

Keeping Officers Happy and the Community Safe

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Keeping Officers Happy and the Community Safe

Capt. Chris Marsh leads Fair Oaks District Station.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The Fair Oaks District Police Station is humming along smoothly, due to its officers as well as the man at the helm, Capt. Chris Marsh. Altogether, he's worked nearly 23 years in the Fairfax County Police Department.

He joined the military after high school and served four years in the Army, ending at Fort Belvoir. He was a military police officer, so it was only natural that, in April 1993, he attended Fairfax County's Criminal Justice Academy.

Marsh began his career as a patrol officer at the Mount Vernon District Station and was there seven years. "It was an active station," he said. "I was on a great squad with a lot of great officers and built the foundation of being a good police officer."

Promoted to sergeant, he was transferred to the Mason District Station as a first-line supervisor. "There, I helped mentor other officers, enrich their careers and support the Police Department's mission and the community," he said.

Marsh was next promoted to second lieutenant and went to the Sully District Station in April 2003. "I was there about two years as a squad supervisor," he said. "It's probably where I most developed as a squad leader, refining my trade."

Another promotion made him a first lieutenant and brought him to Reston as assistant commander of that police station until February 2007. "Every first-line supervisor had more time in the department than I did, and some had double," said Marsh. "So they were well-established and knew what they were doing and it worked out well."

This position also gave him experience "working with the Board of Supervisors and getting out into the community and understanding what it was looking for in a police department. I got involved in their issues and they wanted to be kept in the loop about ongoing stuff in the district. So it was information sharing both ways."

MARSH NEXT made a lateral move to the department's Internal Affairs Investigations Division, staying three years. "It investigates allegations of wrongdoing – from violations of policy and regulations to the use of deadly force and violations of state law," he explained.

It also entails many administrative duties. "You realize the job's importance and that it's critical to maintaining the community's trust," said Marsh. "It's a great experience, giving you a strong foundation and a good place to have been because of the value it provides you."

Afterward, he became assistant commander of the Organized Crime and Nar-



Chris Marsh is the commander of the Fair Oaks police station.

cotics Division, overseeing and helping investigate large-scale money-laundering, vice, narcotics and gambling offenses. He was promoted to captain in late 2013 and stayed put – but now he was that division's commander.

"I was there three years altogether," said Marsh. "It was a good assignment because it's so different than anything else. And it opens your eyes to some of the large-scale crime that goes on in the U.S. We networked and liaised with other local, federal and state agencies – and transportation hubs like airports – and built good relationships with them."

He next spent a year as the staff duty officer attached to the Patrol Bureau. He was mainly in his vehicle, working 12-hour shifts throughout the county. "I responded to large-scale crises such as missing persons,

barricade situations – for example, a domestic incident or a wanted person – and fatal accidents," said Marsh. "I was the operational commander at the scene."

During his tenure, there were several missing-persons cases with extensive searches and rescues. "All the odd things that can surface in a community come to a duty officer," he explained. "He also works closely with battalion chiefs in the fire departments, in a unified command approach. Even during a large, structure fire, police can help control traffic. Or in a barricade situation, the fire department could be waiting nearby."

"It was exciting – a great job – getting back to the core of police work," added Marsh. "You're back out there in the mix again, so it's invigorating."

He then came to the Fair Oaks District

Station in January as its commander. He replaced John Naylor who now commands the Animal Control Division. "I was excited, looking forward to the challenge of running a district station," said Marsh. "You can have an impact on the quality of life of the officers that work for you, as well as assist with community issues."

THE FAIR OAKS STATION has 105 officers who cover 37 square miles, and there's always plenty to do. "I've enjoyed it," said Marsh. "A station commander is one of the busier jobs in the Police Department. I'm responsible for all the officers [here] – for their training, morale and equipment necessary to do the job. I'm also responsible for maintaining the facility, vehicles and equipment; everything ends with me."

He also deals with the community, speaking to groups and handling any complaints. "They're mainly related to traffic issues and we take them seriously," said Marsh. "I check to see if we've addressed it in the past, what we can do now and how the citizens can help us."

He said the biggest problems in the community are vehicle tamperings, burglaries and traffic. People often check for unlocked cars, said Marsh, and then steal the valuables inside. And over the past couple months, there have been several motorcycle thefts from residential areas, especially apartment and condo complexes. But, he added, "Traffic is always the number-one complaint, especially on the smaller roads."

Happy at Fair Oaks, he said, "I came in here with the belief that I have the opportunity to improve the work life of the officers and supervisors, as well as increase and build relationships with the community we serve."

Cognizant of police problems nationwide, Marsh said, "We're under a microscope, but we should always act like we're being recorded. We're responsible to the community as a whole. And we need to continue doing the best job and keeping our integrity and way of doing things at a high level. We should give the community the service they deserve."

Since police work is a "continual, living operation," he said, every day's different and the job's never-ending. So, said Marsh, "It's important for me to learn the culture of this station and district so I can be an effective leader and improve things here and for this community."

He said his greatest satisfaction will be "making this place better than when I arrived. The officers are such a critical part of the community as a whole. So it's important for me to insure that they're happy and have all the tools they need to keep the community safe. The great thing about this profession is the friendships and bonds you build with others – they really last."

Calling Fair Oaks a great community, Marsh is "looking forward to spending the next several years getting out there, meeting people and providing the quality service for which the Fairfax County Police Department is known."

BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax NAACP To Host Rally

Seeking 'Justice for Natasha McKenna.'

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County NAACP president Shirley Ginwright announced a rally will be held Sept. 27 to demand justice for Natasha McKenna, a 37-year-old woman with mental illness who died in February after she had been held in the Adult Detention Center.

During a struggle with a team of deputies who attempted to remove her from her cell and transport her to Alexandria police — who had a warrant for her arrest — McKenna was tased four times.

Sheriff Stacey Kincaid recently released a video of the incident, following a report from Commonwealth's Attorney Raymond F. Morrogh that he determined none of the individuals involved had committed any

criminal offense.

"Anyone who watched the 48-minute video released last week of Natasha McKenna's last conscious moments cannot help but be horrified," Ginwright said in a statement. "Those who have read the 52-page report from Fairfax County Commonwealth Attorney Raymond Morrogh and his conclusion that it was a 'tragic accident' cannot help but wonder, 'What video was he watching?'"

Ginwright said she has been in touch with McKenna's family through their lawyer and that the woman's mother is planning to attend the rally, where she'll make her first public statement on the incident. There will also be speakers from the Virginia and national NAACP groups, American Civil Liberties Union, members of McKenna's family, the family lawyer and social activist groups.



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Commissioner Shirley Ginwright, chairman, Communities of Trust Committee and president of the Fairfax County chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, responds to protesters for Natasha McKenna at the public forum of the Fairfax County police practices review commission.

The rally will be held Sunday, Sept. 27, Fairfax County Courthouse, 4140 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, VA 22030, beginning at 2 p.m. on the grounds of the

Council Hears About Two Road Projects

Both are geared toward future development.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

In 2014, Gov. McAuliffe signed House Bill 2 (HB2) into law. It requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to develop a prioritization process for making funding decisions for the statewide Six Year Improvement Program.

So the CTB is now using a scoring process based on six factors to determine which projects receive money. In Northern Virginia, one of these factors — congestion mitigation — is required to be the highest-weighted factor.

The City of Fairfax wants some of these funds for its road projects, too. And during a Sept. 8 City Council work session, Transportation Director Wendy Block Sanford presented details of two such projects that could qualify.

❖ **ONE OF THEM** is the extension of University Drive (Route 123) from Fairfax Boulevard (Lee Highway/Route 50) to Eaton Place in the City's Northfax area. The project consists of a two-lane roadway, one northbound and one southbound lane. There'd be right- and left-turn lanes onto Lee Highway and Eaton Place, plus a shared left-turn lane to future site entrances.

It also entails sidewalk, pedestrian crossings, on-road bike lanes, lighting and landscaping. Proposed, as well, is traffic-signal reconstruction at the University Drive/Lee Highway intersection.

