

# Springfield CONNECTION

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## Lawmakers Wrap-up Richmond Session

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State senators Barbara Favola (D-31) (center) and State Sen. George Barker (D-39) (left) discuss how to better use unexpended and available funds from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant.

# Springfield Sailor Trains 'Air Wolves'

BY NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**A** 2001 Robert E. Lee High School graduate and Springfield native is serving with a U.S. Navy helicopter squadron that flies the Navy's newest and most technologically-advanced helicopter.

Lt. Matthew Swartz is a pilot with the "Air Wolves" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 40, a Mayport, Fla.-based squadron that operates the Navy's next generation submarine hunter and Anti-Surface Warfare helicopter, the MH-60R Seahawk. Each helicopter is nearly 65 feet long, may weigh up to 23,500 lbs. (max gross) and can travel over 120 miles per hour for nearly 320 miles on a tank of gas.

As a pilot, Swartz is an instructor at the command responsible for training the next generation of MH-60R pilots.

"I enjoy sharing my knowledge and teaching students from my own previous experiences," said Swartz. "I get a satisfaction from seeing students complete the emergency procedures and maneuvers effectively and efficiently."

According to Navy officials, the MH-60R is the most capable multi-mission helicopter available in the world today. It is used for a variety of missions, including hunting and tracking enemy submarines, attacking enemy ships, search and rescue, drug interdiction, delivering supplies and supporting the Navy's special operations forces.

It is replacing the Navy's older helicopters because of its greater versatility and more advanced weapon systems.

Swartz said he and other sailors are proud to be part of a warfighting team that readily defends America at all times.

"I enjoy the camaraderie with my fellow pilots at HSM-40," said Swartz. "I love taking on a leadership role and mentoring junior sailors."

"The Airwolves of HSM-40, represent the best and the brightest our Navy has to offer," said Cmdr. David Loo, HSM-40 commanding officer. "HSM-40's mission is to train Fleet Replacement Pilots and Aircrewman for deployed shipboard operations in the MH-60R Seahawk aircraft. The training conducted includes aircraft flights and full visual simulators in Aircraft Operations, Anti-Surface Warfare, Anti-Sub-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Lt. Matthew Swartz**

marine Warfare, Search and Rescue, and Shipboard Operations. HSM-40's support, maintenance, and instructor staff allow for the completion of over 100 assigned students, year round, operating 16 MH-60R helicopters and 5 simulators."

Serving in the Navy, Swartz is learning about being a more respectable leader, sailor and person through handling numerous responsibilities.

"I've learned to become an effective leader and better mentor since joining the Navy," said Swartz. "I continue to broaden my horizons by learning new roles in the aviation community."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**From left, Genevieve Perrella, Jessica Nasr and Maja Marcich won West Springfield Rotary Club's essay contest.**

## Irving Middle School Students Win Essay Contest

Three Irving Middle School students won the West Springfield Rotary Club's annual 4-Way Test essay contest.

First place went to Jessica Nasr, second place to Genevieve Perrella and third place to Maja Marcich. They were honored at Rotary chapter breakfast on Feb. 24, where they read their

essays and received a certificate and a cash prize.

Nasr's essay also placed first in the Rotary Club's district-level contest. She will travel to Cambridge, Maryland in April to present her essay at the District's annual conference and will receive a \$750 cash prize.

## Woman Robbed and Sexually Assaulted on Morning Walk in Springfield

Just after 6 a.m. on Wednesday, March 30, a 40-year-old woman was robbed and sexually assaulted as she was walking alone around 6 a.m. behind the shopping center on the 7000 block of Commerce Street in Springfield.

Police said the unknown male suspect, described as Hispanic, between 5 feet 6 and 5 feet 9 inches tall, and 140 to 160 pounds, grabbed the woman and pulled her into a storage container.

The victim called police after she returned home and initially reported the incident as a robbery only.

—TIM PETERSON



**Police said the unknown male suspect, described as Hispanic, between 5 feet 6 and 5 feet 9 inches tall, and 140 to 160 pounds, grabbed the woman and pulled her into a storage container.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE



**Police believe the suspect in the March 30 robbery and sexual assault was driving a red car with a distinct non-red patch on the driver's side.**

## Lawmakers Wrap-up Richmond Legislative Session

Unspent TANF grant money, prisoner rights among social issues discussed.

By TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n average, low-income families in Virginia who are eligible and sign up for funds from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant receive \$269 monthly and are cut off after five years. But lawmakers say there's a lot more unexpended money available in the federal grant that, if it remains unused, could one day be taken back.

Expanding funding for TANF programs including child support, workforce training, foster care and apprenticeships was among the social issues discussed at the Social Action Linking Together Richmond Legislative Wrap-up forum held April 3 at Virginia International University in Fairfax.

A mostly Democratic panel of state senators and delegates from around Fairfax County, Alexandria and Arlington also touched on immigration, raising the minimum wage, gun control, redistricting, ending homelessness and human trafficking.

Del. Paul Krizek (D-44) from Mount Vernon said the 2.5 percent increase in TANF program funding that was achieved this year in the General Assembly is "still not enough." His strategy was to "go big" and ask for a ten percent increase over the next three years. TANF, Krizek said, is a "Hand up, not a hand out."

State Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31) from Arlington said she called for a comprehensive review of TANF and put forth a bill that would study how the unspent TANF money could best be spent.

One reason lawmakers would be concerned about spending all the extra grant money at once, Del. Mark Sickles (D-43) said, is in case economic growth slows down and there's a sudden increase in families who are eligible and apply for TANF benefits.

John Horejsi of Social Action Linking Together praised Del. Alfonso Lopez (D-49) for vociferously championing the apprenticeships program as the General Assembly was considering increasing TANF-related funding.

"You hit the ball out of the park when you testified," Horejsi said.

Lopez said it is good for individuals, as well as the Virginia economy. "It's getting an education as well as a paycheck," he said. "That's the key thing."

Prisons, jails and treatment of inmates were another topic of discussion, as State Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-30) and Del. Patrick Hope (D-47) talked about reducing high rates for phone use. Family contact by phone



**John Horejsi of Social Action Linking Together introduces some of the social issues to be discussed at the April 3 Richmond Legislative Wrap-up.**



**Del. David Bulova (D-37) (right) welcomes members of the Social Action Linking Together to the Richmond Legislative Wrap-up Social Issues Forum at the Virginia International University campus in Fairfax, located in his district, on Sunday, April 3.**



**Del. Vivian Watts (D-39) has been working on prison reforms including facilitating increased literacy and job training.**



**Gay Gardner with Interfaith Action for Human Rights said her organization has received numerous complaints about treatment of people with mental disabilities and people in solitary confinement at Red Onion State Prison.**



**Del. Mark Sickles (D-43) said only 24,000 families in Virginia currently receive benefits from the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Block Grant**



**Ann Solomon asked State Sen. George Barker (D-39) how people who are uncomfortable with concealed firearms in the room should respond to Virginia's gun-carrying in public legislation.**

is critical for prisoners, Ebbin said, because "family unification is the number one predictor of success on re-entry." Ebbin and Hope have also been tackling solitary confinement, they said.

Del. Sickles also spoke about his parole bill that facilitates re-examining cases of inmates before 1995, when there was an understanding that an individual wouldn't spend 20 years in prison for a 20 year sentence. "It's outrageous it's not the priority of the state to look at each one of these



**State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) said the 2016 General Assembly Session did not see much progress in terms of redistricting, but that it was a "real breakthrough year" for firearms control.**

cases," he said.

First-time delegate Jennifer Boysko (D-86) of Herndon had her bills that would've expanded who can get a driver's license in Virginia tabled, though she's hopeful to carry the same content next year.

Her bills, she said, "Would've impacted 6,000 people, with no fiscal impact, and be ready to be implemented by July this summer."

"This would help people get back and



**Dr. Gerald Poje, vice chairman of the Fairfax County Human Services Council, said he's concerned about addressing what he believes is an affordable housing crisis.**

forth to work legally," Boysko continued. "It makes a good amount of sense."

Del. Mark Levine (D-45) spoke to the social need for more transparency in government and plugged the Virginia Transparency Caucus he helped form in Richmond. Members of the caucus (the current 12 are nearly bi-partisan) agree to having the committees for each one of their bills filmed and then published to YouTube.

"We're hoping to set a standard," Levine said. "You don't have to pass a bill to do this."



From left, Chief of Fairfax County Police Edwin Roessler Jr. presents Second Lieutenant Nicholas Depippa, Police Officer First Class Federick R. Yap, Police Officer First Class Peter T. Liu, Police Officer First Class Paul J. Blasko, Jr. and Officer Jesse B. Katzman with the Silver Medal of Valor for responding to a shooting in the middle of the night and saving the victim's life.



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Chief Richard Bowers, Jr. (left) presents the Silver Medal of Valor to members of the USA-1/Virginia Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team that was deployed to Nepal after the April 25, 2015 earthquake.

## 'Ready for All Emergencies'

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

Technician Ryland Chapman and Lieutenant Lawrence Mullin with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department were preparing to return home from a deployment with Virginia Task Force 1 to earthquake-rocked Kathmandu, Nepal when another quake sent them back out for duty.

Task Force 1 is an international urban search and rescue outfit sponsored by Fairfax County Fire and Rescue. Chapman and Mullin were part of a team assisting in Nepal in May 2015.

Because most of their equipment had already been loaded for transport, they were only able to bring minimal tools for a 72-hour mission, including small axes and sledgehammers. A helicopter took Chapman and Mullin to search for survivors that might be trapped in collapsed buildings. In one structure, they found a woman who was wedged on the ground floor with another part of the building collapsed on top of her.

