

The Carole Wolfand Award for outstanding community service by a business went to Tracey Zambito of Whole Foods Vienna and Whole Foods. More than 35 volunteers were recognized for their contributions to the Vienna community at the 14th Annual Mayor's Volunteer Reception.

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OBITUARY

Willie L. Hudgins, Jr., of Reston, Dies

Willie L. Hudgins, Jr., beloved husband of Cathy Hudgins — Fairfax County Hunter Mill District supervisor — died Saturday, April 11, 2015. He was 72 years old. Willie was born March 5, 1943, in LaCrosse, Va.

After attending both undergraduate and law school at Howard University, he and the Hudgins family moved to Reston. They have lived in Reston since 1969.

Willie's professional life spanned 39 years working as the section chief and chief litigator for the Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice. During that time, he worked on some of the largest merger antitrust cases in U.S. history and was recognized by Black Enterprise Magazine as one the leading minority litigators in the country. He went on to join the esteemed law firm of Kelley Drye, as partner before retiring in 2007.

In conjunction with his professional career, Willie was also a dedicated member of the community. His service included volun-



teering for such organizations as: Rising Stars, an education program for young

students; the South Lakes High School Tutoring Program; former chairman of the Reston Community Center Board of Governors; member of the Covenants Committee for Reston Association; commissioner of Reston Soccer; and an usher at St. Thomas à Becket Catholic Church.

Willie is survived by Cathy, his wife of 48 years, and his two sons, Tony and Michael.

There will be a public memorial service on Saturday, April 25. In lieu of flowers, the family requests people consider making contributions to the Brain Injury Foundation, the Initiative to Prevent and End Homelessness and/or So Other Might Eat (SOME).

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NEWS

VIENNA/OAKTON CONNECTION EDITOR KEMAL KURSPAHIC
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Roy Baldwin was among several colleagues of Rotarian and SCOV member Keith Bodamer who recalled Bodamer's selfless dedication to the community. Mayor Laurie DiRocco presented the Mayor's Award to Keith Bodamer posthumously. Accepting the award were Bodamer's wife and children [first, second and third from right].



Rotarian and stroke patient Paul Berger was recognized for his "tireless" work on behalf of the Stroke Comeback Center in Vienna. Berger is the Vienna Rotary's greeter.

PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/
THE CONNECTION

Vienna Volunteers Honored

Individuals, businesses, recognized for contributions to community.

More than 35 volunteers were recognized for their contributions to the Vienna community at the 14th Annual Mayor's Volunteer Reception held on April 14 at the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department's Flame Room. Mayor Laurie DiRocco proclaimed April 14, 2015, Volunteer Recognition Day in the Town of Vienna.

"You start off thinking, 'I'll give back to the community,'" said DiRocco. "You end up getting so much in return."

DiRocco and Vice-Mayor Carey Sienicki awarded certificates to the honorees. Busi-

ness owners and neighbors were nominated by Vienna residents. Volunteers were recognized for a myriad of contributions, from clearing snow from a neighbor's yard to organizing major Town events.

The Mayor's Award went to Vienna Rotarian Keith Bodamer posthumously, and several of Bodamer's friends and colleagues remarked on his legacy. "There was hardly an aspect of life in Vienna that Keith wasn't involved in," said Roy Baldwin.

As she announced the Mayor's Award, DiRocco said, "Keith epitomized volunteerism."

Bodamer's wife and children accepted the award.

The Carole Wolfand Award for outstanding contributions by a business to the community was presented to Tracey Zambito and Whole Foods Vienna. Zambito, store/community partnership coordinator, ensures that Whole Foods Vienna supports the community with funding and logistics.

Honorees included Cadette Girl Scout Troop #2684, Dan Mulville, Regina Honigford, Florence Andrews, Celia Blalock, Cecilia Campbell, Michael and Diliarn Deal, Sarah Franklin, Margit Hanna, Steve Haraczak,

Priscilla Kirby, Cherie Lejeune, Tommy Leaman, Estelle McNeil, Dr. Kavian Milani, Jackie Niedermaier, William Padgett, Paul Berger, M. Jane Seeman Memorial Committee, Club Phoenix Teen Center's Teen Council, Sherri Russ, Marguerite Leishman, Jennifer Weisberg, George Creed, Jeff Bollettino, James Cudney, Tara Ruskowski, Mike Cheselka, Nancy Scesney, Dore Skidmore, Grace Rooney, Mary Ellen Larkin, Tommy Staats, Jon Vrana, Marcella Waslsh, Robert Smith, Emily Giunta and Susuan Colwell.

—DONNA MANZ



The mega-book sale sponsored by Historic Vienna, Inc. draws hundreds of shoppers over its weekend two-day sale.



Shoppers browse through HVI's collection of 15,000 used books for sale.

PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Historic Vienna, Inc. Used-book Sale Draws Hundreds of Buyers

15,000-plus books at bargain prices attract book lovers and dealers over weekend.

When the Vienna Community Center opened at 8 a.m. on Saturday, April 18, book lovers moved in, snaking their way around the hallway. The Historic Vienna, Inc. [HVI] annual used-book sale does that, drawing crowds to its opening at 9 a.m. More than 15,000 books filled the auditorium of the

community center's gym. Local Girl Scout troops and Boy Scout troops helped the HVI volunteers set up and take down, and, assist during the sale. Close to 150 volunteers donated their time to collecting, sorting, and organizing the categorized books.

The book sale ran through Sunday, with bargain book-bags selling for \$5 a bag on

Sunday. Patrons were invited to buy a book to donate to the Wounded Warriors program. Dealers joined HVI to come out to the pre-view HVI-only sale on Friday night. They came, they scanned, they bought by the boxes. For sale were original Harry Potters, and Nancy Drew, and Hardy Boys mysteries. The children's section and mystery sec-

tions had continuous browsers.

All proceeds from the book sale support the community programs and operation of Historic Vienna and the Freeman Store and Museum, a Virginia registered landmark.

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NEWS

Greater Vienna Optimists Honor Local High School Juniors

Youth Awards of Excellence renamed in honor of founder TR Cook.

The Optimists' slogan is, "bringing out the best in kids." On April 15, the Optimist Club of Greater Vienna recognized outstanding high school juniors from George C. Marshall, James Madison, and Oakton high schools at its newly-renamed TR Cook Awards of Excellence presentation at Madison. Between 12 and 15 juniors were honored in each category: Academics, Citizenship, Fine Arts, Science, Sports, and Technology. Within each category, a candidate was singled out for the Award of Distinction. Amber Liu - Academics, McLean Kelley - Citizenship, Katrina White - Science, Megan Byrnes - Sports, Erica Therkorn - Technology, and Doi Kim - Fine Arts, received the Awards of Distinction. They each received a \$125 check.

In a surprise presentation, Greater Vienna Optimists president Richard Gongaware, on behalf of the club, honored volunteer club photographer, longtime member, and community sup-



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

The Optimists of Greater Vienna presented Awards of Distinction to Amber Liu - Academics, McLean Kelley - Citizenship, Katrina White - Science, Megan Byrnes - Sports, and Erica Therkorn - Technology. Not present for photo was Fine Arts Award for Distinction winner, Doi Kim.

porter TR Cook with an inscribed tray and the official public renaming of the Youth Awards of Excellence to the TR Cook Youth Awards of Excellence. Cook was clearly

taken aback by the honor but was quick to credit his service club colleagues with making the program an enduring success. Because Cook was asked to leave his cam-



Greater Vienna Optimist TR Cook founded the Youth Awards of Excellence more than 30 years ago. In a surprise presentation, the service organization honored its longtime member with an inscribed tray and an official public renaming of the awards to the TR Cook Youth Awards of Excellence.

era off, the official photographer of the club did not photograph his own honor.

