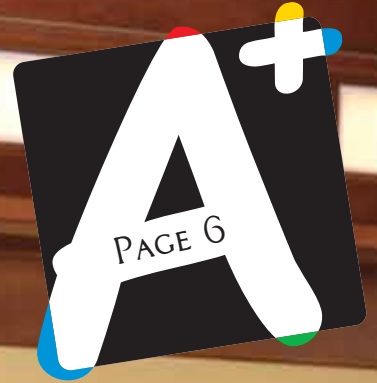


# Oak Hill ❖ Herndon CONNECTION

The safest place to be in Herndon on Friday, March 11 - at the "Coffee with a Cop" and Virginia's Attorney General gathering at Amphora Diner Deluxe. From left — Officers Randles, Meyers, Sullivan, Attorney Gen. Mark Herring, Herndon Police Chief DeBoard, Mayor Lisa Merkel and Town Council Member Grace Wolf.



## Herndon's 'Coffee With a Cop'

NEWS, PAGE 3

### Encouraging STEM-Curious Youth


NEWS, PAGE 12

### Herndon Citizens Honored

NEWS, PAGE 7



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NEWSPAPERS

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**Herndon Police Chief Maggie DeBoard talks with residents at the “Coffee with a Cop” event. DeBoard was appointed to a Steering Committee to help clear up a backlog of untested forensic kits from victims of sexual assault throughout the Commonwealth.**



**Herndon residents Eleanor Benedict, Mary Lou Ferreira and Jeff French enjoy the coffee and pastries provided by host venue Amphora Diner Deluxe as they prepare to listen to remarks by Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring and others during the “Coffee with a Cop” event.**

## Herndon’s ‘Coffee with a Cop’

**Virginia Attorney General highlights the event at Amphora.**

BY ANDREA WORKER  
THE CONNECTION

**N**o doubt the safest place you could have been anywhere near Herndon on Friday morning was in the private dining room at Amphora’s Diner Deluxe on Elden Street. In addition to a number of Herndon residents and Amphora management and staff, the room was also occupied by Mark Herring, the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Lisa Merkel, Mayor of Herndon, and Chief of the Herndon Police force Maggie DeBoard, along with several of the jurisdiction’s men and women in blue.

Billed as Herndon’s “Coffee with a Cop,” the event was the last stop on the Herring’s 2016 Public Safety Tour, a public outreach that Herring has been conducting since taking office in 2014 that sees him crisscross the state meeting with law enforcement, local authorities and the citizens of those locales. “It’s really important to see and hear first hand from our citizens and those on the front lines of public safety,” said Herring.

What are some of the common themes that have been noted during the meetings? “Simply put, our citizens ask that we make our communities better and safer.” Of course, recent events like the shooting death of Michael Brown by police in Ferguson, Mo. and, closer to home, the death of Freddie Gray in Baltimore while in police custody – and the subsequent rioting and unrest in both places and across the country - have trained a spotlight on the relationship between police and the communities they serve.

“Community relations are key,” acknowledged Herring, adding that his office was preparing several initiatives – and partnering with other agencies and jurisdictions – aimed at improving those relations and “increasing citizen engagement” so that police and the community can work together to achieve the goal of better and safer communities. “Neither can do it alone.

**Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring and Herndon Mayor Lisa Merkel join the attendees after the presentation for more one-on-one exchanges of ideas, concerns, and suggestions.**

PHOTOS BY  
ANDREA WORKER/  
THE CONNECTION



Not law enforcement. Not the public. They both need to be actively involved,” he added.

**HERNDON CHIEF OF POLICE** DeBoard described some of the community outreach programs that the Herndon Police employ, like their elementary and middle school programs to begin building trust from the youngest age. Plans are afoot to host youth soccer games where “kids and their parents can see cops as people and interact in a positive environment.”

One area that the Attorney General’s office will address is recruitment of more minorities for law enforcement positions. Chief DeBoard spoke to this need, as well. “It’s one of my biggest frustrations,” she admitted. “We don’t have enough of a connection with our large Hispanic community. We do need more personnel from that background, and to find ways to better connect and break down the barriers.” DeBoard believes that the exchange of information between police and this sector of their citizenry needs to be significantly increased, to improve the force’s effectiveness and make the community “safer for all of us.”

Herring and staff are currently working with smaller jurisdictions to develop minority-focused recruitment efforts and will make their findings and proposals available

as the efforts progress.

Another essential in improving community relations and law enforcement effectiveness is training, according to Herring, and it’s something that he believes is lacking, often due to budgetary constraints. Again, he is working with small and medium-sized communities to develop regional train-the-trainer programs that can be disseminated to the front lines with less expense. The curriculum will include “21st-century policing methods and strategies like de-escalation tactics and implicit bias. Bias is something we all have and we must be trained to avoid in our police work.” In addition to in-service training, Herring and his colleagues will be working on updating the training of recruits at the academy level to “get our newest officers off on the right foot.”

The sharp rise in deaths from heroin and prescription drug overdoses in the last several years also came up during the forum. “This is not an isolated “ghetto” problem,” declared Chief DeBoard. “It’s an epidemic across all sectors of our community.” Herring agreed, sharing that it was a topic at every meeting throughout the Commonwealth where members of the audience expressed their concerns and spoke about personal experiences. “There were 728 deaths from heroin or prescription over-

doses last year. More than in car accidents. And way too often the heroin fatalities started as a person’s usage of prescribed painkillers for legitimate ailments.”

Herring and DeBoard both spoke to the sometimes deadly relationship between heroin and prescription painkillers and called for everyone to educate themselves and to be vigilant about any signs of abuse. Herring was pleased to announce that his office had prosecuted 28 cases involving 90 or more kilos of heroin (“We’re are going after the suppliers, the major players,” he said) but cautioned that “we are not going to arrest our way out of this problem.”

Describing the effort to curb heroin and prescription drug death as truly bipartisan in the Virginia Legislature, Herring outlined a few of the primary initiatives, other than dealer and major distributor prosecution. He noted the passage of a “Safe Reporting Law,” so companions of overdosing persons will not be afraid to call for help for fear of arrest for possession, and making opioid-blocking drugs like Naloxone more widely available to law enforcement and emergency responders. Herring also announced that his office had just released “a cutting edge documentary” on the subject and urged the community to “find as many ways to screen it as possible.” The 44-minute video, entitled “Heroin: The Hardest Hit” is available on the Attorney General’s website at [www.ag.virginia.gov](http://www.ag.virginia.gov), on YouTube and as a free DVD upon request.

