

WELLBEING

PAGE 6



Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

The Town of Herndon provides a family-fun event at Bready Park at the Herndon Community Center on Independence Day. Mother Shamita Palma, son Frank Palma, 4, and sister Sienna Palma, 2, enjoy festivities even before the fireworks began.



Rain or Shine, Fun Fourth

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Herndon High's Sharpshooters Have Best Season in School's History

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Give Paddle Power a Try

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PHOTO BY KEN MOORE/THE CONNECTION

JULY 6-12, 2016

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left: Stacy Thoma, (director of Community Engagement at Fisher House Foundation), Sean Moran (owner of Herndon and South Riding Wireless Zone locations) and Jorien Hopkins (sales representative at South Riding Wireless Zone Store).

Herndon Business Owner Raises Funds for Fisher House Foundation

On Thursday, June 23, Sean Moran, franchise owner of Wireless Zone in Herndon and South Riding, Virginia, presented Fisher House Foundation a check for \$758 as part of his continued support for the charity.

Fisher House Foundation provides free lodging to military and Veterans' families while their loved ones are receiving medical treatment. The charity has helped more than 277,000 families and saved an estimated \$320 million in out-of-pocket costs

for lodging and transportation. Last year alone, it served more than 27,000 families.

Starting in April, both of Moran's Wireless Zone locations in Herndon and South Riding, Virginia pledged two dollars to the charity for every phone and tablet the store sells until Sept. 15, 2016. The \$758 raised so far will fund 75 nights of lodging for military families helped by Fisher House Foundation. For more information, visit www.wirelesszone.com.



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Alexander Ayala, 11, was confident he would win the sack race on July 4 at Herndon's Bready Park.



Frank Palma, 4, is thrilled picking the colors of his balloon animal, with sister Sienna Palma, 2, as their mother Shamita Palma looks on.

More Rain Than Shine, But Loads of Fun

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

Jenna and Fritz Tanis came to the fireworks in Herndon prepared, with a tent comfortable for four no matter how much rain fell.

They brought their son Jaden, 1, to his first fireworks along with older brother Devin, 3.

For much of the beginning portion of the evening at Bready Park, the Tanis family had one of the best spots on the field.

About 20 minutes before 8 p.m., when rain stopped, more spectators started showing and filling in spaces around the Tanis family.

After racing in a sack race, Alexander Ayala, 11, had an answer for his favorite part of July 4 that would make his teachers and parents proud.

"Everybody can celebrate their independence because of the soldiers that fought for our freedom," he said.

Shane Woolley and Andres Bachalet, of

Vienna, took advantage of the Independence Day festivities to try to sign up more people to vote in November's elections.

Grandmother Shelby Gordon brought her grandchildren Valarie Kitchen, 8, and Kendall Blevens, 9. Before the fireworks, the sisters enjoyed getting their faces painted side by side.

Valarie said she's already been photographed in a magazine and been featured in a television commercial before.

Frank Palma, 4, got to pick the colors of the balloons that turned into the shapes of animals while he and his sister, Sienna, 2, and mother Shamita Palma watched.

Rain and shine, Herndon's fireworks dazzled hundreds Monday.

The Town of Herndon provided a family-fun event featuring games, patriotic arts and craft activities, live music, family games, bingo, food, balloon artists and more.

Events took place in Bready Park at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave.

PHOTOS BY KEN MOORE/THE CONNECTION



Jenna and Fritz Tanis packed a tent so their sons Jaden, 1, and Devin, 3, could enjoy the live music and fireworks at Bready Park, rain or shine.



Before the fireworks, sisters Valarie Kitchen, 8, and Kendall Blevens, 9, get a touch of color to dazzle their faces at the annual Herndon Festival on Independence Day.



Whiskey Rebellion took the stage while it was raining around 7:15 p.m. but their music, which ranged from bluegrass to modern party favorites, might have been the necessary rain dance that swept rain away in time for the fireworks at 9:15 p.m.



OPINION

Hungry in Summer

There are hungry children in Northern Virginia, more so in summertime.

Summer for most children in Northern Virginia is a time of fun and activities, camp and vacation, trips to the pool and possibly to the library. Specialized camps and activities tune up sports skills and academic skills. Parents try to ensure snacks are at least somewhat healthy.

In this environment, most of us don't come into much contact with families that might be having trouble feeding their children. We can't imagine that there are children who are hungry in summer.

But many children in our region don't know what their next meal will be in summer. During the school year, many have depended on school to provide breakfast and lunch during the school year. Volunteers have stepped in to provide backpacks to go home with hungry students on the weekend.

In the City of Alexandria, 60 percent of students in public schools qualify for subsidized meals at school.

In Fairfax County, that overall number is

lower at 27.5 percent, but in many areas, more than 50 percent of students qualify for subsidized meals at school.

In Arlington, more than 30 percent of students qualify for subsidized meals at school.

But most of the students who counted on school meals during the school year are not in school for the summer.

Submit Photos to Pet Connection

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish on July 27, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by July 17.

We invite you to send us stories about your pets, photos of you and your family with your cats, dogs, llamas, alpacas, ponies, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your life with you.

Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans.

Please tell us a little bit about your creature,

Locations for Summer Meals

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/pdfs/summer_meals-2016_open_sites.pdf
http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/pdfs/summer_meals-2016_closed_sites.pdf

Fairfax County operates more than 20 open sites in areas where more than 50 percent of students qualify for free or reduced meals where students can go in summer for breakfast and/or lunch. These locations are along the Route 1 corridor, in Herndon, Reston, Fairfax, Chantilly, Lorton, Falls Church and more. See links above for locations.

It also falls to many nonprofits and food pantries to fill the gaps, and those organizations need help keeping food available.

identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name).

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COMMENTARY

Time to Stand Up to Anti-Women Regulations

BY JENNIFER BOYSKO
STATE DELEGATE (D-86)

On Monday, June 27, the Supreme Court of the United States made the right decision to find the Texas TRAP laws unconstitutional. We have these laws in Virginia too. TRAP laws — Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers — passed by the Virginia General Assembly in 2011 under the administration of former Governor Bob McDonnell, have nothing to do with improving women's health.

