

# Chantilly CONNECTION

Fair Oaks ♦ Fair Lakes

# State Champs

SPORTS, PAGE 8

Teammates celebrate with Jared Enders (11), whose walk-off RBI single gave the Chantilly baseball team a 3-2 win over Battlefield in Saturday's 6A state championship game.

Chantilly Boys' Tennis  
Nets State Title

SPORTS, PAGE 11

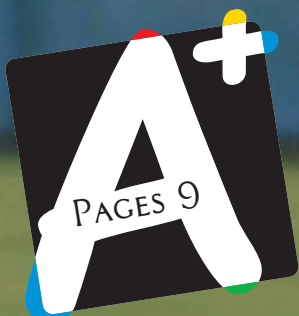
CHS Theater Director  
Ed Monk Is Retiring

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PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



JUNE 15-21, 2016

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# Lord and Lady Fairfax Honorees Selected

Annual tribute spotlights dedicated residents.

BY STEVE HIBBARD  
THE CONNECTION

Celebrate Fairfax, Inc. named the 2016 Lords and Ladies Fairfax at the Board of Supervisors meeting on Tuesday, June 7 at the Fairfax County Government Center.

“We’re proud to honor the 2016 Lords and Ladies Fairfax. Since 1984, each supervisor has selected a Lord and Lady to represent their district. Each honoree dedicates time to the betterment of their community,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova.

Each year the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors selects two people from each district who have demonstrated superior volunteer service, heroism, or other special accomplishments to receive the award.

Later that evening, the Lords and Ladies were honored at a cocktail reception and special dinner and hosted by Great American Restaurants, Celebrate Fairfax, Inc., and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

## The Chairman’s Lord and Lady Fairfax

Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova read the following description of Shirley Ginwright and Michael J. Hershman at the board meeting:

“Ms. Shirley Ginwright is one of the most devoted citizens of Fairfax County. She exemplifies community service in her countless efforts to bring people together and facilitate communal growth. Ms. Ginwright is the president of the Fairfax County NAACP, and served on the Fairfax County Chief of Police’s Diversity Council in 2013. Ms. Ginwright inspired and facilitated the establishment of the Communities of Trust Committee, and serves as the committee’s chairman. In addition, Ms. Ginwright served on the Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, serving as the chair of the Subcommittee to Review Police Practices for Recruitment, Diversity, and Vetting. Ms. Ginwright has done invaluable work to make Fairfax County a leader in community and law enforcement engagement and is very deserving of the title Lady Fairfax.

“Mr. Michael J. Hershman is president and CEO of Fairfax Group, and is an internationally recognized leader on ethics and transparency in business and government. Mr. Hershman’s extensive resume begins with his career with U.S. military intelligence. He is a cofounder of Transparency International, a nonprofit coalition promoting transparency and accountability in business and government. For 20 years, he gave



**Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova with her choice for the Lady Fairfax honoree, Shirley Ginwright and the Lord Fairfax honoree, Michael J. Hershman.**

generously of his time and talents as one of two citizen members of the Board’s Audit Committee. Mr. Hershman’s dedication was on display through his impressive handling of his role as chairman of the Board of Supervisors’ 70-person Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission. Mr. Hershman ably steered the commission and subcommittees through six months of discussions that culminated in 142 policy recommendations for the Fairfax County Police Department, many of which have already been implemented. Mr. Hershman is a proud and dedicated leader in our local and global community.”

## Sully’s Lord and Lady Fairfax

Sully District Supervisor Kathy L. Smith read the following description of Kelly Murray Lavin and E. Mark McConnell Jr. at the board meeting:

“Ms. Kelly Murray Lavin is a Virginia native and graduate of George Mason University. Ms. Lavin is the proud founder of Our Neighbor’s Child, which is entering its 25th year of providing holiday assistance to children from low-income families in western Fairfax. This organization started with a handful of Ms. Lavin’s neighbors providing gifts for a few children in need and through her leadership and determination grew to serving over 2,200 children from more than 800 families in 2016. Ms. Lavin and her husband reside in Virginia Run, and she is the mother to three grown sons. When her children were younger, Ms. Lavin was also the founding commissioner of the Southwestern Youth Wrestling program and the NOVA MatDogs Travel Wrestling program. She served for 14 years on the Virginia Run Elementary PTA board and served eight years as a board member for the Westfield



**Sully District Supervisor Kathy L. Smith with her choice for the Lady Fairfax honoree, Kelly Murray Lavin with the Lord Fairfax honoree, E. Mark McConnell Jr.**

Athletic Booster Club. Ms. Kelly Murray Lavin has made such a positive difference in the lives of so many in Centreville and Fairfax County.

“Mr. E. Mark McConnell, Jr. has been a Fairfax County resident for over 50 years and has a deep commitment to his community. As president of the Sully District Council and member of the Western Fairfax County Citizens Association Land Use Board, Mr. McConnell is an active advocate on land use issues in Sully District. He has served on both associations for over 15 years. Mr. McConnell’s involvement and diligence in the land use process has been instrumental in making Sully District the thriving community it is today. He also currently serves as the president of the Bull Run Civic Association and president/CEO of McConnell Construction Company in Centreville. Mr. McConnell and his wife were charter members of the Bull Run Elementary PTA. In his many years of community involvement, Mr. McConnell is most proud of serving on the panel to select Audra Sydnor as the first principal of Liberty Middle School.”

## Springfield’s Lord and Lady Fairfax

Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity read the following description of Lisa Friedrich Becker and Mark W. Fitzpatrick at the board meeting:

“Ms. Lisa Friedrich Becker was born and raised in Rochester, N.Y. She received a BA in art and architectural history from Connecticut College, and studied interior design at the New England School of Art & Design. She is currently a senior designer with Thomas Pheasant Interiors in Washington, D.C. Ms. Friedrich Becker is a co-



**Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity with his choice for the Lady Fairfax honoree, Lisa Friedrich Becker and the Lord Fairfax honoree, Mark W. Fitzpatrick.**

founder and current president of the Friends of Sydenstricker Schoolhouse, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of the Sydenstricker Schoolhouse in Springfield. She is also the secretary of the Upper Pohick Community League, which owns the schoolhouse and is the oldest continually operating community association in Springfield. In 2012 she was awarded the C.J.S. Durham Award in recognition of her successful Sydenstricker Schoolhouse nomination for the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Friedrich Becker designed and hosts the schoolhouse’s web-site, and speaks to local groups about the history of the schoolhouse and the Gambrill/Sydenstricker area of Springfield.

