

WELLBEING

PAGE 10

**The City's First
24-Hour Park**

NEWS, PAGE 3

Children have fun playing
in Old Town Square's
splash pad during the
opening festivities on
Saturday, May 2.

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Dignitaries jubilantly hold pieces of the ribbon they just cut to open Old Town Square.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Hundreds gathered in Old Town Square for its opening festivities.

Introducing the City's First, 24-Hour Park

**Old Town Square
open for business
and fun.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

It wasn't just Saturday morning's ribbon-cutting that signaled the official opening of the City of Fairfax's Old Town Square. It was all the people who gathered there, the children playing in the splash pad and the friends and neighbors enjoying themselves afterward at the Derby-Q festival.

And that's the whole point of the City's new park at the corner of University Drive and North Street – it's a place for people to get together, relax and have fun.

Hundreds flocked there for the May 2 opening festivities. Besides Mayor Scott Silverthorne and the City Council members, also attending were Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), Del. David Bulova (D-37), Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, County Clerk of the Court John Frey, City Manager Bob Sisson, Fairfax City School Board members Tobey Sorenson and Jon Buttram, and former City Councilmen Dan Drummond and Steve Stombres.

"What a great morning in the City of Fairfax," said Silverthorne at the outset. "Welcome to the official opening of Old Town Square."

Adjacent to the historic Old Town Hall in the heart of downtown Fairfax, the \$4 million park boasts modern, new features while honoring the City's rich history. It includes the Kitty Pozer and Mary McCandlish Memorial gardens, plus the old-fashioned clock that the Rotary Club of Fairfax donated to the City 10 years ago.

Yet it also contains a cascading water feature, a splash pad with 15 water jets – each with a full spectrum of colors, a two-tiered



(From left) are Gerry Connolly, City Councilman Jeff Greenfield, John Frey and Stacey Kincaid.

plaza and a pergola to frame live entertainment performances and other events. And come August, it'll offer free Wi-Fi, too.

As part of the Council that green-lighted this project, Drummond and Stombres got a sneak peek at it Friday night, along with Silverthorne and the current Council members. And, said Silverthorne, "The first kids in the park last night were the Drummond and Stombres kids."

LONG AGO, this spot was the site of an old, two-story building that housed the C&P telephone company. Later on, Weight Watchers took it over. But eventually, the building was torn down and that area was turned into a parking lot.

Time passed, and the City condemned the site and bought it. And 15 years ago, when Fairfax's Open Space Committee looked at parcels all over the City for future parks, this was one of them.

"The residents, 2-1, said they wanted more open space, and we figured out a way to purchase this," said Silverthorne. "Former Mayor Rob Lederer was a big help; we couldn't have done this without his leadership." He also praised Revenue Commissioner Page Johnson and Treasurer Tom Scibilia for their efforts.

Silverthorne further thanked the project managers, David Summers and Christina Alexander, for their hard work on Old Town Square and for ensuring that it was finished on time. Also instrumental, he said, were four key boards and commissions – the Commission on the Arts, Historic Fairfax City Inc., the Community Appearance Committee and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB).

"It's excellent to see this park completed," said PRAB Chairman Jon Stehle. "It really ties together the downtown."

Brian Knapp, the former longtime PRAB

chairman, also addressed the crowd, calling it a wonderful day "to be a lover of parks in the City of Fairfax. Our mayors have embraced the power of volunteers to help define the future of this city, and the mayors and Council members had the courage and fortitude to make this happen. It was the right decision to put this park here; congratulations to the City of Fairfax and its citizens."

Silverthorne said how excited he is about "the beauty and natural setting of this park, right in the heart of our Historic District. Think about the weddings, concerts and festivals [it can host]. And I look forward to seeing you all at our many events here."

Besides that, he continued, "It'll be the City's first, 24-hour park, and it'll be well-lit and safe. And it'll have free Wi-Fi so you can get a coffee and bring it over here with your laptop. We're keeping Fairfax moving forward; thanks for being part of this great celebration today."

THEN CAME the ribbon-cutting, followed by the activation of the splash pad's water jets. Children of all ages had a ball running through the water, and so did State Sen. Petersen – who was one of the first to enjoy it. Afterward, Sisson said, "We're just so pleased to be able to have a place of beauty from what it was in the past. It'll be a real community asset."

Also there was former City Councilwoman Patrice Winter. In 2007, she and fellow PRAB members helped develop the vision for Old Town Square. She also noted how instrumental were Knapp, as well as former City Councilwoman Joan Cross, in this park's planning stages and in helping it get through the Council.

"It's wonderful to see the reality of it," said Winter. "But it took persistence, patience and time – and following a passion. And I think it'll be a catalyst for further development and redevelopment of the downtown area."

City Council Adopts FY 2016 Budget Real-estate tax rate will rise slightly.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Last week's City Council meeting often seemed more like a work session, with members still haggling about the real-estate tax rate. But after much discussion, some failed motions and several votes, they finally came to a consensus.

They officially adopted the City of Fairfax budget for FY 2016 and set the real-estate tax rate at \$1.052 per \$100 assessed valuation. It's a \$.012 increase over the current \$1.04 tax rate; but is \$.013 less than the \$1.065 recommended by City Manager Bob Sisson.

The budget also includes 3.5-percent merit raises (\$313,000) for eligible employees and a 1-percent cost-of-living adjustment (\$270,000).

"We're spending our money on critical items – public safety and public infrastructure, education, economic development and our employees," explained Councilman Michael DeMarco. "We're investing in our quality of life."

At a brief public hearing beforehand, Eco-

nomic Development Authority Chairman John Sabo said he was pleased that a half cent of the tax rate will support the EDA. "This will strengthen the City's economy," he said.

However, Jon Stehle, chairman of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, was unhappy that – although the Council previously adopted the Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan – it wasn't funded in the budget. "We look forward to discussing the ADA study and the plans for Green Acres and Van Dyck parks, and their funding timeline, with you further," he said. "We're proud of our parks and see them as our future."

THE COUNCIL then tackled the various tax rates. Finance Director David Hodgkins promoted the recommended increase in the commercial and industrial (C&I) tax rate from 5.5 cents to 7.5 cents per \$100 assessed valuation. He said the revenue it yields is critical because the City receives



Michael DeMarco



Jeff Greenfield

"matching funds from the NVTa for this tax. And that money's used for transportation purposes."

Councilwomen Nancy Loftus and Ellie Schmidt wondered why this tax couldn't instead be fully funded from the water fund, "instead of burdening our businesses with a 2-cent tax hike."

"We wanted to do it incrementally," replied Hodgkins. "And the 2 cents offsets the decrease in (C&I) valuation, so there's no increased tax burden on the businesses." The Council then approved this new tax rate.

Fairfax's wastewater tax rates will also rise, by 10 cents, he said, "because of the need to maintain and repair our aging infrastructure and wastewater-collections system." And two cents of the tax rate will again be dedicated to the Stormwater Fund for infrastructure maintenance and state and federal regulatory requirements.

Regarding changes since his proposed

budget, City Manager Bob Sisson said he learned recently that "we'll be receiving three-quarters of a million dollars from the school system." And he recommended using it for economic development.

Hodgkins noted that the cost of new voting machines rose from \$110,000 to \$130,000, and the Council approved spending the extra \$20,000. Hodgkins then said that, with the school system's returned revenue, the real-estate tax rate could be lowered to \$1.05.

Councilman Jeff Greenfield suggested \$1.055, saying the City should earmark \$370,000 for an economic-development fund plus \$80,000 for a City branding campaign. Loftus appreciated the idea, but said Council hasn't yet discussed specifics.

Greenfield said nothing would be spent without a plan. "I support it," said Schmidt. "It would help our real-estate tax rate if we could improve our commercial base."

Mayor Scott Silverthorne agreed with "putting some money behind economic-development opportunities. Investing [it] should help us out of tough, budget situations." But Loftus preferred chopping 3

SEE CITY BUDGET, PAGE 5



Current Frost Middle School Principal Eric McCann with Henry York, the first principal from 1964 to 1984.