TRAP laws have everything to do with the politics of restricting a woman's right to choose.

There has been no effort to impose the same requirements on other patient care providers such as podiatrists, oral surgeons or even outpatient plastic surgery facilities.

In Virginia and elsewhere - the TRAP laws include expensive and burdensome architectural regulatory requirements, including increasing hallway width and increasing ceiling heights in boiler rooms. The required modifications can exceed \$1 million and do not improve patient safety at all. This is a cost out of reach for most clinics. The United States Supreme Court agrees.

❖ Let's be clear: TRAP laws



From left: Dr. Jamila Perritt (emeritus medical director, PPMW), Councilmember David Grosso (D.C. Council - At Large), Shelly Livingston (native Texan and PPMW activist), Delegate Jennifer Boysko (D-86), Dr. Laura Meyers (president and CEO, PPMW), Delegate Ariana Kelly (Maryland 16th district), Dakia Davis (Planned Parenthood patient).

were created and enforced with one goal — to close clinics and restrict access to critical women's health care. Many of my colleagues in the Virginia General Assembly don't believe that women should be able to make decisions for themselves. And they have been successful.

Virginia's General Assembly mandated an unnecessary ultrasound requirement as well as a restrictive 24-hour waiting period.

❖ Since June 2013, when the TRAP law took effect - these costly requirements have caused clinics

to close. In fact, according to the 2016 Annual report produced by NARAL Pro-Choice Virginia, 92 percent of Virginia counties have no abortion providers. The long distances required to travel across the state, combined with the 24-hour waiting period often necessitates an overnight stay. This, like in Texas, leaves most Virginians with no reasonable access.

❖ These TRAP regulations are one step further in demeaning women and giving politicians the power to strip women, mainly rural and low-income women, of

their constitutional right to safe and legal abortion.

❖ Our current Governor, Terry McAuliffe, has worked with the Virginia Board of Health to make improvements in the regulatory process. Recently, the Board of Health voted to review TRAP regulations and received overwhelming public support to repeal them. Monday's Supreme Court decision, further justifies the repeal of these burdensome and medically unnecessary regulations.

❖ I understand that the decision to have an abortion is a difficult one. But politicians should not have a role in this personal private situation. As the mother of two daughters, I will always advocate for their right to decide for themselves, for Virginians and for all Americans because women deserve access to the best quality health care without having to fight barriers, and regardless of what their zip code may be.

Now in Virginia, it's up to us, the majority of the population, to use the Supreme Court's clear ruling to stand up to these anti-women, anti-health regulations. I invite you to use your voice with me to protect our sisters, our daughters in Virginia, in Texas, in my home state of Alabama, and all across the US, so that they can make their own decisions for themselves.

Oak Hill & Herndon
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Reston Hospital Center Honored with Mission: Lifeline Achievement Award

Reston Hospital Center has received the Mission: Lifeline Silver Quality Achievement Award for implementing specific quality improvement measures outlined by the American Heart Association for the treatment of patients who suffer severe heart attacks.

Every year, more than 250,000 people experience an ST elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) the most deadly type of heart attack caused by a blockage of blood flow to the heart that requires timely treatment. To prevent death, it's critical to restore blood flow as quickly as possible, either by mechanically opening the blocked vessel or by providing clot-busting medication.

The American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline program's goal is to reduce system barriers to prompt treatment for heart attacks, beginning with the 9-1-1 call and continuing through hospital treatment.

"Reston Hospital Center is dedicated to improving the quality of care for our patients who suffer a heart attack, and the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline program is helping us accomplish that goal through nationally respected clinical guidelines," said John Deardorff, president and CEO of Reston Hospital Center and HCA's Northern Virginia Market. "We are pleased to be recognized for our dedica-

tion and achievements in cardiac care, and I am very proud of our team."

In addition to receiving the Mission: Lifeline Silver Receiving award, Reston Hospital Center has also been recognized as a recipient of Mission: Lifeline's Silver-Plus award, which recognizes the hospital has reached an achievement score of 75 percent or greater for treating STEMI transfer patients from other facilities within 120 minutes.

"We commend Reston Hospital Center for this achievement award, which reflects a significant institutional commitment to the highest quality of care for their heart attack patients," said James G. Jollis, MD, Chair of the Mission: Lifeline Advisory Working Group. "Achieving this award means the hospital has met specific reporting and achievement measures for the treatment of their patients who suffer heart attacks and we applaud them for their commitment to quality and timely care."

Reston Hospital Center earned the award by meeting specific criteria and standards of performance for the quick and appropriate treatment of STEMI patients by providing emergency procedures to re-establish blood flow to blocked arteries when needed. Eligible hospitals must adhere to these measures at a set level for 12 consecutive months to receive this award.

For more information about Reston Hospital Center visit restonhospital.com.

HERNDON CRIME REPORT

Activities reported June 20, 2016 through June 26, 2016

Robbery - June 23, 1000-blk Elden Street. The victim was approached by three unknown suspects who assaulted him and stole property valued at approximately \$415. The victim was transported to a local hospital for treatment of minor injuries. The suspects are described as three black males approximately 16-18 years of age.

Missing - Fany Torres Gonzales, 15, has

been missing since Feb. 13, 2016. She is five-feet tall, 100 lbs. She has brown hair and brown eyes. She was last seen at her home at 9:30 p.m. on the on Feb. 12, 2016, wearing green pants and a green shirt. If you have any information contact Herndon Police at 703-435-6846; or Detective Croson at 571-237-4987 or Michael.Croson@herndon-va.gov

FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday.

Church of the Holy Comforter offers a monthly Healing Eucharist with the Laying on of Hands and Anointing for Healing. The service occurs on the first Sunday of each month at 5 p.m. in St. Mary's Chapel. The Healing Ministry is being led by the Rev. Valerie Hayes and Ms. Alexandra MacCracken and includes a team of lay healers who have gone through intentional training and formation. For more information, contact the Rev. Valerie Hayes at vhayes@holycorforter.com. The church is located at 543 Beulah Road NE, Vienna.

The **LDS Church** at 1515 Poplar Grove Drive in Reston will hold a discussion led by scriptural scholars on "The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus." The class is from May 31 to Dec. 20. Free. Contact: 703-582-3169 or 7461810@mormon.org.