**WITH THE PRESENTATION COMPLETE,** Herring, DeBoard, Merkel and the other law enforcement personnel spent time visiting with attendees, answering questions and listening to suggestions and concerns. Before Herring’s departure, the locals made sure to invite their “Top Cop” back to participate in Herndon’s always well-attended National Night Out extravaganza, a real highlight of the Herndon community relations calendar.



# OPINION

## Homelessness on Its Way Out in Fairfax

Homelessness should be rare, brief and non-recurring;  
776 fewer homeless individuals in 2016 than in 2008.

**H**omelessness is down in Fairfax County in every major category, a fact confirmed on Jan. 28, 2016, the annual Point in Time Count.

There were 145 fewer individuals homeless than the Point In Time Count a year earlier, 138 of those in families, and seven fewer homeless individuals. There also were no families in overflow motels, and no families were unsheltered in the 2016 count.

Sixty-four percent of the 577 family members who were literally homeless on Jan. 28, 2016 were in transitional housing, with the rest in emergency shelter. There were vacancies in emergency shelters for families and in domestic violence shelters; no families were unsheltered.

"This trend is beautiful," said Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. "The things we're doing are making a difference."

In 2008, the Fairfax County established the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness with a plan to end homelessness within 10 years.

"Seeing the numbers decrease in so many different areas is encouraging after working on the 10 year plan," said Dean Klein, director of the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness. Since 2008, the number of people who are literally homeless on the day of the Point in Time Count has decreased by 776 individuals. "Since 2008 there has been a 42 percent reduction in the number of people counted as homeless, from 1,835 people in 2008 to 1,059 in 2016,"

### EDITORIAL

Klein reported to the Board of Supervisors on Monday, March 14.

Julie Maltzman, manager of Continuum of Care, reported the details to the Governing Board of the Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness on Monday afternoon.

A coordinated effort among partners, more housing options and flexible funding helped to get formerly homeless families into more viable housing with appropriate services, said Joe Meyer, executive director of Shelter House. More public awareness around homelessness is also making a difference, Meyer said.

Still, 341 children under the age of 18 were among those literally homeless in this year's Point in Time Count, 32 percent of all homeless.

Eighty percent (190 people) of the adults in homeless families were female; 66 percent of adults (155) in homeless families were employed; a slight increase from 62 percent in 2015. Twelve percent (21) of families were considered "youth households," with all family members under 25 years old.

Single adults made up 46 percent of all homeless people counted, a total of 482. Forty-two percent (202 people) of single adults who were homeless suffered from serious mental illness and/or substance abuse, a 13 percent decrease from last year. Many had chronic health problems and/or physical disabilities as well.

Thirty percent (146 people) were experienc-

ing chronic homelessness. This is a significant decrease from last year when 42 percent (203 people) were experiencing chronic homelessness.

Among the factors helping to reduce homelessness, Maltzman said: the adoption of a Housing First approach; increased homelessness prevention and rapid rehousing efforts; prioritizing housing for individuals with the longest history of homelessness and highest vulnerability; additional permanent supportive housing for singles experiencing chronic homelessness; focus on housing veterans including use of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers; new permanent housing opportunities for families with children.

To find out more, see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/>

Support the effort to end homelessness by contributing to the Build a Village campaign found there as well.

Support the nonprofit partners working to end homelessness, including FACETS, Cornerstones, New Hope Housing, Northern Virginia Family Services, Shelter House, United Community Ministries, Good Shepherd Housing, Alternative House, Homestretch, Pathways Homes and others.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

*Mary Kimm is a member of the Governing Board of the Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness.*

## A Circus Show

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

**I**ronically Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus moved into the Richmond Coliseum for its annual stand at the same time last week that a few blocks away the General Assembly concluded its annual meeting and members packed up and went home. Circus promoters need to come up with a new theme each year to keep its patrons returning; this year's theme was "Extreme." Reviewers are likely to come up with very different assessments of the General Assembly session. It was not as extreme as some sessions, but as always there were some really good things that happened and some not so good.

Legislative sessions tend to be ponderous—nothing as exciting as a flying trapeze or person being shot out of a cannon. Progress in changing laws is made mostly in small, incremental steps. This session I am pleased that small steps were taken to reduce the flow of students going from the classroom to the courtroom. More emphasis will start to be given to providing alternatives for youth who misbehave but who should not be treated like criminals. Very small steps were made in gun safety

by facilitating background checks for those not required to have one to purchase a gun but who volunteer to do so. My bill to require background checks for all purchases at gun shows was defeated. A new law will deny gun ownership for those against whom a permanent protective order has been issued. Persons who receive protection from the court through such an order will find an easier path to getting a concealed weapon permit, an idea I did not support.

School reform continues at a slow pace, but there seems to be a clear recognition that there is too much standardized testing. School systems struggling with their budgets will receive more state aid but still at a level below 2006. Economic development funds are increased which should help the super salesman Governor McAuliffe attract more businesses to the Commonwealth.

For the first time in history the legislature removed a Supreme Court Justice from office. The refusal to confirm Governor

The purpose of the legislative session is serious business and not entertainment like the circus. There are times, however, that it may be difficult to tell the difference.

McAuliffe's appointee had nothing to do with the credentials of the justice who was acknowledged by all to be eminently qualified but had to do with personalities and struggles between the legislative and executive branches. A one-day discussion of the possible nomination of former Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli brought a public outcry. The legislature in the end confirmed a new justice (without my vote) who is as ideologically conservative as Cuccinelli but not a political activist.

The biennial budget brought good news to many programs as the economic recovery has produced more revenue than in the past. Unfortunately, my bill to expand Medicaid coverage was not approved.

The purpose of the legislative session is serious business and not entertainment like the circus. There are times, however, that it may be difficult to tell the difference.

Information about legislative results from this session is at <http://lis.virginia.gov/lis.htm>.

