

# Springfield CONNECTION

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Members of the Congregation Adat Reyim in Springfield gather outside Fairfax Presbyterian Church after completing the 3.7-mile Burke CROP Hunger Walk.

## “No Small Deed”

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## Creating Families with Adoption

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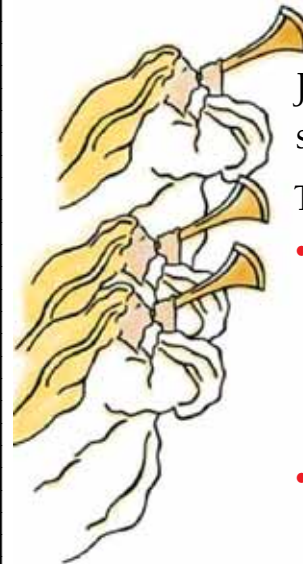
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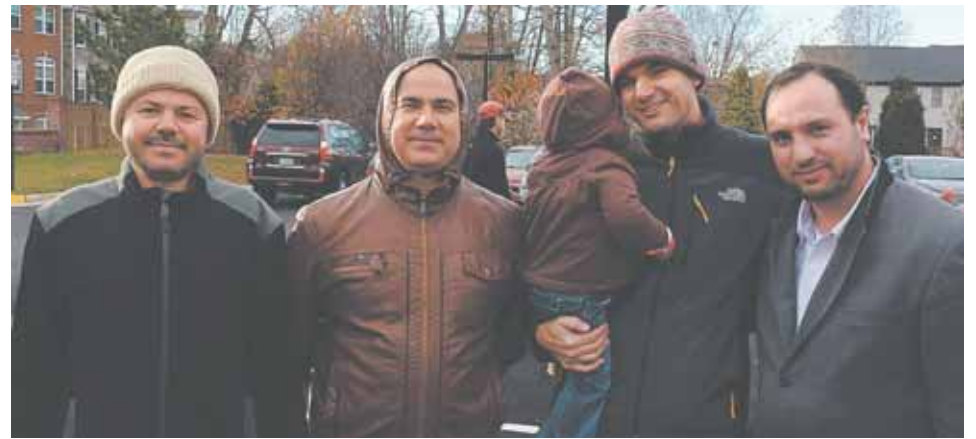


# News



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

**Walkers begin their 3.7-mile journey from Living Savior Lutheran Church in Fairfax Station by crossing Ox Road with help from Fairfax County Police from the West Springfield station.**



**From left, Imam Bilal Ankaya of Ezher Bloom Mosque, Ezher Bloom Mosque member Ali Eren, Burke Presbyterian Church co-pastor Jarrett McLaughlin and Imam Mehmet Ayaz of Ezher Bloom Mosque pause for water during the 23rd annual Burke CROP Hunger Walk.**

## “No Small Deed”

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

**J**ennifer Weiner’s wristband read 11,188 steps. That’s how many it took the Springfield resident to complete the 3.7-mile Burke CROP Hunger Walk on Nov. 22. Weiner is Rabbi Educator for Congregation Adat Reyim, which sent more than a dozen volunteers to the fundraiser for the 14th straight year.

The Jewish congregation was one of more than two dozen faith organizations from around Fairfax County supplying roughly 250 walkers in total.

The route started at Living Savior Lutheran Church in Fairfax Station. Walkers then trekked north along Ox Road with traffic assistance from Fairfax County Police officers out of the West Springfield precinct station, took a water break at One God Ministry in Fairfax (where they were handed off to Fairfax City Police for escorts) and ended at Fairfax Presbyterian Church.

**NOW IN ITS 23RD YEAR**, the walk raised money for international support agency Church World Service, as well as donations for ECHO, the Springfield-based Ecumenical Community Helping Others outreach organization. Last year, the walk raised more than \$38,000, according to organizer Janet Smith of West Springfield.

Smith has organized the Burke CROP Hunger Walk for the last 20 years and is a member of Burke Presbyterian Church, which turned out roughly 40 members. Smith said they were shooting for \$40,000 in donations this year, 25 percent of which will stay local while the rest goes to Church World Service.



**Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael of Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church in Burke acknowledges the walkers about to participate in the 23rd annual Burke CROP Hunger Walk on Nov. 22.**

“They do amazing work getting people to be self-sustaining,” Smith said.

“All the people walking realize how blessed we are to have so much,” she added. “It’s great to see the community come together like this.” The first year Smith worked on the walk, there were eight churches involved and they raised just \$1,000.

Rev. Scott Sammler-Michael of Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church in Burke kicked off the walk with reminders that the 3.7 miles of the walk is the average distance women in parts of Africa must travel to col-



**Patrick Walker, Senior Community Engagement specialist for Church World Service, speaks to participants after they completed the 23rd annual Burke CROP Hunger Walk.**

lect water — a four-hour journey that includes about 44 pounds of water on the return trip.

He also noted that hunger is not a distant problem, adding that there are 73,000 people living in poverty in Fairfax County — food insecure households with limited access to safe water.

“All the numbers have a face attached,” Sammler-Michael said, “people like those we love. There has been a reduction in hunger since 1990. Your donations and witness are part of that good news. What we do is no small deed.”

Another objective of the walk is uniting various faith organizations in the community. Jarrett McLaughlin, co-pastor of Burke Presbyterian Church, invited friends and leaders of Ezher Bloom Mosque in Fairfax to join.

“This is a great interfaith community event,” McLaughlin said. “It’s bringing us together for a common good, we need more of that in this world.”

Bilal Ankaya is the Imam at Ezher Bloom and a leader with the Institute of Islamic and Turkish Studies. “It’s our first time walking,” Ankaya said. “It feels great and it’s a good cause, ending hunger. This is the least we could do.”

Rev. Patrick Walker, Senior Community Engagement specialist with Church World Service, said there are 1,300 such walks taking place nationwide. CROP walks are the oldest national walk for hunger in the United States, beginning in 1969.

“Thank you for all you do,” he told the walkers as they warmed themselves and ate snacks at the finish line, Fairfax Presbyterian Church. “You are saving lives.”

**DR. MARY SAMBA** of Springfield, representing Lorton-based Future Children International, completed the walk with her grandchildren Amirah and Amare Acheampong. With their members hailing from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, they’ve seen chronic hunger firsthand in Africa. “We just want to help out,” she said.

Samba said four-year-old grandson fully comprehended the mission of the event and refused to ride in his stroller. “I want to walk for hunger,” she said the boy told her. “He wanted to reach the finish line.”

For more information, visit [www.burkecropwalk.org](http://www.burkecropwalk.org).

### VIEWPOINTS

### Why Did You Walk Today?

—TIM PETERSON

**Marnie Miller of Fairfax, member of Temple B’nai Shalom in Fairfax Station**

“I walked to help the temple support people who are hungry in the area.”



**Taya Miller of Fairfax, member of Temple B’nai Shalom in Fairfax Station**

“I walked to help make sure there’s no more hunger, throughout the world.”



**Jill Fox of Springfield, member of Temple B’nai Shalom in Fairfax Station**

“People are so affluent in our area, we can lose sight that people go to bed hungry here.”



**Marie Fofanah-Contah of Lorton, president of Future Children International**

“It’s extremely important to teach our children compassion.”





## THANKFUL FOR ADOPTION

Consider adopting a child from foster care. In Virginia, there are more than 860 children waiting and hoping to be adopted. Many of those children are listed on the Adopt US Kids website which you can find at: [adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx](http://adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx)

# Creating Families with Adoption

**Adoptive parents described: 'Grateful. Generous. Awesome.'**

BY JOAN BRADY  
THE CONNECTION

**N**ovember is National Adoption Awareness Month. With that in mind, meet two families expanded through adoption; two families whose kids describe their family as "awesome."