Trinity Presbyterian Church, 651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery and childcare are provided and youth and adult Sunday school classes are held prior, from 9:40-10:45 a.m. 703-437-5500 or www.trinityherndon.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center, Unitarian Universalist Church, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds weekly classes starting Sept. 12, Thursdays 7-8:30 p.m., for the general public which use Buddhist teachings to practice meditation. \$12. 202-986-2257 or www.meditation-dc.org.

St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 1700 Wainwright Drive in Reston, holds Sunday services at 7:45 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. Nursery, Sunday school and adult education available. Morning prayer on Monday at 9:30, Holy Eucharist Wednesday at 8:15 a.m. 703-437-6530 or www.stannes-reston.org.

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WELLBEING

Strategies for Preventing Concussions This Summer

Local physician is pioneering traumatic brain injury treatment.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Summer has been dubbed "trauma season" by health care professionals. Warm temperatures make swimming, biking, hiking, waterskiing and other outdoor activities irresistible during the summer, but this also means a rise in concussions and other injuries. In fact, every 19 seconds someone in the United States sustains a traumatic brain injury.

The National Institutes of Health define a concussion as a mild traumatic brain injury caused by an external force, such as a blow to the head. Symptoms can include a headache or neck pain, nausea, ringing in the ears, dizziness, or fatigue, while serious symptoms include seizures, trouble walking or sleeping, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination, repeated vomiting or nausea, confusion, and slurred speech.

Michael Lewis, M.D. is the president of the Brain Health Education and Research Foundation in Potomac, Maryland. Lewis, who retired from the U.S. Army after more than 30 years of service, is dedicated to improving public health. He spent the last five years of his military career working on nutritional interventions to help prevent and treat brain injuries from physical and psychological trauma.

His interest in brain injury treatment was sparked by the 2006 explosion at the Sago coal mine in Sago, West Virginia. The blast

and collapse trapped 13 miners for nearly two days.

"Only one guy survived," said Lewis. "They used high dose omega-3 fish oil to help his brain recover from carbon monoxide poison. I wondered if it would help soldiers recover from traumatic brain injury. I put together a program to do that kind of research for the military. How can we improve from the inside out for any soldier or athlete who is at risk for head injury?"

Lewis' focus is on the clinical use of omega-3 fatty acids for the prevention, acute treatment, and rehabilitation of brain injuries from traumatic brain injury and concussions, stroke, PTSD and other conditions.

On a more personal level, Lewis' 16-year-old son Isaac attends Winston Churchill High School and plays two sports often associated with concussions: football and lacrosse. Lewis says his son has never sustained a concussion, but he is working with the school's athletic staff on strategies to prevent concussions among athletes. He also makes sure his son takes fish oil every day.

"The value you get from sports far outweighs the risks, but we should mitigate the risks as much as possible," Lewis said. He also advises his patients to "take a fish oil supplement every day or eat good sourced salmon."

Symptoms of a concussion might not be immediately apparent. "The more subtle symptoms are those that appear days or



COURTESY OF MICHAEL LEWIS

Dr. Michael Lewis recently opened a medical practice in Potomac, Maryland, that focuses on concussions and brain health.

"The value you get from sports far outweighs the risks, but we should mitigate the risks as much as possible."

—Michael Lewis, MD, president, Brain Health Education and Research Foundation

weeks after an injury," said Lewis. "The personality might change, a person might become more irritable, have brain fog or have trouble thinking, or their head feels like it's stuffed with cotton."

Among the signs that one might have sustained a concussion are a "loss of consciousness, followed by marked confusion," said Robert Wade, Ph.D., dean of nursing, Northern Virginia Community College's Medical Education Campus, "Most likely a headache, too."

No two injuries are the same. "Each concussion is different, which means the same child could have different symptoms during different concussions," said Ryan Wildenhain, head of sports medicine at Marymount University.

When students are back in school, parents should watch for another common indicator of concussions in student athletes. "One of my warning signs are grades that are falling off," said Lewis. "A straight 'A' student whose grades drop is a warning sign. A good kid who all of a sudden becomes irritable should prompt questioning. Kids are not always good at telling, they tend to want to play through it — it's part of our culture."

Wearing proper protective equipment is recommended as a way to prevent concussions. "Minimizing the risk of a child sustaining a concussion is extremely difficult and dependent on the type of activities the child does," said Wildenhain. "Every child should be properly educated on how concussions occur, the signs and/or symptoms of a concussion, and how to avoid dangerous situations for the specific activity they intend to do."

Lewis warns that even protective equipment isn't foolproof.

"Even if you're wearing a football, hockey or motorcycle helmet, when you hit something, another helmet or another head, it causes injury," he said. "If coaches see anything that is any way questionable they should get them off the field and out of harm's way. I think it's a parent's duty to stop the game and pull the kid out of a game if they see something that a coach doesn't see or doesn't respond to."

Preventing Zika: Doing Your Part

Open public meeting in Great Falls on how to prevent the disease from spreading.

BY NIKKI CHESHIRE
THE CONNECTION

In light of growing international concerns regarding the spread of the Zika virus, the Fairfax County Health Department is holding open public meetings to inform residents how to best prevent the disease from spreading.

While the Zika virus has existed for more than half a century, its rapid spread across South and Central America was unprecedented. The outbreak has been going on since early 2015, and doesn't seem to be slowing down just yet. "I'm sure it'll spread to 2017 too," said Shawn Kiernan, the district epidemiologist at the Fairfax County Health Department.

According to Kiernan, the disease has

occurred in Northern Virginia, but of the 16 known cases in the area, none of them have spread locally. Kiernan said all of the cases are directly linked to travelers who visited a country currently affected by the Zika outbreak. However, the FCHD is actively working to detect the possibility of local transmission, meaning they're looking for signs the disease is actively spreading from person to person via mosquitos. As of yet, this has not occurred in Virginia.

According to Josh Smith, an environmental health supervisor for Fairfax County, the mosquitoes known to carry Zika are present in the area. However, the mosquito that spread the disease the easiest, *aedes aegypti*, is very rare in Northern Virginia.