Significant right-of-way acquisition and easements would be needed from two parcels of land. They are the Regency Shopping Center — which would include building demolition — and the Ruffini property, which is a car-dealer storage lot. And, said Sanford, "Congestion relief would be minimal because of traffic congestion at the Rt. 123/Eaton Place intersection."

This project also comes with an estimated \$10 million price tag — most of which is for right-of-way and utilities costs. But it also comes with many benefits. It would create a roadway grid within Northfax and facilitate that area's redevelopment. It would also provide an alternative, north-south travel route.

"If it's going to increase traffic on University between Route 50 and Kenmore [Drive], what are we doing to the people who live along that roadway?" asked Councilwoman Janice Miller. "Is this a wise idea? That's already a narrow road." Sanford replied that it's just a conceptual design to apply for funding.

"If we apply for funding and it doesn't come through, what's our Plan B?" asked Mayor Scott Silverthorne. Sanford said the City would then look at other funding options. Councilman David Meyer asked the length of the road between Route 50 and Eaton, and Sanford told him it's about 1,000 feet.

"This is a residential road, so that gives me pause," said Councilwoman Nancy Loftus. "And it's an enormous price tag for a small stretch of road. Just buying that

property and the building, and knocking it down, would cost \$7.5 million; I'm not in support of it."

Silverthorne then asked, "What's the strategic value of this road? Is there a benefit to the City's transportation and economic development?"

"Northfax is our crown jewel — our primary, economic-redevelopment opportunity," answered Community Development and Planning Director Brooke Hardin. "Eventually, there'll be no access from eastbound Fairfax Boulevard into that quadrant, unless we do this. Both sides of Northfax from eastbound Fairfax Boulevard would be cut off if this road doesn't extend into this property."

"We've had several studies telling us we should focus our development dollars on Northfax, and it'll make this area more important to developers," said Councilman Michael DeMarco. "I don't think we should miss this opportunity. It'll allow us to eventually connect the east and west quadrants. I think we should at least apply for the HB2 funding."

Agreeing, Meyer said, "We need to think of 20-30 years down the road. I'm afraid that, if we don't do something old, we'll be permanently consigned to second-class status in this part of the City."

❖ **THE SECOND PROJECT** under consideration of HB2 funds is the extension of Government Center Parkway to construct the missing link from Stevenson Street to Jermantown Road.

And most of this project falls within the

existing right of way.

It would consist of two eastbound through lanes to provide right- and left-turn lanes to Jermantown, plus one westbound through lane. There'd be turn lanes to Stevenson and the shopping center. Also included are sidewalk, pedestrian crossings, on-road bike lanes, lighting and landscaping, plus a retaining wall adjacent to the McDonald's drive-through. And there'd be traffic-signal reconstruction at the Jermantown/Government Center Parkway intersection.

"The morning peak traffic is the most critical in this area," said Sanford. "So there'd be more congestion on Jermantown Road." However, this extension would provide an alternative east-west travel route. Preliminary cost estimate, including construction, is \$3.1 million.

"My worry is that there'd be a redistribution of traffic," said Silverthorne. Sanford said the resulting increase in traffic on Government Center Parkway would then place more drivers on Jermantown, too. And Silverthorne said they'll have other opportunities to "further explore this."

The Council members favored this project and Sanford told them she'll be "bringing this to the Council on Sept. 29 for a formal resolution. But the applications [to the CTB for funding] are due the next day; that's why we needed this discussion tonight."

Local Student Helps Globally

TJHSST junior named National Child Awareness Month Youth Ambassador.

BY MARISSA BEALE
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Christopher Cao, from Fairfax City, was one of 51 students recently selected across the country to be a National Child Awareness Month Youth Ambassador.

Youth Service America and the Festival of Children Foundation recently named Fairfax City resident, Christopher Cao, a National Child Awareness Month Youth Ambassador. Cao, a 16-year-old CEO and junior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, was one of the program's 51 nationally-recognized students that are making difference in their communities. They are recognizing the work he has done with Reboot for Youth, a nonprofit he founded to get computers in the hands of youth in need.

"It's really a great blessing," said Cao of this recognition. "I plan to expand to more global projects."

Reboot for Youth refurbishes old computers and then distributes them to children that need them for school. These computers have been distributed to youth in Fairfax County, and abroad in Costa Rica, Vietnam, Cambodia and Kenya. With the \$1,000 grant from the Festival of Children Foundation, Cao has added Liberia to the list.

"I think a lot of that money is going to go to our project and development in Liberia. We are planning on sending 70 laptops," said

the young CEO.

"Our main focus in Liberia is to receive funding that will help with shipping costs and maintaining Keepod devices. That's one of the major hurdles at the moment and we're hoping to find some more generous partners."

Keepod, a USB storage device with the capacity to hold a computer's entire operating system, would let students store their entire computer on the device, rather than on the computer's hard drive.

"We combined hardware with the Keepod software....[It's] really simple for each student to learn and be more familiar with," said Cao.

Having access to a computer plays an important role in a child's education, and Cao's focus is on filling educational gaps created by income disparities. According to the website, Reboot for Youth has donated 139 computers since 2014, impacting 336 students daily. Cao's mission is to make sure each student has an equal access to education.

To donate or request a computer, visit rebootforyouth.org.



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OPINION

Remembering Reston's Civil Rights Icon

“A local giant is gone from our midst. But his spirit and legacy will remain in Reston and beyond.”

BY GERALD E. CONNOLLY
U.S. REP. (D-11)

No one can say Bob Simon didn't lead a full life, but that fact doesn't make his loss any easier. To the end of his 101 years, he was a grand man of extraordinary vision, heart, compassion, humor and charm.

Last year my office embarked on a project to celebrate the Civil Rights Movement by capturing the histories, memories and stories of those who fought for equality. Our goal was to make sure we allowed these brave voices to share their accounts, firsthand, and preserve them for future generations. Today, that archive is available at <http://ethnography.gmu.edu/collections/the-northern-virginia-civil-rights-archive>.

I was fortunate to bring Bob into this project and sit down with him for a few hours to hear his civil rights story. Most of us know Bob as the founder of Reston, but it is his legacy as a civil rights icon and its lasting impact on our community, that I will forever hold in my heart. You see, Bob hated discrimination and bigotry

because he experienced anti-Semitism firsthand as a young man. That experience forged in him a passion – a quiet passion – to build a small corner of the world where equality would be a reality.

Bob's insistence on making Reston the first racially-integrated housing development in Virginia made him a civil rights pioneer. It was not the popular thing to do, and he lost critical investment opportunities because of this decision. But to Bob, it was not a matter of doing the easy thing, or the popular thing. It was about doing the right thing. He had great clarity that to realize his vision of Reston there could be no racial barriers. To fulfill Reston's goals we had to be inclusive and welcoming.

Throughout his long life, Bob's moral compass remained true. He was an environmentalist before the term was invented, a patron of the arts, and passionate advocate for social justice. Northern Virginia owes much of its character and success to Bob. I feel this loss sharply and shall miss his dedication, his laugh and his friendship. A local giant is gone from our midst. But his spirit and legacy will remain in Reston and beyond.



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

Congressman Gerald E. Connolly:
“Bob's insistence on making Reston the first racially-integrated housing development in Virginia made him a civil rights pioneer.”

Chamber Urges Congress to Avoid Another Shutdown

Dear Members of the Northern Virginia Congressional Delegation,

On behalf of the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce (Fairfax Chamber), representing nearly 700 member companies with more than 500,000 employees across Northern Virginia, we urge you and your colleagues in Congress to act immediately to find a path forward to enact legislation to continue funding the federal government beyond Sept. 30, without interruption. For the federal government to shut down would be so harmful to our region it would be, in a word, irresponsible.

A substantial segment of Virginia's economy is tied to the federal government, with federal contractors in the private sector employing a vast number of workers here in our region and throughout the Commonwealth. In addition, Northern Virginia is home to more than 65,000 federal employees and is where more than 110,000 federal employees work. As such, Northern Virginia's diverse business commu-

nity, the economic engine of the Commonwealth, is tremendously impacted by federal expenditures.