Oak Hill & Herndon  
**CONNECTION**

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## Celebrating Easter in the Area

### FRIDAY/MARCH 18

**Flashlight Egg Hunt.** 7 p.m. Glyndon Park, 300 Glyndon St., NE, Vienna. enjoy a family evening searching for eggs and prizes in the dark! Bring a flashlight so you can find the eggs. Jump like a bunny in the moon bounce and visit the Easter Bunny. 703-255-6360.

### SATURDAY/MARCH 19

**St. Patrick's Day/St. Joseph's Day Party.** 6-9:30 p.m. St. Veronica's Church, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly. This is a family event that includes food, drink, sing-alongs, Irish dancers and plenty of smiling Irish eyes. Adults \$7, Children \$5, drinks extra. <http://www.stveronica.net/> or 703-773-2000.

**Aqua Egg Hunt.** 1:30-4:20 p.m. Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Children will collect as many floating and sinking eggs as possible in the time allowed. \$10 for one child and one parent. Check for age group times. [herndon-va.gov](http://herndon-va.gov). 703-435-6800 ext. 2128.

### SUNDAY/MARCH 20

**32nd Annual Children's Spring Festival.** 1:30-4:30 p.m. Great Falls Village Centre, 776 Walk Road, Great Falls. Games, rides, food, fun. Sponsored by Adeler Jewelers, 703-759-4076; and Great Falls Optimist Club.

### SATURDAY/MAR. 26

**Traditional Easter Egg Hunt.** 9-11:30 a.m. Check for times for age groups. 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Easter Egg Hunt, featuring: craft projects, story time, petting zoo, coloring mural, potting station, and photos with the Easter Bunny. Bring a basket or bag to collect your eggs in the hunt. \$9/\$10. Register at 703-435-6800, ext. 2106. [herndon-va.gov](http://herndon-va.gov).

### SUNDAY/MARCH 27

**Easter Egg Hunt.** 10:15 a.m. Forest Edge Elementary School, 1501 Becontree Lane, Reston. Join Restoration Church for an Easter service followed by a free egg hunt! Our Egg Hunt will begin around 11:15 a.m. immediately following the 10:15 a.m. Easter service. Come enjoy an egg hunt, moon bounce, snacks and more. [restorationreston.org/egg-hunt](http://restorationreston.org/egg-hunt). 703-405-7238.

**Easter Egg Hunt at Colvin Run Mill.** Starting at 10 a.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Hunt for eggs filled with treats and treasures of the grounds of Colvin Run Mill Historic Site. Separate hunts by age group. Before the hunt, make egg-cellent crafts to take home. Bring your own basket; program will be held rain or shine. Ages 2-9. \$6/\$8. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/colvinrunmill/events.htm>.

**Old-Fashioned Egg Hunt and Roll.** 10:30-11:30 a.m. Freeman House, 131 Church St., NE, Vienna. Children 12 and under and their parents are welcome to participate in an egg roll and visit with Easter Bunny, hosted by Historic Vienna, Inc. 703-938-5187.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Herndon's traditional Easter Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, March 26 in Lynn Street.**

*He has Risen indeed!*



**Palm Sunday & Easter Services: 8:30am & 11am**  
**Holy Week Thur. & Fri. 7:30pm**

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**  
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**Palm Sunday – March 20**

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**Easter Sunday – March 27**

**Worship services at 8:30 am and 11:00 am**  
Childcare provided

**Children's Easter Egg Hunt at 10:00 am**  
(No Sunday School or Godly Play)



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# ‘Do You Keep a Gun in Your Home?’

Starting conversations about gun safety can help prevent play date tragedies.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

Starting the conversation felt awkward. After all, she didn’t want to offend another parent. It also felt necessary, because putting her 5-year-old son in harm’s way was not an option. After procrastinating, role-playing and even discussing it with a therapist, Sara Hayes finally initiated the dialogue. Before scheduling a play date, she wanted to know if the families of her son’s friends owned guns.

“My son had started making friends in kindergarten and of course I wanted him to have playmates and go on play dates,” said Hayes. “But I had this fear of him being in someone’s house where there was a gun that he could get his hands on.”

Statistics from the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence in-

dicate that one out of three homes in the United States with children have guns and almost 1.7 million children live in a home with a gun that is unlocked and loaded. Child development experts say that because many children are naturally curious, the odds of a child finding and playing with a gun that is relatively accessible are high. Even if a parent has never thought to ask about guns in a home or finds the topic too uncomfortable to raise, the conversation is vital to helping parents make decisions about safety, because simply telling a child to stay away from a gun is not enough to change that child’s behavior.

“Each family needs to decide what information they would like to know. Parents should be aware that children’s judgment alone is not a reliable security measure,” said Bethesda, Md.-based child psychologist Stacie Isenberg, Psy.D. “Way too often curiosity wins over judgment.”

A study by a researcher at Eckerd College showed that educating preschool children about the potential dangers of guns didn’t prevent them from playing with guns. In writing about her findings, Marjorie Hardy, Ph.D., explained, “... We brought a police officer to a class of 60 children and he told them: ‘Don’t touch guns — they’re dangerous. If you see a gun, leave the area. Go tell an adult.’”

After the officer’s presentation, the children could repeat what they’d been taught to do when they saw a gun. “But when we left them alone with disarmed guns, they picked them up and shot everything in sight,” she wrote.

Officer Roger Henriquez of the Fairfax County Police Department, Franconia District Station says that parents might consider asking a parent before a play date: “How many guns do you own, and how do you keep them stored?” “Do you have a lock box or other safety features ... like trigger locks?” “Do you take your kids to a firing range?”

Such questions will help parents gather information to determine whether their child’s playmates’ parents share their views on gun

## Tips

The Center to Prevent Youth Violence has created a resource for parents who want to inquire if there are firearms where their children play. They offer these tips, which might make it easier to open a dialogue:

❖ **Ask with other questions.** Include the question along with other things you might normally discuss before sending your child to someone’s house — such as seat

belts, animals, or allergies.

❖ **Use the facts.** Over one-third of homes with children have a gun. Many of those guns are left unlocked and loaded. That is why you are asking — you just want to make sure that your child is safe.

❖ **Don’t be confrontational.** Present your concerns in a respectful manner. You are simply trying to make sure your child is in a safe environment.