After more than three hours of the rescue operation, Chapman and Mullin were able to free the woman and save themselves from continuing aftershocks and landslides.

"It was an extraordinary effort in a disastrous situation," said Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Chief Richard Bowers Jr. "It was one of the most dangerous situations I've ever seen in my 40 years of experience. They could've been crushed at any minute."

For their efforts, Chapman and Mullin were recognized with the Gold Medal of Honor at the 38th annual Valor Awards held March 30 at the Westfields Marriott in Chantilly.

Officers, deputies and other first responders from the Fairfax County Police Department, Sheriff's Office, Fire and Rescue Department, as well as Police Departments of the Towns of Vienna and Herndon, received the Lifesaving Certificate, Certificate of Valor and Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals of Valor.

In many cases, the responders were cited for acting "without regard to their personal safety under extremely hazard-



Second Lieutenant Dana L. Robinson (center) of the Fairfax County Police Department receives the Lifesaving Certificate.



Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Chief Richard Bowers, Jr. presents the Certificate of Valor to Lieutenant Scott F. Primrose.

ous conditions."

"In a situation where they have to save a life," Bowers said, "that means the motivation to do anything to maintain and preserve that life."

For Chapman, a Fairfax resident based at Fire Station 29 in Tysons Corner, he didn't see his actions in Kathmandu as anything out of the ordinary.

"We just have to be ready for all emergencies," he said. "I just did what's within my job description, what was expected of me to do."

Chapman's wife Taylor said the communication to families from Nepal was good, but not great, and that it was "intense" waiting for updates. What's more, with the



From left: Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Chief Richard Bowers, Jr. presents the Gold Medal of Valor to Technician Ryland W. Chapman and Lieutenant Lawrence G. Mullin, who were redeployed as part of Virginia Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team to search collapsed structures for survivors after an earthquake in the region of Kathmandu, Nepal.



Fairfax County Sheriff Stacy Kincaid (center) presents the Lifesaving Certificate to Sergeant Leslie Sheehan (left).

extra mission Chapman was called on, he nearly missed the couple's wedding.

Going from being a community firefighter to launching into collapsed buildings on the other side of the planet was "strange," Chapman said, but despite being far away, still gave him "good feeling" of helping people in emergency situations.

Leon Harris, News Anchor for ABC7/WJLA-TV and emcee for the awards, thanked all the first responders present for being the ones who are always there on the ground level for the various emergencies

## First responders honored at 38th annual Valor Awards.



Taylor and Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Technician Ryland W. Chapman of Fairfax nearly missed their wedding while Ryland was deployed in Nepal as part of the Virginia Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team.



Certificate of Valor recipient Master Police Officer Damien E. Cichocki (left) of the Fairfax County Police Department presents his canine partner Enzo with the Meritorious Award.

he reports on the news.

"You're there to make sure every one of those has a possibility of a happy ending," Harris said.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

More than 700 students participated in the William Halley Elementary School Boosterthon Fun Run on March 18 that raised \$22,000.

## Boosterthon Culminates in Fun Run

Students at William Halley and Newington Forest Elementary schools raise thousands during a sports-based Boosterthon program.

Earlier in March, students at William Halley Elementary School in Lorton and Newington Forest Elementary School in Springfield participated in the nationwide fundraising program Boosterthon Fun Run by raising money and learning life skills through physical activity.

Boosterthon is an alternative fundraising framework from students going door-to-door and selling goods. Each year some 1,600 schools around the country host their own program.

During the nine-day fundraiser, students at each school also

watched videos about young athletes from six different countries around the world that were meant to teach confidence, curiosity, endurance, humility and practice.

The program culminated with a mass run where students turned in 30 to 35 laps around their respective school.

Newington Forest's run included 590 students and took place on March 10. They raised more than \$16,000, which will go towards improving technology in the school.

At Halley, more than 700 students participated in the run on March 18 and raised \$22,000. That money will be used for enhancing both technology and the playground.

—TIM PETERSON



During the nine-day fundraiser, students at each school also watched videos about young athletes from six different countries around the world that were meant to teach about confidence, curiosity, endurance, humility and practice.

### AREA ROUNDUPS

## Reporting Potholes

Report potholes to the Virginia Department of Transportation by going to <https://my.vdot.virginia.gov/>.

If you see a pothole, report the problem to VDOT online or by calling 1-800-FOR-ROAD (1-800-367-7623). VDOT will investigate each report and will schedule repairs as soon as possible.

Potholes occur when pavement is weakened by seeping moisture which freezes and expands, causing the road to crack. Traffic driving over the roads loosens the pavement further, and it eventually crumbles, causing a pothole.

# AWARD-WINNING MAIN-LEVEL REMODELED HOME TOUR

Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 12pm-4pm  
7521 Cannon Fort Drive, Clifton, VA

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Come see first hand how redesigning existing space created better function, flow, and light in this remodeled home.

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BEFORE

## WHICH DIRECTION SHOULD YOUR LIBRARY GO? YOU TELL US!

Share your opinion about what library services are needed in your community at one of our public forums:

**April 12, 7-8:30 p.m.**  
Chantilly Regional Library  
4000 Stringfellow Rd. • Chantilly, VA

**April 14, 7:30-9 p.m.**  
Kings Park Library  
9000 Burke Lake Rd. • Burke, VA

An online survey will be available soon.  
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library)

**your Fairfax County Public Library**  
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County of Fairfax,  
Virginia

## Move Forward with Independent Oversight

**While FCPD has embraced many critical changes, supervisors need to move forward with oversight.**

Last week, the Fairfax County Police Department posted a list and progress report of 202 recommendations made by the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, each currently labeled as one of: implemented, in progress or under review.

Recommendations that are under review “require more review or approval from the Board of Supervisors,” according to the update.

Two landmark recommendations on independent oversight await further review and approval. One is the establishment of the Office of the Independent Auditor to review investigations of death or serious injury cases involving the FCPD; the other is to establish a Civilian Review Panel to review complaints concerning alleged FCPD misconduct.

The delay in moving forward with these two recommendations is a missed opportunity as

the trial date for Adam Torres in the murder of John Geer approaches later this month, as the county will be under public scrutiny during coverage of the trial.

Chairman Sharon Bulova established the police commission in response to public outcry over the shooting death of Geer by a Fairfax County police officer, later revealed to be Torres, and the delay and stonewalling in release of any information about the incident. Geer was killed in August 2013. It took 17 months, much agitation and a court order in response to a lawsuit on behalf of Geer’s family before the most basic information was released. In August 2015, Torres was charged with murder and ordered held without bond.

The Public Safety Committee for the Board of Supervisors will meet in July to discuss all recommendations related to independent oversight. The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee is May 10 when they will take up commission recommendations related to use of force.

Strategically, the establishment of Office of the Independent Auditor should have been one of the first actions as a result of the recommendations. The Civilian Review Panel should also be an early priority. Contact Bulova, Supervisor John Cook who is chairman of the Public Safety Committee, and your own supervisor, and ask them to move forward.

Several pieces of good news: Fairfax County police leadership have embraced significant

changes as a result of the commission recommendations and an independent report on use of force, changes that have already had major benefits in how police respond in crisis situations. Diversion First, a plan to provide treatment rather than jail for certain people in mental health crisis who come into contact with law enforcement is up and running, a remarkable achievement. Money has been allocated in the current budget to implement changes.

The progress report is available here: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission/progressreport.htm>

### Send in Mother’s Day Photos

Mother’s Day is May 8 this year and as usual every year at this time, this newspaper calls for submissions to our Mother’s Day photo gallery. Send photos of mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, with children or without children in the photos. Please name everyone in the photo, the approximate date, describe what is happening in the photo and include your name, address, email address and phone number. (We will not print your full address or contact information.) You can upload photos and information directly to [www.connectionnewspapers.com/mothersday/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/mothersday/) or email to [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com).

EDITORIAL

## Government IDs for All Virginian Residents

BY SCOTT SUROVELL  
STATE SENATOR (D-36)

In August of 2014, I organized a Hispanic Town Hall Meeting in Hybla Valley. I spent the first hour going over issues with constituents.

Then, I asked attendees for feedback — what was their No.1 issue? Lack of government identification. Attendees said that they and their friends and family were weary of obtaining ID’s from Maryland or not having them at all.

At the beginning of last session, I was approached by Virginia New Majority and the Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations (VACALAO) about working together to bring this issue forward. I introduced Senate Bill 390 that would have allowed the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to issue a temporary driver’s visitor’s driver’s license to anyone who (1) resided in Virginia for one year, (2) had filed a Virginia tax return or been claimed as a dependent another Virginia tax return and (3) paid a \$53 fee. These licenses would be conspicuously marked with language stating “Not for federal use” so it is clear that they are not compliant with the Real ID Act.

Similar legislation has now been

passed in over 12 states: California, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, Illinois, Vermont, Connecticut, Maryland, District of Columbia, New Mexico, and Washington. Other states are considering it. Why is this legislation a good idea?

### Reason No.1 - Reducing Accidents

New residents do not know the rules of the road. According to the DMV, in other states where this has been implemented, over 80 percent of applicants fail the driving test and need to retake the test. Having informed drivers is good for everyone. Data from California showed that people without driver’s licenses were three times more likely to cause a fatal accident. The states with the longest record of providing licenses to all residents have experienced nearly a 100 percent larger drop in traffic fatalities than the nationwide average. This legislation will save lives.

### Reason No. 2 - Reducing Hit and Runs

States adopting these measures have seen significant reductions in hit and run accidents. Analyses by AAA have found that 41 percent of hit and run drivers lack a driver’s license and that unli-

censed drivers are 66.36 times more likely to be hit and run drivers. When people do not fear prosecution they stop and collisions are dealt with appropriately through our system.

