

# Springfield CONNECTION

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Former Police  
Officer Charged  
with John Geer  
Murder  
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## Social Painting Can Be an Art

Shopping  
with the  
Sheriff

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PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL LIEBERMAN  
**John Geer standing in his doorway in Springfield, minutes before he was shot by a Fairfax County Police officer.**



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION  
**Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler expressed his sympathy for the Geer family, police officers and the community at a press conference announcing the indictment of former officer Adam Torres for second degree murder of John Geer.**



**Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova called Monday "a sad day" for the Geer family and police department, with one of their own being charged with murder.**

## Former Police Officer Charged with John Geer Murder

### Adam Torres indicted by special grand jury.

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

**A**dam Torres has been charged with murdering John Geer. Though Torres shot the unarmed man once in the chest nearly two years ago, the then-Fairfax County Police officer remained on the department's payroll until being terminated July 31, 2015.

Commonwealth Attorney Raymond Morrogh had convened a special grand jury to hear testimony from officers and other witnesses to determine whether Torres had committed any criminal wrongdoing. It first met for a week beginning July 27 and resumed on Aug. 17. The indictment of second-degree murder was announced later in the day Aug. 17.

Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler and Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova held a joint press conference to discuss the new charge.

Roessler opened by sharing that he had reached out to the Geer family to again offer them "my personal condolences and sympathy." But he didn't stop there. "To the men and women of Fairfax County Police Department and our great community, my heartfelt sympathy to everybody, because the loss of life in this case impacts the Geer family and all of us."

**TORRES** was in the process of surrendering himself and being processed at the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center while the press conference was taking place. He's currently being held without bond, a police report said. An arraignment hearing was scheduled for 10 a.m. on Wednesday morning, Aug. 19, where a judge may or may not set a trial date, Commonwealth's Attorney Raymond F Morrogh said in an email.

On Aug. 29, 2013, Geer had been standing in the doorway of his Springfield home

for around 40 minutes, talking with officers who had their guns trained on his chest. Geer's longtime partner Maura Harrington called the police earlier because Geer had been throwing her belongings out of the house after she previously told him she was planning to move out of the residence and he became upset.

In police reports of the incident, Torres claimed to see Geer quickly lower his arms, presenting a perceived threat. The other officers present provided contradicting accounts, that Geer's movements were slower and nonthreatening. Torres fired once, striking Geer in the chest.

Roessler said he decided to terminate Torres because after reviewing the incident investigation, "the use of force was not reasonably necessary in this matter" and violated police general order 540.1.

Despite the tragedy of the incident itself, Geer's case drew public and media attention because it highlighted a perceived lack of transparency and accountability in the way Fairfax County and the police department handled communication and other policies such as use of force.

One response to the criticism was Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova's creation of an ad hoc commission to review police policies.

"Fairfax County has learned a lot through this very difficult process," Bulova said at the press conference, "learned a lot about sharing information in a timely way."

Though Geer was killed Aug. 29, 2013, very little information about the case was made public, much less released to Geer's family following the incident. Ongoing investigations by the police department, Commonwealth Attorney's Office and Depart-



PHOTO COURTESY OF  
FAIRFAX COUNTY  
POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Adam Torres was fired by Fairfax County Police on July 31 and indicted for the second-degree murder of John Geer on Aug. 17.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF  
JEFF STEWART  
**John Geer**

ment of Justice were cited as reasons why information such as the name of the officer who shot Geer was withheld for a year and a half.

Geer's family finally filed a \$12 million civil suit against the county, including the request for information. Fairfax County settled out of court, paying nearly \$3 million, and released over 11,000 pages of documents from the incident investigation.

"This is the first time we've had a situation like this where there has not been a relatively fast resolution to a police-involved shooting," Bulova said. The chairman referred to the situation as a "convoluted" one that "held things up in a way that frustrated the Board of Supervisors. We were not happy that things ended up not moving forward to resolution, that instead it wound up at the federal level."

**THE AD HOC COMMISSION** is scheduled to present its final recommendations to the Board of Supervisors in October, however Bulova and Roessler said the county hasn't waited to begin already implementing some of the suggestions that have already been put forward by the commission.

"I have every confidence a scenario like this won't happen again," Bulova said.

Many others are hopeful for that as well. "Nothing you can do is going to justify

his death," said Jeff Stewart, Geer's friend who witnessed the shooting and also serves on the ad hoc commission. "The only thing I can hope is through this commission, and other things, it vindicates his life. I think he'd be proud of that — we keep these things from happening in the future."

Stewart said after he heard about the indictment, he had "mixed emotions." "It's certainly a big weight, felt like a weight had been lifted, but it's hard to get past the fact [Torres] has two kids of his own. His family didn't sign on for this either. It's tragic."

With regards to closure, Stewart said, "I think we're there already."

"The grand jury heard the evidence and got it right. I trust when it goes to trial, they'll get it right as well. I've trusted the system up to now — I've said, if he was indicted, I would trust the system to make the right decision."

And while Torres received the indictment, "more went wrong here than just Torres pulling the trigger," Stewart said. "You should have supervisors in front of you, answering for why an officer was there, violating procedures, and no one was doing anything about it."

"While he did kill someone, we can't really blame him for everything after that," said Mike Curtis of Northern Virginia Cop Block and founder of the Facebook group Justice for John Geer, which has staged numerous protests since the fall. "He can't decide to charge himself with the crime, he can't prosecute himself."