“Mr. Mark Fitzpatrick retired as director of engineering from Lockheed Martin Corporation in May 2014. Since then, as director and chair of the new Shepherd’s Center of Western Fairfax County, the newest center in the national Shepherd’s Center of America, he has led 27 volunteers in providing no-cost assisted driving to elderly residents of Western Fairfax to medical and food bank appointments. The all-volunteer Shepherd’s Center of Western Fairfax County has been providing these driving services for the past 13 months, completing more than 380 drives covering more than 11,000 miles. Mr. Fitzpatrick is a 23-year resident of Fairfax County. He is a graduate of West Virginia University, previously served eight years as Scoutmaster with Boy Scouts of America Troop 577 and currently is a member of Clifton Lion’s Club. Additionally, he assists with the Gracing Spaces non-profit organization providing gently-used furniture to needy families, and attends Lord of Life Lutheran Church in which he has served in a number of leadership positions and inter-faith ministries.”

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION



# End of an Era at Chantilly High

## Theater Director Ed Monk is retiring.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

It's the end of an era; Chantilly High Theater Director Ed Monk is retiring. He's bringing down the curtain on his career here after 31 years with Fairfax County Public Schools — 26 of them at Chantilly.

And before teaching there, he was a student at the school, graduating in 1978. He and his brother John were there when Chantilly opened in 1973 as a secondary school. Monk, now 55, was in eighth grade and his brother was in seventh.

"There was a cornfield across the street and a big barn with the words, 'Chantilly Farm,'" he said. "Route 50 had one stoplight between I-66 and Middleburg, and Fair Oaks Mall was a golf course. There were no computers or cell phones, and kids used the library, encyclopedias and pay phones."

Monk took drama at Chantilly under legendary theater teacher Elaine Wilson — an adjective that he's earned as well — and then majored in history at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. In his senior year, he decided he wanted to teach, so he took education classes at GMU to become certified.

In March 1985, he began teaching history at Thoreau Middle School in Vienna for five years. He also started doing writing and directing plays for St. Timothy Catholic Church's youth group. Wilson, still at Chantilly, knew about it because they shared some of the same actors and they'd kept in touch.

Then in 1990, FCPS went from six to seven school periods so students could take another elective. As a result, said Monk,



Ed Monk (in center, with envelope) and his students after last year's VHSL state theater championship.

"Elaine's theater program doubled in a year. So she asked if I wanted to teach theater at Chantilly." He began that year.

"Elaine taught me and then I gradually took over things," he said. "She retired, the end of '98; but by then, we already shared teaching the upper-level classes. I loved teaching, and teaching high-school kids was wonderful. Chantilly is a place where teachers tend to stay because it's such a good school — with a balance between academics, athletics and the arts — or they become principals."

Through the years, Monk put on about 90 plays and 26 holiday spectaculars. "I always enjoyed it," he said. "Some of our most memorable shows were 'Room Service,' a comedy with a great group of kids, and 'Booby Trap,' the first drama I wrote. And winning the State VHSL Championship three times was fun, including last year for 'Day Six.'"

He and his students always had a good time, he said. "In 26 years, there were only

10 days I didn't want to go to work," said Monk. "The rest of the time, it's been a ball. Every year's had wonderful times, amazing kids, hilarious things and moments that surprised me."

He's also enjoyed working with Chantilly's other theater director, Shannon Khatcheressian, plus former director, Gael Reilly. And, added Monk, "Because of Gael, who lives in Romania, I got to go to the American International School in Bucharest twice to teach a play I wrote."

He's become quite a successful playwright. He writes mainly comedies and children's shows and just had his 19<sup>th</sup> play published. "I even made money from them, which I never set out to do," said Monk, who's always been modest and low-key about his own accomplishments. "I just wanted to get a lot of kids involved in theater, so I wrote a lot of one-acts with several characters."

Some of his most hilarious children's plays are "Cucumber Phil," "The Kid Who Talked



Ed Monk in his school office, with family photos in the background.

to Penguins," "Goldilocks on Trial," "Aliens in My Closet," "Cinderella and the Substitute Fairy Godmother" and "Bedtime Stories (As Told by Our Dad Who Messed Them Up)."

Eventually, other schools started performing his plays at theater festivals, and Playscripts Inc. took notice. It called Monk and asked to publish them, which also surprised him. "That's not the way it's supposed to work," he said. "You're supposed to submit plays and get rejected." But then, he said, his whole career has been that way.

"I took a total of four drama classes in school," said Monk. "And I didn't know anything about building sets when I came here; I learned on the job. So it's just strange how everything worked out for me. Everything I've learned, I learned from Elaine Wilson. She wanted to get as many students on stage, or behind the scenes, as possible and still do quality work. That's what we've tried to maintain, and I think we have."

Every year, he and Khatcheressian have each helmed a big theater production and a children's show. They've also both taught beginning, as well as advanced, theater students. In the Cappies program, Chantilly won Best Play twice, for "Room Service" and "The Man Who Came to Dinner" and won the first Critics Team award. And in 17

SEE END OF AN ERA, PAGE 5

## 'Caring, Creative, Fun, Kind and Inspiring'

### Monk's students explain his impact upon them.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Chantilly High's Ed Monk is one of the most popular and effective theater teachers/directors around. And some of his seniors recently shared their thoughts about him.

"He's a really good teacher," said Jalen Thurman. "He keeps the mood light, but still pushes you to be the best actor you can be. He's also extremely creative and a lot of fun to be around."

"Mr. Monk is a living legend — he's been teaching, entertaining and inspiring students at Chantilly for many, many years,"

said Hannah Harmison. "He talks to us like we're adults, not children."

"There's an old saying, 'Those who can't do, teach,' and that's definitely not the case with him," she continued. "He's successful as a well-known writer, outside the Chantilly Drama Department, with his plays being produced all over the world. People in drama departments all over the country, and even in a school in Australia, know his name."

Trisha Ford said Monk always spoke his mind and never held back. And, saying he can't believe Monk is actually retiring, Jacob Rechner said he'll always remember him shouting the word, "Volume!" to get his actors to talk louder onstage.

