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Robinson Grad Traffic Fatality

NEWS, PAGE 3

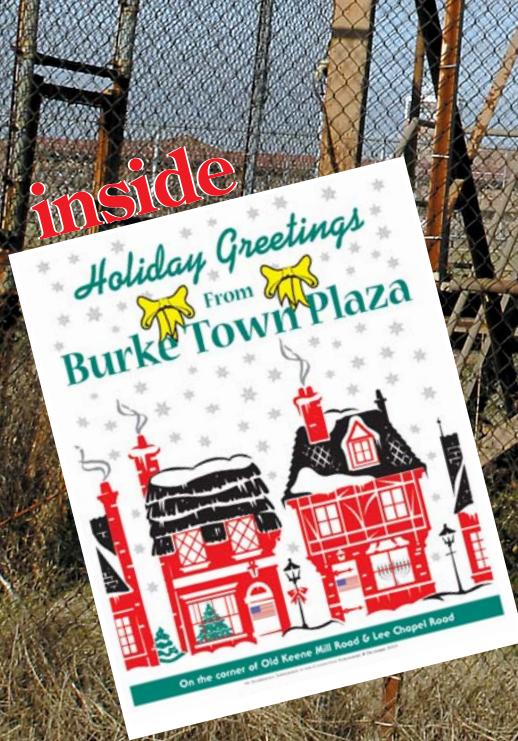
FCPS Give Third Option

NEWS, PAGE 3

ENTERTAINMENT PAGE 10 ♦ SPORTS PAGE 16 ♦ CLASSIFIED PAGE 19

PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

The latest draft of
the Laurel Hill
Project master plan
calls for the base-
ball field at the old
Lorton Prison site
to be torn down.



On the Fence

News, Page 3

Springfield Mall

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NEWS

Planners Not Playing Ball?

Local baseball club, community members criticize Laurel Hill Project plan.

BY DEREK B. JOHNSON
THE CONNECTION

Though the dugouts and grandstand of the baseball field sandwiched within the old Lorton Prison were built in the 1950s, pinning down its exact origins and use has become a matter of dispute. Used originally by prisoners for games, the field also doubled as a venue throughout the years for events and concerts.

Now owned by Fairfax County, the fate of the field is among a host of issues related to the redevelopment of the prison site that has organizations the South County Hawks baseball club crying foul.

In the newest draft of their master plan to adaptively reuse the historic site, the Alexander Company plans to tear down the ball field. A development and consulting company based in Wisconsin, Alexander unveiled its latest draft in a series of 10 public meetings over the last two months. In those plans, the outfield would be used for the placement of the first two rows of 95 proposed residential townhouse units, while the infield would be converted into community green space.

Brad Elmer, development project manager for the company said they were taking all public input into consideration but their

"I'm willing to let them walk away from this."

— Neil McBride, Lorton Heritage Society

and we did. Our feeling is that really the space should be available to enhance the community."

WHEN FAIRFAX COUNTY assumed ownership of the 80-acre property in 2002, Mike Grasso, coach of the South County Hawks baseball club made inquiries to the Park Authority about the possibility of adopting the field. The Hawks are an independent club that competes with teams throughout the Washington D.C. Metropolitan area.

homes.

"We will be unfavorably impacted. They have bypassed sending us to Laurel Hill to take us three or four miles away," said Clint Herbert, parent of a first grader and president of a Lorton Valley homeowners association.

HERBERT and other parents attended the school system's second public meeting at South County Secondary School about the local elementary school redistricting Dec. 1.

Spurred by Laurel Hill's opening in 2009, school officials presented two boundary



The size and scope of the field, combined with its location within the historic Lorton Prison make the site worth preserving, said Mike Grasso, coach of the South County Hawks baseball club.

plans for the field have not changed.

"Our take on the ball field has been that the South County Hawks have a temporary arrangement with the county," said Elmer. "We were asked to include that area in our master plan efforts

They teach and field teams with children as young as 5 and as old at 18, along with an adult club team. The dimensions of their field at Mason Neck on Colchester Road in Lorton (70-foot bases, 230-foot outfield) were too small for their older players. The field at Lorton, with 90-foot bases and an outfield that stretches to 430 feet, was better suited for the older players.

Along with the age of the ball field and historic nature, Grasso said the size was what made the field unusual in the area.

"The field [at the prison] is basically a Major League-plus [size]," said Grasso.

Elmer said that their current plans would preserve certain historic aspects of the field.

"The grandstand is definitely historic and that's a component that we recommended maintaining and incorporating in the community space," he said.

By adopting the field, the Hawks became

SEE DEVELOPER, PAGE 18

FCPS Presents Third Option

Alternative would send some Lorton area students to schools farther away.

BY JULIA O'DONOUGHE
THE CONNECTION

Next year, the new Laurel Hill Elementary School is opening up less than a mile from subdivisions in the Lorton Valley North area. Some of the residents will be so close to the school's entrance that they might be able see it from their doorstep.

But under two of the three school boundary changes it has proposed, Fairfax County Public Schools would send children from the Lorton Valley North area to Halley Elementary, an older school farther from their

options to the community at a Nov. 10 public input session. Taking into account feedback from residents, they offered the third option earlier this month.

The new school boundaries could potentially impact Gunston, Halley, Lorton Station, Newington Forest and Silverbrook elementary schools.

The school system staff plans to make its final redistricting recommendation to the Fairfax County School Board Jan. 8. After two public hearings, the School Board would vote on the new boundary Feb. 19.

THE THIRD boundary option proposed is particularly annoying for homes in Lorton Valley North and a few other subdivisions, since some students who would be attend

SEE THIRD BOUNDARY, PAGE 18

CLIFTON/FAIRFAX STATION/LAUREL HILL CONNECTION ♦ DECEMBER 4-10, 2008 ♦ 3

Crash Kills Fairfax Man

Robinson graduate William Cameron Schlifke dies in three-car crash.

BY DEREK B. JOHNSON
THE CONNECTION

William Cameron Schlifke, born in Fairfax and a graduate of Robinson Secondary School, died Monday, Nov. 24, less than three days after his Volkswagen Jetta was rear-ended in Newport News, Va.

According to a Newport News Police release, on Saturday, Nov. 22, at approximately 2 a.m., Schlifke was parked at a stop-light near Christopher Newport University when a 2006 Acura slammed into the back of his car, causing it in turn to crash into the Ford Mustang directly ahead.

All three drivers involved in the crash were CNU students: Schlifke, 22; Eric Fowler, 20; and an unidentified female, 19. Schlifke was transported to a hospital with critical injuries and the female driver of the Mustang sustained minor injuries. Newport News Police spokesperson Harold Eley said they were still waiting on the toxicology reports, but he did say that the first crash was most likely the ones that ended Schlifke's life.

"He was struck from the rear and that's where he sustained his injuries, yes," said Eley.

Fowler, the driver of the Acura, refused a DUI test at the scene and was arrested at the scene. Police initially charged him with DUI refusal, reckless driving and underage possession of alcohol. After Schlifke was taken off life support on Monday, just before 10 p.m., police added an involuntary manslaughter charge as well. Fowler is being held without bail while awaiting trial.

Schlifke, who went by his middle name Cameron, was an avid soccer enthusiast, playing for Robinson and later for the club team at CNU. He followed international soccer too, with a particular interest in Germany's national team and the various club leagues within.

A member of the fraternity Pi Lambda Phi, friends say Schlifke was acting as designated driver for his Greek brothers on the night the crash occurred. Nathan Hintz, president of the fraternity's CNU chapter, called Schlifke "easily one of the best friends" he had ever had.

"The first word that comes to mind when



DONATED PHOTO

William Cameron Schlifke

Schools Cuts Could Limit Public Access

Two services that facilitate transparency in Fairfax County Public Schools are on the chopping block as the school system tries to find cost savings in next year's budget.

Fairfax County is trying to close a projected \$500 million hole in its overall budget next year and has asked its school system, which receives over 50 percent of the county's general fund revenue, to brace for cuts.

Under scenarios in which the school system would have to take reduction of \$123 million to \$219 million, Superintendent Jack Dale has proposed eliminating the "public school profiles" from the school system's Web site and televised school board meetings.

The "schools profiles," found at www.fcps.edu, allow parents to compare information on schools' enrollments, test scores, demographics, staffing and safety. Televised school board meetings give parents and activists the opportunity to watch without attending the meeting in person.

According to school system documents, parents and residents are able to find the "school profiles" information on the Virginia Department of Education's Web site, albeit in a less organized fashion. Cutting the program would save \$389,853 next year, according to school budget documents. If the school system ceases to televise its meetings, officials could save an additional \$30,800.