For more information, visit: <https://askingsaveskids.org>

safety and storage, since parenting philosophies run the gamut from lax to strict where guns are concerned. “Some parents take their kids to a firing range and other kids are told nothing except ‘Stay away from this box,’” said Henriquez.

Starting such conversations can be fraught with anxiety, and many parents are reticent to broach the subject, especially with friends. “It’s uncomfortable to talk honestly with other parents about issues such as guns because they are so politically divisive,” said Amy L. Best, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at George Mason University in Fairfax. “It’s also difficult to ask other parents questions that may be taken as a judgment on [their] parenting.”

To increase the chance of a smooth and amicable conversation, Best suggests that bringing up questions about possible firearms and their storage should happen

well before a play date, rather than when a child is dropped off at a friend’s house.

“A parent can begin with letting the hosting parent know if your child has any allergies,” said Best. “This can be followed by ‘I just wanted to make sure if you have guns at home, they are secured in a lock box.’”

A straightforward approach is an essential part of initiating these conversations. “It is important to be honest about your concerns,” said Isenberg. “Parents can tell the other family that prior to a play date at a new home, they always inquire as to the presence of guns.”

The statistics, say child researchers, bear out the importance of overcoming initial discomfort about a potentially controversial conversation. “I think most parents support firearm safety, if that means keeping children safe,” said Best.





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## News

**Roberto Castillo was honored for helping to save his family and dozens of fellow citizens' lives on Jan. 24, 2016.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF  
FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE &  
RESCUE DEPARTMENT



# Herndon Citizens Honored

## Herndon Town Council recognizes volunteers.

BY RYAN DUNN  
THE CONNECTION

**T**hey did a really good job of alerting the authorities. These two kids did that and I hope it sets an example. I couldn't be more thankful," said Herndon's Chief of Police Maggie A. DeBoard. Three local residents were honored on Tuesday, March 8 by the Herndon Town Council. Fairfax County Fire Chief Richard Bowers and representatives from Herndon Middle School, including Herndon Middle School Principal Justine Klena, also attended the event. Roberto Morales Castillo, a student at Herndon Middle School called 911 during a January snowstorm, saving his family from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Herndon town council member Steve Mitchell welcomed Roberto Castillo and his family in Spanish. "Thank you very much for coming this evening, All the people here are so excited to see you," said Mitchell. By calling 911, Roberto saved his family and dozens of citizens' lives on Jan. 24. The incident involved a utility exhaust blocked by three feet of fallen snow. Due to the snow blocking the exhaust, levels of carbon monoxide entered the apartment building. Roberto realized an unknown hazard was causing his family to become sick. He notified building management and called 911, and initiated care for his six family members until arrival of the fire department.

All seven members of the Morales Castillo family were taken to the local hospital, where they recovered from carbon monoxide poisoning. Mayor Merkel and the town council praised Roberto. "You really are a hero," said Merkel, who called for a round of applause. Fire chief Bowers and assistant chief Johnson presented Roberto a Citizen Life Saving Award and the Herndon Town Mayor and Council presented a Certificate of Responsible Citizenship. Carbon monoxide has been described as a silent killer, which cannot be seen, tasted or heard.

Also recognized on Tuesday evening were Olga Aste and her daughter Amanda. On Jan. 8, they were driving along Wiehle Avenue near Fairfax County Parkway, when Amanda recognized a fellow student walking on the side of the street. She mentioned to her mother the student should not be in that area alone. Olga turned her car around, and while Amanda was speaking to the student, she contacted Herndon High School and the Herndon Police Department. The Herndon Police advised her the student had been reported missing and a lookout had been broadcast by the police. The Herndon Police notified the distraught parent that her daughter had been found. "I thank Amanda and her mom for intervening that day," said Herndon's Chief of Police DeBoard.

Mayor Merkel recognized Principal Justine Klena's recent achievement of being named Fairfax County Public Schools 2016 Outstanding Principal, and a finalist for the Washington Post Teacher of the Year Award.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TOWN OF HERNDON

**Olga Aste and her daughter Amanda noticed a student who had been reported missing, and contacted the Herndon Police. Other than being wet, the student was in good spirits. Both Olga and Amanda's actions were recognized by the Herndon Town Council.**

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# SPORTS

## Herndon Girls Fall to Cosby in State Semifinals

**Hornets fall to eventual champion Cosby.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Herndon girls' basketball team's first trip to the state tournament started with an upset victory over 6A South champion Woodside and ended with a lesson in competing with the best.

The Hornets lost to the Cosby Titans 64-33 in the state semifinals on March 8 at VCU. The following night, Cosby defeated Langley in the championship game and took home its third consecutive title.

Herndon trailed 17-14 early in the second quarter and 30-20 at halftime, but Cosby outscored the Hornets 17-4 in the third quarter and pulled away.

Despite the lopsided loss, Herndon accomplished much during the 2015-16 season.

**THE HORNETS** finished with a 21-8 record two years after winning just three games during the 2013-14 campaign. Herndon started the year 10-0 and went on to finish runner-up in Conference 5, losing to Oakton in the tournament final. The Hornets earned the program's first state berth with a win over Battlefield in the region quarterfinals and Herndon beat Woodside in the state quarterfinals.

"It's been a remarkable year going from three wins three years ago to nine to 21," Snead said. "... I couldn't be any prouder of these young ladies."

Snead said he had lofty goals when he was hired as the Herndon girls' basketball coach prior to the 2013-14 season.

"When I interviewed I ... said, 'Within three to five years, I want to win a district championship and get to the state tournament,'" Snead said, "so right now we're on schedule."

Things didn't start smoothly for Snead, who started a freshman and four sophomores in his first season with an eye on the future. The result was a three-win season.

"That first year," he said, "I knew we were going to get it handed to us."

The freshman who started on that team was guard Indeya Sanders, who reached 1,000 career points as a junior this year.

"Past years, I never really had the confidence that we would get this far," Sanders said, "but knowing that we had built such a stable program ... and [adding] the two transfers, [junior] Janiece [Loney] and [senior] Shawnice [Gresham], I just knew that those were the building blocks that we needed for championships ..."

