

Reston CONNECTION

Both children and adults participated in the second annual Lake Anne Chalk on the Water Festival at Reston Lake Anne Plaza held on June 11 and June 12. The colorful event was sponsored by both Lake Anne and the Initiative for Public Art Reston (IPAR).

Art Stays Active In Reston

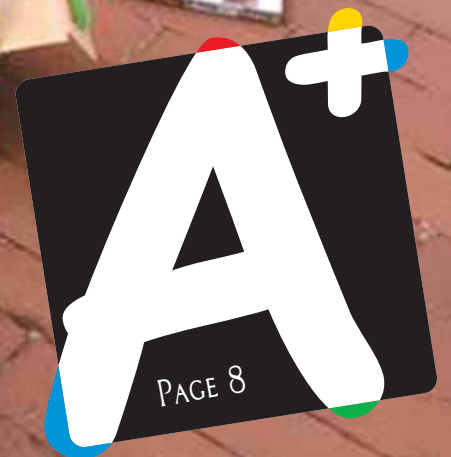
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CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

The 25th annual Taste of Reston will fill the town center with the delicious scents and delightful sounds on June 19-21.

Taste of Reston Returns June 19-21

The Taste of Reston, produced by the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, is the largest outdoor food festival in the area and was voted 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 "Northern Virginia's Best Food Festival" by Virginia Living magazine. Join the fun starting June 19-21 at Reston Town Center for a weekend of restaurants and community

vendors, live entertainment on three stages, a carnival, the Family Fun Zone and a Wine 'n Dine area. This weekend's schedule: Friday, June 19, 3-11 p.m.; Saturday, June 20, noon-11 p.m. Sunday, June 21, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., carnival only. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Visit www.restontaste.com.

WEEK IN RESTON

Village Center Open House

Supervisor Cathy Hudgins and the Jefferson Apartment Group are hosting an Open House to share the revised proposal for the Tall Oaks Village Center. The meeting will be held on Monday, June 22, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Reston Community Center at Lake Anne – Jo Ann Rose Gallery, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston.

Attendees will hear a briefing on the project and have an opportunity to provide feedback. Contact Goldie Harrison at 703-478-0283 or goldie.harrison@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Commemorating 70th Anniversary of War's End

As part of its continuing series celebrating Reston's early history, Reston Historic Trust (RHT) and Museum will present another free program on Thursday, June 25, 7 - 9 p.m., at the Jo Ann Rose Gallery at Reston Community Center - Lake Anne.

Historian Jim Lewis will present a slide show, commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the end of WWII. Stories and anecdotes from the audience will be welcome.

By the summer of 1945, the Americans had finally cornered Japan. Allied leadership was convinced that an invasion of the home islands was the best strategy for bringing about the desired "unconditional surrender" as quickly as possible. Strategists in Washington, Guam, and Manila were putting the finishing touches on a plan that would have been the greatest amphibious invasion in history and likely followed by the most gruesome land operations of all time.

Only a few Americans in 1945 were aware of the elaborate plans that had been prepared for the Allied invasion and even fewer were aware of the defenses the Japanese had prepared to counter the invasion.

Admission is free. Contact the Museum at 703-709-7700; email restonmuseum@gmail.com or visit www.restonmuseum.org.



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Bring On the Plazas

In Reston master plan, emphasis on plazas, mixed use, affordability, walkability and transportation that connects people.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Bob Simon, 101, reminded the Board of Supervisors of the excitement of Reston at the beginning.

"The opening in 1965 of Reston to the public involved 227 townhouses and 60 high rise units and a smattering of retail. Not a big deal," he said before the Board of Supervisors on June 2. "However, to our amazement, it turned out to be an international phenomenon. Nationally front page in newspapers, the Times, the Post. Feature articles in Life, Look, Fortune. A Japanese reporter was sent over with a translator to interview me.

"Over the years I've tried to analyze what happened to that little development. I think what happened was that it was reintroducing into the United States a gathering place called a plaza," he said.

"I felt very disheartened, having been fired in '67," he said. "My successors didn't appreciate what the plaza was and the consequential result of the Village Centers were not plazas, gathering places, important social venues but [instead they were] strip centers, shopping centers," Simon said before the Board of Supervisors. The Board adopted the second phase of the Reston Master Plan on June 2.

"My hope is that during the next 50 years,

all of those village centers will be destroyed and replaced by plazas surrounded by density," he said. "For the plazas to work they need the density to support the individual stores. The plazas are not in competition with other plazas let alone with the town center."

The Board of Supervisors approved the second phase of the Master Plan, which pledges to concentrate growth around transit station areas and village centers.

Simon wants his vision of a plaza, like Lake Anne, to be prominent for all the Village Centers.

"It is very important for Tall Oaks to become a real village center and as a precedent to the other village centers, all of which are shopping centers.

So the concept of plaza is of a hard surface area where people can gather surrounded by local stores and by relatively dense residential units," said Simon. "I hope that's what we get for Tall Oaks and for thereafter for the other village centers."

The Board of Supervisors unanimously approved the Plan.

"The focus on Tall Oaks is exceptional because it is a center that is not functioning today and it has an opportunity to be a true village center," said Supervisor Cathy Hudgins. "That conversation has begun with the community and the owner has been present for that and we look forward to that continuing."



Founder's Day at Lake Anne Plaza in April, offered an example of plazas as gathering places. Eva Desrosiers had the best seat in the house in front of Lake Anne next to Bob Simon, the bronze version, with her daughter Michelle and granddog Rusty.

PHOTO BY
KEN MOORE/
THE CONNECTION

RESTON ASSOCIATION praised the plan and the process, while asking for one key addition.

"The plan better protects the stable neighborhoods in Reston where growth is focused within the TSAs and the village centers," said Cate Fulkerson, of the Reston Association. "This plan better incorporates the essential elements of the planned community of Reston, those characteristics that make Reston unique, giving it its sense of place."

She successfully urged the Board of Supervisors to add one sentence to the Reston Master Plan.

"Reston has always been a place where nature is valued and protected," she said. "That is the most important characteristic of Reston and it needs to be clearly stated and adopted into the plan."

Supervisor Cathy Hudgins expressed her excitement for the plan's details.

"Phase II gave us the opportunity to reaffirm the principles of Reston ... that is about

mixed use, affordability, walkability and transportation that connects people."

Hudgins also noted the importance of "the roles plazas play. ... The proposed amendment envisions transformation of village centers into true community gathering places with a vibrant mix of uses that frame a public plaza and focus on high quality design and architecture."

Highlights of the new master plan according to Hudgins:

"New residential development throughout Reston should address housing diversity and affordability through the provision of different types styles and prices of housing including senior and universally designed housing. The transportation recommendations emphasize, multi-modal transportation system featuring a robust bicycle and pedestrian network. The proposed plan fosters environmental stewardship and provides urban parks within the transit station areas and village centers."

COMMENTARY

Political Prospects for Medicaid Expansion

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

Virginia voters in areas with contested primaries went to the polls last week to select their candidates for the Nov. 3 general election when all seats in the General Assembly are up for election as are many local offices. Primary elections attract mostly party faithfuls in small numbers and are not clear barometers of the mood of voters generally on issues. Some of the results in General Assembly primaries merit attention.