No Trailers To Ease Enrollment Increases?

Fairfax County Public Schools has proposed cutting \$250,000 of its \$3.75 million in "temporary classroom funding" for next year, in spite of the fact that school officials expect to gain as many as 5,000 additional students before the fall of 2009.

County officials are trying to close a projected \$500 million shortfall in Fairfax's overall budget next year. Since the school system accounts for more than half of the county's general fund expenditures, schools superintendent Jack Dale is anticipating major cuts that could go as high as \$218 million in the school system's 2009-2010 budget.

Reducing money for the purchase of temporary classrooms, otherwise known as trailers and modulars, is a bit risky given the enrollment projections. But the schools chief operating officer Dean Tistadt said the school system already owns trailers it is not currently using.

"We haven't bought many trailers in quite some time. Some schools with trailers don't really need them," said Tistadt.

The official said proposals to increase class size will also help mitigate enrollment increases, since some existing classrooms should become available as the number of classes becomes fewer in number.

The main impact of the cut would be on the quality of trailers schools would be receiving. Most schools like work with multi-classroom modulars that come with two to four instructional spaces. Tistadt will not be able to purchase those types of classrooms next year if the cuts goes through, he said.

'Can You Hear Me Now?'

Clifton Town Council to consider installing cell phone upgrade to improve area coverage.

BY DEREK B. JOHNSON
THE CONNECTION

Wendy Vieau works at the Clifton General Store on Main Street in Clifton. Whenever she needs to use her cell phone, she plasters herself up against the window next to the register and hopes that a signal finds a way out of the town.

"I have kids that may need to contact me and if my cell can't pick up a signal, it's an inconvenience to say the least," said Vieau.

Like the Verizon TV spots, the middle of Clifton is a "dead zone" for cellular service. Vieau is one of many who have expressed frustration at their inability to use their mobile phones while working or living in town.

Jacquie Lambertson, owner of the Noodles and Noggins toy store on Main Street, said she needs to use hers on a daily basis and can't. Mayor Tom Peterson said he stopped owning a cell phone when he retired from teaching because it was useless most of the time.

THEIR WISHES may be granted as the Clifton Town Council, at its Tuesday, Dec. 2 meeting, considered an upgrade of the Verizon cell center that is expected to dramatically increase service sometime in 2009.

State Del. Tim Hugo (R-40) negotiated the upgrade with Verizon executives after being asked by Peterson and Town Council member Michael Anton to explore a way to improve cell phone coverage in the area. Hugo said he had been in communication with Verizon officials over the last four to five months, asking for updates.

"We're excited. We've been working with Verizon and I think it will improve the quality of life for people in Clifton and those

traveling through it," said Hugo, referring to reports of people on the Virginia Railway Express losing their service as they pass through the center of Clifton.

Peterson said he was confident that the proposal would gain the approval of the council but stressed that the details were still being worked out.

"I'm optimistic that it will happen, there are just some things that we still have to determine," said Peterson.

Chuck Rusnak, who sits on the Town Council, expressed reservations in an interview Friday, Nov. 28 about the potential move, saying that any installation should fit in with the aesthetics and character of the town.

"It does not need to be conspicuous. So if we can find a way to provide the service without it being conspicuous, a lot of people I know would be for it," said Rusnak.

Lambertson echoed those remarks.

"I think that with any historic town, the aesthetics need to be considered," said Lambertson, though she added that she was in favor of an upgrade in service regardless.

Several Clifton residents and Town Council members expressed reservations about the move, citing a similar measure town officials considered 10 years earlier to install a cell phone tower in Randolph Buckley Park on Chapel Street. That proposal ultimately failed to gain council approval when disputes over indemnification permits and public resistance to the look and design of the proposed tower sunk its chances.

According to Peterson, the Town Council would listen to the concerns they hear from citizens over the design and placement of any structure. He said

"I'm optimistic that it will happen."

— Mayor Tom Peterson

SEE CELL SERVICE, PAGE 5

Holidays Come to Gunston Hall

George Mason's home hosts Plantation Christmas on Dec. 12 and 13.

BY CHUCK HAGEE
THE CONNECTION

Anyone wishing to envision Christmases past need only to visit Gunston Hall Plantation Dec. 12 and 13. That's when the home of the author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, forerunner to the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights, will celebrate its annual Plantation Christmas. These family evenings feature candlelight mansion tours, horse-drawn carriage rides, performances of seasonal music, and samples of festive foods prepared by hearth cooks from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. each night.

Lanterns line the path as visitors make their way to George Mason's elegantly appointed home 20 miles south of Washington, D.C., just off Gunston Road, Virginia 242, where Gunston Cove flows into the Potomac River. Thomas Jefferson referred to Mason as "a man of the first order of wisdom among

those who acted on the theater of the revolution."

IN THE candle-lit interiors, costumed characters representing the Mason family and their guests prepare for daughter Mary's upcoming wedding. Mason fathered nine children.

A spectacular holiday feast will be set on the dining table, and guests will have the opportunity to sample a few of the displayed offerings being prepared by hearth cooks in the plantation kitchen yard. Those cooks are graduates of Gunston Hall's Historic Foodways Program.

In conjunction with Plantation Christmas, Gunston is offering its annual Yuletide Dinner. This holiday meal, with all the trimmings, features a selection of traditional fare and includes admission to Plantation Christmas.

The Yuletide Dinner is \$39.95 for adults and children ages 11 and older, \$19.95 for children ages 6 to 10. Those wishing to participate are urged to call 703-550-9220, as limited seating is available for Friday and Saturday evenings.

Admission to the Plantation Christmas is \$14 for adults, \$7 for ages six to 18, and free for children age six and under. For additional information call 703-550-9220 or visit www.GunstonHall.org.

NEWS

Robinson Grad Killed in Crash

FROM PAGE 3

I think of Cameron is probably 'loyalty,'" said Hintz. "He and I were very similar, we knew how to push each other's buttons, get on each other's nerves, and work each other up. But if I needed anything he would be the first person there to help."

In addition to school, Schlifke worked as a cook at a local bar. Hintz said the combined work load took away much of his friend's free time during his senior year, preventing him from attending as many games and practices as he had in the past.

"School and work had kind gotten a little bit in the way of it," said Hintz.

Brad Barna, also a member of Pi Lambda Phi, had known Schlifke for 15 years and played soccer with him at Robinson.

"He was always full of energy. Very hyperactive as a kid, he was always running around. Even as he matured, he never really lost that," said Barna. "You never knew what to expect with him. He was always attacking life."

Schlifke was interested in law enforcement and government work and considered going to law school early in his college career. Friends say he was still weighing his options.

Barna said their long relationship had given him

the opportunity to watch his friend grow and mature, especially over the last year and a half.

"I had an opportunity to see him from the very beginning. Just seeing where he was at, he was on his way to bigger and better things. It just makes it even harder," said Barna. "He was already great but he was making himself even better."

Hintz and Barna described their friend as active in Republican politics, and attended a John McCain rally two days before the 2008 Presidential election. He also loved music and enjoyed seeking out little known hip-hop artists who were not mainstream.

"He didn't let a lot of people get close, but if you got close he definitely took care of you. You never had to worry about him doing something behind your back," said Hintz.

A memorial service for Schlifke took place Tuesday, Dec. 2 at CNU. According to Barna, details for a funeral have yet to be finalized. Barna said that the family was still working out funeral details. He said that Schlifke's remains had been cremated so there was less urgency to have a service right away, especially with so many of his friends on Thanksgiving break. Both Barna and Hintz said they expected a memorial service would happen after students finish the semester Dec. 13."

"If I needed anything, he would be the first person there to help."

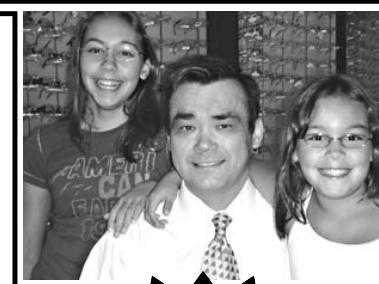
— Nathan Hintz, president of Pi Lambda Phi at Christopher Newport University

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Cell Service

FROM PAGE 4

modern technology would allow Verizon to install a more compact tower this time around that could better blend in to the town's background.

"They're able to disguise the apparatus as a flag pole, or they can [make it look like] a tree. So that's the kind of thing that we will be looking at," said Peterson.

However at the meeting Tuesday, Dec. 2, Anton said that in his discussions with Verizon executives, he was informed that an upgrade could be made to the cellular center without having to build a tower.

