

Whitehall Farm's head grower Brian Yoder,
of Reston, feeds "pastured" chickens.

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Family Friendly Entertainment

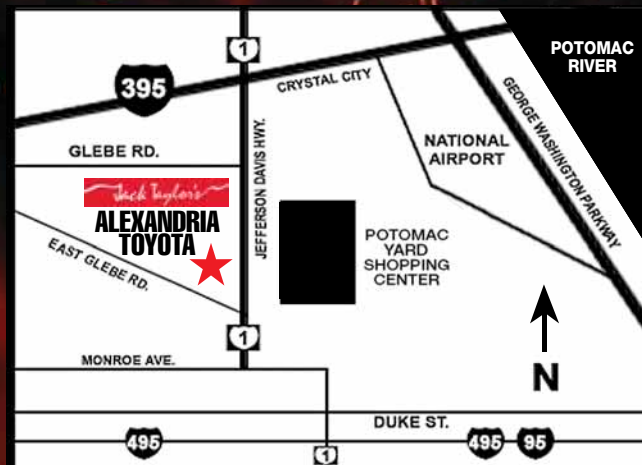
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**Let's
Go
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Indictment Coming in John Geer Case?

Special grand jury began hearing testimony this week.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Since shooting John Geer dead in the doorway of his Springfield home on Aug. 29, 2013, PFC Adam Torres of the Fairfax County Police Department has remained at work, albeit out of the field, but undisciplined by police and unprosecuted for any criminal wrongdoing.

The next chapter of the nearly two-year-old case began unfolding Monday, July 27 when a special grand jury called by Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney Raymond F. Morrogh first met to hear testimony. Unlike regular grand juries that listen to multiple cases, a special grand jury, provided for in the Virginia Code, convenes to make a decision on one specific case.

The purpose of this such group is to decide whether there is probable cause to put Torres on trial.

According to Michael Lieberman, the lawyer who has been representing Geer's family and mother of his children Maura Harrington, the special grand jury has six months to issue a report after being impaneled. At that point, the judge has discretion to intervene.

At the end of January this year, Fairfax County released 11,000 pages from the police department investigation of the incident, detailing their findings of what took place that afternoon. The report said Torres was joined by four other officers outside Geer's home at the time of the shooting. Geer's best friend Jeff Stewart and father Don Geer were also in the area, close enough to see what happened. They make



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL LIEBERMAN

John Geer standing in his doorway in Springfield, minutes before he was shot by a Fairfax County Police officer.



John Geer

up the seven witnesses to the shot fired.

Torres claimed to see Geer quickly lower his hands to waist level after a 40-minute period of talking. During that time Geer had rested his hands on the top of the door frame and reached down to scratch his nose from time to time. Torres said the action he saw provoked him to fire. The other officers' accounts describe Geer's hands moving slowly at either shoulder or ear level and contradict Torres.

Geer's father and Stewart remember the version the other officers described.

Lieberman said he doesn't understand why a special grand jury was needed in this case. "They have seven witnesses," he said. "Six say one thing, one person says another. To me, that's more than enough for probable cause."

Among the witnesses, Morrogh had pre-

viously called one of Geer's two daughters Haylea to participate in the special grand jury. The girls had been with Geer that afternoon, when he became upset hearing that their mother and his partner Harrington was planning to move out of the house. He began throwing some of her belongings out of the house and the daughters called Harrington, who then called the police. When Geer knew the police were coming, he had his daughters go to a neighbor's basement.

Morrogh was not available for an interview, but in an email said that "The daughter is a witness to the events leading up to the shooting."

After Lieberman sent a letter questioning the move, Morrogh decided to not call Haylea after all. "She has nothing to offer — to put her on, to say bad things about her father," Lieberman said. "To me there's only seven witnesses. Maura's not one of them. Haylea's not one of them. It took

place over a split-second."

Stewart, who is one of the witnesses and who remained on the list to testify before the special grand jury, was worried some of the testimony, including his, might be used in "trashing John's character."

"I'm not going to sit there and let them condemn John, try in some way assassinate his character as a defense for an officer shooting him in the chest."

Shortly after the incident, Stewart told investigators he knew Geer had been drinking that day and had told Stewart when he knew police were coming, something to the effect of, "The next time you see me, I may have a bullet in my chest."

"My open-minded discussion of thoughts that day, in shock, had no bearing of basis, or support from the facts," Stewart said. "John didn't want to be shot that day, now we know he said as much."

"I told the FBI John was executed," Stewart continued. "This has nothing to do with whatever his intentions were or weren't. With what I saw that day, he had not made the move yet, to initiate that action. The burden of de-escalating that situation was on the police."

Stewart is also member of the Fairfax County ad hoc commission to evaluate police policies, which was convened largely in response to Geer's death and the limited, untimely manner in which the police department and county government handled releasing information about the case.

"John's death brought to light a lot of issues," Stewart said. "The Culosis were brought back out, Masters were brought back out," he added, referring to Dr. Salvatore Culosi and David Masters, two other men shot and killed by Fairfax County police officers. "I guess it's been worth it to this point — I'm still reserving judgment."

For Geer's family, Lieberman said "They're still upset. Now they don't have confidence in the system. They've been through a horrendous experience for two years where people of authority have just let them down completely. Justice was just denied for the longest time."

Leadership Fairfax Announces New Openings for the Class of 2016

Leadership Fairfax President & CEO Karen Cleveland announced that the first round of applicants for the 2016 classes of the Leadership Fairfax Signature Program and the Emerging Leaders Institute have been selected and a second round of applications are now being accepted.

Interested individuals from the corporate, nonprofit and public sectors are invited to submit their applications for the second round for the class of 2016 scheduled to begin in September 2015. Information sessions where applicants can learn more about the programs and how to apply will be held

*Monday, Aug. 3, from 5:30-7 p.m. at

the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, 1886 Metro Center Drive, #230, Reston;

RSVP to moniek@leadershipfairfax.org or call 703-752-7555.

The Leadership Fairfax Signature Program brings together senior leaders from all over Fairfax County in an experiential, cohort style community leadership development program. Participants immerse themselves in community issues working in teams to study real-world problems and develop real-world solutions. Program days are once a month from September through June and are tuition based.

The Emerging Leaders Institute is a 10 month program that brings together moti-

vated, energetic, young professionals from the business, nonprofit and government sectors. Participants polish their leadership skills, receive individual mentoring and coaching and participate in community service projects that enhance their person and professional resumes. ELI helps participants develop leadership skills and competencies that accelerate the process of becoming a leader at work and in the community.

Leadership Fairfax (LFI) is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to finding, training and growing leaders in Northern Virginia. Through its three programs — Leadership Fairfax, Inc. (LFI), Emerging Leaders, Inc (ELI), and Lifetime Leadership Program

(LLP) — LFI seeks to build and connect leaders who raise the tide not only in their local community but in the whole of Northern Virginia. Graduates represent a diverse alumni in the arts, business, education, government, health, religious and social service sectors. Alumni from all three programs become part of and stay connected to a fast growing network of like-minded leaders. Leadership Fairfax is nonpartisan and inclusive. Leadership Fairfax is located at 8230 Old Courthouse Road, Suite 100, Vienna. For more information, visit www.leadershipfairfax.org or call 703-752-7555.