Another mosquito that can carry Zika, the Asian tiger mosquito, is common in the area

but doesn't spread the disease as well due to its characteristics.

"It's just not a good vector," said Smith, meaning that particular insect isn't a very effective means for the virus to spread. Smith said that Asian tiger mosquitos are awkward flyers, and don't travel far beyond where they breed, so if you see them flying around, "they're most likely from your own backyard."

Additionally, Smith said these insects aren't picky, so they spend most of their time feeding on hosts that aren't necessarily human.

The best way to prevent the spread of the Zika virus and other mosquito-borne illnesses is to interrupt their life cycle, according to the FCHD. "But we can't go everywhere," Smith said, referring to the fact that most places where these insects breed are containers on private property.

The FCHD encourages homeowners to walk their property at least once a week and dump out any containers that hold

standing water, including things such as empty plant pots, uncovered and drained hot tubs, old tires, and any other place that can collect average amounts of standing water (but excluding swimming pools, as they're too large for the insect). Additionally, the mosquitos that are known to carry the Zika virus do not breed in still water ponds, pooling lakes, stormwater management areas or drainage ditches, so Smith considers those areas to be of least concern when it comes to combatting the Zika virus.

If a container can't be dumped, the FCHD recommends treating the water with a mosquito larvicide, available at local home improvement stores. The larvicide specifically targets mosquito larvae, and will not harm other animals.

"Source reduction is the most important effort," said Smith. According to the FCHD, active homeowners are often the best line of defense.

WELLBEING

Healthy Summer Entertaining

Tips for serving bounty of tasty, fresh produce.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

While summer means weekends filled with trips to the beach, backyard grilling and al fresco dinner parties, the food that accompanies these gatherings is often laden with fat and calories (think ice cream, potato salad, hot dogs, s'mores and summer cocktails) and can wreak havoc on a healthy balanced diet.

"Summer here is by the far the best time for food in the mid-Atlantic region and it goes all the way through September," said Nick Phelps of From the Farmer. "Unfortunately, that's when most people are out of town."

An online food delivery company, From the Farmer delivers fresh, primarily local produce, sustainable meats and artisanal pantry items to clients in Maryland and Northern Virginia, including Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax County.

Phelps recommends serving plenty of fresh fruit when planning summer entertaining. Fruit has a high water content and is not only refreshing, it's also filling and can satisfy a craving for sweets. "The most exciting [locally grown producer] are fruits like peaches and plums, which come out mid-summer,"

Phelps said. "There are still some spring produce like strawberries and blueberries."

Summer ushers in fresh vegetables that are bursting with color and packed with fiber. Eating them raw or cooked minimally helps preserve the amount of fiber and vitamins.

"I think entertaining is easier during the summer," said Terri Carr of Terri's Table in Potomac, Md. "There's so much available that can be cooked or prepared easily, and there's just so much that you can do with the produce and the fresh herbs that we have in season now."

The bounty even yields alternatives to ubiquitous ice cream. "You can make sorbet with fruit and beautiful berries," said Carr. "With heirloom tomatoes, it'll be a Caprese salad or gazpacho, and I have a tomato torte that's made with a lot of basil."

Carr will demonstrate her favorite summer cooking techniques and recipes in her class that teaches how to cook for hot weather. She advocates avoiding heavy dishes in favor of "healthy and beautiful combinations that can create a protein-rich and satisfying main course." Using the best of the season's bounty, Carr will use ingredients such as fish, chicken, tomatoes and a variety of greens to show others how to create delicious salads.

Her focus on healthful eating extends beyond her classroom. "I often grill salmon and vegetables," she said. "Or I make a big bowl of pasta with heirloom tomatoes and peppers. I love entertaining in the summer. It doesn't take as much skill and it certainly doesn't take as much time."

Dermatology & Allergy

SPECIALISTS OF VIRGINIA

Kathryn J. Sowerwine, MD



Dr. Kathryn J. Sowerwine is a board certified Allergist and Immunologist with a special interest in dermatological diseases linked to allergy. She completed a residency in Internal Medicine at Georgetown University Hospital and her clinical and research fellowship in allergy and immunology at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD.

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Pushups For Charity Challenge Benefits Veterans

Local veteran opens gym, Rebel Fit USA.

A local Air Force veteran is challenging the community to push their physical limits for a good cause. Beny Blaq, founder of Rebel Fit USA, is hosting a Pushups for Charity challenge to support veterans and active duty military. The challenge coincides with the grand opening of Blaq's new fitness facility located at 2088 Daniel Stuart Square, Woodbridge.

"As an Air Force veteran, the Pushups For Charity challenge is very important to me, especially knowing firsthand the sacrifices our military, veterans and their families make every day," said Blaq.

Rebel Fit USA is a team-oriented health and fitness community specializing in expert coaching through a personalized, hands-on approach. The Pushups For Charity challenge starts at 9 a.m. after Rebel Fit's first morning class. Prizes will be awarded to the top fundraiser as well as the male and female who complete the most pushups within the 90 second timeframe. Rebel Fit USA has set a goal of raising \$10,000 and completing more than 5,000 pushups.

Registration for the Rebel Fit Pushups For Charity team is available online at: <https://www.crowdrise.com/benyblaq-pushupsforcharity2016/fundraiser/benyblaq>.

— MARILYN CAMPBELL



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Air Force Veteran Beny Blaq, owner and founder of Rebel Fit USA, will host a Pushups For Charity challenge to support veterans and active duty military.

Pushups For Charity

REBEL FIT USA

2088 Daniel Stuart Square, Woodbridge, Virginia
July 9, 9 a.m.

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

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AUGUST

8/3/2016.....Wellbeing
8/10/2016.....HomeLifeStyle
8/17/2016...A+ Camps & Schools – Back to School – Private Schools

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SPORTS

Give Paddle Power a Try

The Dragon Boaters are ready to take you aboard.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

It's been called the fastest growing water sport in the world – although it took more than 2,000 years to recently take aim at that title. It can be enjoyed by people of all ages, all levels of skill, and varying degrees of commitment, from the just for “fitness and fun” crowd to the most serious of competitors. And you don't even have to know how to swim to participate! So what is this mysterious, possibly-ancient activity that just about anyone can do? Dragon Boating! Hmmm—sounds like something combined from “Game of Thrones,” and “Vikings,” but it's really a lot more fun and a lot less dangerous than the action depicted in either of those television series. And a lot less expensive to take up than many other sports.