"I think they have a data tower already near Clifton and they're just going to add a cell phone component in town," said Anton.

Hugo confirmed that Verizon officials were looking to make an upgrade to an existing cell center rather than installing a new tower. That would sidestep a debate about placement and design that he said all parties were eager to avoid.

"It's unfortunate what happened a few years ago, but now we're going to get the best of both worlds. We won't have to fight over a pole in town but we'll still get the service," said Hugo.

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PEOPLE

New Vicar for St. Peters

DeDe Duncan-Probe to lead Fairfax Station church.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

Following a yearlong search by a committee of eight, the Rev. DeDe Duncan-Probe was named the new vicar at St. Peter's in the Woods Episcopal Church in Fairfax Station. "She's bubbly and engaging," said Marvin Lawley, senior warden at St. Peter's, who added that he's "terribly excited about her coming and anxiously waiting" for her arrival on Feb. 2.

Duncan-Probe was formerly the associate rector at Church of the Holy Comforter in Vienna, and associate rector at St. John's in McLean. She'll be moving here from Stoneham, Mass., where she was the Priest-in-Charge at All Saints Episcopal Church. She will be replacing the Rev. Robert Koth, who retired due to medical reasons. An average of 60-80 people attend Sunday services at the church at Burke Centre Parkway and Route 123.

Chairman of the search committee Cindy Larkin said what stood out about Duncan-Probe was her charisma and people skills. "One of the reasons we had selected her was her energy level," said Larkin. "She was just this little fireball."

Larkin noticed that Duncan-Probe could deliver meaningful sermons without using notes — and with a wicked sense of humor. "She knows how to use humor well," she said.

"The way she builds her sermon is she looks at the passage in the Greek and then builds from there; what that passage meant at the time of Jesus; and what that application means in our life, and something that connects you with the Gospel, something to sustain you throughout the week," said Larkin.

ORDAINED FOR only five years, Duncan-Probe took an unconventional path to the priesthood. She used to sing classical and jazz music as a professional. She also taught first grade and fifth grade, then taught at-risk special needs students and gang members in Los Angeles for two years.

Since St. Peters was looking for a leader who was organized and could help the small church grow, Duncan-Probe seemed like the perfect fit to the search committee.

"She had outlined the fact that she's a builder and was very good at organization," said Larkin. "She was able to lay out some basic steps for us to rebuild our congregation, and one of her quotes was: 'If

PEOPLE NOTES

Eleven young volunteers from the **Lorton Community Resource Center (LCRC) Youth Activities Group** have completed a Storm Drain Marking and Education project, in the Williamsburg Square community in Lorton. The volunteers delivered educational flyers to each of the 150 residences in Williamsburg Square and fixed permanent markers onto all 29 storm drains along the streets of this

"One of the reasons we had selected her was her energy level. ... She was just this little fireball."

— Cindy Larkin, chairman of the search committee

church and create manageable steps to make that vision come into being."

Originally from outside of Fort Worth, Texas, Duncan-Probe graduated from the Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas in 1985, and Pepperdine University in Malibu in 1993, where she earned a master's degree in psychology. She earned her master's of divinity from the General Theological Seminary in New York City in 2003.

She is married for 15 years to Chris Probe, a consulting engineer, with whom she founded a data communications consulting firm. The couple has three children: Chasen, 10; Ryan, 6; and Grace, 3, who is adopted from Guatemala.

Duncan-Probe is thrilled to be moving back to Northern Virginia and working at St. Peters. "They're a real dedicated group of Christians who want to act out their faith through action, and I'm excited to be part of that," she said. "I am real excited to be joining them in their ministry."

community. The flyer is designed to educate the residents about the danger of dumping anything into a storm drain. Many people are unaware that the water entering a storm drain does not go to a wastewater treatment plant but flows directly into the nearest river or lake. Pollutants such as used motor oil, pet waste, trash and debris eventually flow into the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. The volunteers were

led by LCRC Coordinator **Katrina Hamlett** and **Leroy Washington**.

The project was funded by the Fairfax County Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, and supported by the Lorton Resource Center Youth Activities Group, Mason Neck Lions Club, Williamsburg Square HOA, Northern Virginia Soil & Water Conservation District and the Virginia Department of Transportation.



DeDe Duncan-Probe is the new Vicar of St. Peter's in the Woods Episcopal Church.

you're not growing, you're not moving forward' ... And, we liked here."

Lawley agreed, adding that some applicants would be excellent at pastoral care, but not so good at administration. "But she seemed to be good at all of them," he said, adding that Duncan-Probe was also a skilled communicator. "She's not one of these

people who stands behind the lectern and reads, but one who walks around with the congregation and speaks from her heart."

Larkin said she liked Duncan-Probe's attitude toward encouraging people to volunteer. "She is a big believer in having people do the things they like to do. We kind of like the idea of somebody who knows how to encourage and motivate people," she said.

Describing her leadership style as "collaborative," Duncan-Probe said, "I'm also able to make decisions and define a vision for the



Turkey Time

Above, Collin Whitney, Henry Pyzdrowski, Adam Pickeral, Tyler Papanicolas and Will Ryan wait for the Clifton Elementary Thanksgiving program to start in Margaret Batten's room. Many Thankful Thoughts essays presented by the third graders named family and friends as what they are most thankful for. After the compositions were presented, the students had brunch with their parents and teachers. Below, Grace Williams helps Katie Gugino straighten her 'turkey' in Vivian Siry's class.



VIEWPOINTS

What are you thankful for and what is your favorite Thanksgiving food?



"I'm thankful for my family cause everyone is going to come and visit. Turkey."

Daphne Essimi-Meny



"My cousins cause I have someone to play with. Mashed potatoes."

Sana Tahir



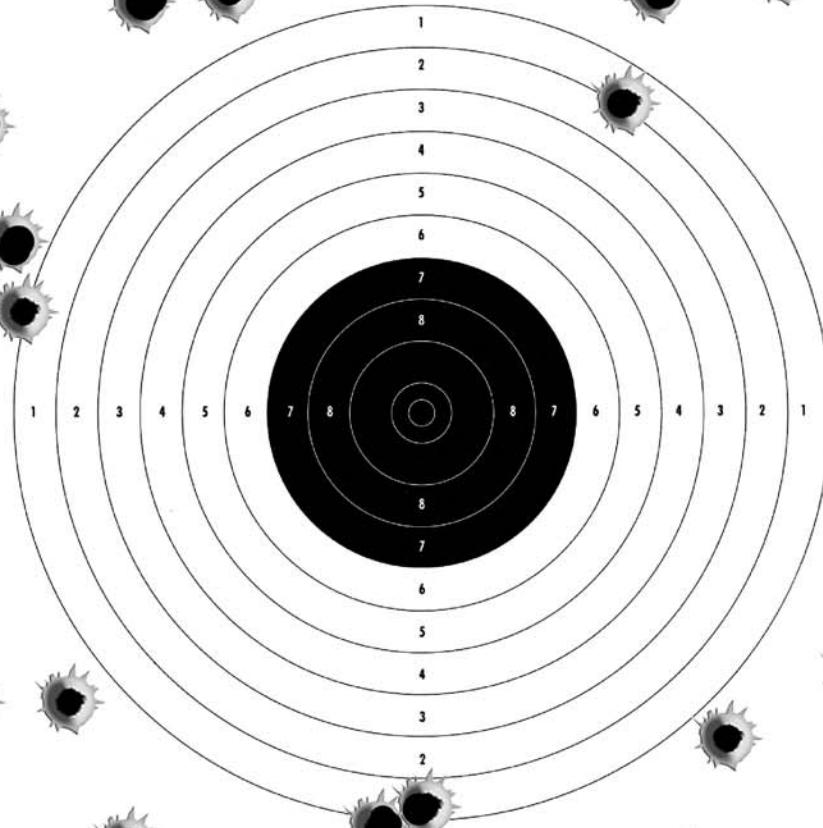
"Games like board games, Battleship. Stuffing."

Jonathan Hernandez



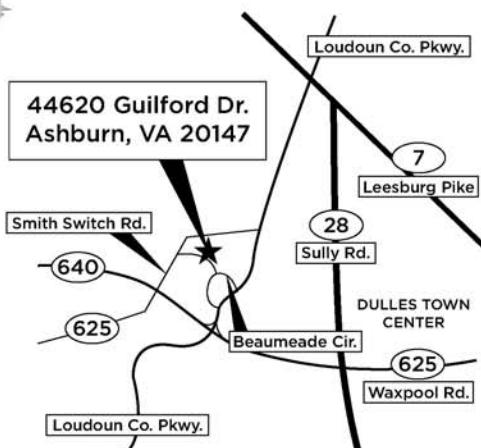
"Ice cream and video games, war and action. Ice cream."

