

Burke CONNECTION

A Household Zoo

PET CONNECTION, PAGE 8

Danielle Hogan holds Princess the hamster comfortably in her hand. She said, although one might not expect such a small pet to be comfortable being held, Princess is quite comfortable with humans.

Inside
PET CONNECTION



Terra Centre Firma

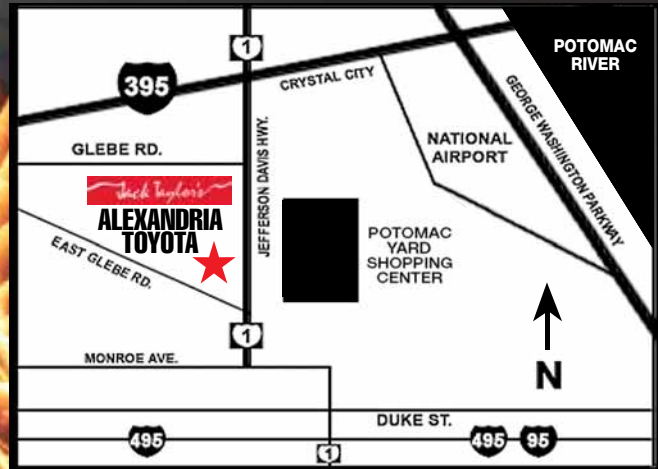
NEWS, PAGE 3

The World is Watching

NEWS, PAGE 10

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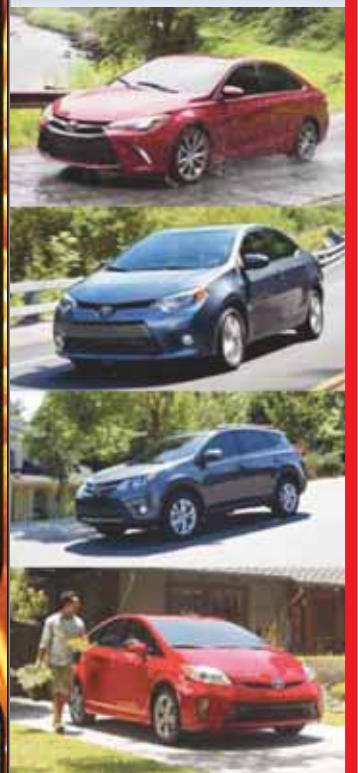
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**Let's
Go
Places**



Terra Centre's library was once in the center of the school; during the renovation it was moved to an all-new space in the wing facing Burke Centre Parkway.



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

The main entrance to Terra Centre Elementary School received a major facelift as part of the school's two-year, \$17.5 million renovation.

Terra Centre Firma Elementary School renovation nearly completed.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Schools, Expansion and Renovation

Molly Field, of Burke, is going on her 13th year as a Terra Centre Elementary School parent. Her third of three children will be in sixth grade there this fall. And though the educational experience hasn't been lacking for her, friends have referred to the school as "The Shire," a subtle dig at the mid-1970s design to be more efficient and environmentally friendly by using a green roof and sealing off many opportunities for natural light in favor of heating and cooling cost savings.

"The kids were like the Hobbits," said Field, who has also served as president of the Terra Centre Parent-Teacher Association. "It was not at all a traditional environment," she added, referring to the often dim, pie-shaped classroom "pods" that clustered around large pillars in the original school's floor plan.

But over the last two years, the school has undergone a county-funded transformation. Its number came up for renovation, a 2011 county bond brought forward funding, construction started in July 2013 and the finishing touches are now being completed, well in time for the first day of school in September.

Field's son is excited for the exterior upgrades, including an upper grass field with new backstops and a large new blacktop area on the side of the school with several pairs of basketball hoops.

Field herself is a fan of the more traditional squared off floor plan for classrooms, the new springy floor in the gym, a restored School Zone light on Burke Centre Parkway and doors on all the classrooms, bathrooms and offices where there were previously none.

"What's not to be positive about?" said Field. "I'm psyched, I wish it had happened a lot sooner. It's a victory for the community, the children, the school — the school looks like an actual school, that says we're

❖For the 2014-2015 school year, more than 35 percent of Fairfax County Public schools were over capacity. That number is expected to grow to more than 45 percent in the next five years, from increasing enrollment.

❖Every 25 years is the "preferred" cycle, though at present it is 34 years. Rising costs mean the cycle is expected to increase to more than every 42 years in the near future.

❖There are around 1,000 portable classrooms (trailers) in use across the school district.

Source: Fairfax County Public Schools

a community and we are here."

68,000 square feet of school were renovated, with an additional 20,000 that included an all-new front entrance, cafeteria extension, two School Age Child Care program rooms, library, roof access stairway and four preschool and art classrooms. The student drop-off "Kiss-n-ride" lanes and entrance were also completely redone to facilitate better traffic flow.

THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL, expansive windows now allow natural light to stream in. While sealing out the sun was better for efficiency in the '70s, "Today, we like to see natural light in every learning space, almost every room possible," said Fairfax County Public Schools director of design and construction Kevin Sneed.

Now, he said, about 80 percent of the structure's power demands go towards ventilation and lighting, not heating and cooling. "Our most important function is to make sure classrooms are conducive to learning," Sneed added. "The place was a little dark. I give whoever came through there credit."

"The newness energizes everyone," said principal Greg Brotemarkle, "the students and staff. We just have to keep it going."

Megan McLaughlin, Braddock District Fairfax County school board representative, echoed Brotemarkle in expressing her excitement to see the project come to comple-



Where the library once stood, the center of Terra Centre Elementary School is now an access point to the green roof, flooding the interior with natural light.

tion.

"It will greatly enhance the learning environment both inside and outside of the classroom," she said, in an email. "In addition, I greatly appreciate Fairfax County taxpayers' long-standing support for our public schools and these important capital improvements."