### Reason No. 3 - Lower Virginia Insurance Premiums

More insured drivers means risk spread among more people, fewer accidents with uninsured drivers, and lower premiums for everyone.

### Reason No. 4 - Increase Interaction With Law Enforcement

Residents with government ID are much more likely to interact with law enforcement whether it’s for car accidents, domestic violence or to come forward as witnesses for other crimes. Government ID means greater civic participation.

### Reason No. 5 - More Tax Revenue

There are an estimated 400,000 people who would benefit from this. If 80 percent of estimated eligible Virginians sign up, Virginia will collect \$1.7 million in new licensing fees per year. If each new licensed driver claims \$35,000 per year in taxable Virginia income,

they would pay an additional \$1,755 of state income taxes per person or a total of \$561 million per year of new tax revenue. If 200,000 new auto insurance policies are purchased for \$1,000 per year, it will result in \$225 million per year of new auto insurance premium tax revenue.

### Reason No. 6 - Provide All Virginians a High Quality of Life

Licenses allow people to enjoy a healthy quality of life. Licenses mean being able to take children to soccer games, drive to work, get a bank account, or get to the doctor.

### The Way Forward

The legislation was supported by the McAuliffe Administration and the DMV has assembled a working group including representatives from law enforcement, the immigrant community, faith groups, driving safety groups, criminal defense, courts, chambers of commerce, taxation, human trafficking, and local governments to come up with consensus legislation. Hopefully, next year, this legislation will pass so that everyone living in Virginia can enjoy a healthy quality of life. If you have any feedback, please send me a note at [scott@scottsuovell.org](mailto:scott@scottsuovell.org).



WEEK IN SPRINGFIELD

## Prince of Peace Lutheran Church to Host Mental Health Conference

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Springfield is taking the initiative to host a weekend dedicated to ministering to young people and adults dealing with issues of mental health.

The "Hope Weekend" starts Friday evening April 15 with a free program called #Bounceback, targeted at helping teenagers and parents recover from stress, anxiety and depression.

Saturday, April 16 is an all-day affair titled Hope Restored and focused on mental wellness. The \$30 per person admission provides access to keynote speeches and breakout sessions with a dozen local professionals in areas including anxiety, trauma, early intervention for childhood disorders and suicide.

"Many churches are ill-equipped to care for and support those struggling with mental health issues," Prince of Peace Minister of Care and Outreach Stacey Crosson said in an email. "There are stigmas we must address. This event seeks to help create environments that welcome and care for all people, especially those with mental health issues."

The Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Hope Weekend mental health conference is scheduled for April 15 and 16. The church is located at 8304 Old Keene Mill Road in Springfield. For more information or to register for the event, visit [www.poplc.org/hope](http://www.poplc.org/hope) or call 703-451-5855.

## Hayfield Lacrosse to Host Military Appreciation Night

Hayfield Boys' Lacrosse hosts Second annual Military Appreciation Night on Friday, April 15. Free admission will be offered to all military members and dependents with valid military ID. Young military dependents without ID must enter the stadium with military parent/guardian.

The event will also raise funds for Fisher House at Fort Belvoir, a "home away from home" for military families when a loved one is undergoing medical treatment. Last year the event raised over \$800 for Fisher House, and Hayfield Boys' Lacrosse hopes to raise over \$1000 this year.

5 p.m. - JV faceoff  
7 p.m. - Special appearance by United States Coast Guard Honor Guard Silent Drill Team and Color Guard  
7:15 p.m. - Varsity faceoff

There will be concession stand; Military recruiter information tables; Fisher House information table at the event.

Regular admission \$5; under 6 and over 60 free.

## Bar in Springfield to Host Job Fair

Zinburger Wine & Burger Bar will hold a job fair from April 2 through April 15 at 6795 Springfield Mall, Springfield.

Nearly 150 positions are available including bartender, server, front desk host/hostess, busser, line cook, prep cook, dishwasher and meat grinder.

**Job fair dates and times are:**

April 4-8, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

April 9, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

April 11-15, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.

Applicants are encouraged to apply online—at [www.zinburgereast.com](http://www.zinburgereast.com), select the Springfield location—before attending the job fair.

Bring a resume and proper forms of identification to the job fair in case a position is offered.

## PHOTO GALLERY! "Me and My Mom"

To honor Mom on Mother's Day, send us your favorite snapshots of you with your Mom and The Connection will publish them in our Mother's Day issue. Be sure to include some information about what's going on in the photo, plus your name and phone number and town of residence. To e-mail digital photos, send to:

[editors@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:editors@connectionnewspapers.com)

Or to mail photo prints, send to:

Springfield Connection,

"Me and My Mom Photo Gallery,"

1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314

Photo prints will be returned to you if you include a stamped, self-addressed envelope, but please don't send us anything irreplaceable.

Gainesville Ballet

Proudly Presents...

# Giselle



Starring Aaron Smyth & Aria Alekzander

See gorgeous dancers in an intimate setting!



Sat., April 16, 7:30 pm

Ernst Cultural Center Theater at NOVA Annandale

Tickets: \$15—\$35 [www.tututix.com/gainesvilleballet](http://www.tututix.com/gainesvilleballet)

Or call 703-753-5005

[www.gainesvilleballetcompany.org](http://www.gainesvilleballetcompany.org)

## Limited Time Only Springfield Clearance Event

April 9-10 | April 16-17 | April 23-24

SAVE UP TO

# 80% OFF

All Discounted & Last Season's Styles

**\$99**

Outdoor Dining Chairs

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3pc Bistro Sets

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SATURDAY 10AM-8PM | SUNDAY 11AM-6PM



Eighteen people took the Fairfax Railroad Station Museum Civil War Sites tour on Saturday, April 2.



Historian Ted McCord gives a talk at Mount Gilead, a house built in 1785 in Centreville's Historic District, which was formerly called Newgate. Originally a tavern, it is the oldest house in Western Fairfax County.



The tombstone of Michael O'Brien and Dennis Corcoran, soldiers in Wheat's Battalion, known as the Louisiana Tigers, who were executed for mutiny by their own men during the Civil War.

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Orange Hunt Elementary in Springfield held at STEAM event on Tuesday, March 15.

### 'STEAM' Boat Olympic Event Held at Orange Hunt Elementary

"STEAM" Boat Express to Rio! was the theme of a community event held at Orange Hunt Elementary in Springfield on March 15.

The event was organized around the central theme of the upcoming Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

The events of the evening included an Engineering station with boat building and testing, straw architecture, cup stacking, and marble runs; an Estimation station with shot put, measurement, and scales; and a Coding station with plugged and unplugged computer coding. SysTEMIC Solutions from

Northern Virginia Community College provided a Demonstration station displaying VEX robotics, and Engineering for Kids set up a Flubber-making station. There was also a Critters Investigation station and microscopes; a Conservation station with water filter building and testing; an Upcycling station with creative Lid Art; and a Strategies station with strategy games and circuit building.

This is the second year that Orange Hunt has sponsored a STEAM night.

—DONNA JONES



Activities centered on the theme of the 2016 Rio Games.

### 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.

**Jubilee Christian Center** of Fairfax is restarting its "Living Free" support groups for the Spring on Wednesdays, starting on Mar. 30, 7:15 p.m. The support groups are free, and will cover "Stepping into Freedom," "Concerned Persons Group" (for family and friends of addicts), "Understanding and Overcoming Depression," "The Image of God in You," and "Handling Loss and Grief." There will also be support groups meeting on Sundays, 10:10 a.m. 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. For information or to register, call 703-383-1170, email

livingfree@jccag.org or see www.jccag.org.

**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.fbministries.org.

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

# Tour of Local Civil War Sites

Stops through Clifton, Centreville and Fairfax Station was a fundraiser for the Fairfax Railroad Station Museum.

By STEVE HIBBARD  
THE CONNECTION

The Friends of Fairfax Railroad Station Museum held a tour of Civil War sites on Saturday, April 2. Under rainy skies starting at 8:30 a.m., 18 people rode around Fairfax Station, Clifton and Centreville for seven hours in five cars, and stopped at local Civil War sites, while tour guides John McAnaw and Blake Myers shared their history expertise.

"We're trying to keep our heritage alive," said McAnaw, who said the tour was a fundraiser for the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. "We're serious about the preservation of our heritage." Besides conducting local tours, the group also takes tours at historic sites in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

"Fairfax County has such a rich history going back to Colonial times, the Civil War and World War II," said Myers. "There are existing historical sites that tell the history of America. You have to take the time to look around you and go to the local libraries, which are huge resources for historical data, or join a local history group."

He added, "There's so much history around, you just have to get out and walk around and research the local area."

And that's exactly what they did.

**THE FIRST STOP** on the tour was Battery Hill Redoubt in Centreville, a fenced-in Civil War site that was



Tour guide Blake Myers stands near one of nine cannon embrasures at the Battery Hill Redoubt in Centreville, a fenced-in Civil War site situated off Balmoral Greens Avenue and Cannon Fort Drive in Clifton.

built after First Manassas and is located off Balmoral Greens Avenue and Cannon Fort Drive, and situated next to the Westfields Golf Club in Clifton.

Nine embrasures used for artillery during the Civil War have survived 154 years and are preserved here by Fairfax County. The cannon embrasures or mounds of dirt with openings cut out of them had a platform behind them where guns

and artillery could be positioned and fired from by soldiers.

"There was a plan to turn it into a park, but no money to implement the plan," said Myers.