In the Republican dominated Shenandoah Valley, senior Senator Emmett Hanger who was one of the three Republicans in the General Assembly who supported Medicaid expansion had two more conservative challengers who made Medicaid expansion an issue in the



primary with both of them opposing expansion. Hanger won easily. In Hampton Roads, the lone Democratic incumbent who opposed Medicaid expansion lost to his primary challenger who supported it. Before jumping to the conclusion that Medicaid expansion has suddenly become popular in the Commonwealth, there is the primary involving the Speaker of the House of Delegates. The Speaker was reported as campaigning in part on his being able to keep Virginia from expanding Medicaid. Of course, his Tea Party opponent opposed Medicaid and suggested that the Speaker's opposition had not been strong enough. After campaigning hard and out-spending his challenger, the Speaker won easily.

Across the state a senate incumbent and

a delegate incumbent, both Republican who opposed Medicaid expansion, beat their challengers who also opposed Medicaid expansion. The election results do not give a clear indication of the outcome of what will be a critically important issue for the 2016 General Assembly session. The Governor remains committed to Medicaid expansion, but his having any chance of success is dependent upon the outcome of the Senate races.

In the November state senate races there will be several key contests. At a 21-19 advantage for Republicans, Democrats need to pick up at least one seat to give Democratic Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam the opportunity to break ties. The seats being vacated by the two other moderate Republicans who supported Medicaid expansion offer hope for Democrats, but Democrats need also to hang onto the seat vacated with the retirement of Democratic

State Senator Chuck Colgan. The only Democratic state senator in western Virginia is in a three-way race.

If elections were based purely on facts, Medicaid expansion would be a sure winner. The White House Council of Economic Advisors issued a report recently that said expansion would reach an additional 179,000 Virginia residents with lifesaving care. The report also said Virginia will miss out on \$1.24 billion in federal funding in 2016 by not expanding Medicaid. That is billions of Virginia taxpayer dollars that could come back to the Commonwealth, freeing up state funds for crucial under-funded programs.

Go to the polls this November, and in the meantime let friends and families know the importance of Medicaid expansion and that their votes will matter in making it happen.



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NEWS

Citizens Speak on Upcoming Family Life Education Vote

LaTeef honored at June 11 School Board meeting.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION



Harris LaTeef

The Fairfax County School Board's May 7 meeting drew a passionate and boisterous crowd that filled the Luther Jackson Middle School auditorium and spilled out into the main lobby. That night the board voted in favor of adding "gender identity" to its nondiscrimination policy for students, employees and applicants for employment.

On June 25, the board may face a similar scene. It's scheduled to vote on proposed updates from the Family Life Education Curriculum Advisory Committee, including adding the topics of gender identity and sexual orientation, beginning in seventh grade Family Life Education, classes out of which parents may opt out their students.

Other advertised changes include moving a portion of the curriculum from Family Life Education to students' health courses. This would be done to comply with the Virginia Board of Education's recently revised health standards of learning for kindergarten through tenth grade.

According to Fairfax County Public Schools, the topics that would no longer be part of Family Life Education (and therefore no-longer opt-out) are:

- ❖ Personal development (emotions/feelings, self-image, self-concept, personal characteristics, skills to work and play successfully in a community)
- ❖ Healthy relationships (includes conflict resolution skills)
- ❖ Respecting individual differences (disabilities, ethnicities, cultures)
- ❖ Mental health areas such as depression and suicide

The recommendations came up as new business at the school board's May 21 meeting. At the June 11 meeting, eight out of the 10 citizen speakers and one additional speaker on a prepared video addressed the recommendations. Each of those speakers opposed the proposed changes.

"How one identifies should not take the place of science and truth," said citizen Steven Mosley, who introduced himself as a "black, ordained, evangelical reverend" who works in higher education. "Here's the truth we need to hang on to: Man cannot determine his gender just like I can't determine my race. Both these things are gifts from God and affirmed by science."

Citizen Mary Beth Style said, "Fairfax County Public Schools have no expertise to teach lessons on the development of transgender identity.

"This religious belief that the soul is separate from the body and that man creates his own reality is not supported by science,"

Style continued. "There is no agreement in the therapeutic world and certainly no agreement in society or even among the theorists who are fighting among themselves. Yet you are teaching it anyway. That is arrogant."

Community review of the board action will continue until Friday, June 19, through the website www.fcps.edu/is/hpe/fle.shtml. The page contains frequently asked questions and answers from Fairfax County Public Schools, as well as contact information for Elizabeth Payne, health and physical education coordinator for the school system. Email comments can be sent to FLEcomments@fcps.edu.

Citizens may also request to speak at the upcoming meeting by either registering online at www.fcps.edu/schlbld/meetings/requestspeak.shtml or calling the School Board office at 571-423-1075 during normal business hours, beginning three days prior to the meeting. Ten spots are available and are filled on a first-come basis.

THE SCHOOL BOARD also recognized its outgoing, 44th student representative Harris LaTeef, a senior at Langley High School. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Karen Garza followed the individual board members and summed up their effusive compliments of LaTeef's work.

"You're one of the most impressive young men I've ever been around: intelligent, articulate, calm under pressure and wise beyond your years," Garza said. "Being the student voice on the board, you always added significant value to our work and reminded us why we're doing this."

In his remarks, LaTeef thanked the board for teaching him about "politics, education, human nature and the true meaning of serving one's community." He also offered the public some commentary from his perspective. "Though they may seem divided at times," he said, "each has the same goal, to make Fairfax County Public Schools a great school system to send your kids to each and every morning." LaTeef's final thoughts were directed back at the School Board members: "Keep fighting the good fight," he said. "Don't let petty politics or gamesmanship distract you from why you are here, and that is to focus on the future." After graduating, LaTeef plans to attend the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

LETTER

Reston Tall Oaks Village Center Identity Crisis

To the Editor:

Robert Simon envisioned Reston as being a place where people could walk to work and shopping, walk to recreation and nature without using a car. He designed a number of Village Centers that were actually within walking distance of most of the residents homes in Reston. One of those Village Centers is located at the corner of Wiehle Avenue and North Shore Drive. It is called the Tall Oaks Village Center. It has been in disrepair for a number of years, a decade, and no one in Reston cared. It was sold a few times and most recently to another developer.

Village Centers are more than just shopping and retail. They are gathering places for people who see each other occasionally from nearby neighborhoods. Where parents and kids could easily walk after hitting the RA pool and maybe have a coke or ice cream. Where dog walkers could sit and chat. Architecturally Village Centers made people feel like they could stop by no reason other than to hang out a while. Inviting open spaces, sitting areas (covered) and up till now, maybe a county or RA office or branch library. The developer's current plans allow for none of these. Worse yet, I believe the RA and county don't seem to think it is important. Actions speak louder than words.

Who is responsible for ensuring the principles of Robert Simon's vision and association bylaws are adhered to? Not an easy answer. There is the Fairfax County Planning Commission, the Reston Association (RA) Board of Directors, along with the RA Planning and Zoning Committee and the RA Design Review Board. That's a lot of oversight. So what have they been doing during the last 10 years of the Tall Oaks Village Center's decline? Ask them yourself. Send an email.