**SANDERS LED HERNDON** with seven points in the state semifinals against Cosby. Sophomore guard Devyne Newman, senior forward Sabrina Tolbert and sophomore



PHOTOS BY WILL PALENSCAR  
**Junior guard Indeya Sanders scored seven points against Cosby in the state semifinals on March 8.**



**Senior forward Sabrina Tolbert helped the Herndon girls' basketball team qualify for the state tournament for the first time in program history.**



**Sophomore guard Devyne Newman figures to be one of Herndon's top returners next year.**

guard Marlise Brunson each scored six for the Hornets.

Herndon will lose starters Gresham and Tolbert to graduation, but figure to return key guards Sanders, Loney and Newman.

Snead said he told the Hornets, "You got here, so you have a taste of it. Now when you come here next year, you'll want to go ahead and finish the job."



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

### South Lakes Girls' Soccer Opens the Season

**Audrey LaMothe and the South Lakes girls' soccer team opened the 2016 season with a 3-0 home loss to Briar Woods on Monday. The Seahawks will host rival Herndon at 5:45 p.m. on Wednesday, March 16.**



# CALENDAR

Send announcements to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com). The deadline is the Friday prior to the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 16

**Opening Reception Mind, Heart, Vision.** 6-8 p.m. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Juried exhibit showcases the extraordinary artworks of Herndon High School art students embarking upon their senior thesis. Free. [artspaceherndon.com](http://artspaceherndon.com). 703-956-9560.

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 17

**Classic Cinema Series.** 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join for a quirky Irish comedy to kick off your St. Patrick's Day celebration. Call library for title. Adults. 703-689-2700.

## FRIDAY/MARCH 18

**Emerging Visions: Contemplating Community Reception.** 6-8 p.m. Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., 103, Reston. Opening reception to celebrate Youth Art Month exhibit. Free. [www.restonarts.org](http://www.restonarts.org). 703-471-9242.

**Holly Montgomery Band.** 9:30 p.m. Kalypso's Sports Tavern, 1617 Washington Plaza North, Reston. [kalypsosportstavern.com](http://kalypsosportstavern.com). 703-707-0660.

## SATURDAY/MARCH 19

**Victor Haskins.** 7-9 p.m. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St. Herndon. Trumpet and electronic wind instrument player, composer/arranger, bandleader, and educator. Originator of ImproviStory, a genre/concept of music where storytelling drives the creation of improvised music, all derived from audience suggestion and interaction. \$10-\$15. [ArtSpaceHerndon.org](http://ArtSpaceHerndon.org). 703-956-6590.

**St. Patrick's Day/St. Joseph's Day Party.** 6-9:30 p.m. St. Veronica's Church, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly. This is a family event that includes food, drink, sing-alongs, Irish dancers and plenty of smiling Irish eyes. Adults \$7, Children \$5, drinks extra. <http://www.stveronica.net/> or 703-773-2000.

**Aqua Egg Hunt.** 1:30-4:20 p.m. Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Children will collect as many floating and sinking eggs as possible in the time allowed. \$10 for one child and one parent. Check for age group times. [herndon-va.gov](http://herndon-va.gov). 703-435-6800 ext. 2128.

## Children's Parent/Child Projects.

10 a.m.-noon. Reston Art Gallery, 11400 Washington Plaza West, Reston. "Hole books", each page has a cut out to the next page as the story continues. 3-11 years. [restonartgallery.com](http://restonartgallery.com). 703-481-8156.

## SUNDAY/MARCH 20

**Run for Haiti 5K.** 9 a.m. South Lakes High School, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston. Use your love of running to help a mother, a child, a family — live a better life. Run the 5k or the 1 Mile and you'll provide monetary aid to Project Haiti and GHATES. Ran on track. <http://www.prraces.com/runforhaiti/>.

**Brahms Requiem.** 7 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 120 Park St., NE, Vienna. Soloists will be Metropolitan Opera soprano Danielle Talamantes and Washington Opera bass-baritone Joshua Hong. Pianist Kristina Schenck, Manassas Chorale accompanist, will play the challenging accompaniment. Free

## "Crimes of the Heart" plays at NextStop Theatre in Herndon, Feb. 25-March 20.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Ongoing

**New Forms and Horizons: Abstract Art and Sculpture.** April 5-May 1. ArtSpace, 750 Center St., Herndon. Featuring contemporary landscape artist Jorge Luis Bernal and sculptor Eric Garner. [artspaceherndon.com](http://artspaceherndon.com). 703-956-9560.

**Reston Art Gallery and Studio March Group Show.** March 3-31. Reston Art Gallery and Studio, 11400 Washington Plaza W, Reston. [RestonArtGallery.com](http://RestonArtGallery.com).

**Joyful Color in Reston.** April 7-May 5. Reston Art Gallery and Studio, 11400 Washington Plaza W, Reston. Joan Kelly's colorful acrylic paintings of Reston scenes will be on exhibit in unison with Founder's Week, a celebration of the life of Reston founder, Robert E. Simon, Jr. [RestonArtGallery.com](http://RestonArtGallery.com).

**Mind, Heart, Vision.** March 15-27. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Juried exhibit showcases the extraordinary artworks of Herndon High School art students embarking upon their senior thesis. [artspaceherndon.com](http://artspaceherndon.com). 703-956-9560.

**Herndon Town Calendar Photography Competition.** Deadline June 7 at 2 p.m. ArtSpace Herndon and the Council for the Arts of Herndon present the Sixth Annual Herndon Town Calendar Photography Competition. Professional and amateur photographers are invited to submit entries to the Herndon Town Calendar Photo Competition. Subjects for all entries must be located within the corporate limits of the Town of Herndon. [artspaceherndon.com](http://artspaceherndon.com). 703-956-9560.

**"Namaste Nepal."** Through April 15. Executive Center 1, 1851, Alexander Bell Drive, Reston. Dawn Murphy's photographic journey demonstrating the experiences of Nepal during the earthquake of 2015. Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. [www.leagueofrestonartists.org](http://www.leagueofrestonartists.org).

**Book Drive.** Through March 18. Herndon United Methodist Church, 701 Bennett St., Herndon. The church is collecting books, movies, and CDs. Funds generated from this drive will be used to support local, national, and international mission projects. 703-206-8988.