"You can't blame him for the stonewalling," Curtis continued. "That's one thing I'm worried about now. We've gotten the one step done, but hardest thing is holding Bulova, Roessler, (County Attorney) David Bobzien accountable. There needs to be some opposition to people who've been on the Board of Supervisors for years. They're the ones who make these employment choices. These patterns keep repeating."

"Unfortunately, it's not an issue to most people," Curtis said.

# Questions Pursued after Encounter with Police

**Iraq war veteran calls Internal Affairs commander's statements 'victim blaming.'**

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

Alex Horton waited patiently for his chance to speak. Meanwhile the Use of Force subcommittee of the Fairfax County ad hoc commission to review police policies and procedures waded through the results of a survey to determine the content and language of policy change recommendations it will eventually bring to the full commission.

Once it was time for public comment, Horton pulled out a prepared statement and proceeded to read from it while seated outside the ring of subcommittee members.

On the morning of June 14, Horton was asleep in a model apartment in his building in the Huntington area of Alexandria. He had been staying there briefly while repairs were taking place in his own unit. Upon seeing the door to the apartment ajar, a dentist with an office across the hall called Fairfax County Police and reported a vagrant in the building.

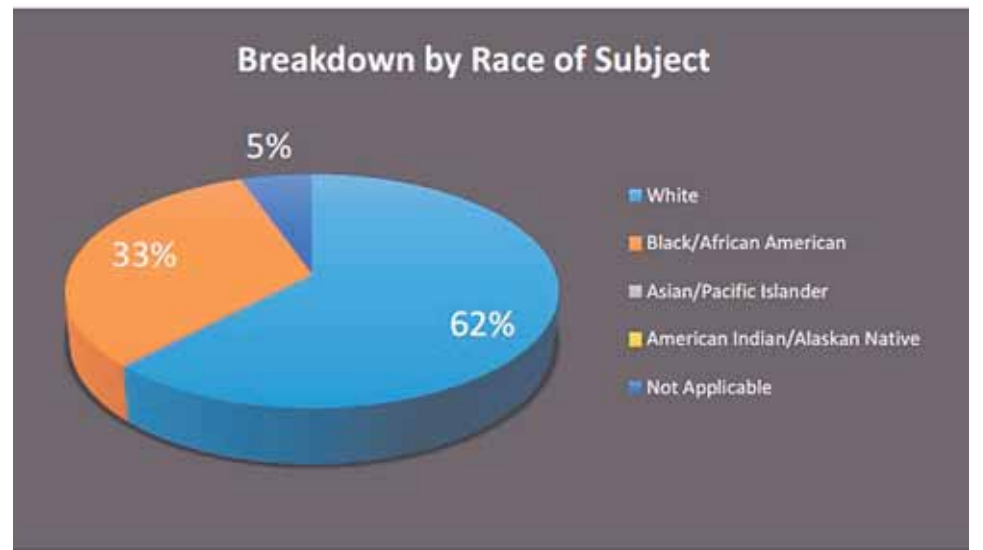
Police gained access to the building and unit, and reportedly announced themselves repeatedly. Hearing no response, they entered and performed a sweep of the apartment, brandishing their service weapons. In a July letter published in The Washington Post, Horton describes waking up in shock while this was taking place.

The letter goes on to explain no shots were fired and the situation de-escalated after Horton produced proof that he lived in the building.

Horton came to the subcommittee meeting not as much to complain about the officers' tactics specifically, but rather his experience with the police department afterwards. An Iraq war veteran, Horton said he understood the process officers used to sweep the room.

"My chief complaint," Horton said, "is how the officers failed to reasonably exhaust all opportunities to gather information before raiding the bedroom with guns drawn and leveled at me."

SEE ENCOUNTER, PAGE 7



Breakdown by Race of Subject		
White	23	62%
Black/African American	12	33%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0%
Not Applicable	2	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>

Not Applicable refers to a vehicle or vehicle tire

All subjects involved have been male

Breakdown by Race of Officer Involved		
White	50	96%
Black/African American	2	4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0	0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>100%</b>

IMAGE COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Charts on the new Fairfax County Police Department officer-involved shooting website give a demographic breakdown of the incidents.**

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## AREA ROUNDUPS

### Injured Driver Dies

The 85-year-old woman who was injured in a crash succumbed to her injuries on Sunday, Aug. 16. She has been identified as Nancy Schade, of the Fairfax area.

Detectives would like to speak with anyone who may have witnessed this crash.

Crash Reconstruction Unit detectives are investigating a crash. Police were called to the intersection of Braddock Road and Roberts Road for the two-vehicle crash around 2:12 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 16.

An investigation determined that a 47-year-old Chantilly-area man was driving a 2000 Ford van east on Braddock Road. The woman, driving a 2001 Cadillac, was traveling west on Braddock Road. The Ford van attempted to turn left on Roberts Road, in the path of the oncoming Cadillac. The two vehicles collided in the intersection.

The driver and passenger in the van were not injured. The woman driving the Cadillac was transported to Fairfax Hospital with life-threatening injuries. Speed and alcohol do not appear to be factors in this crash.

Detectives would like to speak with anyone who may have witnessed this crash. If you saw this crash, you are asked to call police at 703-280-0553 or you may contact Crime Solvers electronically by visiting [www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org](http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org) or text-a-tip by texting "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES(274637)\*\* or by calling 1-866-411-TIPS(8477).