Congress' inability in the past to enact individual appropriations bills, and rather to instead fund the government from continuing resolution to continuing resolution, has caused significant uncertainty and greatly disrupted business planning by federal contractors in the region. Such practices, combined with annual threats of government shutdowns and, in 2013, an actual shutdown, have caused private sector businesses of all sizes throughout Northern Virginia serious economic harm and forced them to lay off or furlough employees.

We are gravely concerned that such economic dislocation will again occur if the federal government shuts down on Oct. 1. Also, as you know, the impact of a shutdown would not be limited to the federal government and federal contractor workers in Virginia. As has been shown in the past, the downstream ef-

fects of a shutdown will also be harmful to small businesses in Northern Virginia and across the Commonwealth.

The Chamber recognizes the importance of restraining federal spending and different budget priorities for members of Congress. However with the U.S. economy continuing to underperform, Congress needs to act now to avoid inflicting any more substantial and enduring damage on the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States as a whole.

Congress must continue to fund the operations of government in a budget-conscious way, while avoiding any more damaging fiscal show-downs. We need and expect nothing less. Accordingly, we urge you to work with your colleagues and leadership to promptly enact legislation by Oct. 1 to fund the operations of the federal government without interruption.

Sincerely,
Jim Corcoran, President & CEO
Fairfax Chamber of Commerce

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Powerful and Accountable

To the Editor:

With your focus on the recent death of an inmate, I want to congratulate you for dealing with a serious PR problem Fairfax County has been developing.

Virginia and this county maintain an admirable fear level among

wrong doers that helps to keep this a great state and county to live in. But, when that turns into front page stories about torture with stun guns and stonewalling we are absolutely going to be punished nationally and internationally at a time when we must be building new bridges and attracting the best people to maintain our standard of life and living here.

Please keep the pressure on to

fix this without turning this region into another crime friendly, revolving door justice, victims last place to live like Maryland and all of New England. We are not Texas but we are not chumps either. We need well regulated law enforcement that is powerful and accountable.

Drake Wauters
McLean

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Send to:

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Pedestrian Killed on Braddock Road

A pedestrian was pronounced dead at the scene after being struck by a car on Braddock Road, west of Twinbrook Drive. The crash occurred Thursday, Sept. 17 around 9:58 p.m., Fairfax County Police said. A 71-year-old man driving a 2004 BMW was traveling west on Braddock Road through a left-through lane before the pedestrian walked in front of his moving vehicle. Police are withholding the identity of the 37-year-old male pedestrian. They said alcohol may have been a factor for him and are continuing to investigate the case.

—TIM PETERSON

Text to 9-1-1 Service Goes Live in Fairfax County

In emergency situations where calling 9-1-1 isn't possible, Fairfax County residents now have another option: texting.

The County announced Tuesday that residents with text or data plans on through Verizon, Sprint, AT&T and T-Mobile are now able to request emergency services by texting "911" in the "to" or "recipient" field on their phones, followed by a short first message including the location of the emergency and whether police, firefighters or an ambulance are needed.

The service is available in Fairfax County, the towns of Herndon, Vienna and Clifton, and city of Fairfax, the report says.

Steve Souder, director of the Fairfax County 9-1-1 center, said, "it allows the person that is unable to hear or hearing impaired, a person that is in a precarious situation where it is not in their best interests or safety to voice a 9-1-1 call, or where perhaps a person injured and is unable to voice a 9-1-1 call — it now provides them the opportunity, using a smart device, to text a 9-1-1 call."

For more information on how the service works, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news2/text-to-9-1-1-launches-in-fairfax-county.

—TIM PETERSON

Fairfax County Hosts Volunteer Fair

Older adults, seniors, and retirees looking for flexible, meaningful volunteer opportunities are invited to "Venture into Volunteering," a free volunteer fair, on Oct. 8 from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Lorton Workhouse Arts, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton.

The Fairfax County Department of Family Services' Area Agency on Aging, AARP, Fairfax County Park Authority, RSVP Northern Virginia (Volunteer Fairfax, Volunteer Alexandria, and Volunteer Arlington) and The Positive Aging Coalition are partnering to host this event. More than 30 organizations and Fairfax County agencies will be on hand to talk about their volunteer programs and benefits.

Refreshments will be provided and participants will have an opportunity to enter a prize drawing.

For more information or to request reasonable ADA accommodations, contact Jeannine Deem Purdy, Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, at 703-704-6075, TTY 711, or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

City of Fairfax Urgent Election Notice

The registration deadline to vote in the General Election to be held on Tuesday, Nov. 3, 2015 is Oct. 13, 2015. Applications must be postmarked by this date or received in-person by 5 p.m. You may also apply online by 11:59 p.m. at www.vote.virginia.gov

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I-66 Inside the Beltway Project
Arlington County, City of Falls Church and Fairfax County
Public Information Meetings

Monday, October 5, 2015, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Presentation at 7:30 p.m.

VDOT Northern Virginia District

4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030

Visit Transform66.org to view a live stream of this meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 6, 2015, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Presentation at 7:30 p.m.

Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School Cafeteria

7130 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22043

Wednesday, October 7, 2015, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Presentation at 7:30 p.m.

Washington-Lee High School Cafeteria

1301 N. Stafford Street, Arlington, VA 22201

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in partnership with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), will host Public Information Meetings for the Transform 66 Inside the Beltway Project. The project involves converting I-66 to dynamically-priced toll lanes in both directions during morning and afternoon rush hours between I-495 (the Capital Beltway) and U.S. Route 29 in Rosslyn, along with implementing a series of multimodal improvements that benefit the toll users of I-66. Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOVs) will now have the option to use I-66 during the morning and evening rush hours in the peak direction by paying a toll, while High Occupancy Vehicles (HOVs) with three or more passengers (HOV-3+) will ride for free. VDOT is also considering a toll scenario that would allow HOV-2+ to ride for free until improvements are completed outside the Beltway in 2021. Proposed improvements are intended to move more people, enhance connectivity and improve travel reliability on I-66.

Stop by to learn more about the project, discuss your questions with VDOT staff, and attend the formal presentation.

Review project information and project schedule at www.Transform66.org and at the Public Information Meetings.

Give your written or oral comments at the meetings or submit them to Amanda Baxter, Project Manager, at the VDOT Northern Virginia District Office (address noted above). You may also e-mail comments at any time to Transform66@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Please reference "Transform 66 Inside the Beltway" in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT's Civil Rights Division at 800-367-7623 or TTY/TDD 711.

State Project: 0066-96A-358, P101 UPC: 107371

NEWS

(From left) J.E.B. Stuart High School seniors Anna Rowan, Cassie Marcotty, Marley Finley, Abby Conde and Lidia Amanuel accept the Fairfax County NAACP president's award recognizing their Students for Change petition to change the name of their school to Thurgood Marshall.



Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) (left) and Fairfax County NAACP president Shirley Ginwright (center) present (right) Del. Scott Surovell (D-44) with a president's award acknowledging his work to include Hybla Valley and Gum Springs communities in Fairfax County revitalization.



Fairfax County NAACP president Shirley Ginwright (left) presents the community service award to Valerie (center) and Rubin Cuffee (right), who accepted it on behalf of Celeste Peterson. Peterson and her husband Grafton created the Erin Peterson scholarship fund in honor of their daughter who died in 2007 at Virginia Tech.

PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION



Debbie Kilpatrick, president of the Fairfax County Council of PTAs, speaks as she accepts the second Fairfax County NAACP community service award.



Keynote speaker Eric Broyles, a Washington, D.C.-based attorney and co-author of the book "Encounters with Police: A Black Man's Guide to Survival," speaks at the 70th Fairfax County NAACP Freedom Fund Awards Banquet.

'Your Vote, Your Power'

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

J.E.B. Stuart High School seniors Anna Rowan, Cassie Marcotty, Marley Finley, Abby Conde and Lidia Amanuel were bothered by the Confederate legacy of their school. Inspired by a history class with teacher Keith Brobst on the Massive Resistance anti-segregation policy, the girls set out to change Stuart's name, mascot and colors. They sug-

gested a name change to Thurgood Marshall, in honor of U.S. Supreme Court's first African American justice.