The second stop was "A" Fort (Redan) in Centreville, which sits behind a fence off Balmoral Greens Avenue in Clifton. Oriented toward the East, it was an open structure with a trench line leading up to it and built to protect the railroad by



Civil War earthworks located on the Nancy Meade property on Smoke Rise Lane in Fairfax Station. Built by troops, it served as a defense line around the Fairfax Station railroad during the Civil War.

both sides during the Civil War. It has four or five embrasures where cannons were once positioned. Down the trench line are remains of the embedded foundations of 12 rows of tents where the soldiers slept as well as rocks used for company cooking and remnants of latrine trenches.

Next, the cars drove down Union Mill Road in Clifton near Centreville High School where a

Confederate trench line was preserved by developers between Stonefield Drive and South Springs Drive.

Then they stopped at St. John's Episcopal Church and cemetery on Mount Gilead Road in Centreville's Historic District. On the adjacent preserved 4-acre field, 40,000 Civil War troops set up their winter encampment in 1861-62, although some argue that number was closer to 24,000 troops.

The land was recently spared from development with help from Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova and U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, who have interests in historic preservation.

"Here, a lot of lessons were learned in handling troops," said McAnaw. "Centreville was so important because geographically it was the highest point locally."

They toured the graveyard at St. John's Church where they learned of Civil War soldiers Michael O'Brien and Dennis Corcoran being interred there in 1979. As soldiers in Wheat's Battalion, these rambunctious Louisiana Tigers during First Manassas were the first men to be executed for mutiny and bad behavior by their own soldiers during the Civil War.

**NEXT ON THE STOP** was Mount Gilead, the oldest house in Western Fairfax County, built in 1785 and originally used as a tavern. The caretaker of 20 years, Ted McCord, an archaeologist, said during the Civil War the house was occupied by officers of both the Confederate and Union armies.

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The home was spared during the war and has its original flooring and is decorated in Colonial Revival style furnishings. Outside the porch are remnants of a moat of a trench line used by soldiers during the war. Fairfax County acquired the property in Centreville's Historic District in 1996.

They got in their cars and headed down Pickwick Road near Leland Street in Centreville to see the Covered Way Park, which was restored by local developers. During 1861-62, the large trench coverings were used to be a way to get artillery pieces back and forth without being observed. There are three forts situated on the Covered Way property.

From Centreville, they drove back to Fairfax Station to see the earthworks on the Nancy Meade property on Smoke Rise Lane. Snaking behind the home is a long, continuous trench that was used as a defense line that protected the Fairfax Station railroad and built by Civil War troops.

Then the group headed over to the property owned by Dr. Dan DiLabriola, also on Smoke Rise Lane in Fairfax Station.

His home was also built within a couple of feet of the defense line trench, now fully preserved, that was used to protect the Fairfax Station railroad.

When the tour was finished, one of the attendees, Mike Farrell of Arlington, had this to say of his experience: "There are a lot of things that are here that I didn't know about — the trenches," he said. "I enjoyed it immensely."

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special thanks to **Mount Vernon Gazette**



**Jensen Jacobs, lead actress in Northern Virginia International Film Festival feature film "TRI."**

PHOTO COURTESY OF RED ZEPPELIN PRODUCTIONS



# Film Festival Returns to Fairfax, Bigger and Bolder

**Northern Virginia International Film Festival to be held at Angelika Film Center April 21-30.**

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

Returning for its second year, the Northern Virginia International Film Festival will continue to "create a slice of Hollywood in Northern Virginia; this year is even bigger and bolder" than its inaugural season at the Angelika Film Center in the Mosaic District, said Fernando Mico, founder and director.

Northern Virginia is a special place with its own cosmopolitan population. "The Northern Virginia International Film Festival aims to have its own personality befitting its strategic location near the nation's capital location," added Mico. "Northern Virginia has an international population, many visitors, and countless filmmakers who make their home here. And, of course, sophisticated filmmakers who want to see the latest and best films.

About 100 films will be screened during the Festival. The films are every size, genre and budget from filmmakers from Northern Virginia, the U.S. and around the globe. There will also be workshops, panels and forums on issues such as screenwriting, funding/distribution, entertainment law, filmmaking and, of course, acting.

An award-winning filmmaker, Mico, of Alexan-

## Where and When

Northern Virginia International Film Festival at the Angelika Film Center and Café at the Mosaic, 2911 District Ave., Fairfax. Festival runs April 21-30, 2016. Ticket starts at \$11 with additional ticket packages available. Film Festival music event at State Theatre, 220 N. Washington Street, Falls Church, Friday, April 22, 2016. For detailed information and tickets call 703-960-1970 or visit [www.novafilmfest.com](http://www.novafilmfest.com).

dria, made clear in an interview that he wants to assure that filmmakers have their work screened for audiences who would not normally have the opportunity to do so without the Festival.

"From last year's success, we know that bringing a usually unseen piece of Hollywood and the international arts and entertainment to Northern Virginia was well received." This year's Festival include a second venue for a one-day music event at the Falls Church State Theater. Also a number of local Mosaic District merchants are Festival sponsors, opening their venues for celebratory events associated with the Festival.

One Northern Virginia filmmaker who will have a film showcased is Jai Jamison. He is the director of "TRI," feature length film about a journey of triathletes overcoming their own personal obstacles and the challenges of competing in a triathlon. The film was produced by Springfield's Red Zeppelin Productions.

This year's Northern Virginia International Film Festival will include late afternoon pre-performance events and evening gatherings at locations and shops throughout the Mosaic District. There will be a high energy, closing night Awards Ceremony at the Angelika Film Center on Saturday, April 30, 2016.



**Jai Jamison, director, Northern Virginia International Film Festival feature film "TRI."**

PHOTO COURTESY OF RED ZEPPELIN PRODUCTIONS



PHOTO COURTESY OF EILEEN CURREN

**(From left) Caleigh Davis plays Harriet and Abby Rozmajzl plays Emma in Paul VI's "Emma, a Pop Musical," playing April 8-10 at Paul VI Catholic High School.**

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

**"Disembodied."** 5 p.m.-midnight. April 16-June 11. Epicure Cafe, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Epicure's spring exhibit invites artists to explore the concept of disembodiment. [epicurecafe.org/](http://epicurecafe.org/).

**Cell Phones for Soldiers.** March 1-April 18. Liberty Tax, 5622-G Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Donate unwanted cell phones to help active duty military and vets call loved ones. 703-323-5580.

**Carolina Shag.** Wednesdays. 6:30-10 p.m. Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m. No partners needed. Dinner menu. \$8. Under 21 free. [nvshag.org](http://nvshag.org).

**Palingenesis.** Feb. 19-April 9. Epicure Cafe, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. New art exhibition. Curated by Mojdeh Rezaeipour and Hannah Son, Palingenesis brings together an eclectic group of local and D.C. artists working in a variety of media. 571-212-7227. [epicurecafe.cart@gmail.com](mailto:epicurecafe.cart@gmail.com).

**"Shrek the Musical JR."** April 22, 29, and 30. Burke Community Church, 9900 Old Keene Mill Road, Burke. Come see this talented group of young actors ages 8-18 as they travel Far Far Away with everyone's favorite ogre, a wise-cracking donkey, and a cast of fairy tale misfits. \$14. [www.nvplayers.com](http://www.nvplayers.com).

**FUN-Exercise.** Thursdays, noon-12:50 p.m. Grace Presbyterian Church Family Room, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. Inova certified exercise instructor leads a moderate level exercise class with music and current events conversation. Muscle, Balance, Strength Training using stretch bands and weights both standing and seated exercises. Instructor donation is \$5. Contact Chris Moore at [moorefitt@yahoo.com](mailto:moorefitt@yahoo.com) or 703-499-6133.

**Lake Accotink Park Campfire Saturdays.** April 16, May 14. Starts between 6:30-7 p.m. Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. Adventure awaits as you explore the woodlands and Lake Accotink spots where wildlife hides and resides, guided by a naturalist. Program ends with a cozy campfire. Bring whatever you like to roast. S'mores provided. Topics vary each month. \$8-\$10. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lake-accotink/>.

**Celebrating our Children's Creativity.** May 19-June 20. The Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. The J's Early Childhood Learning Center presents "A Reggio Exhibit," which showcases the philosophy of teaching art under

the guidance of Sarah Vejvoda. Free. [www.jccnv.org](http://www.jccnv.org). 703-537-3000.

**Skating Equipment Collection.** Mondays, 7-9 p.m., through May 9. Fairfax Ice Arena, 3779 Pickett Road, Fairfax. Gently used skating equipment needed for Kids on Ice. For information, contact [dondes@cox.net](mailto:dondes@cox.net).

## WEDNESDAY/APRIL 6-SUNDAY/APRIL 17

**Circus XTREME.** Eagle Bank Arena, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Last chance for local residents to see the treasured Asian elephants before they are moved to their permanent home at the Ringling Bros. Center for Elephant Conservation in Florida. [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com). Ringling.com.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 7-SUNDAY/APRIL 17

**Northern Virginia Jewish Film Festival.** Angelika Film Center and Cafe at Mosaic, 2911 District Ave., Fairfax. Festival will screen 14 contemporary Jewish-themed and/or Israeli-made feature films that explore identity and place in the world. \$10-\$70. For schedule and showtimes, go to [jccnvarts.org](http://jccnvarts.org).

## FRIDAY/APRIL 8

**Fairfax Volunteer Awards.** 8 a.m. The Waterford, 6715 Commerce St., Springfield. Join Volunteer Fairfax, Chairman Sharon Bulova and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and other community leaders to celebrate the work of volunteers. Purchase tickets by April 4. \$50. For information and tickets go to [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org).

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY/APRIL 8-10

**"Emma, a Pop Musical."** Friday-Saturday, 7:30 p.m. Sunday, 2 p.m. Paul VI Catholic High School, 10675 Fairfax Blvd., Fairfax. Modern and musical take on Jane Austen's "Emma." \$8-\$15. Email [PVIProducers@yahoo.com](mailto:PVIProducers@yahoo.com).