“It's true,” says Kwansene Kenner, who is the mother of two young dragon boaters, someone who has also competed in the sport, and who just so happens to be the program manager and assistant coach of the Capital City Dragons (CCD), the youth club of dragon boaters right here in our area. “I have a 13-year-old son who also plays football. The cost of his equipment and the time spent in practice and travel are quite a lot more than the \$95 annual fee for his membership in CCD. The youth teams generally practice just once a week and their membership includes all the equipment needed.” (Membership in the adult club is more.)

The sport of dragon boating wasn't born on the mythical shores of “Westeros,” nor from the real-life journeys of those water-wandering Vikings. The modern manifestation of the competitive activity saw its beginnings in Hong Kong in 1976, but its roots can be traced back to China, in the B.C. Fast forward a few thousand years and see how dragon boat racing has evolved into an international sport celebrating fitness, fun and teamwork, and whatever level of competitiveness suits the individual paddler—and how it has successfully paddled into our own local waterways.

Starting with the basics. Just what is a “dragon boat?” In China, the dragon is a much revered symbol of power, with controlling influence over water and related weather. Decorated with a colorful dragon head and tail during competition, the dragon boat is basically a long, narrow canoe, manned by 20 paddlers sitting as pairs in 10 rows, with a steerer/coach navigating and issuing commands from the back, while an on-board drummer keeps time at the front. Don't think for a minute that the drummer is just for show. Check out the photos and imagine those 20 paddlers sitting that close together and not maintaining a steady and synchronized rhythm.

There are numerous differences between dragon boating and other rowing sports, but the most obvious are that the crew of the dragon boat is facing in the direction of the boat's travel, not backwards as in sculling, and it's a paddle, not an oar, that's used to



Three of the four Kinsey-Korzym dragon boating brothers – Liam, Spencer and Matt – were on hand for this practice occasion. The young men, recently graduated from South Lakes High School in Reston, joined the Capital City Dragons when they were just 12. All three agreed that they “got hooked” and enjoyed the exercise, the challenges and meeting new people around the region and even from around the world.



Kenner Eversmann, 16, a student at James Madison High School in Vienna, really knows how to wield that paddle. She probably learned a thing or two from her coach, Kwansene Kenner (her mom) who is also the program manager and assistant coach for the Capital City Dragons. Kes qualified for last year's World Championships in Welland, Canada.

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION



The Capital City Dragons is a dragon boat club for youth ages 12 – 18. This gang are ready for a practice run from the Anacostia Community Boathouse in southeast Washington. Toan Pham stands at the back of the boat, in command as steerer and coach. Although he has been involved with the sport for some 15 years, Pham says he is “still learning” and loves to help the next generation develop their physical skills, their sense of adventure and the spirit of teamwork.

propel the boat.

DRAGON BOATING came to our area when the National Capital Area Women's Paddling Association (NCAWPA) was established in 1992 as a nonprofit, community-based organization. What started as a women's only paddling group has grown significantly over the years. In 1994 the NCAWPA started a team for outriggers (a story for another day). Then came the DC Dragons, a co-ed group of paddlers who range in age from 18-72. In their 20-year history, they have become a real force to reckon with in the sport, often sending members to represent Team USA in the

IDBF World Championships.

Convinced that dragon boating was really something for everyone, the NCAWPA then developed a youth program for ages 12 to 18, dubbed the Capital City Dragons, and head-coached by Jeff Kuhn, who does double duty as the president of the DC Dragon Boat Club (DCDBC) - not to be confused with the DC Dragons. The DCDBC really illustrates just how explosively the sport is growing. Since its formation in 2008, they have expanded to more than 150 members and a plethora of teams including a recreational adult mixed team, a competitive adult mixed team, a women's team, and a blind and partially sighted team called the

“Out of Sight Dragons.” Based out of Gangplank Marina at the Wharf, the DCDBC is also home to a number of community teams and corporate teams like the “Volksdragon,” and Booz Allen's BetaFish gang. Isn't the double duty of coaching responsibilities with one group and the president's role in another a bit like overloading the plate? Maybe, but Kuhn thinks it's worth it. “It's great to have a hand in introducing the kids to the sport, watching them develop not only physical skills, but teamwork and confidence.” Whether or not the youngsters become competitive dragon boaters, both Kuhn and Kenner say that the sport is “addictive” and it's something that can be enjoyed at just about any age.

Matt Kinsey-Korzym and his three brothers agree that dragon boating “can really grow on you.” The four boys, all 2016 graduates of South Lakes High School in Reston came to the sport rather accidentally, when “Mom took us out here when we were in the sixth grade, just to see if it was something we might like to do.” Apparently it was. In the six years since they first took up a paddle, the Kinsey-Korzym quartet have loyally attended the weekly practices, and participated in dozens of races, even last year's IDBF 2015 World Championships in Welland, Canada.

“Oh, it's hard, that's for sure,” admitted Liam Kinsey-Korzym, “but it's really fun.” “I especially like that we made friends outside of our own school circle,” added brother Spencer. “At the races you have lots of time to meet people and really talk and get to know each other. And, of course, you get to know your crew members, and they come from all over – Virginia, D.C., Maryland.” The brothers also acknowledged that adding dragon boat competitor to their school applications and resumes “kind of

SEE DRAGON BOATING, PAGE 12

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CALENDAR

Send announcements to www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Mapping Moments. July 13-Aug. 28. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. An exhibit featuring of vibrant abstracts which will draw the viewer into the worlds of international artist Caroline Morgan and Jay Young Gerard. 703-956-9560.

Beginners Chair Yoga. July 5-Aug. 30. 6-7 p.m. Herndon Senior Center, 873 Grace St., Herndon. Yoga for beginners with a teacher who specializes in yoga with 50+ in mind. \$10/\$20. 703-464-6200.