The Students for Change, as their group is known, were among several recipients of awards at the 70th Fairfax County NAACP Freedom Fund banquet, held Sept. 19 at the Waterford reception hall in Springfield. There were two president's award winners, including the students, and two community service award winners.

"These are students who saw that a change

needed to be made and made that change," said Fairfax County NAACP president Shirley Ginwright. "They didn't worry about the repercussions."

The students have gained support through a petition and are working to connect more with community members in the Falls Church neighborhoods that feed Stuart prior to a Fairfax County School Board vote scheduled for early 2016.

"It's great to be recognized," said Cassie Marcotty. "We've gotten mixed reactions, but

overall there's been a supportive, lovely community."

Now, the girls are trying to raise awareness in their school, including sharing a new video they shot the same day as the awards. Over the summer, they also met with members of the Fairfax County NAACP who offered support and guidance.

The students have reached out to School Board members, including Mason District representative Sandy Evans. They met with Evans, "but everyone is staying neutral un-

Fairfax County NAACP hosts 70th Freedom Fund Awards.

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til after the election," Marcotty said. Del. Scott Surovell (D-44) received the second president's award in recognition of his work on the revitalization of the Route 1 corridor and keeping the Hybla Valley and Gum Springs communities involved in the process.

In his acceptance speech, Surovell told the story of his grandparents moving to a Fairfax County farmhouse from Brooklyn in 1935. As politically active and progressive Jewish people, "They joined the only organization who would take them," Surovell said, "the NAACP"

Surovell said his grandmother told him stories about gaining the right to vote, the poll tax and desegregating schools in Fairfax County. "It's a sound base to guide my actions going forward," he said. "We still have a lot of work to go."

Community Service awards went to Debbie Kilpatrick, president of the Fairfax County Council of PTAs, and Celeste Peterson, who, together with her husband Grafton created the Erin Peterson scholarship fund in honor of their daughter who died in 2007 at Virginia Tech.

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ENTERTAINMENT

From left — Gayle Grimes, Joanna Snitzer, Susan Garvey, Michelle Fletcher, Jayne Victor and Barbara Gertzog in rehearsal for the Providence Players production of "Calendar Girls."



PHOTOS BY CHIP GERTZOG/COURTESY OF PROVIDENCE PLAYERS OF FAIRFAX COUNTY

Joyful and Unconventional

Providence Players open the season with "Calendar Girls."

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Opening its 18th season, the Providence Players are in a heartfelt, uplifting comic mood presenting "Calendar Girls." It is about women's friendships along with the power of imagination, risk-taking and resourcefulness under trying conditions.

The comic play, about human triumph after a loss, has been on the Providence Players list to produce for several years. The theater troupe is one of the first community theater groups to obtain the rights to produce the show.

"Calendar Girls" written by Tim Firth is based upon a true story; later turned into a movie about unusual events that took place in a small village in Great Britain. A local women's organization wanted to raise funds to help those in need. The group came up with a novel way to get donations; produce an unconventional calendar that soon attracted worldwide interest.

Directed by Michael Donahue, who described it as a "wonderful play with many strong roles for women...with universal themes about changes that can take place in the inner person when there is a need. It clearly shows how one person can and does make a difference in the lives of others."

Many in the 13-member cast are making their Providence Players debuts. Several originally hail from Great Britain knowing of the real life "Calendar Girls" background story.

In a recent interview, cast members described their various roles as colorful, if not quirky characters. All agreed it was a "very empathetic play." Michelle Fletcher, from England, "gets to play a liberating character; who is somewhat of a 'tart' in her own way." Fletcher described her role as "a challenging one with plenty of physical movement and energy."

Barbara Gertzog plays "the trophy, pleaser wife who is learning to throw off the restrictions of her upper class mores." As the play progresses her character becomes "a very believable person." Jayne Vic-



From left — Susan Garvey as Annie and Jayne Victor as Chris, in rehearsal for Providence Players production of "Calendar Girls."

Where and When

Providence Players present "Calendar Girls" at James Lee Community Center Theatre, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Performances: Thursday, Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m., and Sunday Matinees at 2 p.m. on Oct. 4 & 11. Tickets \$17-\$20. Call 703-425-6782 or visit www.providenceplayers.org

tor, Providence Players board chair and actor in "Calendar Girls," described how "the play presents strong friendships among the women characters, as well as how they became comfortable in their own skin."

The cast further includes actors Angela Cannon, Smitty Chai, Bob Cohen, Diana Conn, Susan Garvey, Gayle Grimes, Anne Lloyd, Bob Thompson, Joanna Snitzer and Andra Whitt. Set design is by Patrick David who is creating the inside of small village church hall, along with some special surprises.

The cast nodded in agreement when Gertzog said they wanted "the audience to be mesmerized."



Learn about new roses and the best sources for ordering roses that are hard to find, full of form or fragrant at Merrifield Garden Center in Fairfax on Sept. 27.

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.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/SEPT. 24-26

Children's Book Sale. 6 p.m. Thursday till 2 p.m. on Saturday. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Children's books of all ages will be available to purchase.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/SEPT. 24-27

Fall for the Book Sale. Thursday: 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Friday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Saturday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday: 1-4 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 25

A Taste of the Vine. 6:30-9:30 p.m. Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Historic Fairfax City, Inc. is sponsoring a Wine Tasting Fundraiser to benefit the historic Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center. Sample wines from local vineyards paired with hors d'oeuvres. Silent Auction. Tour the Historic Mansion. Free parking. \$55 per person. For reservations contact Hildie Carney at 703-591-5305 or visit the website at www.historicfairfax.org.

TGIFairfax Rock the Block: Almost

Journey/U2. 6-9 p.m. Old Town Square, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. The second best U2 show in the world and the complete Journey experience. www.fairfaxva.gov/RockTheBlock

SATURDAY/SEPT. 26

Pohick Annual County Fair. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The 70th Annual Country Fair includes games, booths, barbecue, homemade apple butter, historic church tours, living history re-enactors, organ concerts, live music, pony rides and more. 703-339-6572. <http://www.pohick.org>.

Fighting Chance 8K Run/Walk. 8 a.m. Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Burke. Run to give an orphaned child a fighting chance for a future free from poverty, disease and violence. Register for the 8K run/walk at www.2540.org.

20th Annual CÉ Irish Folk Festival. Noon-7:30 p.m. Sherwood

Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax and The Auld Shebeen Irish Pub, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. All are invited to enjoy, free of charge, the "pure drop" - the beauty and depth of Irish music, dance, language and sport as it has taken root and come into full flower in our community.

Azalea Sale. 1-4 p.m. Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield. The Northern Virginia Chapter, Azalea Society of America (ASA), will be holding their 8th Annual Public Azalea Sale and Auction.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/SEPT. 26-27

Workhouse Fall Arts Festival 2015. Saturday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sunday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Over 100 of the nation's best artists will exhibit their original fine art and crafts. The two-day outdoor festival will include work by artists from across the Mid-Atlantic region, showcasing paintings, photography, ceramics, sculpture, jewelry, handcrafted furniture and much more.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 27

The Best Roses for Your Garden. 2-4 p.m. Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Learn new roses and the best sources for ordering roses that are hard to find, full of form or fragrant.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 27 - SATURDAY/OCT. 3

Annual Fall for the Book Festival. George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A week-long, multiple-venue, regional festival that brings together people of all ages and interests. Featured authors are National Book Award winner Tim O'Brien and "Outlander" author Diana Gabaldon. Visit www.fallforthebook.org.

MONDAY/SEPT. 28

Music and Movin' with Miss Susan. 11:15 a.m. City of Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Miss Susan for singing and moving to music with your little ones.

Animal Decomposers. 4:30 p.m. SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Learn about the hidden insects that can be found in decomposing logs that you dissect yourself with the help of staff from Hidden Pond Nature Center.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 29

Tai Chi. 10 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Come experience the benefits of Tai Chi led by Dante Gilmer of Still Water Tai Chi Center. Wear comfortable clothes that allow movement. Adult.