All told, the project cost about \$17,545,000 and took 21 months of construction, according to Sneed. He said that though demolition was a challenge given the school's uncommon design, no additional work orders were written and the original contract wasn't exceeded. In other words, it "came in exactly on the budget," he said.



Terra Centre retains its full green roof, a well-known characteristic of the original building, but enhanced with a large stairway to allow plenty of natural light into the school.

Brotemarkle said student enrollment has been fairly steady over the past several years — unlike other areas of the county such as the Route 1 corridor in Mount Vernon — around 550 students.

BUT CAPACITY was still an issue, with fifth and sixth grade students forced to take turns learning in trailers outside the school. As more classroom space became available during the project, they began moving back inside.

Though her son thought the special treatment of being in a different space was cool for a time, Field likes how everything has come together.

"It's beautiful, it's a school now," she said.

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PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO/THE CONNECTION

From left, Dominion Virginia Power's Carolyn Moss, delegates Ken Plum (D-36), Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41), supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield), delegate Mark Keam (D-35) and Fairfax County Board of Supervisor chairman Sharon Bulova attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the Children's Science Center Lab on Monday, July 20 at Fair Oaks Mall in Fairfax.

Children's Science Center Lab Opens in Fairfax

Hands on STEM experience at the mall.

ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO
THE CONNECTION

The Children's Science Center Lab opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Fair Oaks Mall in Fairfax on Monday, July 20. It is the first interactive museum in Virginia where children and families can explore STEM concepts "through fun, engaging, hands-on" programs.

At the Experiment Bar, one of the four zones in the museum, children can choose three experiments to explore. Tablets mounted on the bar provide the written instructions while museum staff provide materials and guidance.

Fourth-grader Colin Burke, 9, one of the children who attended the ceremony as a youth ambassador, perused a container of construction blocks in the Tinker Shop, an area designed for the exploration of engineering design challenges. It is stocked with batteries, wires, switches and other building materials.

The Inspiration Hub and the Discovery Zone are the other zones in the museum.

Speakers during the opening included

Del. Mark Keam (D-35) and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova. Keam said that the museum is a way to bring jobs to Northern Virginia in the future, as children become inspired to pursue STEM careers and bring their expertise back. Bulova said that it is a place that will "keep minds moving and curiosity piqued" year-round. Executive director of the Children's Science Center Nene Spivy thanked and presented a plaque to chairman of the board Tanya La Force for her role and leadership in the creation of the museum. She also presented plaques to the Junior League of Northern Virginia, Kincora, Fairfax Education Foundation and Dominion Virginia Power. Carolyn Moss of Dominion presented a check for \$125,000 to the Children's Science Center.

The museum had a soft opening last month and has served 5,000 people since then. It is expected to attract 60,000 visitors a year. Activities are designed for children ages two to 12. Admission is \$12.

The Children's Science Center operated an outreach program called Museum Without Walls, which is the precursor of the Children's Science Center Lab. It expects to expand into a full-scale STEM-centered museum in 2020 that will be located in Dulles, Va. Visit <http://childsci.org/> for more information about the museum.



Youth ambassadors officially open the Children's Science Center Lab at Fair Oaks Mall on Monday, July 20.

Choose Your Own Adventure Storytelling

Northern Virginia storytelling group hosts three shows.

T rue, personal storytelling shows are all the rage these days. Audiences are sitting back and listening to stories based on that month's theme in NYC, L.A., Baltimore, and, of course, Washington, D.C. In Northern Virginia, we are about to do something a little different - three times, in August, September and October.

This August, Better Said Than Done storytellers will let the audience choose which way their stories will go, while keeping to the confines of telling a true, personal story. This performance will be hosted by Derek Hills and includes storytellers Len Kruger, Jessica Robinson, David Supley Foxworth, Mary Supley Foxworth, Anne Thomas, and Zach Wilks.

"Choose Your Own Adventure"



Mary Supley Foxworth

will be performed downstairs at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, at 7 p.m., on Saturday, Aug. 29. Doors open at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$10 per person and can be purchased in advance at www.betersaidthandone.com/upcoming-shows/ or at the door. Full bar and dinner menus are available and seating is limited to first come, first served. (The stories are intended for an adult audience.)

The concept for "Choose Your Own Adventure" is based on the book series of the same name. Unlike at a typical storytelling show, each storyteller will stop at two points during his or her story and present the audience with two

options for what path the story could take. The performer will then take the story in that direction. This means that each storyteller is facing the unique challenge of preparing five different segments of storylines to ultimately perform one cohesive story as chosen by the audience. "The biggest challenge is keeping everything true," says Zach Wilks, who has experience as a stand-up comedian in addition to storytelling. "This seems like improv, but it's not; improv is based entirely on lying to the audience."

"I loved the Choose Your Own Adventure books as a kid because it felt like I was helping to shape the story and make decisions for



Jessica Robinson

the characters," shares storyteller Mary Supley Foxworth, who will be telling a story with her husband David Supley Foxworth. "I'm hoping the audience will feel the same way with our stories."

Wilks adds, "It's interesting to give the audience control over your story. It's kind of like having a monkey as an Uber driver: it will be a fun ride, but you really are not sure where you'll end up and if you'll still be in one piece. That, and I believe we are also getting paid in bananas."

"We're excited to give our audience - who are always great silent participants - the chance to direct the show a bit. It will take audience participation to a new level,"

Better Said ... on Saturday

Better Said Than Done presents "Screwed: stories of being screwed over, getting screwed up, or that are just plain screwy" on Saturday, July 25, 7 p.m., downstairs at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, \$10 per person.

said Jessica Robinson, storyteller and founder of Better Said Than Done.