Daniel Moore



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OPINION

Don't Lump Poor Students Together

Boundary changes should not create schools with high concentrations of poverty.

Under one proposal, one new elementary school in Fairfax County, Coppermine in Herndon, would open next fall with almost 60 percent of its students poor enough to qualify subsidized meals.

Meanwhile at Oak Hill, the most affluent of the six elementary schools in this boundary change decision, the percentage of poor students would drop from 4.4 to 3.4 percent.

At the other end of the county, the opening of another new school, Laurel Hill, will bring a boundary change there as well. In one proposal, Lorton Station would see its percentage of poor students increase to 41 percent, up from 35, while another school in that boundary study, Silverbrook, would see its percentage of poor students drop to 3 percent from 11 percent.

Students achieve more in schools that do not have high concentrations of poor students, and the county should use boundary change opportunities to improve these ratios.

There is no easy way to change school boundaries, as members of the Fairfax school board can no doubt attest. They are in the midst of another round of redrawing school boundaries, this time because of the imminent opening of

two new elementary schools.

Some of these families have been through multiple boundary studies and changes. In the last decade, homes in the northeastern Floris district have undergone six major school boundary changes.

But some of the proposals on the table both EDITORIAL in the north and south part of the county should never have made it to the drawing board, because they would cluster poor students in schools at a much higher rate than the county average.

Overall, about 20 percent of students in Fairfax County are poor enough to receive subsidized or free meals. These are students from families who are poor by any reasonable measure.

Research shows that performance lags in schools with high concentrations of poor students, and one set of guidelines suggests that school populations should be no more than 40 percent students who are poor.

There are places where this is nearly impossible, whole school districts that have high concentrations of poverty. Not so here in Fairfax where the average household income is more than \$100,000, the wealthiest county in the country by recent measures.

Yet in 31 elementary schools in Fairfax County, more than 40 percent of the students are poor. That's 31 out of 137 schools, or more than 22 percent of the county's elementary schools with a student body with a very high poverty rate, defined as 40 percent or more students receiving subsidized lunch.

tions and stewardship projects. The bond will allow us to continue towards our goal of 10 percent of open space in park ownership in Fairfax County. With this new funding authority, we will also continue to address the county-wide shortage of rectangular fields

by converting existing fields to synthetic turf. The trail network will continue to improve, connecting

people with recreational facilities and the natural world, and many aging facilities will also receive long-needed renovations and repairs to extend their service life.

A new stewardship category was included to fund capital projects that promote the protection, enhancement and interpretation of natural and cultural resources. As part of this initiative, Huntley Meadows Park will see its wetland restored through an ambitious project designed to preserve its unique and irreplaceable freshwater marsh.

The voter approved park bonds will be allocated to the Fairfax County Park Authority to fund land acquisition, park development, park and building renova-

ing to vote "Yes" for parks. The Park Authority Board values your trust and confidence in our fiscal responsibility as we navigate these uncertain economic times. Be assured that your unwavering loyalty to parks is greatly appreciated.

Harold Strickland

Chairman

Fairfax County Park Authority
Board

Remember the Living Too

To the Editor:

The tag line in your Opinion article "A Day for Those Who Served" [Springfield Connection, Nov 13-19, 2008], announced "Nov. 11 marks Veterans Day, a day to honor all veterans, living and dead." I read your entire article but, found only mention of the dead. While we must honor our war dead for paying the ultimate sacrifice, a little balance in the article would have seemed appropriate. Some

Poverty Concentrated

On average, about 20 percent of students in Fairfax County Public Schools are poor. Some schools with high concentrations of poor students:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL POVERTY RATE
Annandale Terrace, Annandale 57.19%
Bailey's, Arts and Sciences 54.09%
Beech Tree, Falls Church 41.81%
Belvedere, Falls Church 43.06%
Braddock, Fairfax 49.33%
Bren Mar Park, Alexandria 47.76%
Bucknell, Mount Vernon 53.85%
Cameron, Alexandria 55.61%
Crestwood, Springfield 55.51%
Dogwood, Reston 60.28%
Garfield, Springfield 42.90%
Glen Forest, Falls Church 67.44%
Graham Road, Falls Church 76.76%
Groveton, Mount Vernon 58.44%
Hollin Meadows, Mount Vernon 44.48%
Hutchinson, Herndon 45.29%
Hybla Valley, Mount Vernon 81.11%
Lynbrook, Springfield 67.92%
McNair, Herndon 41.66%
Mount Eagle, Mount Vernon 75.17%
Mount Vernon Woods, Mount Vernon 77.99%
Parklawn, Alexandria 59.22%
Riverside, Mount Vernon 60.61%
Timber Lane, Falls Church 51.91%
Washington Mill, Mount Vernon 42.64%
Westlawn, Falls Church 47.95%
Weyanoke, Alexandria 67.73%
Woodburn, Falls Church 41.39%
Woodlawn, Mount Vernon 55.41%
Woodley Hills, Mount Vernon 55.39%

Seventeen elementary schools in Fairfax County have a poverty rate of more than 50 percent, with some much higher.

It's one more reason for the school board to consider a county-wide boundary study. (Another big reason: some schools are overcrowded while others have many open seats.)

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

mention of those who have served and returned home. An uplifting story of service with honor and bravery would have been appropriate. But, I found none.

Your second to last paragraph, a total of five lines, is the only oblique mention of the living by referring to veterans who served in past wars. You call our WWI veterans "a dwindling number." An understatement for sure. Had you checked your facts, you would find that there is only one WWI veteran known remaining alive today. He is Pvt. Frank Buckles of West Virginia. Buckles is nearly 108.

I submit that your article was not an attempt to honor veterans but, rather an opportunity for you to oppose the current wars. Your biased article as a poorly veiled anti-war message has done a disservice to veterans by hijacking the opportunity to sincerely honor all veterans and instead grind your own ax.

Gary Kelch
Springfield

THE CONNECTION

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On the Web

Read more about the current boundary changes at www.connectionnewspapers.com.

Thanks for 'Yes'

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support of Fairfax County parks. The \$77 million Parks and Park Facilities Bond on this year's ballot was approved by nearly 68 percent of voters on Election Day. Throughout the Park Authority's 50-year history, you have overwhelmingly supported park bond referendums, authorizing over \$400 million for land acquisition and park development. Without your continued commitment to parks, the Fairfax County Park Authority would not be able to protect open spaces or to provide nationally recognized recreational facilities that make Fairfax County such a desirable place to live and play.

The voter approved park bonds will be allocated to the Fairfax County Park Authority to fund land acquisition, park development, park and building renova-

ENTERTAINMENT

Town of Clifton Celebrates Christmas

Holiday homes tour, horses on parade, kicks off the holiday season this Saturday.

By STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

The Historic Clifton Candlelight Tour will take place Saturday, Dec. 6 in downtown Clifton. Co-chairing the seventh-annual event are Lynne Garvey-Hodge and Jennifer Chesley.

It all begins Saturday from 2-3 p.m. with the Caroling on Horseback Parade along Main Street followed by costume judging, cookies and caroling at King Field on Chapel Street.

From 4:30-7 p.m., five homes will be festively decorated for the holidays. The event includes strolling Dickens Carolers, live music in the town churches and the neighborhood decorated with luminaries. The Clifton Baptist Church will host the musical duo of flutist Gail and her friend Karen on the harp, followed by Marcio Botelho's string trio. Chantilly High's choral singers will be performing holiday favorites at Clifton Presbyterian Church.

From 7:30-8 p.m., caroling will take place in the Ayres Town Square along with roasting of marshmallows, hot chocolate and the

lighting of the Christmas Tree at 8 p.m.

The homeowners who will be showing their festive homes are:

♦ Tom and Wendy Burdette, Clifton Heights Lane. This warm and inviting home is a "newcomer" to Clifton, sitting at the end of a pipe-stem situated at the edge of the Town of Clifton proper. Decorated in a Country French style with antique oak accent pieces, the owners prefer a traditional Christmas and holiday theme. The ornaments on the Christmas Tree have been collected for 23 years and reflect the life of a growing family.

♦ Jim and Becky Witt, Clifton Heights Lane. As one steps into this lovely home, one will hear the music of harpist Robin Brinkmann. Note the copper accessories throughout the home, which were bought while the couple traveled overseas to Greece and Turkey. The over-sized ceramic teapot in the living room is from Japan, setting the stage for a number of Asian decorative elements found through the home: six woodblock prints in the living room and one in the dining room by Japanese artist Kiyoshi Saito as well as antique cast iron Japanese teapots in the family room.