The Hagens of Vienna are a family of two parents, Kelly and Scott; three boys, two adopted and one biological; and two family dogs. Appreciative is the word that comes to mind listening to the Hagens talk about their family.

Lewis, 17, describes family priorities. "Somehow we find time to do stuff together. Like eating dinner. I've heard some families don't do that. That's very sad to me."

Spencer, 16, talks of how his brother, James, influences his life. "I know there are a lot of experiences that I get to have because James is so outgoing."

James, 11, appreciates time spent with his dad. "I like working outside with my dad. And, I like that he pays me for it."

Lewis loves having brothers. "You have people who are always there. I play Xbox with them. We talk. We listen to music. It's like having friends that are always there AND they are family." Would be different with sisters? Spencer says, "Well, they would probably make it all about them."

For parents Kelly and Scott Hagen, appreciation extends outside of their immediate family. "We have a lot of special issues in our family and that has made us more open minded about people," says Kelly. "We make fewer assumptions and we listen more."

### Meet the Connelly Family

The Connellys have an immediate family that includes two parents, five sons — two



**Hagen Family: Scott, Spencer, James, Lewis and Kelly of Vienna**

biological, two adopted from Fairfax County foster care, and one foster son — and two cats. They hope to add a therapy dog in the next few months.

Jackson, 8, likes the commotion that a large family brings. "I like having brothers. It's interesting living with a lot of people. It's very loud, which means I'm never bored and I learn a lot about how to be nice."

Anthony, 17, has a deep appreciation for his parents, "Not every family would take in so many kids and do so much for them. My parents make sure to keep things fair and show us a lot of love."

Ben, 15, recognizes all that it means to be a family, "If you are looking for a family, you will find everything and more from the family right here. We are everything you would expect; the good and the bad. We are a real family."

Hunter, also 15, might complain about the noise, and apparently does, all of the time, but he wouldn't change a thing, "When we are at home and I'm trying to get work done and everyone's doing their thing around my area, it drives me crazy. But I wouldn't trade

them in for peace and quiet."

Scott and Megan Connelly have been foster parents to many kids over the years. According to Scott, the "spectacular" success of the foster children they have had over the years, many now grown, as well as the success of their biological and adopted boys is simple. "We make sure they know that we love them, unconditionally, and that we are going to hold them accountable. It takes a few weeks, but then they settle right in."

Megan adds: "One of the things that helps makes our household work is that the kids are flexible and giving. Each time we have added someone new into the mix, they follow the example set and pretty quickly, it's like they were always there."

Nicholas, the Connelly's 10-year-old foster son describes his foster parents this way: "They are grateful. They are generous. They are awesome."

Megan Connelly is one of 12 kids, 10 of whom were adopted. Megan says that with their current four, they are only just getting started.



**Connelly Family: Hunter, Jackson, Ben and Anthony (Foster son, Nicholas, not pictured).**



**Scott and Megan Connelly.**

Photos and bios provided by Fairfax County Department of Family Services

**Adame**, an energetic 6-year-old boy has a big smile and big heart to match. Keeping Adame engaged will help him remain on task and minimize anxiety for him. A two-parent household, with one parent primarily in the home available to attend to Adame's needs would be ideal. Adame is resilient and would thrive in an adoptive family of his own.



**Tim**, an active 16-year-old, loves to keep busy. His favorite thing to do is go fishing. He would like a family who is active and loving. He gets along well with young children and has a good sense of humor. He hopes to one day attend a trade school to become a plumber because he feels this would be a great way to become financially stable.



**Damon**, a kind and thoughtful 14-year-old young man enjoys eating out, watching movies and going to the park. He has discovered rock-collecting and can identify many different kinds of rocks. Damon likes school; he is energetic and loves sports, especially basketball, rollerblading and riding his bike.



**Summer**, a 15-year-old young lady enjoys hiking and biking outdoors, and loves music and reading. She is self-taught on piano and guitar and can play songs by ear. She would like a family that has a love for music and enjoys being active in the community.



## All 860

BY JOAN BRADY

**P**arental rights terminated. Available for adoption. Floundering in an imperfect system. These words describe many children who are currently living in foster care in Virginia. In Fairfax County, these four children are hoping that this will be the last Thanksgiving spent in foster homes.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe wants those children who are currently available for adoption, adopted into loving homes, and he isn't messing around.

"Let's make it a goal — all of us in this room — that one year from today all 860 of these children will be adopted," McAuliffe recently charged a room full of adoption and foster care professionals at the Connecting Hearts Summit.

Focusing on Virginia is a good start. More than 26,000 young people across the United States age out of foster care each year to futures more likely to include homelessness and hunger than jobs and careers that will pay the bills. All of those young people were once children like the 108,000 currently languishing in foster care. Children who hoped, in vain, that someone would come forward and

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# THANKFUL Adoption

FROM PAGE 4

choose them for adoption.

In 2014, McAuliffe elevated the priority of foster care adoption by appointing Debbie Johnson as Virginia's Adoption Champion. An adoptee herself, one of her achievements to-date has been to create Connection Hearts. [www.connectingheartsva.org](http://www.connectingheartsva.org). With Ericca Facetti at the helm, Connecting Hearts works with the Virginia Department of Social Services, local departments of social services as well as local businesses to engage and educate the public about children in foster care who are waiting for adoptive families.

One of Ericca's immediate goals is to get as many of those children as appropriate included in the Adoptuskids/Virginia listings. Currently, of the 860, just 180 are listed. [www.adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx](http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx)

According to the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG), there are 259 children in the DC metro area waiting for adoptive homes. Child Welfare Program Manager, Kamilah Bunn, works tirelessly to bring visibility to foster care adoption in our region. COG's adoption efforts include Wednesday's Child, The PicMe Project, Regional Adoption Events and the Regional Adoption Exchange.

Many children have no problem advocating for themselves. Perhaps one of the more memorable self-advocates was a 10-year old twin, who grabbed his brother, hopped on a stage in downtown DC, grabbed a mic and belted out to the cheering crowd, "WE NEED A FAMILY." Other children are not so forthcoming; They are embarrassed by circumstances that are no fault of their own. They have been disappointed by adults who have said they loved them, but who then turned away. They fear further rejection.

Social workers and other professionals like Kamilah Bunn and Ericca Facetti all work together to protect each child, as they work tirelessly to match children successfully with a small pool of potential adoptive families.

## Adoption Expo

**What:** 2015 Adoption Expo will educate, inspire and celebrate families formed through adoption. Prospective adoptive parents can meet adoption professionals as well as current adoptive and foster parents to learn about foster care adoption and foster parenting.

**Cost:** Free

**When:** Dec. 5, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**Where:** 801 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20001

**More:** [adoptionfosterexpo.org](http://adoptionfosterexpo.org)

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



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Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

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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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# OPINION

## Celebrate, Shop, Dine Locally

### Every day can be “small business day.”

There is a joy to participating in community traditions and celebrations during the holidays, from walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to shopping in local stores, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambiance available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that is otherwise unmatched.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon. An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving, also called

Shop Small. This year that day is Nov. 28.

Locally owned retail shops, services, restaurants depend on vibrant local communities to thrive, and communities depend on those businesses as well. Most small, locally owned businesses invest in community, helping to transform our towns and communities with a sense of place.

Frequently, it is the small retail person who is active in fundraising for local charities, advocating for improvements, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local retail stores, mom-and-pop stores, face tough challenges right now. Competition from big box stores and online sellers makes the holiday shopping season all the more important to locally owned retailers. But local families will literally spend millions of dollars to shop and exchange gifts during the next month in a variety of places.

