

Armed with Information

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Springfield CONNECTION

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Newington

Fairfax County Police West Springfield precinct crime prevention officer MPO James T. Frey explains principles of fire-arm safety at a public information forum held at Pohick Regional Library.

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PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission held its first meeting March 23 at the county government center.



Commission members Sal Culosi (left), father of Dr. Salvatore “Sal” Culosi Jr., who was killed by a Fairfax County Police officer, and Nicholas Beltrante (right), executive director of the Virginia Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability, attend the first meeting of the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission.

‘A Way for Something Good’

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

While several other members of the recently created Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission stated their general intent to listen and learn and help, Salvatore Culosi had a more specific request.

“My son would still be alive today,” Culosi said, “but for 2006 Fairfax County policies to routinely use SWAT and aggressive procedures against citizens certified to be low risk.”

Culosi’s son Dr. Salvatore “Sal” Culosi Jr. was killed by a Fairfax County Police officer Jan. 24, 2006 outside his Fair Oaks townhouse. Culosi Sr. told other members of the commission that he was told by then-Fairfax County Police Chief and current deputy county executive David M. Rohrer that use of force policy changes had been made since his son’s shooting. During his introduction at the commission’s first meeting on March 23 at the Fairfax County Government Center, Culosi said he has yet to receive a list of the changes. But, he said, the members of the commission, created by Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova and endorsed by the rest of the board, should have that list as they proceed with developing recommendations for further policy changes.

“I want to assuage the public this commission is not a political cover,” Culosi said.

Bulova later responded that the information Culosi referred to would be provided to the commission.

WITH MORE THAN 35 MEMBERS, comprising citizens, legal experts, academics and representatives from the media and law enforcement, the commission is approaching the size of the Virginia Senate, which has 40. Bulova compared the “not too large” size to previous commissions created to review redistricting and a meals tax.

While members repeatedly commented on the “diversity” of the commission in terms of experience and expertise, Great Falls resident Jerry Santos was critical of other imbalances. “The optics are bad,” he said, observing that of the 30-plus members, less than a third are female and the majority are middle-aged Caucasian men. “I’m the only Hispanic in the room,” he said. “It’s outrageous, them throwing out the word diversity.”

The commission was created amid a swell of media and public attention to the case of John Geer, a Springfield man who was shot dead by Fairfax County Police Officer Adam Torres on Aug. 29, 2013. Details of the shooting, including the name of the officer, were kept hidden from the public and the Geer family, until Jan. 30, 2015.

The commission, Bulova reiterated, was set up to review the police department’s policies for use of force and release of information compared with best practices in other jurisdictions, and to make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for potential changes.

“We are not investigators,” Bulova reminded the commission members. But hopefully, she said, “this is a way for something good to come out of something tragic.”

Jeff Stewart, a close friend of Geer’s who witnessed the shooting and said he was contacted by Bulova for the commission at the beginning of the selection process, said he is hoping for a “positive and constructive” process. Stewart added he would “like to see independent oversight” of the police department by citizens “at the very least. I hope that can come about in a timely manner.”

Bulova set a deadline for handing over recommendations for policy changes to the

Emotional beginning for Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission.



Commission chair Michael Hershman, right, and Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova speak at the first meeting of the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, with former Commonwealth Attorney Robert Horan.

use of force, communication and co-operation policies, recruitment and vetting of officers and the Crisis Intervention Team. Chairs of the subcommittees will have the authority to appoint additional citizens to be part of those groups, and their meetings will also be open to the public.

The next public meeting of the commission will be April 27 in rooms 9 and 10 of the Fairfax County Government Center, beginning at 7:30, and is open to the public. The April meeting will be “foundational” with regards to establishing the subcommittees and their objectives, and answering the question “Why we’ve found ourselves in this position.”

“I want to assuage the public this commission is not a political cover.”

— Salvatore Culosi

Commission member Lt. Col. Tom Ryan, deputy chief of police for police administration, said, “Our organization is a learning organization. There’s still room to be better and learn where we’ve gone wrong. I come here with an open mind.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the commission and to find a full list of commissioners and meeting schedule, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission. Questions for the commission chair Michael Hershman or requests to be involved with the work of the subcommittees can be directed through Bulova’s office, by calling 703-324-2321 (TTY 711) or emailing chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov.

NEWS

Armed with Information

League of Women Voters hosts forum on firearms, domestic violence and suicide.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

precinct crime prevention officer MPO James T. Frey.

Among intimate partner homicides in Fairfax County in 2009 and 2010, firearms were the fatal weapon 60 percent of the time, nearly double the next closest implement: knives. Fairfax County domestic violence coordinator Sandra Bromley shared this and further information at an information forum on gun use in domestic violence and suicide held at Pohick Library on March 22.