♦ Paul and Arlene Posner, Main Street. This charming Clifton home's architecture is typical of the early farmhouse style seen in abundance throughout the town. The first mayor of Clifton, Robert R. Buckley built this home in 1896. He later served on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. It is a home with many fun "secrets" and "treasures." Of significance was a previous owner, Jeffrey Arch, who wrote the book "Sleepless in Seattle" while living there. The Posners have traveled the world and the treasures they have found abroad now adorn their home.

♦ Steve and Kim Bittner, "Mayhugh Tavern" on Chapel Street. The Bittners are relatively newcomers to Clifton and have found the history of their home and decorated it in a complimentary fashion. The home was moved to its current location in the 1970s. It originally faced the railroad tracks. It was originally a tavern and the exterior window and door combinations attest to a door for the tavern and a door for sleeping rooms.

♦ Brant Baber and Kathy Kalinowski, Ford Lane. This Victorian era home was built by the Ford family in 1880. The Fords owned the General Store in Clifton, which was located on the site now occupied by the Heart in Hand Restaurant. Baber and Kalinowski have lived here since 1980. In 1987, local architect Jim Hricko designed an addition for the owners that created a library for the

first floor and extended the basement apartment. In 2002, Hricko designed a new kitchen and dining area within the confines of the original structure.

Also on tour are:

♦ Clifton Baptist Church. The Clifton Baptist Church stands as a reminder of our American heritage and the freedom to worship together. Clifton Baptist Church was admitted into the Potomac Baptist Association in August 1875. Services were first held in the home of George W. Tillet along with other men who served with Mosby's Rangers during the Civil War. The first building was constructed in 1988 at the intersection of Main and Chapel Streets. The cornerstone of the present building was laid at the same intersection in Nov. 24, 1910.

♦ Clifton Presbyterian Church, Richardson Lane. The Clifton Presbyterian Church has been serving the community as a place of worship and community life since its founding in 1870 by the families of soldiers who fought in the Civil War and who settled here after the war. In the early part of the 1900s, the church acquired the manse next door and then in the 1950s added the annex for classroom, office and fellowship space. Tickets are \$15/adults and \$5/children under 12, and are available at most Clifton shops. For more information, contact Lynn Garvey-Hodge at 703-322-1811 or Jennifer Chesley at 703-830-2129.

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CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-917-6459. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/DEC. 4

Lamb Tales. 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and activities for age 13-23 months with adult. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. 703-249-1520.

Book discussion Group. 12 p.m. "Ethan Frome" by Edith Wharton. Adults. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Lansdowne Centre, Alexandria. 703-339-4610.

FRIDAY/DEC. 5

Azure Barton & Artists World Premier Dance Installation at the Workhouse Arts Center Gallery W-16, at 7:30 p.m. Reception at 7 p.m. Part of a joint partnership with the Baryshnikov Dance Foundation. \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door. To reserve tickets contact tickets@lortonarts.org or call 703-584-2900. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

Lunch Bunch. 12 p.m. Bring lunch, listen to stories. Birth-5 with adult. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. 703-971-0010.

Donizetti's "The Elixir of Love," 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, at the intersection of Braddock Road and Route 123. A pre-performance discussion, free to ticket holders, begins at 1:15 p.m. on the Grand Tier III. Tickets are \$48-\$98. Charge at 888-945-2468 or www.tickets.com.

Funny Money with Baby Jayne, Tilt, Sinner's Trail and Not-Liable. 8 p.m. Age 21 and over only. \$12 in advance, \$14 at the door. Jaxx Night Club, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. 703-569-5940 or jaxxroxx.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Holiday Open House. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Music and activities. All ages. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. 703-339-7385.

Historic Clifton Candlelight Tour, beginning at 2 p.m. Tickets \$15. Caroling on Horseback Parade and costume judging. Tour of decorated homes, strolling Dickens carolers, live music in town churches, marshmallows and hot chocolate and tree lighting. Contact Lynne 703-322-1811 or Jennifer 703-830-2129. lghassoc@erols.com.

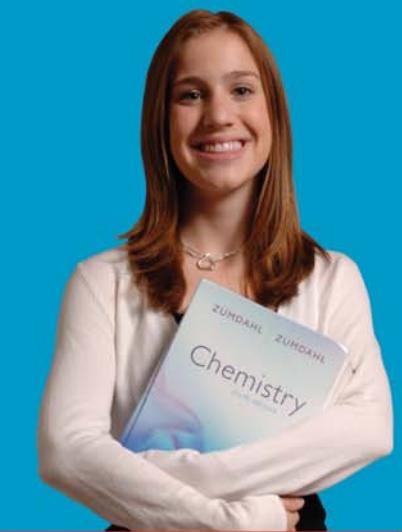
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Donizetti's "The Elixir of Love," 2 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, at the intersection of Braddock Road and Route 123. A pre-performance discussion, free to ticket holders, begins at 1:15 p.m. on the Grand Tier III. Tickets are \$48-\$98. Charge at 888-945-2468 or www.tickets.com.

Forestdale Elementary Flea Market and Holiday Sale, 8 a.m.-12 p.m. at 6530 Elder Avenue, Springfield. Julie Parsons, 703-244-

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 12

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The Historic Clifton Candlelight Tour will be Saturday, Dec. 6, with a Horseback Parade and costume judging, tree lighting tour of decorated homes, strolling Dickens carolers, live music in town churches, marshmallows and hot chocolate and tree lighting.

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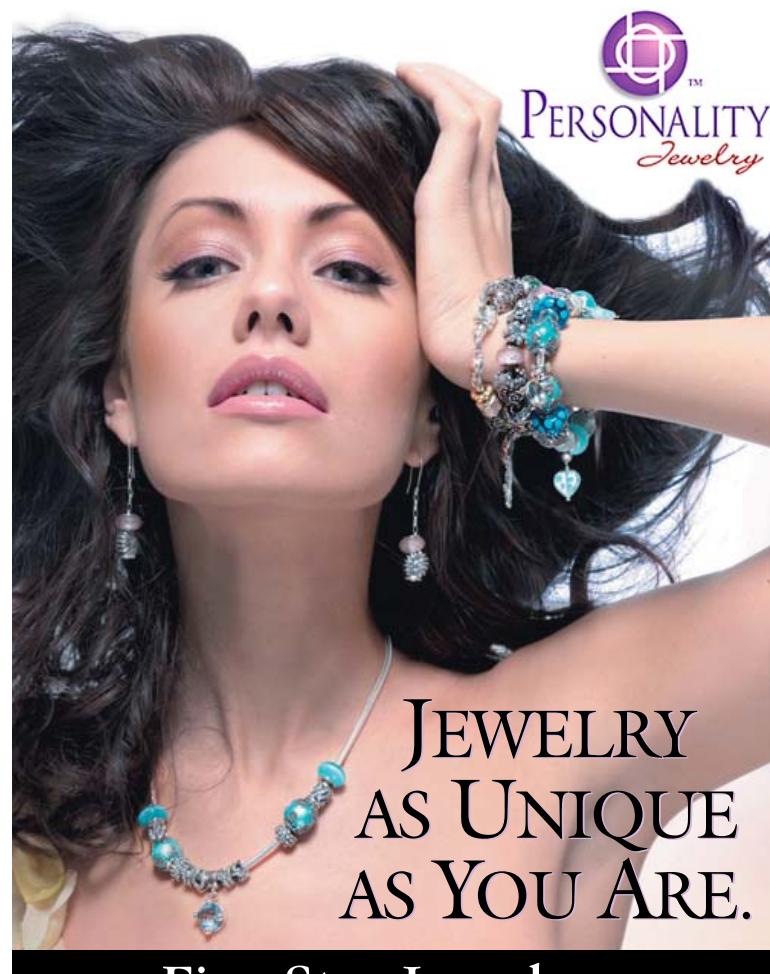
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Thursday, Dec. 4 – Saturday, Dec. 6

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Thursday, Dec. 4-Saturday, Dec. 6

Taste of Scotland
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Scottish Walk Parade
Saturday, Dec. 6th at 11:00 a.m.

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

6284.

Kings' X with Last Perfect Thing, Gate 1, Minds Eye and more. 8 p.m. Age 21 and over only. \$22 in advance, \$25 at the door. Jaxx Night Club, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. 703-569-5940 or jaxxroxx.com.