In September, Better Said Than Done will present "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon" in conjunction with the regional literary festival Fall for the Book. For this show, each story will share how the teller is connected to the actor.

Then, in October, Better Said Than Done will be bringing improv and storytelling to the stage together in "A Night at the Improv, Part 2." The show will feature audience participation, high energy, lots of laughs and a mix of stories, some of which will be works of fiction, others true and personal and all of them off the cuff.

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OPINION

What's Special about Your Community?

Share tips in upcoming Newcomers and Community Guides.

The Connection's annual Newcomers and Community Guides will publish Aug. 26.

A bevy of interns, plus staff writers and editors, are preparing this year's editions, but we need help from our readers.

What tips do you have for someone getting to know the community?

EDITORIAL

We're hoping to share special places, activities, events, organizations and volunteer opportunities. What should someone new to your neighborhood know about? Events that should not be missed? Organizations that do a great job? Places to volunteer? Tips for navigating your PTA or your school's front office? A great place to see the sunset? We'd love to have your photos to go along with your suggestions.

Faith organizations, nonprofit organizations, clubs, environmental groups, advocacy groups, youth sports teams and others who offer events open to the public are invited to send a paragraph about the organization and how to get involved.

We will publish a selection of local tips along with a plethora of information useful to newcomers and long-time residents alike, including our award-winning Insiders Guide to the Parks, information on how to vote and more.

See last year's community guides by going to www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/ and scrolling down to Newcomers.

Email tips and photos to editors@connectionnewspapers.com or send as a letter to the editor via the website at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>. Send in your Insider's Tips by Friday, Aug. 14.

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After One Year, Silver Line is Changing the Face of Northern Virginia

BY U.S. REP. GERRY CONNOLLY (D-11)
SPECIAL TO THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



If you were among the thousands descending upon Tysons Corner Center this summer for the grand opening of the new Hyatt Hotel, which included a concert and fireworks, you experienced firsthand the transformation taking place there and throughout the Dulles Corridor thanks to the arrival of Metro's Silver Line.

It was just one of many milestones we've celebrated as we reach the one-year anniversary of completion of Phase 1 of Silver Line service from East Falls Church through Tysons to Wiehle-Reston East.

Previously, the mall was accessible mainly by car and one often had to contend with fierce traffic to get there. Today, the Tysons Station is one of Metro's busiest on Saturdays.

With the opening of the mall's plaza connecting with the Metro station and new offices, apartments, and the hotel, the outdoor space is bustling with families din-

ing alfresco, dancing to one of the Friday night concerts, or trying their hand at the free games and activities set up throughout the plaza.

And that's just the beginning of the transformation! The changes around the malls are emblematic of what we're seeing take place across Tysons and Reston. Thanks to the Silver Line, people are doing something that up to now was unthinkable: They are walking to work, to eat, to shop, or to their homes.

The collection of office parks and shopping centers, once surrounded by vast expanses of parking, are now being connected to the Silver Line by raised walkways interspersed with pocket parks. Today, you can even walk off the train at Tysons or Reston to shop at a local farmers market!

Take a ride on the Silver Line through Tysons and out to Reston and you can see the transformation we envisioned taking shape. At least five new buildings including new high-rise apartments opened in the past year, and the construction cranes dotting the

skyline and projects in the pipeline give us a glimpse of what's to come.

The growing ridership on the year-old Silver Line demonstrates the pent-up demand for transit in the corridor. Wiehle-Reston East continues to be the busiest Silver Line station with nearly 9,000 riders a day, and during the morning rush it is the third highest revenue-generating station across the entire Metro system. Overall, Silver Line ridership is exceeding expectations with an average of 16,000 rider trips per day.

Northern Virginia's economy is also feeling a boost. The 23-mile Dulles Corridor, with five Fortune 500 companies and numerous other firms headquartered there, already accounts for 25 percent of the region's gross domestic product.

By connecting downtown Washington and suburban Maryland to the region's second largest employment corridor, the Silver Line has created new opportunities for our workforce. And the growing commercial tax base along the corridor, already a primary driver of the regional economy, will relieve some of the burden on local property taxpayers and help sustain our

investments in schools, public safety, and parks.

Within a few years, Phase 2 will extend the Silver Line to Dulles and Loudoun County, providing a new link to our premier international airport and opening a new commuting option for the outer suburbs.

Over my two decades of service as Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and now as Congressman for Virginia's 11th District, construction of the Silver Line topped my list of priorities. I was proud to work with other local, state, and federal leaders to keep this important project on track and I am excited about the future benefits of this transit line to our region.

I hope you share this excitement and will join us in celebrating the one-year anniversary of the Silver Line and the positive transformation to come.

Congressman Gerald E. Connolly represents Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Fairfax in the U.S. House of Representatives. At the ceremony marking the opening of the Silver Line one year ago, then Metro General Manager and CEO Richard Sarles said about Connolly: "Without him, we wouldn't be here today."

schools during the year.

Fairfax County is a comfortable community to live. People all over the nation come here for jobs and for its outstanding schools, supported by dedicated and hardworking teachers. Life is good for many living here, but lest we forget, at times those deserving citizens need some help in our

community. Those organizations identified in this article are excellent places to go and donate the basics items so needed by our kids. We can help to insure our kids will have a good start this coming new school year.

Ronald L. Baker
Springfield

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LETTERS

Redistricting Matters

To the Editor:

Thank you for your insightful editorial headlining support for nonpartisan redistricting ("Yes to Nonpartisan Redistricting," July 9). The League of Women Voters of Virginia has been advocating for a nonpartisan redistricting commission for at least ten years, ever since the last round in 2011 of slicing and dicing up the voting districts so that legislators can choose their voters.