Cook founded the Greater Vienna Optimists' Youth Awards of Excellence 30 years ago. He felt that seniors were typically honored but juniors, not so much. Cook looked at a way to recognize their achievements in school and in the community. Cook started Great Falls Optimists.

Fairfax County School Board Member Ryan McElveen, popular with high schoolers, spoke with humor in-tune with his audience. McElveen's tweets are famously followed by Fairfax County students who look to him as one of their own. Born and raised in Fairfax County, McElveen attended Westbriar Elementary School, Kilmer Middle School, and graduated from George C. Marshall High School in 2004, and the University of Virginia in 2008.

Students were nominated by their schools' guidance counselors or teachers and nominees wrote an essay supporting their candidacy.

To learn more, visit <http://www.optimistclubofgreatervienna.org>.

— DONNA MANZ

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WEEK IN VIENNA

Vienna to Hold Family Fishing Rodeo

The annual Vienna Family Fishing Rodeo will take place on Saturday, April 25, at Wolftrap Creek in Wildwood Park, 700 Block of Follin Lane SE.

Participants in the event will be able to fish Wolftrap Creek, which will be stocked with hundreds of trout just for the occasion. Volunteers will be on hand to provide instruction, stream education and fish cleaning demonstrations during the event.

The Fishing Rodeo is \$5 per fisherman and is open to Town residents only.

Tickets are required to participate in this event and will be avail-

able first come, first serve at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street SE. Limit of 6 tickets per household. Bring your ID as proof of residency. Participants of the rodeo should bring fishing rod(s), a bucket, plastic bags and ice. Bait will be supplied. Five 30 minute fishing time slots are available: 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 12 p.m.

This event is made possible by a partnership with Navy Federal Credit Union, Northern Virginia Trout Unlimited, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and the Vienna Department of Parks and Recreation.

VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

Transform I-66 Outside the Beltway Fairfax and Prince William Counties

Public Hearings

All hearings are 5:30 p.m. until 9 p.m. A presentation will begin at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 27, 2015
VDOT Northern Virginia District Office, 1st Floor
4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030

Thursday, May 28, 2015
Oakton High School Cafeteria (Entrance #1 or #14)
2900 Sutton Road, Vienna, VA 22181

Tuesday, June 2, 2015
Battlefield High School Cafeteria (Entrance #1 or #4)
15000 Graduation Drive, Haymarket, VA 20169

Wednesday, June 3, 2015
Bull Run Elementary School Cafeteria (Entrance #1)
15301 Lee Highway, Centreville, VA 20121

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in partnership with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), will host hearings for the public to review and provide comments on the Tier 2 Environmental Assessment (EA)/Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project. In compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and 36 CFR Part 800, information on potential effects of the proposed improvements on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places is included in the environmental document. The EA is being prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and 23 CFR 771. The project involves the transformation of 25 miles of I-66 between U.S. Route 15 in Haymarket and I-495/the Capital Beltway, and will provide congestion relief and enhanced safety, as well as new travel choices and reliability.

Stop by between 5:30 and 9 p.m. to view displays, learn more about the project, discuss your questions with VDOT staff and provide written or oral comments. The formal presentation will begin at 7 p.m.

Review project information, including preliminary plans, project schedule, and right-of-way, environmental and civil rights information at www.transform66.org, at the public hearings, or at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax beginning May 12, 2015. Please call 800-367-7623 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Written comments may be mailed to Ms. Susan Shaw, Megaprojects Director, at the VDOT Office address above, or emailed to Transform66@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Please reference "Transform 66 Outside the Beltway" in the subject line. Comments must be postmarked, emailed or delivered to VDOT by **June 18, 2015** to be included in the public hearing record.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT's Civil Rights Division at 800-367-7623 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: 0066-96A-297, P101 Federal Project: NH-066-1(300) UPC: 105500

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OPINION

Connection Papers Win Awards

Variety of coverage honored at annual Virginia Press Association conference.

On Saturday, April 18, a group of journalists from the Connection Newspapers traveled to Roanoke for the annual Virginia Press Association event to collect awards

for business reporting, government writing, writing about health, science and the environment, feature writing, sports writing, column writing, obituaries, cartoons, entertainment pages and writing, public safety writing, editorial pages and writing, page design, informational graphics and more.

A look at the themes of some winning entries gives some insight into the mission at the Connection: to tell stories of significance, using reporting, data and analysis while getting to the heart of why the issues matter in local lives. In a time that we, like all newspapers, are functioning with reduced resources, it helps affirm that the effort can make a difference.

Bonnie Hobbs won for ongoing coverage of

EDITORIAL

a family's efforts to provide the best life for a son they call "not special needs, but a special person," and a second award for coverage of issues related to affordable housing and homelessness.

Judges call Michael Pope's business reporting "first-rate, data-driven reporting and analysis on important issues." Stories on driving habits, cesarean deliveries and the Affordable Care Act are called "well-researched, clearly written and engaging. The use of real-live people high up in stories to illustrate makes for very compelling material."

Vernon Miles won for breaking news coverage of Arlington's first same sex marriage, being "on the scene of a local event that has local, statewide and national significance. ... The story is multi-sourced; has a strong lead that gives readers a sense of the scene; places the

event in historic context; and captures the celebratory feel of the event."

On Pope government reporting: "Rather than regurgitating official statements, the reporter tells people's stories to illuminate the consequences of government decisions. This represents a model for all government reporting."

On Marilyn Campbell's reporting for Wellbeing: "These articles amount to personal guidance in the best sense of the term."

Even in recreation and entertainment, our mission is to provide our readers with the information they need to have fun, and our annual update to the "Insiders Guide to the Parks," brainchild of Jean Card, is designed to do that.

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— MARY KIMM

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Winners

Truncated list, for a complete list, see www.connectionnewspapers.com

Jon Roetman, The Vienna/Oakton Connection — Sports Writing Portfolio, First Place. *Madison's Koshuta Scores 39 Against 'Idol' Floyd; Oakton Girls' XC Repeats as State Champs; Madison Volleyball Drops Heartbreaker in State Final.* Judge's comments: Strong and clear writing and excellent storytelling helps game stories feel more like features. Excellent work.



Jon Roetman



Victoria Ross



Joan Brady

concepts clear and applicable to the reader. The aging in place article was particularly relevant and insightful, the childhood sleep story was unlike anything I'd ever read (and I have two kids) and really summed up how a specific approach to children's health makes sense. The spiritual health article was unusual, refreshing to see, and I love the variety of sources and comments.

Victoria Ross, Oak Hill/Herndon Connection — Government Writing, First Place. *Let Sun Shine on Virginia's Financial Disclosure Laws, Mr. Horejsi Goes to Richmond; Bulova: 'This Will Be a Challenging Budget.'* Judge's comments: An engaging look at a lobbyist who fights for the little guy; an entertaining story on a political candidate, helping readers put the upcoming election into context; one of the better budgeting stories I've seen lately that helps readers understand how the county's budgeting process is going to cost them more money. The supporting sidebars help bring the message home.



Mary Kimm



Marilyn Campbell



Bonnie Hobbs

Bonnie Hobbs, The Fairfax Connection — Personal Service Writing, Third Place. *Affordable Housing Lack Can Lead to Hunger; 'Help Us, Will You Please?' City of Fairfax to Tackle Affordable Housing; Council 'Honored to Support this Project;' 'Dream Come True' for Lamb Center.* Judge's comments: Solid writing and good follow-through on the housing issues. The writer did

a good job of including income and free lunch data without breaking the flow of the story.

Mary Kimm, The McLean Connection — Editorial Writing, Third Place. *Trending in the Right Direction; Virginia Proves Elections Matter; More Affordable Housing Needed; Tragic Consequences; Deadly Medicaid Debacle.* Judge's comments: This submission consists of five well-articulated and well-grounded pieces tackling access to affordable housing and health care, a pair of closely related state and national issues with important local ramifications. The work combines passion with a persuasive factual underpinning.