Everyone will do some of their shopping at the mall. Everyone will shop online. Many will answer the call of the big box. But local shoppers should be sure to do some celebrating, shopping and dining locally. We promise it brings more joy.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

## The Challenge of Ending Homelessness

BY MARGI PRESTON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
FACETS

Sometimes it takes a challenge to make progress. That's what happened here in Fairfax when leaders of six nonprofits serving those who are homeless decided to push themselves to do more.

With the second largest homeless population in the region, homelessness is a real problem in the Fairfax County-Falls Church community. A majority of the people who are homeless are in working families with children. Throughout the year, FACETS works in partnership with Fairfax's Office to Prevent and End Homelessness and other nonprofits to bring our community closer to a day when no one is homeless through a variety of effective programs. And in the summer of 2014, we decided to do even more by teaming up with five other local nonprofits to motivate ourselves to reach new records in moving people from homelessness to housing.

Our power team — FACETS, New Hope

COMMENTARY

Housing, Cornerstones, Shelter House, NVFS and Volunteers of America-Chesapeake — kicked off a year-long Fairfax County Housing Challenge. The challenge was modeled after the successful Rapid Rehousing Challenge, which was organized by the National Alliance to End Homelessness to motivate nonprofits statewide to rapidly re-house as many families as possible within 100 days.

Rapid re-housing is a proven and cost-effective strategy used by communities across the country to reduce homelessness. It involves helping households move into housing as quickly as possible after they enter the shelter system. Families and individuals are housed in market-rate apartments or houses in the community, and receive rental subsidies and/or services that are tailored to their specific needs, including a caseworker to help ease the transition.

Our housing challenge showed the real benefits of collaboration. Together we set and met quarterly ambitious goals to find homes for

### Children's Connection

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. It is a keepsake edition for many families. The annual Children's Connection is a tradition of well over a decade.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 4.

Email submissions for the Children's Connection to ChildrensSouth@connectionnewspapers.com. Subject line should be school name, town and teacher's last name (e.g. Westgate ES, McLean, Card).

even more people who were unstably housed and homeless. We brainstormed and found new ways to get people out of homelessness and into safe and secure housing. And it worked. At the end of the challenge, nearly 500 single adults and more than 220 families now have a home of their own and services to help them remain housed.

As important as it is to get people into housing right away so they can start the transition back to a stable life, we all recognize that preventing homelessness is the top priority. Like our nonprofit partners, FACETS relies on help from volunteers and partnerships with the faith and business communities to prevent homelessness throughout Fairfax County by offering a full spectrum of services, such as basic needs and financial assistance, career counseling and outreach, educational enrichment programs, and permanent housing.

With the cold temperatures approaching, we have begun to gear up for our Hypothermia Prevention and Response Program. Through a partnership with over 40 faith communities, this program enables FACETS to offer refuge from the bitter cold to over 200 individuals in our community who are homeless each year. The success of the Fairfax Housing Challenge has inspired us to remain motivated in helping even more people come in from the cold this winter and ideally keep more from ever having to experience the cold at all. We are up for the challenge ... and I know our community partners are too. That's a win for the whole community. To learn more, visit us at [www.FacetsCares.org](http://www.FacetsCares.org).

Springfield  
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**NEWS DEPARTMENT:**  
[springfield@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:springfield@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Kemal Kurspahic**

Editor ♦ 703-778-9414  
[kemal@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kemal@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Amna Rehmatulla**

Editorial Assistant  
703-778-9410 ext.427  
[arehmatulla@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:arehmatulla@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Tim Peterson**

Community Reporter  
703-314-0789  
[tpeterson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:tpeterson@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Jon Roetman**

Sports Editor ♦ 703-752-4013  
[jroetman@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jroetman@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@jonroetman](https://twitter.com/jonroetman)

**ADVERTISING:**

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**Debbie Funk**

National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

**David Griffin**

Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor & Publisher**

Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

**Executive Vice President**

Jerry Vernon  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor in Chief**

Steven Mauren

**Managing Editor**

Kemal Kurspahic

**Photography:**

Deb Cobb, Craig Sterbutzel

**Art/Design:**

Laurence Foong, John Heinly

**Production Manager:**

Geovani Flores

**Special Assistant to the Publisher**

Jeanne Theismann  
[jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@TheismannMedia](https://twitter.com/TheismannMedia)

**CIRCULATION: 703-778-9426**

**Circulation Manager:**

Ann Oliver  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)



### BULLETIN BOARD

#### SUNDAY/DEC. 6

**Warm Coat Outreach.** Set up, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Distribution, 3-5 p.m. Moose Family Center, 9612 Fernedge Lane, Lorton. Clean, used coats (new ones are great too!) can be on Sunday, Dec. 6 from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. <http://www.lortonaction.org/>.

#### MONDAY/DEC. 7

**State Sen. David Marsden.** 10-11:30 a.m. Church

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9416. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

of the Good Shepherd, 9350 Braddock Road, Burke. The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Mason is sponsoring State Senator David Marsden for a discussion on current transportation issues affecting the state, particularly Northern Virginia, including mass transit, high occupancy toll lanes, and road construction. He represents the 37th district. RSVP to 703-503-3384. [olli.gmu.edu](mailto:olli.gmu.edu).



## LETTER

### Chairman Bulova Supportive of Springfield Senior Center

To the Editor:

On Saturday, Nov. 21, 2015, Fairfax County Chairman Sharon Bulova pledged to more than forty senior demonstrators that she would work on getting permanent facility(ies) for the Burke/West Springfield Senior Center Without Walls (BWSSCWoW), particularly with the possibility of an addition to the Pohick Regional Library renovation. She noted that the staff of the Springfield Supervisor would be involved in the process.

The senior demonstrators, led by BWSSCWoW Founding Chairman Corazon S. Foley, informed her of their plans for continued activism for the Springfield Senior Center – to include testifying at the public hearings in early 2016. The plan includes a dance demonstration by a group of senior participants to underscore community service provided by the senior center, currently without walls.

Chairman Bulova encouraged

the senior participants to testify at the public hearings on the budget, particularly if funding were to be required for the addition to the Pohick Regional Library renovation.

Many thanks go to senior line dance teams – the Snappy Tappers, Sampaguita Sweethearts (Philippine Dancing), Hawaiian Stars, and Cathy Byon's Line Dance classes. It was a wonderful day that culminates more than a year of community activism by Springfield seniors, including petition gathering (1,000 signatures), election campaign resulting with 4,226 votes or 19 percent of Springfield totals, demonstrations and, in 2016, testimonies to the full Board of Supervisors. More information can be found at [www.facebook.com/Foley4SpringfieldSeniorCenter](http://www.facebook.com/Foley4SpringfieldSeniorCenter).

**Corazon Sandoval Foley**  
Burke

## BUSINESS NOTES

### Diamond Transportation President Wins Metro's Accessibility Award

Diamond Transportation Services' president and founder, Robert "Robbie" Werth, has won the Richard W. Hedding Accessible Transportation Award. The annual award is presented in honor of the first chair of the Washington D.C. Metro's Accessibility Advisory Committee for his leadership in the cause of Metrorail accessibility. The honor recognizes an advocate and member of the disability community whose efforts have resulted in significant improvements in the accessibility of Metro.

"This is truly the award of a lifetime for me," Werth said. "As someone who knew and revered Richard Hedding, and as someone who has spent his life in pursuit of his high standards, this award has very deep and emotional meaning for me."