"He's a great writer and teaches you about human nature and how audiences react," said Jordan Plozai. "He's also a role model in drama because, in the '70s, he was named

SEE KIND, PAGE 5



Chantilly Theater Director Ed Monk surrounded by this year's graduating senior thespians.

PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



# NEWS



Chantilly ShowStoppers sing "Fly Me to the Moon."



Max Read's "Bad Samba" guitar solo.

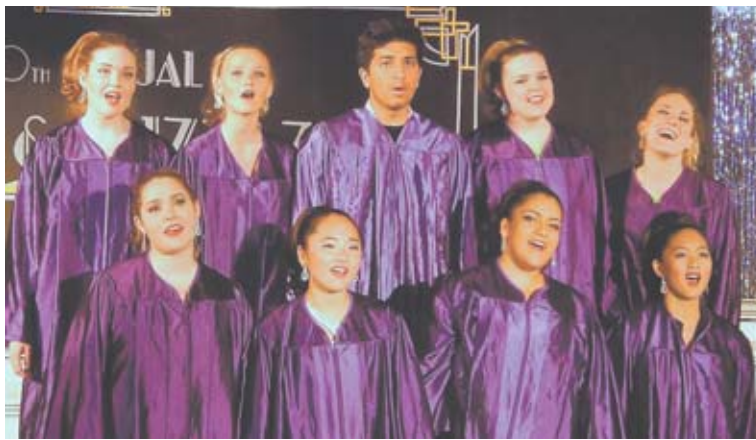


Thomas Allain and Sano Nagai perform "I Wish."

# Celebrating Three Decades of Music



The Chantilly Jazz plays "March Slav."

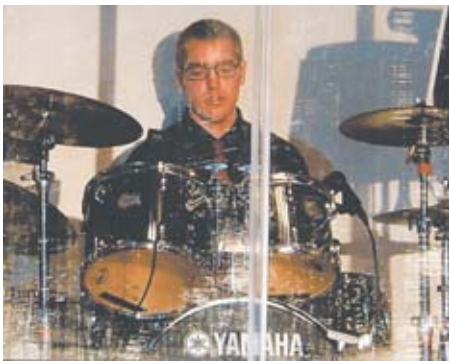


Graduating seniors perform "I'll be There."



Mario Reyes-Rivera sings "Ordinary People."

Chantilly High's 30th annual Jazz & Pizzazz was June 8-11.



Drummer Kevin Slappey played a 5-minute solo.



Chantilly ShowStoppers sing "How Will I Know?" during last week's Jazz & Pizzazz.



Dressed as zombies, performing Michael Jackson's "Thriller."

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS



The boys sing a Jackson Five medley.



Singing "Man, I Feel Like a Woman."



# End of an Era at Chantilly

FROM PAGE 3

years, it was nominated 12 times for Best Play and 14 times for Best Set.

Monk relishes the fact that he's gotten to wear jeans to work and hasn't worn a tie in 26 years. But perhaps the best part of his job was having all four of his children — Marley, Eddie, Maggie and Kelsey — in his theater program.

"I drove them to school, and they were in all my classes and shows, all four years," he said. "So I got to spend more time with them — and know all their friends — than most parents do. And my mom, Mary Monk, was the cafeteria manager when I came here as a teacher, and still is. So I'd take the kids to her office and she'd give them a treat."

He also emphasized that he "never made them take theater; they wanted to. They grew up here with the Chantilly actors babysitting them and playing with them. Kelsey even knew when an actor dropped a line from one production to another. Marley is now a stage manager in [Washington], D.C., and Maggie is an actress in California."

Toughest, said Monk, was having to disappoint students when posting a show's cast list. "I'd have great, nice kids who tried hard, but didn't get a part because there weren't enough, or they just got a small part," he said.

Most satisfying, he said, were his relationships with his students — "Watching them grow as actors and young adults and become really nice people. I still keep in touch with many of them. Most aren't going to do this for a living; they do it because they love it. It's a tight-knit community, they form friends for life and are always part of Chantilly Drama."

Monk was also happy "being part of this school that I love and having a great faculty and administration that's always supported us. This is Shannon's 17<sup>th</sup> year here, and we've never had a cross word. It was the same with Elaine and Gael; it's been a blessed place to work. We welcome anyone who wants to participate in theater in any way, and they can do other activities at the same time. And our parents support us and don't try to take over the program."

He said theater's about "creating something that didn't exist. You put it all together and try the best you can — and that carries over to anything you do in life. You should have fun doing it, laugh at yourself and just enjoy life."

So why retire now? After 30 years, Monk's reached the top of FCPS's pay scale and will get no more raises. So he and wife Grace are moving to Pittsburgh to be near several relatives, plus Eddie and his wife, who are expecting their first child. So, said Monk, "This is a good time to go, and to leave while I still love the job." But he won't be relaxing. His wife, a nurse, will teach childbirth and parenting classes there, like she does here. And he'll either teach or do something else "to pay off our kids' college loans, for the next 10 years. I didn't plan on this job and it's worked out, so it'll be a leap of faith. But it'll be exciting not knowing."

Monk won't miss getting up early, but he will miss "the kids, faculty and friends at Chantilly, and the challenges of new kids and new productions. The community's been supportive of me and the program, and I thank them. But my retirement's not real, yet. I guess, when I don't come back here in September, it will be."

# 'Kind and Inspiring'

FROM PAGE 3

the Outstanding Drama Student of the Year at Chantilly and then came back and taught here."

"He told us to 'Always be yourself and never be afraid to laugh at yourself,'" said Drew Beckvonpeccoz. "And in our freshman year, we were the first class to perform one of his new plays, 'Bedtime Stories.'"

Daniel Richter said, "You can tell [Monk] really cares about the department and Chantilly as a community and only doing things that would benefit them. And he always had a great time driving the drama students in the homecoming parade."

"Not only is he a phenomenal director — probably the best in the county — but he also makes theater fun," said Grace Mattes. "He's really kind and always tries to include everyone. And he asks us how we're doing and keeps up with our lives — and that's where a successful teacher separates himself from the pack."