Whitehall Farms head grower Brian Yoder, of Reston, (left) feeds “pastured” chickens.



The Whitehall Farms corn maze spans three acres and is being grown for the Sept. 19 Fall Festival.

PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

White Knights Saving the Whitehall family farm while growing responsibly and benefitting veterans.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

As Fairfax resident Jeff Waters guided his nimble four-wheeling cart over a bumpy dirt path through the woods on his family's 200-plus-acre farm, he said confidently, “It’s a lot closer to being done than it looks.”

Waters’ late father-in-law Martin Vazquez and family moved on to the property that borders Clifton, Fairfax Station and Fairfax areas in 1960. Vazquez, a Cuban immigrant, served as a medic in World War II and then started an insulation business with his wife. He put all his money into purchasing the land.

“This was his baby,” Waters said.

Vazquez’s family continued to live on the land and used its 40 to 45 acres of pasture for raising an average 60 head of Angus steer as a “gentleman’s farm,” selling registered breeding stock.

When Waters’ wife Nadine Vazquez’s parents were no longer able to take care of the farm, they all faced a choice: Sell the land to developers or figure out a way to keep it.

Not selling meant finding some way to otherwise monetize the farm. “We wanted to get a viable

business going here,” Waters said.

ONE IDEA he considered was operating a paintball course. With around 160 acres of woods on the property and the ability to keep players 500 feet from any roadway, it seemed like a promising direction that wouldn’t require excessive labor or maintenance.

But following some media coverage of the idea, a number of area residents raised concerns about increased traffic and pollution coming to the neighborhood. Waters also said meeting development conditions for Fairfax County became too expensive.

“We pulled the plug on it,” Waters said. “We grew tired of fighting.” That announcement came in February this year. Though



Owner Jeff Waters predicts pumpkins from this expansive patch may reach 90 pounds in time for the Whitehall Farms Fall Festival.

earlier in the winter, Waters was already pursuing another route for preserving the land: agritourism.

The Right to Farm Act that went into effect in July 2014 opened the door for Waters to “up the scope” as far as growing produce and livestock on the farm, hiring more people and hosting educational events without as much regulation from the county.

Brian Yoder, a Reston resident and recent graduate of a natural resources Master’s program at Virginia Tech, responded to an ad Waters posted on Craigslist in December for a general manager on the farm. Yoder had the motivation and skill to do more with the land.

Yoder and his wife had been contemplating starting their own farm after he completed his two tours with the U.S. Army flying Boeing CH-47 “Chinook” airplanes.

“There’s a lot to do,” Yoder said, adding that he was excited to find “someone else with the farm and same passion trying to make it happen.”

With paintball pulled, Yoder and Waters put everything into making Whitehall Farms, LLC a reality. For the new vision of the farm, Waters wanted it to be operated by and benefit veterans with a portion of

profits. He also wanted all the farming to be done as responsibly and sustainably as possible.

Eventually, Waters sees the farm as an educational resource for students and other groups to visit and learn about sustainable agriculture.

“Our only dream is that it stays a farm,” Waters said.

Getting the land back into growing shape has been laborious, with Waters and Yoder putting in between 60 and 80 hours a week. There was considerable brush and outdated fencing to clear before even getting to the soil that had been packed down hard from decades of cattle hooves.

But late-summer vegetables like kale, broccoli and radishes are in the ground, along with a vast pumpkin patch field and 3-acre corn maze (in progress) slated for the farm’s first Fall Festival beginning Sept. 19.

For livestock, Whitehall currently has a dozen grass-fed angus steer, a handful of mulefoot pigs on the way and a few dozen pastured chickens pecking around in a large pen. There are also two retired lieutenant colonels helping out around the place.

“Sustainable farming interests a lot of

veterans,” Waters said. He hopes to have many more on the farm in the future, thanks to a partnership with the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture, based on the Woodlawn Estate in the Mount Vernon area of Alexandria.

Arcadia has its own farm training program for veterans and can expand the operation with Whitehall as a satellite location.

“Veterans, coming out of the military with experience overseas, are really looking for a job that has a purpose to it,” said Arcadia executive director Pam Hess. “They’re accustomed to being part of a really close knit, well-operating team that’s working for something larger than themselves.”

With hardly any other farms in Fairfax County, Hess is also excited about Whitehall’s contribution to the “local food system and economy.”

“The idea of letting Fairfax County residents have actual farms to buy actual food grown in responsible ways is really exciting,” she said.

In keeping with both the veterans-support theme and sustainable growing motivation, Waters and Whitehall have already made significant use of material from Veteran Compost. The Aberdeen, Maryland and Fairfax-based outfit also employs veterans and diverts food scraps from going to landfills.

WATERS AND YODER said they’ll use as much as 3,000 yards of the compost over the next three years, which will decrease the dependence on fertilizer and promote healthier plants that require less spraying for pests.

Making smart decisions about how to grow and what to eat are the core of what Waters calls the “working demonstration farm concept.”

“There’s a renewed interest for people to see for themselves how it’s raised, and what the right choice is,” Yoder said.

For more information, visit www.whitehall.farm, www.arcadiafood.org and www.veterancompost.com.

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Race Against Crime on Saturday

This weekend on Saturday, Aug. 1, at 8 a.m. the Board of Directors for Fairfax County Crime Solvers will host their third annual 5K Race Against Crime at the Fairfax County Government Center. This race is open to everyone and supports their non-profit program that works to aid law enforcement by providing a means for the public to report criminal information anonymously and protected under state law.

As part of the run, police officers, firefighters and sheriff's deputies all compete against each other in the Public Safety Challenge. The winning team gets bragging rights and awards, as do the top runners in the race.

This is a family event. Children will enjoy exploring the emergency vehicles and may visit the child fingerprinting station. McGruff the Crime Dog will be there too. There is a free kid run immediately following the 5K. Multiple food vendors will be on hand as well.

Fairfax County Crime Solvers is proud to have Investigation Discovery as their title sponsor. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet Lieutenant Joe Kenda from the Investigation Discovery television show, "Homicide Hunter." He will emcee the race and be available for autographs and photos with the runners.

Crime Solvers is in need of volunteers as well. If you are not able to run but would still like to be a part of this fun event, visit <http://fairfaxcrimesolvers.org/5k.html> and register as a volunteer today.

Del. Filler-Corn Appointed to Health Insurance Reform Commission

Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D - 41) was appointed to the Health Insurance Reform Commission (HIRC) by Speaker William Howell. The HIRC monitors the work of appropriate federal and state agencies in implementing the provisions of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, including amendments and regulations under the ACA. The Commission prepares an executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Commission before the first day of the regular session of the General Assembly.