Werth launched Diamond Transportation in 1984 as the provider

of paratransit service for Alexandria City Public Schools, and Alexandria's DOT Paratransit Program. Since then, Werth established Diamond Transportation as a premier local transportation provider with extensive experience in paratransit service, call center management, shuttle bus service, driver training and transportation management.

Diamond has had a long history of service with MetroAccess, beginning from the start of Metro's paratransit service in 1994. Under Werth's 30 years of leadership, Diamond Transportation has been awarded numerous national and regional awards for its outstanding customer service. Werth is the past President of the Taxicab, Limousine and Paratransit Association and its Operator of the Year in 1995.

Visit [diamondtransportation.us](http://diamondtransportation.us).

### Springfield Company Wins Award

Paxton Van Lines, Inc. from Springfield has won the 2015 Milton M. Hill Quality Award from Atlas Van Lines, one of the moving industry's most prestigious awards.

The Milton M. Hill Quality Award recognizes companies that demonstrate industry superiority

and uppermost quality of customer service. As part of the Atlas network, these affiliated agents truly rank among the best of the best.

Paxton Van Lines received the award at the 68th Annual Atlas Convention held Nov. 11-14 in Tucson, Ariz.

## Home of the \$6,850 Bathroom Remodel From Now to WOW in 5 Days Guarantee

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### Orthopaedics & Pain Management

**Wed., Dec. 2, 2015 • 6 to 7 p.m.**

**MedStar Orthopaedic Institute**

9455 Lorton Market St., Suite 200  
Lorton, VA 22079

### Shoulder Pain & Differentiating Arthritis

**Tues., Dec. 8, 2015 • 6 to 7 p.m.**

**MedStar Orthopaedic Institute**

9455 Lorton Market St., Suite 200  
Lorton, VA 22079

### Hand & Upper Extremity

**Thurs., Dec. 10, 2015 • 6 to 7 p.m.**

**MedStar Orthopaedic Institute**

12825 Minnieville Rd., Suite 203  
Woodbridge, VA 22192

**Attendance is free but registration is required.**

Space is limited. To register call **855-788-6464**. Light refreshments will be provided.

[MedStarOrthopaedicInstitute.org/OrthoLectures](http://MedStarOrthopaedicInstitute.org/OrthoLectures)

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## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON WATER RATE AND PROPOSED 2016 BUDGET

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2015, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges and its proposed 2016 Budget. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes to the Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, to be effective April 1, 2016, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$3,950 to \$4,100†.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$9,750 to \$10,240.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,090 to \$1,150†.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from \$36 to \$37.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$9.80 to \$10.10†.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.55 to \$2.68 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.55 to \$3.80 per 1,000 gallons of water.
8. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$50 to \$52.
9. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
10. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 110% to 104%.
11. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Materials from 25% to 16%.
12. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$45 to \$46.

†Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is proposing a \$170.4 million budget for calendar year 2016\*. Revenues are expected to be \$170.4 million in 2016. Water sales are expected to provide \$147.3 million. Approximately \$23.1 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s -- 2015	2016
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 53,891	\$ 55,581
Power and Utilities	10,677	10,750
Chemicals	6,335	7,857
Purchased Water	6,717	6,090
Supplies and Materials	4,985	5,113
Insurance	1,017	1,050
Fuel	781	880
Postage	637	664
Contractual Services	9,930	10,422
Professional Services	1,146	1,046
Other	2,363	2,447
Sub-Total	98,479	101,900
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,669)	(9,616)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 88,810</b>	<b>\$ 92,284</b>

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$41,417,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$24,131,000

\*Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates and the 2016 budget can be viewed on our Web site at [http://fairfaxwater.org/current/public\\_hearing\\_2015\\_12\\_17.htm](http://fairfaxwater.org/current/public_hearing_2015_12_17.htm). Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Mr. Ken Lasso at 703-289-6194. Interested parties also may submit written comments to [PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org](mailto:PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org) or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water  
Public Hearing Comments  
8570 Executive Park Avenue  
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, December 16, 2015** to be included in the record of the public hearing.

## News



Students in the Sangster Elementary School choir sing to celebrate Veterans Day on Nov. 11.

## “They Sacrificed” Sangster Elementary School honors veterans with annual musical program.

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

Springfield resident Tim Swicord's parents met at West Point, the United States Military Academy, and then both served in the U.S. Army. “They sacrificed,” said Swicord, in sixth grade at Sangster Elementary School. “You could either do it or you couldn't. They made the decision.”

Swicord said he thinks it's important for all veterans to be honored for choosing to serve in the military like his parents did. His is one of 155 military families out of 655

total with students attending Sangster.

To honor those parents either actively serving or retired from the military, Sangster hosted an annual Veterans Day program the morning of Nov. 11.

**PRINCIPAL** Lisa Reddel spoke to students seated facing the front of the school under gleaming fall sunshine: “Veterans are very important to this nation, this community, this school and me personally,” she said. Reddel added that her father and husband's father both served in the military.

Veterans set an example for tomorrow's



Sangster Elementary School Principal Lisa Reddel reminds students that “Freedom is not free; freedom comes from a veteran.”

leaders, Reddel said, exhibiting “honor, citizenship, patriotism and bravery.”

“Freedom is not free,” she concluded. “Freedom comes from a veteran.”

The program included musical performances of “On Veterans Day” and “God Bless America” by the school choir and handbells, and a reading of Ruth Apperton Rous' poem “I am the Flag.”

A color guard of Lt. Col Jon O'Gorman, U.S. Marine Corps, Commander Robert Lewis, U.S. Navy, Lt. Col. Arie Richards, U.S. Army and Col. Lance Landrum, U.S. Air Force, raised the American flag on the pole in front of the school.

After the program concluded, students returned to their classrooms. Each room was scheduled to have a veteran visit and talk about their role in the military.

Commander Robert Lewis, U.S. Navy, planned to visit the classes of his sons Hayden and Connor and talk about some of the things the Navy does. “It's a great honor to see them in action,” he said. “I hope it leaves a lasting impression not only with them, but their classmates.”

For sixth grade student John Richards, Veterans Day has a special meaning because his father, grandfather and great-grandfather have all served in the U.S. military. “It's my



Parents and representatives from all the U.S. military branches stand before Sangster Elementary School Students during a special Veterans Day program.

chance to really learn about what my family did,” said Richards, who added that his great-grandfather served in World War II under Gen. George Patton.

Richards' family recently moved to northern Virginia from Kentucky because his father took a new post with the U.S. Army. To welcome and support military families that are new to the area, Sangster has a military spouses group to help with the transition.

“We have a different perspective at this school,” said Maria DeHay, president of the spouses group, “having such a big military population. The students live with this every day.”

But whether or not their parents are in the military, DeHay thinks the school's Veterans Day program and classroom visits are important for all the students.

“It's a great way for kids and the staff to honor veterans,” she said.

“They're gaining an understanding of what patriotism is, the sacrifices these people make with their lives. It helps them visualize that.”

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** or to connect with DeHay and the Sangster military spouses group, email [mmsgsangster@gmail.com](mailto:mmsgsangster@gmail.com).

PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

## Fairfax Man Battles Rare Disease

### Lacrosse tournament in Springfield brings attention to Goodpasture Syndrome and kidney diseases.

ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO  
THE CONNECTION

To the children and some of the adults on the fields at South Run RECenter on Saturday, Nov. 14, it was just a lacrosse tournament, another chance to play. They do not know Marcus Garcia, the organizer of the 15 teams participating in the the first American Kidney Classic, that is what he is calling this meet.

They do not know about his brother Matthew Moody, 31, who was diagnosed with Goodpasture Syndrome. They do not know about this uncommon autoimmune disorder that affects the kidneys and the lungs.