## SATURDAY/APRIL 9

**Infant Toddler Family Daycare Dinner.** 5-7 p.m. Sydenstricker United Methodist, 8508 Hoes Road, Springfield. ITFDC hosts the 2016 International Dinner. For more information, call 703-352-3449 or email [infor@infanttoddler.com](mailto:infor@infanttoddler.com).

**"Sophie and Paige Storytime."** 11 a.m. Barnes and Noble, 12193 Fair Lakes Promenade Drive, Fairfax. Author Joseph Hicks does story time. 703-278-8527.

**How Will Your Garden Grow? 11**

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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

# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

a.m.-2 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Gardening books, soil test kits, advice, and creative ideas. Make this the best gardening year, ever. 703-451-8055.

**Pet Adoption with Sheehy Subaru and HART.** 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Sheehy Subaru of Springfield, 6571 Backlick Road, Springfield. HART is a no-kill, nonprofit rescue/support group. Free. sheehy.com. 703-712-8700.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 10

**Shamanism - An Introduction.** 2-4 p.m. Unity Spiritual Center, 8136 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Three-part series exploring the fundamental aspects of Shamanism. \$20/\$55. 410-733-0994.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 14

**Luncheon.** 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Springfield Christian Women's Connection will discuss INOVA's Future. \$20. Reserve by April 11. SpringWmConn@yahoo.com. 703-922-6438.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 16, 23

**Charity Yard Sale.** 8 a.m.-noon. The Historic Sydenstricker Schoolhouse, 8511 Hooes Road, Springfield. Proceeds benefit the Historic Sydenstricker Schoolhouse. sydenstrickerschoolhouse.org.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 16

**Country Western Benefit.** 6:30-10

p.m. Accotink Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association will hold a benefit dance to raise funds for the Fisher House Foundation. Bring your own refreshments and a dish to share. \$20. nvcwda.org. 703-860-4941.

**Trivia Night.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. St. Stephen's United Methodist Church, 9203 Braddock Road, Burke. Fun, food, and prizes galore from the Optimist Club of Central Fairfax. \$15. 703-861-7317.

**"Giselle."** 7:30 p.m. Richard J. Ernst Community Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Gainesville Ballet's professional and junior companies with special guest stars. \$15-\$35. 703-753-5005.

## WEDNESDAY/APRIL 20

**Honoring Those Who Served During the Civil War.** 7:30 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Mary Lipsey, a docent for the American History Museum of the Smithsonian and for the National Archives and former President of the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association, will present.fairfax-station.org.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 21

**Friday Morning Music Club.** Noon-1 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Community of music lovers and musicians dedicated to promoting classical music throughout the metropolitan area. On the third Thursday of the month they host their performances at Old Town Hall. Free. fmmc.org.

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## SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

### APRIL

4/20/2016..... A+ Camps & Schools

4/27/2016..... A+ Camps & Schools Pullout

4/27/2016..... Mother's Day Celebrations, Dining & Gifts I

4/27/2016..... Spring Outlook 2016

### MAY

5/4/2016..... McLean Day Pullout

5/4/2016..... Mother's Day Dining & Gifts II

5/4/2016..... Wellbeing

*Mother's Day is May 8*

5/11/2016..... HomeLifeStyle

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PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Robinson junior Katie Checkosky finished with six goals and two assists against Lake Braddock on Tuesday.****Robinson senior Taylor Caskey had five goals and three assists in the Rams' 19-1 win over Lake Braddock on Tuesday.**

## Robinson Girls' Lax Dominating Opponents

### Rams beat Lake Braddock 19-1.

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**K**atie Checkosky scored Robinson's first goal less than four minutes into Tuesday's home game against Lake Braddock. One minute later, Ellie Kluegel found the back of the net. Taylor Caskey then added back-to-back goals, leading to a Bruins timeout with 18:58 on the clock.

It would only get worse for Lake Braddock.

In less than 10 minutes, Kluegel had a hat trick and three different Rams had scored multiple goals.

In less than 15 minutes, Robinson had built a 10-0 lead.

When the game ended, Robinson had won, 19-1.

**THE DEFENDING STATE CHAMPION** Robinson girls' lacrosse team has been no stranger to blowouts early in the 2016 season. The Rams are 8-0, winning each game by at least 10 goals. They have outscored their opponents 151-27, including a 79-11 margin against public school foes.

The toughest competition Robinson has faced came during the "Spring Fling" tournament on April 2 at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School. Playing in back-to-back games against private school opponents, the Rams defeated St. Anne's-Belfield, 18-8, and Collegiate, 21-7.

"Playing the private schools, that was a shock," said Kluegel, a junior midfielder. "It was close at the beginning, but I think we're a team, when we really get in the groove of it, we just keep going and we don't let off the gas. I think a lot of our scores have reflected that so far."

Robinson finished 21-1 last season, winning Conference 5, 6A North region and state championships. The Rams' only loss came against Georgetown Visitation, a pri-

**Robinson junior Elli Kluegel totaled six goals and two assists against Lake Braddock on Tuesday.**

ate school. Robinson returned the majority of its roster and has continued piling up victories.

So how do the Rams stay motivated?

"[Head] coach [Liz] Case keeps us motivated in practice a lot," said Kluegel, who was a US Lacrosse All-American as a sophomore. "She tells us before every game that the team we're about to play has nothing to lose and she stresses to us we have everything to lose — everyone's gunning for the state champions and it's our job to defend that and defend our school and defend our title."

The desire to repeat is also a driving force.

"A lot of us have experienced the amazing feeling of what it feels like to win a state championship," said Checkosky, a junior attacker/midfielder, "and we want to do whatever we can to have the same feeling and be able to experience the same stuff that we did last year."

Robinson certainly has the talent to get the job done.

Kluegel, a Loyola University Maryland commit, and Checkosky, a JMU commit,

each scored six goals and had two assists on Tuesday night. Caskey, a senior midfielder and one of three team captains, finished with five goals and three assists. Senior attacker/midfielder Kaitlin Luccarelli, a Longwood University commit, had two goals and three assists.

"We all just want to shoot a lot and get

our goals and everyone wants to get their own goals, but we never go in there, like, "We want to score 20 goals,"" said Caskey, who will attend Virginia Tech but is uncertain about her lacrosse future. "We want everyone to score."

With all the talent on the Rams roster, Case said practices get quite competitive. The Robinson defense includes senior goalie and captain Danielle Valenti, and senior defender and captain Emily Skrzypczak, who will play at Ohio State.

"The coolest thing is our practice, because of our offense against our defense, it's pretty intense, the level of play," Case said. "They're constantly being challenged every day in practice by each other. They don't stop just because it's practice. You go 100 percent."

Next up for Robinson is a home game against Westfield at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 12.

**ON FRIDAY**, April 15, the Rams will travel to face a Woodson team that is currently undefeated against public school competition.

"We're going for the [championship] again, but this year we want to go totally undefeated," Luccarelli said. "Last year, we only had one loss, so there's not much more we can do than win the second state title."

### Marshall High School to Host All-Star Game Sunday

The DMVStream.com Nova Challenge will be held Sunday at Marshall High School.

There will be two all-star games, a 3-point contest and a dunk contest.

At 2 p.m., the Fairfax South team will face the Prince William all-stars. The 3-point contest and dunk contest will start at 4 p.m. At 5 p.m., the Fairfax North team will face the Loudoun all-stars.

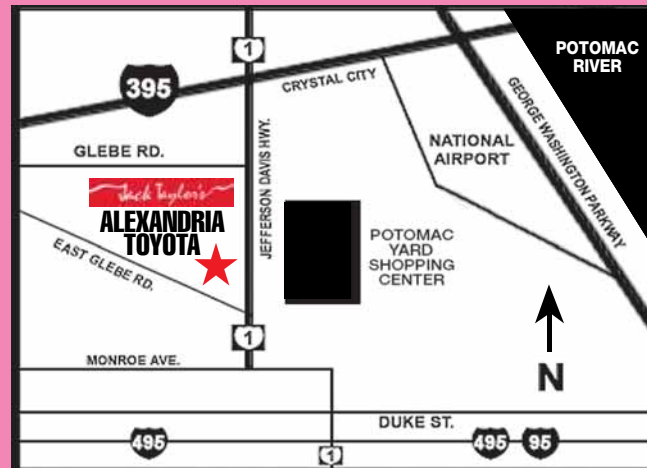
The Fairfax South roster includes: Spencer Askew (West Springfield), Matt Ayoub (Woodson), James Butler (Lake Braddock), Lewis Djonkam (West Springfield), Seamus Maloney (Woodson), Romaine Oakley (Hayfield), Avi Silberman (Robinson) and Kendall Thompson (Lee).

**West Springfield senior Spencer Askew will participate in the DMVStream.com Nova Challenge on April 10.**

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

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**21 Announcements**

**ABC LICENSE**  
Caboose 3, LLC trading as Caboose Brewing Company, 11389 Reston Station Blvd, Reston, VA 20190. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) FOR A Brewrey < 500 BBL + retail on/off license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Matthew Greer, managing member

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

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Caboose II, LLC trading as Caboose Brewing Company, 8301 Lee Hwy, Fairfax, VA 22031. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) FOR A Brewrey < 500 BBL + Keg, retail on/off license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Matthew Greer, managing member

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

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**Zone 5:** The Potomac Almanac

**Zone 6:** The Arlington Connection  
The Vienna/Oakton Connection  
The McLean Connection  
The Great Falls Connection

**THURSDAY/APRIL 7**  
**Jared Meyer.** 7 p.m. The Hub VIP 2, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Economist talk titled "How DC is Betraying Millennials." Sponsored by College Republicans. For information contact taylor@enlightenedwomen.org.