In addition to the Health Insurance Reform Commission, Del. Filler-Corn is also an appointed member of the Joint Commission on Technology & Science, Joint Commission on Transportation Accountability and Commission on Intergovernmental Affairs. In the House of Delegates, she serves as the House Democratic Whip and is on the Transportation Committee, Finance Committee, as well as the Commerce & Labor Committee.

Singers Wanted

Do you love to sing? Make new friends? Bring joy to others through music? Singers wanted for the Celebration Singers, a women's show choir performing at various community sites in Northern Virginia. Practice is held 10:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., starting again in September on Wednesdays in Burke. Contact Gayle Parsons, 703-644-4485 or email gparsons3@cox.net.

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OPINION

Wind Energy

Wind energy needs to be a part of the renewable mix of energy sources in Virginia and the nation.

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

With the federal Clean Air Act requiring higher air quality standards, many fossil-fuel power plants will be closing or converting to other fuel sources. On trips to the western part of our country and abroad, especially to Germany, I am reminded of the significant role that wind plays in being used to generate clean and sustainable electricity. In 2014, wind power added significantly more new electricity for consumers than any other source in the United States, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

According to an American Wind Energy Association announcement last year the United States has more wind energy supplying its grid than any other country, enough to power 15.5 million American homes. Wind is the fifth largest electricity source in the U.S., generating 4.4 percent of all the electricity in this country. In Denmark, wind-produced electricity provides just under 40 percent of the



COMMENTARY

nation's power. Scotland has enough wind-produced electricity to supply all its homes. Wind power is the leading source of Spain's electricity and is the largest component of Germany's renewable sources that now constitute a quarter of its power. China leads the world in investments in wind power.

Among the states Texas, Iowa, California, and Oklahoma, each generated enough electricity from wind to power more than a million homes. Other states with significant wind capacity include Kansas, Illinois, Minnesota, Oregon, Colorado and Washington. Virginia and other eastern states do not make the list because they do not have as significant a wind resource. For Virginia, only off-shore and in the mountains mostly in the southwest is there wind sufficient to site a wind turbine farm. Dominion, the largest power provider in the Commonwealth, has invested in wind-powered electricity generation in West Virginia, Indiana, Illinois, and in Virginia where it holds a lease from the federal government for off-shore wind development.

The success of wind-produced electricity in Europe has been realized from a feed-in tariff system that has effectively subsidized investments. In the United States, the Production Tax Credit has been the primary federal tax incentive for wind energy. As all countries look for ways to save money these incentives are in danger at a time when wind energy is beginning to demonstrate its value.

Virginia is the first state to secure a wind energy research lease to build and operate turbines in federal waters. Dominion's plan to build a pair of six-megawatt test turbines about 24 nautical miles off-shore from Virginia Beach seems to be in trouble as bids to build the turbines are about twice that projected. The expectation has been that eventually there would be 300 turbines in the off-shore area. Stakeholders are currently at work to identify options to salvage the project.

Wind energy needs to be a part of the renewable mix of energy sources in Virginia and the nation. Congress needs to extend the federal tax credit that keeps our development of wind energy competitive with the rest of the world. Consumers need to be open to buying wind and other renewable energies even if there is a cost premium. Our air quality depends on it.

LETTERS

Slavery in 'the Land of the Free'

To the Editor:

America, "the land of the free." I have always considered it necessary for a land of free people to assist in freeing the enslaved.

Yet 36,000,000 men, women, and children throughout the world are enslaved through human trafficking, according to the Global Slavery Index. That is more than there have ever been at any point in time in the history of humanity.

How can a world that is supposedly improving socially also have a constant increase in slavery? The two cannot coexist, and it breaks my heart to see the number of human beings forced into slavery increase each day. Human trafficking is the use of force or fraud to control someone to labor without payment or engage in sexual activity. This crime occurs all over the world, from Malaysia to Northern Virginia. In Northern Virginia alone, from October 2013 through January 2015, 290 victims of trafficking have been identified, according to the NOVA Human Trafficking Initiative.

Malaysia, also a center for modern day sex-trafficking and slavery, is a popular destination for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking.



Though the Government of Malaysia proposed amendments to help decrease trafficking, these amendments have yet to pass through Parliament. Furthermore, despite Malaysia's significant increase in trafficking investigations, the government only convicted three traffickers in 2014, a sharp decrease from the 9 convicted in 2013 prior to the increase in investigations.

Crime does not dissipate naturally. Significant investigations and convictions are necessary if there is any hope for a decrease in human trafficking in Northern Virginia, Malaysia or worldwide.

Congress currently is reviewing the End Modern Slavery Initiative Bill.

If passed, the U.S. Government will authorize the formation of a

nonprofit grant-making foundation to fund projects and programs outside of the United States in hopes of putting an end to slavery. The passing of this bill is a crucial step in the fight to end slavery.

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LETTERS

Morally Wrong and Counterproductive

To the Editor:

Thanks to Mary Kimm of the Connection (Editorial — “Backpacks for All,” Connection, July 15-21, 2015) and Ronald Baker’s letter to the Connection for highlighting the need for backpacks and the way to support this initiative. However, your readers also need to know about the “Virginia Back to School Supplies and Clothing Allowance” (aka: Backpacks for All) that was introduced in the Virginia General Assembly in 2014 and 2015.

The Connection article noted that we live in an affluent area with these needs, however, in other areas of the state, less affluent areas, the need is greater.

For example, the Richmond International Raceway, seating capacity of 107,097, could be filled more than twice with the number of Virginia Children living in poverty, most of which are in families experiencing the deepest poverty.

In addition to the Connection appeal to support the backpack program via charitable contributions, an approach that SALT also embraces, there is also need to advocate for efforts by the state to address the issue. The article calls for partnership, but the state is absent, not a part of the needed partnership. Funds are already available for government support of backpacks for impoverished students via the fed-

erally funded TANF Block Grant. What is missing is public awareness and support to tap these funds and use them for the intended purpose.

Support has come from students, with the leadership of Rae Moar, a freshman at Thomas Jefferson High School. In her seventh and eighth grade years of school and in her freshman year at Thomas Jefferson, she collected over 800 signatures from students at her school, her church and community to help give impoverished children a strong start in school and give them a learning boost. These signatures were sent to members of the General Assembly, and Delegate Scott Lingamfelter and Senator Chuck Colgan (now retired). The legislation requires support from your readers. Readers that do not know who represents them can go to this web site: <http://viriniageneralassembly.gov/>.

SALT is proud to have advocated for the “Virginia Back to School Supplies and Clothing Allowance” and promoted support for smart policies for kids and their families. Failing our children today is not only morally wrong; it is also counterproductive, ultimately leaving us less competitive in the global community.

John Horejsi
SALT Coordinator
Vienna

Teens Charged in Little Rocky Run Car Fires

Four teenagers from the Centreville and Clifton area were charged with setting fire to vehicles, Fairfax County Police announced July 23, associated with 11 vehicle fires in the Little Rocky Run neighborhood over the last several weeks.