Storytime at Old Town Square.

10:30 a.m. City of Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Come across the street to Old Town Square to hear some stories, weather permitting. Age 2-5 with adult.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 30

Meet Author Mark Tooley. 7 p.m. City of Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Meet Mark Tooley, author of *The Peace That Almost Was: The Forgotten Story of the 1861 Washington Peace Conference and the Final Attempt to Avert the Civil War*. Books available for sale and signing.

Celebrate Calm Workshop. 9:30-11:30 a.m. St. Andrew's Episcopal Preschool, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Ten ways to stop defiance, disrespect and yelling with America's Calm Coach Kirk Martin

FRIDAY/OCT. 2

Movie Night in the Campground. 7-9 p.m. Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Join in the fun of Movie Night by watching *Ghostbusters* at the Campground at Burke Lake Park this fall.

SATURDAY/OCT. 3



The Workhouse Arts Center present its inaugural 2015 Workhouse Fall Arts Festival on Sept. 26-27. Over 100 of the best artists, including visiting artists from around the country and the artists at the Workhouse, will exhibit painting, ceramics, glass, fiber/clothing, mixed media, wood, jewelry, printmaking, photography, furniture, digital art and sculpture.

Country-Western Dance. 7:30-10 p.m. The Salvation Army, Fairfax Corps, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. Couples and singles welcome. \$5-\$12. www.nvcwda.org.

Concerts from Kirkwood Season Opener. 3 p.m. Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield. New York-

based pianist Martin Soderberg presenting an exciting program of music by Spanish and Latin composers.

Music, Fun and Faith Fest. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. A "preach-off," food, fun, a bounce house. face

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10/14/2015..... HomeLifeStyle
10/21/2015..... A+ Camps & Schools
Halloween is October 31

10/28/2015..... Election Preview

NOVEMBER

11/4/2015..... Wellbeing
11/11/2015..... HomeLifeStyle
11/18/2015..... A+ Camps & Schools
11/19/2015..... Holiday Entertainment & Gift Guide I
Thanksgiving is November 26

11/25/2015..... Celebrating Gratitude, Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

12/2/2015..... Wellbeing
12/9/2015..... Holiday Entertainment & Gift Guide II
12/9/2015..... HomeLifeStyle; Home for the Holidays
12/16/2015..... A+ Camps & Schools; Holiday Entertainment & Gifts Pages

12/23/2015..... Special Issue - Safe for the Holidays

12/30/2015..... Children's Connection

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Lake Braddock Football Holds Off Robinson Rally

**Bruins build 21-0
halftime lead,
improve to 3-0.**

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

After outscoring Lee and Annandale 109-0 in its first two games, the Lake Braddock football team appeared on its way to a third consecutive lopsided victory when the Bruins entered halftime of Friday's rivalry contest against Robinson with a three-touchdown lead.

But thanks to a conservative second-half approach by Lake Braddock and a pair of fourth-quarter touchdown passes by Robinson, a potential blowout turned into an early-season test for the Bruins.

Robinson tight end Mason Velasquez's second touchdown reception pulled the Rams within a single score with 32 seconds remaining, but Lake Braddock recovered the ensuing onside kick and held on for a 21-14 victory on Sept. 18 at Robinson Secondary School.

LAKE BRADDOCK improved to 3-0, while Robinson fell to 1-2.

The Lake Braddock defense held opponents scoreless for the first 11 quarters of the season before surrendering two touchdowns to Robinson in Friday's final 10 minutes. The Bruins also failed to score in the second half after producing 130 points in the season's first 10 quarters.

"We killed them early," Lake Braddock junior running back/safety Lamont Atkins said. "Offensive line did great, defense did great, we all did great, but then in the second half we had a couple mental errors. ... It shouldn't have been close, but, as I said, we had a couple mental breakdowns."

The Bruins built a 21-0 halftime lead with a run-heavy offense. Lake Braddock continued to pound the ball on the ground in the second half, but found limited success.

After the game, Lake Braddock head coach Jim Poythress wondered whether the Bruins should have turned to the passing game in the second half.

"Maybe I got too conservative — run it down, run the clock down," Poythress said. "We probably should have spread them out at that point and chucked it. We had them about to break, and I just wanted to stay with what we were doing. [The Robinson defense loaded] it up and [that] makes it hard to run."

Meanwhile, Robinson started creeping back into the game. Rams quarterback Alex Miller rolled to his left and connected with Velasquez for a 16-yard touchdown with 9:38 remaining, cutting the Lake Braddock lead to 21-7.

Later, after stopping the Bruins on fourth and 2 with less than 2 minutes remaining, the Rams needed 41 seconds to drive 93 yards in five plays, cutting the Lake



Lake Braddock defenders Andrew Niedringhaus (44), Daniel Dinges (51), Asa Ward (3) and Ibrahim Mansaray (25) swarm Robinson ball carrier Dajon Lee during Friday's game at Robinson Secondary School.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



Lake Braddock's David Fofi (2) and Peyton Scott celebrate Fofi's second-quarter touchdown reception during the Bruins' 21-14 win over Robinson on Sept. 18.

Braddock lead to seven when Miller hit Velasquez for a 30-yard touchdown.

Poythress said he could sense nervousness on the Lake Braddock sideline late in the game.

"They need to develop confidence and they need to learn how to put people away," he said. "When we can do that, we'll have a good team. Until then, we're just a pretty good team."

The Bruins held on to win, recovering the ensuing onside kick and running out the clock with three kneel downs.

Lake Braddock ran the ball 36 times for 108 yards and two touchdowns.

"I would describe it as smash-mouth football," Atkins said. "We just let our linemen do what they need to do and they did a great job today. We just did what we do best."

Atkins finished with 11 carries, often times taking a direct snap, and a team-high 72 yards. His 5-yard touchdown run with 35 seconds remaining in the first half gave Lake Braddock a 21-0 lead.

"We've been after him to run harder and let his speed take over," Poythress said. "I

thought he did a good job."

Edwards carried 17 times for 18 yards and a touchdown.

"Smash mouth," is how Edwards described Lake Braddock's running game. "Up front, it's a mentality that we want to impose on the other team. This was a great test for us playing a traditional, perennial runner like Robinson, just to see how we can match up and can we run the ball. Obviously, I think we can run the ball on them, but this is just a piece of the plan trying to run the ball down in the playoffs."

Edwards completed 10 of 17 passes for 97 yards and a touchdown. He was intercepted once.

Lake Braddock took a 7-0 lead on its first possession, when Edwards punched it in from 1 yard with 2:07 remaining in the opening quarter. The Bruins traveled 64 yards in 12 plays, using 4 minutes, 38 seconds.

Robinson's ensuing possession ended with a lost fumble, and Lake Braddock responded with a five-play, 52-yard drive, ending with an 11-yard touchdown pass from Edwards

"We killed them early. Offensive line did great, defense did great, we all did great, but then in the second half we had a couple mental errors. ... It shouldn't have been close, but, as I said, we had a couple mental breakdowns."

**— Lake Braddock junior
Lamont Atkins**

to David Fofi with 9:41 left in the second quarter.

Robinson lost another fumble at its own 14-yard line late in the first half and Lake Braddock capitalized with a 5-yard touchdown run by Atkins, extending its lead to 21-0.

The Rams fumbled four times in the first half, losing two.

"We were our own worst enemy in the first half," Robinson head coach Scott Vossler said, "but you've got to give a lot of credit to Lake Braddock."

ROBINSON, a wing-T team that relies heavily on the ground game, generated points through the passing game in the fourth quarter. Miller did not attempt a pass in the first half and missed on both his third-quarter throws. The junior completed 4 of 9 attempts in the fourth quarter for 109 yards and two touchdowns, with Velasquez on the receiving end of all four completions.