From the RA website: "The primary purpose of the Reston Planning and Zoning Committee is to provide a vehicle whereby the community can ensure that the development of Reston as a planned residential community (PRC) follows the founding principles. Its primary focus is the appropriate development of land use within the legal constraints of the PRC Zoning Law, county and state ordinances and laws."

The redevelopment of the Tall Oaks Village Center in Reston is proving to be quite challenging. The developer has met with Reston Association and the Fairfax Planning Commission on a number of occasions. Currently the developer has over 90 percent of the seven acre site planned for dense residential. The planned commercial space is a little over 3,000 square feet. Not much bigger than a 7-11. The developer states that future commercial space would fail, despite the fact there are seven or eight businesses still there, some more than 20 years. With a parking lot that fills to about half capacity on the weekend.

You can't blame the developer. They spent a lot of money to buy the property and

should make money from their investment. You can blame the Reston Association and Fairfax County for not taking an active role in the redevelopment of the Tall Oaks Village Center. Sure you can hear them say, not my job, that is not what we are supposed to do, etc. But if not them then who should continue the vision held by Robert Simon the founder of Reston? The developer?

The residents of the Tall Oaks area say they want a small grocery store so they don't have to spend another 20 minutes getting home (traffic lights) if they stop at the store. Not going to happen. I heard that our Reston Association Board Tall Oaks representative said that it is still walkable from Tall Oaks to the Lake Anne Village Center. I wonder if she ever tried that walk a mile or more when it's 90 degrees outside or 30 degrees outside. It is a hike. Driving down Wiehle Avenue or even North Shore Drive, you will never see people walking on those streets to go to a village center.

I am fairly certain, based on the latest review by the Reston Association Design Review Board where the term Village Center mysteriously was dropped during the discussion, and the term Cluster (residential housing) was used by DRB board members and the developer, that the Tall Oaks Village Center will die, and new residential cluster may be born. I don't want to minimize the effort necessary to find a new definition for the term "Village Center" but that is where city planning, the RA design review board, and the county can step up and actively participate in creating this new vision.

I ask this, who decided to kill the Tall Oaks Village Center and turn it into a residential cluster? Who will take the responsibility and put in the hard work to be the champion of Reston, and redefine what a Village Center will be for the rest of the life of Reston? Got me. Remember "actions speak louder than words."

Bill Woloch
Reston

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to herndon@connectionnewspapers.com by the Friday prior to the following week's paper.

THURSDAY/JUNE 18

ESL for Advanced Students. 10 a.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join Richard's Thursday conversational language group for adults, and learn English. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/>.

Sensory Friendly Story Time. 10:30 a.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. This multi-sensory story time, geared towards children with special needs, provides plenty of time for interactive stories, songs, music and social interaction. Ages birth-5 with adult. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/.

Dialogs & Grammar: ESL for Advanced Beginners and Intermediate Students. 11:45 a.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join Judy's Thursday conversational language group for adults, and learn English. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/ your profile and geared towards the job that you want and the language a recruiter is seeking. <http://www.eventbrite.com/o/the-career-path-partners-8061588850>



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OPINION

Odds for Greater Police Accountability

BY JOHN LOVAAS
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST

Some in Reston say I have a tendency to be a prophet of gloom and doom, rarely projecting a positive outlook. But, today I see light—in the Ad Hoc Commission to Review Police Practices (AHC) of all places.

When Chairman Sharon Bulova created the Commission after the latest killing by Fairfax County Police and 18 months of absolute stonewalling by the Police and Supervisors, I was suspicious. Public outrage forced action, but Police leaders, the County Executive, and most Supervisors opposed real reform. The 38-member Commission—with strong media reps, mental health specialists, and citizens such as me lacks diversity and is loaded with police (12) and allies.

Yet, after three months, the odds for reform outcomes look better. One important reason is that many officers seem to realize that “times have changed and we have to change,” to paraphrase a senior Police Information Officer. In fact, the AHC Communications subcommittee appears poised to strike blows for greater transparency, e.g., prompt naming of officers who kill civilians. Communications are vital, but it is only one of five subcommittees generating recommendations for full AHC blessing before



going to the Board of Supervisors for final action.

The other 4 subcommittees are: 1) Use of Force—training and rules for use; 2) Independent Oversight and Investigations—that is, citizen oversight; 3) Crisis Intervention/ Mental

Health Training—a high proportion of police interactions involve people with mental health issues; and, 4) Recruitment of Police. I am a member of the Independent Oversight subcommittee and have observed all subcommittees except Recruitment. Their meetings have featured animated and, mostly, productive discussions with each having its own dynamic.

In the Communications meeting, for example, police Public Information Officers outlined proposed changes to provide more, and more timely, information to the public. But, they had to convince tough, skeptical local media reps on the AHC who have had enough “no comment” and stonewalling from the FCPD. Discussion moved to specifics. I.e., what information would the Police actually reveal? And, the PIOs were responsive. One could sense a growing level of trust. Both sides agreed to recommend changes such as reveal-

ing police shooters’ names within 24-48 hours (vs. months and longer) and more detailed incident reporting.

The Use of Force group struggled, but began to work through differences. Some veteran officers denied differences existed between police academy trainers and officers “in the field”. One even said he had never seen a single difference in twenty-some years. He was contradicted by colleagues who acknowledged problems. These were open disagreements, followed by discussion of possible improvement. The men and women in blue were not the monolith I had assumed.

The Mental Health subcommittee, with strong civilian advocates, is moving forward as FCPD commits to crisis intervention training for all officers and the county explores 24-hour mental health service alternatives to incarceration in the Fairfax jail.

The recent taser killing of a troubled woman by sheriff’s deputies served as a reminder of the urgency for action. Police acknowledged a lack of preparation and resources to manage confrontations with mentally disturbed citizens. A positive beginning. Unfortunately, the Independent Oversight subcommittee cannot yet find common ground despite the fact that the Commission’s central goal is to restore police accountability to civilian authority and the public. Leadership must step up. Overall, the odds for reform are looking pretty good.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

What Can We Learn From Europeans?

To the Editor:

When people hear the word sustainability, they often shy away from it. To some, it is about creating resilient infrastructure and systems that will last for many future generations. To others, it is about protecting and preserving parts of our earth, for either human enjoyment or the sake of the earth itself. Sustainability is about equity, economy and the environment. When Robert E. Simon decided to build a city, he envisioned one in which work and play could take place within the same shared space, that people would find a sense of place, and one in which nature was present and sprawl was hindered. His vision was one of innovation, and has been replicated throughout the United States since its establishment. 51 years after its creation, Reston, including Lake Anne Plaza and the surrounding areas, still displays and attempts to uphold these innovative ideas.

I’ve spent many weeks in Europe this summer learning about sustainable practices. What do the Europeans do that we could learn from? Often these practices are performed strictly out of convenience and efficiency, and the environmentally friendly aspect is just an added bonus. These practices include integrated public transit systems, low energy infrastructure, community housing, slow food, and maintaining a high quality of life. During my time, I often think of Lake Anne, which embodies most

of these themes. But there is one aspect Europeans exhibit that Reston could learn from: a slower pace of life and enjoying the environment around them. This could mean nature or it could mean the built environment. Europeans, especially in parts of Germany and Switzerland that are leaders in sustainable environmental practices, are relaxed and confident. They are on time, they are brilliant, and they enjoy life.