Sixth Annual Herndon Town Calendar Photography Exhibit. June 29-July 10. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St. Herndon. 703-956-9560. artspaceherndon.com

Herndon Friday Night Live. 6:30 p.m. Through Aug. 26. 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Features the most popular local and regional acts from up and down the east coast. Free. For more information or for the performance schedule, go to herndonrocks.com.

Summer Entertainment Series. June 1-Aug. 31. Fairfax County Parks. A summer-long calendar of shows, concerts and movies appropriate for you and your family. These concerts held in local parks are the perfect place to bring a picnic dinner, blankets and lawn chairs to enjoy the best local and regional entertainers. Free. To find out what's playing at your nearby park, go to <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance/>.

Reston Concerts on the Town. 7:30-10 p.m. Saturdays, June-August. Reston Town Center Pavilion. Bring lawn chairs or picnic blankets and enjoy live music in the Pavilion. Free. Rain or shine. restontowncenter.com. 703-579-6720.

All-comers' Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. For more information, call 703-689-0999 or visit <https://potomacriverrunning.com>.

TUESDAY-SATURDAY/JULY 5-9

Coco-Cola Collectors Convention. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St., Reston. Bring Coca Cola collectibles and have them appraised. Swap with other collectors. Live auction. The convention's Saturday swap meet on July 9 is open to the general public.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Town of Herndon's Farmers' Market Fun Day runs from June 30-Aug. 25.

Free. cocacolaclub.org. 214-929-0555.

THURSDAY/JULY 7

Farmer's Market Fun Days. 10:30-11:15 a.m. Town Hall Green, 730 Station Green, Herndon. Milk Shake Duo Live! Great rock music for kids. Free. herndon-va.gov.

FRIDAY/JULY 8

Guerrilla Theatre Works: At What Cost? 8 p.m. NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. \$20. One night only events featuring various genres of performance. nextstoptheatre.org.

Kristen and the Noise Concert. 6:30-10:30 p.m. Town Green, 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Come hear the band Kristen and the Noise in concert. Free. info@herndonrocks.com.

Senior Tea. 10:30 a.m.-noon. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St. Herndon. All teas are free and open to the public. 703-956-9560. artspaceherndon.com.

SATURDAY/JULY 9

Ukulele Festival. 10-6 p.m. Lake Anne Plaza, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. free festival features performances by several acclaimed ukulele musicians, music demonstrations, a public morning jam session, festival vendors, and other family friendly activities. Free. lakeanneplaza.com.

Meadow Explorers. 9 a.m. Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Enjoy a hike to our Wildlife Sanctuary meadow in hopes of seeing various animals the call our meadow home, while learning about the wildlife habitat. Bring footwear suitable for hiking. \$10/\$12. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lakefairfax/>.

Herndon Town Calendar Photography Reception. 7-9 p.m.

ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St. Herndon. 703-956-9560. artspaceherndon.com.

THURSDAY/JULY 14

Farmer's Market Fun Days. 10:30-11:15 a.m. Town Hall Green, 730 Station Green, Herndon. Yosie, lively children's sign-along. Free. herndon-va.gov.

FRIDAY/JULY 15

Crazy in Stereo and Six to Midnight Concert. 6:30-10:30 p.m. Town Green, 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Crazy in Stereo's five different members sing lead vocals in multiple combinations. Come hear the band known for their versatility and harmonies. Free. info@herndonrocks.com.

SATURDAY/JULY 16

Opening Reception Mapping Moments. 7-9 p.m. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. An exhibit featuring of vibrant abstracts which will draw the viewer into the worlds of international artist Caroline Morgan and Jay Young Gerard. 703-956-9560.

SUNDAY/JULY 17

Concert4aCause. 4-10 p.m. Town Green Lawn, 777 Lynn St., Herndon. Rocknocos, Gonzo's Nose, High Valley and Cassadee Pope. \$20/\$40. <http://bit.ly/Concert4aCause>. 703-739-6750.

MONDAY/JULY 18 - FRIDAY/JULY 29

Summer Stem Camps. South Lakes High School, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston. VEX IQ Robotics. and VEX1 Robotics. Register at www.nvcc.edu/systemic or contact SySTEMic Solutions Regional STEM Coordinator Aleksander Marthinussen at 703-530-2894 or systemic@nvcc.edu for information.

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Stop The Presses!



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

And cancel the third shift. My constant (lifelong) craving for sugar seems to have subsided since my last chemotherapy infusion. Typically, for a week to 10 days after my Friday infusion, food doesn't appeal to me. Even chocolate (in particular) and sweets in general do not affect the eating challenges I experience during this near fortnight. Usually, the pattern, going on 18 months or so now, is after 10 days, give or take, my interest in food returns and it's Katie-bar-the-door as I ravage the house looking for food that I had neglected the previous 10 days. To say I'm hungry after a week of not eating is to disrespect the obvious. There's not a word that accurately characterizes how I'm feeling when the urge to splurge finally returns. Suffice it to say, it's not safe for food to be around me. And the food which is most often around me are from Kenny's four major food groups: cake, cookies, candy and ice cream.

But not this time. Actually, let me be honest: not nearly as much as usual and way below what anyone who knows me would consider normal for me. As of Saturday, two-plus weeks out from my last infusion, in the house I have zero cookies, zero candy, zero cake and some ice cream – from approximately three weeks ago, which remains frozen and untouched in my freezer, which in and of itself is a miracle. In fact, ice cream has probably never been in my freezer longer than a week – cumulatively, in my entire life. Yet, when I open the freezer door now, to check inventory, there sits two Ben & Jerry's pints, one Breyer's quart and a half and two boxes of Dove Bars (six bars total), missing only two bars since its purchase. This kind of availability is foreign to me and speaks to the depth of my distaste and disinterest in all things sweet/chocolate. No doubt, if you believe many of the professional opinions, cancer patients need to reduce their sugar intake. Could it be that after seven-plus years of treatment, my brain has finally gotten the message and taken over – or been affected/instructed somehow, and told my receptors to stop being receptive to sugar?

If so, alert the authorities because there's going to be a bump in the unemployment rate next month. M&M Mars, Nabisco, Entenmann's, Hostess Brands, Tastykake, Little Debbie and NECCO (New England Confectionary Company) among a few other miscellaneous selections will be cutting staff. And if my lack of sugar craving continues, the drop will be precipitous. As Muhammad Ali said back in the day (about his boxing prowess): "It ain't bragging if it's true." Well, I ain't bragging, either.