Police detectives and Fairfax County Fire Marshal investigators collaborated on tracking down the offenders. According to the Fire Department release, “Seven of the vehicle fires took place in the early morning of July 18, with three additional vehicle fires occurring on July 3 and one more on July 15, causing more than \$120,000 in damages.”

Two of the juveniles are 16, two are 17 and each was charged with multiple counts of burning or destroying personal property, and setting fire to woods, fences, grass, etc.

— TIM PETERSON

Four teenagers were charged in connection with 11 vehicle fires in the Little Rocky Run area.



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Repairing a ‘Crisis of Confidence’

Ad hoc commission subcommittees report on police policy review.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

“It is well past time for the Fairfax County Police Department to start providing timely, honest and effective communications with everything it does.”

When former director of Fairfax County public affairs Merni Fitzgerald delivered the final report and recommendations of the communications subcommittee of the Fairfax County ad hoc commission to review police practices, commissioner Joseph Cammarata responded immediately to those words in report’s introduction.

Cammarata wondered aloud at the commission’s July 27 meeting if the police members of the subcommittee had read the report themselves. He said if they agreed that the department had been “dishonest” in its past communication, “We’ve got a real problem. Whoever was giving dishonest communication, those people should be fired.”

Some heated exchanges among commissioners followed, including over the fact that the word “dishonest” wasn’t technically used.

Fitzgerald, chair of the Communications subcommittee, answered that the report “reflects the views of the subcommittee.”

“We’re not here to assign blame,” said Michael Hershman, chairman of the commission. “That was never the intention.”

“Communications in recent high-profile use-of-force and critical incident cases were mishandled, inadequate and untimely, leading to loss of public trust and questions about the legitimacy of police actions,” the report said. The most recent incident was the Aug. 29, 2013 shooting death of John Geer standing unarmed in the doorway of his Springfield home.

It continued: “The failures in both communications and its Freedom of Information Act policies have created this crisis of confidence for the Fairfax County Police Department. If the department had policies that fostered real transparency, it’s unlikely the controversies in recent years would have lasted so long and there likely would not have even been a call to form this Commission.”

“It is strongly worded,” said Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova. “We suffered from a lack of candor, that enraged a segment of the community. Not just



Christian Klossner, deputy director of the Washington, D.C. Office of Public Complaints and at-large member of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement board of directors, was the guest speaker at the July 27 meeting of the ad hoc commission to review Fairfax County Police policies.



Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler reminded members of the community and ad hoc commissioners that he now has a personal scorecard through the Fairfax County website for citizens to rate his performance.

in the Geer case, but that really brought it to a head.”

Commissioner and Lt. Col. Tom Ryan with the Fairfax County Police department said, “The words don’t hurt us. We recognize the need to get better at release of information.”

“It isn’t easy to have your profession laid open,” Ryan continued, “we welcome that. We want to hear where we’re failing.”

The subcommittee’s recommendations fell under the categories of Maximum Disclosure, Minimum Delay; Community Engagement; Policies, Procedures and Personnel; Freedom of Information Act; Culture of Transparency and Moving Forward. It also proposed future regular review dates for the Board of Supervisors to the recommendations and implementation of input from the commission.

Shirley Ginwright, chairman of Board of Supervisors Trust Committee, president of the Fairfax County NAACP and chairman of the commission subcommittee on



Mike Curtis, Manassas resident and vice president of the Mount Vernon area-based Virginia Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability, asked guest speaker Christian Klossner if an officer-involved death would automatically trigger an investigation by the Washington, D.C. Office of Police Complaints.



Lt. Col. Tom Ryan with the Fairfax County Police Department said police recognize “the need to get better at release of information,” during the July 27 meeting of the ad hoc commission to review Fairfax County Police policies

diversity, recruitment and vetting of police officers, also shared that group’s final report and recommendations.

Ginwright said that subcommittee appreciated the chief of police’s existing diversity council that “is paying off,” but thought the department could do more outreach into community forums. The subcommittee, among its recommendations, called for a “diversity goal” for each district commander that would make them independently responsible “for enhancing diversity within the department.”

Once each subcommittee has filed a final report, the commission will assemble a comprehensive final report and recommendations to submit to the Board of Supervisors later in the fall.

Christian Klossner, deputy director of the Washington, D.C. Office of Public Complaints and at-large member of the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement board of directors, was the guest speaker that pre-

sented first at the meeting. “Things are moving away from reactive models,” Klossner said during his presentation, “moving towards more proactive, addressing causes and not just the symptoms.”

When asked about the effectiveness of his organizations, Klossner responded there needs to be better data collection on use of oversight. “The key is building trust,” he said.

The next full meeting of the ad hoc commission is scheduled for Aug. 17 at the Fairfax County Government Center. For the Sept. 14 meeting, commissioners will be at Walt Whitman Middle School in the Mount Vernon area of Alexandria.

More information on the police policies review commission, including the full text of final reports and proposals from the communications and diversity, recruitment and vetting subcommittees is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission.

Yhomi Warshansky leads in Jazzercise during the Family Sports Challenge on Saturday, July 18, at Van Dyck Park in Fairfax.



PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/
THE CONNECTION

Family Sports Challenge Benefits ODB’s Backpack Program

In spite of the morning rain, a Family Sports Challenge was held Saturday, July 18 at Van Dyck Park in the City of Fairfax to benefit Our Daily Bread’s Collect for Kids Back to School Program. Sponsored by local nonprofit Parties 2 Inspire, the City of Fairfax Parks and Recreation Department and XSport Fitness, participants paid \$5 or donated backpacks and scientific calculators for a chance to take part in a number of sports challenges, including Jazzercise, a hula hoop contest, and soccer, football and basketball challenges.

“This has been an extraordinary day because through the rain, we’ve had so much help with our volunteers, including the George Mason Women’s Basketball Team, and other nonprofits joining in to inspire our community and children with health, fitness and fun to raise awareness for families in need,” said Hawanya Turner, president of Parties 2 Inspire, which sponsored the event.

“Our Back-to-School program is part of a countywide effort to help local kids in need go back to school with all the supplies they need,” said Heather Webb of Our Daily Bread (ODB). “We’re working to help 2,000 kids in Central Fairfax.”

ODB’s goal is to provide supplies for 2,000 quali-

fied needy children who attend Fairfax High School, J.E.B. Stuart High School, the elementary and middle schools that feed into them, and some additional central Fairfax schools that have requested assistance.

Webb said a donation of \$15 can translate into all sorts of school supplies in the Collect for Kids’ Back to School program. Some 52,000 school children who qualify for the free or reduced meals in the schools, or 27 percent of the school population, are eligible to receive backpacks with school supplies.