**Annual Housing Forum.** 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Brookfield Residential, 3201 Jermantown Road, Fairfax. Meet and learn from shelter partner colleagues, share best practices, and gather take-away strategies from community leaders in the field. Free. Registration required. <http://www.homeaidnova.org/news-events/housingforum/>.

**SATURDAY/APRIL 9**  
"Bullying in Plain Sight." 2 p.m. Barnes and Noble, 12193 Fair Lakes Promenade Drive, Fairfax. Discussion and signing with author Dr. Dan Chandler. 703-278-8527.

**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.

**Post-Secondary Education and Employment Workshops.** 7-9 p.m. Woodson High School Cafeteria, 9525 Main St., Fairfax. For students with IEPs and their parents. Register at 703-204-3941.

**THURSDAY/APRIL 14**  
**Library Forum.** 7:30-9 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Help plan the libraries' future by sharing your input. [fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/library). 703-324-8319.

**SHARE Program.** 3 p.m. Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. Recently receive a dementia diagnosis? Learn about how the SHARE Program can help you and your partner with communication, building a support network, and making more informed decisions about care. Free. RSVP at 703-204-4664 or go to [InsightMCC.org](http://InsightMCC.org).

**SATURDAY/APRIL 16**  
**Living Well, Aging Well Summit.** 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Explores multiple ways to age well and features a transportation/mobility expo, technology fair, volunteer opportunities, a CarFit program, health screenings, presentations and more. Register at [www.livingwellfairfax.org](http://www.livingwellfairfax.org) or call 703-324-7647, TTY 711. Call 703-324-5219, TTY 711 for ADA requests.

**TUESDAY/APRIL 19**  
**Autism and Safety.** 7-8:30 p.m. Dunn Loring Center for Parent Services, 2334 Gallows Road, Entrance 1, Room 100, Dunn Loring. Learn Safety risks for individuals with special needs, proactive steps to reduce the risk of potential dangers, resources available in the community for emergency preparedness, safety guidelines and more. Register at 703-204-3941 or <http://www.fcps.edu/dss/osp/prc/resources/events/documents/AutismSafety.pdf>.

**WEDNESDAY/APRIL 20**  
**Prepare to Care.** 1 p.m. Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. Learn about how to form your team, make a plan, find support, and still care for yourself. Free. RSVP at 703-204-4664 or go to [InsightMCC.org](http://InsightMCC.org).

**TUESDAY/APRIL 26**  
**Virginia Colorectal Cancer Roundtable.** 9 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Inova Center for Personalized Health, 3225 Gallows Road, Fairfax. Discussion on the nationwide initiative to reach an 80 percent colorectal cancer screening rate by 2018. Free. Advanced registration required, <http://tinyurl.com/vacrct>.



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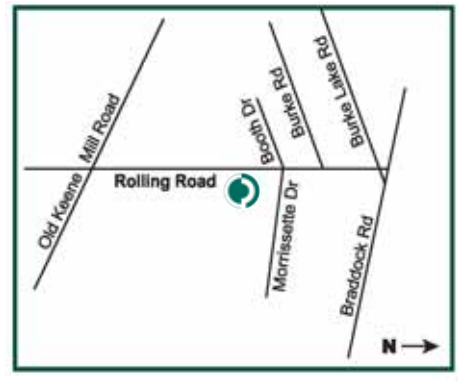
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# Senior Living

## Taking the Long View

BY JOHN BYRD  
THE CONNECTION

Budgeted, incremental improvements are the key to effective planning, aging in place.

**W**hen they decided not to move-on after retirement, seniors Mike and Sandy Nusbaum slowly began enlarging their long-term residence with several goals in mind.

Ten years and four improvements later, the couple's Alexandria home is ideal for extended visits with children and grandchildren—and all sorts of everyday pleasures.

Home improvements can come in many sizes: life-changing or simply necessary; comprehensive, or something to please the grandkids.

The real problem is practical: how to conveniently and affordably implement a list of desired improvements—especially when experience tells you that securing a satisfactory outcome for even a basic household repair can be challenging.

In this context, it's heartening to talk with Mike and Sandy Nusbaum, retired empty-nesters who have executed mid- to large-scale renovations to their thirty-year-old south Alexandria residence in phases, about once every two years and for more than a decade.

Plainly, the Nusbaums like their house, a circa-1980s Colonial-style home where they raised three children. While somewhat space-constrained at its original 2,100 square feet, the structure's location adjacent to woodland and minutes from historic Old Town made it hard to beat.

As retirement neared, however, the couple began cautiously reassessing their home's basic assets, even briefly considering a move to a bigger place.

"You have to ask yourself whether the next house will actually improve your quality of life," Sandy Nusbaum says, recounting her thoughts of twelve years back. "When we looked at the alternatives ... we realized there were only a few things about our house that we didn't like."

**AND SO IT BEGAN.** Plans for incremental changes. Kitchen and screened porch. New family room and deck. Lower level. Enlarged Garage ... Facilitated by a new relationship, with 30-year veteran remodeler David Foster, principal of Foster Remodeling Solutions.

"We met some homeowners at a local home show who raved about David," Sandy recalls. "David has a low-key style, and a strong service orientation that helps us make informed decisions."

Looking back, while the remodeler's fresh design ideas were critical, the couple also appreciated his clearly-stated, always-reliable cost projections.

**"WE WERE ON THE CUSP** of retirement and didn't want debt," Mike Nusbaum says. "Our first thought was to make targeted improvements to the kitchen while keeping our options open for the larger family entertainment suite we might undertake as



**Mike and Sandy Nusbaum have enlarged their home four times in the past ten years. Each phase has improved the home's overall functionality, which has transformed it into a preferred gathering place for children, grandchildren and extended family. The garage and storage units have resulted in a dramatic improvement in available space and eliminated clutter.**



**Only 150 square feet was added to the family room, but the four-window course with "eyebrows" creates a visual continuum that makes the room feel significantly larger.**



**The first phase of a 10 year remodeling plans entailed replacing the kitchen/living room divider wall with a dining counter/serving station. The revisions allowed light from three directions. Maple cabinets and Silestone quartz surfaces provide a tonal and textural contrast.**

we assessed the budget issue."

Foster was not only supportive of such thinking, but, as the Nusbaums learned, considers "phased remodeling" an integral part of his company's service.

"I grew up in Fairfax County and have learned my business by helping homeowners find a process that will work for them as they think ahead," he says.

Once work began, the Nusbaums particularly noted the foresight Foster brought to each improvement.

"Ten years ago, we wanted the rooms extending from the kitchen to function better as a place for entertainment. We had a small dining room that wasn't being used much. The back rooms were too dark," Sandy Nusbaum recalls.

In short order, the wall between the kitchen and dining room disappeared, replaced by a three-stool Silestone counter that has become the couple's primary kitchen gathering area. That counter surface was also positioned as a serving sta-

tion for the new elevated 16-by-16-foot screened porch that is now a much-used fair-weather dining spot.

A new window over the kitchen sink adds natural light and a lovely view of the backyard. "When you walk from the kitchen to the screen porch, it feels like you're walking in the air through the trees," Sandy says. "This gave us a wonderful re-discovery of our own backyard."

From there, it wasn't long before the Nusbaums began planning an extension of the rear family room, an open-air grilling deck and a pathway that permits children, grandchildren and guests to circulate freely through a wide-ranging suite of rooms used for social gatherings.

"It was at this point that we started having holiday gatherings for up to thirty," Sandy says. "Such fun!"

**WHICH LED TO THE THIRD PHASE:** Transform the 800-square-foot lower level into an exercise room that doubles as a guest

suite. Here a comfortable Murphy bed folds out of a discrete closet. There's a full bath, and built-in serving station with refrigerator and microwave. The Nusbaums refer to it as "the family suite." On holidays, it can be occupied for two or three days a stretch.

Then, just last year, Foster created a second bay for the garage by building a wing off the side elevation. The new construction is supplemented by a garden shed accessed from the yard. The contents, pruning tools, mower, freed up floor space in the garage, which now (for the first time) has room for something special: two cars.

"What we really appreciate about David Foster is there are no bad surprises, and frequently there are good ones," Mike Nusbaum said. "Last year, for instance, he repaired a window that was out of warranty and didn't charge us. That kind of service encourages you to think ahead."

*John Byrd (byrdmatx@gmail.com or www.HomeFrontsNews.com) has been writing about home improvement for 30 years.*

# Threading Your Way Through the Maze

One family's journey finding help to care for husband with dementia at home.

BY EDEN BROWN  
THE CONNECTION

Laura "Fayse" Howard lives in the house her husband Allen built in South Arlington. The side entrance looks out on bird feeders hanging from a tree he planted. There is a bench big enough for two in the garden. The kitchen is the way kitchens used to be: cozy, galley size. In the living room, there are pictures of family, an antique organ, crocheted blankets, and a rescued dog named Diva who is keeping an eye on things from "her" armchair.

It feels like home, and it has been home to the Howards since Laura, or "Fayse" as her husband nicknamed her, came to Washington from southern Virginia, at age 17, to work at the FBI, and met Allen Howard, who had just been demobilized after serving the Coast Guard on a destroyer escort in WWII.

It was here that Allen Howard, 91, died recently, at home, with his wife and daughter Joan, and his nighttime caregiver, by his side.

Allen Howard had dementia, he probably had it longer than anyone knew, his wife thinks. He was 91. At Christmas, a year ago, he started really showing it. He went upstairs to be by himself while his much loved family was visiting downstairs in the family room; that wasn't like him. He accidentally set things on fire in the kitchen, leaving burners on. He put the outside water hose into the dryer vent.