### Citizen's Police Academy Announces 2016 Sessions

The Citizen's Police Academy is now accepting applications for the Spring 2016 session that will meet from March 10 to May 14, 2016. Applications are also being accepted for the fall 2016 session that will meet from Sept. 15 to Nov. 19, 2016. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/services/citizens-police-academy.htm>

### ESL Volunteers Needed

The English as a Second Language program at Fairfax United Methodist Church needs volunteers to help adults learn English. No training necessary - just a desire to help our immigrant neighbors learn English and adjust to U.S. culture. Classes are Mondays and Wednesdays, Sept. 16 - Nov. 18. Volunteers come either Monday OR Wednesday. Classes are held at FUMC, 10300 Stratford Ave., Fairfax, VA 22030. Contact [Judyblanchard47@gmail.com](mailto:Judyblanchard47@gmail.com) or call 703-591-1587.

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AUGUST 31—SEPTEMBER 4.....RIO (PG)

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# OPINION

## Sea Changes in Policing?

Report offers blueprint for transforming aspects of policing, jail and services for people with mental illness.

**Y**esterday, for the first time in the history of Fairfax County Police Department, a Fairfax County Police officer was charged in a shooting death.

On Monday, Aug. 17, former Fairfax County Police officer Adam Torres was charged with the second-degree murder of John Geer, following an indictment returned by a special grand jury convened by Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney Ray Morrogh. It appears to be only the second time in history that the Commonwealth's Attorney has convened a grand jury in an officer-involved shooting.

John Geer was shot dead in the doorway to his own home on Aug. 29, 2013 after police were called in a domestic dispute. Torres was fired in July 2015, almost two years later.

FCPD began by releasing almost no information. It took a year-and-a-half, a judge's order, a U.S. senator's probing, and public outrage (the most important of these being the court order) to get information about the investigation.

But the public outrage led the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to form the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, which has been meeting since April both as a commission and five subcommittees involving thousands of hours of work by about 70 people. Areas of focus by committee include Use of

Force; Communications; Mental Health; Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting; and Independent Investigations and Oversight.

Communications recommendations came out last month, well worth reading on the commission website.

Police and county officials recognize that the world is changing around them, and have engaged in the process. The kind of changes needed represent a massive change in culture and approach, and none of it will happen overnight, but the process has started.

### EDITORIAL

Several developments, beyond the indictment of Torres, mark progress and opportunity for change.

Last week, FCPD Chief Edwin Roessler posted a website summary of all officer involved shootings, a major step and a work in progress. The department is wrestling with communications initiatives on many levels.

This week, the report released from the Mental Health and Crisis Intervention Training Committee marks a remarkable opportunity for Fairfax County to transform the way it provides services to people with mental illness. Recommendations reach beyond the police department to the county jail and the Community Services Board, which provides mental health services in the county.

Police are often the first responders in a mental health crisis. The jail is the county's

## Get Involved

The public is invited to speak at the next meeting of the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission:

Monday, Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m.

Walt Whitman Middle School

2500 Parkers Lane, Alexandria VA 22306

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission/>

❖ Read the Mental Health Subcommittee's final report and recommendations:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission/materials/mhcrit-draft-report-august14.pdf>

❖ See Fairfax County Police Department website on Officer Involved Shootings

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/inside-fcpd/063015ois.htm>

largest facility for people with mental illness. The costs, financial and human, of dealing with mental health in this way are enormous. The 26 recommendations of the Mental Health Subcommittee, presented by committee chair and state delegate Marcus Simon, offer the county a path to getting it right.

Recommendations including fully implementing the "Memphis model" of crisis intervention, which provides for response teams including officers specially trained in de-escalating situations with people in mental health crisis; creating a system of getting treatment rather than incarceration for people with mental illness; creating a mental health docket in the courts; funding a second Mobile Crisis Unit under the Community Services Board; establish strategically located, 24-hour crisis intervention sites where police can safely transfer custody of person in crisis without taking them to jail.

How much will it cost? It will require upfront money, but it costs \$50,000 annually to house someone in the Fairfax County Detention Center. To provide intensive therapy in the community costs \$7,500 a year.

— MARY KIMM

**Nathan, 7, and Naana Boateng, 10, of Fairfax get brand new school supplies from FACETS.**



**From left, sisters, Nour, 7, Shahd, 5, and Fatima Badawi, 16, get brand new school supplies for the upcoming school year courtesy of FACETS.**

## Back-to-School Shopping

ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO  
THE CONNECTION

**"I** wanna get school supplies so I can get smart," said Sabrina Mohammed, 5, of Fairfax, as she excitedly entered the recreation center at Ragan Oaks Court apartments in Fairfax, which has been filled with school supplies provided by FACETS.

Fifty-three children have signed up to receive book bags and school supplies on Monday, Aug. 17. FACETS will also distribute back-to-school necessities at two other lo-

cations, Robinson Square in Fairfax on Tuesday, Aug. 18 and Barros Circle in Centreville on Wednesday, Aug. 19.

A total of 186 children from low-income families will get brand new school supplies.

"When they have something new and in good condition, it looks good and it does exactly what they need it to do, it helps boost their self-esteem," said FACETS' D'Ivonne Holman.

Armed with the list they received from their schools and escorted by their own personal shop-

per, a volunteer, the children, who ranged from elementary to high school, gathered notebooks and binders and rummaged for pens, crayons and scissors.

For items on the list that they cannot get during the distribution, such as graphing calculators, FACETS will try to get them using monetary donations to the Back-to-School drive.