Anyone interested in helping may donate through Our Daily Bread’s website, www.ODBFairfax.org, or mail a check to 4080 Chain Bridge Road, 2nd Floor, Fairfax, VA 22030. Donations of new backpacks and/or gently used scientific calculators are also welcome. They may be brought to ODB’s offices through Aug. 7, Mondays through Fridays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Contact Dawn Sykes 703-273-8829 or holiday@ODBFairfax.org or visit www.ODBFairfax.org.

— STEVE HIBBARD



Tamar Williamson of Burke participates in the Basketball Three-Point Challenge.



Demitri Turner and Andrew Yoon, both of Lorton, won the Basketball Three-Point Challenge.

Be a part of our **Wellbeing** pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

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FARMERS MARKETS 2015

WEDNESDAYS

Oak Marr Farmers Market. 8 a.m. - noon. Wednesdays, May 6- Nov. 18. Oak Marr Park & RECenter, 3200 Jermantown Road, Oakton. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/viennamkt.htm>

Wakefield Farmers Market. 2-6 p.m. Wednesdays, May 6-Oct. 28. 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale. 703-321-7081. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/wakefieldmkt.htm>

Fair Lakes Farmers Market. 3:30-7 p.m. 4501 Market Commons Drive, Fairfax. www.greentowns.com/initiative/farmers-market/fair-lakes-farmers-market-fairfax-va.

THURSDAYS

Annandale Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Thursdays, May 7-Nov. 12. Featuring a master gardener plant clinic on site to answer questions about plants and landscaping. Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/annandalemkt.htm

Herndon Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Thursdays, May 7-Nov. 12. Twelve Vendors sell a variety of products including kettle corn and fresh made Italian pasta. Old Town Herndon, 700 Block of Lynn St, Herndon. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/herndonmkt.htm

Fairfax's Government Center Farmers Market. 3-7 p.m. Thursdays, May 7-Oct. 29. Ten vendors including a Middle Eastern delicacy bakery and custom organic ice cream shop. Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/governmentcntr-mrkt.htm

FRIDAYS

McLean Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Fridays, May 1-Nov. 20. 1659 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/mcleanmkt.htm

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

SATURDAYS

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.fairfaxsaturndaymarket.com

Reston Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-noon. Saturdays, May 2-Nov. 14. Named the best farmers market in Northern Virginia by Virginia Living Magazine. Lake Anne Village Center, 11401 North Shore Drive, Reston. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/restonmkt.htm

Oakton Farmers Market. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Year round. Unity of Fairfax Church, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. www.smartmarkets.org/

Great Falls Farmers Market. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Year round. Great Falls Village Centre, 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. www.celebrategreatfalls.org/FarmersMarket.html

Vienna Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Faith Baptist Church Parking Lot, 301 Center Street South, Vienna. www.viennafarmersmarket.com

CALENDAR

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 30

Preschool Science 123. 2:30 p.m. City of Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Enjoy fun experiments. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

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/>

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/JULY 31-AUG. 2

Cabaret Series: Sizzling Summer Nights! Friday-Saturday 8 p.m., Sunday 1 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd., Lorton, W-3 Theatre. A raunchy ramble featuring red-hot jazz mixed with some tropical tunes and some of the spiciest sun-drenched songs written for the stage. Tickets: \$25-\$30.

SATURDAY/AUG. 1

Mount Vernon Nights 2015: Grand Ole' Ditch. 7-8 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd., Lorton. Enjoy free public concerts featuring a different genre and musical group each week.

5K Race Against Crime. 8 a.m. Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. This race is open to everyone and supports their non-profit program that works to aid law enforcement by providing a means for the public to report criminal information anonymously and protected under state law. As part of the run, police officers, fire fighters



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

'The Age of Love'

Come out to the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia on Aug. 2 to watch the documentary, "The Age of Love." This charming movie follows the humorous and poignant adventures of 30 older adults in Rochester, N.Y., who sign up for a first-of-its-kind speed-dating event exclusively for 70-to 90-year-olds.

and sheriffs deputies all compete against each other in the Public Safety Challenge. This is a family event where children will enjoy exploring the emergency vehicles and may visit the child fingerprinting station. McGruff the Crime Dog will be there too. There is a free kid run immediately following the 5K. Multiple food vendors will be on hand as well.

Neighborhood Plant Clinic. 10 a.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Master Gardeners provide horticultural tips, information, techniques and advice to home gardeners. Adult. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

SUNDAY/AUG. 2

Christ Church Opening Services. 9:30 a.m.-noon. at Christ Church, 7600 Ox Road. Services at the new location. Visit www.christchurchva.org.

Hands On Modeling Day. 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road. Visitors learn how to paint and display railroad scenery as well as participate in artifact cleaning. Tickets: \$2-\$4.

"The Age of Love." 4 p.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. This charming movie follows the humorous and poignant adventures of 30 older adults in Rochester, NY, who sign up for a first-of-its-kind speed-dating event exclusively for 70-to 90-year-olds. Recently widowed, long divorced, or never married, we watch as they prepare for the big day, meet their possible dates, and then anxiously await the results. Through comic and bittersweet moments, they reveal intimate confessions of what it is like to still yearn to be seen and understood, and how much or how little their hearts have changed over a lifetime. Includes movie, post-discussion and dinner. Tickets: \$18-\$22.

TUESDAY/AUG. 4

Robin and His Merry Band. 2:30 p.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Impressions Theatre presents the musical story of Robin Hood. Ages 6-12. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 5

Read! Build! Play! 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Read a story, build with DUPLOs and play with friends. Ages 3-5 with adult. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

FRIDAY/AUG. 7

Stewart Huff Live. 8-10 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Comedian Stewart Huff brings his humor to the Workhouse. Tickets: \$15.

"Despicable Me 2." 7 p.m. Strawberry Park, just outside of Angelika Film Center, 2911 District Avenue, Fairfax. Girls on the Run NOVA is presenting a free outdoor screening of "Despicable Me 2." The event is a way for families to learn more about their unique youth development program while also celebrating 15 years of service and 50,000 girls served.

Fun and Games. 2 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Board games and fun. Ages 6-12. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

SATURDAY/AUG. 8

Mount Vernon Nights 2015: Robin and Linda Williams. 7-8 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd., Lorton. A Prairie Home Companion favorites Robin & Linda Williams just released a new hit album, These Old Dark Hills. Come enjoy live music and fun..

2nd Saturday Art Walk. 6- 9 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd., Lorton. Experience the diverse art of over 100 artists on a historic venue. Free Admission.

Creative Writers Club. 2 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Fred Oaks Road, Burke. Join for sharing, discussion and feedback on your works in progress. Ages 13-18. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

SUNDAY/AUG. 9

Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road. Table Top (TTRAK) model trains will be on display and running. Admission: \$2-\$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org.