Now don't get me wrong, when in the supermarket, I'm still making my usual rounds through all my familiar aisles and taking note as I walk. But for some inexplicable reason, this particular post post-chemo week, I don't have – to quote a singing Tom Cruise and Val Kilmer from their 1986 movie "Top Gun," "that loving feeling." It seems/feels as if I've actually lost it. And though not consuming mass quantities of sugar would certainly be bad for the cancer cells – who do crave it (and good for my overall health), it definitely doesn't help the snack food/dessert industry. But I suppose I can't really worry about that. I have bigger problems: stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer. I don't anticipate that my current aversion to sugar will last, but in an odd way I'm enjoying my new-found freedom. Every minute of my life is now spent thinking about eating and/or avoiding chocolate. To invoke a Moe Howard (of The Three Stooges) line from a classic two-reeler: "What an experience!" (Although, he was talking about changing his socks.) So too has this been an experience. One I hope which doesn't continue for much longer.

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

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-Theodore Roosevelt

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VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

MARIAMMA KARINGATIL THOMAS AND
SAJAN K. THOMAS, CO ADMINISTRATORS, C.T.A.D.B.N.
OF THE ESTATE OF KARINGATIL THOMAS VARGHESE,
DECEASED

Petitioners,
v CL16-1005

BENJAMIN K THOMAS, ets als,
Respondents.

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The object of the above-styled suit is to distribute one-fourth (1/4) portion of Benjamin K. Thomas from the Estate of Karingatil Thomas Varghese, Deceased, into the Court. And, it appearing by affidavit filed according to the law that Benjamin K. Thomas, one of the above-named Respondents, cannot be found, that service was attempted on Respondent's last know mailing address and could not be completed, that certified letters sent to the Respondent's last known mailing address have been returned, and that diligence has been used without effect to ascertain his location, it is therefore ORDERED that the said Benjamin K. Thomas appear on or before the 5th day of July, 2016, in the Clerk's Office of this Court and do what is necessary to protect his interests.

And, it is further ORDERED that this order be published once a week, for four (4) successive weeks in the Herndon Connection, of Alexandria, Virginia, a newspapers of general circulation in Herndon; that a copy of this order be posted on the local government website.

I ASK FOR THIS:

CATHY JACKSON LEITNER (VSB# 44288) ; ASHLEIGH
KESTER (VSB #76926)
LEITNER LAW GROUP, 2565 John Wayland Highway, Suite
110 Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801
540-442-7700
540-442-7744 (Facsimile)
Counsel of Petitioners

Do what you can, with what you
have, where you are.
-Theodore Roosevelt



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Newly elected 2016-17 board of directors posing with appointed Parliamentarian, Darlene Cooke. Pictured from left are Darlene Cooke, Karen Amster, Jeanne Sclater, Linda Shilts, Kathy Jackson, Pat Thompson, Lynn Barron and Karen Craft. Board member not pictured - Nannette Henderson.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia Installs New Board of Directors

Assistance League of Northern Virginia's Installation of the 2016-17 Board of Directors was conducted on June 13 during the annual chapter meeting and luncheon. This year's meeting was held at Dolce Vita Cucina Italiana in Fairfax and offered an opportunity for members, old and new, to join together to celebrate the chapter's successes for the year. Pat Thompson, president of Assistance League of Northern Virginia 2014-16, thanked all members for dedicating their time and energy to improving the lives of children in need. She asked members to reflect upon the significant impact their work has had on the community the organization serves. Member volunteers were commended for donating over 7,000 hours of service in support of the nonprofit's philanthropic programs, which touched the lives of 17,101 children this school year. Gail Banks, Marty

Le Van and Wilma Bastian were recognized for their outstanding achievements with respect to the Weekend Food for Kids program. Parliamentarian Darlene Cooke administered the oath of office to the new board, including, Linda Shilts, President, Jeanne Sclater, VP Philanthropic Programs, Kathy Jackson, VP Membership, Karen Craft, VP Resource Development, Nannette Henderson, Education Chairman, Lynn Barron, Recording Secretary, Pat Thompson, Treasurer and Karen Amster, Public Relations Chairman. Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) non-profit that feeds, clothes and educates children in need in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. Operation School Bell and Operation Hugs programs will resume in Fall 2016. To learn more, visit www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ by noon on Friday.

THURSDAY/JULY 21

Introduction to Doing Business with the Intelligence Community. 8 a.m. Leidos Conference Center, Freedom Square One, 11951 Freedom Drive, Reston. Features executives from three of the 17 federal intelligence agencies, including the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the National Security Agency and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. \$35/\$50. For more information, please contact Ashleigh Dorfman, CSEP, events and development director at 703-707-9045 or ashleighd@restonchamber.org.

ONGOING

The **Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center** needs a bingo caller and an art therapy assistant. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The **Herndon Senior Center** needs a volunteer trained in taking blood pressure, Social Visitors and a Baked Goods Table Manager. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

The **Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Also visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/.

Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Fairfax County needs a volunteer **Senior Center Marketing Coordinator** to assist the Friends of Fairfax County Senior Centers with marketing. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Free Support Group for Parents with Children with Autism. Saturdays at 10-11 a.m. 462 Herndon Parkway, Suite 202, Herndon.

Food Addicts in Recovery. Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at The Vine Church, 2501 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring. Are you having trouble controlling the way you eat? Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA) is a free 12 step recovery program for anyone suffering from food obsession, overeating, under-eating or bulimia. For more information or a list of additional meetings throughout the U.S. and the world, call 781-932-6300 or www.foodaddicts.org.

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Rifle Team members celebrate competing in the Area 5 Championship, and thank the Izaak Walton League for inviting them to shoot the match at its new facility.

PHOTOS BY
ROBERT R. MAXWELL



Herndon High's Sharpshooters Have Best Season in School's History

After six months dedicated to practice, perfection, and intense competition, the Herndon High Navy JROTC Rifle Team celebrated their best season ever. Highlights include new school records and award of the Fairfax County JROTC Rifle Spicer Cup as well as a third place finish in the Area 5 Championship, which includes more than twenty teams from Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia.