Having firearms in the house, Bromley's presentation continued, raises the chances of lethal to non-lethal violence taking place by 6.1 to 1.

Bromley also highlighted a distinction between federal and state law regarding limiting domestic violence offenders' access to firearms, primarily whether misdemeanor criminals or people qualified for a protective order can possess, ship, transport or receive any firearm or ammunition.

Also on the panel were Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services prevention manager Jesse Ellis and Fairfax County Police West Springfield

THE FORUM was moderated by Kristin A. Goss, associate professor of public policy and political science at Duke University and author of "Disarmed: The Missing Movement for Gun Control in America" and "The Gun Debate: What Everyone Needs to Know" (with Philip J. Cook).

"This public forum grew organically out of the study that we conducted on the progress that Fairfax County has made in serving people at risk from domestic violence or suicide," said League of Women Voters member Sidney Johnson, who was on the committee that helped organize the forum.

"We felt that the public needs to know that law enforcement and the mental health and social service agencies are working to become more efficient and effective in coordinating their responses and educating the public," Johnson continued.

One of those partnerships is between the Fairfax County Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services and Police Department, which Bromley explained



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

(From left) Moderator Kristin A. Goss, Fairfax County domestic violence coordinator Sandra Bromley, Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services prevention manager Jesse Ellis, and Fairfax County Police West Springfield precinct crime prevention officer MPO James T. Frey hold a public information forum on firearm safety and suicide and violence prevention at the Pohick Regional Library.

worked together on a Lethality Assessment Protocol to screen for high-danger victims of domestic violence and help refer them to services.

A main theme of all the speakers was encouraging the citizens in attendance to spread the information shared that afternoon and encourage others to educate themselves.

An average of 47 percent of homicides in 2009 and 2010 involved homicides — people who know about threats of violence to someone in a relationship but decided

not to intervene — according to Bromley's presentation.

"You can become our community bystanders," Bromley said. "Tell them you're concerned for their safety."

Opening up communication was also a marching order from Jesse Ellis, who spoke to the deadly connection between mental illness, access to the means to kill oneself and people simply avoiding having a direct dialogue with someone who may be exhib

SEE FORUM, PAGE 7



PHOTO GALLERY!

"Me and My Mom"

To honor Mom on Mother's Day, send us your favorite snapshots of you with your Mom and The Connection will publish them in our Mother's Day issue. Be sure to include some information about what's going on in the photo, plus your name and phone number and town of residence. To e-mail digital photos, send to:

springfield@connectionnewspapers.com

Or to mail photo prints, send to:

The Springfield Connection,
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Photo prints will be returned to you if you include a stamped, self-addressed envelope, but please don't send us anything irreplaceable.

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT FOR CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A PARKING LOT AT NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL-INTELLIGENCE AGENCY NEW CAMPUS EAST FORT BELVOIR NORTH AREA • FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA IS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: March 23, 2015 – April 21, 2015

PROPOSED ACTION

The Real Property Services Field Office of the United States Army Corps of Engineers Baltimore District, on behalf of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and in cooperation with the Fort Belvoir Directorate of Public Works, has completed a Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) to address the potential impacts on the human and natural environment resulting from the construction and operation of a 900-space, 7-acre paved parking lot on a previously-disturbed site adjacent to the NGA New Campus East (NCE) on the Fort Belvoir North Area in Fairfax County, Virginia. The site of the proposed parking lot consists of a gravel-covered area currently used for overflow parking by NCE employees; vegetated areas; and two modular buildings with a combined footprint of approximately 28,000 square feet. The proposed action would accommodate parking for personnel currently assigned to NCE by consolidating existing overflow parking areas and improving safety and environmental conditions.

The FEA evaluates the potential environmental impacts resulting from implementing the Proposed Action Alternative and No Action Alternative. The FEA concludes that the proposed action would not result in significant impacts on the environment and a Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) has been prepared.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this notice is to provide the public with an opportunity to review the FEA and Draft FNSI and solicit comments concerning the proposed action.

PARTICIPATION

Written comments must be submitted no later than 30 days after publication of this Notice of Availability and should be directed to:

Department of the Army
U.S. Army Garrison Fort Belvoir
Directorate of Public Works, Environmental and Natural Resource Division
Attention: Felix Mariani
Building 1442, 9430 Jackson Loop, Suite 226
Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5116

Comments may also be submitted via e-mail to imcom.fortbelvoir.dpw.environmental@us.army.mil.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Copies of the FEA and Draft FNSI are available for review on Fort Belvoir's website at <https://www.belvoir.army.mil/envirodocs.asp> and at the following repository locations:

Fairfax County Public Library
Lorton Branch
9520 Richmond Highway
Lorton, VA 22079-2124

Fairfax County Public Library
Kingstowne Branch
6500 Landsdowne Centre
Alexandria, VA 22315-5011

Fairfax County Public Library
Sherwood Regional Branch
2501 Sherwood Hall Lane
Alexandria, VA 22306-279

News

Del. Albo to Seek Re-election

Del. Dave Albo (R-42) recently announced he had submitted paperwork on March 18 to run in the Republican primary and seek re-election for his seat.