Vienna & Oakton CONNECTION

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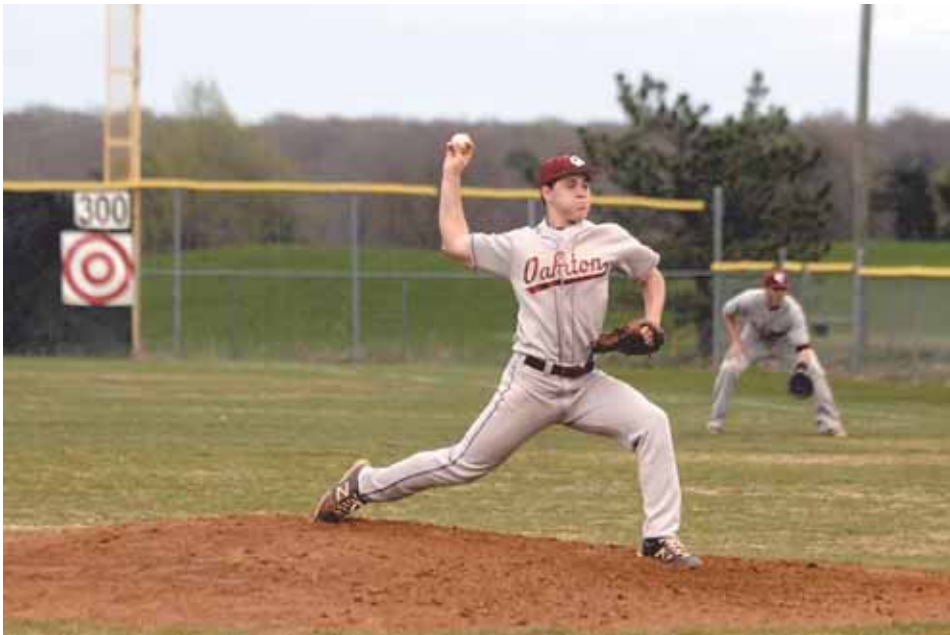
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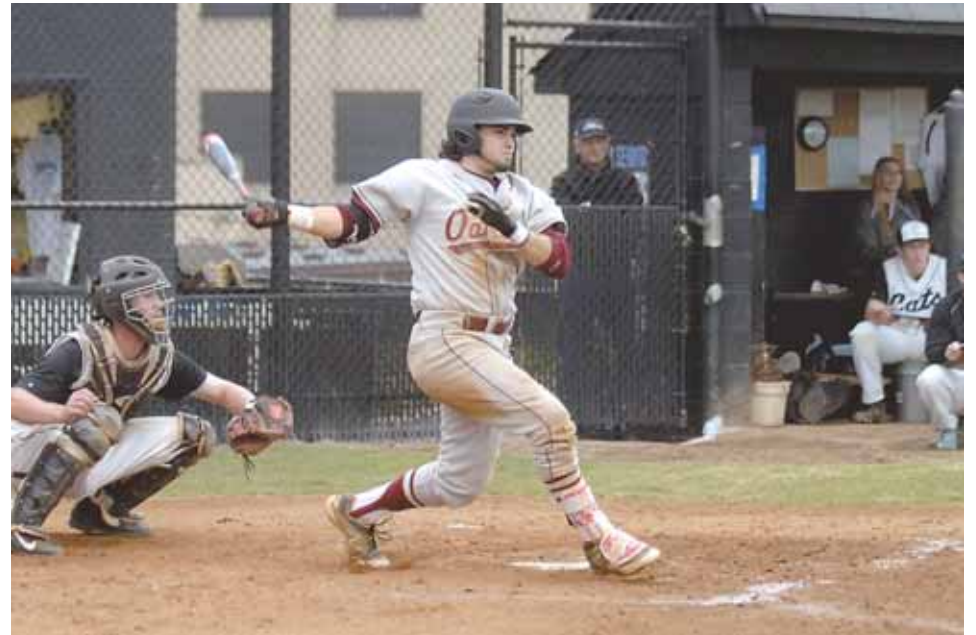
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Oakton senior Connor Jones pitched a complete game against Centreville on April 16, helping the Cougars win 8-2.



Oakton junior shortstop Joe Rizzo went 4-for-5 with two RBIs against Centreville on April 16.

Oakton Pitcher Jones Tosses Complete Game

Cougars improve to 9-0 with win over Centreville.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Oakton pitcher Connor Jones had to wait for his turn at the varsity level. As a junior, Jones was good enough to be a front-line starter for the Cougars. However, the right-hander was stuck behind a pair of senior standouts in Tommy Lopez, the Conference 5 Player of the Year, and RJ Gaines. With limited opportunities, Jones was relegated to bullpen duty and the role of No. 3 starter.

Now a senior, Jones entered the 2015 season with the opportunity to be “the man” for Oakton. With Lopez and Gaines having graduated, the Cougars were in need of a leader on the mound.

“If we didn’t have one of those guys, [Jones] would have been a starter, clearly,” Oakton head coach Justin Janis said. “We had three guys eat a lot of innings last year and he was one of them. That’s the nice part — he has experience. Coming into this year, we were hoping: ‘OK, now those two guys have graduated, you need to step up and be the bulldog, the No. 1 for us,’ and so far, so good.”

JONES EARNED A WIN and pitched his first complete game of the season against Centreville on April 16, allowing five hits while striking out four and walking none during an 8-2 Oakton victory at Centreville High School.

After Centreville’s Daniel Lachance tied the score at 2 with an RBI single in the bottom of the fourth inning, Jones retired the final 11 Wildcat batters.

Meanwhile, Oakton took a 4-2 lead in the sixth inning with an RBI double by sophomore catcher Ryan Davis and an RBI single



by junior shortstop Joe Rizzo.

The Cougars added four more runs in the top of the seventh.

“My change-up was definitely good,” said Jones, a third-year member of the Oakton varsity. “I consider it my best pitch. When it’s on, it’s pretty good. I like throwing it a lot in any count.”

The victory improved Oakton’s record to 9-0, including 3-0 in conference play.

“It’s been exciting,” Jones said of transitioning into the role of front-line starting pitcher. “It feels good to get some innings in, get a lot more big starts against teams like Centreville.”

Despite the graduation of its top two

pitchers and other impact players, the two-time defending Conference 5 champion Cougars have opened the 2015 season on fire. Oakton has wins over perennial contenders Lake Braddock and Madison, and entered Monday ranked No. 1 in the NOVA Baseball Magazine and Washington Post polls. The Cougars outscored their first three conference opponents — Westfield, Robinson, Centreville — 26-5.

“I was a little unsure,” said Janis, referring to what he expected out of the Cougars early in the season. “I knew we had some good players on the team, it was just a matter of how we then went out and performed. It’s still early, but to this point the

“My change-up was definitely good. I consider it my best pitch. When it’s on, it’s pretty good. I like throwing it a lot in any count.”

— Oakton senior Connor Jones

Head coach Justin Janis and the Oakton baseball team improved to 9-0 with a win over Centreville on April 16.

PHOTOS BY
CRAIG
STERBUTZEL/
THE CONNECTION

guys have played pretty well.”

Jones said Oakton can compete with any team.

“We know what we can do,” he said. “We know that we’re a good baseball team. If people think it or not, that’s their opinion, but we know we’re a good team and we know we can come out and compete with any team in the region and the state.”

While Jones has been a big part of Oakton’s success, sophomore Toma Shigaki-Than has also been a force on the mound, giving the Cougars two quality starting pitchers.

“Our sophomore pitcher Toma, he has stepped up huge for us,” Rizzo said. “... He just deals. He’s got great stuff.”

RIZZO, a third-year varsity player who is committed to the University of South Carolina, is the main threat in the Oakton lineup. Rizzo went 4-for-5 with a pair of RBIs against Centreville.