George Mason University Holiday concert, 7 p.m. at the George Mason Center for the Arts Concert Hall, on the Fairfax campus at the intersection of Braddock Road and Route 123. Old seasonal favorites, carols and an audience sing-a-long. The George Mason University ensembles performing include the Chamber Orchestra, the Symphony Orchestra, University Chorale, University Singers and Select Women's Chorale. Tickets are \$20 adults, \$15 students and seniors. Charge tickets at 888-945-2468 or www.tickets.com. www.gmu.edu/cfa.

Highway, Lorton. 703-339-7385.
The Progressive Damnation Tour with Born of Osiris, Shai Hulud, After the Burial, Burning the Masses, Prodigium, Gallows Hill and Upon a Throne of Lies. 5 p.m. \$12 in advance, \$14 at the door. Jaxx Night Club, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. 703-569-5940 or jaxxroxx.com.

TUESDAY/DEC. 9

Snowfest. 10:15 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Stories and activities. Age 2-3 with adult. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. 703-971-0010.

Penguin Parade. 1:30 p.m. Stories and a craft. Age 4-5 with adult. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. 703-339-7385.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 10

Science and Stories. 4:30 p.m. Simple science experiments. Age 4-6. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. 703-249-1520.

Performance and Demonstration of Dandia Raas, folk dance from Western India. Instructor Archana Chhaya. 7:30 p.m. Age 14 and up. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. 703-249-1520. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

Writers Peer Review Group. 7 p.m. Adults. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Lansdowne Centre, Alexandria. 703-339-4610.

THURSDAY/DEC. 11

Sesame Street Live "Elmo's Green Thumb." 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15-\$75 at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 13
at the school, 7855 Morning View Lane,
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"Oklahoma!", 7 p.m. at Thomas Jefferson High School, 6560 Braddock Road, Alexandria. 703-750-7500 or www.tjhsst.edu.

Friends of the Library Book Sale. 10 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. 703-339-4610.

"Over the North Pole," 11 a.m., 2 p.m., 5 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the Ernst Theatre, Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. \$17 adults, \$15 students and seniors 703-222-5511 or www.encore-tap.org.

Fairfax County Kinship Respite Day, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. will provide relatives who are raising a child for another family member a day off while providing fun for the children, who can be part of a theatrical production or participate in a variety of games, arts and crafts. Fairfax County children ages 3-15 can be dropped off at one of three community centers, and the children will be bused to James Lee Community Center, 2855-A Annandale Road in Falls Church. Participation is free, but pre-registration is required. 703-324-3517, TTY 703-449-1186. Transportation will be available from:

❖ Gum Springs Community Center, 8100 Fordson Road, Alexandria.
❖ Mott Community Center, 12111 Braddock Road, Fairfax.
❖ Southgate Community Center, 12125 Pinecrest Road, Reston.

Chinese Corner, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Improve Chinese speaking and learn about Chinese traditional culture. West Springfield Governmental

Center, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield. Free Admission. 703-868-1509 or www.AsianServiceCenter.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 14

Sesame Street Live "Elmo's Green Thumb." 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15-\$75 at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. 703-993-3000 or www.patriotcenter.com.

"Oklahoma!", 2 p.m. at Thomas Jefferson High School, 6560 Braddock Road, Alexandria. 703-750-7500 or www.tjhsst.edu.

"Over the North Pole," 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. at the Richard J. Ernst Theatre, Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. \$17 adults, \$15 students and seniors 703-222-5511 or www.encore-tap.org.

Sunday Night Drop-In Ballroom Dancing, 6-7:30 p.m. at the Workhouse Art Center, Gallery W-16, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. To reserve tickets contact tickets@lortonarts.org or call 703-584-2900. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Pops Concert, with the Fairfax Choral Society and W. T. Woodson High School Select Vocal Ensemble, 3 p.m. at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. www.fairfaxesymphony.org.

MONDAY/DEC. 15

Sophie the Performing Dog. 10:30 a.m. Sophie, a Cairn terrier, performs tricks and stunts. All ages. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. 703-249-1520.

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8502 CHASE GLEN CIR	\$678,967	Sat/Sun	Re/max	Bob Lovett	703-407-4700

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HEALTH NOTES

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SPORTS

Guarded Hope at S. C.

First-year coach boys' basketball coach Wendell Johnson pushes Stallions to compete in Patriot.

BY JASON MACKEY
THE CONNECTION

Early in November, South County boys basketball coach Wendell Johnson called his team to the baseline. Johnson, the Stallions' first-year bench boss who replaced Mike Pflugrath, wanted to explain an upcoming drill at practice, but one of his players took a late, foolish shot and the new coach had a statement to make.

"It shocked us," senior Kiunte Watkins said of Johnson's reaction.

The Stallions had seen no other side of Johnson than the affable assistant coach who, for the most part, didn't have a temper. But on that November afternoon, Johnson turned serious, notifying his players that such undisciplined actions would not be tolerated.

"We had to run a lot," Watkins said. "It showed that we really had to work and he's pushing us. He's pushing us to a positive role."

When Johnson took over from Pflugrath, who became the school's director of student activities, on Oct. 7, he inherited a team that finished 7-16 overall, 3-9 in the Patriot District last season and lost its top four players, including two standout forwards in Chris Panneton and David Stevens.

With a revamped front court and a wealth of experience at the three back court positions, it's no secret that South County will become a guard-oriented squad this fall. Leading the charge will likely be Watkins and junior Antonio Butler, both 6-foot-3 perimeter players, as well as senior guard CJay Rector.

"Last year, I would say that we were more of an inside-out team, and this year we're going to have some pretty good guards," Johnson said. "That doesn't mean that we won't have any post [players] that contribute, but we feel a little bit more confident with our three guys out on the wing having the ball in their hands."

Butler averaged a team-best 8.2 points per game last season and grabbed 3.2 rebounds per contest. Watkins, who's more of a natural point guard, averaged 2.5 points and 2.1 assists per game. Rector averaged 3.2 points per game last season and shot 31 percent from beyond the three-point arc.



PHOTO BY JASON MACKEY/THE CONNECTION

Wendell Johnson took over the South County boys basketball program on Oct. 7. He inherits a team that finished 7-16 overall, 3-9 in the Patriot District last season.

WHILE WATKINS admitted that the burden of having to score has been quite a change, he said he's ready for the challenge. The expectations have been building since the summer and he's finally slid into a bit of a comfort zone with his new role.

"All I can do is give it my all," Watkins said. "I'm getting better with this. I just have to get more vocal, and that's something that my team helps me work on and hopefully I can work with them."

"Last year, I wasn't really counted upon as a scorer," Butler said. "This year, it's my role to be a scorer, so it'll be different, but I think I can handle it."

In addition to the perimeter shooting and quick ball movement that will become staples of South County's basketball team this season, the Stallions hope to emphasize defense. The abundance of guards should translate into an abundance of speed. Look for South County to press early and often.

Butler observed that most teams will be taller than his own but noted that few would match South County's speed. Since the beginning of November and during scrimmages against Woodbridge and Edison, South County has worked to perfect its full-court press and high-pressure defenses.

"We're going to have a fairly quick team," said Johnson, whose team suffered an 85-56 loss at Mount Vernon Tuesday night and will host Woodson Friday. "Not as quick as Mount Vernon, but I think across the board we're going to be a little bit quicker than we were last year. We can put five guys on the floor who can cause some chaos and that's what we're hoping for."

With the departure of front court leaders Panneton and Stevens, a handful of players have been battling to fill those two spots. Right now, Darius Colburn, a new addition to the team, appears to be a front-runner for one of those spots and Johnson will also look to senior captain Jamel Gonzalez to fill the other.

Colburn carries a sizable 6-foot-3 frame and brings a physicality to complement Gonzalez's athleticism and shooting. Kenny Allen and Jeff McDaniels should also provide competition inside.

"I think we're going in the right direction," Johnson said. "It just depends on what day it is and where we are. At times, they've showed flashes that they can come together and jell as a team, and other times everybody plays their own game and we kind of break down and start arguing among ourselves."

"But it's OK to be that way in December. In February, no. We're working toward building team chemistry and coming together. It's a slow process."

"We can put five guys on the floor who can cause some chaos."

— Wendell Johnson

WEEK IN SPORTS

Ex-Cavalier Surges at Tufts

Despite suffering a torn anterior cruciate ligament at the end of her freshman season on the Tufts University (Division III) field hockey team, 2007 W. T. Woodson graduate Tamara Brown emerged healthy and better than ever this season. Brown re-wrote the school's field hockey record book, scoring 28 goals and a total of 61 points for the Jumbos (19-2), smashing the previous marks of 18 goals and 41 points. Tufts (Boston, Mass.) suffered a double-overtime 3-2 loss to Bowdoin in the NCAA championship game on Sunday, Nov. 23. In the NCAA tournament, Brown scored a total of six goals, including two in the title game. In addition to being recognized as an NCAA second team All-America performer, Brown was named first team All-Conference (NESCAC) and first team All-New England Region West (NFHCA).