**Emerging Visions: Contemplating Community.** March 15-April 9. Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., 103, Reston. Fairfax County high school students the opportunity to work directly with GRACE's curatorial staff to create thoughtful, well-crafted artworks that will be exhibited in the gallery. This year, GRACE is dedicating its celebration of Youth Art Month to Bob Simon's vision for a New Town. [www.restonarts.org](http://www.restonarts.org). 703-471-9242.

**Dress Drive for Prom.** Jan. 2-March 26. Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. RCC is collecting formal dresses, shoes, handbags, scarves and shawls, jewelry and accessories for Diva Central. All donations are appreciated, however, we ask that donations are in good condition, no older than 5 years old (circa 2011), and dry cleaned before they are donated. 703-390-6158.

**Volunteers.** The McLean Community Players seeks volunteers, preferably retirees who can work during the day on weekdays as well as weekends, to build scenery for MCP productions. No experience is required. Training provided. Call the scene shop manager at 703-304-3176 to schedule a visit and talk. [www.McLeanPlayers.org](http://www.McLeanPlayers.org).

**Integral Tai Chi.** 12:30-2 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays through March 30. Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace St., Herndon. Integral Tai Chi is a combination of traditional Chinese Tai Chi and Qi Kong. The movements come from both forms of practice, in addition to yoga movements in the warm up section. Students need to bring their own yoga mat, a towel and water. Free-\$5. 703-464-6200.

**"Crimes of the Heart."** Feb. 25-March 20. Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Fridays, 8 p.m. Saturdays, 2 p.m., 8 p.m. Sundays, 2 p.m., 7 p.m. NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Uncover sordid events of the past when the three Magrath sisters gather to await news of their family patriarch, living out his last hours in the local hospital. This award-winning play is known for its grave-yet-hysterical, touching-but-dysfunctional portrait of a Mississippi family. \$35. [www.nextstoptheatre.org](http://www.nextstoptheatre.org). 866-811-4111.

will offering. 703-438-0718.

## TUESDAY/MARCH 22

**Folk Club of Reston-Herndon.** 7:15 p.m. Amphora Diner Deluxe, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. Mid-Atlantic Song Contest winners Letitia VanSant and Woody Lissauer perform. \$9/\$10. 703-435-2402. [jamesue@aol.com](mailto:jamesue@aol.com). [restonherndonfolkclub.com](http://restonherndonfolkclub.com).

## WEDNESDAY/MAR. 23

**Meet me at the Movies – Senior Movie Day.** 10 a.m. Bow Tie Cinemas, 11940 Market St., Reston. Reston Association presents "The 33." Refreshments and door prizes provided prior to movie. Free to 55+. Information: [Ashleigh@reston.org](mailto:Ashleigh@reston.org). 703-435-6530. [reston.org](http://reston.org).

## THURSDAY/MARCH 24

**"Another Way of Living: The Story of Reston, VA."** 6:30-8:30 p.m. National Building Museum, 401 F St. NW, Washington. Documentary of the story of Reston will be shown at the Environmental Film Festival. <http://anotherwayoflivingfilm.com/screensings/>.

## FRIDAY/MARCH 25

**Best of FAVS Showcase.** 7-9 p.m. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Spotlights award winning films produced by students in Film and Video Studies (FAVS) at GMU from Fiction and Documentary Directing classes and Senior Thesis projects. \$10. [artspaceherndon.com](http://artspaceherndon.com). 703-956-9560.

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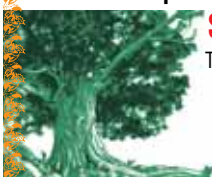
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## 21 Announcements

### Moving Sale Sat 9-4

**11670 Pellow Circle Court Herndon**  
Riding Mower, large triangular oak hutch, desk, easy chair, coffee and end tables, ping pong table, jig saw and bench, books, old tools, 1940-era teacher's chair, misc items.

## 2 To Share

Roommate wanted. Herndon townhouse. \$700/mo. Utilities inc. 703-742-6892

I believe the future is only the past again, entered through another gate.  
-Arthur Wing Pinero

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# "I Have Cancer"

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Hardly a news flash, as you regular readers know. But when I said it the other day in response to some general conversation, I almost couldn't get the words out. It was peculiar, since I'm not usually uncomfortable discussing cancer or any of the associated experiences, and I certainly spend enough time writing about it. But when I said these words, I almost shook with anxiety or fear or something. And it scared me because it was a reaction/sensation I had never felt before; well, hadn't felt in a long time, anyway.

And it's not as if I spend a majority of my time denying my affliction. I wouldn't say I embrace it, but neither do I shrink from the responsibility of living with it and trying to overcome it. Nor do I mind being asked questions about cancer or my feelings before, during and throughout any and all ongoing treatments, scans, appointments and lab work and how it all relates and impacts. I'm open and honest and try to be "self-effacingly" positive in the midst of/against terrible odds. Generally speaking, not much bothers me. In fact, I've found a little humor goes a long way, and a lot of humor can mask a multitude of negative/unproductive emotions. (As you might imagine, there's no shortage of these.)

So it was odd – to me, when I went unexpectedly negative, experiencing an almost physical reaction to words (which aren't supposed to hurt me; after all, they're not "sticks and stones"). Words which I must have said in some context hundreds of times since I was diagnosed seven years ago, and rarely if ever shuddering – literally, at the mention of them. But shudder I did. I thought I had become accustomed to acknowledging them. Perhaps not?

But this is what cancer does; it sneaks up on you and takes control, physically and emotionally. And not merely when you least expect it, but when you thought you had passed the point of expecting it because you felt you had been there and doing it long enough that you were resistant to its ravages. Well, I was reminded quite clearly by this recent conversation that I will likely never get out from underneath its influence and effect. And here I thought I was Mister Well-Adjusted/Cancer Cool. Not so much, apparently. I'm just another cog in the cancer machine. Granted, I have my moments where I'm Charles and in charge, but this past week has shaken me to the core.

Not that I'm rethinking my approach to being a cancer patient/survivor; more that I've gained newfound respect for my adversary. You know, all things considered, I've had an amazingly easy time of it since I was diagnosed in late February, 2009, and perhaps I've misjudged/miscalculated/totally misinterpreted that amazing good fortune, thinking that somehow I was immune to cancer's insidious nature. Well, if I wasn't convinced before, I'm definitely convinced now. I don't suppose cancer schemes, but now I sort of feel like a pawn in a chess match and all I am is the timer.