It is difficult to get voters energized enough about this to urge their legislators to give up any power. It is also a fairly complicated concept that comes up only every 10 years.

However, we feel the current process is a serious challenge to

our democracy. As you pointed out, a huge number of Virginians are not being fairly represented, especially in northern urban areas. Communities have been cut into multiple pieces with little in common with Virginians miles away. Voters have become disengaged and don't bother to vote.

Yes, gerrymandering has gone on for centuries and apparently was even invented in Virginia, in spite of its name. But the latest line-drawing technology has taken the process to new "lows." Look at a map of the congressional and legislative districts to see what has been done to your voting rights.

The League has many resources for becoming informed and for advocating with your legislators,

plus copies of the maps mentioned above, on our website. Go to <http://lwv-va.org/redistricting.html>.

Another good source of information is a coalition called One Virginia 2021 (onevirginia2021.org) that is gathering support across the state.

It may take a constitutional amendment to effect change. Action must begin now or we will be stuck with the same lopsided, polarized representation through 2030. We urge concerned citizens to join us in this effort.

Lois Page and Dianne Blais

Co-presidents
League of Women Voters of
Virginia
president@lwv-va.org

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
The Connection
1606 King St.
Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444.

By e-mail: south@connectionnewspapers.com

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A Household Zoo

Local preschool teacher owns a diverse menagerie of pets.

By THOMAS FRIESTAD
THE CONNECTION

Ask your average person on the street how many pets they own, and most answers will typically be one or two, maybe three. Talk to preschool teacher Danielle Hogan, however, and 11 will be the answer you receive. This includes Kona the dog, Mocha and Ziggy the cats, Buzz the rabbit, Bernie the guinea pig, Prodo and Princess the hamsters, Chubs and Stevie the lizards, Nemo the fish and Sandy the hermit crab.

"The dog and the cats were our family pets, and then I decided to do some research on the benefits of children having pets in the classroom," Hogan said. "I started off with the hermit crabs. The kids loved them and I just kept adding to them, and the kids just enjoy feeding them and watching them. We learn about the habitat, what foods they eat, so it ends up being part of my curriculum."

Hogan said that each pet has its own maintenance requirements, although those of some are surprisingly minimal.

"The rodents and rabbit need their cages cleaned out regularly for health reasons, and eat store-bought food and hay," Hogan said. "The lizards, you don't have to clean their cages much, just the water, while with the crabs, you need to give them food and soak their sponge in water for moisture."

Hogan said each pet also has its own entertainment value as well, some in ways one might not initially expect.

"The lizards are very easy to handle," Hogan said. "They like to be held, they do shed their skin and it's entertaining to watch them eat. They just stick their tongues out, grab a mealworm and swallow it. With the crabs, you can get them to be active if you can spray them with water. That makes them come out of their shells and walk around."

Hogan said all of her animals get along with each other, including her dog and cats, as well as her rabbit with all of the others. She said the best thing about owning such a variety of pets is taking them into preschool for her students to enjoy.

"I love to go in and watch the kids interact with my pets and to see how much they become part of their day-to-day lives at school," Hogan said. "I bring in the fish, the hermit crab, the guinea pig, hamsters and lizards. My students feed them and just take care of them, and it's fun to watch."

Hogan said she is considering expanding her array of pets in the future, although she does not yet know what the newest entrant will be.

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Chubs the lizard sits on Hogan's kitchen table. She said his eating mannerisms make him one of her more entertaining pets to watch.



Sandy the hermit crab sits on Hogan's kitchen table, along with his shelter and sponge. Hermit crabs require a fresh sponge of water each day to retain necessary moisture.



Hogan said, "I would like to get an aquarium for the preschool too, as well as to get another pet for my home, but my partner doesn't want a bird, so I'm left with not much else to get at this point."

Danielle Hogan holds Princess the hamster comfortably in her hand. She said, although one might not expect such a small pet to be comfortable being held, Princess is quite comfortable with humans.

PHOTOS BY
DANIELLE HOGAN



Gina Lynch, outreach coordinator of the Humane Society of Fairfax County, interacts with one of the cats up for adoption.



Some of the cats available for adoption at the Humane Society of Fairfax County. Cats are placed in separate rooms when first found, where they are screened for sickness and disease.

PHOTOS BY CONNOR ORTMAN/THE CONNECTION

Humane Society of Fairfax County Celebrates 50 Years

By CONNOR ORTMAN
THE CONNECTION

The highlight of any day is getting an animal adopted," said Gina Lynch, outreach coordinator of the Humane Society of Fairfax County. Luckily, for Lynch, the nonprofit organization has been successfully pairing pets and owners for the past 50 years. "Established in 1965, 2015 will mark 50 great years of providing services to Fairfax," said Lynch, who can barely keep a glowing smile off her face while talking about the animal's lives the Humane Society of Fairfax County has made better.

The group has had such success over the past 50 years by providing extensive care and attention to each animal that it takes in. "We ensure that before we adopt it up, it has all its vaccinations and needed medical care. If an animal comes in with dental problems, we make sure that they are taken care of before he is cleared for adoption," Lynch said. The Humane Society takes in more animals than just cats and dogs. Bunnies, guinea pigs, and horses are among the many other animals that can be adopted, depending on family circumstance.

The animals that are taken in are treated to a comfortable temporary living situation inside the Humane Society of Fairfax County office building. Instead of being placed in harsh cages, these cats, once cleared of disease and proved healthy, are allowed to roam free inside brightly lit and colorfully painted rooms filled with toys and scratching posts. Each room is comprised of anywhere from three to five cats, whom are matched together based on their personality types. Volunteers are invited to come in and play with or read to the cats, helping the animals re-adjust to human interaction before adoption. When prospective families or individuals come in to interview, the Humane Society goes above and beyond to create a lasting relationship between human and pet. "We really go to extreme measures to make sure that connection is right. It's a very, very extensive interview process, but that's so that we make sure the fit is perfect," says Lynch. "We make sure it's the right fit because it's traumatic for the pet. They have already been given up once, so we re-

ally try for the perfect connection. We strive for 100%." One recent success story is the tale of Greta, a dog who came to HSFC almost paralyzed, dragging her hind end. After a few surgeries and "lots of TLC", Greta recovered and is now with a loving family.