“He’s just a tireless worker,” Janis said. “He’s a baseball nut. Every single day is dedicated to making himself a better baseball player throughout the year.”

Davis had a double and two RBIs against Centreville. Senior Jagger James went 2-for-3.

Oakton was scheduled to face Chantilly on Tuesday, after The Connection’s deadline. The Cougars will travel to face Woodson at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 22.

CALENDAR

Send announcements to north@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

THROUGH SATURDAY/MAY 6

6 Artists: 5 Years. The Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. An exhibition and sale of artwork by local artists: Jackie Elwell, Elaine Floirmonde, Debbie Glakas, Lisa Neher, Sarah Swart and Barbara Wagner.

THURSDAY/APRIL 23

John McCutcheon. 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Folk expert with a vital, narrative voice performs classics like "Christmas in the Trenches" and "Hail to the Chief." \$25-28. 703-255-1900.

Arbor Day and Green Expo. 4 p.m. Peet's Coffee at 332 Maple Ave E, Vienna. The tree planting ceremony will be held in front of Peet's Coffee. After the Arbor Day ceremony, the public is invited to attend the 7th annual Vienna Green Expo at the Vienna Community Center from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. The Vienna Green Expo is a juried showcase of local and regional earth-friendly exhibitors educating the public on how to achieve a green lifestyle. Presentations and discussions for children and adults from 30 juried exhibits, includes information on energy efficiency, purchasing local organic products, creating green gardens, recycling options and more practical ideas to save money.

Introduction to Painting. 1-4 p.m. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant Street, NW, Vienna. If you have always wanted to learn how to paint, attend this class with Donna Grone and you will take home your own finished painting. All supplies provided by the Vienna Arts Society. No experience necessary. Free. Call to register: 703-319-3971.

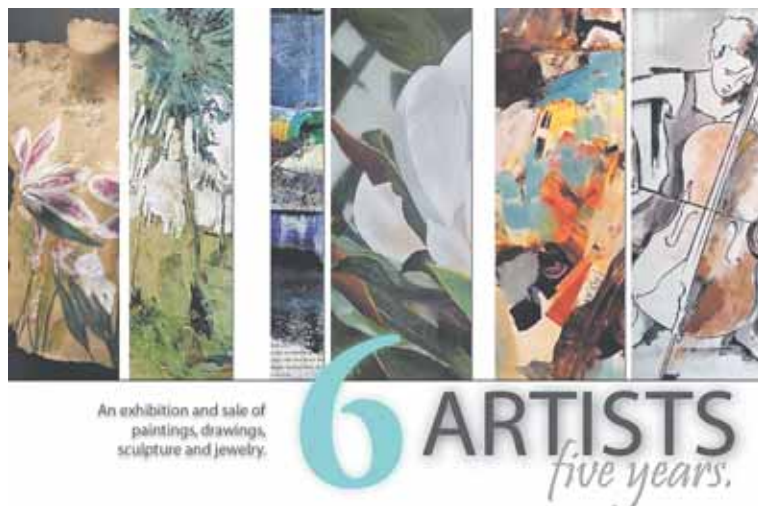
FRIDAY/APRIL 24

Sybarite5. 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. String quintet blurs boundaries with exacting musicianship and adventurous programming for a transfixing result. \$35. 703-255-1900.

SATURDAY/APRIL 25

Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Festival. 7:30 p.m. The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Melodic island music with uncommon tunings and finger picking by Hawaii's finest players. \$25-27. 703-255-1900.

Taste of Vienna. 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. 400 Center Street South, Vienna Volunteer Fire Department. to <http://www.tasteofvienna.org/>. <https://www.facebook.com/tasteofvienna?fref=ts>. Rain or shine.



6 Artists: 5 Years - an exhibition and sale of artwork by local artists: Jackie Elwell, Elaine Floirmonde, Debbie Glakas, Lisa Neher, Sarah Swart and Barbara Wagner. At The Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road NE, Vienna, until May 6.

Family Fishing Rodeo. Five 30 minute fishing time slots are available: 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 12 p.m. Wolftrap Creek in Wildwood Park, 700 Block of Follin Lane SE, Vienna. Participants in the event will be able to fish Wolftrap Creek, which will be stocked with hundreds of trout just for the occasion! Volunteers will be on hand to provide instruction, stream education and fish cleaning demonstrations during the event. The Fishing Rodeo is \$5 per fisherman and is open to Town residents only. Tickets are required to participate in this event and will be available at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street SE. Limit of six tickets per household. Bring your ID as proof of residency. Participants of the rodeo should bring fishing rod(s), a bucket, plastic bags and ice. Bait will be supplied.

SUNDAY/APRIL 26

"Walk On the Hill." 2-5 p.m. Free. Windover Heights. Experience a peaceful time as part of Vienna's Quasiquicentennial (125th) celebration by touring the historic district and meandering through any yard with a "Yard Open" sign. Programs throughout the event, including native habitat at Salsbury Spring and concerts by The Old Time Machine, Green Hedges School and Vienna Community Band. Roads closed to vehicles at 2 p.m. Refreshments will be served. www.historicviennainc.org.

11th Annual Vienna Elementary PTA "Run for Fun" 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk. 8 a.m. Vienna Elementary School, 128 Center Street South, Vienna. Bring

out the whole family to help support academic activities and improvements at Vienna Elementary School. The cost is \$25 before 4/19 and \$30 after. Children 14 and under are \$15. For more information and to register, please visit www.vienna5krun.org.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 29

Fashion Show to Benefit Kenyan Village. 8 p.m. Babalu, 8605 Westwood Center Drive, Vienna. Hair-fashion show sponsored by Tyson's Corner salon Noufal will benefit local nonprofit "Serve a Village," in support of village in Kenya. In the show, models will display hair styles created by award-winning Noufal Haircolor Studio stylists. Guests in attendance can win prizes through a raffle with a ticket cost of \$10.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 30-MAY 3

"Young Frankenstein." Thursday, April 30 at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, May 1 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, May 2 at 2 & 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, May 3 at 2 p.m. George C. Marshall High School is located at 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Come and be transported back to Transylvania with Dr. Frederick Von Frankenstein and a zany cast of characters. Tickets are \$15 for Adults, \$10 for students/seniors. Note: This production contains language and content that may not be suitable for young children. Visit <http://statementtheatre.org> for more details.

Can't Vote at McLean Day or Just Want a Head Start on Voting?

Vote by Absentee Ballot through May 13 at either:

McLean Community Center (MCC)
1234 Ingleside Avenue
McLean, VA 22101
(703) 790-0123/TTY 711
Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m. – 11 p.m.;
Sunday, noon to 6 p.m.

OR

Old Firehouse Teen Center (OFTC)
1440 Chain Bridge Road
McLean, VA 22101
(703) 448-8336/TTY 711
Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
(closed on weekends)

Requesting Absentee Ballots:

You can pick up absentee ballot packages and vote at MCC or OFTC. You can also request absentee ballot packages by email at elections@mcleancenter.org or by telephone at (703) 790-0123.

Returning Completed Applications and Ballots:

You can return your application and ballot to the front desk at either MCC or OFTC. Or, you can mail your application and ballot using the pre-addressed envelope enclosed in the absentee ballot package.

Absent voting ends promptly at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13.

Hand delivered applications and ballots must be received at either MCC or OFTC by that time. Absentee applications and ballots returned by mail must be received at MCC on May 13.

If you have questions:

Please call (703) 790-0123 or email elections@mcleancenter.org



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where better is expected.
-Thomas Fuller

PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes a modification to an existing facility with tip heights of 132 feet on a building at 1125 North Patrick Henry Drive in Arlington, VA (Kentucky Dr.). In accordance with federal regulation 47CFR 1.1307, the NEPA and the ACPH 36 CFR 800, parties interested in submitting comments or questions regarding any potential effects of the proposed facility on Historic Properties may do so by contacting Scott Horn (856-809-1202, scotthorn@acerassociates.com) at ACER Associates, LLC at 1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091.

PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T proposes a modification to an existing facility with tip heights of 66 feet on a building at 4241 Columbia Pike in Arlington, VA (Tanglewood). In accordance with federal regulation 47CFR 1.1307, the NEPA and the ACPH 36 CFR 800, parties interested in submitting comments or questions regarding any potential effects of the proposed facility on Historic Properties may do so by contacting Scott Horn (856-809-1202, scotthorn@acerassociates.com) at ACER Associates, LLC at 1012 Industrial Dr., West Berlin, NJ 08091.

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NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEES' SALE OF PROPERTY OWNED BY HUNTER MILL EAST, L.L.C.

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SALE TO BE HELD AT THE FAIFAX COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

MAY 7, 2015, AT 10:00 A.M.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust and Security Agreement dated May 5, 2008, and recorded May 5, 2008 in Deed Book 19918 at Page 1894, as amended by a certain Amendment to Deed of Trust and Security Agreement dated October 14, 2009, and recorded October 15, 2009 in Deed Book 20741 at Page 0680, each among the land records of Fairfax County, Virginia (collectively the "Deed of Trust"), made by HUNTER MILL EAST, L.L.C., a Virginia limited liability company, now securing CATJEN LLC, a Virginia limited liability company (the "Noteholder"), default having occurred in the payment of the debt secured thereby, and being instructed to do so by the Noteholder, the undersigned Substitute Trustees will offer for sale the property described below at public auction by the main entrance to the Fairfax County Circuit Court, located at 4110 Chain Bridge Rd, Fairfax, VA 22030 on May 7, 2015, beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The real property encumbered by the Deed of Trust that will be offered for sale by the Substitute Trustees is commonly known as 1623 Crowell Road (Tax Identification Number: 0184-08-0003), 1627 Crowell Road (Tax Identification Number: 0184-08-0002), 1631 Crowell Road (Tax Identification Number: 0184-08-0001A), 1627 Hunter Mill Road (Tax Identification Number: 0184-01-0023), and an adjacent parcel lacking a street address (Tax Identification Number: 0184-01-0026B), all located in Vienna, Fairfax County, Virginia, as more particularly described in the Deed of Trust, and all improvements, fixtures, easements and appurtenances thereto (the "Real Property"). The Real Property will be sold together with the interest of the Noteholder, if any, in the following described personal property at the direction of the Noteholder as secured party thereof, as permitted by Section 8.9A of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended (the "Personal Property"): Improvements, Fixtures and Personalty, and any and all other personal property and any proceeds thereof as more particularly described in the Deed of Trust (the "Personal Property"). The above described Real Property and Personal Property are collectively referred to as the "Property."

TERMS OF SALE

ALL CASH. The property will be offered for sale "AS IS, WHERE IS" and will be conveyed by Substitute Trustees' Deed (the "Substitute Trustees' Deed") subject to all encumbrances, rights, reservations, rights of first refusal, conveyances, conditions, easements, restrictions, and all recorded and unrecorded liens, if any, having priority over and being superior to the Deed of Trust, as they may lawfully affect the property. Personal Property, if any, shall be conveyed without warranty by a Secured Party Bill of Sale.

The Substitute Trustees and the Beneficiary disclaim all warranties of any kind, either express or implied for the property, including without limitation, any warranty relating to the zoning, condition of the soil, extent of construction, materials, habitability, environmental condition, compliance with applicable laws, fitness for a particular purpose and merchantability. The risk of loss or damage to the property shall be borne by the successful bidder from and after the date and time of the sale. Obtaining possession of the property shall be the sole responsibility of the successful bidder (the "Purchaser"). A bidder's deposit of \$250,000.00 (the "Deposit") by certified or cashier's check shall be required by the Substitute Trustees for such bid to be accepted. The Substitute Trustees reserve the right to prequalify any bidder prior to the sale and/or waive the requirement of the Deposit. Immediately after the sale, the successful bidder shall execute and deliver a memorandum of sale with the Substitute Trustees, copies of which shall be available for inspection immediately prior to the sale, and shall deliver to the Substitute Trustees the Deposit and the memorandum of sale. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid by the Purchaser. Settlement shall occur within thirty (30) days after the sale date, TIME BEING OF THE ESSENCE with regard to the Purchaser's obligation. Settlement shall take place at the offices of Venable LLP, 8010 Towers Crescent Drive, Suite 300, Tysons Corner, Virginia 22182 or other mutually agreed location. Purchaser shall also pay all past due real estate taxes, rollback taxes, water rents, water permit renewal fees (if any) or other municipal liens, charges and assessments, together with penalties and interest due thereon. The Purchaser shall also pay all settlement fees, title examination charges, title charges and title insurance premiums, all recording costs (including the state grantor's tax and all state and county recordation fees, clerk's filing fees, congestion relief fees and transfer fees and taxes), auctioneer's fees and/or bid premiums, and reasonable attorneys' fees and disbursements incurred in the preparation of the deed of conveyance and other settlement documentation. The Purchaser shall be required to sign an agreement at settlement waiving any cause of action Purchaser may have against the Substitute Trustees, and/or the Beneficiary for any condition with respect to the property that may not be in compliance with any federal, state or local law, regulation or ruling including, without limitation, any law, regulation and ruling relating to environmental contamination or hazardous wastes. Such agreement shall also provide that if notwithstanding such agreement, a court of competent jurisdiction should permit such a claim to be made, such agreement shall serve as the overwhelming primary factor in any equitable apportionment of response costs or other liability. Nothing herein shall release, waive or preclude any claims the Purchaser may have against any person in possession or control of the property. If any Purchaser fails for any reason to complete settlement as provided above, the Deposit shall be forfeited and applied to the costs of the sale, including Trustees' fees, and the balance, if any, shall be delivered to the Beneficiary to be applied by the Beneficiary against the indebtedness secured by and other amounts due under the Deed of Trust in accordance with the Deed of Trust or applicable law or otherwise as the Beneficiary shall elect. There shall be no refunds. Such forfeiture shall not limit any rights or remedies of the Substitute Trustees or the Beneficiary with respect to any such default. If the property is resold, such re-sale shall be at the risk and the cost of the defaulting bidder, and the defaulting bidder shall be liable for any deficiency between its bid and the successful bid at the re-sale as well as the costs of conducting such re-sale. Immediately upon conveyance by the Substitute Trustees of the Property, all duties, liabilities and obligations of the Substitute Trustees, if any, with respect to the Property so conveyed shall be extinguished, except as otherwise provided by applicable law.

/s/ Henry F. Brandenstein, Jr., Substitute Trustee
/s/ Patrick W. Lincoln, Substitute Trustee
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21 Announcements

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NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE

American Tandoor Tysons Corner, LLC trading as American Tandoor, G021U Tysons Corner Center, McLean, VA 22102. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer On and Off & Mixed Beverage Restaurant (seating capacity over 150) license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Karan Singh, Manager
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

ABC LICENSE

Robinson Hill LT, Inc. trading as Lebanese Taverna Express, 2401 Smith Blvd Reagan National Airport Terminal BC Space BC-20A, Arlington, VA 22202. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Beer and Wine On Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Robinson Hill LT, Inc.
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

ABC LICENSE

Big Mooks BBQ, LLC trading as Mookies, BBQ, 1141 Walker Rd. Great Falls, VA 22066. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Mixed Beverage Caterer Limited license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Brian Varani, member
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

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2015 Spring Real Estate & New Homes

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Spring Real Estate & New Homes

Staged to Sell

Real estate agents give the lowdown on getting your home ready for the market.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When a Burke family hired E. Diane Neustrand to sell their home, she did her standard walk-through of the house to assess it, but when she reached the dining room, she stopped cold.