But it is Spring Training (baseball) when all things are possible and hope is eternal. And though I have admitted some of my deepest and darkest fears, nothing is inevitable. My original prognosis was "13 months to two years" SEVEN YEARS AGO, so I'm not easily swayed. Presumably, in the future, there will be blips on my health radar, but it's nothing I can't handle. This recent experience actually confirmed it. It made me rethink some of my situational self-assessments and encouraged me in a way. I'm not exactly sure how or why but strangely enough, I sort of feel stronger and more capable going forward. On the whole, an excellent result.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.



**Kendra Scott and Blue Mercury are two relatively new stores at Reston Town Center. Joe Grooming, which had a retail space at Reston Town Center is now PR Barbers. The Ben & Jerry's, which closed at Reston Town Center in September has begun renovations for a new location at 11916 Market St.**



PHOTOS BY RYAN DUNN/THE CONNECTION

**In downtown Herndon, the space formerly occupied by infrared sauna studio Hot Spot at Station Street has been replaced with an Ana Bella Salon Spa.**

## Herndon, Reston Business Update

By RYAN DUNN  
THE CONNECTION

**J**oe Grooming, which had a retail space at Reston Town Center is now PR Barbers. The business will be operated by Reg Laws, an owner of PR at Partners Salons. Roosters Men's Grooming Center has a lease for space at 11990 Market St., the ground level of the Midtown condos. Roosters is a franchise operation with locations in Franklin Farm in Herndon, and more than 70 others nationwide. The Ben & Jerry's, which closed at Reston Town Center in September has begun renovations for a new location at 11916 Market St. Reston Town Center is a mixed-use development featuring offices, retail stores and restaurants in Reston.

Chick-fil-A announced plans to build a restaurant at North Point in Reston.

According to a Fairfax County Planning Department staff report, the Burger King building will be torn down and replaced with a new restaurant. Chick-fil-A has a location at 12160 Sunset Hills Rd, in Reston. In downtown Herndon, the space formerly occupied by infrared sauna studio Hot Spot at Station Street has been replaced with an Ana Bella Salon Spa.

Galaxy Atrium LLC purchased a 130,000-square-foot, Class A office building in Herndon for \$19.6 million. The sale was announced by Cambridge Property Group LLC on behalf of its client. The seller of the building at 205 Van Buren St. was AEW Capital, represented by Cushman and Wakefield. The property is located on 6.3

acres adjacent to what will be the Herndon Metro Station.

Phase 2 of the Metro Silver Line is expected to open in 2020, and will link Dulles International Airport to the Metro system. General Dynamics has expressed interest in moving headquarters to the south side of Sunset Hills Road, north of the Dulles Airport Access Road and west of Hunter Mill Road, at 11011 Sunset Hills Road. The arrival of the Metro Silver Line is expected to spur mixed-use transit oriented development projects next to the metro station.

Reston's The Wise Investor Group at Robert W. Baird & Co., a team of financial professionals announced it is donating over \$14,000 to Raising Enthusiasm for Science, Engineering and Technology (RESET). RESET is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to use hands-on experiments and classroom activities to introduce the joys of STEM education to pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade students. In addition to RESET, The Wise Investor Group is active with other charity organizations such as Hopecam, Neediest Kids and Foster Care to Success.

Herndon council members celebrated the grand opening of café GreenFare at Herndon's K-Mart Shopping Center. Richmond-based Ravenchase Adventures is opening a location nearby. Co-owner Omer Aru says Escape Room Herndon may open in early May, and will be 4,000 square feet with different rooms. Escape rooms are team-based games conducted inside a uniquely designed room. They can resemble anything from science labs, an underground

bunker or even a pirate ship.

Groups explore an immersive environment full of hidden clue, and other oddities. According to the company webpage, the suggested age to play games is 10 years old or more. Those under the age of 15 will be required to be accompanied by an adult as the games are created with the intent to stump players. Sessions are available for bookings three months in advance. The cost for our public games which run Thursday night, Friday night and all day Saturday and Sunday is \$25 per player.

The first residential building at Reston Station, adjacent to the Wiehle-Reston East Metro, is open and has been welcoming its first residents. BLVD Luxury Apartments is the building by the Reston Station Plaza, and visitors can tour Comstock's newest residential project. BLVD features 450 apartments and is the first building to open at Reston Station. BLVD's leasing center at Reston Station is open seven days a week. Rents will start at about \$1,900 a month for a studio to more than \$3,000 for a three-bedroom plus den model.

The Reston Zoo will reopen on March 19 with a new name, Roer's Zoofari. Roer's Zoofari offers opportunities for visitors to discover and connect with animals through educational encounters and hands-on interactions. Roer's Zoofari offers summer camps, birthday parties, corporate events, season passes and an outing in a zoological setting for people of all ages. New owners Vanessa Stoffel and Jacob Roer are excited to reopen Roer's Zoofari. The zoo hired Mario Lawrence as director last July.

### BULLETIN BOARD

#### SATURDAY/MARCH 19

**Library Forum.** 10-11:30 a.m. George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Help plan the libraries' future by sharing your input. [fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/library). 703-324-8319.

#### TUESDAY/MAR. 22

**INOVA Blood Drive.** Noon-7 p.m. Besides Pavilion of Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Schedule appointments at 1-866-256-6372 or [inova.org/donateblood](http://inova.org/donateblood). On-site registration also available.

#### SATURDAY/MARCH 26

**Habitat Heroes Project.** 10 a.m.-noon.

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to [north@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:north@connectionnewspapers.com) by the Friday prior to the following week's paper.

Across the street from 11300 Stones Throw Drive. Oriental bittersweet is one of the most invasive and vigorous weeds in Reston. Please help us eradicate this aggressive vine and liberate our native plants. Meet at the asphalt path near the intersection of Fieldview Drive and Stones Throw Drive. Look for Reston Association truck. For information or to sign up, go to [reston.org](http://reston.org).

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 2

**Nature House 5K Volunteers.** 7:30-9:30 a.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. The Walker Nature Center needs volunteers to help with the Nature House 5K. Volunteers for race marshals must attend an orientation on Friday, April 1 from 6-7 p.m. <http://bit.ly/NatureHouse5K>.