The HSFC is always looking for more volunteers to help interact with the animals, and donations are always welcome. Lynch, who has worked with HSFC for around ten years now, emphasized how important volunteers are, helping bring pleasure and comfort to the animals in need. "We love when

Details

The Humane Society of Fairfax is a nonprofit charitable organization located at 4057 Chain Bridge Road. Adoption information can be found online at hsfc.org or by calling 703-385-7387.

volunteers come in, it really helps brighten the animals' days." For Lynch, however, getting an animal adopted trumps all. "It's like being in a hospital when a patient goes home alive. For us, when a homeless animal comes into our care, and we can find it a forever home, that is the highlight of any day."



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A Street Dog Becomes Princess

Howard Madnick of Burke writes: "On the right is our Delhi-dog Safie (means 'white' in Hindi) - we adopted her when she was 4 months old when we lived in India 10 years ago. She literally was born a street dog and became our princess. Her mixed-breed type is known as a 'Russian dog' there. Her 'little' brother, Rocco, is a 1-year-old English bulldog (we got him at around 9 weeks old) who outweighs her almost 3-1. They often chase each other and annoy each other as siblings do, but they both enjoy sunning themselves on the deck and it's one of the few times we can get them both in the same frame and smiling."

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BURKE CONNECTION ♦ JULY 23-29, 2015 ♦ 9



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Karen Dickerson goes for a quick jog after getting off work at the new Alexandria Wegmans grocery store.

The World is Watching

Springfield athlete to compete in third Special Olympics World Games.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Karen Dickerson has run 16 marathons, well on the way to reaching her goal of completing one in every state in America. At 29, Dickerson has been a Special Olympics athlete for 18 years.

At this year's Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles, the Springfield resident is scheduled to compete in the 10K (track) and half-marathon (road) races. It will be her third World Games: She competed in Israel in 2003 and Greece in 2011.

The half-marathon will be "unified" competition, meaning Special Olympics athletes will run alongside an open field in Long Beach. "It will be a real face," said Dickerson's mother Ernestine. "She loves the competition." After a Special Olympics coach first "saw that I could run" in seventh grade, Dickerson began competing in more and longer races, including high school track and Special Olympics events. She was eventually chosen to represent the United States in international competition.

Dickerson said she "likes marathons and likes to travel," so the opportunities were a dream come true for her. The travel has also given her the opportunity to meet many new people. Though quiet in per-



Karen Dickerson is competing in the 10K and half-marathon distances at the Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles.

son, her mother said Dickerson is "constantly" keeping up with friends on Facebook and email.

TO TRAIN for half and full marathons, Dickerson typically runs between 40 and 50 miles per week, listening to a soundtrack of country artists including Tim McGraw. When she's not pounding the pavement alone, Dickerson likes to work out with groups from the Burke Potomac River Running store and Pacers store in Fairfax. There's also cross- and weight work with trainers at Onelife Fitness and Everybody Fitness.

To get even more cross-training in, Dickerson has added lap-swimming to her regimen. She practices with the Burke Barracudas, a Special Olympics team that works out at the Burke Racquet & Swim Club.

Terry Mitchell has been the coach of the team since 1997 and helped Dickerson develop stroke skills.

"She's an amazing athlete — she's very quiet, very introspective, but she knows what she has to do," said Mitchell. "When you tell her, 'You need to modify stroke, to do this,' she really takes it on board, you see her trying to achieve that."

Mitchell's daughter Jennifer swims with the Barracudas, as does Luke Ferris, 18, of Falls Church, who will be joining Dickerson in Los Angeles. He's set to compete in the open water swimming event.

BETWEEN WORKOUTS, Dickerson works part-time at the new Wegmans in Alexandria, though she's worked at the Fairfax location for the last 10 years. She also enjoys walking the family's Australian shepherd Sam. Her brother Joey is also a Special Olympics athlete in softball and basketball, and Dickerson said they aren't necessarily competitive with one another. The rest of their immediate family includes brothers Tommy and Jimmy, and father Joe.

For Dickerson, her past successes and future plans for success are based around goal-setting and determination. She hopes her running will "inspire people to work hard for their goal," she said. "Don't let anyone say, 'You can't.'" In the half-marathon, Dickerson's goal is 1 hour, 40 minutes. Her next full marathon is in November, in Florida. And that's one more state off her checklist of 50.

The opening ceremony for the Special Olympics World Games will be on July 25. That and coverage of the games, which last until Aug. 2, will be broadcast on ESPN.

Del. Filler-Corn Elected to the Center for Public Policy Innovation's Board

Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) was unanimously elected to the Center for Public Policy Innovation's (CPPI) Board of Directors during its Annual Meeting on June 23.



Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41)

Del. Filler-Corn has served in the Virginia House of Delegates since 2010. She serves as the House Democratic Whip and on the Transportation Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Commerce & Labor Committee. She has been appointed to the Joint Commission on Transportation Accountability, Joint Commission on Technology and Science and is the chair and founding member of the bipartisan General Assembly Arts Caucus.

Del. Filler-Corn is the director of Government Relations at Albers and Company.

She brings over 25 years of extensive governmental, legal and political experience to the firm where she works on a variety of state and

local legislative and regulatory issues.