Frost Middle School Turns 50 Anniversary celebration includes tree-planting ceremony, 5K Race, and visits from former staff members.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Frost Middle School celebrated its 50th Anniversary on Saturday, May 2, with an open house that included a tree-planting ceremony and a 5K Fun Run. Guests included Braddock District Supervisor John C. Cook, the first principal Henry York, as well as former teachers and current principal Eric McCann. Named after the poet Robert Frost, the school off Pickett Road in Fairfax has only had five principals in its

50-year history.

"When we have an anniversary, we see that our schools are more than schools, but centers to our community," said Cook, who read a proclamation from the Board of Supervisors during the tree-planting of a Red Bud donated by Area Landscaping.

"All of us who live here, we are very blessed to live in a community that cares so much about schools," added Megan McLaughlin, Braddock District School Board member, who has three sons that attended Frost as well as her husband. This is the current principal Eric McCann's first year



PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Braddock District Supervisor John C. Cook presents a proclamation celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Frost Middle School last Saturday in Fairfax. (From left): Dr. Henry York, first principal at Frost Middle School; Ryan McElveen, FCPS school board member at-large; Megan McLaughlin, FCPS school board member, Braddock district; John C. Cook, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, Braddock district; Eric McCann, principal, Frost Middle School; Dr. Frances Ivey – regional assistant superintendent, Region 5; and Maribeth Luftglass, assistant superintendent, Department of Information Technology.

on the job. "This being the 50th Anniversary and my first year has been kind of awe-inspiring. It's a great school with an incredible history," he said. The anniversary also included student-guided tours, a choral performance of "Annie, Jr.," student musicians, an academic showcase, art gallery, and a Lands and Water Science Project.

The first principal Henry York opened the school in 1964 with 1,000 students and at that time it served one-fifth of the county. "This was the very best school in Fairfax County. I got to select many of my staff in the first year." He attributes its success to the

"wonderful support we received from the community. I have very fond memories of working with all of these people; a good staff sure makes your job a lot easier," he said. Former teacher Jackie Lose, who taught PE. from 1966 to 1991, said: "We were all so close and we just helped each other out. I loved working here." Another former teacher, Sarah Davis, who moved from Wyoming and taught English and Math from 1967-1971 and 1976-1983, added: "We really operated like a family. We all just kind of grew up together. It was wonderful. I loved it."

City Budget Adopted

FROM PAGE 4

cents from the tax rate while dedicating funds for economic development. Greenfield's motion failed, but an amended one by DeMarco passed. He recommended using \$300,000 for economic development, with \$100,000 of it used for a strategic plan and branding. Agreeing, Councilman David Meyer said, "We ought to be able to step out, have faith in the future and do the right thing." Since home valuations have increased, Loftus wanted to cut capital expenditures by \$1.4 million so residents' tax bills wouldn't rise. But her motion failed. Hodgkins said \$1.2 million of the total General Fund is debt service the City must pay.

Schmidt suggested cutting \$105,000 total from the allocations for contract and other services, overtime and temporary help. Her motion passed, but with a provision allowing Sisson to decide from where the money should be cut.

Greenfield then moved to set the real-estate tax rate at \$1.052. "We're trying to run a business, and more than 40 percent [of the budget] goes to nondiscretionary expenses," he said.

Meyer seconded and the motion eventually passed, 4-2. "This is a prudent budget, and I'm glad it included money for economic development," he said. "And we all appreciate what our City employees do."

Neither Schmidt or Loftus supported it because it raised property taxes. "Some people's taxes are going up \$800 just because of increased assessments," explained Loftus. "So this tax increase affects real people's budgets."

But, said Councilwoman Janice Miller, "People also tell me how pleased they are with the City services – trash, parks, art programs and special events. I support this budget because it funds police, fire and schools and increases spending for capital needs. It provides a modest salary increase for our employees and preserves our 10-percent cash reserves."

AGREEING, Silverthorne said, "No one likes paying taxes. But the question is, are people getting value for their tax dollars? I believe our residents are – and better than any other place in Northern Virginia." "We still have one of the lowest, overall tax rates and tax burdens of any other jurisdiction, and our citizens know that," he continued. "And money for economic development is an investment in our future. So all in all, I think we struck the right balance. And our investments in the City will give us back more in return."

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MOTHER'S DAY PHOTO GALLERY

“My mother and I have lived far away from one another for many years. I went to college in Syracuse while my family was stationed overseas, and then when my family moved back to Virginia, I was living in Manhattan. Because of this distance, we rarely got to spend holidays or birthdays together. Luckily, this has recently changed! I have finally moved back to Fairfax and will have the opportunity to celebrate Mother’s Day by taking my Mom out for a big family brunch. I couldn’t be more excited to get to spend the day with her! This photo was taken on her birthday this past August— clearly we look happy that we were able to spend the day together. She is a strong and beautiful woman who I am so proud to call my mother!” writes Brittany Oman, of Fairfax.



Georgia and Aurelia, 1, of Fairfax, at the Washington Nationals home opener.



Jennifer Maloney of Fairfax with her three children Claire, Brian, and Stephen: Here they are enjoying a lovely summer day and matching haircuts.

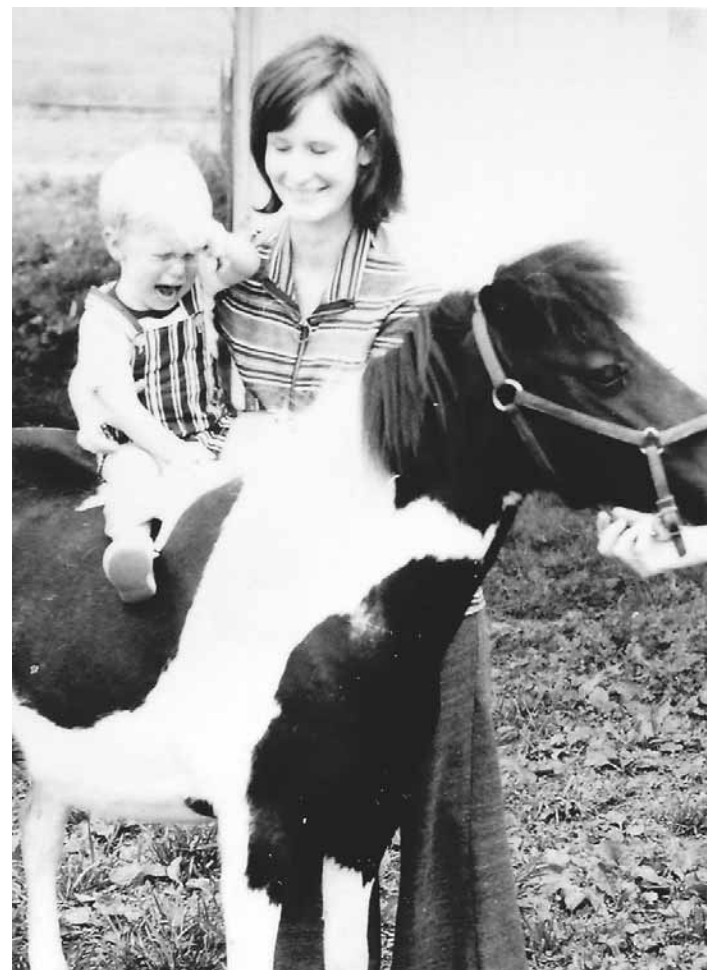
Jacqueline Rose of Fairfax writes: “My daughter, Kathleen Rose, won a trip to New York for two. She treated her mom to come along. We had a wonderful time together.”



Mom’s 50th birthday party at Viet House restaurant in Fairfax. From left: Kathryn, 15; Diana; and Jordan Miller, 18.



Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Sharon Bulova “loves this photo.” On the right is her daughter Karin feeding her newborn Mac, sitting next to her stepdaughter, Mary, feeding Will. They gave birth within two weeks of each other.



Chairman Sharon Bulova with son Delegate David Bulova in 1971. David Bulova has since gotten over his fear of horses.



Chairman and Delegate Bulova at Ocean City in 1973.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

SATURDAY/MAY 9

2nd Annual Community

Conversation on Teen Stress: Fostering Wellness and Resiliency.