"We work on that stuff all the time," Vossler said about the passing game. "We obviously want to do it on our own terms instead of when people force us to do it. It's something that we're open to doing if we feel like we've got that advantage. Quite honestly, I think [Lake Braddock's] secondary is pretty good and I think they might have got lulled to sleep a little bit just by not having to cover a whole lot throughout the game. I've seen those guys on film, and I think we might have got lucky a little bit tonight there at the end doing that stuff."

Robinson ran the ball 37 times for 131 yards. Dajon Lee finished with a team-high 52 yards on nine carries. Sean Foncha rushed 14 times for 36 yards, Roman Lowery carried eight times for 23 yards and Miller rushed six times for 20 yards.

Robinson defensive back Wes Richmond and linebacker Tyler Iriando intercepted passes.

Lake Braddock will travel to face West Potomac at 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 25. Robinson will host Oakton.

"Honestly, 109-0 sounds great," Edwards said, "but being tested is what's going to help you go on in the playoffs."

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BACK-TO-SCHOOL SPECIAL

\$59⁹⁵

Includes: Genuine Toyota oil filter, up to 5 qts of conventional oil*, inspect windshield wipers, tire rotation, check tire condition, check battery (with print-out), inspect and adjust all fluid levels, inspect air & cabin air filters

SYNTHETIC OIL \$10.00 MORE. NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. OFFER EXPIRES 9/30/15. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA.

FALL DETAIL SPECIAL

\$119⁹⁵

Prepare your car's paint for the harsh winter road conditions. A full exterior buffing, paint sealant and wax, along with a vacuuming of the interior. Vans & SUVs add \$20.00. By Appointment Only

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4 WHEEL ALIGNMENT

\$79⁹⁵

Your car's alignment suffers, and can cause uneven tire wear, steering problems and decreased fuel economy.

INCLUDES: inspect suspension, ball joints, struts & shocks, tire condition and set tire pressure.

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TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE BRAKE SPECIAL

\$99⁹⁵

PADS

Includes: Install Genuine Toyota front brake pads, inspect front & rear rotors & drums, check tire condition and inspect all hardware. TCMC pads only.

MACHINE ROTORS AN ADDITIONAL \$199.95.

DOES NOT APPLY TO ALL VEHICLES PLEASE SEE SERVICE ADVISOR FOR DETAILS. NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. OFFER EXPIRES 9/30/15. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL.

TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE 30000 MILES FACTORY RECOMMENDED SERVICE

\$159⁹⁹

Synthetic \$10 More

Includes: Change engine oil & filter (up to 5 qts), rotate tires, inspect wear and adjust pressure, measure brake pad thickness & rotor runout, replace cabin air filter (if equipped), replace engine air filter, reset maintenance reminder light (if applicable) and multi-point vehicle inspection.

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POWER STEERING FLUSH **\$139⁹⁵**

BRAKE FLUSH **\$139⁹⁵**

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ROTATE & BALANCE SPECIAL

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-Theodore Roosevelt

21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements

TAX NOTICE
CITY OF FAIRFAX

**PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX
PAYMENTS ARE DUE**

Personal Property tax bills have been mailed and are
due
October 5, 2015

LATE PAYMENT PENALTY

To avoid a 10% late payment penalty and interest charges, payment
must be made in full in person or postmarked by close of business on
October 5, 2015

Taxes may be paid in person Monday – Friday
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Treasurer's Office, Room 234, City Hall

IMPORTANT

Even if you do not receive a bill,
you are responsible for paying personal property taxes on time.

For Additional Information, please call 703-385-7900



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Remodeling in 2015: All about Family

Adapting your home so it tracks your family's development over the years.

BY JOSHUA BAKER
BOWA

Almost every luxury remodel starts with the same question "How can we improve our family's life at home?" But this answer varies as our families grow, age and evolve. And the best designs consider both current and future needs.

For young families, the focus is almost always child-centric. Kitchens are designed with low drawers for easy access to the most important items, like sippy cups and napkins. Refrigerator drawers installed as beverage stations and below-the-counter microwaves allow the "vertically challenged" to help themselves. Study areas are incorporated into family spaces to allow for parent-child interaction at homework time.

Creative storage solutions and child-friendly finishes, like washable wall paint, chalkboard paint in play areas, and custom ceramic tiles featuring kids' artwork in their bath, all lend to a successful design.

In the teen years, the question asked most often is, "How do I create the house where all the kids and their friends want to hang out?" For this age group, creative basement remodels with game areas are most popular, and perhaps not surprisingly, basement bars are often minimized or omitted completely. As opposed to the closed-off theaters of the past, media viewing rooms are now open and designed as multi-purpose spaces that also facilitate informal gatherings and entertaining. For the ambitious, outdoor features, such as pools, patios and fire pits, can create a neighborhood destination. (Though pools and water features are of-

ten delayed until kids are old enough to be safe around water.)

Teen-friendly designs often include a family foyer, an entrance from the garage with plenty of storage for sports equipment, coats, backpacks, etc. Other potential opportunities for teens include creating small, fun spaces like lofts in bedrooms, themed bedrooms, and making sure that there are plenty of USB charging stations.

For empty nesters, remodeling typically involves "downsizing" within the home by planning to use the space more efficiently. Often, one-level living is designed for convenience and to reduce energy use. Heating and cooling systems are zoned so only the inhabited areas are fully conditioned when in use. Apartment-style washer and dryers are right sized for a couple. Smaller, drawer-style dishwashers are also available. And, perhaps now is the time to discuss repurposing spaces that were previously used as game rooms or homework stations into areas to accommodate hobbies and interests.

Almost all design discussions should at least contemplate the potential for boomerang kids (children coming home after college), in-laws, or elderly family members who might join the home. For those wanting more independence and privacy, in-law suites sometimes include private entrances and even a small kitchenette. Sometimes kids' rooms are moved to the basement to add more privacy.

For all of us as we get older, a house that incorporates the principles of universal design, which allow us to live comfortably and safely in the homes we love, is a critical conversation. Design considerations include creating accessibility-friendly baths, kitchens, entrances and passageways and

perhaps reconfiguring to minimize steps. Often, a strategy that comes up is the consideration of the installation of an elevator to facilitate long-time use.

The design priorities for each remodel are unique to the family, but thinking about all the different phases of family life is critical to long-term success.

Josh Baker is the founder and co-chairman of BOWA, an award-winning design and construction company specializing in luxury renovations, remodels and additions in the greater Washington, D.C. area. BOWA has more than 25 years of experience and has been honored with 170 local and national awards. Visit www.bowa.com or call 703-734-9050.



Renovated home office by BOWA features space for the whole family.



Custom designed cabinetry in this renovated family foyer in Great Falls keeps a busy family organized.

HomeLifeStyle

Evolution of a Family Home

BY JOHN BYRD

Starting in the late 1990s, Paul and Laurie Carter began transforming a simple production house into a personal residence.

Collaborating closely with Sun Design Remodeling, the Carters nursed their vision of an exceptional property with a stunning indoor-outdoor continuum.

This past September, the public was invited to see the results.

Paul and Laurie Carter purchased a new production house in a new neighborhood not far from Mount Vernon. At 3,700 square feet, it was a perfect spot to settle down and raise their son. The schools nearby were excellent; the house was just a few miles from Old Town Alexandria. But there were some things about the property Carters thought they might improve — if they were to stay in residence long enough.

Cramped master bathroom; no family play area; dark rear rooms with no visual continuum; cabinet-cluttered kitchen; builder-grade finishes ... Just a few of the perceived shortcomings.

But skip ahead almost two decades, and the whole house remodel that the public was invited to see this past September demonstrates the kinds of improvements and upgrades that can occur when owners continue to occupy, modifying the environment to suit evolving interests.

In fact: it's no longer merely a house. It's

the Carter's long-term residence.

"The ideal of long term ownership is the option to create a home that, over time, becomes more supportive of favored activities and aesthetic preferences," says Bob Gallagher, Sun Design Remodeling's Executive Vice President. "We are finding this kind of on-going commitment to personalizing a residence much more frequently than in decades past."

Gallagher was at the house Sept. 12 to greet neighbors who wanted to learn more about remodeling in phases. Sun Design had guided the Carters throughout nearly every revision over the past decade. Many guests seem surprised at the project's top-to-bottom scope.