Robinson's Barron to Connecticut

Tory Barron, a senior on the Robinson girls lacrosse team, has committed to play the sport next season at the University of Connecticut. A Fairfax Station native, Barron is a three-year letter winner for the Rams, earning all-Concorde District honors during her junior campaign as a midfielder. She's also a member of the Capital Lacrosse Club and helped the Rams (12-4) this spring to a Concorde District title game victory over Chantilly.

"Tory will add tremendous leadership and athleticism on the defensive end," said Huskies coach Angela McMahon in a press release issued by the school. "She has an innate ability to control the draw and her work ethic is contagious."

Barron will be joined in making the collegiate jump by teammates Megan Dunleavy (Virginia), Sarah Moody (Villanova), Sam Barber (Maryland), Kelsey Zinck (Connecticut) and Dana Sparks (Presbyterian).

Donovan Nets Another At Northeastern

Fairfax Station native Chris Donovan, a junior forward on the Northeastern University men's ice hockey team, scored his ninth-career goal and fourth this season on Saturday, Nov. 29 during a 5-1 win over Rensselaer. A graduate of Hopkinton High School after leaving the area, Donovan played two years for the Boston Junior Bruins of the Eastern Junior Hockey League, totaling 51 goals and 57 assists during that span. With the No. 4-ranked Huskies (10-3-2) this year, three of Donovan's four goals have come on either the power play or penalty kill while contributed three assists.

Paul VI Swimming Touches Off

On Tuesday, Nov. 25, the Paul VI swim team competed against Bishop Ireton at St. Alban's. The boys team, powered by seniors Pat Lytle, Alex Spina and Joe Clarke, dominated the Cardinals by winning nine of the 11 events en route to a 110-60 victory. The girls team, led by seniors Natalie Fitz, Jackie Orsa and Michelle Young, also had a number of strong performances and personal-best times despite dropping a 109-61 decision. The Panthers' next meet will be against St. Alban's and National Cathedral on Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 4 p.m. at St. Alban's.

Edison Throws Fund Raiser

Edison High School will have a fund raiser for the boys and girls basketball teams on Saturday, Dec. 13 in the school's gymnasium. Members of the Charlottesville Cardinals, a championship wheelchair basketball team, will be on hand to help with the fund-raising efforts. The event will include a live auction with autographed sports items and a series of giveaways featuring overnight hotel stays, snowboarding and goal accessories and even a Christmas tree. For more information, e-mail Mary Counts at mary.counts@cox.net.

CAMPS & SCHOOLS

After Hours at Gunston E.S. Is a Blast

Volunteers offer fun classes to 272 students for free.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

For the past six weeks, Gunston Elementary in Lorton has been conducting a thrilling after-school program for 272 students.

On Tuesdays, from 3:30-4:30 p.m., students could choose from 18 different classes divided by age group — everything from building Legos to studying the Civil War to metal detection.

Allison Mills runs the free program, which is a collaboration between Gunston staff, local community agencies such as the Lorton Arts Foundation and volunteers who devote their

"There are times we had to turn children away because we didn't have enough spaces."

— Allison Mills, program coordinator



Fourth-graders Andrea Cifuentes and Katherine Najarro practice stage combat.

expertise to one goal — fun and learning. The PTA provides free bus rides.

TO HAVE 272 participants out of a 650 Gunston student enrollment was a "pretty big success," said Mills. "There are times we had to turn children away because we didn't have enough spaces."

She said her biggest challenge was finding enough teachers. For example, 57 children signed up for flag football, which only had room for 30 slots — so children had to be realigned to other classes. Fif-



Sixth-grader Maria Reese hip-hop dances to 'Lose Control' by Missy Elliott.

teen children signed up for the Civil War class. Other popular classes were Mad Science (19 students) and Tumbling and Yoga.

Lorton Arts Foundation offered a class on Hip-Hop Dancing as well as Stage Combat, which taught prat-falling. "They really enjoyed that class," said Mills.

For the Science Class, students learned about animals and their habitats and took molds of animal tracks home with them. Mills said the Bureau of Land Management

even donated sleeping bags and T-shirts to students.

Mills said a lot of Gunston children go to empty homes after school because their parents work. "And some children are considered at-risk, so it's a two-fold purpose," she said. "One is to give the children a safe place to be and hang out with their friends. The second is to expose at-risk children to programs that they might not otherwise be able to participate in."

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

CRIME REPORT

Activities reported by the Sully District of the Fairfax County Police Department through Nov. 21.

LARCENIES

6800 block of Cottingham Lane. GPS and iPod stolen from vehicle.

13900 block of Lee Jackson Memorial Highway. Purse stolen from vehicle.

14100 block of Park Meadow Drive. Clothing stolen from

vehicle.

14500 block of Pittman Court.

Laptop computer stolen from residence.

4900 block of Stonecroft Blvd.

Wallet stolen from business.

Sully Station Drive/ Creek Branch Court.

Tools stolen from vehicle.

14300 block of Summer Tree Road.

GPS stolen from vehicle.

Activities reported by the Franconia District of the Fairfax County Police Department through Nov. 21.

ROBBERY

South Van Dorn Street/Interstate 495.

Two men robbed another man near the intersection of South Van Dorn Street and Interstate 495 on Friday, Nov. 14 shortly after midnight. The victim, 20, from Alexandria, saw four males as he was walking and they began to follow him. Two of the males approached and one of them reportedly implied a weapon while the other held him. The suspects took an undisclosed

amount of cash, a game system and video game then fled on foot. The suspects were described as black, in their late teens. They were all about 6 feet tall and weighed between 160 and 180 pounds, with black hair. Three of them had brown eyes and they all wore black, hooded sweat shirts and blue jeans. One suspect had long, braided hair and a beard. The second suspect had short curly hair and a tattoo on his neck. The third had short, curly hair and wore a black skull cap.

VEHICLE THEFTS

5700 block of Backlick Road.

Unknown type moped.

6500 block of Backlick Road.

2006 Volkswagen Passat.

6100 block of Franconia Road.

2006 Ford Taurus.

7200 block of Lamar Drive.

Toyota Tercel.

7000 block of Skyles Way.

18-wheeler freightliner truck.

6500 block of Virginia Hills Ave.

1991 Nissan Pathfinder.

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COMMUNITY

Third Boundary Option on the Table

FROM PAGE 3

ing Laurel Hill live much farther away from the school than they do. Under the third boundary option, many Laurel Hill students would actually drive through or past neighborhoods attending Halley to get to the new school.

"Option three is not an option. My kids moved five years ago from Halley to Silverbrook and now they would have to move back again. I am in walking distance of the new school, but we are going to be bused to one farther away," said Tiffany Kennedy-Kirby, who lives in the Gables at Gunston development.

School officials have pointed out that, in several cases, elementary school students who could walk to school are actually not allowed to do so. The school system's policy requires all elementary school students who have to cross a large, busy road to ride a bus to school, regardless of how close by they may live, according to School Board member Liz Bradsher (Springfield).

Still, several families, particularly in the Lorton Valley North area, already feel as if they have been asked to bear the burden of an unfair school redistricting decision. Under the current secondary school boundaries, many of them have to travel a few miles to Hayfield for middle and high school, despite the fact that South County Secondary, which opened less than a decade ago, is only 1 mile away.

STILL, other communities oppose the third boundary option because they do not want to be moved from Halley.

Many parents who live around the intersection of Silverbrook and Hooes roads said they did not want to be moved from Halley to Silverbrook, because the latter has half-day instead of full-day kindergarten program and the shift would be a financial

hardship.

This issue of full-day kindergarten also comes into play for families that might move from any of the elementary schools, with the exception of Silverbrook, to Laurel Hill, since it is unclear whether the new school will have a half or full-day program.

OTHER PARENTS are concerned that the third option does not adequately address enrollment and capacity issues. According to statistics provided by the school system, the latest alternative would leave Lorton Station approximately 250 students overenrolled, even though Silverbrook and Laurel Hill would have about 180 and 270 open seats each next year.

"Why are we keeping school over capacity when we have schools with room?" asked Francesca Wall, a Mason Neck resident with students at Gunston.