8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Hayfield High School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. Marc Brackett, Ph.D., the director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence will be featured as the keynote speaker. Tracy Cross, Ph.D., Professor at The College of William and Mary and Executive Director of the Center for Gifted Studies and Talent Development will speak in the afternoon about perfectionism and child and adolescent suicidality. This event will feature breakout sessions led by FCPS staff members and guest presenters. A variety of exhibitors will also be present. <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/summit/>.

GIVE - Free Tutoring to School Age Students.

City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. 2 p.m. Math, reading, writing, science, social studies and ESL free tutoring by GIVE- Growth and Inspiration through Volunteering and Education volunteers from Thomas Jefferson H.S. and Robinson H.S.

Microsoft Excel.

City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. 2:30 p.m. Teens and adults learn how to create spreadsheets with Microsoft Excel. Openings.

MONDAY/MAY 11

Library Tech Help.

City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. 11 a.m. Teens and adults get help with eBooks and compatible devices, and other library-related electronic resources questions. Bring your library card, eBook reader, and laptop.

One-on-One English Practice.

Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. 6:45 p.m. Ages 8 through adult practice speaking, reading, and writing with a volunteer. Waiting list.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 13

Reston - League of Women Voters meeting on growth in Fairfax County.

Where is the County's growth going to go? What has changed in Fairfax County's land use and where do we go from here? Join in the discussion. 7:30-9 p.m., North County Governmental Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. Free, open to the public (men and women), call 703-757-5893. Background papers at www.lwv-fairfax.org.

THURSDAY/MAY 14

Medicaid Planning.

3 p.m. Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. Learn more about how to make your loved one's money last, including estate planning, auxiliary grants, and Medicaid. Call 703-204-4664 to RSVP and for more information.

SATURDAY/MAY 16

Living Trust Plus Seminar: How to Protect Your Assets from the Expenses of Probate and Long Term Care.

The Law Firm of Evan H. Farr, P.C., 10640 Main Street, Suite 200, Fairfax.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 20

Path of Progression in

Alzheimer's Disease. 1:30 p.m. Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. While not everyone travels the same path, join us for a discussion on what to expect as Alzheimer's progresses. Call 703-204-4664 to RSVP and for more information.



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OPINION

Hunger Is Widespread

Saturday, May 9, is the postal carriers food drive; put a sturdy bag with food donation next to your mailbox that morning.

EDITORIAL

There are families dealing with hunger in every county in the United States, including here in Northern Virginia.

In Fairfax, there are 67,190 people who are food insecure, (facing hunger at some point monthly) which is more than 6 percent of the population, according to a report by Feeding America. In Arlington, 8.7 percent of the population is food insecure, 18,750 people. In Alexandria, 10.8 percent of the population faces hunger at least monthly, that's 15,540 people.

You can see the national data by county in an interactive map: <http://map.feedingamerica.org/>

COMMENTARY

Law Enforcement, the Mentally Ill and the Pursuit of Justice

BY STACEY A. KINCAID
SHERIFF, FAIRFAX COUNTY

Across the nation, people are having serious discussions about how to alter the dynamic that too often exists between some law enforcement officers and individuals. Out of each case, we learn something that will help us go forward. So, as justice pursues its course in Fairfax County with regard to the tragic death of Natasha McKenna, let's not lose sight of the real underlying problem: the systemic mishandling of mentally ill patients who have few or no resources, and law enforcement's struggle to deal with untreated or undertreated individuals.

There is a teachable moment here for those of us who have dedicated our lives to law enforcement and for members of the community who believe in dignity and

fairness for those who come into contact with the criminal justice system.

All of us are eager — and many are impatient — for the investigation into Ms. McKenna's death to be concluded. This incident has not been forgotten or ignored. From the beginning, the Sheriff's Office has cooperated with the investigation fully. The recent completion of a report by the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner means the investigation is nearing a close. I have not offered more than passing comment because, as both a law enforcement official and a citizen, I do not want to prejudice the outcome of an investigation in advance of the facts by answering questions to which I do not have the answers, or by anticipating actions I might take once all the facts are known. I admit to having been disappointed that someone chose to release internal

documents — for the same reasons I think anyone interested in justice and fairness would be.

In the meantime, and for the foreseeable future, our jail will continue to be a warehouse for individuals with mental illness who have been unable or unwilling to access effective clinical care, social services and housing in the community.

About 40 percent of the inmates in our jail have been identified as needing some level of mental health care during their incarceration. More than a quarter have a serious mental illness — often combined with a substance abuse disorder — that requires intervention, regular treatment and medication management. The Sheriff's Office is working to improve mental health care at the jail, but as of this writing, we have no available options to properly divert individuals under arrest and avoid

The annual food drive is held in more than 10,000 cities and towns in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Guam. Last year almost 73 million pounds of food was collected in the one-day event for people in need throughout the United States.

CHILDREN ARE AFFECTED by hunger disproportionately, with nearly 30 percent of students in Fairfax County Public Schools poor enough to receive subsidized meals at school, which is an incredible 51,968 students. That percentage is more than 31 percent in Arlington with more than 7,700 students poor enough to get meal benefits. In Alexandria, 60 percent of students are poor enough to get meal benefits; that's almost 8,600 students.

Many of these students go hungry on weekends, during school closures for bad weather and in the summer. More on that soon.

In the meantime, leave a bag of food out by your mailbox on Saturday.

unnecessary incarceration. In no way whatsoever is this intended to justify inappropriate, improper or illegal behavior by law enforcement officers anywhere; it is simply a fact.

As I have done for years, I will continue to advocate locally and in Virginia for more treatment centers for minor offenders who are seriously mentally ill and would be better served in a mental health facility than in a jail.

I have pledged my 28-year career with the Sheriff's Office in service to the safety, security and well being of all Fairfax County residents, and to do so as fairly and transparently as possible. I will continue to work with mental health organizations in search of solutions to an intractable problem facing vulnerable individuals for whom all of us, out of nothing more than common human compassion, must assume some responsibility.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mother's Day and Islam

To the Editor:

A man once asked the holy Prophet Muhammad (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), "O Messenger of Allah! Who has the most right to the best treatment from me? The Prophet replied, "Your mother. The man asked, "Then who?" The Prophet said, "Your mother." The man asked again, "Then who?" The

Prophet again said, "Your mother." The man asked again, "And after that?" The Prophet replied, "Your father" (Bukhari and Tirmidhi).

To truly appreciate the awesome significance of this particular incident, one must remember that this took place more than 1,400 years ago, in a completely male dominated society; a society where women were treated no better than slaves.

In Islam the role of a mother is recognized as being so pivotal in the upbringing of the children - as

well as in shaping the future of mankind and society - that Muslims are taught that the attainment of paradise lies under their mother's feet. Not only does this paradise refer to the one in the hereafter, but it also refers to a social paradise in this world...peace, blessings, and security which are obtained after respecting and honoring your mother each and every day, regardless of how difficult the circumstance may be.

So while it's thoughtful and sweet to pause our busy lives once

a year to overtly celebrate everything our mothers mean to us with flowers and gifts, it is more important that we also instill the practice of honoring them daily by making them proud of the manner in which we conduct ourselves; as well as attending to their growing needs with the same care, compassion, love, and patience as they once extended to us when we were children.

Aisha Khan
Herndon

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OPPOSING VIEWS ON EDUCATION FUNDING

Garza Calls Community to Help #saveFCPS

Superintendent says FCPS faces deficit of more than \$100 million; FCPS excellence at risk.

Statement from Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Karen K. Garza following the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors passage of the Fairfax County Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 budget:

Once again, we find that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has failed to fully fund Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). This is extremely disheartening — we entered this budget year making a good faith effort to work collaboratively with the Board of Supervisors. We worked for nearly a year with the County Executive and the Board of Supervisors to develop a reasonable budget that met only the very minimal needs of FCPS, and in the end they did not deliver.

Supervisors are sending a clear message that they are unconcerned about the increasing challenges of our students, our teachers, and our schools. The supervisors refused to fully fund our budget for the 2015-16 school year (FY 2016), when faced with a nominal \$7.6 million deficit. We have grave concerns as to what will happen in the 2016-17 (FY 2017) school year when we face a devastating shortfall of more than \$100 million.