Due to family job transfers, Sarah Kratz attended three other high schools before Chantilly. And, she said, "Mr. Monk and Mrs. Khatcheressian created the most friendly and welcoming environment where I was able to make friends immediately. Mr. Monk looks out for the little guy and



The going-away cake for retiring Theater Director Ed Monk.

brings out the best in everyone, including the quiet kids who might otherwise be overlooked."

"It's sad that he's retiring," added Julia Parkinson. "It'll be hard to find anyone who compares to him. He cares about his students and makes time to get to know them."

Noting that Monk taught both her older sisters, too, Hannah Bridenbaugh said she's known him for more than 10 years. "And in that time, he's never made me feel like a little kid. Even when I was 6 or 7, I was another human being."

"He's taught me, not just about acting, but about how people work, and I ended up learning so much about psychology," she continued. "I got so many great opportunities, and I know I'll be well-prepared to do whatever I want, theater-related, in the future, because of Mr. Monk."

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## Support for Police in Reforms

**Police commission recommendations go to Board of Supervisors for approval, implementation.**

In some ways, the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, brainchild of Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova, was a bit of a miracle.

The 32 voting commission members included at least nine representatives from Fairfax County Police; former Commonwealth's Attorney Robert Horan; current and former law enforcement officers with experience from the FBI, DEA, state police and others; other former county officials; mental health advocates; attorneys; high powered consultants. Ranks of those participating swelled to 80 when others were appointed the five subcommittees.

How could such a large, intense group with so many viewpoints get anything done? It seemed crazy to expect much. But Bulova, apparently, was crazy like a fox. Bulova and commission chair Michael Hershman, expressed unwavering commitment to the process.

The 142 recommendations, the result of democracy in action, provide support and more resources to the FCPD, while providing for transparency and public confidence.

Police, Commonwealth's Attorney Ray Morrogh, county attorneys and others provided answers to questions and consulted on recommendations every step of the way. The commission and subcommittees met for literally hundreds of hours over nine months. Individual members took on in-depth research projects and reported back to subcommittees.

Members of the Mental Health subcommittee, chaired by Del. Marcus Simon, traveled to Texas for a first-hand look at an effective Crisis Intervention program. In January, the Community Services Board, Police and Sheriff's

Office launched Diversion First, to get people having a mental health crisis who come into contact with law enforcement into treatment instead of jail. If this were the only accomplishment of the police review commission, it would be an achievement.

The Independent Oversight and Investigations subcommittee unanimously recommended formation of an Independent Auditor and a Civilian Review Panel. Independent oversight is a national best practice, and these issues come before the Board of Supervisors next month.

The commission recommends the implementation of body worn cameras, a recommendation that appears to be set for delay. This might be necessary, but if so, the delay should come with a timetable for next steps.

Changing the culture from withholding information to sharing as much as possible, as soon as possible, and responding to Freedom of Information requests with as much information as possible are part of the recommendations of the Communications subcommittee. Police departments in Northern Virginia have invoked a blanket exemption to FOIA requests, which has been part of the erosion of public trust.

The robust collection and reporting of demographics covering all stops, frisks, citations, arrests, and use-of-force incidents by district station and magisterial district is also key to public trust and departmental excellence.

Bulova and the Board of Supervisors formed the commission in the wake of the death of John Geer in August of 2013. Geer, a Springfield resident, was standing unarmed with his hands up in the doorway of his own home when he was shot by Officer Adam Torres. Torres, charged with murder, was the first Fairfax County Police officer in the history of the department to be charged in such a death. Torres entered a guilty plea to involuntary manslaughter, with a likely sentence of 12 months; his sentencing is scheduled for next week.

Public outrage over Geer's death was compounded by obfuscation and silence, the failure to communicate,

and a lack of public accountability. The police and county refused to release any information on the case for more than a year, and only then after repeated court orders. This tragedy and its aftermath no doubt had a negative impact on morale in the FCPD. The commission's recommendations ac-

knowledge the excellence of the Fairfax police. It's a credit to the department that Chief Edwin Roessler aspires to make FCPD the best in the nation. It's a high bar, county residents expect no less, and steps in that direction are a positive reflection on every member of the department.

It now falls to Supervisor John Cook, chairman of the Public Safety Committee, to guide these recommendations through for approval by the Board of Supervisors overall. The process is underway, and deserves public attention to the details.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Mary Kimm served as a member of the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission. Read more at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission)

**Key recommendations include Independent Auditor, Civilian Review Panel, commitment to transparency, body cameras, data collection.**

## ADAMS Condemns Orlando Mass Shooting

The All Dulles Area Muslim Society (ADAMS) condemns the tragic and horrific Orlando mass shooting, and rejects any possible motive for this terrible act, whose perpetrator is still being investigated as a possible hate crime, mentally unbalanced individual, and/or lone wolf terrorist sympathizer.

We send our thoughts, prayers, and condolences to the families and loved ones of all those killed or injured.

We appreciate the Orlando Muslim community's response in condemning this attack, and we join in urging the entire Muslim community to take part in a blood donation drive for those injured in the attack.

For us in Virginia, this tragedy brings back horrible memories of April 2007, when Virginia Tech student Seung-Hui Cho killed 32

people on the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University campus in Blacksburg, Va.

This is also too reminiscent of the equally horrific hate crimes like the attack in South Carolina on an African American Church, attacks in movie theaters and schools and too many more. Such incidents are a too frequent reminder of the number of individuals driven by hate to commit unspeakable acts.

This horrific Orlando attack however should not be used to vilify and stereotype the peaceful and law abiding Muslim community in America. Islam absolutely condemns and forbids terrorism and extremism. The Quran, Islam's revered text, states: "Whoever kills a person, it is as though he has killed all mankind. And whoever saves a life, it is as though he had saved all mankind."

Islam promotes the sanctity of human life,

and a respect for human, civil rights. Islam teaches religious freedom and emphasizes the same universal moral values accepted by the majority of people of all backgrounds. These are the same principles on which the U.S. Constitution was established and the Bill of Rights was approved.

Muslims believe there is "No compulsion in faith" and we reject violence, hatred, and discrimination toward anyone on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, religion, familial status, sexual orientation and national origin.

ADAMS' mission is to provide religious, social, and educational services to enable the Muslim community to fulfill its responsibilities and contribute to the betterment of society [www.adamscenter.org](http://www.adamscenter.org).