I noticed that when I ordered a coffee or tea in a café, it was never put in a to-go cup. My check was never brought to me, I had to ask for it. And when I did pay, I was never shuffled out the door, but invited to stay longer. During lunch time, business owners and workers took a two hour lunch break and were often seen lounging around grassy areas or swimming in the lake, especially in Zurich. Statues and monuments were not only structures of awe and amazement but also places to sit and eat lunch or talk with friends. In the evenings, people wandered from shop to shop holding beer and wine and enjoying the history and culture around them, not concerned with an open container law or driving 15 minutes home after a few drinks with friends. When I walked the streets, people looked me in the eye, and often stared. When I felt uncomfortable, I realized they were just taking the time to notice the people around them.

I gradually felt myself slowing down, walking with a lighter, less deliberate step. I watched people and studied store windows and enjoyed my coffee that was not in a plastic to go cup. I put my phone away at dinner and

tasted each bite. Especially in Northern Virginia, we often feel rushed, ready and waiting for the next activity, the next new car, the next fresh coat of paint on the house, the next cup of coffee, the next new restaurant, and it is exhausting. Part of fulfilling the brilliant vision that Simon set out to achieve so long ago is taking the time to slow down, notice and enjoy the fact that his vision became a reality. Part of being a more sustainable Reston means appreciating the present.

The city of Reston was modeled after planned communities in Europe. It already captures the essence of a picturesque European town settled on the water. The live music, outdoor seating and farmers market at Lake Anne all contribute towards a sense of place and community. But Reston also suffers at the hands of its surroundings: the D.C. metro area. The “pace of life” as I like to call it is essential in maintaining a high quality of life. Appreciating local food and architecture, walking and biking, chewing slowly, engaging in conversation, being an advocate for the community, and putting the phone away all contribute towards a more sustainable Reston, and are absolutely necessary. I encourage these actions in the day-to-day and the rest will follow.

Cat Humphries
Herndon

Reston
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NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

This year's recipients of the Reston Hospital Center Medical Staff Scholarships.

Reston Hospital Center Awards \$15,500 in Scholarships to Students

Reston Hospital Center awarded scholarships to 17 Fairfax and Loudoun County High School seniors in recognition of their academic excellence and excitement for pursuing a career in healthcare.

At an award ceremony at Reston Hospital Center on Thursday, June 4, John Deardorff, president and CEO of Reston Hospital Center said, "The exceptional students that are here with us today are looking forward to furthering their interest and education in the field of healthcare, and we are delighted to support them through our scholarship fund."

Each year the medical staff at Reston Hospital Center offers \$15,500 in scholarships to local high schools. For the past 15 years, Reston Hospital Center has awarded more than \$250,000 in academic scholarships to students in Northern Virginia.

The recipients of the Reston

Hospital Center Medical Staff Scholarships are: Madihah Alam – Potomac Falls High School; Nicole Batt – Briar Woods High School; Courtney Brown – Westfield High School; Morgan Carson – Chantilly High School; Natalia Chavez Choque – McLean High School; Kiranpreet Kaur – Broad Run High School; Mucahit Kaya – Park View High School; Madison Lintner – South Lakes High School; Melissa Liu – Dominion High School; Anthony Lupinacci – James Madison High School; Lydia Monanino – Oakton High School; Emily Schmid – Potomac Falls High School; Sahib Sohal – Langley High School; Emily Stanley – Herndon High School; Yasaman Vahdat – Centreville High School; Lyric Venable – South Lakes High School; Yasleen Villegas – Herndon High School

For more information about Reston Hospital Center visit restonhospital.com.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

habrock@reston.org or 703-435-7986.

SATURDAY/JUNE 20

One-To-One Technology Help. 11 a.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Stop in and get help with smartphones and tablets.

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A variety of summer camp activities are offered at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, Culmore Character Club in Fairfax County. 3D printing will be a new activity this summer.

YouthQuest Runs ThinkLink

Experts say 3D printing can open a world of imagination and critical thinking.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Adonis Gonzales had always wanted to become a master electrician, but when he was asked to leave high school at 16 because of a poor attendance record, his prospects looked bleak. He enrolled in Freestate Challenge Academy, a tuition-free program that offers 16- to 18-year-old high school dropouts an opportunity to earn a GED and learn a trade. A 3D printing technology class that Gonzales took through the program proved to be eye-opening. “When I first went into the class, I saw the computers and printer and thought that it was going to be too hard,” said Gonzales. “But then the instructor said that if we could imagine something, then we can create it. The first thing I made was a heart with my daughter’s name on it.” The class was part of an initiative called 3D ThinkLink, a program designed to teach critical thinking and problem solving skills through 3D design and printing. The class was run by YouthQuest, a Chantilly-based nonprofit that provides at-risk youth with educational scholarships to pursue their college or vocational aspirations.

Linda Mann, Ph.D., one of the

organization’s founders, believes young children can benefit from ThinkLink because the lessons and life skills learned extend beyond technology. The class will be offered as part of a camp this summer at the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, Culmore Character Club in Fairfax County. “I discovered that we could use 3D printing to teach critical thinking and problem solving to the kids we served,” said Mann. “Many of the kids hadn’t learned to think critically or to problem solve. They’d learned that failure was a way of life, but with 3D printing, they learn that failure isn’t the end, it’s the beginning.”

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB staffers agree, saying ThinkLink will inspire students.

“It will be an excellent opportunity for the youth here, who sometimes are in difficult living situations, to see that if they work hard

“With 3D printing, they learn that failure isn’t the end, it’s the beginning.”

— Linda Mann, Ph.D., YouthQuest

and put in effort, they can have a bright future,” said Chris Roberts, science, technology, education and math (STEM) regional director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington. “I think the students will be excited. It will be inspirational and have activities that will lead them to think more about what they can do in their future and what the future will bring.” “It will reinforce their existing

Ideas for Summer Learning

Experts offer suggestions for avoiding summer brain drain.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

While summer is opportunity for fun, it can also be a breeding ground for stagnation. In fact, the National Summer Learning Association reports children can experience learning loss when they are not engaged in educational activities while on school break.

From summer reading programs at local libraries to nature walks in the woods, local educators offer ideas for combining enriching experiences and warm weather fun. “Most local libraries have a reading program that offers kids incentives for reading books during the summer,” said Peggy Woodstock, a Bethesda, Md., based reading specialist. “They add an element of competition which can offer a boost to many kids.” Think of the natural world as an interactive classroom as well. “Hiking and camping are great ways to

get kids excited about science and nature,” said Amy Adams, director, Aspiring Scientists Summer Internship Program at George Mason University in Fairfax. “There are some local parks that have nature programs and guided walks.” Adams recommends Eleanor Lawrence Park in Chantilly and Great Falls Park in McLean. “Allow children to explore, but it’s always nice to give guidance as well,” said Adams. “For example, ‘Let’s go on this hike and look for evidence that an animal was present,’ and then kids get involved trying determine which animal it was.” Trading video games for blue

“Allow children to explore, but it’s always nice to give guidance as well.”

— Amy Adams, George Mason University

foam blocks at the National Building Museum’s “Work, Play, Build” exhibit is another option. It’s a hands-on, interactive space that offers children an opportunity to see the work of architects and engineers.