Del. Dave Albo (R-42)

Since 1994, Albo has been a member of the House of Delegates. He currently chairs the House Courts of Justice Committee.

The delegate lives in the South County area with wife Rita and 9-year-old son Ben, though he grew up in West Springfield.

"I decided to run again because I still enjoy helping people where I grew up and have lived for the past 45 years," Albo said in a statement.

At the most recent session of the Virginia General Assembly, Albo championed, or was the chief patron, for legislation including: protecting people from being defamed on the internet, allowing public breast-feeding and decriminalizing the possession and use of Cannabidiol and THC-A oil extracts from marijuana to treat patients with epilepsy.

"One of my proudest achievements," Albo said, "is being on the team that during the Great Recession cut government spending to 2007 levels and saved money for the Rainy Day Fund."

— TIM PETERSON

WEEK IN SPRINGFIELD

Presentation on Chronic Pain

Nancy Shaw, myofascial pain therapist and author of "Simple Changes to End Chronic Pain" will speak about why trigger point therapy alone is not enough to permanently change your pain cycle. She will show some examples from her 32 years of clinical and personal experience learning from Janet Trevell, MD who developed the technique and treated JFK for his back pain.

RSVP: Reggie Edwards, Fitness Center 703-451-1485 makingfitnessfun@hotmail.com

Date: April 21. Time: 7 p.m. at Springfield Golf and Country Club, Fitness Center 8301B Old Keene Mill Rd, Springfield. Interactive presentation followed by book signing (books will be available or can be purchased at Amazon.com prior to the session).

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OPINION

Housing and Health

BY DAVID LEVINE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GOOD SHEPHERD
HOUSING AND FAMILY SERVICES, INC.

Many homeless people experience an episode of homelessness because of a chronic physical or mental illness, a disabling injury, or other health issues. Several years ago, the National Alliance to End Homelessness estimated that people living in homeless shelters were more than twice as likely to suffer from an acute medical condition. Many have fallen into homelessness because of repeated failures in their health. The medical bills mount, they can't pay rent, and they end up evicted from their housing.

The link between health and homelessness is no mystery. Recognizing that link, the 100,000 Homes Campaign was a national movement to focus on permanently housing those homeless Americans who face the highest risk of death from living homeless on the streets. In June 2014, the four-year 100,000

COMMENTARY

Homes Campaign had successfully moved 101,628 homeless individuals into permanent housing. As the Campaign reported: "That number represents an estimated annual taxpayer savings of \$1.3 billion and reflects the collective work of 238 U.S. communities who have joined the Campaign"

The Campaign proved that homelessness can be ended. But it also showed that housing is itself a life-saving tool.

Housing provides the supports that many chronically ill and disabled homeless people require for their conditions. With a stable address these homeless people can call home, they can plan their treatments and doctor visits. They can transit from home to treatment centers and back home again without any fear. The neighbor next door will be there to drive them. Their prescription medicines will be available to them in a medicine cabinet in their bathrooms. They have a bed where they can rest after a painful treatment or hospital stay.

So much depends on having a home.

The other link between housing and health comes from the housing itself. According to the Environmental Health Watch (EHW), nearly six million households "live with moderate to severe home health and safety hazards." People living in such housing may experience higher risks of illnesses and injuries from greater exposure to asthma triggers, lead hazards, excess moisture, pest infestations, and toxins.

The financial savings are significant from a basic healthy home. In other words, these savings come from homes that are dry, well-ventilated, pest- and contaminant-free. Healthy homes lead to improved health results. Asthma-related healthcare costs are lower and labor force productivity is greater from such homes. According to EHW estimates, billions are saved from healthy homes in reduced healthcare expenditures.

When anyone considers the link between housing and health, it really comes down to this idea: housing matters for life. It is that critical.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Turning Every Rock For Education Budget

To the Editor:

Fairfax County is cited as having an average household income that is one of the top ten of all the counties and cities in our nation. Yet the proposed budget for the county's fiscal year 2014 reads in part: "We cannot fund all our priorities and investments," and "We have turned over every rock looking for increased savings opportunities."

Clearly they have neglected turning over every rock looking for increased revenue opportunities, and they should have. Increased revenues could be found by increasing the county's real estate tax rate, now at \$1.09 per \$100 of assessed value of properties. Each penny of increase in the tax rate would yield the county an additional \$22.6 million.

By leaving the county tax rate unchanged for another year, we are short-changing our public school students. The teachers for these students have starting salaries that are 3 percent lower than teachers in neighboring counties. This small gap, however, increases to 20.5 percent for teachers with a Masters degree in their tenth year. Difficult to retain the best teachers in these circumstances.