The Carters are quick to acknowledge that their periodic home remodeling efforts have been a logical and sequential response to family needs — beginning with an 18-foot-by-36-foot swimming pool installed on their quarter acre lot in 2006.

"We wanted a place where Paul, our son, Austin, and I could enjoy pleasant summers together as a family," recalls Laurie. "Our remodeling changes reflect the different stages of our lives, and the lifestyle options we wanted to pursue in day-to-day living."

As Austin's circle of friends expanded, for instance, the Carters hired Sun Design Remodeling to convert the home's unfinished lower level into a spacious family room and fitness center complete with a billiards table and TV viewing area suitable for guests of all generations.

During this same time period, Paul and Laurie, both working professionals, sought improvements to the second floor master suite, introducing a sizable master bath with a walk-in shower and changing vestibule. The plan was designed so that one partner could shower, dress and slip off to work without rousing the other partner, who might be still sleeping.

"The new master suite made life more comfortable for both of us," Laurie says, "and it still works beautifully today."

More recently, when Austin left for college, the Carters, now empty nesters,



The Carters purchased the original production house in 1998 and have steadily made focused improvements and upgrades.

began considering ways to better integrate the home's rear suite of rooms with its lovely poolside setting.

The landscaping and mature trees confer a lot of backyard privacy, so the Carters were looking for graceful ideas to better integrate indoor and outdoor horizons. "It made no sense not to have a better view and more natural light from the back of the house," she said. "Also, we didn't have a comfortable outdoor dining zone."

Not surprisingly, the core problem was the home's original floor plan.

Unchanged since the late 1990s, the three rooms on the west-facing rear elevation consisted of a central kitchen flanked by a formal dining room to the right and a family room to the left.

The dining room was sequestered from the kitchen by a floor-to-ceiling wall festooned with builder-grade cabinets. There was one small window above the kitchen sink which was, likewise, bordered by cabinets on two sides. To the left, one entered the family room, which provided an exit to a rear veranda partially covered by a shed roof.

"We had talked about a more open floor plan," Laurie recalls. "But how do you tear down the walls that are holding up the cabinets you use every day?"

As it turned out, this was a good question for Sun Design's Jeremy Fleming, who supervised the Carter's most recent remodeling.

"Something as simple as custom-designed cabinets can inspire a completely new, and much more functional, floor plan," Fleming says.

"Once the Carters were satisfied that the wall between the kitchen and dining room

could come down," he adds, "it was clear that innovative storage solutions would make it possible to further develop a special visual continuum from inside the house."

A counter surface with a gas-fueled cooktop range between the kitchen and the formal dining area, thus, provides storage for both the best family china (accessed from the dining room) and everyday cooking necessities (retrievable from the kitchen). A reach-in pantry next to the refrigerator offers supplemental storage. Though the eye-level cabinet clutter has been deleted, Fleming says there's actually been a 35 percent increase in storage capacity.

To improve natural light, the small kitchen

window has been replaced with a three-part glazing solution consisting of a 45-inch picture window flanked by two double hung windows.

Better yet, with its bianco romano granite surfaces, square flat cabinet facings and bright, reflective wall coloring, the new space has acquired a design elegance that was never previously in evidence.

"An open plan that segues to a free-flowing indoor/outdoor component is the very essence of a transitional-style interior design solution," says Fleming. "The formal elements provide definition and balance, yet the clean lines allow a lively visual continuum."



Sun Design's Jeremy Fleming extended the shed roof to cover sun-exposed decking. Two overhead rotating fans make the new outdoor space comfortable even on the hottest day. The couple have meals on the deck throughout summer.



The original kitchen relied on rows of builder-grade cabinets for storage. Eliminating walls initially seemed impossible to Laurie, but custom cabinets by Sun Design's Jeremy Fleming created the opportunity for a wholly different floorplan.



To create the shady spot appropriate for dining, Jeremy Fleming extended the shed roof which is now covered with an architecturally-appropriate seamless metal.

To provide for outdoor dining, Fleming extended the rear shed roof over the previously sun exposed decking. The former outdoor dining niche now becomes a viewing area adjacent to a recently installed flat screen TV.

With the addition of two overhead rotating fans, the new outdoor space is both intimately connected to the house and visually linked to the pool and well-landscaped setting.

"We couldn't be more pleased with how well the house has evolved over the years," says Laurie. "We look forward to living here long into the future."

John Byrd has been writing about home improvement topics for 30 years. See more stories at www.HomeFrontsNews.com.



The home's unfinished lower-level was converted into a spacious family room and fitness center complete with a billiards table and media viewing area.



A sizable master bath with a walk-in shower and changing vestibule was designed so that one partner could shower, dress and slip off to work without rousing the other still-sleeping partner.

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Condo Living Ideal for Recent Retirees

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOMEFRONTSNEWS

A pair of luxury baths add comfort and charm to 30-year old unit.

BY JOHN BYRD

One of the challenges of modern retirement is creating a space that will serve for the long term; another is stretching the budget.

Approaching retirement, Kathleen David explored both of these considerations recently with husband when they decided to sell their multi-level townhouse and find a suitable one-level living option. The goal was a condominium that could be obtained at a favorable price and upgraded within a budget.

Accustomed to urban living, the couple mainly wanted freedom from stairs, available parking, and a spot for a favorite China cabinet.

"We were quite satisfied with our choice," Kathleen says of the 1,300-square-foot-unit in an 11-story, 30 year old Crystal City complex. "But after we had been in residence for about a year, we started looking for contractors to help us upgrade the master bath, which was terribly dated."

What came as a surprise as interviews got under way was how few contractors were willing or able to work in a condominium.

"There are lots of restrictions," Kathleen recalls. They learned that remodeling a room in a condo can take 20-to-30 percent longer than it takes to complete a comparable project in a single family home. "Several well-known firms wouldn't even meet with us," she said.

As such, Sarah Wolf at Foster Remodeling Solutions headquartered in Lorton was a breath of fresh air.

"We hit it off right away," Kathleen says. "She understood condo remodeling challenges completely.

So much so, in fact, that the single full bathroom slated for improvement became two, and the interior design ideas grew progressively more sophisticated.

"Condos have always been interesting to me—partly because they require very precise space plans," Wolf says. "In a tight footprint, inches make all the difference and the design effects that add to that crucial sense of spaciousness must be expertly executed. Professionally, it's exhilarating to design out of the picture the apparent limitations in a room, so that only thing an owner is aware of is how attractive the space is, and how well it works."

Beginning with a "style preferences" slide show narrated by Kathleen (who had stockpiled ideas for close to a year), Wolf began by grappling with an unyieldingly compact 220 square feet that could not be enlarged in any direction.

Removing a wall between the vanity and tub in the master bathroom, for instance, added just two inches of floor space, yet the half-wall and frameless glass space di-



The black and white art deco-style ceramic basket-weave pattern for the shower prevents slipping. As an aging-in-place consideration, Wolf, of Foster Remodeling, found room for an in-shower bench and grab bars. A hand-held shower head on a slide bar adjusts to the owners' different height requirements.



A blue-grey-black Cambria quartz counter top has been color-coordinated with vanity cabinet facings lacquered in a black-brush-applied mushroom gray stain.



Recognizing that inches count in a tight footprint that can't be expanded, Sarah Wolf at Foster Remodeling Solutions gained just two inches of floor space by removing a wall between the vanity and the tub (left); the half-wall and frameless glass space divider that now surrounds the newly installed walk-in shower (right) invites line of sight that previously didn't exist.

vider that now surrounds the newly installed walk-in shower invites a visual continuum that previously didn't exist.

More to the point, Wolf's softly textured interior design scheme provides the eye with something to enjoy, and narrow spaces now seem much wider.

"Alternation and balance are important when working with small spaces," says Wolf. "In effect, you have a three dimensional canvas formed by walls, floors, ceiling, and each side is a critical part of the whole.

When the design statement is well-made, the finished space feels peaceful, pleasant, a room you want to spend time in. Size becomes unimportant."