Her principal areas of expertise are Information and Communications and Technology (ICT), healthcare and education. Previously, Del. Filler-Corn served in the Administrations of Governors Mark Warner and Tim Kaine, advising on state and federal relations. She is an attorney and graduate of Washington College of Law at American University.

New Giant Draws from Virginia Farms

Last month, a new 50,000-square foot Giant Food grocery store opened in the Kings Park Shopping Center at 8970 Burke Lake Road in Springfield. In addition to pursuing Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification from the United States Green Building Council, the store is also working with a number of Virginia farm suppliers. Those farms include:

Andrews Farming, Galaxy
Appalachian Sustainable Harvest, Abington
Cedar Point Farm, Mechanicsville
Cole Berry Farm, Vernon Hill
Crown Orchards, Coveseville
Dodd's Acres Farm, Mechanicsville
Fred Chesser & Co, Temperanceville
Fresh 20 Growers, Stevensburg
Hanover Plant and Vegetable Farm, Ashland
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Old Home Orchard, Winchester
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Robbins Family Farm, Jonesville
Snake Creek Farms, Fancy Gap
Sunnyside Farms, Cumberland
Turkey Knob, Timberville
Virginia Produce Co, Hillsville
Wayne's Produce, Jarrett
Worrell Family Farm, Austinville

—TIM PETERSON

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.

ONGOING

Evenings on the Ellipse Summer Concert. Thursdays, through Aug. 20. 5:30-7 p.m. Fairfax County Government Center Ellipse (Backyard), 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Relax with music, tastes of local wines and great company.

Burke Arts in the Parks. Saturdays, through Aug. 22. 10 - 11 a.m. Burke Lake Park Amphitheater, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Entertain children, teach them the importance of protecting our natural resources, introduce them to live entertainment in an informal kid friendly atmosphere, and forge a connection between kids and parks. Call 703-323-6601.

Stars on Sunday Concert Series. Sundays, through Aug. 30. 3 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Featuring a lineup of performances that showcase the diversity of talent and culture in Northern Virginia. Concerts are free to attend and are perfect for families, a special date or a relaxing afternoon of music and dance.

Summer Reading Program. Friday-Saturday, through Sept. 5. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Come to the library all summer for books and events. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>.

THURSDAY/JULY 23

The Kindercise Show. 2:30 p.m.

Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Wolf Trap teaching artist John Taylor will be offering a singing and dancing class. For more information go to fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches.

Chapter Book Chat: Storytime for Bigger Kids. 4 p.m. Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Come listen to a chapter book read aloud. Age 8-12.

Uno, Dos, Tres Con Andres. 2:30 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Sing and move with music and dance from Latin America with Andres Salguero. All ages.

Preschool Story Time. 10:30 a.m. City of Fairfax, 10360 North Street Fairfax. Stop in to enjoy stories, songs and activities. Ages 3-5 with adult. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

Under the Sea. 2:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Meet live sea creatures. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

FRIDAY/JULY 24

Fun Flicks. 10:30 a.m. Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Watch movies based on children's books. All ages.

Fun and Games. 2 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stop by to play board games. Ages 6-12. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

Americas Adopt A Soldier 5th Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament. Golf Club at Lansdowne Resort, 44050 Woodridge Parkway, Lansdowne. Former major league baseball player Michael Pagliarulo "Pags" will host the golf tournament. America's Adopt A

Soldier, an established nonprofit organization who has through grass roots volunteerism, donations, and partnerships; provided a positive impacted to our Nations Wounded, Deployed Service Members, Homeless Veterans, Veterans and their Families. All donations go directly to support their projects and programs. Visit Americasadoptsoldier.org to register or call 703-278-3718 for more information.

Campfire Fridays. 7:30- 9 p.m. Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. Learn about reptiles while sitting around a fire and eating s'mores. Tickets: \$8. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov.

Kingstowne Farmers Market. 4-7 p.m. Fridays, May 1-Oct. 30. Giant Parking Lot, 5955 Kingstowne Towne Center, Alexandria. Vendors products include fresh organic honey and hand held pies and rolls. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/kingstownemkt.htm

SATURDAY/JULY 25

Burke Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-noon. Saturdays, May 2-Nov. 21. 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/burkemkt.htm

Springfield Farmers Market. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Springfield Town Center, 6699 Spring Mall Drive, Springfield. www.smartmarkets.org.

Fairfax Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, May 9-Oct. 31. 10500 Page Avenue, Fairfax. www.fairfaxsaturdaymarket.com.

Yoga. 8 a.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Enjoy free, drop-in Art of Movement classes featuring Yoga, Hula, Mat Pilates, Surfset and Tai Chi. No experience is necessary, bring your own mat.

Creative Writers Club. 2 p.m. Burke

Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stop by for sharing, discussion and feedback on works in progress. Ages 13-18. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

Mr. Gabe Concert. 10-11 a.m. at Mason District Park is located at 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale. Songs inspired by life lessons. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances.

SUNDAY/JULY 26

Used Book Sale. 1-4 p.m. The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road. Hundreds of used books about railroads, the Civil War, local history and general interest will be available for purchase. Admission: \$2-\$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org.

Canine Cruise. 7- 8 p.m. 7500 Accotink Park Rd., Springfield. Take your dog on a pontoon tour boat on Lake Accotink. Tickets: \$6. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov.

MONDAY/JULY 27

Around the World Musical Adventure. 10:30 a.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Miss Susan will be performing music for participants to sing and dance to. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches.

Pohick Prose Society. 7 p.m. Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Teens talk about books. Call 703-644-7333 for title. Age 13-18.

Gymboree: Infants 1. 10:30 a.m. Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Gymboree instructor presents play-based activities to stretch the body and mind. 4-8 months with adult.

TUESDAY/JULY 28

Pokémon Club. 7 p.m. Kings Park

Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Participants can trade and play games with their Pokémon cards. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches.