# Cappies Gala Honors Local High School Theater

The 17th Annual Cappies Gala honoring high school theater was held Sunday, June 12 at The Kennedy Center. Winning the top prizes for the Best Musical was Woodrow Wilson High School in the District for “Hair;” and winning Best Play was Duke Ellington School of the Arts in the District for “The Story.” This year’s Masters of Ceremony were Judy Bowns, Janie Strauss and Ed Monk, who is retiring from Chantilly High School this year.

This year’s show included 57 public and private high schools in Fairfax County, Arlington, Fauquier, Loudoun, Montgomery, and Prince William counties, and the cities of Falls Church, Alexandria, and Washington, D.C. The Cappies season extended from late October to early May.

The Cappies program was launched in the summer of 1999 by Judy Bowns, the Theatre Arts resource teacher with FCPS, and the late Bill Strauss (director, Capitol Steps), in cooperation with area theater teachers, for the purpose of celebrating and bringing public acclaim to high school theater.

— STEVE HIBBARD



The Sets Award went to “The Man Who Came to Dinner,” Chantilly High School. From left are Michael Rosegrant, Ben Klosky, and Eryn O’Reilly.



The Comic Actor in a Musical Award went to Keegan Garant, “Footloose,” Westfield High School.



The Stage Management and Stage Crew Award went to “The Man Who Came to Dinner,” Chantilly High School. From left are Tova Besalel, Rachel Weaver and Sophie Elledge.

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD

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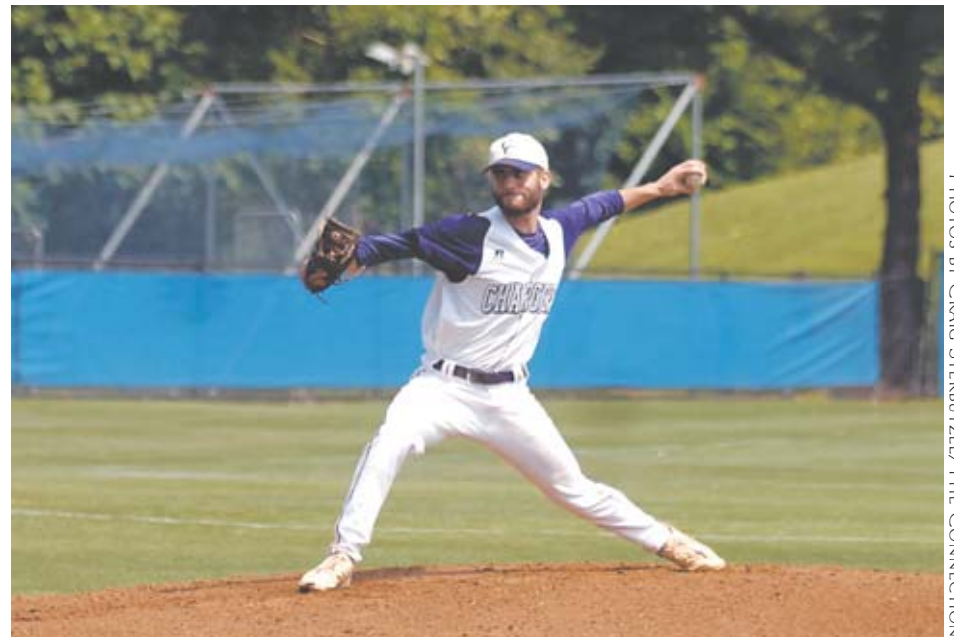
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Jared Enders' RBI single in the bottom of the seventh gave Chantilly a 3-2 win over Battlefield in the 6A state championship game on Saturday.



Chantilly starting pitcher Forrest Wagner received a no decision in Saturday's 6A state championship game. He allowed two runs on four hits in 6 1/3 innings.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

## Chantilly Comes Back to Win State Championship

**Chargers score three runs in bottom of seventh to beat Battlefield.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Chantilly baseball team's improbable comeback against Battlefield in the 6A state championship game on Saturday ended with a euphoric celebratory pile in the infield. It started with senior Forrest Wagner remaining resilient while facing a potential third straight loss in a state final.

Jared Enders' walk-off RBI single capped a three-run seventh inning for Chantilly and the Chargers captured the first state title in program history with a 3-2 win over Battlefield on June 11 at Robinson Secondary School.

After losing to Western Branch in the 2014 state championship game and falling to Madison in the 2015 state final, Chantilly trailed Battlefield 2-0 and was two outs away from yet another runner-up finish when Wagner started a memorable comeback in motion.

Wagner had started on the mound for the Chargers. He battled, keeping Chantilly in the game, but after the left-hander issued his sixth base on balls, he was pulled with one out in the top of the seventh inning and the Chargers trailing 2-0. Chantilly reliever Jake Pasquale got the next two outs and the Chargers came to bat in the bottom of the seventh needing at least two runs after managing just two hits in the first six innings.

With one out in the bottom of the seventh, Wagner, who had less than his best on the mound, ripped a single, bringing the tying run to the plate. It was Wagner's sec-



Chantilly right fielder Garrett Snedeker scores the winning run in the 6A state championship game on Saturday at Robinson Secondary School.

ond hit of the day.

"He's an amazing kid that just keeps battling," Chantilly head coach Kevin Ford said. "You saw what he had today — he was throwing fastballs because he couldn't throw anything else, yet he didn't hang his head. He got tired there at the end, so we kind of had to go to somebody else, but he battled and battled and battled and that is Forrest Wagner. We don't get here without him. He won a district championship on the mound; he won a region championship on the mound and got us to the end here. ... We don't keep going if he doesn't get a base hit there."

Second baseman Chris Pitura followed with a groundball to shortstop that resulted in a fielder's choice and an error, giving Chantilly runners at the corners with one out. Designated hitter Ryan Krueger then drove in a run with a sacrifice fly, cutting

the Battlefield lead to 2-1.

With Chantilly down to its final out and the tying run on second base, right fielder and No. 9 hitter Garrett Snedeker hit a fly ball to right that dropped for a game-tying RBI triple.

"Everyone was a little nervous," Snedeker said. "We know we're a great team, so we just kept our heads up. We usually have, like, one big inning per game. We knew it was coming up soon and we just got it done that last inning.