But Amy Lane, of Stafford, knows. She works in a dialysis clinic. “I love the fact that it's for the National Kidney Foundation.” Proceeds raised by the tournament

will go towards the American Kidney Fund. But Lane and her husband, who have children playing in the tournament, are happy that the event is raising awareness for kidney diseases. “Our kids love lacrosse and they know what I do for a living and it means something to them to play [in this tournament].”

**MARCUS' FUNDRAISING GOAL** is \$5,000. The idea started with a conversation between the brothers about how to help people. They came up with a lacrosse tournament to raise money. Marcus mined his lacrosse contacts to set it up. “If we can raise a couple thousand dollars, we can touch lives across the country” through the American Kidney Fund, he said.

The American Kidney Fund, AKF, provides financial assistance to patients undergoing treatment for kidney diseases. Martin McNutt, of AKF, said that events like the tournament help raise awareness to the 30 million people affected by kidney disease in the United States and is an opportunity to raise funds so patients can benefit from the services AKF offers.

Marcus, 22, grew up watching his older brother play lacrosse. Matthew was the reason, he took up the game. “He was Superman to me,” said Marcus.

When Marcus went off to college in 2011, Matthew moved back home. But there was

something different about him. He had been feeling sick and sluggish for a long time but had assumed the tough attitude of “walk it off, it will go away,” instilled him from his high school sports days. He was not feeling right.

“I would take a long walk, all of a sudden, I can feel my heartbeat in my head. I'd walk up the stairs, I can feel my heartbeat in my head and I knew that wasn't normal,” said Matthew. Especially not for a 26-year-old, who had always been active and athletic, never broke a bone, never even been in the hospital. On the day he finally went to the hospital, Marcus and Matthew's mother, Marie Garcia, had just come back from a leukemia walk. Her husband told her that Matthew was not feeling well. A nurse at the Virginia Cancer Specialists, Marie did a check on her son, looking at his eyes, his fingers. “She noticed I had absolutely no blood left in my body. She threw me in the car right away and took me to the hospital,” said Matthew.

“I had to coax him to get to get to the hospital. He kept saying, ‘After the Redskins game,’” said Marie.

“She basically saved my life,” said Matthew.

He was in kidney failure. He was 26 years old.

Goodpasture Syndrome occurs in 0.5-1.8 cases per million per year in European and



Matthew Moody says that his mother, Marie, saved his life when he was diagnosed with Goodpasture Syndrome in 2011.



PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO/THE CONNECTION  
Marcus Garcia, of Fairfax, organized 15 lacrosse teams in a tournament bringing awareness to kidney diseases. Proceeds will go towards the American Kidney Fund.

Asian populations. Its etiology is not fully understood but exposure to cigarette smoke, hair dyes, hydrocarbon fumes, metallic dust and certain drugs, as well as genetics, increase susceptibility according to the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. Matthew underwent plasmapheresis, which took out the anti-glomerular membrane antibodies attacking his body. But his kidneys were already shot. He goes to dialysis three days a week, for four hours each treatment. He is waiting for a kidney transplant. There was a potential match recently but it fell through.

“He was never woe-is-me even when he

got turned away when he had a potential kidney donor,” said Marie. “Just being able to pick up the pieces and say, ‘Somebody else needed it more than me tonight. Mine's next time,’ I think that's been his resilience.”

“He hasn't always wanted to go through the fight. He's had some dark days,” said Marcus, but he and his other brother Lucas realized how strong their family is.

“It's been four years now. We're a fighting family. We're getting through it,” said Lucas.

“Be more proactive in getting yourself checked out. A lot of men, especially single men in their early 20s or 30s, these things sometimes can be detected early in life by

### For More Information

National Kidney Foundation, <https://www.kidney.org/>  
American Kidney Fund, <http://www.kidneyfund.org/>  
Goodpasture Syndrome, <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000142.htm>

simple blood draws and yearly check ups. No matter what age you are, you should always get that yearly check up,” said Matthew.

**IF CAUGHT EARLY**, Goodpasture Syndrome can be treated, according to Dr. Orlando Gutierrez, a nephrologist at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. But by the time patients go to the hospital, the disease is already in a severe stage. “A lot of damage has already been done,” he said, because there are few signs and symptoms in the early process. Microscopic hematuria, blood in the urine, is an early sign, which not visible to the naked eye.

“Unfortunately, it is such a rare disease, there is not anything that can be done on a general basis to catch it earlier. Keep in mind family history,” he said, and get checked out if a family member has Goodpasture Syndrome.

For some people it only affects the kidneys but both kidneys and lungs can be affected. “People who smoke are more likely to get lung problems on top of the kidney problems,” said Gutierrez.





PHOTO BY JOHN MILEWSKI

**From left: Remy Thompson, Michele Zelaya and Bethel Elias in Robert E. Lee High School's 'Steel Magnolias.'**

## Beauty in Friendship

BY CECILY WOLFE  
FLINT HILL SCHOOL

“There is no such thing as natural beauty,” said the sign on the back wall of Truvy’s Beauty Salon. While there may be some truth in that, one should also take this slogan with a grain of salt. After all, is there not natural beauty in laughter and in friendship? That was up to the audience to decide once the play “Steel Magnolias” began at Robert E. Lee High School.

Written by Robert Harling, “Steel Magnolias” premiered off-Broadway on March 28, 1987, and went on to enjoy an iconic film adaption in 1989 and a brief five-month run on Broadway in 2005. A tribute to Harling’s sister, who died of type-one diabetes, “Steel Magnolias” is a wonderful story set in the 1980s about six Louisiana women of different ages and perspectives who gather at Truvy’s Beauty Spot, looking for gossip and reassurance as they move through both joyful and tragic stages in their lives.

The six young women from Lee High School handled this delicate balance between comedy and drama with exceptional maturity. Ellie Milewski (M'Lynn) embodied a constantly anxious mother, interspersing a rational tone with the slightly strained quaver. By allowing her placid appearance to sometimes slip during moments of disbelief and grief, Milewski easily conveyed those times when she was putting on a brave face, even as grief and worry consumed her. The relationship between Milewski and Remy Thompson (Shelby), her daughter, was quite realistic. Milewski acted the collected, experienced, albeit somewhat overbearing mother, while Thompson characterized Shelby through with a flighty nature and enthusiastic naiveté, painting the picture of a young woman who still had not fully let go of her girlish fantasies.

While these two shared tense

arguments and affectionate hugs and looks, other actresses helped to bring levity to such serious situations. Michele Zelaya (Truvy) ran her beauty salon with flair, always ready to raise an eyebrow over the latest gossip or assert her opinions on everything from marriage to the best nail polish color. Acting largely as a foil to her flamboyant boss, Skyler Estrella (Annelle) adeptly transitioned from an awkward teenage girl too shy to look people in the eye to a daring young woman then on to a devout religious convert who prayed at the drop of a hat. Kiana Burch’s (Ouiser) gruff and abrasive manner as the neighborhood misanthrope highlighted her shift into a more compassionate person as she softened her words and personality. Finally, Bethel Elias (Clairee) fully committed to her role as an older, yet no less classy or spirited, Southern woman. Her slow drawl, stately gait, and quick-witted jabs demonstrated her confidence and commitment to Clairee’s laid-back and humorous outlook.

Aspects such as the lighting, makeup and sound mirrored the tone of the scenes and differentiated among characters. Though the lighting largely remained the same throughout, the bright fluorescent lights of the beauty parlor added an element of constancy to the continually changing dynamics among the women. In contrast, makeup ranged from shades of bright pink to barely there, and incorporated subtle changes in keeping with each character’s age and preferences. The occasional song reflected both upbeat and poignant moments.