The National Zoo and the Natural History Museum in Washington, D.C., the National Aquarium in Baltimore, Maryland and the Air and Space Museum’s Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center in Chantilly are also good choices for children. In

addition, the Potomac Overlook Nature Center in Arlington is “great for teaching kids about birds, turtles and birds of prey,” said Adams. “Farms or petting zoos are also great for teaching kids about animals and nature.” “4-H programs at local fairs would be another great way to learn about nature and animals,” Adams continued. “Parents can look online for at-home science experiments for kids,” on sites like <http://www.curiosityzone.com/Experiments>.

There is plenty of inspiration to be had at home as well, says Gail Multop, who teaches early childhood development at Northern Virginia Community College. “You can build things at home with your kids,” she said. “Experiments with water are great. Use funnels and buckets of water and experiment with how water flows.” Multop shares ideas for learning on her blog, “The Arts and Early Childhood Education.”

For building projects at home, “parents should save cardboard, paper towel rolls, shoeboxes, etc. and provide duct tape and paints. Kids can build castles [and] space ships,” she added. For more inspiration, Multop recommends a blog by Alexandria-



Activities such as building “driveways” in the sand can encourage learning at home during summer months.

based educator Peggy Ashbrook: <http://families.naeyc.org/blog/124>.

“She has lots of activities on it that encourage learning about sci-

ence in a fun way,” said Multop. “What’s really important for kids is to inquire and for parents not to give them the answer, but help them find the answers.”



Lake Anne Elementary Earns Eco-Schools Honor

Lake Anne Elementary School was recognized by National Wildlife Federation’s Eco-Schools USA program for exceptional achievement in “greening” physical structure and grounds, conserving natural resources and integrating environmental education into curricula. It is one of five schools so honored in the county to win the Green Flag, Eco-Schools USA’s highest honor. To win the Green Flag, Lake Anne’s students, parents and staff tackled a host of sustainability initiatives that began with forming an Eco-Action team; auditing facility energy efficiency, waste disposal and other environmental impact areas; and instituting environmental-themed curricula. These steps led to a rainwater barrel, monthly Walk and Roll to Schools, recycling paper, recycling juice boxes in the cafeteria, and many other projects, all designed to raise environmental and natural awareness, cut waste, increase student engagement and save money for the school.



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8/5/2015.....Wellbeing
8/12/2015.....HomeLifeStyle
8/19/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools – Back to School – Private Schools
8/26/2015.....Newcomers & Community Guide Pullout

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PHOTO BY RYAN DUNN/THE CONNECTION

On June 13-14 Reston Lake Anne Plaza hosted its 2nd annual Lake Anne Chalk on the Water Festival. There were three categories to participate in, each with cash and other prizes awarded. More than 100 chalk artists participated in this event.



PHOTO BY RYAN DUNN/THE CONNECTION

Cindy Vasco won first place for her work at the Reston Photo Society's photo exhibit at the Jo Ann Rose Gallery. The exhibit is on display until June 29.

Art Stays Active In Reston

Creative works at Reston Lake Anne.

BY RYAN DUNN
THE CONNECTION

This past weekend Reston Lake Anne Plaza hosted its second annual Lake Anne Chalk on the Water Festival. There were three categories for persons to participate in, each with cash and other prizes awarded. More than 100 chalk artists participated in this event. Participants had two days to complete their work. Despite heat and humidity, people of many ages took the opportunity to draw chalk art. "The hardest part was keeping my sweat from dripping on it while I was drawing," said artist Ioannis Hadjikyriakou.

Lake Anne collaborated with Initiative for Public Art-Reston (IPAR) to bring this public art themed event to the plaza. IPAR imagines public art throughout Reston that inspires the community and engages the mind and senses. Funds raised from the festival were donated to IPAR. Participants could purchase a "plot" of brick space on the plaza and create whatever flowed from their imagination. Approximately 100 spaces/plots were available for this event. Reston Town Center will host a ChalkFest on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11-12.

Sunday, June 14 was also the first date of the return of the Summer Film Festival, a free outdoor cinema festival which begins at sundown near the Lake Anne Plaza. The schedule for July 12 is Spielberg's "E.T.,"



Lake Anne Plaza Marketing/PR Spokesperson Maurisa Potts was on Good Morning Washington to talk about the Chalk on the Water Festival. She created a little chalk memento for the anchors. www.chalkonthewater.com

Aug. 9 the musical "West Side Story," and Aug. 30 the documentary film Jazz on a Summer's Day. The shows begin at dusk, close to 8:30 p.m.

The Reston Community Center at Lake Anne is hosting an art display by the Reston Photographic Society. The exhibit, PhotoArt, is at the Jo Ann Rose Gallery and continues until June 29. The Reston Photographic Society (RPS) is open to all League of Reston Artists (LRA) interested in photography, and meets on the first Mondays of each month, September through May.

Also located at Lake Anne is the Reston Art Gallery & Studios, a privately owned small cooperative gallery and studio. Open on the weekends, appointments to see the gallery can be made for weekdays. The Reston Art Gallery & Studios houses 11 artists who have

their own workspace in the gallery, and it's possible to watch them working and creating through the windows. Reston Art Gallery & Studios exhibits works of art year-round, in both the main gallery and in side workrooms.

Argentinean-born Claudia Samper holds a degree in architecture from the University of Buenos Aires. After moving to the United States, Claudia studied graphic design, photography, ceramics and painting. She describes herself as an "empathetic" person and looks to relationships and "the psychology of life itself" for artistic inspiration.

Claudia has exhibited around the country, and her paintings are part of collections in Argentina and Spain. Currently, Claudia has a solo show at the Reston Art Gallery titled "Interplay," which features pieces that explore the world

of opposites and dreams, a rearrangement of different visual or intuitive elements. This show lasts from June 4 to July 2.

Reston South Lakes High School art students are working on a follow-up to last year's popular multicolored pyramid at the Lake Thoreau spillway. This year, South Lakes students are designing an iridescent double-helix sculpture. The group's project was approved by the Reston Association Design Review Board. The project should be installed in June. Members of the STEAM Team include Margaret Lashley, Josh Rodriguez, Kathleen Roherty, Tehmeena Salahin, Lucy Nguyen, Carson Bush, Victoria Slaski, Leah Moyer, Samantha Malzahn, Cale Sherman, Johnathan Doctor, Ryan Monaco and Ben Paul.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LAKE ANNE PLAZA MARKETING

Artists of all ages participated in the second annual Lake Anne Chalk on the Water Festival at Reston Lake Anne Plaza.

Send announcements to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline is the Friday prior to the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

THROUGH SUNDAY/JUNE 28

PhotoArt Exhibit. 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday - Friday. JoAnne Rose Gallery, Reston Community Center at Lake Anne, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. The Reston Photographic Society, a special-interest group of the League of Reston Artists, showcases photography from members and nonmembers in the annual PhotoArt exhibit. www.leagueofrestonartists.org

THROUGH SATURDAY/SEPT. 5

Reston Concerts on the Town. 7:30-10 p.m. Reston Town Center. Bring lawn chairs or picnic blankets and enjoy live music in the Pavilion Saturday nights. Free. Rain or shine. 703-912-4062. www.restontowncenter.com/concerts

THURSDAY/JUNE 18

Owl Prowl. 7 - 8:30 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. All ages. Meet a wildlife rehabilitator from the Raptor Conservancy to view live owls native to Virginia. Afterwards prowl trails along The Glade Stream Valley in search of resident owls. Reservations required by June 15. Fee: \$7/person RA members · \$9/person Non-members. naturecenter@reston.org. 703-476-9689 and press 5.