Employees from Noblis in Falls Church helped distribute the supplies at Ragan Oaks Court. Volunteer Gloria Maser said that her company likes to do things that

can connect with and involve the community directly. This is the second year Noblis has participated in FACETS' Back to School Supply Party.

Naana Boateng, 10, of Fairfax, is excited to start the fifth grade at Eagle View Elementary school. She is especially looking forward to the field trips.

Mohammed cannot wait to start first grade at Eagle View, too. Her favorite subject is playing.

For more information on FACETS and its programs, visit <http://facetscares.org/>.

## Springfield CONNECTION

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# Encounter Re-examined

FROM PAGE 4

**FOLLOWING HORTON'S LETTER** in the newspaper, Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler announced an investigation of the matter would take place. Aug. 7, the chief released recordings of the 9-1-1 call and dispatch call, as well as a five-page response letter to Horton, to the public.

At Horton's request, the two met in person to discuss his concerns.

"I felt it was helpful and constructive," Horton said.

In addition to the case, Roessler said the two had "a good, healthy discussion about philosophical issues with policing in the national dialogue. He made good points about the profession, I wanted to get his input."

In his statement at the meeting, Horton said the chief justified the officers' procedures because they were executed by the book. "Whether the book itself needs rewriting is a question I hope Chief Roessler and other leaders will answer in the coming weeks and months," said Horton.

Horton was also critical that the chief's summary in the letter to him said officers tried but were unsuccessful in obtaining information from the security guard at the apartment complex.

"A representative from the security company told me precisely the opposite of what was found in the report," Horton said, "The officers only asked the guard which building the 9-1-1 caller had identified and they went in. That's it, no questions, no fact-gathering."

Horton played recordings he'd made of conversations with the security guard who encountered the police, as well as a police supervisor with knowledge of the incident. That supervisor asserted the officers didn't do anything wrong by not gathering more information.

Horton's next major complaint was with statements made by Fairfax County Police Internal Affairs commander Maj. Michael Kline, who attended the previous subcommittee meeting and spoke about how the incident transpired and the ensuing investigation.

**DURING HIS EXPLANATION** (which is available on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k82WIL9Uvo4>), Kline walks the subcommittee members through the mentality of the officers who responded to the vagrancy call.

Whether they're homeless just looking for a place to stay the night, drug addicts strung out, a fugitive, someone who is mentally ill, "these things are in the back of the mind of the patrol officer as he's prepared to make that entry."

Kline said the officers knocked and announced themselves, standard procedure, and hearing no response, entered the room with a mindset that the person inside might be trying to barricade themselves or set up an ambush.

"It can be pretty well inferred, our investigation indicates, that he had spent the night before drinking rather heavily," Kline said. "He didn't hear the knock-and-announce because he was still in bed and asleep when we went in."

"This is untrue and pure conjecture," Horton responded. "By all accounts, the officers said I was cooperative and compliant, and nothing would have indicated I was inebriated."

"Whether consciously or not," Horton continued, "he seized on the harmful trope of the damaged, drunk and disheveled war veteran that my community has sought to amend in the wake of Vietnam."

Horton went on to say he shared this complaint with Roessler as well. Roessler confirmed that the matter is a "personnel issue, under inquiry by me."

Though Kline was in the room for the Aug. 12 meeting, he didn't immediately respond to Horton's statement.

## Subcommittee To Pilot Case Review Process

The Aug. 12 Use of Force subcommittee meeting began with a discussion of Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler's public release of brief summaries of every officer-involved shooting going back to 2005.

Though the summaries do provide more information than had previously been released, they do not mention the names of victims or officers who were involved. Members of the subcommittee questioned whether the summaries were complete enough or sufficient to help that body with its mission of crafting suggestions for policy changes.

"The people who've prepared this are in the best position to see if these have policy issues embedded in them," said Sal Culosi, who is also a member of the full Ad Hoc commission to review police policies. "The Police Department is in

the best position to help us identify ... If they can't do it, we're not going to be able to do it."

Subcommittee and commission member Mary Kimm raised the possibility of requesting access to full incident reports for "three, five, seven cases, to see if we can find out a little more about it? A couple might help us understand the procedures."

Roessler confirmed that rather than grant unrestricted access to incident reports, several subcommittee members will participate in a "pilot effort" where they'll be able to ask dedicated police staff questions related to particular cases. Those staff members will have access to the files.

Roessler said the first such meeting is being scheduled in the near future.

— TIM PETERSON

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THE CONNECTION  
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## Checking the Back-to-School Healthcare Blocks

**Local governments, clinics offer free immunizations for all and physical exams for the uninsured.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

As the lazy days of summer wind down, beach trips, lemonade stands and lax bedtimes give way to alarm clocks, textbooks and backpacks. Public health officials say that a back-to-school list should include more than pencils and paper. For many, the first order of business is a well-child physical, a dental exam and required immunizations.

During a physical exam, parents should double check that immunizations are up to date, ask if their child's growth is on target and what normal developmental changes they should expect during the next year. Parents should also be prepared to answer questions about their child's sleep patterns and eating habits.

"Vision checks are an important part of a routine school entry physical so make sure to ask for one," said Caroline Sutter, a family nurse practitioner, DNP-BC, co-director of Mason and Partners (MAP) clinics and an assistant professor of nursing at George Mason University in Fairfax. "Dental exams are important to maintain health. Ask for a referral for a dental visit."

George Mason University's Col-

lege of Health and Human Services runs MAP clinics, which offers school entry physicals at no cost.