"... When you hit a pop fly, you've just got to think that it's going to drop, so I was just running the bases as fast as I could. Fortunately enough, it got over his head. I was already halfway to second, so that enabled me to get to third."

Enders, a first-team All-6A North region selection, completed the comeback with an RBI single.



Chantilly senior Forrest Wagner gives head coach Kevin Ford a celebratory bath after the Chargers came from behind to beat Battlefield 3-2 in the 6A state championship game on Saturday at Robinson Secondary School.

After rounding first, Enders fell to his back and was mobbed by his teammates.

"It's crazy," Enders said. "Down to our last three outs, thought my high school career might end with a third straight loss in the state championship, but — I don't know, I can't even believe that just happened, to be honest with you ..."

Wagner received a no-decision on the mound. He allowed two runs on four hits in 6 1/3 innings. He walked six and struck out one.

Pasquale pitched 2/3 of an inning and earned the win.

Battlefield starting pitcher James Beasley suffered the loss despite surrendering two hits and no runs through the first six innings.

Battlefield took a 1-0 lead in the top of the sixth when catcher Tyler Solomon led off with a home run over the left-field fence. After center fielder Oakley Herrewig hit a two-out single, pinch hitter Jonah Seagars fouled off four two-strike pitches before delivering an RBI triple and increasing the

SEE SEVENTH-INNING, PAGE 11

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# The Gap Year Trend

The pros, cons of taking a break in academic studies before college.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION



COURTESY OF OUTWARD BOUND

**A.J. Galindo of Alexandria, Benjamin Waters of Fairfax and Kirby Nassetta of Arlington participated in Outward Bound Costa Rica's Gap Year program.**

**R**appelling down an 80-foot waterfall, the ground appearing miles away, zip lining through thickets of dense, steamy rain forest, treating wounded travelers in the wilderness and engaging in other limit-pushing adventures — that's how three local young adults spent their time after graduating from high school.

"Scuba was definitely my favorite part of the course because of a strong reinforcement that I would enjoy working as a scuba instructor one day," said A.J. Galindo of Alexandria. His adventure was part of Outward Bound's Costa Rica program.

Galindo took what is known as a "gap year," which means taking an academic break for a year or a semester before beginning college. Gap year programs offer students an opportunity for "personal growth in ... leadership, self-awareness [and] ... character development," said Soizic Hagege, spokeswoman for Outward Bound Costa Rica.

After completing his Outward Bound program, Galindo enrolled in Thompson Rivers University in British Columbia, Canada.

The American Gap Association (AGA), an organization that accredits and sets standards for gap year programs, reports that taking a gap year has become an increasingly popular choice for American students. The association has seen renewed interest since Malia Obama's recent decision to take a year off before beginning her studies at Harvard University.

**A RECENT AGA STUDY** showed that students who took a gap year over performed academically in college. The organization released the results from a survey of its 2015 alumni. More than 90 percent of the alumni surveyed credited their gap year with increasing their self-confidence and maturity as well as offering time for personal reflection.

Uncertainty about future plans is one of the reasons students decide to take time off between high school and college. "Some don't know yet what they want to study, or want to take the opportunity to travel or work to get experience in the real world," said Francesca Reed, associate vice president for Enrollment Management and director of Graduate Enrollment Services at Marymount University. "A gap year ... can be a great opportunity for a person to mature and discover their interests before pursuing a college degree."

Experiences gained during a year away from school can offer clarity, says Jim McClellan, PhD, dean of Liberal Arts at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria. "Few students know what they want from life or what will be their life's work when they first enroll in college," he said. "Few finish college in the same major where they began. Sometimes a year of reflection can help a student focus. A year abroad or in some environment beyond their previous experience can offer new perspectives. Working at a 7/11 convinced me I needed to continue college."

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While the AGA reports that 90 percent of students are actively enrolled in a four-year institution of higher learning within one year of completing a gap year, the organization acknowledges that this option is not for everyone. The decision to delay college comes with a caveat that students may lose academic momentum they gained through high school.

"There is a set of skills that a student learns moving through each grade level. Like playing tennis or any other sport, the more practice, the better the performance," said McClellan. "Laying out for a year leads to skills atrophy. [For some students] it is better to continue on while in top form than to try to rebuild lost skills and regain good study habits."

Even for students who feel certain that they want to take a gap year, Reed advises completing the college application process if obtaining a college degree is a future goal.

"It is easier while they are still in school to gather letters of recommendation and use the resources of guidance departments when applying for college," she said. "It will also keep them focused with a future plan. If the student decides to go abroad or work full-time, it may be difficult to request a letter of recommendation while they are busy overseas or with work. Once accepted into college, they can defer their admission a semester or a year."

Boosted by a belief in the benefits of a gap year experience, a growing number of colleges and universities are supporting students who want to take time off before college. "Most colleges are accommodating and will move their start date to the following year," said Reed. "Colleges and universities like to see students with a plan and a degree of motivation before entering college, and the gap year may be the perfect opportunity to do just that."

Researching opportunities, thinking about goals and having a plan in place about how the time will be spent are critical components of a successful gap year. "They shouldn't wait until they graduate to start planning," said Reed. "Do you want to travel abroad? Learn a new language or improve your foreign language skills? Volunteer either at home or abroad? Explore career interests? It's important to have something meaningful in mind. There are many programs available for students that are considering a gap year."

McClellan suggests an alternate option for students and parents who are concerned that a gap year could slow a student's academic progress. "Spending the junior year abroad is a better idea since no academic momentum is lost and the experience of living and studying abroad is of incalculable value," he said. "Plus, with two years of college completed and added maturity, the junior year abroad is more meaningful than a gap year."

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## Control And/Or Lack Thereof



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If being diagnosed with a "terminal" form of lung cancer makes you feel anything, it is loss of control; along with all the anxieties associated with feeling powerless. As I may have written previously, "terminal" is all it's cracked up to be. That prognosis hangs over your head, almost physically – or so it seems, but most assuredly: emotionally and spiritually. The trick is; there is no trick.

Compartmentalizing, deluding, pretending, denying, hoping, praying, laughing and crying are but a few of the methods I've employed over these past seven-plus years in an attempt to overcome that original "13 month to two year" prognosis. Being open to diet and lifestyle changes and non-Western alternatives, and maintaining a positive attitude and a self-effacing sense of humor have likewise contributed – or so I've been told, to my above-average years of survival.