THURSDAY/JUNE 18-SEPT. 3

Take a Break Concert Series. 7-9 p.m. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Listen to some great music live.

FRIDAY/JUNE 19

School's Out for Summer Pool Party. 4-7 p.m. Golf Course Island Pool, 11301 Links Drive, Reston. Come to the Hawaiian-themed pool party to celebrate the end of school. There will be a DJ and a cookout to include hamburgers, hotdogs, drinks and dessert. Be sure to wear your Hawaiian print shirts and swim suits.

FRIDAY/JUNE 19-SATURDAY/SEPT. 5

Summer Reading Program. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Come to the library all summer for books and events. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/r/>.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JUNE 19-21

Taste of Reston. Friday: 3-11 p.m.; Saturday: noon-11 p.m. Sunday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Carnival games and rides with a family fun zone. Visit www.restontaste.com for more.

SATURDAY/JUNE 20

Family Fun Entertainment Series: Pinot & Augustine Show. 10 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. Reston Town Square Park. Performed by the incomparable Mark Jaster and Sabrina Mandell. Fun, knock-about comedy and classic physical mime antics. Augustine is the star. Pinot is trying to steal the show. Hilarity ensues as these two mute fools try to prove who is who with gentle humor and playful interaction. Free. restoncommunitycenter.com.

Fishing with Fathers. 10:30 a.m. - Noon. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. All ages. Take Dad fishing to celebrate Father's Day. Join us at Lake Audubon to learn fish facts, fishing basics and practice casting. We'll provide rods and bait.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Those 16 and older wishing to fish will need a fishing license available online at www.dgif.state.va.us. Fee: \$7/person RA members, \$9/person Non-members. naturecenter@reston.org. 703-476-9689.

Rocknoceroceros. 2:30 p.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Coach Cotton, Williebob and Boogie Woogie Bennie play award-winning music for the whole family. Please sign up each child and adult separately. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/>.

SUNDAY/JUNE 21

T-Ball II. 10 a.m. Lake Fairfax, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lakefairfax/>.

MONDAY/JUNE 22

The Wonderful World of Bats. 7 p.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Learn about bats and make a bat T-shirt. Bring a white or light colored T-shirt or buy shirt for \$4. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/>.

Terrific Twos. 11 a.m. Herndon Library, 768 Center Street, Herndon. Jump and jive through story time with rhythmic books, songs and movement activities. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/he/>.

TUESDAY/JUNE 23

The Folk Club of Reston-Herndon Concert. 7:15 p.m. Amphora Diner Deluxe, 1151 Elden Street, Herndon. National touring artists Pat Wictor, Joe Jencks and Greg Greenway will perform as Brother Sun at The Folk Club of Reston-Herndon. Fusing folk, Americana, blues and pop, as well as a cappella singing, Brother Sun is an explosion of musical diversity. Tickets: DAHurdSr@cs.com or at the door \$13 members, \$14 non-members.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 24

Meet Me at the Movies - Senior Movie Day at Bow Tie Cinemas. 10 a.m. Reston Association presents a feature film. Refreshments and door prizes are provided prior to the movie. Free to those 55 years old and older. Doors open 9:15 a.m. Information: Ashleigh@reston.org, 703.435.6530, or www.reston.org.

Busia Bear's Third Annual Music Festival. 7 p.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Stop in and engage in story time with music and Busia Bear singing and dancing. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/>.

THURSDAY/JUNE 25



"Inter-Play" is a show of a new series of oil and acrylic paintings by Claudia Samper on exhibit from June 5 until July 2 at Reston Art Gallery & Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza.

Family Drive In Movie. 8:30 p.m. Lake Audobon Pool, 2070 Twin Branches Road, Reston. A free poolside movie. Popcorn and drinks will be provided, but don't forget your favorite float. Movie titles will be advertised at the event location.

All Join In. 10:30 a.m. Reston Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Stop in for story time with stories and songs for children ages 2-5. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/>.

Downfall: The Empire's Last Stand. 7-9 p.m. Reston Community Center, 1609 Washington Plaza North, Reston. A slide-oriented journey presented by historian Jim Lewis, commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the end of WWII. Stories and anecdotes from the audience will be welcome. Admission is free. 703-709-7700. restonmuseum@gmail.com. www.restonmuseum.org.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JUNE 26-JULY 5

World Police & Fire Games

Athletes' Village. Thousands of athletes from 70 countries will converge in Fairfax County for 10 days of competitions. Entertainment and activities will be hosted by Reston Town Center during the games. Fairfax2015.com.

FRIDAY/JUNE 26

Explore Lake Anne by Canoe/Kayak. 6:30 - 8 p.m. Lake Anne Public Boat Docks - Washington Plaza

in the Lake Anne Village Center. Adults and children 10+ years. Explore Lake Anne from a different perspective. Paddling is a leisurely and enjoyable way of getting up close to waterfowl, fish and turtles that seem far away from shore. Learn about lake ecology and what you can do to help the lake and its aquatic wildlife. Reservations required by June 23. Fee: \$6/person RA members, \$8/person Non-members. naturecenter@reston.org. 703-476-9689.

SATURDAY/JUNE 27

Family Fun Entertainment Series:

Mr. Skip. 10 a.m. - 10:45 a.m. Reston Town Square Park. Come move and groove with Mr. Skip. Wear your Hawaiian shirt and be ready for hot tunes for cool kids. Mr. Skip will get kids of all ages "dancing around as if they had ants in their pants." Free. restoncommunitycenter.com.

Introduction to Wildlife Photography.

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Adults. Join local photographer John Eppler to learn how to photograph wildlife in your backyard. Be sure to bring your camera. Reservations required by June 24. Fee: \$10 RA members, \$15 Non-members. naturecenter@reston.org. 703-476-9689 and press 5.



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FATHER'S DAY PHOTO GALLERY



Nationals baseball game with Lauren, 9, and Dad, of Reston.



Melanie and Kristina Blackman with their dad, Marc - residents of Herndon, visiting town of Bluemount.



Thomas 11, Megan 15, Joseph 5, Kelly 18, and Mike Carney spending the day at Epcot waiting for the New Year's Eve fireworks.



Loren Sadlack of Herndon, with his daughters, Sadie and Cora, enjoying some custard at Viva Vienna.



Alex and Ray Capece, of Reston, attending a Washington Nationals game.