Overall, Robert E. Lee High School’s production of “Steel Magnolia” was a moving rendition of this classic. The composure of these six young women and their hilarious yet heartbreaking conversations with each other reminded the audience that, as Shelby says, “Life goes on,” and there will always be beauty in friendship and love.

## 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.

### Ongoing

**Inaugural Workhouse Glass National 2015.** Through Jan. 17. W-16, Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join for the family-friendly exhibitions of glass art and the opening reception on Tuesday, Nov. 10, 6-8 p.m. [workhousearts.org](http://workhousearts.org), 703-585-2900.

**FCPS Art Teachers Exhibition.** Nov. 14-Dec. 6. W-16 McGuireWoods Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join for the exhibitions by the FCPS best art teachers. Discover the breadth of talent found in FCPS as you view works by art teachers. The exhibit will feature various media, unified by the artist’s passion to educate. [workhousearts.org](http://workhousearts.org), 703-585-2900.

**Sue Grace Art Exhibition.** Nov. 14-Dec. 6. Workhouse Arts Center, Building W-10 Gallery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Her paintings share the experience of giving birth, explore the bridge between abstract and figurative expression. [Gracefamily999@verizon.net](mailto:Gracefamily999@verizon.net). [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org), 703-585-2900.

#### THURSDAY/NOV. 26

**Turkey Trot for Parkinson’s.** 9 a.m. Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. 5K Run/Walk and One-mile gobble wobble to benefit the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research. [www.WestSpringfieldRunning.com](http://www.WestSpringfieldRunning.com).

#### SATURDAY/NOV. 28

**Donuts with Santa.** 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. W-16, Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Santa is returning for a wonderful family event just in time for the holidays. Join Santa and his helpers for a special experience at Donuts With Santa. Each ticket holder will enjoy two doughnuts and a choice of juice or coffee while Santa and his elves read a classic Christmas story and lead a fun-filled family sing-a-long. \$20. [workhousearts.org](http://workhousearts.org), 703-585-2900.

**Children’s Theatre: “The Nutcracker.”** 1-2:15 p.m. and 3-4:15 p.m. W-3 Theatre, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Presented by Mestey Films Productions. Playwright Vianlix Mestey produces an original re-telling of the favorite holiday story in play form. Running time 75 minutes with one intermission. All ages. \$9-\$13. [workhousearts.org](http://workhousearts.org), 703-585-2900.

**Workhouse Winter Wonderland.** 3-7 p.m. Full campus, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join and celebrate the holiday season creatively. Get into the holiday spirit by taking a special date or the whole family on a magical sleigh bell ride around our historic campus in horse-drawn carriages. Enjoy delicious holiday treats such as s’mores and roasted chestnuts by the fire. Free. [workhousearts.org](http://workhousearts.org), 703-585-2900.

**“A Chanticleer Christmas.”** 8 p.m. George Mason Center for the Arts, 4373 Pond Drive, Fairfax. An evening of ancient hymns, venerated sacred songs, contemporary classics, gospel spirituals and treasured American and European carols, all performed with Chanticleer’s lush harmonies and impeccable technique. \$32-\$54, half-price for children and youth through grade 12. [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu), 888-945-2468.

#### TUESDAY/DEC. 1



**Chanticleer, hailed as “the world’s reigning male chorus,” performs at George Mason’s Center for the Arts on Saturday, Nov. 28.**



**Chanticleer, hailed as “the world’s reigning male chorus,” performs at George Mason’s Center for the Arts on Saturday, Nov. 28.**

**Tiny Tots Concert.** 10 a.m. 7 p.m. Robert E. Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. Join Robert E. Lee High School Band and Drama for their annual Tiny Tots concert featuring favorite characters and seasonal selections. \$2. 703-663-0185.

#### THURSDAY/DEC. 3

**Tap Takeover with Devil’s Backbone Brewing Company.** 4-8 p.m. Wood Ranch BBQ and Grill, Springfield Town Center, 6797 Springfield, Mall, Springfield. Sample the happy hour menu along with special brews from DBB including Bravo 4pt Session IPA, Schwartz Bier Black Lager and the distinctive Smokehaus Lager, an aromatic amber. RSVP 703-307-3977 or [kelly@ksmmarketing.com](mailto:kelly@ksmmarketing.com).

#### THURSDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 3-6

**Library Holiday Book Sale.** Dec. 3, 3-9 p.m. Dec. 4-5, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 6, noon-2 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Come and find those perfect books, CDs and DVDs for your holiday shopping. Whether it’s a cute little book to put a gift card in, a craft/hobby book for your favorite aunt or that special gift for mom, dad or the little ones—there are offerings galore waiting for you. Purchases will help fund valuable library children’s programs. Bag sale on Sunday. For more information, please contact [rbfriends@gmail.com](mailto:rbfriends@gmail.com) or 703-451-8055. TTY 703-324-8365.

#### FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 4-5

**Norwegian Festival/Bazaar.** Friday,

10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Christ Lutheran Church, 3810 Meredith Drive, Fairfax. Fifth year with Norwegian café, Fjord horses, live music, Nordic Dancers, Norwegian food products and goods. Local Nordic artisans. Waffle, krumkake, lefse demos, baked goods and Kransekake sales. Free. [www.norwaydc.org](http://www.norwaydc.org), 703-573-5943.

#### SATURDAY/DEC. 5

**City of Fairfax Festival of Lights and Carols.** 11:30-7 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Come enjoy live holiday music, hot cider, s’mores by the Yule log, petting farm, Ferris wheel, caroling and lighting of the Christmas tree in the winter wonderland. Visit [www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/festival-of-lights-and-carols](http://www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/festival-of-lights-and-carols) for times and locations.

**Lunch with Santa.** 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Have lunch with Santa. \$6. Parents free. Ages 10 and under. Visit [www.fairfaxva.gov](http://www.fairfaxva.gov) for ticket information or call 703-385-7858.

**Santa’s Workshop.** 1-5 p.m. Springfield Methodist Church, 7047 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Come out to Santa’s Workshop for crafts, cookie and cupcake decorating, storytime, a cake walk, letter writing to Santa and more. Additional fee for refreshments and photos with Santa. \$5. Children 12 and below. [amitchem@live.com](mailto:amitchem@live.com).

**A Celtic Christmas with Sior-Óg.** 7:30 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)



# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

sponsors the seventh annual Christmas concert. Adults \$5.00 and Children 12 and under free.  
www.fairfaxarts.org.

**Art Guild of Clifton Holiday Show.** 2-7 p.m. Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. A feature of this year's show will be instruction and craft demos for youth visitors. They will be able to use a variety of papers and stamping to create Holiday cards and gift accessories suitable for their gift giving. www.artguildofclifton.org.

**Clifton Tree Lighting.** 6 p.m. Ayre Square. Campfire, marshmallow roast, carols. www.clifton-va.com.

**Concerts from Kirkwood-Marcolivia.** 3 p.m. Kirkwood Presbyterian church, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield. Award-winning violin and violin/viola duo. The concert will feature season music in the folk traditions of America and Eastern Europe. Free.  
www.kirkwoodpres.com.

**SATURDAYS/DEC. 5, 12, 19**

**Donuts with Santa.** 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. W-16, Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Santa is returning for a wonderful family event just in time for the holidays! Join Santa and his helpers for a

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**FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 4-5, 11-12**

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# South County to Host Robinson in 6A North Semifinals

## Q&A: RB Ramsey enjoys father's gumbo on Thanksgiving.

**T**he South County football team remained undefeated and secured a spot in the 6A North region final four thanks in part to another big night from senior running back DeMarcus Ramsey.