There is another opportunity to be found under another rock in the projected 2014 budget, viz: The meals' tax assessed on meals in restaurants. A tax of a mere 4 pennies on the total dollar expended

by a restaurant patron would yield some \$80,000 to the county's coffers. No one is hurt. Thus, it's politically safe.

In conclusion, it is certainly not too much to ask our community with the 10th highest average income in the US to be a leader of our country in caring for the education of our children. Retaining the best qualified teachers to inspire our children requires us to lead in the salaries for those teachers.

Bob Simon
Reston

A Cornerstone in Danger

To the Editor:

We are a community that values education. We're known nationwide for our world-class education system. And for good reason: with outstanding teachers, motivated students, and active leadership, we have every right to take pride in the top-tier education that our community has asked for. But it scares me, as a student, to think that this cornerstone of our county may be in danger.

For years now, we have been cutting back on our investment in education. Since 2008, Fairfax County Public Schools have lost nearly \$500 million in funding while growing by nearly 22,000 students. With enrollment growing faster than our resources can keep up, this means real cuts in real classrooms are affecting me and my 188,000 colleagues.

It is not just on paper. It touches

every one of us, from kindergarten to adult education. I spent a fair amount of my childhood in a temporary building barely passing as a classroom. I have had to wait in line to get access to a set of four textbooks in a class of nearly 30. I have seen great teachers, the kind who inspire real change and passion for learning in their students, come and go because of the fact that we are no longer competitive for teacher salary. If we settle for less than the best, then we have compromised our community values.

Half of my teachers work multiple jobs. Two years ago, I ran into an old teacher of mine at a restaurant. As I was sitting at the table, she approached me, beaming with joy to see a past student. After a pleasant nostalgic conversation, there was a pause. She produced a pad and pen, and said "By the way, I'll be your server tonight."

It does not have to be this way. By becoming competitive in teacher pay, investing in capital improvement, and allocating meaningful materials to classrooms, we can make strides to improve our system. But this annual battle of the Boards is not sustainable. We need to create a shared partnership and build meaningful progress on the common ground we share. And as community members, it is up to you to bring that message to your supervisors.

Ben Press
Vienna

The writer, age 16, is a junior James Madison High School in Vienna.

There is No 'Away'

To the Editor:

I am dismayed by what my neighbors' put out for "trash." Yes, we all know about Goodwill, Purple Heart, various organizations that collect clothing, kitchen gadgets and other items. We are all pretty good about recycling paper, glass, plastic, and cardboard. But much is put on the curb that is not trash. Below are just a few of what I have seen on the curb side for trash pick-up this past trash day.

A bike; this is one of the worst items to put out with trash. Bikes of the World collects "any serviceable complete (or nearly-complete) bicycle, adult or children's," - See more at: <http://bikesfortheworld.org>.

Wall-to-wall carpet. Here is a link to how the wall-to-wall carpet industry is recycling their products and keeping carpet out of landfills. <http://carpetstowall.com/carpet-recycling-process/>.

A child's dresser. Was it useable? Could wood glue on a drawer or two make it whole? Habitat for Humanity Restore takes would take that dresser, other old furniture, kitchen sinks, bookshelves, old bathtubs, they are easy to call and ask what they take and don't take.

<http://www.habitat.org/restores>

So, as spring "cleaning" arrives and de-cluttering our houses happens, and we "throw away" we need to think first about how to keep items out of the landfill, because there is no away.

Kay Fowler
Herndon

Springfield
CONNECTION

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PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Del. Vivian Watts (D-39) and South Run Oaks resident George Korte talk after the public forum on firearm safety and violence prevention held at the Pohick Regional Library.

Forum Highlights Firearms Safety

FROM PAGE 4

iting risk factors. “How do we reduce the stigma around them?” said Ellis. “Thirty percent of youth in Fairfax County have been identified as having depression symptoms,” cutting across demographics and economic levels. Though he also explained on average, actual suicide rates for ages 10 to 19 fall below those for people 20 to 24 and the highest group, 60 and over.

Regardless of age, Ellis said, “A big piece of this is talking about it.”

Frey stressed the four cardinal rules of gun safety that he was drilled on when he joined the police department 27 years ago: Always assume a gun is loaded, don’t aim at anything you’re not prepared to kill, don’t keep your finger on the trigger until you’re ready to fire and know your target and what’s around it.

He also expressed the importance of being a responsible gun owner, knowing the cardinal rules and being a responsible parent when it comes to educating children on firearm safety and following up for more information if they spend time at a home with firearms in it.

“If we can get some kids talking about

it,” Frey said, “that can go the whole way up into adulthood.”

South Run Oaks resident George Korte attended the meeting for more information on legislation that might affect him as a gun owner.