I wouldn't characterize these last seven years, however, as my friend Sean has joked, as "being on the clock," but cancer patients are usually on something. And the "something" we're most typically on is, a schedule. For me: 24/7 urine collection on Tuesday, pre-chemotherapy lab work on Wednesday (two days prior to Friday infusion), pre-infusion medication taken at home beginning Thursday and continuing through Saturday, Friday infusion, post-chemo weak for the next seven to 10 days; repeat every four weeks; quarterly C.A.T. scans followed by a quarterly face-to-face appointment with my oncologist to discuss the scan/results, P.E.T. scans every six months, M.R.I. of the brain once a year; plus my daily regimen of pills, supplements, apple cider vinegar, alkaline water, wheat grass, among other miscellaneous presumptive anti-cancer options.

Given this chronology of treatment and routine/maintenance, it's extremely difficult (let me amend that: I'll say challenging instead) to plan, schedule, coordinate, arrange and commit to social activities, especially those involving travel away from home. Because, at least for me, the cancer stuff comes first and is foremost – as does my daily routine – so anything that upsets that figurative apple cart is yet another complication/blip on my radar that initially serves no particular purpose other than reinforcing some of the less obvious problems/negatives of living life as a cancer patient undergoing treatment.

Perhaps understanding this lack of control/fairly rigid set of circumstances – as well as my recurring attempts at extending my life as long as possible – my oncologist, to his credit, has regularly given me opportunities to stop, start, change, etc. my treatment/schedule in order to enhance the quality of my life and give me back some control. Rarely have I taken advantage, however. As much as I respect and appreciate his opinion, it has always been difficult for me to find that balance. The logistics of juggling my mandated routine along with my personal routine – and dealing with the subsequent fears of not doing/maintaining either, given the fact that I've survived so long adhering to them, is a hurdle I've been unable to overcome.

I've often heard it said that laughter is the best medicine. I wonder though, as it pertains to cancer patients like myself, currently still on treatment, if breaking/braking routine – and saying the heck with it, for awhile anyway, is not the pause that refreshes? As much as I like to laugh, I'd like to live a little, too.

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

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## SPORTS



The Chantilly boys' tennis team won the 6A state championship.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

## An Unexpected State Title

Comini wins state championship in first year as Chantilly boys' tennis head coach.

BY AARON LUNDMARK  
THE CONNECTION

The Chantilly boys' tennis team headed into Saturday afternoon's state championship match after making one of the more unseen runs ever by a Northern Virginia tennis program.

With a champion-like effort in the final match, the No. 2 doubles team of freshmen Manu Balasubramanian and Shaun Ganju took a victory in the final match, giving Chantilly the 5-3 win over Cosby High School at George Mason University to win the Virginia 6A boys' team state championship.

To make it to the state tournament, the Chargers had to go through a lot. The improbable run started with them as the No. 3 seed in the 6A north region tournament after a 7-3 regular season.

"They've worked incredibly hard all season," said first-year head coach Mike Comini. "What I've seen the most in them is that they're competitors."

Comini knew a little bit about bringing home state championships as he brought five home for Herndon High School's gymnastics team before arriving at Chantilly.

Before reaching the state tournament, the Chargers upset Westfield and Langley be-

fore beating Madison to win the school's first ever region title in boys' tennis.

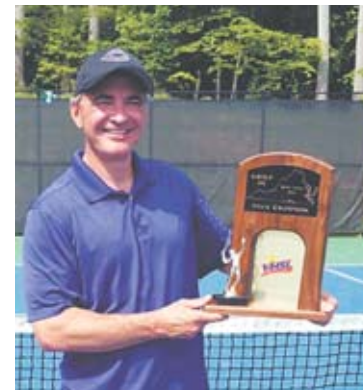
"Our battles with Westfield and Langley were something else — the tie breakers went on forever," said Comini. "But that character they showed as well as their no-quit attitude inspired me to be a better coach."

The team has been led by senior Sean Moran, as well as junior Josh Melynck, and freshmen Balasubramanian and Ganju.

Balasubramanian and Ganju both won their singles matches to go along with their title-clinching doubles match. Melynck also won his No. 2 singles match.

"During our matches we're really focused on winning," said Melynck. "So whether it means changing up how we play to get the win, we focus on it."

Even though No. 1 player Sean Moran lost his singles match, senior Abiral Pandey won his No. 5 match in singles, which helped propel Chantilly to the champi-



Head coach Mike Comini is seen after the Chantilly boys' tennis team beat Cosby to win the 6A state championship.

onship.

"It's kind of like the miracle on ice," said Comini jokingly. "We never thought we'd make it this far. I told them it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, so enjoy it. I never saw fear in them."

## Seventh-Inning Comeback

FROM PAGE 8

Bobcats' lead to 2-0.

Battlefield would take the two-run lead into the bottom of the seventh, but Chantilly found a way to score three runs.

"It's really just great for these kids," Ford said. "They have fought and fought and fought and to have a game like this, where we really didn't play that well, it would have been a tough one to sit with, but they came

through there at the end and got it done."

Chantilly finished the season with a 25-2 record and won championships at the Conference 5, 6A North region and state levels. The Chargers defeated Battlefield in the regular season, in the region championship game and the state final.

"It's a crazy feeling," Wagner said. "We've been here the past two years, lost it. It's a new feeling, I guess. It's so much more than just the regional or district 'ship."



# ENTERTAINMENT

Email announcements to chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

## ONGOING

**Carolina Shag Dance.** Wednesdays, 6:30-10 p.m. at Arlington/Fairfax Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Free lessons at 7:30 p.m.; no partners needed; dinner menu at 6:45 p.m. Tickets are \$8. Visit [www.nvshag.org](http://www.nvshag.org) for more.

**Open Rehearsal.** Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. at Lord of Life church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Centreville. The Fairfax Jubil-Aires barbershop chorus invites men of all ages who enjoy singing. Free. Visit [www.fairfaxjubilaire.org](http://www.fairfaxjubilaire.org) for more.

**Toddlin' Twos.** Tuesdays, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Early literacy storytime with songs and activities included. Age 2 with caregiver, free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

**Storytime for Three to Fives.** Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Stories and activities for children age 3-5 with caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

**English Conversation Group.** Thursdays, 7 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Practice English with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a space.