Short Book Conversations. 1:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stop by to join in on a discussion of "Normal" by Amy Bloom. Adults. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

WEDNESDAY/JULY 29

Under the Sea. 10:30 a.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Kings Park Library will be hosting an event for participants to meet live sea creatures. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches.

Classic Tales. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stop by for stories songs, and activities. Ages 3-5 with adult. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

THURSDAY/JULY 30

The Living Rainforest. 2:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Meet animals from the rainforest. Ages 6-12. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

FRIDAY/JULY 31

Library Play Date. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stop by with 1-2 year olds and allow them to play with other toddlers. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

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AUGUST 17—AUGUST 21.....KUNG-FU PANDA (PG)

AUGUST 24—AUGUST 28.....SHREK (PG)

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Lake Braddock Grad Owens Plays in Ripken League All-Star Game

Former ECU middle infielder to play at Virginia Tech.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Jack Owens experienced a significant change when he received his release from the East Carolina University baseball program near the end of the 2015 season before deciding to continue his college career at Virginia Tech.

Owens, a 2014 Lake Braddock graduate, had committed to play at ECU for head coach Billy Godwin, who was fired following the 2014 season and replaced by Cliff Godwin. Owens said ECU “wasn’t the right fit.”

“It’s the toughest thing I’ve ever been through,” Owens said. “My family helped a lot. Coach [Cliff] Godwin at ECU was awesome. He’s a great guy, but it just wasn’t the right fit. We both thought it would be better if I moved on. No bridges burned.”

Owens, a rising sophomore middle infielder, would likely have to sit out the 2016 season at Virginia Tech due to NCAA transfer rules, though he is hoping to receive a waiver allowing him to play.

While Owens’ college baseball career included some stressful moments during the past year, his experience during his first season in the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League has been enjoyable.

Owens, a member of the Vienna River Dogs, played in the league all-star game on July 15 at Shirley Povich Field in Bethesda, Md. He suited up for the South All-Stars, which defeated the North All-Stars 3-2.



PHOTO BY HARVEY LEVINE/THE CONNECTION

Jack Owens, a 2014 Lake Braddock graduate, played in the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League all-star game on July 15 at Shirley Povich Field in Bethesda, Md.

Owens finished 0-for-2 at the plate but gained experience playing with and against some of the league’s best.

“It was awesome,” he said. “It was a lot of fun. ... I want to come back next year.”

Owens entered July 22 batting .298 (28-94) with three doubles and eight RBIs in 27 games this summer. He also scored 14 runs and stole six bases. Vienna entered Wednesday’s action with a 19-17 record. The River Dogs are in second place in the South division and are battling for a playoff spot.

“I’ve hit a lot of singles, which I like,” Owens said. “I’m a singles hitter and I like keeping the ball low and on the ground and making infielders work, making them mess up sometimes.”

Owens is one of several former Northern Virginia high school standouts on the Vienna roster. Shaun Wood (Yorktown, West Virginia), Denis Mikush (Robinson, UMBC),

Kevin Lachance (Centreville, UMBC), Jack Gomersall (Stuart, VMI) and Mark Gunst (Paul VI, JMU) also play for the River Dogs and were also selected to the South All-Star team.

Owens spent four seasons on the Lake

“It’s the toughest thing I’ve ever been through,” Owens said. “My family helped a lot. Coach [Cliff] Godwin at ECU was awesome. He’s a great guy, but it just wasn’t the right fit. We both thought it would be better if I moved on. No bridges burned.”

— 2014 Lake Braddock graduate
Jack Owens

Braddock varsity. A standout shortstop, Owens was part of the Bruins’ first state championship team as a sophomore in 2012. In 2013, Owens and Lake Braddock won the Northern Region championship.