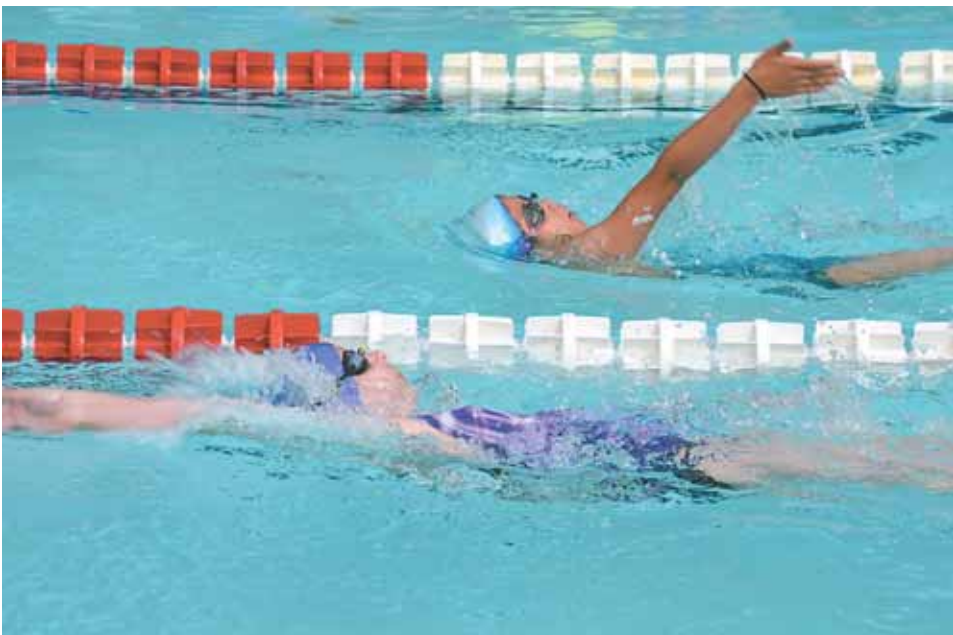
Mike Calsetta, of Oak Hill, with his two boys, Justin and Zach.



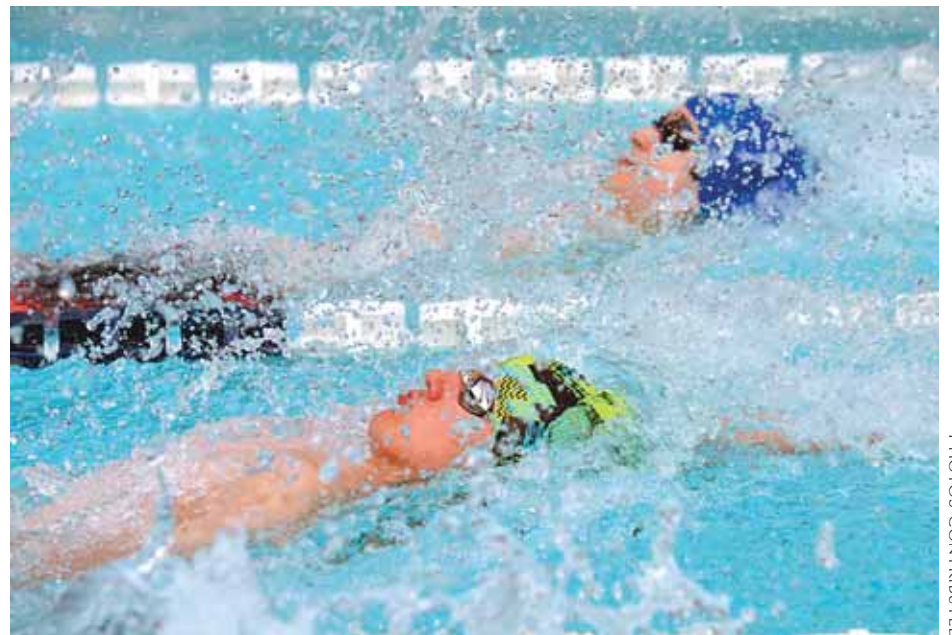
Flynn Rairdon, of Reston, with his dad, Stephen, on the way to a HOYB baseball game.



David Erickson of Eagan, Minn., spending an afternoon ice skating with his granddaughter, Sadie Sadlack of Herndon.



Lake Audubon's Danielle Elliott (bottom) and Newbridge's Clara Sgambati race in the girls 9-10 50-meter Backstroke.



Robby Cordts (bottom; Lake Audubon) and Andy Carro (Newbridge) lead off the boys 15-18 200-meter Medley Relay.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Reston Swimmers Topple Records

If the pace set at Reston Swim Team Association's (RSTA) early season meets is any indication, Reston is in for a fast summer swim season.

In only the second week of meets, swimmers have already set 20 records, including one league record and 10 team records last Saturday. Josh Zhang of Ridge Heights led the way, setting a new league record in the men's 13-14 50-meter breaststroke with a time of 33.07, besting a record from 1981.

Team records set on Saturday include: Darius Truong of Lake Anne bested his own team record set last week in the 11-12 50-meter freestyle with a new time of 28.87.

Sophia Landeryou of Glade Gators set a new team record in the 11-12 50-meter backstroke, beating a record set in 2001, with a time of 33.17.

Joseph Sciortino of North Hills broke his own 11-12 50-meter freestyle record from June 6, 2015 with a time of 29.45. He also replaced the team record in the 11-12 50-meter backstroke from 2004 with a time of 35.35.

Ryan Grimes of North Hills broke the men's 13-14 50-meter freestyle record from 2004 with a time of 26.35.

Josh Zhang of Ridge Heights broke his own record from last week in the men's 13-14 50-meter breaststroke with a time of 33.07. He also smashed the men's 13-14 50-meter freestyle record of 27.03 set by Alan Webb in 1997 with a time of 26.33.

Newbridge's 15-18 200-meter medley relay men's relay team of Ryan Ha, Eric Compton, Leonardo Briceno, and Patrick O'Malley set a new team record with a time of 2:02.98.

Glade 15-18 200-meter medley relay women's team of Madeline LaPorte, Meghan Benedetto, Emily Landeryou, and Lainie Davison broke a record set in 2002, with a time of 2:20.23.

The North Hills men's 13-14 200-meter medley relay team of Ryan Hill, Ryan Luczak, Abhishek Bazaz, and Ryan Grimes broke their own team record from June 6,



A Glade swimmer competes in the breaststroke.

Swimmers take off in the Boys 9-10 50 Meter Freestyle event. From top: Joaquin Vita (Glade), Roane Smith (Autumnwood), Karan Murari (Glade), Thomas Smith (Glade), Andrew Bowen (Glade), John Clark (Glade).



2015 by more than three seconds with a new time of 2:14.29.

Autumnwood Piranhas 551, Glade Gators 465

For Glade, triple-event winners were Natalie Bardach, Clara Landeryou, Sophia Landeryou, and Madeline LaPorte.

Double-event winners were David Clark, Lainie Davison, Tiffany Ji, Griffith Knowlton, Karan Murari, and Zachary Wiemer.

For Autumnwood, triple-event winners were Liam Willson, Andrey Smiryagin,

Vikrant Mahajan and Emily Hur. Double-event winners were Donovan Willson, Andrew Rawlins, Evan Melnick, Luke McDermott, Anne Kennedy, Will Daly, Anna Byrd, Nolan Brown, Natalie Bardach.

Hunters Woods Blue Marlins 580, Lake Anne Stingrays 520

For Hunters Woods, triple-event winners were Nolan Dunkel, Ashley Nobles, Gwyneth Wagner, Brian Zhou. Double-event winners were Arya Amirshah, Mary Byron, Sylvia Cheng, John Evans, William Harvey, Ryleigh Line, Jonah Medler, Prana Owen, Philip Pan, Ben Szeto, Jair Valenzuela, Evelyn Wagner, Meredith Wagner.