“I support the objectives announced today,” he said, “But I’m disappointed there was no literature on the proposed wording in the law. How would it be enforced?”

Del. Vivian Watts (D-39), who sits on the Virginia General Assembly Criminal Law subcommittee, said she came to the forum to get an overview on procedures and protocols for dealing with gun-related and domestic violence. “We’ve come a long way on treating domestic violence,” she said, and highlighted the “importance of getting out” information on responsible gun ownership.

FOR MORE INFORMATION on the Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofw. More information about youth suicide prevention training available through the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/at-risk. Additionally, you can contact Sandy Bromley at sandy.bromley@fairfaxcounty.gov.



Fairfax County Police West Springfield precinct crime prevention officer MPO James T. Frey explains principles of firearm safety at a public information forum held at the Pohick Regional Library.

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SPRING FUN



From left: Mary Bresnahan, Barbara O'Brien and Nancy Kay from Fairfax, have been friends for many years. O'Brien has six great-grandchildren.



From left: Judy Caddel of Burke, Jane Wiedhahn of Annandale, and Betsy Jouannet of Fairfax getting ready for lunch and the fashion show.

The Shepherd's Center Hosts Spring Fashion Show

The Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke held its first fashion show for the fashion conscious women of Fairfax and Burke. The spring outfits were provided by Draper and Damon's of Fairfax and the models are members of the Shepherd Center community. With piano accompaniment by Sylvia Mulherin the models had numerous outfit changes and delighted the more than 130 attendees.

Prior to the lunch catered by St. John Davis Center, a dozen vendors showcased their offerings for Shepherd's Center guests. The vendors included, Avon, Beading for Haiti, Pampered Chef, Mystical Rose Flowers and Silpada Jewelry. Their tables were filled with browsers and customers.

The Shepherd's Center provides life-enriching programs for older adults in the Fairfax-Burke community with the goal of enabling them to live independently. In the past year, the Shepherd's Center provided over 1,000 rides for their over 800 clients.

The Shepherd's Center provides bi-monthly luncheons, learning classes in art, history, health and exercise. In addition, the center helps their clients with shopping, visitation for shut-ins, and monthly meetings for caregivers of dementia patients.

Drivers and office workers are always needed for their medical transportation and companion shopping programs. Contact their office at 703-323-4788.



Kim Moden, of Fairfax, modeling a spring outfit from Draper and Damon's.



Joanne Dair, of Fairfax, models a pink outfit fit for Easter from Draper and Damon's.



Mary Walher, of Fairfax, models a spring tunic and hat to the guests at Shepherd's Center.

PHOTOS BY
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George Mason University School of Dance, Dance Company group.



PHOTOS BY TIM COBURN/COURTESY OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Youthful Energy on Mason's Stage

George Mason's Dance Company presents "2015 Dance Gala Concert."

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Dance is a captivating art form. An exploration set to music. It is motion and stillness, turns and jumps done with personal style.

It is "Shakespeare in the air," according to William Reeder, dean, George Mason University College of Visual and Performing Arts. He called dance at Mason "simply extraordinary, and world-class."

"We want to be on pulse with what is most relevant," said Susan Shields, director, School of Dance. And its critical, "we provide a unique blend of serious conservatory training within the liberal arts education. The George Mason University dance major is a talented mover, an emerging artist/movement poet and a thinking arts advocate."

Area audiences can take in the fresh, youthful energy of Mason's dance students at this year's George Mason University Dance Company Gala Concert. Come as well to see honorary event chair and dance legend Jacques d'Amboise. He is a Kennedy Center Honors recipient and founder of the National Dance Institute that uses dance to inspire children to excellence.

Based upon interviews, Mason dance majors promise to hold nothing back performing works by an array of contemporary choreographers. The choreographers include Andrea Miller of Gallim Dance, Alexandro Cerrudo from Hubbard Street Dance, and the late Ulysses Dove who performed with Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Joey Day (Vienna) said that Mason provides "such a very supportive environment. The School of Dance took a chance on me and is open to my style and hip-hop background." He also discussed how dance movements can visually "describe a particular person and a relationship."



Susan Shields, director, George Mason University School of Dance.

Where and When

George Mason University's Dance Company presents "2015 Dance Gala Concert" at Center for the Arts, 4400 University Ave, Fairfax. Performances Friday, March 27 at 8 p.m. and Saturday, March 28 at 8 p.m. with a special pre-performance Gala Dinner Celebration with honorary chair, renowned dancer and choreographer Jacques d'Amboise. Will also be performed at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas on Sunday, March 29 at 4 p.m. Tickets for the performance \$15-\$25. Tickets for the Gala Dinner start at \$150. For tickets call 888-945-2468 or visit George Mason University Center for the Arts Box Office. General information about School of Dance, call 703-993-1114 or visit dance.gmu.edu.