"It was painted with three different shades of orange and accessorized with black, white and gold furniture," said Neustrand, a real estate agent with Long and Foster Real Estate, Inc. in Burke, Fairfax Station and Clifton.

First on Neustrand's chopping block: a pair of zebra print chairs. The boisterous wall colors were next.

"It wasn't harmonious at all," said Neustrand, who also works as a professional home stager. "We had to calm that down because orange is not a color that sells well. You want neutrals in paint and furniture, so potential buyers can visualize their own items in your home."

Residential real estate staging, the practice of preparing a home to go on the market for sale by making it aesthetically appealing, is credited with giving homes an advantage over the competition.

Staging can range from rearranging furniture, decluttering and painting the walls to furnishing a home in which the seller no



PHOTO BY ROBERT WHETZEL

Realtors say professionally staged homes spend less time on the market.

longer resides.

The National Association of Realtors' 2015 Investment & Home Buyers Survey showed that staging can have a positive impact on the number of days a home sits on the market and the amount of money potential buyers a willing offer for the home.

"STAGED HOMES traditionally present themselves better than the competition by being clean, clutter-free and ready to show to prospective buyers," said Mona Bekheet, a real estate agent with McEneaney Associates, Inc. in McLean. "Home staging is decluttering, depersonalizing and preparing a seller's home to look like a model

home so the potential buyers can see themselves living in the home."

The survey showed that 49 percent of agents say most buyers are affected by home staging, while a 2013 study by the Real Estate Staging Association showed staged homes sold 83 percent sooner than houses that weren't staged.

Realtors also believe buyers usually offer a 1-5 percent increase on the value of a staged home.

"Staged homes take less time on the market and they sell at the best price," said Bekheet. "Buyers view them as well cared for properties and appraisers are more likely to appraise staged homes at a full or higher value."

That increase can offset the expense of having a home professionally staged. Services, including consultations and furniture rental, can cost \$250 to \$2,000. Neustrand uses as many of the homeowners' possessions as she can to minimize out-of-pocket expenses.

"Since staging gives a home a clean, fresh, current look, it makes a home more attractive to buyers," said Betsy Schuman Dodek of Washington Fine Properties in Potomac, Md.

However, real estate agents say initiating conversations with homeowners about their homes and suggesting changes must be

SEE STAGED, PAGE 7

Optimism for 2015 Real Estate Market

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

After what seemed to be an endless winter, spring has finally come calling, signaling the start of the year's first real estate high season. Homes trade hands all year long, but spring is often for buyers, seller, agents, brokers and lenders like those weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas; buyers at full speed searching out the best bargains and sellers looking to move their wares without having to resort to price-slashing sales tactics.

So far, area real-estate experts and the data from sources like the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR), Movoto

Real Estate, and SmartCharts (powered by RealEstate Business Intelligence with data supplied from the MLS listing service) are all aligned in their assessment of the outlook for the 2015 market in Northern Virginia. Compared to a lackluster 2014 after a strong 2013, there's reason for optimism.

Veronica Seva-Gonzalez, NVAR board member and Realtor with Compass Real Estate, noted that the spring weather and positive housing market news had arrived simultaneously. "It's great to see how all of the numbers are up from last year and also from the beginning of this year," she said.

Across the board, the numbers do look positive. Combined data collected for the counties of Fairfax and Arlington, the cities

of Alexandria, Falls Church and Fairfax and the towns of Vienna, Herndon and Clifton, show a first quarter increase of total units sold of just over 9 percent, with 3,657 units sold in 2015 compared to 3,352 the prior year. For the same period and for the same localities, days on the market (DOM) per unit actually rose in 2015 and the average ratio of sales price to list price showed marginal slippage, but Realtors and market analysts see the significant improvements in March 2015 numbers vs. March 2014 figures as an indicator of a healthy selling season ahead.

The March 2015 increases were seen in

SEE OUTLOOK, PAGE 6

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February, 2015 Top Sales in Vienna, Oakton, Reston and Herndon



2 900 Park Street SE, Vienna — \$1,869,500



11 12616 Winter Wren Court, Herndon — \$1,120,000



13 1315 Dasher Lane, Reston — \$893,000



1 2740 Stream Vista Court, Oakton — \$2,234,220



3 537 Lincoln Street NW, Vienna — \$1,610,000



12 11990 Market Street #1315, Reston — \$900,000



4 2407 Oakmont Court, Oakton — \$1,550,000



14 2880 Franklin Oaks Drive, Herndon — \$1,120,000

Address	BR	FB	HB	...	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 2740 STREAM VISTA CT	1	1	0	.....	OAKTON	\$2,234,220	Other	0.00	22124	LITTLE DIFFICULT FARMS	02/27/15
2 900 PARK ST SE	5	5	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,869,500	Detached	0.48	22180	ONONDIO	02/27/15
3 537 LINCOLN ST NW	5	5	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,610,000	Detached	0.61	22180	MALCOLM HEIGHTS	02/20/15
4 2407 OAKMONT CT	5	5	2	.....	OAKTON	\$1,550,000	Detached	1.74	22124	OAKMONT	02/05/15
5 224 TAPAWINGO RD SE	6	6	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,448,000	Detached	0.38	22180	VIENNA WOODS	02/27/15
6 1005 LYNN ST SW	6	5	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,370,005	Detached	0.29	22180	VIENNA WOODS	02/17/15
7 4 CHARLES CIR SW	5	5	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,369,900	Detached	0.25	22180	VIENNA WOODS	02/26/15
8 402 SURREY LN SE	5	4	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,317,500	Detached	0.27	22180	SURREY ESTATES	02/18/15
9 1211 KELLEY ST SW	5	4	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,270,000	Detached	0.23	22180	VIENNA WOODS	02/27/15
10 1725 BEULAH RD	5	5	1	.....	VIENNA	\$1,250,000	Detached	0.71	22182	CHAPEL HILL	02/23/15
11 12616 WINTER WREN CT	5	4	1	.....	HERNDON	\$1,120,000	Detached	0.20	20171	RESERVE AT STONE HILL	02/12/15
12 11990 MARKET ST #1315	3	2	0	.....	RESTON	\$900,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors	.....	20190	MIDTOWN	02/06/15
13 1315 DASHER LN	6	4	1	.....	RESTON	\$893,000	Detached	0.36	20190	HUNT AT LAKE FAIRFAX	02/26/15
14 2880 FRANKLIN OAKS DR	5	3	1	.....	HERNDON	\$884,500	Detached	0.36	20171	FRANKLIN OAKS	02/26/15
15 765 GRACE ST	5	4	1	.....	HERNDON	\$850,000	Detached	0.55	20170	AZALEA WOODS	02/12/15
16 1830 FOUNTAIN DR #904	3	3	0	RESTON	\$825,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors	20190	PARAMOUNT	02/23/15

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On Tour: Aging in Place Renovation

BY JOHN BYRD

A Vienna whole house remodel that incorporates an Aging-In-Place solution will be featured in the Parade of Homes/ Remodeled Home Tour April 25-April 26.

The circa-1970s split-level owned by Andre and Katy Hollis was substantially repurposed and renovated by Sun Design Remodeling of Burke.

"I decided that I really liked our neighborhood and that with changes we could stay in the house indefinitely," Katy Hollis said.

Mindy Mitchell, the Certified Aging-In-Place Specialist (CAPS) at Sun Design Remodeling who executed the Hollis design solution, says such inquiries have become more common in recent years.

After considering options, the Hollis family settled on several revisions: a spacious first floor bedroom; a gourmet kitchen; a better entertainment plan; and a guest suite with dedicated bath.

"I thought we probably had enough

square footage to achieve what we wanted," Katy Hollis said, "but there were lots of functional problems, and we weren't sure how to address them." The challenge was reconfiguring adequate existing space into a better plan serving long term horizons.