The entire Fairfax County community has a critical decision to make: either we invest the necessary funds in our students and schools, or we will have to work together to decide what to cut — and we cannot cut our way to excellence.

Due to years of chronic underfunding coupled with a decade of significant enrollment growth and increasing student needs, we will not be able to sustain the current quality nor the full range of academic programming we currently offer our students. We have sought to protect the classroom to date, but with the scale of the FY 2017 shortfall, we will have to take a serious look at the programs that we must cut starting



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

Karen K. Garza

in the 2016-17 school year. These cuts will likely affect all current academic programming including limiting elective choices, reducing career and technical programs, impacting advanced offerings, and again raising class sizes at all levels. We must make these difficult choices by December 2015 because students begin their course selections in January 2016.

Since 2008, we have cut 2,175 positions and nearly a half-billion dollars from our budget affecting every school and department. We have fallen so far behind in teacher salaries that we are no longer competitive and are losing talented staff to neighboring school districts. Our teachers are the reason FCPS students excel and achieve. Losing our most experienced teachers will have a significant effect on student performance and will ultimately affect the reputation of FCPS.

Fairfax County public schools are frequently cited as one of the main reasons that businesses choose to relocate to the county, and Fairfax has some of the highest property values in the country, but without excellent schools as a foundation — corporate investment in Fairfax and property values will decline.

In the education of our children, every year matters; we cannot hope to make up deficits in their education in their later years. It is critical we take action now.

I hope our community will join me to #saveFCPS.

Education Is County Board's Priority

The crux of our school funding problem is the State funding formula.



Jeffrey McKay

BY JEFFREY MCKAY, SUPERVISOR (D-LEE DISTRICT)

There is a considerable amount of misinformation about the County's commitment to education and I would like to give you some of the facts.

While close to 70 percent of County residents do not have children in the school system, education is our County Board's priority. We directly transfer more than half our General Fund to the schools and additionally assume the costs of a number of other school needs, such as school nurses, health aides, resource officers, and the like.

The FY2016 budget that we adopted on April 28 includes a transfer to the schools of \$2.01 billion, an increase of \$66.7 million (+3.43 percent) over the FY2015 budget and nearly two-thirds of all new revenue associated with increased property values. The total school budget (that includes the County transfer and some state and federal funding), totals \$2.6 billion. This is the fifth consecutive year that has seen a substantial increase in the school transfer—since 2008, the Board of Supervisors has increased funding for the schools by \$230 million.

As a County Supervisor, I am responsible for all of our residents' needs including parks, libraries, public safety, and human services. These are not stand-alone services and the success of our schools is also linked to these public services.

To further illustrate our spending priorities, in addition to the 52.1 percent of the County's General Fund that we transfer directly to the schools, we spend only 12 percent of our General Fund on public safety, 10.9 percent on health and human services, and 1.4 percent on parks, libraries, and recreation centers combined. Slashing funding to these would not make a dent in our budget and would hurt the schools.

The crux of our school funding problem is the State funding formula. Fairfax County is a donor jurisdiction, sending more dollars to the state than it recoups—about 21 cents on the dollar. That funding formula inequity holds true not only for education but also for human services, transportation,

and the like.

FCPS' state per pupil funding suffers in comparison to other Virginia localities. In FY2012, the state provided \$2,764 per pupil while the County provided \$9,905 per pupil in local funding. In contrast, neighboring Prince William County received half its per pupil funding from the state. These figures may have been OK in the past, but today's school needs have far outpaced our local ability to pay. Other school districts are able to

fund their needs with our tax dollars while here in Fairfax County we struggle to meet our own needs.

Fairfax County continues to work with the General Assembly and advocates hard for a larger share of state funding for our schools. Our lobbying this year got us \$9.9 million more than anticipated in the state budget. Those additional funds bring FCPS within \$4.1 million of its total \$2.6 billion advertised budget proposal—that's a gap of 0.16 percent less than the School Board's proposed budget.

The superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools increased her transfer request **after** the state budget increase was announced and shortly before our budget adoption.

Please be aware that the Board of Supervisors does not have line item authority over the FCPS budget.

According to the Constitution of Virginia, that responsibility lies with the elected School Board and it is that Board that sets the funding priorities for the schools, including salaries. If teacher salaries are the School Board's top priority, it is their responsibility to close the 0.16 percent gap between their proposed budget and the funds they are receiving.

As we look ahead at the fiscal outlook for next year, we know that we will continue to be affected by a sluggish economy and the effects of federal cutbacks and sequestration.

Like the Schools, the County side of the ledger is projecting a budget shortfall for the next (2017) fiscal year. Both boards will have to work closely together to produce balanced budgets.

Thank you again for contacting me and you have my assurance that my colleagues on both the County and School boards will continue to work together.

P.S. - On a personal note, with two kids, I'm as much invested in our educational system as anyone. My daughter is an FCPS first-grader and my son isn't very far behind. I'm the product of our Fairfax County Public Schools and I want every child to have the same opportunity to learn that I did.

Who Pays for a Mistake?

To the Editor:

So the agreement was reached to pay John Geer's family just under \$2.95M for the mistake of a police officer. My heart goes out to the family.

But I am concerned about the payment.

Why are taxpayers responsible to pay for this? Where is the statute that justifies this?

I pay over five digits in real estate tax, personal property tax, car registration

fees, licensing fees, and who-knows-how much in sales tax.

But the Board of Supervisors pays millions to a victim of a mistake; yet the roads I have to drive on are still full of lumps, bumps, cracks, and potholes. Where is the money for that? What gives?

Bob Fritz
Oakton

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WELLBEING

Healthy Relationships for Life

Researchers say meaningful friendships help preserve health.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Bill and Betty Kenealy, of Springfield, make it a point to socialize regularly with their long-time friends, many of whom are other couples they met through work and through the activities of their five children. They've watched their children become adults, worked, retired and even survived cancer. Now they're living together in a retirement community in Springfield. Bill is 85 and Betty is 81.

"We enjoy meeting for dinner on a regular basis or playing cards or dominoes and Bingo," said Bill.

One of those couples is George and Peggy White, both 80. They met when Bill and George were stationed together in the military. Both couples speak fondly of the strength they get from their friendships.

"All of us have different stories and have different backgrounds," said Peggy White, 80. "It's been an

interesting and rewarding."

Healthy friendships and strong social connections provide more than interest, say researchers. They are vital to one's mental, physical and emotional wellbeing. A study by the National Institutes of Health show that people who are socially isolated are more likely to die of heart disease than those who have close relationships. While it might be more challenging to make friends as one ages, the benefits are worth the effort say researchers.

"Research shows that social connections are more important for health, longevity and cognitive functioning than any other variable," said Linda Gulyn, professor of psychology at Marymount University in Arlington. "Social support ... increased likelihood of getting proper health care, compliance with health treatments, diet, activity [and] mental health."

A HEALTHY SOCIAL NETWORK is credited with longevity.

"Social support at all stages of the lifespan reduces people's stress levels, and this in turn promotes physical health," said Linda Cote-Reilly, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at Marymount University. Seniors who have active social connections are better able to fight disease, they experience greater psychological well-being and reduced incidence of depression, Cote-Reilly said.

Social isolation can lead to depression and physical health issues.

"One of the things that research has shown is that social isolation is a killer," said Dominique S. Hubbard, professor of psychology who studies social exclusion and ostracism at Northern Virginia Community College. "One of the most fundamental things that we need is meaningful social connections and a sense of belonging."

In fact, researchers point to a variety of studies that link health and longevity with fulfilling relationships.

"There is this really amazing study done in Alameda County, Calif., that followed almost 5,000 residents for nine years, and found that the best predictor of mortality rates were people who indicated they had few meaningful relationships, meaning that people who answered they had many meaningful relationships were more likely to be alive than those with few," said Georgeana Stratton, Ph.D., (associate professor of psychology at Northern Virginia Community College in Sterling. "Even when they ... only look at people with cancer or heart disease, they still found that those with many meaningful relationships did better than those who answered few.

"Their social relationships were the best predictor of health and death, meaning it predicted better than other things they measured like smoking and stress," said Stratton.