**English Conversation Group.** Selected Saturdays, 3 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Practice English

with a group of students and adults. Free. Call 703-830-2223 for a list of dates.

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**ESL Book Club.** Mondays, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Meet and discuss a book chosen by group. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a spot.

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**Lego Block Party.** Every other Tuesday, 3 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Legos will be provided for an afternoon of building. Grades 3-6. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

**Duplo Storytime.** Every other Wednesday, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Develop and reinforce early literacy skills for reading success. Ages 1-3 with adult. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

**Live After Five.** Fridays at 5:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway. Every Friday night a band plays on the patio of the winery. Free

to attend. Visit [www.wineryatbullrun.com](http://www.wineryatbullrun.com) for a full schedule.

**Legos Kids Club.** Every other Tuesday, 10:30 a.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Thousands of Legos for children to play with. Ages 6-12. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

**Starlight Storytime.** Every other Wednesday, 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Stories under the stars for ages 4-8. Wear pajamas and bring stuffed friends. Free. Call 703-830-2223 to reserve a space.

## PET ADOPTIONS

**Adopt a Cat or Dog.** Fridays, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at PetSmart, 12971 Fair Lakes Center, Fairfax. Visit [www.lostdogrescue.org](http://www.lostdogrescue.org) for more.

**Adopt a Dog.** Saturdays, 12-3 p.m. at Petco, 13053 Lee Jackson Highway. Visit [hart90.org](http://hart90.org) for more.

**Adopt a Dog.** Sundays, 1-4 p.m. at Petco, 13053 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy. Adopt a puppy or dog. Visit [foreverhome.org](http://foreverhome.org) for more.

**Adopt a Dog.** Saturdays, 1-4 p.m. at PetSmart, 12971 Fair Lakes Center, Fairfax. Adopt a puppy or dog. Visit [www.lostdogrescue.org](http://www.lostdogrescue.org) for more.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 18

**Family Day and Outdoor Aviation Display.** 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly. See military, recreational, and home-built aircraft as well as classic automobiles. Enjoy presentations, demonstrations, special tours, and hands-on activities for all ages. Free. Call 703-572-4118 or visit [airandspace.si.edu/udvarhazy](http://airandspace.si.edu/udvarhazy).

**Touch-A-Truck.** 1-4 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Children and adults will have the opportunity to explore a wide variety of vehicles including helicopter Fairfax One (weather permitting). Free. Call 703-502-3883.

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/JUNE 18-19

**Northern Virginia Summer Brewfest.** 12-7 p.m. Saturday, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Sunday at Bull Run Regional Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. The biannual Northern Virginia BrewFest returns for its summer installment presented by Mad Fox Brewing Company. Call 703-631-0550, visit [www.nvrpa.com/park/bull\\_run](http://www.nvrpa.com/park/bull_run), or [www.novabrewfest.com](http://www.novabrewfest.com) for more.

## SUNDAY/JUNE 19

**Annual Antique Car Show.** 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Father's Day Gourmet Cuban Pig Roast.** 3 p.m. at Paradise Springs Winery, 13219 Yates Ford Road, Clifton. Menu to include La Caja China roasted pork, black beans and rice, yucca, salad, fried plantains, and tres leches for dessert. Tickets are \$75, \$65 for wine club members, \$45 for children. Visit [www.paradiseparkwinery.com](http://www.paradiseparkwinery.com).

## THURSDAY/JUNE 23

**Program: 19th Century School Days.** 1 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Scribble on slate boards, write with quill pens and read stories in an 1820s school house, complete with fireplace. Admission is \$5 for county

residents, \$7 for non-residents. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) for more.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 25

**Author Event: Sherryn Craig.** 11 a.m. at Barnes & Noble, 12193 Fair Lakes Promenade Drive, Fairfax. Saturday story time with a visit from Sherryn Craig, author of "Midnight Madness at The Zoo." Free. Call 703-278-0300 for more.

**National Day of Play.** 3:30-7:30 p.m. at Gymboree, 14155 Sully Field Circle, Ste. 1, Chantilly. Families with children from birth to 5 are welcome to drop-in for play activities, flying parachutes, bubbles, art, music, touch a truck, child ID program, balloons, refreshments and more. Free. Call 703-836-2277 for more.

## SUNDAY/JUNE 26

**Preserving Sully.** 11 a.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. On this specialized walking tour, see select archival photos and hear stories about past and continued efforts to preserve Sully Historic Site. Admission is \$8 for county residents, \$10 for non-residents. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) for more.

**Author Event: Rick Campbell.** 2 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, 12193 Fair Lakes Promenade Drive, Fairfax. Rick Campbell, author of "The Trident Deception" will release "Ice Station Nautilus." Campbell will lead a discussion and Q&A session for his readers. Free. Call 703-278-0300.

**Patriotic Concert.** 6 p.m. at Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. The National Christian Choir will be presenting selections from their newest album, "Glory - A Celebration of God and Country." Free. Call 703-383-1170 for more.

## WEDNESDAY/JUNE 29

**White Glove Tour.** 11 a.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Take a behind-the-scenes tour with a curator and learn the ins and outs of specialized furniture. Look in cabinets and the old clock and see the special door that leads to hidden storage areas. Admission is \$8 for county residents, \$10 for non-residents. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) for more.

**Sully Architecture Tour.** 1 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Tour Sully from the ground up, from cellar to rafters, and see 18th century construction techniques used when Sully was built. Admission is \$8 for county residents, \$10 for non-residents. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) for more.

## THURSDAY/JUNE 30

**Program: 19th Century School Days.** 1 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Scribble on slate boards, write with quill pens and read stories in an 1820s school house — complete with fireplace. Admission is \$5 for county residents, \$7 for non-residents. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov) for more.

## MONDAY/JULY 11

**"How to Throw a Rockin' Facebook Party."** 7-9 p.m. at Gunnell House at Truro Church, 10520 Main St., Fairfax. Facebook can be a marketing tool for authors. Capital Christian Writers presents tips on throwing a successful Facebook party with Heather Gray, vice president of Virginia's American Christian Fiction Writer and the founder of The Inspired Inkpot, a co-op street team for authors writing Christian fiction. Free. Visit [www.capitalchristianwriters.org](http://www.capitalchristianwriters.org).

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