Katy wanted both a guest suite and a larger, more private master bedroom suite.

The former master bedroom suite now becomes spacious guest quarters. A corner bedroom has been transformed into a second upstairs bathroom.

Mitchell and team re-deployed 300 square feet on the rear of the first level for a very private master bedroom suite that includes a master bath and generous walk-in closets.

A home office behind glass-facing French doors opens directly into the redecorated living room.

"It's a terrific solution in every detail," Hollis said. "And knowing we've already made some solid decisions about the future has really given me peace of mind."

Call 703-425-5588 or
www.SunDesignInc.com.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

A whole house aging-in-place solution by Sun Design Remodeling will be featured in the Parade of Homes' Remodeled Homes Tour, April 25 and April 26. The firm executed a top-to-bottom makeover to a circa 1970s split-level, creating a first level master suite and a gourmet kitchen.

Trendy Bathroom Transformations

Designers share the hottest ideas in lavatory design.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Imagine stepping into a resort inside the comfort of your own home. Contemporary, spa-like bathrooms with clean lines and features such as floating vanities, open shelving, innovative storage and low-maintenance materials are on trend this year in bathroom remodeling projects.

When the main level master bathroom in a 1970s-era Reston home got a major facelift earlier this year, Dean Turner, of Evolution Design & Build in Reston was tasked with addressing structural issues as well updating the entire space.

"This bathroom had a sunken tub and shower combination that was leaking into the basement below," said Turner. "They wanted me to solve their water problems ... update their bathroom, and they were very interested in a floating vanity."

The floating, walnut piece was made by a local cabinetmaker and hovers 12 inches above the floor, and Turner was able to give the homeowners an abundance of storage by incorporating cabinetry into the vanity. A simple touch of the fingertip opens and closes its drawers and doors, eliminating the need for visible hardware. Motion detecting, LED lighting under the vanity is another convenience.

Turner's team removed the existing wall



PHOTO COURTESY OF NICELY DONE KITCHENS AND BATHS

Low maintenance porcelain tile accented with river rock stone are used in this Burke bathroom.

and floor tile, replacing it with scratch- and stain-resistant porcelain tile that has the appearance of natural stone, while the wall tiles were made in the image of natural

wood.

"When you look at it," said Turner. "It looks just like hardwood flooring on the wall."

AFTER MOVING into a retirement community, an empty-nester couple decided to overhaul the builder-grade bathroom that came with their home. They enlisted the help of Stephanie Brick, of Nicely Done Kitchens and Baths in Springfield, who designed a contemporary space.

"The homeowners were looking for something that was calming and had a spa-like energy," said Brick. "They also wanted more storage, especially open storage for linens and displaying items."

Brick and the Nicely team installed cabinetry with open shelving over the toilet. The vanity has a quartz countertop with veins of blue and turquoise that bears a close resemblance to marble. "Those colors were carried through in an accent piece in the shower," said Brick.

The porcelain tile floor has a marble-like appearance.

"You get the beautiful look of marble, but you don't have the maintenance or the cost," said Brick. "The new bathroom has a much more spa-like aesthetic. It was very bland and vanilla and it needed a face lift."

When the owners of a contemporary home in Burke decided to remodel their master bathroom so that it matched the style of the rest of the house, they called on designer Cathy Gross, also of Nicely. She used porcelain tile on the walls accented with river rock stone, a material that she also used on the bathroom floor.

"They wanted to continue the calm, zen, contemporary feel in the remodel of their master bath," said Gross, who also designed the home's kitchen five years prior.

More designs in the unabridged story at www.connectionnewspapers.com

Outlook Optimistic for Local 2015 Real Estate Market

FROM PAGE 3

all sectors of the residential market, with “attached” homes like townhouses leading the way with a 3.6 percent uptick in average sales price. Condominiums came in at second place, with a 1.8 percent increase in the month compared to 2014. Single-family homes came in last for the March 2015 totals, but still better than the prior year by 0.7 percent.

Greatly increased inventory versus last year could be one factor in the more modest single-family home price increases. In 2015, 3,165 new properties came onto the market during the month, while only 2,656 were put on the books during that month last year. A total of 3,381 units were available to buyers in March this year compared to 3,011 last year.

“In some areas and some price ranges, there is definitely more choice,” said Reston Long and Foster Realtor Anita Lasansky. “Sellers are starting to get more confident.”

Realtor Jennifer Boyce, Long and Foster Gold Team, also noted that some buyers were starting to “come out from under,” having held on during the worst of the economic downturn. “Equities are looking stronger, so they can get back in, selling or buying.”

The data does vary around the region. Not all areas experienced an increase in sales prices in the month-to-month comparison. Falls Church City, for example, posted an increase in the numbers of units sold, but a 19.12 percent decrease in median sales price.

Arlington County, on the other hand, saw the largest increase in the March 2015 vs. March 2014 side-by-side; with 24.43 percent more closed sales and a 10.68 percent increase in the median sales price.

Janet Gresh of the Gresh Group in McLean says that her experience so far this year is in line with those numbers. “Arlington is definitely hot right now, close in and enough quality properties that you see serious competition.”

Lasansky gave the numbers she is seeing for Reston a “thumbs up,” as well. “We’re up about 15 percent in the first quarter over last year and about 5 percent up in median sales price.”

In the City of Alexandria, the median sales price rose by more than 10 percent in March on an increase of 14.37 percent in closed sales.

Fairfax County and Fairfax City both saw more moderate improvements in median sales prices at 2.79 percent and 2.00 percent respectively. For Fairfax City, the positive takeaway from the March figures is that the median sales price rose despite a drop in total closed sales of more than 50 percent compared to last year.

While all of the data provided is considered preliminary and still subject to revision, the numbers available to date suggest a good start to the year – and barring the unforeseen negative impact – a positive 2015 real estate market.



IMAGE COURTESY OF NVAR

Plus-column numbers on the books, the collective optimism of many of the area’s top real estate professionals, and respected organizations like the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors adding that “2015 may be different because of its more sustainable, positive market direction,” all offer signs that the real estate market in the region is looking at a healthy year. Any number of factors, including the ever-present threat of the Federal Reserve raising interest rates sometime this year, could stall or even reverse the positive trends.

Whatever comes along, realtors like Kathleen Quintarelli, Weichert Realtors, Burke, think we will deal with it. “People have kind of stopped believing that the rates will go up again and when they do it will be a shock and have its impact, but we will adjust to that new norm, as well.”

With the latest figures in hand, we asked some of our area’s top real estate professionals for their perspectives, and to offer some expert advice to buyers and sellers alike.

❖ **Virgil Frizzell, Ph.D., MBA**, realtor Long and Foster Reston: “I think the March housing statistics indicate a healthier spring housing market in the footprint of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors than for the rest of the country. The con-

tinuing improvements ... are good for both homebuyers and home sellers and likely indicate a more balanced market. Buyers should benefit from increasing inventory, still low mortgage [rates] and easing credit standards. The year-over-year increase in housing units sold and modestly rising median prices may embolden sellers.” (Frizzell is the 2015 NVAR Chairman-Elect.)

❖ **Mary Bayat**, owner of Bayat Realty in Alexandria and 2015 NVAR Chair: “Finally, many buyers who had distressed house sales years ago could have enough repaired credit to qualify for a new loan. They will get more house for their money now than if they wait. We expect the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates later this year. Another local indicator is that active listings have risen more than 25 percent.”

❖ **Jennifer Boyce**, Long and Foster Gold Team Burke/Fairfax Station/Clifton: “Don’t price too aggressively in late spring or early summer is my advice. Homes that are well priced and in good condition will sell. The \$500,000-\$800,000 homes are in high demand. Homes that are priced over \$1 million face a smaller and sometimes more exacting buyer base, not willing to compromise much and expecting top quality for their money.”