In January, they sought medical advice. Their neurologist did tests and reported that Allen Howard had dementia. His wife couldn't leave him alone anymore. She had a good neighbor up the street who would come watch him while she ran to the supermarket. Otherwise, she was with him, 24/7. He was disoriented. He fell a lot.

Howard's daughter, Joan Davis, had come home for Christmas and saw how things were with her father. She didn't know how bad it had gotten, though, because over the next two months, her mother didn't let on how much the disease was taking a toll on both Allen as patient and Fayse as caregiver, or how little help they were getting. She didn't want to burden her children.

In late March, Howard called Arlington County to get hospice care set up because she had been told by their doctor that it was a way to get help. When she called Arlington County's Office on Aging and Disability, she says they told her over the phone that he didn't qualify.

Everyone kept suggesting Adult Day Care, but Fayse Howard said, "No, he's upset enough. That will upset him more."



PHOTO BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

Fayse Howard at home in Arlington with her dog, Diva.

**THAT WAS BEFORE** the accident.

On May 12, as Fayse Howard guided Allen into the dining room for lunch, he fell backwards, on her, and she fell too, breaking her hip. They lay on the floor. Neither of them could move for a while. Then she helped him get up to a sitting position and asked him to try to reach the phone; he handed her the TV remote control. She talked him through it, finally getting him to pull on the telephone cord. She didn't call 911 first. She called her neighbor to come watch her husband before she went to the hospital.

Davis came out from Wisconsin to help as soon as she could: she was surprised things had gone downhill so fast with her father. She got the doctor to intervene on the hospice option: Allen definitely qualified for hospice services which began right away.

But that wasn't enough care. Davis started diving into the problem. She wanted to make sure her mother was never left alone with her father again. She knew there were many options for help in the Arlington area: the Elderly Disabled or Consumer Direction Waiver (EDCD), PACE, the Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital, Arlington County Office on Aging and Disability. Davis started keeping a journal to help her thread her way through the daunting maze of options.

Fayse Howard had already enlisted the help of Arlington County's office of Aging and Disability Services after the fall. She

needed someone to come in and watch Allen while she was in the hospital. Arlington had given her a list of caregivers. Some were very good, and very expensive, she said. She paid out of pocket for the care. But later, when her daughter got involved, and because she stressed that both parents were disabled now, they were more helpful. Howard said, "I would have given up after the first voice message. My daughter just kept on them."

Because both members of the family were disabled, Arlington provided paid care from 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. five days a week. But as soon as Howard's hip was healed the benefits stopped.

Howard said she was distraught and tired. "I just gave up", she said. "All I cared about was my husband and his comfort."

Davis called the County and got more help. They were then able to get 15 hours of care a week, but by June 30 time ran out for that application; they had to reapply for help. Howard had trouble with the online application and said she wishes Arlington would offer paper applications to those who didn't grow up with computers.

But there was still not enough support. It was up to the family to fill in the hours with private caregivers, paying them out of pocket, to help take care of her husband. Howard said she paid an assortment of part-time workers about \$6,000 a month for 8 months in order to keep her husband at home.

Davis's research showed that there were benefits due Howard because of his veteran status. She called the Veterans Administration Hospital and they agreed to evaluate him in D.C.

Davis described a series of events that she said was almost comical. There they were, her mother on a walker, her father in a wheelchair.

Howard remembers the social worker suggesting her husband "really needs to be in a nursing home." Their own doctor too had said the place for the Howards was not in their home, but in a facility. But Fayse Howard didn't think that was the right solution for her.

Both she and her daughter remember that painful day at the VA, filling out the long, involved forms, listing their finances. The VA sent them home that day with no plan, and said they could do more the next time he came.

**HOWARD SHAKES** her head in dismay telling the story. "Do they have any idea how hard it is to get a dementia patient out of the house, into a car, into a large hospital, on time, without an accident?" She had to hire a caregiver just to help get him into the car.

Then the Howards were put on a waiting list because there was no staffing for them. "Imagine," Howard said with a wry smile. "They put a 91-year-old man with late stage Alzheimer's on a waiting list."

On Sept. 9, the VA social worker finally organized care at home. The care from the VA Hospital was helpful, Howard said, but there were many challenges.

Howard remained the chief caregiver, despite the help. She managed the new challenges thrown her way as the disease progressed.

"He would hold pills in his mouth," she said. "They'd find them later on the floor when he spit them out." His dentures no longer fit so he couldn't chew his food anymore so Fayse pureed three meals a day for him so he could eat.

Fayse Howard found that she alone could get him to swallow when he resisted, or calm him down when he was upset. He would hold her hand, and give it a squeeze. Sometimes, he'd give her a smile that made it all worth it, she said.

Although their doctor took good care of her husband, Howard says she had to tell him one day to stop telling her to "remember you are not alone."

"I am alone," she said. "I've been alone since he got sick. When a decision has to be made, I make it. When I'm all alone in that house with him and he looks at me for consolation, it's I who have to take his hand and hold it, and try to keep things even."

And fewer people came to visit. Those who did found that Allen Howard always perked up when an old friend or family member came by, even if he didn't remember them by name. Howard was so housebound that many times she felt iso

SEE DEMENTIA, NEXT PAGE

## Senior Living

# Finding Help

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

lated, and would have really lost her ability to cope had it not been for her neighbors, particularly Woody and Margaret Staeben. Woody, she said, comes in once a week to have a beer with her. “We call it our “meeting”, she laughed. It meant she and her husband had not been forgotten.

Howard said she had never heard of any of the services of Arlington County, like the Personal Advocate. She hasn’t been to any community centers. She has a computer, but doesn’t use the internet. “I guarantee you without my daughter, I wouldn’t have made the second phone call,” she says of the effort to find help. Allen Howard had run his own business. Fayse Howard had given up her retirement fund to add money to the business when it was having trouble. They worked hard, raised three children, sent one to college. They had enough to live on, just not enough to manage a long health crisis.

Davis says the thing that bothered her the most is that “there was no one to tell us what to do, no road map.” There were so many moving pieces.

Patty Sullivan, Interim Operations Manager of Arlington Neighborhood Village (ANV), agrees it is a real maze. As a member of the Arlington Commission on Aging, she knows there are many services available to Arlington residents, but is not sure why the word is just not reaching those who need the information, despite the brochures Arlington hands out.

“There isn’t a system,” she said. “Medicaid and Medicare, Social Security, State programs, County programs — none of them overlap.” You can hire a “care manager” to help you thread your way through the system, but that is prohibitively expensive, or you can join Arlington Neighborhood Village which provides some personal advocacy.

“Arlington County doesn’t have the capacity to handle all the issues with the elderly that are now coming into play,” she said.

Allen Howard will be laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery on June 24.

Fayse Howard has a little more she’d like people to know.

“I want people to know it’s not all bad. When he looked across at me and smiled, or held my hand”, Fayse Howard said, “I knew I was doing the right thing. Knowing they depend on you, and that the

sound of your voice would still make a difference to them, even in the late stages of dementia, added a dimension to the meaning of marriage that some people might find hard to understand but it’s just as beautiful as some other stages.”

**“I want people to know it’s not all bad. When he looked across at me and smiled, or held my hand, I knew I was doing the right thing. [It] added a dimension to the meaning of marriage that is just as beautiful as some other stages.”**



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# 'Shark Tank' for Seniors

High school students design and present tech products to improve older adults' lives

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

Chantilly High School freshman Aru Rajpurohit remembers seeing her great-grandfather struggle to drink his morning tea and other beverages, his hands shaking from Parkinson's disease.

"As a young child, it was heartbreaking to see him like this," Rajpurohit said. "Often he was embarrassed after spilling in front of friends and family."

Motivated by the memory of her great-grandfather, she's always wanted to develop a solution for this problem of spilling caused by tremors. On Monday, March 28, Rajpurohit presented her invention called StabilityCup, a shock-absorbing beverage holder, at the first Assistive Technology "Shark Tank" Challenge for Fairfax County High School Students.

Six finalists from Chantilly High School, South Lakes High School and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology presented their innovative solutions for solving different problems that senior citizens face.

The challenge originated from the Fairfax County 50+ Community Action Plan Technology Committee, which has been working on an initiative called "Help People Stay in their Homes with Technology."

Sharon Lynn, director of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, said the motivation for creating the challenge was twofold: "Many students don't have grandparents that are local, that they get to interact with. They're not really aware what it's like to have a grandparent nearby."