TUESDAY/AUG. 11

Cupcake War for Teens. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Fred Oaks Road, Burke. Teens will create cupcake confections with frosting, sprinkles, toppings and accessories to learn decorating tips. Ending with a fun competition. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 12

The One Man Band. 10:30 a.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Sing, dance and read to the rhythm with Peter McCorry. All ages.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

AUGUST

8/12/2015.....HomeLifeStyle
8/19/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools – Back to School – Private Schools

8/26/2015.....Newcomers & Community Guide Pullout

SEPTEMBER

9/2/2015.....Wellbeing
Labor Day is Sept. 7

9/9/2015..HomeLifeStyle Pullout – Real Estate & New Homes

9/16/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools Back to School, Open Houses

9/23/2015.....Fall Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment

9/30/2015.....Professional Profiles & Your Business in the Community

OCTOBER

10/7/2015.....Wellbeing Senior Living Pullout

10/14/2015.....HomeLifeStyle
10/21/2015.....A+ Camps & Schools

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- Potomac Almanac
- Reston Connection
- Springfield Connection
- Vienna/Oakton Connection

SPORTS

The Greater Fairfax 16-18U Babe Ruth baseball won the Southeast regional and will compete in the Babe Ruth World Series. Pictured are: (front) Coach Brian Seeley, Nathan Nguyen, Brandon Reiser, Zach Beck, Tyler Murray, Kyle Wilkinson, Sean Culleton, Ben Stine, Nick Render, Zach Thurston, (back) Coach Karl House, Kenny Barry, Michael Camarata, Matthew Sedlock, Zach Bright, Jimmy Nicholas, Trey House, Matthew Blaise, Jake D'Ercole, Joe Larimer, and Coach Aaron Tucker.



COURTESY PHOTO

Greater Fairfax 16-18U Babe Ruth Baseball Wins SE Regional

The Greater Fairfax 16-18U Babe Ruth baseball team is headed to the 2015 Babe Ruth World Series to be held Aug. 8-15 in Klamath Falls, Oregon.

Greater Fairfax earned the right to represent the Southeast Region by winning the Southeast Regional tournament, which was held from July 22-26 at historic Shepherd Stadium in Colonial Heights.

During double elimination play, Greater Fairfax defeated Putnam County Tennessee, Union County North Carolina, Northern Fairfax, and Lumber River, North Carolina (twice) in order to advance to the World Series. The 2015 Greater Fairfax 16-18U tournament team is the first team from Virginia ever to advance to a World Series. In 2013 and 2014 Greater Fairfax was the Southeast Regional runner up to Alabama.

The team is coached by Aaron Tucker and Karl House, and managed by Brian Seeley.

Local Fencer Wins United States National Championship

Local fencer Phil Sbarbaro, member of the Virginia Academy of Fencing in North Springfield, the world's largest fencing school, and member of the board of directors of the National Fencing Foundation, won

the veteran 70-79 years old men's sabre national championship at the 2015 United States Fencing Association's Summer National Championships in San Jose, CA, taking place between June 29 and July 6.

In addition, Sbarbaro, together with two other Virginia Academy of Fencing members Chris Matt and Jeannine Bender, qualified for the 2015 Veteran World Championships taking place from Oct. 19-25 in Limoges, France.

Matt fences in the Veteran 50-59 year old men's sabre category. Bender fences in the veteran 60-69 year old women's sabre category.

Senior Olympics Offers Wide Variety of Events

The 2015 NVSO will be held Sept. 12-25 at 23 venues throughout Northern Virginia. More than 50 events are open to adults 50-plus years of age living in a sponsoring jurisdiction. NVSO is sponsored by the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Fauquier and Prince William.

Other NVSO events include track and field, swimming, diving, cycling, tennis, table tennis, golf, miniature golf, ten pin bowling, eight ball pool, volleyball, pickleball, men's basketball, handball, racquetball, badminton and bocce. Participants can register online at www.nvso.us or by mail. Registration fee is \$12 which covers multiple events. Deadlines are Aug. 28 by mail, Sept. 4 online.

For more information, call 703-228-4721 or email, nvso1982@gmail.com.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Please register child and adult separately. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

THURSDAY/AUG. 13

Toddler Time. 10:30 am. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Join for stories, song and activities. Ages 2-3 with adult. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

FRIDAY/ AUG. 14

Library Playdate: Toddlers. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Fred Oaks Road, Burke. A fun place to play with other toddlers. Ages 1-2 with Adult. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/

SATURDAY/AUG. 15

Mount Vernon Nights 2015: The Revelers. 7-8 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Revelers, founding members of the Red Stick Ramblers and The Pine Leaf Boys "unquestionably the two groups at the vanguard of the Louisiana cultural renaissance" have joined together to form a Louisiana Supergroup which combines Swamp-Pop, Cajun, Country, Blues and Zydeco into a powerful tonic of roots music that could only come from Southwest Louisiana. Free admission.

Tales to Tails. 11 a.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, (Fairfax). Children ages 6-12 celebrate Prince Boo-Boo's birthday with games, activities and reading to the dog. Please bring a birthday card. School age. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/

SUNDAY/AUG. 16

Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold a N gauge model train show. Admission: \$2-\$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org.

TUESDAY/AUG. 18

S.T.E.A.M Storytime. 2 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Fred Oaks Road, Burke. Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. Each month focuses on one subject with stories and activities for preschoolers. Ages 4-5 with adult. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

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 AUGUST 31—SEPTEMBER 4.....RIO (PG)

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Illinois De-Commit Ohanian Faces Uncertain Future

Bishop O'Connell softball standout training in California.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Patty Maye Ohanian arrived in Mission Viejo, Calif., on Friday to train for what she called her “most important” travel softball tournament of the year.

Ohanian, a Burke resident and rising junior pitcher and slugger on the Bishop O'Connell softball team, plays travel ball for the SoCal Bandits, a Huntington Beach-based branch of the Illinois-based Beverly Bandits. Ohanian and her teammates will compete in the 16U premier division of the Premier Girls Fastpitch tournament Aug. 1-8.

Travel softball tournaments are nothing new to Ohanian, a competitive and driven athlete who has dedicated countless hours to her craft. But this tournament has taken on added importance after a coaching change at the University of Illinois shifted Ohanian's softball future into a state of uncertainty.

Ohanian spent most of her 10U-16U travel seasons playing for the Vienna Stars. She also played one season with Virginia Glory and attended multiple camps with the goal of getting noticed by college coaches.

Ohanian's hard work paid off with a full scholarship offer from the University of Illinois. Ohanian, then a freshman at Lake Braddock Secondary School, committed to the Fighting Illini.

THE FOLLOWING YEAR, Ohanian transferred to Bishop O'Connell and excelled in both the pitcher's circle and the batter's box. She posted a 1.75 ERA in 44 innings pitched, and batted .594 with nine home runs and 57 RBIs in 30 games. She was named VISAA state Player of the Year and was a first-team All-Met selection by the Washington Post.

“People ask me [about the effects of committing early] a lot,” Ohanian wrote in an email. “They ask me if I got lazy. They ask me if I stopped practicing. The answer is, NO. I don't play softball for the scholarship. I play softball to be the best I can be. I am not naturally the ‘perfectly built softball player.’ I'm ‘too short’ to be a pitcher, and I'm ‘not from the right area.’”