Ramsey carried 30 times for 155 yards and two touchdowns, according to stats on maxpreps.com, helping the top-seed Stallions defeat No. 9 West Potomac 42-9 in the region quarterfinals on Nov. 20 at South County High School.

Ramsey has now rushed for 1,407 yards and 20 touchdowns in 12 games, while averaging 5.9 yards per carry. Friday's performance was the seventh time Ramsey surpassed the 100-yard mark this season, including a 228-yard, four-touchdown effort against T.C. Williams on Oct. 1. He rushed for 184 yards and four touchdowns against Annandale on Oct. 23, and went for 157 yards and two scores during the Stallions' 33-30 overtime victory against Lake Braddock on Nov. 6.

The 6-foot, 220-pound ball carrier will have a chance to add to his totals when

**Running back DeMarcus Ramsey and the South County football team will host Robinson in the 6A North region semifinals at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 28.**



PHOTO BY RICHARD MAPLE

South County (12-0) hosts No. 5-seed Robinson (9-3) in the region semifinals at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 28. The Rams are on a five-game win streak and have won seven of their last eight games. Robinson defeated No. 13 Chantilly 31-24 in the quarterfinals on Friday.

Advancing this far in the playoffs means South County will practice on Thanksgiving. Ramsey recently took part in a Q&A with The Connection, sharing his thoughts about the win over West Potomac, Saturday's matchup with Robinson, and his plans for the upcoming holiday.

**Q:** South County defeated West Potomac 42-9 last week in the quarterfinals. How do you feel your team played?

**Ramsey:** I definitely believe we played better. We also for the first time had less than 10 penalties, so I think if we can keep that up we'll be that much better.

**Q:** You had 30 carries last week against West Potomac. As a running back, how many carries do you feel you need in a game before you're performing at your highest level?

**Ramsey:** As a running back, I'm starting off at my highest level and finishing at my highest. So it can even be 1-5 carries; I'll make sure I give the best I've got.

**Q:** Next up for South County is a semifinal matchup with Robinson. What will it take to beat the Rams?

**Ramsey:** It'll take guts, it'll take pride, it'll

take a Stallion Nation.

**Q:** Does being undefeated at this point in the season place additional pressure on the team?

**Ramsey:** Being undefeated at this point in the season does put additional pressure on the team because we know we have a lot of eyes on us just waiting to see us fail.

**Q:** The team will practice on Thanksgiving, correct? What time? How long?

**Ramsey:** We practice on Thanksgiving morning from 7-10 a.m., including meetings, so for about two hours.

**Q:** What are your plans for Thanksgiving Day?

**Ramsey:** My plans for Thanksgiving Day are to wake up early in the morning and get what I need to get done with my team, then enjoy the day with my family.

**Q:** What is your favorite Thanksgiving food?

**Ramsey:** My favorite Thanksgiving food would honestly be the gumbo my dad has been making since I was little because he's from Louisiana.

**Q:** With the football season still going, will you have to make sure you don't eat too much?

**Ramsey:** No, that's actually the least of my worries. I should be eating way much more than I've been doing, so that's something I've been making sure to work on with the fact that we've been doing so much running.

— JON ROETMAN

# Lake Braddock Football to Host Westfield

## Q&A: RB Atkins commits to Vanderbilt.

**T**he No. 2-seed Lake Braddock football team secured a trip to the 6A North region semifinals, beating No. 7 Battlefield 13-10 on Nov. 20 in Burke.

Two days later, Bruins running back Lamont Atkins made a decision about his football and academic future.

Atkins, a 5-foot-11, 195-pound junior, committed to Vanderbilt University on Sunday. Atkins has been a primary option in the Lake Braddock offense and figures to be a key contributor when Lake Braddock hosts No. 3 Westfield in the 6A North region semifinals at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 28.

It's the third straight season the two teams have met in the region semifinals, with Westfield winning each of the last two years.

Atkins recently participated in a Q&A with The Connection, discussing his commitment to Vanderbilt, Lake Braddock's upcoming matchup with Westfield and his Thanksgiving plans.

**Q:** You committed to Vanderbilt on Sunday, correct?

**Atkins:** Yes. I visited for the game Saturday and stayed to meet all the coaches and tour the facilities and campus Sunday. At the end of the day, I committed to the coaching staff.

**Q:** What made Vanderbilt the right choice for you?

**Atkins:** I knew Vanderbilt was the right choice for me before I even visited for the

**Lake Braddock running back Lamont Atkins recently committed to play football at Vanderbilt University.**

PHOTO BY  
CRAIG  
STERBUTZEL  
THE CONNECTION



weekend. They are the No. 15 National University in the nation and [head] coach [Derek] Mason makes academics a top priority for the players. I also enjoyed the personalities of all the coaches. They care for their athletes as they would their own kids. They hold you accountable to being a Vanderbilt man and encourage you to be limitless. I also couldn't pass up an opportunity to compete in the SEC.

**Q:** For what position did Vanderbilt recruit you?

**Atkins:** I was recruited to play running back.

**Q:** Lake Braddock pulled out a 13-10 win

over Battlefield last week in the quarterfinals. How do you feel your team played?

**Atkins:** Battlefield was a great team and played well on both sides of the ball. I was proud of my entire team because everyone fought hard for four quarters and pulled out a close victory.

**Q:** Now you face a Westfield program that has beaten Lake Braddock in the region semifinals each of the last two years. What will it take to beat the Bulldogs?

**Atkins:** Westfield is a great team and they may have the best defense in the state. We have to execute our game plan and play

error-free football to beat them.

**Q:** You guys will practice on Thanksgiving, correct? What time? How long?

**Atkins:** Yes, we will practice from 8:30 to 11:30.

**Q:** What are your plans for Thanksgiving day?

**Atkins:** After practice, a few of the parents will prepare a real nice brunch for us. It's a privilege to be practicing and having a meal with your team on Thanksgiving because it means your state championship dreams are still there.

**Q:** What is your favorite Thanksgiving food?

**Atkins:** I like the fried turkey and my mom's sweet potato pie.

**Q:** With the football season still going, will you have to make sure you don't eat too much?

**Atkins:** Don't worry, we have practice at 8:30 Friday morning and I'm sure we will run it off.

**Q:** Do you or your family participate in any sports-related Thanksgiving traditions?

**Atkins:** We do not. My mom is the varsity team mom and leads most of the preparation for the team brunch. My dad and little brother will be helping her out too, along with a lot of the other families. After practice and the brunch, we're all tired so we normally just hang out around the house and watch movies.

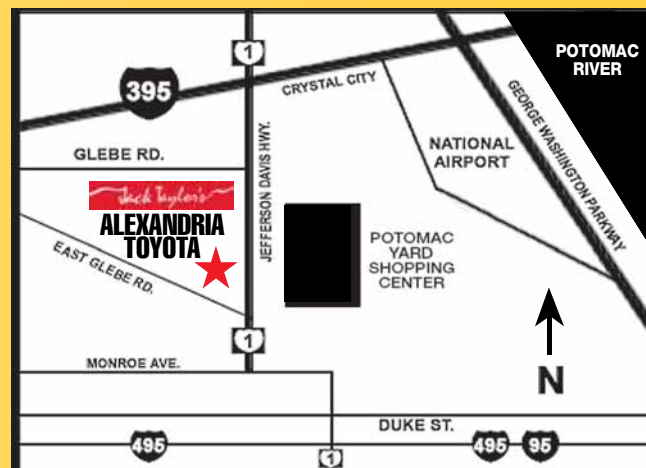
— JON ROETMAN

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## FAITH NOTES

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

Clifton Presbyterian Church is offering a **Grief Support Group**. Offered for eight sessions on Thursdays from Dec. 3-Feb. 3 from 10:30 a.m.-noon for those who have experienced a recent death and loss in their lives. This group will offer a safe and supportive place for participants to explore ways to walk the journey of grief and to "wrestle" with difficult, and sometimes unanswerable, questions. Dec. 3, 10, 17; Jan. 7, 12, 21, 28; Feb. 3. Clifton Presbyterian Church is located at 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. office@cliftonpc.org. 703-830-3175.