Over the past four years, the Rifle Team has broken record after record, and this year was no exception. The team broke every team record in existence, and it also had a novice shooter, Cadet Erin Maxwell, who set two new individual rookie records.

Record breaking has grown with the team's popularity. Each year approximately twenty-five cadets undergo safety and other instruction necessary to compete for a position in the top sixteen. These top sixteen team members regularly practice so that they can vie for a competition spot in the top nine, who must consistently demonstrate the reliable, accurate marksmanship required to compete. To make things even more interesting, as the season continues, rankings change as the top sixteen members continue to acquire new personal best scores and higher averages. This year's final top nine were Rifle Team Cadet Commanding Officer Allison Maxwell (2016), Cadet Clayton Newcomb (2016), Rifle Team Cadet Executive Officer Danny Jones (2017), Cadet Raphael Del Rosario (2018), Cadet Sarah Ettestead (2018), Cadet Leo Sucre (2018), Cadet Erin Maxwell (2019), Cadet Claude-Alexander McVicker (2019), and Cadet Moran Qiu (2019).

"I think we accomplished so much this year because every team member set and exceeded personal goals," shared Cadet Maxwell. "While air rifle requires practice, patience, and resilience, anyone with a real interest can be successful. None of our team members, including myself, had ever shot competitive air rifle until enrolling in Herndon High's Navy JROTC. The Unit gave us all a great opportunity to learn an NCAA sport."

In addition to establishing new personal best scores and multiple team records, the Rifle Team once again won the Spicer Cup. Formed in 2003, the Fairfax County-wide JROTC Rifle League named the award after the league's founder, the late LTC Joe Spicer, USA (ret), from Hayfield High School. The tournament included six high schools – Edison (Army), Hayfield (Army), Herndon (Navy), Mount Vernon (Marines), South Lakes (Army), and West Potomac



Cadet Allison Maxwell and Cadet Clayton Newcomb recently graduated from Herndon High School. They competed on the Rifle Team together for four years. In the fall, Cadet Maxwell will be attending Franklin Marshall College, where she will study neuroscience. Cadet Newcomb will be attending Northern Virginia Community College followed by George Mason University, where he will major in math education.

(Army).

Most impressive, however, was the Rifle Team's third place finish in the Navy JROTC Area 5 Championship, which is the highest the team has ever placed among the many highly competitive teams in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Herndon High's Navy JROTC is for anyone interested in real leadership experiences, teamwork, and/or high-level competition. There is no military commitment. To learn more about this program, contact David Adler, Captain, USN (ret) at (703) 755-5710 or dbadler@fcps.edu.

Dragon Boating

FROM PAGE 8

makes you stand out a bit from the crowd."

Kes Kenner Eversmann, 16, another CCD member who qualified for the 2015 World Championships in the Junior B (U1) Division, also enjoys the friendships she has made through the practices and the competitions and the cultural experiences. "Plus, it's exercise on the water!" said the 10th-grader from James Madison High School in Vienna.

The Kinsey-Korzym boys are all heading off to college in the fall. Those who are staying locally say that will probably move up to the DC Dragon adult club. "Because dragon boating doesn't require hours of practice several times a week," said Liam, "I found that it didn't interfere with academics or even other sports or extracurricular activities. I think you can do this and still do what you need to and have fun in college, too."

If you're thinking that there's "no room on the boat" for you with all these boaters who have been pushing the paddles together for years, then think again. "Our practices and our teams are really quite fluid," declared Kwansene Kenner. Dragon Boat crews are not like football or baseball teams with a set roster per season, barring injury or other unforeseen circumstance. "People do come and go. We sometimes literally have to 'balance the boat' before a practice session and sometimes before a race, putting people in certain positions depending on who's there."

COACH KENNER explained that there is a Premier Division Class of competitors - "the best of the best." Those teams tend to be more constant in their crews, but just like in the Olympics, team members who compete at the World Championships (held in odd years) or Club Crew Championships (even years) come from all over after individual athletes "earn their berths" with superior performances in individual qualifying races. "Those who want to compete at that level can, but there is plenty of room and a warm welcome for those who just want to enjoy the camaraderie, some great cardio and core exercising, and a good day out on the water."

As a shining example of just how accessible the sport is,

Kenner talks about the GoPink!DC team, the only local dragon boat team for women who have had or have breast cancer. Along with their own personal experiences, the participants in that NCAWPA club cite numerous studies that laud the physical and mental benefits of the sport for women in treatment for, or in recovery from breast cancer. The GoPink!DC paddlers race against other breast cancer teams, and like the DC Dragons and the Capital City Dragons, and the DC Dragon Boat Club teams "they come from all over the region, and include women who never did a water sport before," said Kenner. "So don't be shy. Come on out!" is her advice.

As Kenner points out, there is "nothing to lose" by exploring dragon boating as your new casual hobby or competitive passion. Folks interested in the adult mixed-crew DC Dragons, in the breast cancer surviving GoPink!DC team, or in the youth program of the Capital City Dragons are all invited to attend a practice or two or even more – at no charge. They meet at the Anacostia Community Boat House in Southeast Washington. All equipment, including life vests, are provided, but anyone who wants to give it a go must register and sign waivers with the appropriate team in advance. For an upclose look at dragon boaters in action, Kenner also recommends joining in the fun at the upcoming Capital Dragon Boat Regatta on August 27th along the Southwest Waterfront in D.C. For the more daring, Kenner suggests getting a crew complement group together and join in. "After all, that's how I started," Kenner says, as part of a corporate-sponsored team, "and I knew nothing about it, but I certainly got hooked!" Kenner, Kuhn and the rest of the paddlers think you might, too.

The NCAWPA's website, www.ncawpa.org, has all the history and information necessary to explore the paddling sports in our area. The DC Dragon Boat Club will tell you their story at www.dcdragonboat.org, and introduce you to a variety of teams, the youth club Capital City Dragons at www.capitalcitydragons.org and the breast cancer survivors team www.gopinkdc.com. For more information on the Third Annual Capital Dragon Boat Regatta, see their website at www.capitaldragonboat.com.