“Every day I take off, someone else is taking advantage of it. The only thing that changed for me was how much more I knew I had to work hard to compete in the Big 10. Everyone who watches me play tells me I seem very intense, and I am. I mentally challenge myself every pitch of every game because I know how intense college will be. I play because I love to compete, with myself and others. I want to see how far I can take this thing.”

Things were going smoothly for Ohanian until Terri Sullivan, who spent 16 years as head coach of the Illinois softball program, announced in early June that she would retire. Ohanian, who listed Sullivan as one



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Burke resident and Bishop O'Connell rising junior Patty Maye Ohanian de-committed from the University of Illinois during the summer.

of the main reasons she committed to Illinois, retweeted the coach's retirement announcement from the Illini Softball Twitter account.

“Going into my unofficial visit, I was timid, knowing nothing about the university,” Ohanian wrote. “When I met the coaches, I felt unbelievably at home. The head coach that recruited me, Coach Sullivan, and her assistants, Coach [Donna] DiBiase and Coach [Katie] O'Connell, were exactly what I was looking for in coaches. They were athletic, and energetic. My personality fits well with that type of leadership. After looking in to the university, I found out how great of a school it was academically, too.”

How did Ohanian react to the news of Sullivan's retirement?

“My initial reaction was very upset,” she

wrote. “I was sitting in [O'Connell] Coach [Tommy Orndorff's] office during lunch one day when I got a text from one of the recruits telling me what had happened. As I said before, one of the main things I liked about the school so much was her, and once she was gone it felt like what I had imagined it to be like was all gone.”

Less than a month later, Illinois hired Tyra Perry as head coach. According to Ohanian, “the commitment fell through about a week later.”

“Pitching is a hard thing,” Ohanian wrote. “Some coaches want power pitchers, some want junky movement pitchers. Some want 6-foot tall girls and some want girls like me (5 feet 8). The new coach and I weren't a good fit, personality-wise or pitching-wise.”

After committing early in her high school career and seemingly saving herself from a

“The early recruiting puts players, parents, and coaches in tough positions and forces them to make decisions that seventh and eighth graders should not be making.”

— Patty Maye Ohanian via email

stressful process down the road, Ohanian finds herself uncommitted entering her junior year.

“The early college softball recruiting has gotten out of hand,” Ohanian wrote. “Girls in the seventh and eighth grade commit to colleges. There was no specific reason why I committed then, to be honest. It was normal. I was right on schedule with all other 2017 pitchers who want to compete at the highest collegiate level.”

When asked what she meant by softball recruiting getting “out of hand,” Ohanian mentioned several reasons.

“I said that because softball is one of the earliest sports that recruit,” Ohanian wrote. “Girls in the seventh and eighth grade commit to college, similar to me. The problem with this is that five or six years is a long time in the collegiate athletics business. Coaches can change, and even more than once, in that time period. Girls can peak early, and not get any better from their eighth grade year on. Or, girls can peak late, but by the time they're up to speed, spots are already filled.”

“The early recruiting puts players, parents, and coaches in tough positions and forces them to make decisions that seventh and eighth graders should not be making. A lot of the time, everything works out, but the amount of times things change or go wrong after a player commits early and then de-commits for various reasons is growing too fast.”

OHANIAN IS CONFIDENT everything will work out.

“On my travel team, we have girls going to DePaul, ASU, Louisville, Southern Utah, and Miami of Ohio, but we also have many other girls who have not committed,” Ohanian wrote. “All that changes now is that I go back into the pool of girls who are not committed. There are plenty of Division I schools who still need pitchers and hitters. I know what I want in a school, I know how far away I want to go, and what I like and dislike in programs and coaches now. I truly believe I learned a lot from this experience.”

Next up for Ohanian is the Premier Girls Fastpitch tournament.

“This tournament is the most important of the year, so it was definitely important all year long,” Ohanian wrote, “although now that I de-committed, I know the importance of performing well in front of all the scouts that will be at the tournament.”



Scalawags Singalong for Young Pirates posing next to Arts in Parks sign.

Family-Friendly Entertainment

Free Arts in the Parks performances are held at area parks Saturday mornings.

By TABITHA TIMM
THE CONNECTION

Ditch the Saturday morning cartoons and head out to one of five local parks hosting the Arts in the Parks children's entertainment series. Families can see free acts that range in variety from puppet shows to comedy shows to magic shows.

Scalawags Singalong for Young Pirates, a comedic children's band, performed this past weekend in the Burke Lake Park Amphitheater. The band invited children onto the stage, gave out prizes, and encouraged families to sing along to their songs.

When asked about his favorite part of the show, Mike from Fairfax Station said his was "audience participation." Many adults in the audience could be seen singing along with the band and dancing to the music with their children.

"It's Saturday morning and it's so awesome that we can come and spend time with

the kids and enjoy the music as well," said Irma from Fairfax Station. Arts in the Parks provides an opportunity for families to bond and have fun while learning the importance of our natural resources. "A lot of the groups bring up volunteers and bring up the kids on stage and they have them dance or sing or do different things on stage," said park volunteer Stewart Copin.

"There was a good crowd here; I counted 339 plus two dogs," said Copin, adding that, "we normally have about 200 to 250."

After the show, audience members have the opportunity to explore Burke Lake Park and the attractions it has to offer. The Amphitheater is located on hiking trails that wrap around the lake, and a carousel, mini golf course, miniature train ride, and playground are located nearby.

The Arts in the Parks performances are held at Burke Lake Park, E.C. Lawrence Park, Lake Fairfax Park, Mason District Park, and Frying Pan Farm Park. Shows are every Saturday until Aug. 22, 10 - 11 a.m.



Mike and Irma, from Fairfax Station, with their two children.



Scalawags Singalong for Young Pirates onstage with young volunteers.



Burke Lake Park Amphitheater



Stewart Copin,
park volunteer

PHOTOS BY
TABITHA TIMM/
THE CONNECTION

A member of Scalawags Singalong for Young Pirates dancing in the audience.



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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Zin Springfield, VA LLC trading as Zinburger Wine and Burger Bar, 6795 Springfield Mall, Springfield, VA 22150. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer on Premises/Mixed Beverages license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Bradford Honigfeld, member
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200

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

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THURSDAY/JULY 30

Spanish Conversation Group. 2 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Participants can practice and improve their Spanish with a native speaker. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches.

Walk-In Ebook and Computer Clinic. 10 a.m. Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Help with basic computer skills and downloading library eBooks. Bring device account IDs and passwords.

FRIDAY/JULY 31

Basic Computer Skills Training. 1 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Participants can learn basic computer skills with one-on-one technology volunteers. Visit fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches.