Some have suggested dealing with the enrollment imbalance by moving the local Gifted and Talented Center out of Lorton Station, which would remain significantly overenrolled under two of the three boundary proposals.

Others are opposed to a shift in the Gifted and Talented Center location because the percentage of students who are from low-income families, which will already be higher at Lorton Station than the other elementary schools, would increase signifi-

Newly Proposed School Boundaries:

Fairfax County Public Schools presented a third option for new elementary school boundaries on Dec. 1. The school system needs to adjust boundaries in the Lorton area to make way for the new Laurel Hill Elementary School. Option Three, as the new boundary alternative is called, would move the following neighborhoods and subdivisions:

From Gunston Elementary to Lorton Station Elementary

♦ Summerhill, Southpoint, New Haven, Green Pines

From Halley Elementary to Laurel Hill Elementary

♦ Laurel Highlands, Monacan Estates, Hagel Circle area, Evans

From Halley Elementary to Silverbrook Elementary

♦ Areas northeast, southeast and southwest of the Silverbrook Road/Hooes Road intersection

From Halley Elementary to Lorton Station Elementary

♦ Lorton Town Center area

From Lorton Station Elementary to Laurel Hill Elementary

♦ Lorton Station South, Gunston Square, Gunston Hill

From Lorton Station Elementary to Halley Elementary

♦ Lorton Valley North and surrounding subdivisions

From Silverbrook Elementary to Newington Forest Elementary

♦ Laurel Hill North along Pohick Road

From Silverbrook Elementary to Laurel Hill Elementary

♦ Laurel Hills primarily east of Silverbrook Road and north of Lorton Road

From Silverbrook Elementary to Halley Elementary

♦ Laurel Crest, Gables Condo at Gunston, Gunston Corner, Highlands Gunston Corner on the west side of Silverbrook Road

poor. Under the second option, Lorton Station would actually see a more significant bump in the percentage of its population that is low income but Lyons' neighborhood would be moved to Laurel Hill so she is not as concerned about that proposal.

"Depending on the demographics at Lorton Station, I would want the option of going to Laurel Hill," said Lyons.

But several Lorton Station parents are pleased with the third option.

Under option three, the school's population of students that qualify for free-and-reduced lunch prices would increase from 35.2 percent to 37.3 percent. Under the other two alternatives, it would jump up over 40 percent, even as another local school, Silverbrook, would see its free-and-reduced lunch population reduced to fewer than 10 percent.

"I am a lot happier with this option because the demographics are more balanced,"

said Chris Cardon, a Lorton Station parent.

Both Cardon and Lyons said they would prefer to see "funky boundaries" — those which are not drawn along obvious community boundaries or where students may have to travel farther to get to school — if it meant that the school system was able to create equity in the elementary schools' demographics.

Cardon added he would prefer to see Lorton Station overenrolled than to see the percentage of poor students in the school soar.

cantly.

Even if the Gifted and Talented Center does not move, some parents are concerned that any jump in the percentage of poor students will trigger a shift in resources away from high-performing students.

"I have concerns that an increase in [students who qualify for] free and reduced lunch is going to impact the GT program," said Beverly Lyons.

She is not in favor of first and third option because both would increase the percentage of students at her school who are

"It's unfortunate, but not surprising in this economic climate that the Alexander Company would see the ball field as an appropriate location [for the townhomes]," said Sargeant.

McBride did not accept that explanation, citing his experience in land-use development.

"In 20 years of hearings, [developers] all say the same thing on their first iteration. [They say] 'We can't make this work' and 'It's not economically viable,'" he said. "I can tell you, we found that after a while they would find a way because they needed our support."

Marc Holma from the office of review and compliance in the Virginia Department of Historic Resources has been in contact with the committee and company regarding aspects of their plan. Holma said the department's preference was for the parties involved to find a way to preserve the field and its historic components.

"Avoidance of demolition is always the

preferred option," said Holma. "If there's another site where the townhouses can be moved, that would be our preferred option."

Alternate sites for a portion of the townhouses were proposed by both McBride and Grasso in order to preserve the field. Both The Alexander Company and Sargeant said that alternate sites were being explored, but that historic preservation regulations and planning restrictions have limited their placement options.

McBride admitted that the Alexander Company might walk away from the proposal if they decide it's in their best financial interest to do so. "I'm willing to let them walk away for this. It could be years for another company to get back to where [we are] today," said McBride.

Irma Clifton, president of the Lorton Heritage Society, said that that organization has yet to give an official position on the baseball field, but that they had asked the committee and developers to do "all they can" to keep it intact.

Developer Wants To Build Townhomes on Ball Field

FROM PAGE 3

responsible for maintaining and refurbishing it. Grasso said his organization has spent over \$30,000 to install batting cages, cement the dugouts and install Fairfax County-approved roofs over them. In exchange, the Hawks are given exclusive rights to the field for most of its weekly schedule.

The field is just one of many issues the Lorton Heritage Society (LHS) has expressed concern about regarding the current plan for the Laurel Hill Project.

Newington resident Neil McBride has been a member of three Laurel Hill Project committees dating back to 1995 designed to help guide the potential redevelopment and reuse of the Lorton Prison site. He is also a member of the Lorton Heritage Society. McBride has criticized both the developer hired by the county and the current advisory committee charged with oversight of the plan.

"The county and Alexander Company started off on the wrong foot, period," said McBride.

The master plan being drafted relies too heavily on residential and retail components to the detriment of the site's historic appearance, said McBride. Officials from both the Alexander Company and the current committee defended the plans, saying components were intended to make the plan economically feasible. Elmer said the residential units were needed to offset the overall cost of the project, though a financial pro forma detailing exact figures is still being formulated.

Tim Sargeant, chairperson of the current Laurel Hill Project Advisory Committee, said the committee could not endorse or reject the plans or the number of residential units until the Alexander Company presented its financial feasibility report some time next year. He did say that, given the economic climate, the 300 residential units proposed in the latest draft plans might be necessary.

"It's unfortunate, but not surprising in this economic climate that the Alexander Company would see the ball field as an appropriate location [for the townhomes]," said Sargeant.

McBride did not accept that explanation, citing his experience in land-use development.

"In 20 years of hearings, [developers] all say the same thing on their first iteration. [They say] 'We can't make this work' and 'It's not economically viable,'" he said. "I can tell you, we found that after a while they would find a way because they needed our support."

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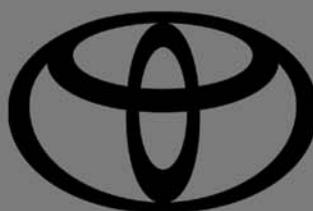
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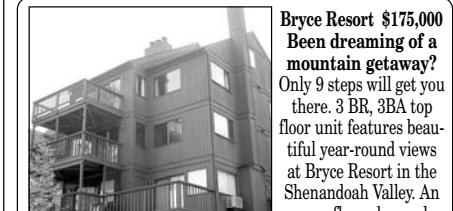
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 in Fairfax
 Station,
 3 Level,
 4 Bed,
 2.5 Baths

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Lake Front!

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 Great rental opportunity in central Springfield. 4BR/3BA
 totally renovated beauty. Wood floors, granite kitchen with
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 Brand new kitchen: 42" maple cabs, granite, stainless steel app.
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 Great location! Close to major transportation and shopping!

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Fairfax Station \$725,000
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Can't be beat! See this property at www.CliftonMLS.com.



Fairfax Station \$1,824,000
 Timeless Elegance!
 Quality custom home built in Jeffersonian architectural style & design, on beautiful 5 acre parcel. 5 BR, 5.5 BA, 3 car gar. Heated pool w/flagstone patio. Australian cypress hdwd flrs., Italian granite kitchen counters, Kolbe windows, Schoenbek chandeliers. Everything top of the line!
 See this property at www.CliftonMLS.com.



Barbara Nowak & Gerry Staudte
"My Virginia Home Team"
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gerry.staudte@longandfoster.com
www.MyVirginiaHomeTeam.com



Woodbridge \$110,000
 Sunny & Spacious
 Partially updated townhome with 4 BR/3.5 BA. Eat-in space in Kitchen. Walk-out from LL recreation room. Fenced yard backs to trees. Priced to SELL!
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Catie & Steve
 Direct: **703-278-9313**
 Cell: **703-362-2591**
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 Great family home in a top family neighborhood! Sited on 1 private acre backing to common area! From the inviting front porch to the private back deck, this has everything on your list! Four bedrooms, master suite, sparkling hardwoods, granite remodeled kitchen, and a walk out rec room! Privacy yet in a neighborhood setting. Attend Clifton ES/Robinson SS! Call Catie & Steve to see today!

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