❖ **Will Farnam**, Long and Foster Falls Church: “I think the data so far for this year would be considered bright - not a boom - but strong. It’s a market that’s good for good properties, not good for just anything. There’s enough choice. One good sign is the traffic at Open Houses. The last two weekends I have had house-fulls, quite different from last year. Smaller down payments on many FHA and VA loans is helping, but despite some lending requirement easing, I find that buyers with credit problems are still struggling to get a loan.”

❖ **Janet Gresh**, The Gresh Group@Keller Williams: “The market is looking good, but it is still a bit more of an art than a science at times. If an under-\$1 million home is priced right, I am starting to see multiple offers, especially in Arlington. ... In some of these areas, if the house doesn’t sell or have offers in the first two weekends, it could be a sign of trouble and time to re-evaluate. ... Don’t overprice and you may end up getting more than you ask for. I have experienced that recently.”

❖ **Anita Lasansky**, Long and Foster Reston: “It’s looking good, strong numbers over last year for Reston especially, what some call the ‘Silicon Valley of the East.’ Some homes are selling now in days, not weeks, if they are well-priced with updated kitchens and bathrooms. Those homes take top dollar and for the first time in years I am seeing multiple offers on those properties. The properties over \$1.2 million are still sitting. Sellers should also be cautioned not to overprice based on the addition of the Metro Silver Line. I see that a lot of people are riding it, but it hasn’t had that much of an impact on house prices in the area, at least not yet, but some sellers are factoring in 5-10 percent in their list price based on the Metro.

❖ **Kathleen Quintarelli**, Weichert Realtors, Burke: “I’m excited. 2015 looks slightly better already. Open Houses are really packed. With interest rates staying so low, more choice, the easing up on credit requirements, and fewer short sales and foreclosures - all those factors are really giving the market energy. There’s just not enough inventory in some categories, especially anything around \$350k - \$450k. Anything in good condition in that price range can go in the first week. My advice to sellers: Price well, prepare your home and stage it. And have your photographs taken by a professional. If the potential buyer comes in and says “Wow! This place looks a lot better than the pictures on the internet!” then your agent - or you - have done something wrong. Sellers should be ready to buy, even the same day you see the house you want. That means pre-approval and preferably by a local lender that we can work with quickly, especially if you’re faced with multiple offers or counters.

Staged to Sell

FROM PAGE 3

handled delicately.

"You don't want to hurt someone's feelings by telling them that they need to move items or get rid of items like the wrong artwork or too much furniture," said Maria Smith of Arlington Realty in Arlington. "But the homeowner's objective should be to sell the home."

Staging helps when a home is too cluttered, or even if a house is already empty. It's also a good idea "for those with dated, mismatched furniture or too many pieces in a room," said Realtor Marsha Schuman of Washington Fine Properties. "For homes that don't have a traditional floor plan, staging helps a buyer see how the rooms can be laid out."

"Even if you have a large home, if your closets are over-stuffed or if you have too much furniture, a prospective buyer can't get a sense of the space and dimension of a room or visualize themselves in the home," said E.J. Stone, a real estate agent with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Alexandria.

REMOVING ULTRA-PERSONAL ITEMS like family pictures or bills is another part of the staging process.

"You want to get a potential buyer to envision their things in the home," said Stone. "Neutrals can help with that. Those are things that a home stager can suggest."

"Staged homes traditionally present themselves better than the competition by being clean, clutter-free and ready to show to prospective buyers."

— **Mona Bekheet, McEneaney Associates, Inc., in McLean**

model home, like no one lives there," said Neustrand. "The bathroom counters should not have products or clutter. There should not be trash in the garbage can."

Less is often more in the home staging game, say Realtors. "I tell my clients to take stuff off the walls, rent a storage space and take all the stuff you don't need and put it into a storage unit, so it opens up more space," said Michael Richter, real estate agent for residential preferred properties at the Richter Group in Burke.

Realtors rank the living room as the number one room to stage, followed by the kitchen. Also in the top five rooms are the master bedroom, dining room and the bathroom.

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Winners of Awards in the 2014 Virginia Press Association and Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association Editorial Contests

First Place Winners

Steven G. Artley, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Editorial Cartoon. Judge's comments: Smart and insightful.

Bonnie Hobbs, *Centre View* – Feature Series or Continuing Story. Judge's comments: Clear and concise writing with a good flow. Journalist captured the emotion of the event and engaged the reader well.

Michael Lee Pope, *Mount Vernon Gazette* – Business and Financial Writing. Judge's comments: First-rate, data-driven reporting and analysis on important issues. Fine work.

Michael Lee Pope, *McLean Connection* – Health, Science and Environmental Writing. Judge's comments: Michael Lee Pope's stories on driving habits, cesarean deliveries and the Affordable Care Act are well-researched, clearly written and engaging. His use of real-live people high up in his stories to illustrate his findings makes for very compelling material. He seems quite capable of turning some of these topics into a book. If he does, I'll read it.

Jon Roetman, *Vienna/Oakton Connection* – Sports Writing Portfolio. Judge's comments: Strong and clear writing and excellent storytelling helps game stories feel more like features. Excellent work.

Victoria Ross, *Oak Hill/Herndon Connection* – Government Writing. Judge's comments: An engaging look at a lobbyist who fights for the little guy; an entertaining story on a political candidate, helping readers put the upcoming election into context; one of the better budgeting stories I've seen lately that helps readers understand how the county's budgeting process is going to cost them more money. The supporting sidebars help bring the message home.

Jeanne Theismann, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Personal Service Writing, Obituaries. Judge's comments: These stories provide a glimpse inside the lives of people who have played significant roles in their communities. The writing is engaging and well-researched. And the stories serve as an example to others of how to live a life of purpose.

Jeanne Theismann, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Column Writing, Entertainment. Judge's comments: Ms. Theismann's entertainment columns demonstrate a breadth of knowledge that gives her opinions a ring of authority and authenticity.



Steve Artley



Bonnie Hobbs



Michael Lee Pope



Jon Roetman



Victoria Ross



Jeanne Theismann



Jean Card



Steve Hibbard



Louise Krafft



Joan Brady



Veronica Bruno



Vernon Miles



Marilyn Campbell



Mary Kimm



Steven Mauren



Geovani Flores



Laurence Foong



Renee Ruggles



Ken Moore

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Though I live nowhere near her area, I found it easy to be influenced by her writing and to wish that I had the opportunity to attend some of the events she talked about. All three examples are nicely written.

Jean Card, Jeanne Theismann, Steve Hibbard, Louise Krafft and Kara Coleman, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Lifestyle or Entertainment Pages. Judge's comments: Good balance. Front page article has good detail and info.

Second Place Winners

Joan Brady, *Great Falls Connection* – Column Writing.

Veronica Bruno, *Mount Vernon Gazette* – Feature Story Writing.

Jean Card, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Page Design.

Vernon Miles, *Arlington Connection* – Breaking News Writing.

Jeanne Theismann, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Headline Writing.

Third Place Winners

Steven G. Artley, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Editorial Cartoon.

Marilyn Campbell, *Chantilly Connection* – Health, Science and Environmental Writing.

Bonnie Hobbs, *Fairfax Connection* – Personal Service Writing.

Mary Kimm, *McLean Connection* – Editorial Writing.

Michael Lee Pope, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Public Safety Writing.

Steven Mauren, Mary Kimm, Steve Artley, Geovani Flores and Laurence Foong, *Alexandria Gazette Packet* – Editorial Pages.

Jean Card, Renee Ruggles and Laurence Foong, *Mount Vernon Gazette* – Informational Graphics.

The *Potomac Almanac* participates in the Maryland-Delaware-DC Press Association, and while 2014 award-winners there will not be fully announced until May 1, 2015, we do know that Ken Moore and Marilyn Campbell are winners.