Seniors are more susceptible to the harmful effects of a dearth of

PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE & PEGGY WHITE
George White, 80, stays socially connected by volunteering for the West Springfield police department. He and his wife, Betty, also 80, stay connected with friends.

companions. "Isolation is potentially very damaging to all of us, but most especially to seniors," said Pamela Stewart, assistant dean of psychology, Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale campus. "Friendships keep us balanced and generally more positive. They help to keep us busy, can give us a focus and keep us more happily engaged in the world around us."

Retiring and relocating creates challenges when attempting to maintain existing friendships. "Unfortunately, for many the pool of friends becomes smaller as one ages," said Stewart. "We lose touch

PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL & BETTY KENEALY
Bill and Betty Kenealy stay connected by socializing regularly with their good friends and former next-door neighbors.

with our former work mates and a fair percentage of our friends may have moved away or passed away." Those who are no longer in situations that offer natural opportunities for social interactions can still recreate a circle of friends.

"Seniors can replace those by adding new things," said Hubbard. "Consider joining a class or a bridge club. The key is to have consistent, positive interactions."

Donating one's time offers an opportunity for staying connected. "Volunteering at a local school or animal shelter or even getting a part time job is a great way to meet people and stay engaged and cur-

rent," said Joyce Schwartz, a geriatric social worker who lives in Potomac, Md. "Pursuing a hobby, working out a gym or attending lectures are good too, especially if they're free or discounted activities for seniors."

STILL, STAYING ENGAGED socially and developing new friendships can become increasingly challenging, as one gets older.

"Physical disabilities and illnesses can increase the likelihood that a person is hospitalized or homebound in later adulthood, which can lead to social isolation and depression," said Cote-Reilly.

Also important, said Cote-Reilly, is distinguishing connections that

offer positive social interaction from those that simply provide contact with another person. "Social support means, 'Does this individual feel supported by those in his or her life?' It doesn't mean the number of friends or support persons one has," she said. "Older adults who have a lot of social interaction because they need assistance with activities of daily living ... do not experience these interactions as positive. People are helping them because they have lost the ability to do the tasks themselves."

While social media has made staying in touch with friends easier for some, there are dangers. "Unfortunately, there is a negative correlation between time spent on social networking sites and the internet in general and the time spent with friends," said Stratton. "Also, several studies indicate that more time on Internet predicts depression. So while in-person relationships are great buffers for stress and protect physical and mental health, online relationships may actually... hurt mental health and social connections."

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

MAY

5/20/2015...A+ Camps & Schools, Proms, Summer Planning
Memorial Day is May 25

5/27/2015.....Summer Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment

JUNE

6/3/2015.....Wellbeing

6/10/2015.....Father's Day Dining & Gifts

6/10/2015.....HomeLifeStyle

6/17/2015.....A+ Graduations & Summer Learning

6/17/2015.....Father's Day Dining & Gifts

Father's Day is June 21

6/24/2015.....Independence Day Preview

6/24/2015...Professional Profiles & Business in the Community

JULY

7/1/2015.....Wellbeing

7/8/2015.....HomeLifeStyle

7/15/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools

7/22/2015.....Pet Connection Pullout

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- Oak Hill/Herndon Connection
- Potomac Almanac
- Reston Connection
- Springfield Connection
- Vienna/Oakton Connection

Creating Fun and Awareness with FACETS

Three high school young men designed and implemented a drug and alcohol prevention event at the Mott Community Center April 4 with help from FACETS.

Kaleabe Tewolde, Stephen Amoako and Corey Lucas of Fairfax hosted a 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament as a way to bring back to the community awareness of the dangers of drug and alcohol use. They designed this program after attending a weeklong leadership program at Longwood University in Farmville, Va., last summer. Their flyer highlighted a family friendly event with food, games, music and prizes and they didn't disappoint.

The registered teams took the courts to showcase their talents, with music pumped out on background. The championship game was intense yet it was the height advantage that led Peter Klosky, Nathan Roberts and Jibril Ahmed from Fairfax to victory.

FACETS is always looking for volunteers and mentors to help with their community and youth support programs. If you're interested in sharing your knowledge as a mentor or after school advisor contact James Williams, Community Advocate at jwilliams@facetscares.org or 703-352-3269.

—TERRANCE MORAN

These young men took their idea and made it happen. Event creators (from left): Kaleabe Tewolde, Stephen Amoako, and Corey Lucas from Fairfax.

Maria Rink from Fairfax leads the brave with some advanced exercises using stretch ropes.

PHOTOS BY TERRANCE MORAN/THE CONNECTION

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Dr. William Lloyd Glover Jr. (middle) receiving the GWU award "Distinguished Alumni Award for Urology" from Dr. Harry C. Miller, past chairman, & Dr. Thomas Jarrett, Chairman, Department of Urology at George Washington University – where Dr. Glover is Clinical Professor of Urology.

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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.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/MAY 8-9

“Les Miserables.” 7 p.m. South County High School, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. Tickets will cost \$15 for general admission or \$12 for students and seniors.citizens. You can order tickets online at southcountytheatre.org. “Les Miserables” is famous musical adapted from the novel by Victor Hugo in 1862. The story revolves around former convict Jean Valjean and his pursuit of self-redemption by breaking his parole, thus having to escape the fleet of Inspector Javert. Intertwined are the students’ revolution to combat the monarchy and a love triangle between schoolboy Marius, Valjean’s daughter Cosette, and the poor Eponine. Taking place in France in the early 19th century, the central themes are compassion and social injustice.

“Big the Musical.” 7:30 p.m. Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. The FX Players theatre department will debut its long awaited spring musical, BIG, the first two weekends of May. Following the storyline of the 1980’s Tom Hanks movie, BIG revolves around a young boy who dreams of being an adult. After a Zoltar machine grants his wish, he goes on a heartwarming adventure where he learns that age does not determine how much fun you can have. For more information, please visit www.fxplayers.org or call 703-219-2351.

Spotlight on the Arts Festival. Dedicated to showcasing the very best of the visual and performing arts in the City of Fairfax. At a variety of venues in and around the city. Visit www.visitfairfax.com/category/spotlight.

SATURDAY/MAY 9

Tales to Tails. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. 10:30 a.m. Age 6-12 read aloud to a friendly, trained therapy dog. Openings.

SUNDAY/MAY 10

Hands On Modeling Day Workshop. 1-4 p.m. 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. You and Mom can learn how to create and paint scenery for your model train display. Admission: Museum members and children 4 and under, free; ages 5-15, \$2; adults 16 and older, \$4. www.fairfax-station.org, 703-425-9225. Like us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/FFXSRR.

Workhouse Farmers Market. 1-5 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. The opening day of this year’s farmers markets season.

MONDAY/MAY 11

PJ Library Book Buddies. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. 10:30 a.m. Ages 6 months to 5 years with adult enjoy Jewish storybooks and craft making. Co-sponsored by JCC of Northern Virginia.

Crazy 8S Math Club for School Age. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. 4:30 p.m. Super-Cube Shuffle: Math and art collide when you use specially colored cubes to create funky design. Then, test your memory skills as you race to copy a giant pattern that your friends are spinning...Openings.

TUESDAY/MAY 12

Creative Cupcakes for Older Adults. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. 1 p.m. Celebrate the Creative Aging Festival by getting creative. Decorate cupcakes with the pros from Cupcakes Actually, a local bakery and multiple winner at the Chocolate Lovers Festival. Openings.

SATURDAY/MAY 16

Hope & Health Festival. 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Lorton Community Action Center, South County Cares, and INOVA are providing the annual Hope & Health Festival at the Lorton Park, 9518 Richmond Highway, behind the Lorton Library. Free health screenings, food, inflatables, kids’ games and activities will be available, rain or shine to all in attendance. LortonAction.org or call 703-339-5161, ext. 140.

7th Annual Occoquan River Fest. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Occoquan Regional Park, 9751 Ox Road, Lorton. This family event will feature free river boat rides, a children’s midway, live animals, food, hiking, paddling and over 15 outdoor recreation, history and conservation organizations. The event is sponsored by NOVA Parks with assistance from the Occoquan Watertrail League, the Occoquan River Communities, Bob Beach Architects, Vulcan Materials, Rivergate Development, Prince William Marina and Lorton Station Merchants.