The Fairfax County Health Department provides free school-required immunizations at five locations in the county. "We are offering some special extended hours in August and September to accommodate the back-to-school rush, but we recommend that parents make the appointment now," said John Silcox, public safety information officer, Fairfax County Health Department.

In conjunction with Inova Health System's Partnership for Healthier Kids, the Fairfax County health department also offers free physicals for school entry to uninsured children. The health department also operates three dental clinics that provide services to children based on eligibility.

"We operate three health centers in Falls Church, Alexandria and Reston that provide primary health services for low income, uninsured residents who cannot afford primary medical care services for themselves and their families," said Silcox.

Dental services are available for eligible children in Arlington through high school age. Vaccines required by Arlington County Public Schools are also available free of charge.

### Health Care Resources

#### Mason and Partners (MAP) Clinics

For physical exams:  
Tuesdays: Manassas Park  
Manassas Park Community Center  
99 Adams Street  
Manassas Park, VA  
8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Wednesdays: Springfield  
Springfield Family Resource Center  
7224 Commerce Street, Apartment T4  
Springfield, VA 22150  
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Thursdays: Culmore  
Culmore Family Resource Center  
3304 B Culmore Court  
Falls Church, VA 22041  
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Other Fairfax County, Virginia, health care resources:

**Fairfax County Health Department Community Health Care Network (CHCN)**  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/pcs/hdchcn.htm>  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/immun/hdchcn.htm>

◆ CHCN - Bailey's  
6196 Arlington Blvd.  
Falls Church, VA 22044  
703-237-3446  
◆ CHCN - South County  
8350 Richmond Highway, Suite 301  
Alexandria, VA 22309  
703-704-5333  
◆ CHCN - North County (Lake Anne)  
11484 Washington Plaza West, Suite 300  
Reston, VA 20190  
703-689-2180

**Fairfax County Health Department's Dental Clinics**  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/pcs/hdchcn.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/pcs/hdchcn.htm)  
◆ Joseph Willard Health Center  
3750 Old Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA, 22030  
703-246-7100  
◆ Herndon/Reston Office  
1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Suite 100  
Reston, VA 22090  
703-481-4242  
◆ Mount Vernon Office  
8350 Richmond highway, Suite 233  
Alexandria, VA 22309  
703-704-6181.

**Fairfax County Immunizations**  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/immun/immunupdate.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/immun/immunupdate.htm)



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FAIRFAX COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

**Back-to-school physical exams — medical, dental, as well as required immunizations — are important parts of back-to-school preparations.**

In Alexandria, the Child Health Clinic provides preventative health services for infants and children through age 5, and physicals for daycare and school entrance through age 11. The Alexandria Health Department offers routine

immunizations for infants, teens and adults.

The Montgomery County Maryland, Health and Human Services Department offers an Immunization Program with walk-in immunizations to children under the age of

19. The county also offers dental care for children ages three to 18.

Sutter says proper sleep and physical activity are also part of the pediatric health care picture and should not be overlooked. Transitioning from a summer of sleeping late to a school year of early wake-up calls can be challenging if children are not prepared. "Establish a sleep schedule now," said Sutter. "With summer coming to an end, it is important to get kids on a regular sleep schedule before school starts."

"Stress the importance of routine physical activity with your child," she continued. "Talk about sports they might be interested in during the school year or other ways to stay physically fit but most important set a good example. Exercise regularly yourself or with your children."

For those experiencing anxiety about returning to school, Sutter suggests addressing the issue before the first day of school. "Come up with a good plan to address them," she said. "Talk to your children about kindness and what to do if he or she is a victim of bullying and how to ask for help if needed."



From left, Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova, supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock), 2nd Lt. Michael Messier with the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office, Burke Centre Target assistant manager Nathan Cooke and Fairfax County Sheriff Stacey Kincaid.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUPERVISOR JOHN COOK'S (R-BRADDOCK) OFFICE

## Shopping with the Sheriff

The Fairfax County Sheriff's Office continued an annual tradition of collaborating with Target Department Store to provide back-to-school shopping opportunities for children in homeless families.

At the "Shop With a Sheriff" which took place at the Burke Centre Target Aug. 13, assistant store manager Nathan Cooke was joined in a ceremony by Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova, Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock), Sheriff Stacey

Kincaid and deputies and members of the Sheriff's Office.

The program benefits school-age children temporarily living at the Katherine K. Hanley shelter in Fairfax, Patrick Henry Family Shelter in Falls Church and Next Steps Family Shelter in the Mount Vernon area of Alexandria.

Last year, "Shop With a Sheriff" provided 36 students with backpacks and Target gift cards.

— TIM PETERSON

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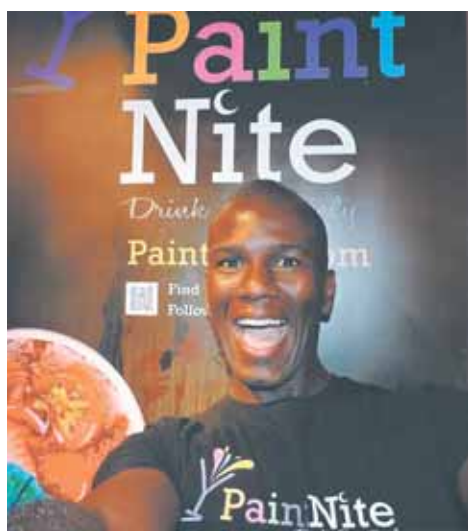
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**City of Fairfax resident Luc Atangana runs Paint Nite events throughout Northern Virginia.**



**These women proudly display their finished paintings.**

## Social Painting Can Be an Art

**City of Fairfax resident mixes food, drink, art lessons and fun.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**W**hen Luc Atangana came to the U.S. from his native Cameroon, Africa, little did he expect to someday make his living as an artist. But that's exactly what the City of Fairfax resident is doing.