#### SUNDAY/APRIL 3

**Richmond Wrap-Up.** 2-4 p.m. Virginia International Conference Room, 4401 Village Drive, Fairfax. Learn what your area legislator did during the Virginia General Assembly. Hear from state legislators. Bring your questions. Join the discussion. For more information go to [s-a-l-t.org/](http://s-a-l-t.org/) or call 703-591-7042 ext. 352.

#### TUESDAY/APRIL 12

**Library Forum.** 7-8:30 p.m. Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Help plan the libraries' future by sharing your input. [fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/library). 703-324-8319.





**Kritika Singh (left), a senior at TJHSST in Alexandria, is the CEO of her own nonprofit, Malaria Free World. Here she discusses her work with Kate Dalby, president of Inspiring Test Preparation.**



**Aaron Joy, a fifth-grader at the Nysmith School, explains his science fair project on bio-plastics to U.S. Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-11), who was also an event speaker. During his remarks, Connolly praised Fairfax County in particular for its investment in education, but cautioned that “other countries have caught up to us, we need to continue and advance our investment in STEM, in research and development and in improving our infrastructure.”**

## Encouraging STEM-curious Youth

BY ANDREA WORKER  
THE CONNECTION

“We need people in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields today, tomorrow and as far as we can envision.”

That quote came from speaker Eric Schierling as he addressed the crowd packed into the gym at the Nysmith School for the Gifted in Herndon during one of four presentations offered at the Third Annual STEM Symposium. Schierling, a director with Vencore, Inc.’s Space Group and a former Naval Top Gun Pilot, was joined throughout the day-long event by a plenitude of accomplished and engaging speakers, from former astronauts to high school and college students, a U.S. Congressman, leaders from STEM-related businesses and agencies, and school principals and headmasters. Regardless of what position each speaker held, what point in their careers at which they had arrived, or whether they worked for the government, the private sector, a nonprofit, or had yet to complete their studies and enter the workforce, their remarks all contained an echo of Schierling’s statement. Somewhere in each speaker’s address there was a cautionary note that STEM-proficient people are not only in high demand, but in critically short supply. Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology’s (TJHS) principal Dr. Evan Glazer insisted that “we need to keep searching for ways to encourage our STEM-curious young people.” Exposure, encouragement, opportunities and resources are key to developing the “STEM-inclined.” Glazer’s presentation included excerpts and numerous slides that highlighted the STEM fields with the most projected growth for the near future, as well as practical advice for parents and teachers on how to encourage STEM interest, and where to look for support and resources.

JD Kathuria, founder and president of

WashingtonExec, an online media, membership and events company in D.C., is a staunch supporter of STEM education. He is so convinced that investment in STEM education is invaluable, that he launched the Symposium in 2014 to bring together the best, the brightest and the most involved to elevate STEM education to the foreground of the region’s concerns.

**IN THIS THIRD**, and ever-growing edition of the event attended by some 2500 people, Kathuria and the WashingtonExec gathered sponsors like Aerospace, Vencore and Siemens to achieve the mission of “bringing industry and students together.” In addition to the speakers’ sessions, attendees were treated to more than forty exhibitors filling the hallways and classrooms of Nysmith. Some of the exhibitors, like George Mason University and Sweet Briar College, Nysmith and TJHSST represented formal educational opportunities. Others, like Fairfax Collegiate, Microsoft in Education, Patriots Technology Training Center and STEAMtrix, LLC Learning Program offered outside-the-school term STEM activities, workshops and camps.

Nonprofits, outreach groups and organizations run by kids themselves were also on hand. Robotics for Youth, Inc., which occupied a double booth, was manned by some 20 student volunteers, and still had a crowd three-deep waiting to try their hands at operating some of the robots the group had built. The nonprofit was formed just last year by three teenagers – Bharath Maniraj from Fairfax High School, Rishabh Venketesh from TJHSST, and Pranav Sukumaran from River Bend Middle School. “The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that there will be a million computing job openings by 2024,” is one reason why co-founder Maniraj took his interest in the field to the outreach level. “We are doing our best to increase awareness among

## Third Annual STEM Symposium draws a crowd at the Nysmith School.



**“Scientists” Anju Advani and Esha Madamalla, both second graders at the Nysmith School for the Gifted in Herndon, are pleased to welcome the attendees to the Third Annual STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Symposium being hosted at the school.**

school-aged kids.” The Robotics for Youth gang also serve as mentors for Lego League competition participants.

The Children’s Science Center was another exhibitor that attracted significant attention, with hands-on activities and experiments available for youngsters of different ages and abilities – with a few adults who just couldn’t resist mixed in. The Center currently operates at Fair Oaks Mall in Fairfax but is in the planning stage to develop a full-scale, state-of-the art, STEM-centered interactive museum at the Nokes Boulevard exit off of Route 28 in the Dulles area.

**MENTORING GROUPS** were also well represented. LaShaunda Ford who works at Dell, Lauren Medley from Booz Allen Hamilton, and Elizabeth Goodson with Lightower Fiber Networks were pleased to be able to reach so many young women at one venue as they offered information about the “Girls in Technology” mentoring program they belong to.

Several local youth were given the opportunity to showcase their competition-bound Science Fair projects and made admirably poised presentations explaining their work from drawing board to finished product, or from hypothesis to practice. Aaron Joy, a fifth grader at Nysmith, looked calm and comfortable as he discussed his work with U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) who toured the exhibits, demonstrations and projects after his speaking duties at the symposium were completed earlier in the day.

The organizers of the STEM Symposium, mindful of the ages and activity levels of many in their audience, also provided some outdoor adventures, including the opportunity to race against President Thomas Jefferson himself – at least as personified by the Washington Nationals baseball team’s official presidential mascot. There were also flight simulators courtesy of sponsor Vencore, drone displays and “connected” cars with Internet access and other high-tech accessories.

The STEM symposium brochure handed out upon check in to the event described the mission of the organizers to be joining “a community of teachers, mentors, parents and local leaders to nurture a child’s curiosity in the STEM fields. Linking science and mathematics taught in the classroom to impactful careers is an ongoing national challenge. Bottom Line: The opportunities for students who are STEM-proficient are endless.” More information, resources, and a Parent-STEM action plan are available at [www.stemsymposium.com](http://www.stemsymposium.com).