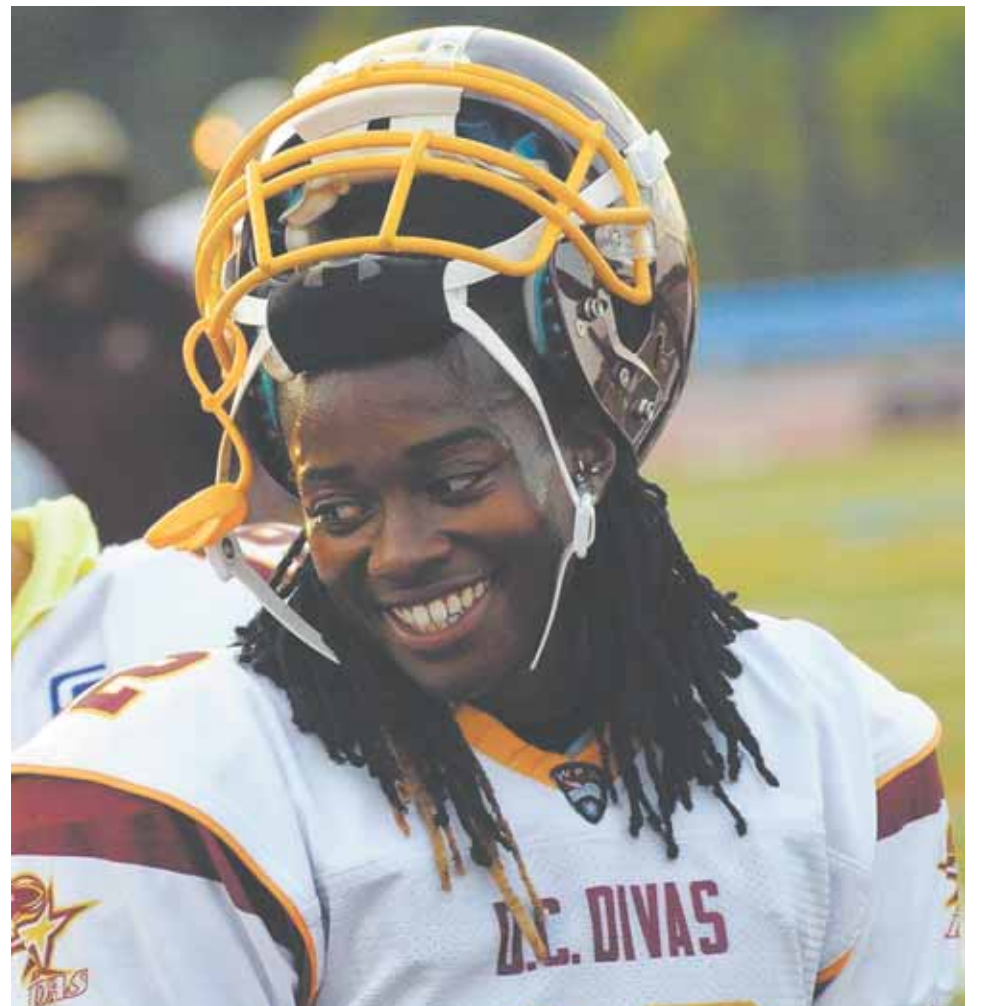


PHOTO COURTESY OF D.C. DIVAS/DOUG CHARLAND

D.C. Divas in Championship Game

Standout wide receiver Ashley Whisonant and the D.C. Divas will face the Chicago Force in the Women’s Football Alliance National Conference championship game at 6 p.m. on Saturday, July 25 at Lee High School in Springfield. The winner will advance to the national championship game Aug. 8 in Los Angeles. The D.C. Divas roster includes several players from Fairfax County. Tickets can be purchased at www.dcdivas.com/tickets.

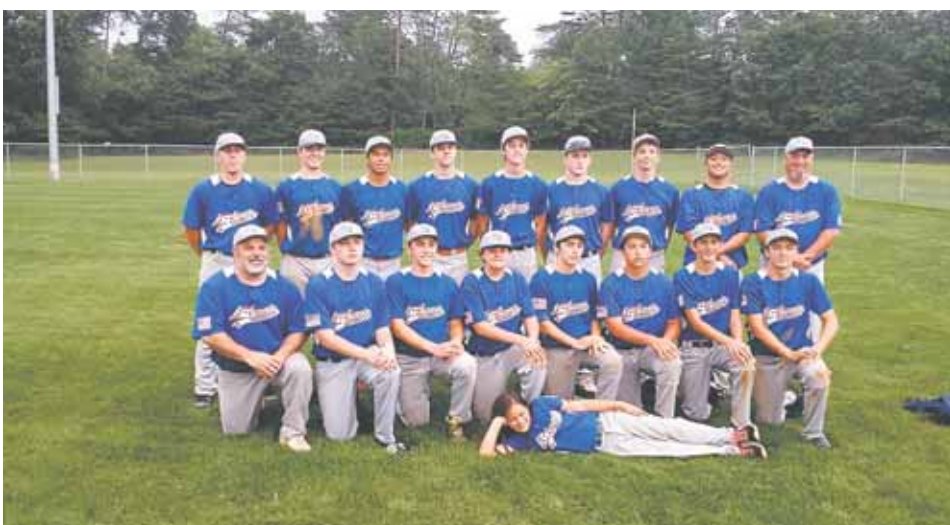


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State Champions

The Southwest Youth Association (SYA) Greater Fairfax 15U Babe Ruth won the state championship in South Hill, Va., last weekend. The team includes students from Westfield, Woodson, Centreville and Robinson. Pictured from left (back row): Coach Joe Stine, Henry Pyzdrowski, Brandon Wong, Chris Hanna, Justin Martin, John Basham, John Farley, Ryan Wu, Manager Dan Martin, (front row) Coach Tim Divecchia, Nikko LaMay, Nick Divecchia, Mitchell Thompson, Joshua Spiro, Pascal Zamora-Roberts, Jordan Reiser and Russell Steinhilber. Bat Girl: Jenna Martin.

SPORTS

Cottontail Swim Team Raises Money for Haiti

Members of the Cottontail Cobias summer league swim team know that not everyone has a 25-meter pool to swim in — much less clean water to drink. That's why this year, the team held a swim-a-thon fundraiser benefitting Fish 4 Hope, an organization that builds fish farms in Haiti so local residents can better support and feed themselves.

Rising Lake Braddock junior Maddy Altobelli organized the July 16 event at the Cottontail Swim & Racquet Club pool in Springfield. She learned about the needs down in Haiti through her church, Church of the Nativity in Burke. Altobelli's father and sister recently went on a mission trip to the country and were a major motivation for her.

"Most kids don't realize how different Haiti is from here," she said. "We have water to swim — they don't even have it, really, to drink."

Around 100 school-age swimmers raised money at Nativity and signed up per-lap sponsors for their swim-marathon. With pop, rock and Disney music blaring and a bright mid-morning sun shining, they cruised back and forth while



Maddy Altobelli

Cottontail Cobias summer league swimmers raise money to help build fish ponds in Haiti.

PHOTOS BY
TIM PETERSON/
THE CONNECTION



parents, friends and other swimmers counted.

By the end of the event, the Cobias swam over 3,500 laps. Together with the \$2,000 they al-

ready raised at the church, the team's contribution is enough to pay for building one entire fish pond in Haiti.

— TIM PETERSON

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passed away July 15, 2015 after a brief illness. He was 65. Services were held July 18, at Demaine Funeral Home 10565 Main St, Fairfax VA 22030. In lieu of flowers, donations may be given in his honor to wildlifescueleague.org. He will be dearly missed by his family and friends.

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