He's now a Paint Nite licensee, bringing the joy of painting to others by putting on Paint Nite events throughout Northern Virginia. And for this exuberant 24-year-old, the sky's the limit.

"I'd taken art classes in high school and college and was told that I had talent," said Atangana. "But I never took it seriously."

As a teenager in 2006, he already spoke English because Cameroon is bilingual. But he left his home and came to America to get a good education and play basketball, at which he excelled. He attended Paul VI High, graduating in 2008. He later graduated from Christopher Newport University, where he continued playing basketball and obtained a degree in psychology.

"I still intend to go back to grad school and have my own, private practice, at some point," said Atangana. Meanwhile, his college basketball coach – who's a cousin of the co-founder and CEO of Paint Nite – introduced him to the painting-party event.

"Paint Nite uses painting as a platform that allows artists like myself to get involved in what they love to do – and earn a living from it – without having to spend extraordinary amounts of money," explained Atangana. And these artists pass on their knowledge to others – but instead of doing it in a classroom setting, they turn the lessons into social events at restaurants and bars.

"Some people haven't painted since el-

ementary school, and others have never done it before, because most people don't get to be artistic as they get older," he said. "But at Paint Nite, they reminisce about how much fun it was and see how much fun it is now – especially while eating and drinking at a bar or restaurant. They can do it at the same time."

**DEPENDING ON THE VENUE'S CAPACITY**, each event attracts 30-60 people. "We're now doing 10-12 events a week and we're constantly growing," said Atangana. "For example, the first week of August, we did 12 events, and the second week, 15 events."

The cost is \$45/person and participants must be at least 21. Tickets to each event are purchased at [www.paintnite.com](http://www.paintnite.com). "We also have a deal through Groupon and do advertising on social media," said Atangana. "And we get a lot of repeat and word-of-mouth customers. One woman – who's an accountant and spends her days in a cubicle, crunching numbers – has been to 15 Paint Nites. She says it's a great outlet and stress reliever and something that's fun."

All the materials are provided. "People just have to bring a positive attitude and be willing to have a good time," said Atangana. "Classes are about two hours and we usually have an assistant with art talent to help out."

"I bring a sample painting – a landscape, flowers, etc. – that people can try to recreate," he continued. "But if they want to change or add to it in some way, they can. We'll walk them through it, step by step, but we also encourage them to create something entirely different, if they want."

Atangana said Paint Nite is more like a party than a class. "We focus on making sure that each person leaves learning at least one, new thing and having a good time," he explained. "People really seem to like it. They enjoy the experience, tell their friends and want to come back, so it's been well-received."

Less than a year after becoming a Paint Nite licensee and artist, he's gone from

working by himself to managing a team of nine employees and selling thousands of dollars in event tickets each month. The job has also taught him how to publicize and grow the business via entrepreneurship, branding, social media and networking.

Truthfully, said Atangana, "I don't know if I'd be happier as a professional athlete. It's been an absolute blast – challenging and enjoyable. It's also been a learning experience, since I'm doing the marketing, hiring artists to assist me and managing staff."

He said the various venues benefit, as well, from hosting these events. "Paint Nite exposes people to new restaurants they haven't been to before," said Atangana. "And the restaurants also get return customers."

**MOST EVENTS** start at 7 p.m. and, although people may buy their tickets the same day, advance purchases are generally better. "If people come to the bar or restaurant and we're not full, they can buy tickets on the spot," said Atangana. "But we usually sell out, so we encourage them to get their tickets early, online."

A few of the local, upcoming, Paint Nite events will be held:

- ❖ Monday, Aug. 24, Baladna Restaurant & Lounge, Fairfax;
- ❖ Monday, Aug. 24, On the Border, Fair Oaks Mall;
- ❖ Wednesday, Aug. 26, The Greene Turtle, Fairfax;
- ❖ Thursday, Aug. 27, Joe's Crab Shack, Fairfax.

The toughest part of his job, said Atangana, is keeping up with the growing demand, as more and more restaurants want to get involved. So his challenge is to find more artists to run the events – but it's a good problem to have, since it means business is thriving.

What he enjoys the most, he said, is "After the event, seeing people leave happy with something they created and tell me they never thought they could paint something like that. I'm also happy when they just want to come back because they enjoyed the experience so much."

## CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto: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.

### THURSDAY/AUG. 20

**Talk & Taste.** 5-7 p.m. Wegmans Fairfax, 11620 Monument Drive, Fairfax. Customers can sample some of North America's best cheeses from cow's, goat's, or sheep's milk, and hear about the journey from prime pastureland and milking sheds to the Cheese Shop in the store.

**Afternoon Reading Group.** 1 p.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. A Constellation of Vital Phenomena by Anthony Marra. Adult. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

**Magic Tree House Club.** 4:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Reading Buffalo Before Breakfast. School age. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

**Springfield Writers' Group.** 7 p.m. Richard Byrd, Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield.

Share your work, give and receive feedback in a supportive setting. Adults.