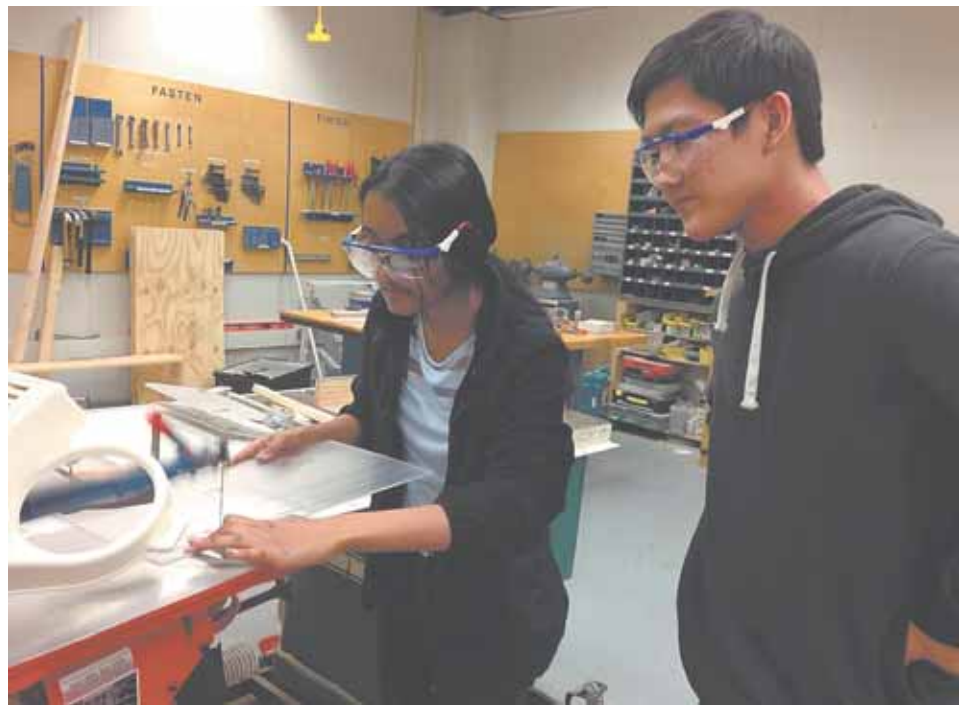


PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Srijay Kasturi (right) monitors a laptop while his father Srini Kasturi (left) observes Charles Schanker (center) testing the Stride obstacle-sensing device at Herndon Senior Center.

But also, Lynn said, they wanted to encourage students to think about the possibilities for how technology can benefit people, "not just to make life easier in some way, but can benefit older adults, help them live at home for a longer period of time and benefit the community."

SEE SHARK TANK, PAGE 8



Chantilly High School sophomores Tanvi Nallanagula (left) and Eric Kim (right) fabricate their "Ledge Wedge" design that would help better illuminate staircases for older adults.



Chantilly High School freshman Aru Rajpurohit (left) displays her StabilityCup design with (right) Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield).

# Luxury Condos are a Growth Market for Seniors

Active retirees seek options for independent living, including condos in Alexandria, Arlington, Tysons, Reston, McLean, Bethesda and Chevy Chase, among others.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

When Joyce and Don Lipman decided to move out of their Potomac, Md. home, they opted for a high-end townhouse instead of a retirement community. They gained a cosmopolitan environment and lost the burdensome maintenance of a large home.

“My husband always hated taking care of the grounds and he didn’t want to pay someone to do it, and we weren’t ready for a retirement community,” said Joyce Lipman, who is 71. “Now I can walk to the shopping center and to my doctor’s office. I couldn’t believe it the first time I was able to go without my car. It was like a new lease on life.”

When another active retired couple decided to downsize and move out of their home, they opted for a high-end condominium instead of moving to a retirement community. They enjoy traveling and own a beach home where they often spend time. When it came time to design their new living space, they sought the help of Kelley Proxmire of Kelley Interior Design in Bethesda, Md.

The couple wanted “a pretty, yet practical home and also a place they could lock and leave on a moment’s notice,” said Proxmire.

Condominiums and townhouses are growing in popularity for midlife couples because unlike large homes, they don’t require a lot of maintenance, and they offer opportunities for living independently.

“In the next three to five years, luxury condominiums are going to be extremely popular with that age group, those who feel the colonial home is too big and they don’t want the ... mentality of retirement communities,” said Debbie Miller, an Arlington-based associate broker with McEneaney



PHOTO CREDIT

Kelley Proxmire designed plush interior for a retired couple who downsized from a larger home into a luxury condominium.

“In the next three to five years, luxury condominiums are going to be extremely popular with ... those who feel the colonial home is too big and they want the freedom of locking and leaving their home.”

— Debbie Miller, McEneaney Associates

Associates Inc. who specializes in the 55 and over real estate market. “Luxury condominiums provide a great option.”

Miller says that in addition to proximity to shopping, dining and public transportation, amenities such as a 24-hour concierge

service that can handle requests such as meal delivery and grocery shopping make high-end buildings sought after among well-heeled retirees.

The buyers Miller works with are looking for condos “that provide a ‘lock-and-leave’ advantage for residents who ... like to travel or who spend six months here and six months elsewhere.”

Such condominiums are prized and often hard to obtain.

“There are some that are very exclusive and [others that] don’t come on the market very often,” she said. “I sold a unit in the Rotonda [in McLean] a year ago and had multiple offers that were all cash.”

**ONE REASON THAT** retirees opt for condominiums over retirement communities is freedom without restrictions, such as the frequency or length of stay for overnight guests. “In a retirement community, your

grandchildren might only be able to visit for two weeks. Condos provide more of an independent feel,” said Miller. “Owning a condo allows them the opportunity to pay the condo fee and come and go as they please and someone else takes care of the maintenance.”

Another reason is proximity, with a condominium community more likely than a retirement community to be in an urban environment like Arlington, Reston or Tysons.

Among the most favored luxury condominium properties in Northern Virginia, says Miller, are The Palladium of McLean, Midtown at Reston, the Porto Vecchio in Old Town Alexandria, and the Turnberry Tower in Arlington.

“There are many other high-rises that appeal to the 55 and older crowd due to convenience and lots of amenities and that are walkable,” she said.

Gerontology experts offer perspective for retirees who are looking to buy a new home. “The main thing is to consider safety,” said Beverly Middle, DNP, RN, Assistant Professor of the College of Health and Human Services in the School of Nursing at George Mason University. “Communities where there are other older adults tend to have services in place to support them.”

Middle recommends using evidence-based design when creating dwellings suitable for seniors. “It’s a new science that’s geared toward older adults and is very specific to their needs,” she said.

Addressing retirees’ desire to live a vibrant and active life that takes freedom and safety into consideration, some retirement communities are working to broaden their appeal to a wider group of seniors. For example, Sunrise Senior Living, based in McLean, created a Live With Purpose program which offers residents structured programs that include activities for volunteering and learning.

“No matter your age, each of us has interests, desires and activities that make us feel whole and help contribute to a meaningful, healthy life,” said Rita Altman, senior vice president of Memory Care & Program Services for Sunrise.

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Photo by Ed Knepley

# 'Shark Tank' for Seniors

FROM PAGE 6

The full 50+ plan includes 31 action items from a long-range trends and needs analysis to increasing employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for older adults.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) chairs the 50+ full committee. He said "we've got a long way to go" implementing initiatives like prenotification of medical conditions for 9-1-1 calls and ensuring housing options for seniors. However other projects including older adults visiting elementary schools to read and interact with students ("Grand Involve"), and a free, ride-scheduling service ("Northern Virginia Rides") "are moving forward at light-speed."

Herrity is especially excited about initiatives like Grand Involve and the Shark Tank Challenge that engage older and younger adults, that get the generations helping each other.

"It's the communication piece," he said, "and getting seniors to use technology as an avenue to expand their communication and knowledge they might be missing out on."

Srijay Kasturi, a sophomore at South Lakes High School, repurposed an ultrasonic sensor he had been developing for use with camera tripods to fashion an aid for older adults with impaired vision.

"Many seniors would rather suffer from a lack of vision than use the 'white cane' that blind people use," Kasturi said. "Then they get labeled as a blind person."

"Stride" attaches to the user's shoe and scans up to six feet ahead within a 45-degree cone. If something's in the way, the unit



**"Stride," a design by South Lakes High School sophomore Srijay Kasturi, senses objects up to six feet in front of the wearer and transmits a vibration to their ankle to warn them.**

sends a vibration to a wrap around the person's ankle.

Kasturi tested the product at both the Herndon Senior Center and Nova Labs. Though he got a lot of positive feedback, he also saw a lot of room for improvement. One user with diabetic neuropathy wasn't able to feel the vibrations, while another was unsure of whether to go left or right to avoid the obstacle in front.

Kasturi's initiative to go out and test the design multiple times impressed Mike Waddell, managing partner and co-founder of Reston-based Integrity One Partners, an information technology solutions firm for government clients that

sponsored the challenge.

"This youngster, something touched his heart," Waddell said, "and he decided was going to do something about it."

Stride wasn't the only product that had hurdles to develop. Waddell said he was surprised that almost all of the students had a story about how they tried to make something, it didn't work, and they kept at it.

Waddell said he appreciated "their thoughtfulness and tenacity, to go after

something like this, develop all the software and hardware solutions on their own.

"These are they types of kids we're looking to employ," he continued. "It's why we do this, to show the younger generation how much we appreciate what they're doing."

Tanvi Nallanagula, a sophomore at Chantilly High School, was part of a team that designed and built the Ledge Wedge, an automatic light that brightens staircases to help decrease the amount of injuries that occur from falling.

"Seniors are a really valuable part of our society," Nallanagula said. "You sometimes forget that. As you talk, you can learn so many things. They still have a lot to teach us and it does no good to abandon or forget them."

Winners of the Shark Tank Challenge will be announced at the Fairfax Area Living Well, Aging Well Summit, a free convention of vendors, resources and services for seniors scheduled for Saturday, April 16 at the Fairfax County Government Center.

The website for the summit is [www.livingwellfairfax.org](http://www.livingwellfairfax.org). More information is also available by phone at 703-324-7647. For more information on the 50+ Community Action Plan, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/fairfax50plus.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/fairfax50plus.htm) or call 703-324-5720.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



**(Top row, from left) Michael Waddell, Kay Lamer, Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield), James Quigley and (bottom, from left) Julie Barber and Cindy George helped judge the first Fairfax County 50+ Assistive Technology "Shark Tank" Challenge for Fairfax County High School Students on March 28.**



**Chantilly High School sophomores Megan Van Rafelghem and Christine Shan work on building their team's "Ledge Wedge" for the Assistive Technology "Shark Tank" Challenge for Fairfax County High School Students.**