For David Kurland (Reston), Mason School of Dance provides great opportunities to see and learn from master performers as he "pushes himself." He spoke about Mason providing trainers to help dancers get and stay in shape. Kurland also mentioned learning about the visual aspects of dance from a film course where he is learning how to "find different angles and ways to give attention to the hands and feet of a performer."

Katherine Stewart (Chantilly) said that dance is helping her to learn to take risks "to express internal emotions about herself and to generate creative ideas." The School of Dance supportive environment is providing a "great place for self-examination along with pushing my boundaries beyond my own expected limitations." You never know, you may see someone from the Dance Gala Concert on a bigger stage in the near future; however, you can see them here first.

VIEWPOINTS

Where do you go for fun and recreation in the Spring?

Interviews conducted by Steve Hibbard at Fairfax City Library and Pohick Library in Burke.

Wyland Leadbetter of Springfield:

"We go outside and walk a couple of miles a day and enjoy the warm weather."



Max Wimberly of Annandale:

"I like to play soccer with my cousins; I like to go BMX bicycling in Woodbridge."



John O'Malley of Springfield:

"I like the South Run Rec Center to play racquetball and basketball. I also like Hooes Road Park for walking the dog and playing tennis."



Angie Wu of Springfield:

"I like to go to Burke Lake Park and walk around the neighborhood of Orange Hunt."



Alex Pena of Springfield:

"I like the South Run Rec Center pool and gym as well as the basketball, field and soccer center."



Eduardo Ugarte of Springfield:

"We take our walks along Lake Accotink."



Alexander Beale of Springfield:

"I'm starting to play football for South County. I'm starting more recreational activities."



Sarah Ugarte of Springfield:

"I like to play lacrosse at Cardinal Forest through SYC."



ENTERTAINMENT

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.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 26-29

Season of Innovation: "An Experiment with an Air Pump." March 26-28, April 2-4, 8 p.m. March 28-29, April 4, 2 p.m. Harris Theatre, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. This contemporary consideration of art and science takes place in the same house but, in time, on the eve of two very different centuries. Furtive romance, farcical commotions and dark secrets infuse this unique examination of women's roles in medical research and the ethical challenges unfolding in anatomy in 1799 and genetics in 1999. \$25, 15. 888-945-2468.

Northern Virginia Jewish Film Festival. March 26, 7:30 p.m. March 27, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. March 28, 8:40 p.m. March 29, all day. Angelika Film Center & Cafe, 2911 District Ave., Fairfax. Films to be screened include 24 Days, Above and Beyond, Apples from the Desert, Arlo & Julie, Beneath the Helmet: From High School to Home Front, Disobedience: The Sousa Mendes Story, God's Slave, The Green Prince, Kidon, Life as a Rumor, Magic Men, The Outrageous Sophie Tucker, The Prince of Egypt and Touchdown Israel-Tackle Football in the Holyland; plus a live storytelling event by SpeakeasyDC. \$10-24. 703-537-3000.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/MARCH 27-28

2015 Dance Gala Concert. GMU Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. This eagerly



PHOTO BY DONNA MOULTON

Mark your calendars: The Virginia Historic Garden Tour - an 8-day event that stretches across the Commonwealth, where each spring visitors are welcomed to Virginia's most beautiful gardens, homes and historic landmarks. The Clifton and Fairfax Station Garden Tour is on April 21. This self-drive tour features stables, vineyards, a world-class garden, Georgian-revival architecture, and a 10,000 square-foot contemporary home with a vanishing edge swimming pool - four private homes with gardens and two stables in all. Tour ticket includes a tea at the Clifton Presbyterian Church. Advance ticket sales: \$30. www.vagardenweek.org.

anticipated annual event showcases an extraordinary repertory company of dancers at the beginning of their professional careers, performing a program of contemporary choreographic masterpieces by Andrea Miller, Alejandro Cerrudo and Ulysses Dove. Recent alumni of the Mason Dance Company have been invited to join some of the world's most prestigious dance companies, including Mark Morris Dance Group, Limón Dance, Elisa Monte Dance and Pascal Rioult's company, RIOULT.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 28-29

Bunny Paws! Saturday, 8:30-9:30 a.m. Sunday, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. Bring your dog or cat to visit and have photos taken with the Easter Bunny. Dogs and cats must be on a leash or in a carrier and up-to-date on shots. Please use mall entrance next to Todai restaurant. <http://www.shopfairoaksmall.com/events>.

Hoppy Easter Weekend. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. Bring your little ones for free face painting, balloon creations, spring crafts, and more! In Grand Court West.

SUNDAY/MARCH 29

Arts and Crafts Day at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 1-4 p.m. Suitable for all ages involving the themes of the Museum - Railroading, the Civil War and local history. 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Admission is free to Museum members and children 4 and under; \$2 children 5-15 and \$4 adults 16 and older. www.fairfax-station.org, 703-425-9225.