For Lake Anne, triple-event winners were Arianna Barkhordari, Madeleine Freeman, Darius Truong, Devin Truong, Jocelyn Wulf, Hannah Ziaii.

Double-event winners were Sophia Abrahams, Sophie Barkhordari, Joanne Fu and Emily Meilus.

Ridge Heights Sharks 584, North Hills Hurricanes 559

For Ridge Heights, triple-event winners were Evan Blase, Andrew Shedlock, Mac Sogandares, Paige Sogandares, and Josh Zhang. Double-event winners were Maya Becker, Jack Bobby, Jordyn Boswell, Eva Decker, Jared Decker, Derek Liu, Alex Russell, Kathleen Russell, Christina Wallace.

For North Hills, triple-event winners were Katie Cazenias, Marlee Czarny, Joseph Sciortino, Sarah Sciortino, and Evan Zhang. Double-event winners were Abhishek Bazaz, Corey Clark, Maggie Gao, Landan Grange, Ada Langston, Emily Ren and Ella Wilson.

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No Joke, But Funny Nonetheless



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that I ever want to use my having cancer as an excuse, but you have to admit, it's a doozy. And it's probably the best thing about the diagnosis/prognosis. However, it's not as if there are a number of other advantages to the disease. Nevertheless, having such a readily-available, go-to, slam dunk of an excuse is not exactly like a "Get-out-of-jail" card made desirable in the original Monopoly board game, but let's be realistic: us cancer patients need/deserve all the help we can get. And just like a little compassion goes a long way toward fluffing our pillow, so too does having a beyond-reproach excuse occasionally simplify a muddled state of affairs, personally and professionally. It's an equal opportunity "excuser."

And "muddled;" morning, noon or night; conscious, subconscious and probably even unconscious, is how this cancer patient, as most others I would bet, live their lives. Whether you want to or not, it is impossible - with a capitol "I," to not view your new cancer-diagnosed life/life expectancy through the prism of your diagnosis. Not that that prism has to make you a prisoner of your prognosis (or alliteration), but to think it's not going to change your perspective, your priorities and your decision-making is to not accept your new reality. And accepting that new reality doesn't mean compromising your principals or giving in or giving up or even yielding the floor. It simply means that you're able to move on. Resistance is not futile. Cancer is not "The Borg." Moreover, assimilating this terrible fact into your head and heart and not obsessing about it opens up your life to more potentially fulfilling and rewarding experiences that might actually enable you to survive and maybe even thrive. Otherwise, as the doctor in Miles City, Montana Territory (at the time) said to Augustus McCray in part IV of "Lonesome Dove" after Gus refused to let him amputate his remaining infected leg - which would ultimately lead to his death: "I assure you, sir, the alternative is gloomy." But Gus wasn't gloomy. He was thoughtful and self-effacing. He explained his refusal for not allowing a second amputation: "I like to kick a pig every once in a while. How would I do that?"

Well, as much as possible, even though I have been diagnosed with a "terminal" form of cancer: stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, I am not going to be a negative Nellie or a dismal Jimmy. I'm going to try and remain an upbeat Kenny. Certainly I'm not thrilled about my circumstances and I do have my moments when I'm not great company. Still, making fun of an incredibly heavy burden is the only way I know how to lighten the load. And lightening the load is my path of least resistance. It's not futile at all. It's who I am. It's what I do. Now if the cancer will just continue to cooperate, we can all live forward and have a few laughs.

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



PHOTO BY CAMILLE KIDWELL/THE CONNECTION

A photo of Team One with their third place trophy and pin towel. Featuring coaches Emily Marko, Olivia Peterkin and Julia Estrada. Team members, from left: Ryan Jones, Ethan Waple, Wen Ip, Charlotte Peterkin, Charlotte Cai, Maya Nakhre and Noah Ginsburg



PHOTO BY BRANDON GINSBURG

Team One: Featured from left, Ethan Waple, Ryan Jones, Noah Ginsburg, Maya Nakhre, Charlotte Peterkin, Wen Ip and Charlotte Cai

Rachel Carson Takes Odyssey of the Mind

Two teams from Rachel Carson Middle School compete in the World's Competition of Odyssey of the Mind.

BY CAMILLE KIDWELL
THE CONNECTION

Between school, sports and activities, there is often little time for students to express themselves or to use their minds in innovative ways. To combat this are programs like Odyssey of the Mind, described by participant Charlotte Peterkin as a “creative competition, where participants receive a scenario and problem to solve, often through a skit. You try to be out of the box and steer away from the norm.” Two teams from Rachel Carson Middle School participated at the World Competition this past year, one team placing third overall, and the other fourteenth.

Team One, led by coaches Emily Marko, Olivia Peterkin and Julie Estrada won third place in the world competition. Some of the members have been on this team together since the third grade, and have been working every year to improve upon their performance.

As eighth graders, this team worked to solve a videogame edition of Pandora's box. “We had to have three evils, and a gaming character had to defeat all of them. At the end, we had to release hope. So we said that the biggest evil was disease, so we did a science theme.

The scientist defeated misfortune, greed and monotony. In the end our ‘hope’ was soap,” described team member Ethan Waple. Coach Marko added, “They took this problem so far out of the box.” Their success led them to the World Competition, with over 800 international teams compet-

ing at Michigan State for five days. The team received bronze medals and when reflecting described the moment as “surreal.”

THIS TEAM was not the only group from Rachel Carson to achieve success in this competition. Embarking on two different projects, the second group led by Coach Kothari and manager Mrs. Huckabee, competed in the Structure category, creating a balsa wood structure for the theme: “Lose your Marbles.”

“We had to dislodge the marbles from our structure, so we created a technical pulley system. We had five scenes for each marble, and the main character would lose each one because of stress,” said member Isabela Huckabee. Simultaneously, while performing this skit, other members of the team would be placing weights on their balsa wood structure, symbolizing the “pressure” the main character was under. This structure was able to hold 884 pounds. Their success took them to World's where they won 14th place overall and fifth place for their skit. “Overall, it was definitely worth it!” said member Prabha Girish. Additionally, member Neil Kothari even won the “Omar Award.”

When asked “Why Odyssey of the Mind,” coaches and students could not have had more praises for the program. “Being my tenth year with OM, I can see how it is a great way to infuse creativity into a student's life and allow them an outlet to be themselves.

It makes kids see problems and look at materials in a different way.

They can take everything they learn and apply it to the real world,” said Coach Estrada. Additionally, the many laughs, inside jokes and text messaging groups within teams suggests the friendships this program helps kids create.

SUMMARIZED by Coach Marko of Team One, “The best part is the bond that they've formed. They will have friendships together that will last a lifetime. They all do different things; we have athletes, kids in drama, art music, and yet they all come together. It's amazing.”



PHOTO BY MARISA JONES

Team One's skit, “Nightmare on Beaker Street.”



Some of Team Two's members before a competition.

PHOTOS BY
MADELINE HUCKABEE

Team Two, from left: Vinay Mummareddy, Isabela Huckabee, Gloria Wang, Riya Jaih, Prabha Girish, John Castro and Neil Kothari