SATURDAY/AUG. 1

Teen Advisory Board. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Young adult volunteers work together on developing library programs for their peers. Age 13-18. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

ONGOING

Senior Outdoor Pickleball, April-October, Wednesdays 8-10 a.m. Audrey Moore Wakefield Park Fairfax County, Courts 9 & 10, Beginners welcome. No cost. Email Gerald Rhoads at geraldrhoads6701@gmail.com.

Volunteer Fairfax seeks individuals, families, youth and corporate groups for service opportunities at a variety of nonprofit agencies. One-time special events or ongoing activities are available at www.volunteerfairfax.org or call 703-246-3460.

Singers Wanted for the Celebration Singers. The women's show choir is interested in new talent to perform at various Northern Virginia community sites. Practices are Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. in Burke. Contact Gayle Parsons, 703-644-4485 or email gparsons3@cox.net.

Online Scavenger Hunt. Visit Fairfax tasks those interested in becoming "citizen ambassadors" to the county (those informed on fun, creative weekend outings in the area) to find two Fairfax County Ambassador icons hidden throughout the fxva.com website in order to join the ambassador team; those who find all five hidden pins will receive a complimentary gift. www.fxva.com/online-ambassador.

FAITH NOTES

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

Fairfax Baptist Temple, at the corner of Fairfax County Parkway and Burke Lake Roads, holds a bible study fellowship at 9 a.m. Sundays followed by a 10 a.m. worship service. Nursery care and children's church also provided. 6401 Missionary Lane, Fairfax Station, 703-323-8100 or www.fbtministries.org.

The Guhyasamaja Buddhist Center, 10875 Main St., Fairfax City provides free classes to both newcomers and advanced practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism. The center emphasizes working with the mind and learning how to understand the workings of the mind, overcoming inner causes of suffering, while cultivating causes of happiness. Under the direction of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the center is a place of study, contemplation and meditation. Visit <http://www.guhyasamaja.org> for more information.

Lord of Life Lutheran offers services at two locations, in Fairfax at 5114 Twinbrook Road and in Clifton at 13421 Twin Lakes Drive. Services in Fairfax are held on Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. and Sundays at 8:30 and 10 a.m. Services in Clifton are held on Sundays at 8:15 and 10:30 a.m. 703-323-9500 or www.Lordoflifeva.org.



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Fairfax Station Beauty - \$869,000
Sited on 1 acre with gorgeous landscaping. Beautifully
updated with attention to details throughout!

View more photos at www.hermendorfer.com



Ann Witherspoon, CRS
Associate Broker
703-503-1836
ann.witherspoon@LNF.com
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**Fairfax
Station/
Canterberry
Estates**
Coming Soon!
\$769,500

Rare opportunity!
1.5 beautiful, landscaped
acres sited on a
cul-de-sac! Elegant home featuring 4 bedrooms, 3 full baths -
kitchen & all baths updated - possible (true) 5th BR with bath
on main floor - large custom screen porch with adjacent deck
- butler's pantry - MBR with sitting room + dressing area -
ample closet space - many built-ins - many surprises!



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Top 5% of Agents Nationally
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Cell: 703-618-4397



Centreville
\$629,999
Superbly priced!! From the lemonade sippin' front porch, to the
island kitchen, the vaulted ceilings, and the sought after Chantilly
HS pyramid - this home offers everything you are looking for at a
sensational price. Call for a private appointment.



STEVE CHILDRESS
"Experience...with
Innovation!"
Life Member NVAR Top Producers
Buyer Broker since 1973!
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Clifton
\$900,000
Horse
Country!!!

5 bedrooms, 3.5
baths on 5 acres!
Premium private
lot at end of cul-
de-sac next to
entrance of bride
trails of horse community! Immaculate condition w/ loads
of extras/upgrades to include: hardwood floors throughout,
granite countertops, SS. 6 stall stable w/ 2 fenced paddocks. 3
fireplaces, cedar shake roof, chair rails/crown molding, and
much MORE! Call Steve Childress NOW... 703-981-3277

Sheila Adams
703-503-1895

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Fairfax New Listing \$619,800
Lovely Colonial in beautiful Country Club View.
4 BRs, 2 1/2 Baths, Full Finished Walk-up Lower
Level, Updated Kitchen/Breakfast Room, 1st Floor
Family Room w/FP. Nothing to do but move in.
Call Sheila Adams 703-503-1895



Jim Fox
703.503.1800
jim.fox@LNF.com



Woodbridge
\$644,000
Look No
Further

Stunning, exqui-
site, model home
condition! 5300+
sq ft. 6BR/5.5BA.
3-car gar.
Gorgeous 1/2 ac
lot backing to trees. Screened porch & deck. Sunrm off KT.
Custom built-ins in fam rm. Library. To-die-for KT w/miles of
granite. Sumptuous MBR w/lux bath & BIG walk-in closet. All
BR's up w/baths. Expansive walkout rec rm + 6th BR, full bath,
media rm on LL. A MUST SEE Call Jim Fox 703.755.0296



Karen Sparks
703-503-1881
karen.sparks@lnf.com



Manassas
\$635,000
Stunning, center hall 4+ BR, brick colonial, beautifully
situated on 5+ acres; custom upgrades, gourmet designer
kitchen, library can be bedroom, split rail fence, near his-
toric Clifton, patio & deck, great location, close to VRE!



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Gainesville Heritage Hunt 55+ \$479,900
GORGEOUS 2 LVLS on golf course - STUNNING Sunrm
addtn. 3BR, 3.5BA, Grnt Kit w maple/grnt & islnd, Liv, Din,
Fam w Gas Fpl, Sunrm, Loft, 2 car Gar, Irrig syst, Patio.



Gainesville Heritage Hunt 55+ \$279,900
UPDATED 1 LVL patio home - backs to trees! 1 lg BR w WIC, 1.5 BA, Kit w oak
cabs, recess lts, HVAC 2013, solar tube, ceram tile, Laundry, Liv, Din, Fam,
Sunrm, NEW paint, 1 car Gar w NEW door, Patio, close to Clbhs & entry gate.

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Manassas \$525,000
Gorgeously updated, immaculate home on private 1 acre wooded lot
in serene community. Gourmet Kitchen, top-of-the-line upgrades:
Counters, Cabinetry, Stainless Steel Appliances & Lighting. Fully
Finished Walk-Up Basement with Den, Full Bath, Wetbar & new
Carpet. 3 year old Roof, new HVAC & new Gutter Guards.

Christine Zinser
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Open Sunday!



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Burke Centre • \$400,000 • Garage TH • Backs to Common Area

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Woodbridge \$500,000
Stylish Updates
Beautiful 4 BR, 3.5 BA home w/open flrpln. New HW
floors on ML. Gourmet Kit w/SS appliances. Gas FP.
Fin. Rec Rm w/WO from Lower Level. Backs to Trees.

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Fairfax City \$190,000
You are minutes away from shopping, restaurants, and Metro
service! This two bedroom condo is perfect for first time own-
ers but equally appealing if you are downsizing. Freshly
painted, new appliances, and new neutral carpet throughout.

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