That said, Wolf applied considerable engineering skill in designing built-ins to satisfy precisely-measured storage requirements."

"There was nothing but an open cabinet under the vanity before," Kathleen says. "Sarah designed appropriately-sized drawers, shelves and recessed a storage spaces

The single full bathroom slated for improvement became two, and the interior design ideas grew progressively more sophisticated.

MORE: Foster Design will be at the Capital Home Show at the Dulles Expo Center Sept. 25-27 in booth 540-542, and is also offering a free remodeling and design seminar at their Lorton facility on Oct. 10, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. RSVP@FosterRemodeling.com or call 703-550-1371.

for everything. The new sense of order has been wonderful."

As an aging-in-place consideration, Wolf found room for an in-shower bench and grab bars. A hand-held shower head on a slide bar adjusts to the owners' different height requirements.

"Everything has been carefully tailored to our needs," says Kathleen. "We feel fortunate to have gotten such a winning result."

John Byrd has been writing about home improvement topics for 30 years. See more stories at www.HomeFrontsNews.com.

Elegant Organization

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Design elements can make maintaining organization throughout the school year elegant and stylish as the activities start to aggregate, notices pile up and calendars start to fill.

“Designate a location for baskets for each family member, such as the entryway or mudroom, and use them daily to keep mail [and] school notices ... organized and in one place,” said Marika Meyer of Marika Meyer Interiors. Meyer used this technique in a Potomac, Maryland home recently.

“Consider a couple baskets for each person, one for notices and one for objects such as toys that can be taken to designated spaces throughout the day.”

It makes life easier on everyone, even the smallest family members. “I also like to keep my kids’ different items for activities in tote bags or bins in our mudroom area,” said Jody Al-Saigh of Picture Perfect Organizing in Arlington. “They can

quickly grab what they need for soccer or Girl Scouts on their way out the door, rather than searching all over the house for stray items. We make it a rule that those items always live in the designated bag or bin,” said Al-Saigh. “If uniforms are washed or water bottles cleaned, for example, they are returned to that area when they are clean.”

A home’s entryway often becomes a depository for shoes, hats, gloves and other items that are removed when busy families come home after a long day. Simple shelving can offer a solution with aesthetic appeal, especially with mounds of clutter.

“If there’s space within an entry closet, install shelving along the top for hats, gloves and miscellaneous seasonal items so they can be reached easily and not fall out each time you open the door,” said Elle Hunter, director of project development, Case Design/Remodeling. “If there is currently a single shelf but room for another, consider hiring a handyman to add that extra storage. It will go a long way.”



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Diversification Could Help Real Estate Market

Home sales have increased, particularly in Fairfax County, which saw a 22 percent uptick.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Vienna-based realtor Craig Lilly with Long and Foster agreed with how Ken Harney, the moderator for the 2015 Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR) Economic Summit, described the current year's market trends at the gathering earlier this month at the Fairview Park Marriott.

"His assessment of 2015 is on target with what I am experiencing," said Lilly. "So far, so good."

Harney, a nationally-syndicated columnist, categorized 2013 as the "rebound year" when sales and house prices seemed to be back on a roll after years of post-recession doldrums. Then 2014 started out impressively strong as well, but mid-year the market became more "restrained."

"Last Spring things were rocking," said Lilly. "I think that caused some sellers to price too aggressively too quickly in a market that was changing. That certainly had an effect on the slowdown we saw for the rest of the year."

The data for 2015 is on Harney's side. Home sales have increased, particularly in Fairfax County, which saw a 22 percent uptick in sales. Figures just released by Real Estate Business Intelligence report the second-highest level of August sales since 2006, with inventories remaining fairly healthy and time-on-the-market about equal with the same period last year. The August report also showed the average sales price of single-family homes down slightly (.02 percent), while the average price of attached homes and condominiums rose slightly.

But even those positive numbers didn't keep the summit's panellists from making presentations that leaned decidedly towards the cautionary, for both short-term real estate transactions, and the future economic health of the region.

LOOMING ON THE HORIZON is the spectre of another potential government shutdown if Congress fails to pass even a temporary budget by the end of the month. Describing the region as a "company town," and as such, somewhat "vulnerable" to Congressional activity, panellist Dr. Terry Clower, director of George Mason University's Center for Regional Analysis, said he wouldn't discount the possibility of a shutdown, despite the insistence of others that neither political party would tolerate that turn of events. Additional sequestration during a Presidential election year is also possible, he said. With a laughing



From left — Jonathan Aberman of TandemNSI, Jill Landsman, NVAR VP of Communications, and summit moderator Ken Harney at the 19th Northern Virginia Association of Realtors Economic Summit.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION



Dr. Terry Clower, director of George Mason University's Center for Regional Analysis, provided detailed data on area employment figures, income, job sector changes and more during the Economic Summit. There was considerable note taking during his presentation.

acknowledgement of his "slight accent – I am from Texas," Clower reminded the audience that for a "good lump of the rest of the country, a government shutdown is not seen as a such a bad thing."

But for a region where almost 40 percent of the economy is directly related to federal wages and salaries, procurement and other federal activity, Clower's analogy of the "company town's" vulnerability seems right on target.

The seemingly endless "Federal Reserve Watch" for interest rate hikes was also discussed by Clower, and by Dr. Lawrence Yun, chief economist with the National Association of Realtors.

"A rate increase is coming, probably sooner rather than later, before the end of the year," predicted Yun, but he also believes that any increase will not have an immediate impact on mortgage rates.

That's an opinion that Weichert Realtors Fair Oaks managing director Lorraine Arora

for awhile," said Arora.

Lilly was more struck by Yun's powerpoints showing homeownership at a 50-year low combined with rental vacancies at a 30-year low and rents at a seven-year high. "There's some things to be thinking about as a Realtor, and really as anyone living and working in this area," he added.

In Yun's research, millennials - who currently represent a large portion of the renters - are actually the most confident about the housing situation, and despite the many obstacles to their entering the market, the majority want to eventually become homeowners. Their achievement of that goal is crucial, according to Yun, who noted that the net worth of homeowners tends to exceed that of renters.

One positive note on real estate trends by Yun that the Realtor attendees appreciated was his belief that the "trade-up" market would probably see an improvement, with potential buyers having more cash-in-hand from their current homes' sales with which to make the move. The figures show that many homes that had fallen below their original purchase price have at the least returned to parity, and in many cases even seen a modest increase in value.

Back on the subject of the "company town" dependency, Clower and Yun both argued that diversification of job sectors is critical to the region's future economic success, requiring greater regional cooperation.

SPEAKING OF ROBOTS, drones, artificial intelligence, virtual reality and the "We Work" models of sharing work, living spaces and resources, Jonathan Aberman, chairman of TandemNSI, focused on technological trends and how they would affect our daily lives. Aberman said that any region that doesn't prepare for these changes with an emphasis on affordably "educating people on how to think, rather than just how to do" will be quickly left behind.

Aberman said that more effort is needed to keep the federal dollars spent on technology and related research here at home. "We need to be encouraging our next generation of 'gazelles,' what we call our fast-growth companies and entrepreneurs. And we need to consider that these people will be more interested in data-ways than high-ways when considering their work options."

To Aberman, that includes rethinking the number of "trophy offices" under construction and in the pipeline. He worries about over-building in commercial properties that sit empty for so long that they cease to be Class A buildings. Before they can be occupied, many are already not up to par for the next wave of change, either technologically, or culturally speaking, he said.

Lorraine Arora tends to agree with Aberman's concerns. "Look at the commercial vacancy rates in Arlington, as just one example," she said. She was also fascinated by Aberman's predictions on technology's influence on society in the very near future.

"It's a little concerning," she said. Technology is good, but I hope we don't get to the point where people just don't leave their homes."



Rob Whitfield, a member of several regional transportation citizens' groups including the Dulles Corridor Users Group, asks a question of the panellists.

shares. "People will still be buying and selling. I think the current situation continues to make people a bit cautious, as Yun suggests, but I agree that we probably won't see much impact on mortgage rates, at least