### FRIDAY/AUG. 21

**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](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/kingstownemkt.htm)

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

### FRIDAY-SUNDAY/AUG. 21-23

**Workhouse Music Hall.** Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Friday & Saturday: 8 p.m. Sunday: 6 p.m. A good old-fashioned rowdy music hall filled with laughter and songs (both vintage and modern songs that evoke the mood) will fill the air in an homage to the famously unique brand of entertainment. Purchase tickets at [workhousearts.org](http://workhousearts.org).

### SATURDAY/AUG. 22

**Art of Movement Class on the Quad.** 8 a.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Enjoy a free yoga class - no experience is necessary, bring your own mat.

**Date Night: Chef's Table.** 7-9 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Date Night cooking classes are designed to be fun, relaxing and an escape from the daily grind. Participants will be served a tasting portion of all the entrees and a chef-selected drink of choice. No one will leave hungry. \$150 per couple.

**Mount Vernon Nights 2015: The United States Air Force "Celtic Aire".** 7-8 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. "Celtic Aire," the premier folk ensemble of the Air Force, performs great classic Irish melodies with refreshing new flavor! From foot-stomping tunes to heart-warming ballads, these professional vocalists play it all while accompanying themselves on traditional Celtic instruments. Free admission.

**Burke Farmers Market.** 8 a.m.-noon. Saturdays, May 2-Nov. 21. 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke. [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/burkemkt.htm](http://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](http://www.smartmarkets.org)

**Fairfax Farmers Market.** 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturdays, May 9-Oct. 31. 10500 Page Avenue, Fairfax. [www.fairfaxsaturndaymarket.com](http://www.fairfaxsaturndaymarket.com)

**Creative Writers Club.** 2 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Join for sharing, discussion and feedback on your works in progress. Teen volunteer facilitates. Ages 13-18. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

**From Seed To Sprout.** 10:30 a.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. See how amazing seeds are and learn to sprout seeds by making your own Bean Baby American Horticultural Society and National Capital Area Garden Club. Age 6-12.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/AUG. 22-23

**Greenberg Model Train Show.** 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. The show will feature many dealers with operating model trains as well as collectibles for sale, hands on exhibits and demonstrations.

## SUNDAY/AUG. 23

**Summer Activities Day.** 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road. Crafts and hands-on activities for all ages. \$2-\$4.

## MONDAY/AUG. 24

**Book Bingo.** 7 p.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Prizes are gently used books. Everyone who plays is a winner. Ages 7-12. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

**Hidden Pond Monday: Bugs, Bugs, Bugs.** 4:30 p.m. Richard Byrd, Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Presented by the staff of Hidden Pond Nature Center.

## TUESDAY/AUG. 25

**Short Book Conversations.** 1:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Discussion on books That Quail, Robert by Margaret A. Stanger. Adults only. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

**Pokemon Club.** 7 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road,



**If you love learning more about where your food comes from and what it takes to produce cheeses that are "best in class," then you won't want to miss Wegmans' "Talk & Taste" events. At the meet-and-greet tasting, customers can sample some of North America's best cheeses from cow's, goat's or sheep's milk. Come out to Wegmans Fairfax, 11620 Monument Drive, Fairfax, on Aug. 20 from 5-7 p.m.**

Burke. Bring your Pokemon trading cards to trade or play the Pokemon game. Age 6-12.

songs and rhymes in a special story time just for ones. Age 12 to 23 months with adult.

## WEDNESDAY/AUG. 26

**Classic Tales.** 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Develop your child's early literacy skills with stories, songs and activities. Ages 3-5 with adult. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/bc/>

**Fun with Ones.** 10:30 a.m. Richard Byrd, Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Enjoy books,

## THURSDAY/AUG. 27

**I'll Be Me.** 2 & 6 p.m. The Fairfax, 9140 Belvoir Woods Parkway, Fort Belvoir. The Fairfax & Alzheimer's Association invite you to attend a full length screening of Glen Campbell I'll Be Me. The event free and open to all. Proceeds from concessions and any donation will be presented to the Alzheimer's Association, NCA. RSVP to [beth.mclean@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:beth.mclean@sunriseseniorliving.com)

## 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/>.

**Follow Your Heart: Recent Work by Nancy Hannans** through Sept. 6 at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Nancy Hannans' recent paintings weave stories of love, joy and harmony in magical lands filled with unlimited possibilities. Hannans combines her love for storytelling and universal symbolism to communicate that we are all interconnected, and to celebrate our common humanity. The women in her work represent all cultures and races. They embody the beauty of the human spirit and are symbols of wisdom, strength, honesty, courage and perseverance.

**Children & Teen Book Sale.** 1-8 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Plenty of books as well as CDs and DVDs.

## FRIDAY/AUG. 28

**Library Playdate: Toddlers.** 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Play with other toddlers at the library. Ages 1-2 with adult.

**Preschool Story Time.** 10:30 a.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Build your child's early literacy skills while enjoying stories, songs and activities. Ages 3-5 with adult. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

## SATURDAY/AUG. 29

**Family Math Games.** 2 p.m. Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Games for all levels with tips for parents to use at home to improve math and logic skills. All ages. Sign up required. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/>

## SUNDAY/AUG. 30

**29th Annual Pakistan Independence Day Festival USA.** Noon. Bull Run Regional Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. The Pakistan Independence Day Festival includes musical performances, rides and games.

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# SPORTS



PHOTO BY BONNIE SCHIPPER

The South County football team opens the 2015 season at home against Briar Woods at 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 4.

## South County Football Thrives with Speed, Aggression

Rising senior quarterback DeAndre Clayton leads Stallion offense.