SUNDAY/MAY 17

3rd Annual Fragile X Walk. 7:45 a.m. Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Early Registration is \$35 per adult (includes dry fit t-shirt) and \$15 per child

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(From left) Doug Klain and Zion Jang play with light sabers during Fairfax High’s “Big: The Musical.” Performances: Thursday-Saturday, May 7, 8 and 9, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 via www.fxplayers.org or \$15 at the door. For the Sunday matinee, tickets are \$5 for children 12 and under. And after the show, they can dance on the big piano, take a photo with the cast and make a wish with Zoltar.

(includes dry fit t-shirt) Children under 4 are free. Fragile X syndrome (FXS) is a genetic condition that causes intellectual disability, behavioral and learning challenges and various physical characteristics. FXS is the most common known genetic cause of autism. It can cause learning and behavior challenges ranging from mild to severe. Over 1 million individuals nationwide have, or are at risk, of carrying the Fragile X mutation. Late Registration after May 5 is \$40 per adult and \$15 per child and shirt sizes are not guaranteed. <https://www.crowdrise.com/FXSNOVA2015>.

N Gauge Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Museum members, free; adults 16 and over, \$4; children 5-15, \$2; under 4, free. Information on the museum and shows is at www.fairfax-station.org phone 703-425-9225.

MONDAY-SUNDAY/MAY 18-24

GI Film Festival. Angelika Film Center, 2911 District Avenue, Fairfax. The nation’s only military film festival. Cinematic stories of mothers, daughters, fathers, wives, brothers and more. GIFF15.com.

THURSDAY/MAY 21

Fairfax Antique Arts Association. 10 a.m. Green Acres Senior Center, 4401 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Linwood Smith, guest speaker this month, will demonstrate how to repair old trunks. He will have a few small samples to show. He will also share stories about growing up in Olde Town Alexandria.

SATURDAY/MAY 23

Screening of Big Dream. 1 p.m. GMU, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Big Dream is a documentary film that follows the stories of seven young women in technology fields around the globe. Each story takes a look at these young women’s ambitions and how they overcome personal challenges to pursue careers in STEM fields. Free.

SUNDAY-MONDAY/MAY 24-25

Art Guild of Clifton Show and Sale. 5-8 p.m. on Sunday. 12-5 p.m. on Monday. 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Artists will display and sell works featuring local themes across a range of media. Admission is free for Museum members and children 4 and under; \$2 children 5-15; \$4 adults 16 and older. www.fairfax-station.org, 703-425-9225.



Bollywood Masala Orchestra and Dancers.

Mason Announces ‘Great Performances’

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO BY ANDREW ECCLES/
COURTESY OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Bernadette Peters

There was a buzz of energy in the jam-packed foyer of the Center for the Arts at George Mason University. Northern Virginia performing arts lovers were ready to learn of the 25th anniversary season of “Great Performances at Mason!” The crowd would not be disappointed as Thomas Reynolds, director of artistic programing, announced “a remarkable variety of performing arts that both entertains and educates.” The new season begins this September.

“We’ve always prided ourselves on variety and the 25th anniversary season is very representative of that,” said Reynolds. “We are sticking with our strengths, which has always been a variety of arts and entertainment options.”

The upcoming season of “Great Performances at Mason!” will also continue to support the students at George Mason University. The Center is part of Mason’s College of Visual and Performing Arts and the schedule of performers takes “to heart the mission of how to present artists that help support the teaching of our students,” noted Reynolds.

There are many highlights for the upcoming 25th anniversary season. Just a few examples include the Tony and Grammy Award winning Broadway actress and singer Bernadette Peters who will headline the annual “Arts by George!” grand benefit gala on Sept. 26. The gala will include a grand showcase of Mason College of Visual and Performing Arts student and faculty works.

As the season rolls forward,

there is tap dance phenom Savion Glover, Disney’s “Fantasia - Live in Concert,” a notable performances from the Virginia Opera, the Munich Symphony Orchestra, live theater such as Aquila Theatre’s “The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes,” the inventive work of Mummenschanz, the dynamic Mark Morris Dance Company, the innovative RIOULT contemporary dance troupe and Bollywood Masala Orchestra and Dancers of India, to name a few.

There will be Christmastime favorites such as Chanticleer and the Vienna Boys Choir. Local favorites such as Jeffrey Siegel and his Keyboard Conversations and the Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra will also return

With a wide-range of offerings, the 2015-16 season is an opportunity to try new things or take in old favorites. There are many performances right for the whole family as a way to introduce younger audiences to the world of performance with special ticket prices all in a near-by, easy to reach location with parking. And free pre-performance discussions sponsored by the Friends of the Center for the Arts add to experiences.

Where and When

The 2015-16 season of “Great Performances at Mason!” will be at the George Mason University, Center for the Arts, 4440 University Drive, Fairfax. The 2015-16 runs September 2015-May 2016. Subscription and single tickets are available. For information and tickets call 703-993-2787 or visit cfa.gmu.edu. Detailed season brochure at: http://issuu.com/cfaatmason/docs/cfa_2015-16_brochure?e=4583740/12238447



Sixth grade teacher Anna Heaney showed the students the cards they made and also encouraged them to think about the effect that their service project would have.

Sixth Graders Support Therapeutic Riding Program

Students at Oak View Elementary School design flash cards for NVTRP.

BY MARISSA BEALE
THE CONNECTION

Every year, sixth graders at Oak View Elementary School do a service project to help their school's community. For this year's project, they created cards for the Northern Virginia Therapeutic Riding Program (NVTRP), an assistance-riding program for children and adults with special needs.

Chris Liss, one of the parents on the committee that organized the project, said that she always felt very strongly about what NVTRP does, and when the opportunity arose to organize the service project, she pitched the idea.

"Their program is just so incredible," said Liss. "When I ran it by the principal, she said that there are a couple students, right there at Oak View, who have gone to therapeutic riding, and she thought it was a great way to give back to the program."

At NVTRP, horses are used to help alleviate muscle tightness in those with physical disabilities. Participants also learn to ride and how to take care of the horses.

"For some of the kids who are on the autism spectrum or have cerebral palsy, it's one of the few times that they feel like they can control something. The horses are being controlled by them," said Liss.

The youngest rider in the program is just 4 years old, and the cards created by the sixth graders will be used for learning purposes. More than 300 cards were created, featuring numbers, letters and even Disney characters. Linda Aiken, director of Volunteer Services at NVTRP, visited the school to officially receive the cards.

"The cards will go, randomly, around the arena," said Aiken. "Riders will be told different instructions once they get [to the card]. They might be told to go to all the even numbers, or to all of the odd numbers."



(From left) Grace Miglorie and Naomi White made 14 cards in total to go to NVTRP.

NVTRP's mission is to "provide equine-assisted activities to children and adults with disabilities, youth-at-risk, military service personnel, and their families in an inclusive, community setting," according to their website. About 200 volunteers help out at NVTRP a week, and they rely solely on donations and rider fees for support.

Even though the sixth graders at Oak View are all under 14 and, thus, too young to volunteer at NVTRP, they were excited about their project, and eager for more chances to work with them in the future.

"I would love to take a field trip there," said sixth grader, Jackson Falls. Fellow student, Aubry Smith agreed, saying that she would like for them to all go as a group.

"It was really fun," said sixth grader Lindsey McAllister, who designed four different cards.

The students were asked what they believed were the benefits of community service, and they answered that it increases self-discipline, teaches job skills, helps one think about others and even helps one emotionally.

By participating in this year's service project, the students also learned about different breeds of colors of horses, grooming tools used and other topics.

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OBITUARY

Robert Paul "Bob" Warhurst, 76, Dies

On Wednesday, April 29, 2015, Robert Paul "Bob" Warhurst, 76, passed away at his home in Fairfax after a long battle with cancer. On the last full day of his life, Bob was surrounded by family and friends before he passed peacefully early the next morning under the care of Hospice.