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

**First Baptist Church of Springfield** offers Sunday school at 9:15 a.m., followed by a 10:30 a.m. worship service at 7300 Gary St., Springfield. 703-451-1500 or www.fbcspRINGfield.org.

**Clifton Presbyterian Church**, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton, offers Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery care is provided. Christian education for all ages is at 9:45 a.m. 703-830-3175.

**Prince of Peace Lutheran Church**, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, offers casual worship services on Saturday evenings at 5:30 p.m. featuring contemporary music. More traditional services take place on Sunday mornings at 8:15 and 11 a.m. Sunday School is from 9:45-10:45 a.m. for children and adults. The church also offers discussion groups for adults. 703-451-5855 or www.poplC.org.

**St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church**, 6720 Union Mill Road, Clifton, conducts Sunday masses at 7:30 a.m., 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. It also offers a Saturday vigil at 5:30 p.m. and a Thursday Latin mass at 7 p.m. 703-817-1770 or www.st-andrew.org.

**Kirkwood Presbyterian Church**, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway in Springfield, supports a Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) program on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings are 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the church. All mothers and children are welcome. The program provides mothers an opportunity to get to know other mothers through discussions and craft activities. Register. 703-451-5320.

**Franconia United Methodist Church**, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria, offers traditional Sunday church services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. plus Sunday School classes for all ages at 9:45 a.m. Childcare is available 8:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. There will be a Terry Hall Concert on Saturday, April 14 at 4 p.m. with old spirituals, classic hymns, southern gospel favorites and more. 703-971-5151 or admin@franconiaumc.org or www.franconiaumc.org.

**Arabic Bible Baptist Church** is located at 6428 Ox Road in Fairfax Station. Services are on Saturdays at 6:30 p.m. and Sundays at 1 p.m. Pastor: Wissam Jamil. Call 703-273-5599.

**A casual worship service** with a praise band is at 9:45 a.m. at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8508 Hooes Road in Springfield. www.sumcdisciples.org or 703-451-8223.

**Calvary Hill Baptist Church**, 9301 Little River Turnpike in Fairfax, conducts practice in the Sanctuary every Wednesday at 7 p.m. All are welcome. 703-323-1347

**The Fairfax Church of Christ**, 3901 Rugby Road in Fairfax, has facilitators available to help those who are experiencing a separation or divorce. 703-63-200 or www.fxcc.org.

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## SEASON OF GIVING



Home remodeler Bob Gallagher, who grew up near Clifton, organized a benefit to help Dixie Dawson with repairs to her house including a deck and wheelchair ramp. The repairs are set for Dec. 12. Dawson, who has spina bifida, has lived most of her life in the rambler off Popeshead Road her father built in the early 1960s. Gallagher is a principal at Sun Design Remodeling.



The Dawson house.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

# Remodelers, Suppliers Join Forces to Help Clifton Woman

Sun Design Remodeling and partners donate services to upgrade deck and wheelchair ramp for local woman with spina bifida.

BY JOHN BYRD

A coalition of local remodelers and home improvement suppliers are set to repair the deck and wheelchair ramp surrounding the home of Dixie Dawson, a long term Clifton resident with spina bifida.

Dawson, who lives alone in the house her father built in the early 1960s, was the beneficiary of the second annual Remodeler's Charity Tour which was held Nov. 7. The tour was sponsored by Sun Design Remod-

eling with participation from TW Perry, Cedar Electric, MR Contracting and Trex.

The repairs, which will include extensive upgrades to the wheelchair-accessible deck, as well as improvements to the home's electric system and chimney, will occur on Dec. 12. All materials and labor are being donated by participating contractors. The value of the repairs is estimated at \$25,000.

Dawson credits childhood friend, Janaye Raper Lawson, with initiating the process that led to her receiving the needed assistance. Lawson knew about last year's char-

ity tour (which helped a local widow repair the driveway to her home) and contacted Christina Gallagher, wife of Sun Design principal Bob Gallagher. Two days later, Gallagher dropped by Dawson's home.

"I just thought there must be a way that a community as old and close-knit as ours can aid one of its own," says Gallagher, who grew up in the area where his father practiced medicine.

"My company has learned a lot from doing tours of recently remodeled homes;

## To Contribute

Those who wish to make a contribution to the Dawson repair effort may do so at: <https://www.youcaring.com/dixie-dawson-449502>

this seems like a logical way to draw attention to someone in the community we could help."

The tour, which focused on a Sun Design project in the Balmoral section of Clifton, provided an opportunity for locals to make a contribution to Dawson. It also firmed up the professional support needed to execute the repairs.

John Byrd (byrdmatx@gmail.com or [www.HomeFrontsNews.com](http://www.HomeFrontsNews.com)) has been writing stories about community interest topics for 30 years.

## Special Bible Exhibit at First Church of Christ, Scientist

How did the King James Version of the Bible come to be? In a one-day exhibition celebrating International Bible Day on Nov. 23, Springfield resident and historian Bruce Slawter showcased several ancient Bible pages and explained some of the book's origin story.

The exhibition took place at First Church of Christ, Scientist in Springfield, where Slawter is a member and "first reader." Not to be confused with the Church of Scientology, the Christian Science Church was founded by Mary Baker Eddy in 1879. Members follow the Bible and Eddy's interpretation of it as their spiritual basis.

Slawter of Springfield has always been interested in history and is a "first reader" at the First Church of Christ, Scientist. In 2011, the 400th birthday of the King James Bible, Slawter said was "the big push" to pursue Bible history scholarship as he was teaching college Sunday School at the church.

Questions of how the King James Ver-

**Bruce Slawter of Springfield presents an exhibition and talk on the history of the Bible at First Church of Christ, Scientist in Springfield.**



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

sion of the Bible came about compelled Slawter to contact the Folger Shakespeare Library and begin work on his own exhibition. Slawter connected with vendors and collectors online, and came into possession of several historic pieces he had verified by experts at Folger.

His pieces include a page from the William Tyndale New Testament, from around 1526, the first English translation from the

original Greek; the Matthew Bible, circa 1537, a first edition from Antwerp printed with movable type on rag-cotton linen; and the Geneva Bible, circa 1560, by English Protestants who fled England.

The primary collection of Slawter concludes with a page from the 1611 first edition of the King James Version, the culmination of work from six different companies exchanging drafts, peer reviews and

circulating corrections before a general review committee and senior review.

"It's considered one of the greatest collaborative efforts of scholarship in history," Slawter said.

Slawter managed an open house at the church during the day and led a more detailed talk that evening. Seeing the pages first hand has given him a more profound perspective on his own scholarship.

"It makes you appreciate the dedication of the forerunners of Biblical scholarship," Slawter said. "Many of these individuals were martyred for their views, like Tyndale, who asked for his stylus and his Hebrew dictionary so he could work on translating right up until his execution."

"You wonder whether you would have that sort of faith, that courage, today," Slawter added.

First Church of Christ, Scientist is located at 5315 Backlick Road in Springfield.

—TIM PETERSON