Art Show Reception. 1-3 p.m. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Come to the

Horticulture Center and Historic House at Green Spring Gardens and see the work of artists of the

SUNDAY/MARCH 29-APRIL 5

Easter Bunny Photos. Daily. Fair Oaks Mall, 11750 Fair Oaks Mall, Fairfax. A sure sign of spring is the arrival of the Easter Bunny, and those on the bunny trail will soon find him happily settled in his new home in Grand Court West. The Easter Bunny eggcitedly awaits visitors in Bunnyville, a charming, three-dimensional Bunny town featuring the Kid Junction Home of the Ultimate Party Experience, Hare Salon, and 24 Carrot Bank. The last stop in Bunnyville is a professional photo with the Easter Bunny in front of his Bunny House. Customers will receive a \$10 or \$20 card from Shutterfly with the purchase of select photo packages (\$22-44), and all children receive a small gift from the Bunny just for visiting! Locally presented by Kid Junction.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 8

Benefit Fashion Show. 11 a.m. Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Women's Association of Northern Virginia is hosting a Benefit Fashion Show and Luncheon featuring Lord and Taylor's spring fashions. All proceeds will go to Northern Virginia Therapeutic Riding Program in Clifton. NVTRP provides equine-assisted activities to children and adults with disabilities including our military service personnel. Tickets are \$35, and reservations are due by April 4. Please send payment to WANV PO Box 523651 Springfield VA 22152. Please indicate on check Chicken or Filet Mignon.

COMMUNITIES OF WORSHIP



Messiah United Methodist Church
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March 29 - Palm Sunday worship at 8:15, 9:30, and 11:00 am
April 2 - Holy Thursday service at 7:30 pm
April 3 - Good Friday service at 7:30 pm
April 4 - Easter Egg Hunt at 10 am
April 5 - Easter Sunday Celebration at 8:00, 9:30, and 11 am

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Robinson senior Chris White (32) scored four goals against Dominion on March 21.



Senior attackman Chapman Jasien and the Robinson boys' lacrosse team enter the 2015 season as defending 6A state champions.

Confident or Cocky?

Defending champion Robinson boys' lax has high expectations.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Matt Curran was an assistant coach for the Robinson boys' lacrosse program when the Rams won the state championship in 2006. Robinson returned a large portion of its team the following season, leaving Curran and the rest of the coaching staff to manage the egos of a team full of championship-expectant teenagers.

Despite the potential for overconfidence, Robinson would repeat as state champion in 2007.

Seven years later, Curran, having taken over as Robinson head coach, guided the Rams to the 2014 6A state championship. Many talented athletes returned from that title-winning group, leading to lofty expectations for this year's squad.

"We have so many guys back from that team, that the expectations are high again," Curran said. "... In 2006 and 2007, when I was an assistant on the team, we won it two years in a row and we had 19 seniors on the 2007 team. The expectation was that we were going to win it. We did, but it was definitely a [challenge] trying to keep them confident but not cocky.

"The good thing is I've been in that situation before and it feels very similar [to this season]."

Keeping the Rams' egos in check could prove challenging, even for an experienced coach like Curran.

ON MARCH 21, Robinson scored seven of the game's eight second-half goals en route to an 11-4 victory over Dominion at Langley High School. The win improved the Rams' record to 3-0, including victories over Lake Braddock and C.M. Wright.

"We just have all the confidence in the world right now," Robinson senior attackman Chris White said. "We don't think any team can beat us and until they do, we're on top."



Robinson junior attackman Johnny Daniel scored two goals against Dominion during an 11-4 victory on March 21.

How do the Rams deal with carrying a championship target on their backs?

"We just keep in mind that we're the top team," White said, "and no one can beat us if we play as good as we can."

Sound confident? Cocky?

"We're definitely confident, but we talk almost daily about not getting cocky," said Robinson senior attackman Chapman Jasien, a four-year starter. "That's a hard thing to do after you win a title. We're trying our best to stay modest and keep grinding every week to make sure we get better and better."

After starting 1-3 last season, Robinson won its final 17 games, including victories in the Conference 5, 6A North region and 6A state championship games. Counting the three wins in 2015, the Rams have won 20 straight games.

"We ran into that last year before we even won anything," Curran said about potential over-confidence issues. "These guys

knew that they were going to be good, so they got really cocky early. This year, it's the same kind of thing. I've got to tell them: 'Guys, you're not a good team yet. You will be later on, but right now you're not.' They're probably like, 'You're full of it,' but it's true — they're not yet. They certainly have the capability, [though]. We have the talent."

The Rams definitely have the talent. White scored a team-high four goals during Robinson's victory over Dominion and leads the team with 11 goals through three games.