Bob Warhurst was the co-owner and co-founder of Merrifield Garden Center, a large garden center, nursery and landscaping company with three locations in Northern Virginia. Bob started the garden center in 1971 with his good friend and neighbor Buddy Williams. In the beginning, there was a quaint red barn, a small store and less than an acre of plants. Over the next 44 years, Merrifield grew to become one of the largest independent garden centers in the country.

Bob was born on Dec., 8, 1938 in Russellville, Ala. He was the fourth of eight children born to Claude and Mary Warhurst. Growing up in the rebuilding years that immediately followed the Great Depression, life was hard on the family. To help make ends meet, Bob got his first job at the age of 7 years old at the corner grocery store in Russellville. He was hired for 50 cents a week.

When he was in the middle of the eighth grade, Bob quit school and moved to Northern Virginia to make his way in the world. He became an apprentice bricklayer for his older brother Lee, who owned his own contracting business. Two years later, Bob met Billie Jean Allgood and fell in love at first sight. They were married on Jan. 16, 1957. He was 18 and she was 14. It was a happy marriage that lasted 58 years.

While laying brick in the booming suburban developments around Northern Virginia, Bob noticed there was a need for trash pick-up service, so he started the Warhurst Trash Company in 1963. In running the trash business, Bob saw that many customers were throwing away items that still had value, so he began selling those items at The Tradin' Post, a second hand store he started in the Kamp Washington section of Fairfax. Later, Bob decided to start selling plants at The Tradin' Post. That was so successful he decided to open a nursery to sell plants full time, and the following year he opened Merrifield Garden Center.

Although his life was defined by hard work, Bob led an adventurous life, riding horses, driving fast



Robert Paul "Bob" Warhurst

cars and flying airplanes. He earned his pilot's license in 1977. Bob was very active in the local business community and helped start two banks - The

Horizon Bank of Virginia, which was founded in 1990 and then sold ten years later to Southern Financial Bank, and Virginia Heritage Bank, which was founded in 2005 and sold in June of 2014 to Eagle BankCorp. Throughout his life, Bob improved - and often changed - the lives of many people. Not only was he able to do this by having a successful business, but by the enormous generosity of his heart.

In 1998, Bob bought a seven-acre piece of property at historic Hope Parke in Fairfax, where George Washington often visited many years ago. Bob built his dream house, which became the center of the family's activities. Bob was very active in the community and gave generously to many charitable and civic organizations. Bob's fascinating and inspirational life was chronicled in a recent book, *The American Dream: The Rags to Roses Story of Bob Warhurst and the Founding of Merrifield Garden Center*.

Bob was preceded in death by his father Claude, mother Mary and brothers Charles, Jim, Claude (Tracy) and Lee. Survivors include Bob's wife Billie Jean Warhurst; children Debbie Warhurst Capp (husband Rob, children Danny and Sarah), Robert Warhurst, Jr. (wife Lynn, children Lyndsey, Ashley and Bobby), Larry Warhurst (wife Leslie, children Chance, Jake, Whitney and Harley), Donny Warhurst (girlfriend Karen Velehoski) and Kevin Warhurst (wife Chris, children Madison and Grace); sisters Margene Scruggs and Jane von Pingel; brother Carl Warhurst; and many extended family members. A viewing was held on Sunday, May 3, at Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home, 9902 Braddock Road in Fairfax. The funeral service was held on Monday, May 4, at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park Street NE in Vienna, followed by an interment at National Memorial Park in Falls Church. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the American Cancer Society or Capital Caring Hospice Services.



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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61 Sports Events over 10 Days Fairfax County hosting the 2015 World Police & Fire Games.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

A huge event on a scale Fairfax County has never before seen — that's the 2015 World Police & Fire Games. It'll run June 26-July 5 and promises to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for area residents.

"We expect over 12,000 first responders from more than 70 countries," said county police Maj. Rich Perez, who's heading up security. "There'll be 61 sporting events spanning 10 days, and with more athletes than the summer Olympic Games."

Perez is in charge of bringing together 37 different federal, local and state entities to provide security for the events. These groups include the county Fire and Rescue Department, Sheriff's Office, Virginia State Police, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the TSA, ATF, and Department of State.

The World Police & Fire Games started in San Diego, Calif., in 1985 and are held every two years. "We're celebrating the camaraderie, honor, courage and athleticism of first responders from around the world," said MPO Michelle DuBois, one of the county Police Department's athletic outreach ambassadors.

Both active and retired fire and law-enforcement personnel will be competing. "This is the 30th anniversary of the games, so there'll be dignitaries here, too," said DuBois. "And it's also the 75th anniversary of the Fairfax County Police Department."

THE OFFICIAL website is Fairfax2015.com and, said Perez, "It's getting 9 million hits a day. The local, economic impact is expected to be \$70 million to \$80 million for those 10 days." That's because, in addition to the athletes, themselves, an estimated 30,000 visitors are also expected to attend the games here.

Some 80 county firefighters and 50 county police officers are registered to participate, including Police Chief Ed Roessler



Police officers Rich Perez and Michelle DuBois discuss the upcoming World Police & Fire Games.

Jr. "He registered for the triathlon and has been diligently working out and preparing for it," said Perez.

Some other local first-responders will be defending their awards won previously. Fire Department Battalion Chief Jerome Williams won a gold medal in stair climbing in the last games, held in New York. And county police officer, Lt. Mark Kidd, is the current gold-medal holder in darts.

But all the participants are special, said Bill Knight, president of the World Police & Fire Games.

"These athletes are truly heroes from around the world," he said. "And they deserve to be treated like Olympians."

The various athletic competitions will be held at 53 different venues, but more than 70 percent of the games will take place in Fairfax County. Athletes will participate in events including archery, badminton, baseball, beach volleyball, bench press, billiards, body building, bowling, boxing, cross country, cycling, darts, dodge ball, flag football, golf, hockey, judo, karate, lacrosse, half marathon, motocross, motorcycle and mountain biking. They'll also vie in orienteering, paintball, pistol and rifle com-



petitions, police service dogs, rowing, rugby, skeet shooting, soccer, softball, swimming, table tennis, tae kwon do, tennis, track and field, triathlon, ultimate firefighter, volleyball, wrestling and wrist wrestling.

Several of the events will be held in the local communities. There'll be baseball at Westfield High; Toughest Competitor Alive at the Cub Run Rec Center; clays, skeet and trap shooting, Bull Run Regional Park; cycling, police driving track in Chantilly; darts, Fairfax County Police Association Hall in Fairfax; and lacrosse, Centreville High.

GMU will also host baseball games, as well as basketball, bodybuilding, boxing, swimming, tennis, and track and field. At the Reston Town Center will be the athlete village and check-in, plus the half marathon and honor guard competitions.

Martial arts will be held at NOVA's Ernst Center, and weightlifting will be at the Herndon Community Center. Meanwhile, archery, cycling, mountain biking and orienteering will take place in Fairfax Station's Fountainhead Regional Park. And Tysons Corner will host dodge ball and stair racing.

MASS TRANSIT will be used as much as possible to transport the athletes to and from each venue.

"There's no cost to attend and view any of the events," said DuBois. "So we encourage people to bring their families and friends to them and enjoy."

But such a huge undertaking can't be accomplished without volunteers, and some 4,000 of them are needed. Signups are at <http://fairfax2015.com/volunteer>.

"We need medical personnel at each venue to cover the athletes, volunteers and spectators," said DuBois. "People are also needed to check in the athletes and direct them to the next station. Volunteers must be 18 or older and able to read, write and communicate in English. They must also pass a background check to keep everybody safe."

Urging people not to pass up this opportunity to lend a hand, she said, "You can play a key role in one of the largest, multi-sport, multi-venue events in the world. Instead of just watching, you can be a part of history."

Fairfax Rotary Club Spells It Right

Late this past February, Fairfax Rotarian and PR, Ron Hubbard was contacted by Debbie Kilpatrick, president of Fairfax County Council of PTAs regarding the Fairfax Club's annual Dictionary Project presentations. Kilpatrick was coordinating the Fairfax County School's Annual Spelling Bee Contest to be hosted March 22, 2015 at local city of Fairfax Lanier Middle School. She had been made aware that Hubbard was the annual presenter of dictionaries to the Willow Springs Elementary School, and inquired if there might be enough dictionaries available for the Annual Fairfax County Schools Spelling Bee contestants, as part of their take-away gift bags. Hubbard moved quickly with the Fairfax Rotary Club's Dictionary Project Coordinator and president Paula Kelley. Additional dictionaries were ordered to be available for the 60 "Bee" contestants. The Rotary Club was a proud sponsor of this event.