BY BONNIE SCHIPPER  
FOR THE CONNECTION

Nothing ever moves slowly in South County football. The Stallions, who went 10-2 last season and made it to the region quarterfinals, hope to have another successful season this year by playing fast on both offense and defense.

"We don't do anything slow. Our practices are ridiculously fast," head coach Gerry Pannoni said. "We don't condition ever. At the end of practice, we don't run sprints and we don't have to because practices are so fast. Our goal is to have the kids think the

game is slow motion, so if the practice is chaos, by the time we get against other teams it will all feel slowed down."

One of four starters returning on offense, rising senior DeAndre Clayton will fill the quarterback position, backed up by rising junior Michael Salisbury.

"Clayton led us to 50 points a game and 5,000 yards of total offense [last season]. He's a great trigger man," Pannoni said. "But behind him, Salisbury played a lot at the end of the year, and now they're pretty much interchangeable. They're both going to be really great players."

Also returning to the offense are senior fullback DeMarcus Ramsey and senior half-



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEVIN ALLEN

South County's Saif Khan (55) and Kevin Allen (54) tackle an Annandale player during the 2014 season.

back Xavier Jones, some of the Stallions' many military transfer students.

"We get a lot of military move ins, so we might only get some of our players for two years, so we have to make the most of their time here and be flexible," Pannoni said.

Hoping to run at least 90 offensive plays a game, the Stallions will rely a lot on Ramsey and Jones.

"[Ramsey] runs well," Pannoni said. "Jones is about the fastest kid we've had in the program since I've been here."

The young offensive line will be led by three-year starter Mike Hayes.

South County also has seven starters returning on defense, including second-team all-state linebacker Kevin Allen, defensive lineman Saif Khan, and safety Kyle Foley.

"Defensively, we're going to come after

you, we're going to blitz, and we're just going to let our guys make plays," Pannoni said.

Opponents can once again expect to see an aggressive team.

"Our special teams take a lot of risks, and everybody knows that. We gamble on defense too," Allen said. "We go for it and we either win it or blow it."

The Stallions will begin their season at home against Briar Woods on Sep. 4, their first game on their new turf field. They will then face regional-runner up Westfield and reigning Conference 6 champion Hayfield.

"We're going to approach every game the same. New team, new year," Allen said. "The tough teams are just like any other game. As far as I know, they're 17, 18 years old just like us, and we're going to do everything we can to win."

## Upcoming Events in High School Sports

For **Lake Braddock**, the football team will scrimmage at Good Counsel in Olney, Md., at 6 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 21. The volleyball team will open the regular season at home against Edison at 7:15 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 26. The field hockey team will open its season at home against Fairfax at 1 p.m. and Centreville at 5 p.m. on Aug. 26 during the Lake Braddock tournament.

For **Robinson**, the football team will travel to Osbourn for a scrimmage at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 20. The volleyball team will open its season at home against Patriot at 6 p.m., on Monday, Aug. 24. The field hockey team will travel to face Falls Church at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 25.

For **Woodson**, the football team will host a scrimmage against Marshall at 6 p.m. on Aug. 20. The field hockey team



PHOTO BY JON ROETMAN/THE CONNECTION

Members of the Woodson football team participate in a "midnight madness" practice on Aug. 3. They will host a scrimmage against Marshall at 6 p.m. on Aug. 20.

will compete at the Lake Braddock tournament, facing West Springfield at 3 p.m. and Robinson at 7 p.m. on Aug. 26.

For **South County**, the football team will travel to Western Branch for a scrimmage at 6 p.m. on Aug. 21. The field hockey team

will travel to face Washington-Lee at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 26.

For **West Springfield**, the field hockey team will compete in the Lake Braddock tournament, facing Woodson at 3 p.m. and Osbourn Park at 7 p.m. on Aug. 26.

For **Fairfax**, the football team will host a scrimmage against Stuart at 6 p.m. on Aug. 21. The field hockey team will compete in the Lake Braddock tournament, facing the host Bruins at 1 p.m. and Oakton at 5 p.m. on Aug. 26.

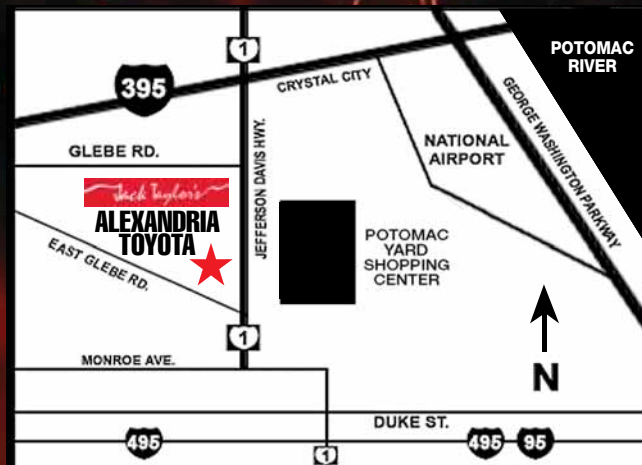
For **Hayfield**, the field hockey team will compete in the Under the Lights tournament at Lee on Aug. 24-25.

For **Lee**, the football team will scrimmage at West Potomac at 6 p.m. on Aug. 21. The field hockey team will host the Under the Lights tournament Aug. 24-25.

For **Edison**, the volleyball team will travel to face Lake Braddock at 7 p.m. on Aug. 26. The field hockey team will host West Potomac at 7:30 p.m. on Aug. 26.

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