"Honestly, I think he's the best finisher in the area," Curran said about the 5-foot-9, 160-pound attackman. "He's a three-year starter. He's a scrappy little guy. We don't ask for him to carry too much and drive against his man, but he'll finish and he just gets it done. He's one of those guys that ends up at the end of the day with three, four goals on the scoreboard every time."

Jasien totaled three assists against Dominion and leads the team with five.

Senior long-stick midfielder Jack Rowlett, who will play for the University of North Carolina, is tied for second on the team with five goals.

"In my opinion," Curran said, "Jack is probably the best player in the area, overall."

Junior midfielder Austin Henry, junior attackman Johnny Daniel and senior attackman Thomas Gallogly each scored two goals against Dominion. Senior midfielder Alex Sands added one.

Henry and Daniel each have five goals this season, Gallogly has four and Jasien has three.

Sophomore goalkeeper Matthew Bethard totaled eight saves against Dominion. Junior keeper Ryan Keith leads the team with 13 saves. Curran said he is trying to determine which goalie will start long-term.

Senior defenseman Jude Bukholz is a four-year starter for the Rams.

NEXT UP FOR ROBINSON is a home game against fellow state-power Chantilly at 7:15 p.m. on Thursday, March 26. The Chargers have reached the state final in five of the last seven seasons, winning championships in 2008 and 2013.

"Robinson, we have a lot of respect for them," Chantilly defenseman and Ohio State commit Brendan Wallace said after the Chargers beat Herndon 10-1 on Monday, improving their record to 2-0. "They're a good team — they're one of the best teams in the area — but we think we have a pretty good club too."

Whether it's managing player egos or dealing with each opponent trying to knock off the defending state champion, Robinson will face challenges throughout the 2015 season.

But challenges won't stop the Rams from aiming high.

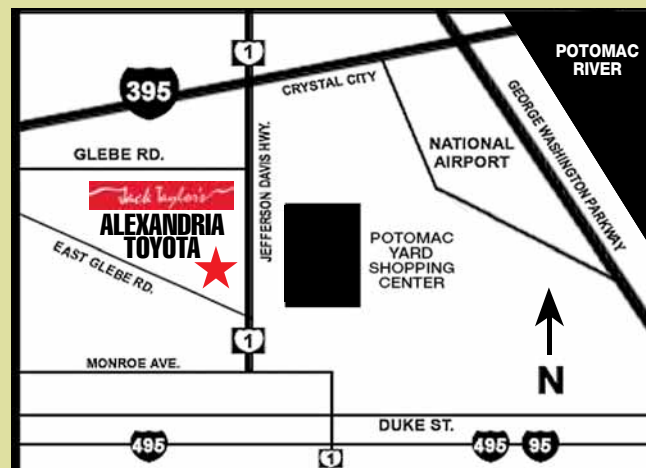
"We're trying to improve as a team [and] individually," Jasien said, "but we want the title again. That's what we're working for."

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I believe the
future is only
the past again,
entered through
another gate.
-Arthur Wing
Pinero

21 Announcements

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ment is applying to the
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and Beer On and Off Premises
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Neiman, member
NOTE: Objections to the iss-
uance of this license must be
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tered at www.abc.virginia.gov
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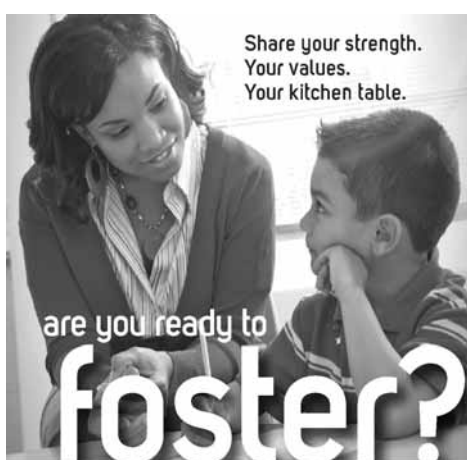
21 Announcements

**PUBLIC HEARING FOR TOWN OF CLIFTON
PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO SPECIAL USE PERMIT
PUBLIC HEARING TOWN OF CLIFTON
PLANNING COMMISSION
March 31, 2015**

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 31, 2015 at 7:30 P.M. at the Acacia Lodge Hall, 7135 Main Street, Clifton, VA 20124 to consider the amendment of the special use permit of Clifton General Store / Main Street Pub, located at 7140 Main Street, to include and authorize an increase in number of seats, an increase in parking onsite and off-site for the public and employees. The application for the proposed amendment to Clifton General Store / Main Street Pub's special use permit, is available for review and downloading on the Town's website at www.clifton-va.com and a hard copy may be examined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton VA, 20124. All interested parties are invited to attend and express their views with respect to the requested amendment to the Clifton General Store / Main Street Pub's special use permit.

21 Announcements

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