Sixth-grader Trisha Balakrishnan of Greenbriar West Elementary won the Fairfax County Spelling Bee and she will represent Fairfax County at the Scripps National Spelling Bee, to be held May 25-30 at National Harbor's Gaylord Hotel.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



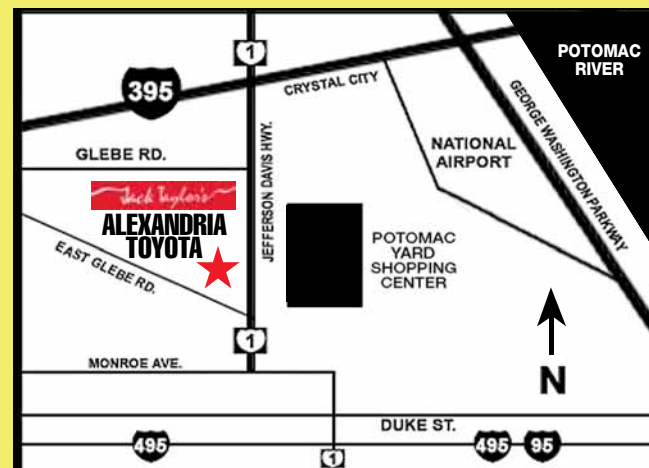
Sixth-grader Trisha Balakrishnan (center) of Greenbriar West Elementary won the Fairfax County Spelling Bee and was joined at the Champion's stand by runner-up Harsha Harish (left), a sixth-grader at Mosby Woods Elementary, and third-place finisher Grace Fisher, a seventh-grader representing Capital Baptist Homeschool.

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21 Announcements

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Clair D. Burgeson

July 28, 1929 – March 30, 2015

Clair D. Burgeson died March 30, 2015 at three pm at Hospice by the Sea in Boca Raton, Florida. He died with his wife and three children by his side of complications of pulmonary fibrosis. Born in Jamestown, NY on July 28, 1929, survived by: wife Joyce Elaine Carberg Burgeson, brother Irving Burgeson, sister Louise Kolinofsky. Three children: Stephen Clair Burgeson of Buffalo, NY, David Mark Burgeson of Naples, FL, Lisa Joy Burgeson Rhein of Fairfax, VA and six grandchildren: Elizabeth Rhein O'Connor, Robert Rhein, Geneva Rhein, Eric Burgeson, Briana Burgeson, Liam Burgeson.

A depression baby, born in 1929, Clair received a diploma in General Agriculture from NYS Agricultural Technological Institute (now Alfred State College) in 1950, a diploma in Bible Studies and Missions from Prairie Bible Institute, Alberta Canada in 1954, a Bachelor of Arts, cum laude, SUNY Albany paid for by the G.I. bill. During his 3 years of United States Army service he spent a year and a half on the DMZ in Korea. He set up two libraries and served as a librarian under special services. Joyce and Clair both worked while raising Steve, Dave and Lisa. Clair completed two additional college degrees; a Masters of Library Science, Columbia University and a Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration, SUNY, New Paltz.

His library career began in White Plains High School. In 1967 he took the position of Director of Libraries in Ramapo Central School District in Rockland County, NY and held it until his retirement in 1991. One of his great joys during that time was teaching a Junior Great Books class for the 7th and 8th grade students. Clair was one of the first trustees of the Sloatsburg Library, instrumental in moving the library to the building it resides in today. A naturalist, he took many groups on educational nature walks in Harriman State Park. An energetic father and grandfather, he could be counted on to jog, snow shoe, hike, bike and canoe as well as take quiet walks in nature. He was an enthusiastic bird watcher, loved classical music, and an avid reader. He was active in the American Library Association and Audubon Society.

Clair gave consistently and generously to his charities of choice. He was unfailingly devoted to his family. Upon his retirement, Clair and Joyce enjoyed traveling the world and sharing their love with family and many friends at their residences in Naples, FL, Chautauqua, NY, Burke, VA, and Boca Raton, FL.

His love of learning, nature, spirituality, philosophy and people will live on through we who knew and loved him. He will be deeply missed. Contributions in Clair's memory can be made to the Sloatsburg Public Library, 1 Liberty Rock Road, Sloatsburg, NY 10974 or the Audubon Society. Following a scattering of Clair's ashes over Chautauqua Lake, a gathering and smorgasbord will be held in the library at the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Jamestown, NY on July 18, 2015.

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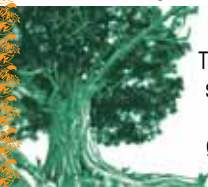
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SPORTS

Robinson long stick midfielder Jack Rowlett, right, scored three goals against South County on Saturday.



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Robinson Boys' Lax Spreads Offensive Wealth

Seven different Rams score multiple goals in win over SoCo.

By JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The Robinson boys' lacrosse team returned most of its firepower from last year's state champion ship run, entered Saturday's contest against South County with a 9-2 record and had won 26 of its previous 27 games against public school opponents, a streak dating back to early in the 2014 campaign.

In other words, the Rams are good. Real good.

But just in case there was any doubt whether Robinson has what it takes to compete for a second straight state title, the Rams put forth one of their best offensive efforts of the season on Saturday.

Facing a South County team, considered one of the best in the region, the Rams had seven different players score multiple goals during a 16-9 victory on May 2 at Robinson Secondary School.

"I'm starting to see the patience that I'm looking for offensively," Robinson head coach Matt Curran said. "... This is huge, and one of the reasons is we've had some good offensive outputs, but not against a team — no offense to the teams we've played — but a team of this caliber. This was really big for our momentum. ... This was the type of victory we needed."

South County entered the contest with a 10-2 record and briefly took a 4-3 lead on a goal with 2:53 remaining in the second quarter. Robinson responded with a pair of goals and led 5-4 at halftime.

Robinson led for the entire second half.

"I think this is one of the best games we've played all year," said Jack Rowlett, a senior long stick midfielder who will play for the University of North Carolina. "As a team, it wasn't just one player shining. Everyone contributed ..."

Rowlett scored three goals Saturday, giving him 16 for the season.

"Getting a hat trick as a long stick, [Rowlett is] just such a weapon," Curran said. "... Long stick middies, you don't get that. You might have one or two goals on the year in a transition. Jack has 16 goals on the season and that's just kind of unheard of with a long pole. He can dodge against anybody. If he has a shorty on him, he has the green light."

Senior attackman Chapman Jasien said Rowlett makes life difficult for opposing defenses.

"That's huge coming from a long stick middle," said Jasien, who will play college lacrosse for the Naval Academy. "That's tough for another team; that's tough to defend. We'll kind of get out of his way and let him work on offense; let him get his shot ..."

"Those shots really help us out a lot. We encourage it big time."

Senior attackman Tommy Gallogly also recorded a hat trick for Robinson.

Senior midfielder Jack Smith, junior attackman Johnny Daniel, senior attackman Chris White, junior midfielder Austin Henry, and Jasien each scored two goals for the Rams.

"I think it's good for us," Rowlett said. "We're hitting our stride at the right time. We started a little shaky, not playing as well as we could have. This is a big game for us to help us build toward the team we can be, the team we should be [come late] May, the beginning of June."

Robinson defeated Oakton 14-4 on Tuesday, improving its record to 11-2. The Rams will close the regular season with a road game against Centreville at 7:15 p.m. on Monday, May 11.



Robinson senior Tommy Gallogly finished with a hat trick during the Rams' 16-9 win over South County on Saturday.



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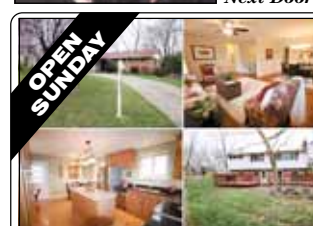


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