

CENTRE VIEW

SOUTHERN EDITION



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Boy, 16, Is Convicted Of Robbery

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

In court last week, via a Spanish-language interpreter, 16-year-old Julio Cesar Montenegro pleaded guilty to robbing a man near an elementary school in Centreville. As he entered his plea, a second person interpreted the proceedings for his mother, sitting in one of the rows.

"Do you understand the maximum punishment you could receive for this offense is life imprisonment?" Fairfax County Circuit Court Judge David Schell asked the young man, last Wednesday, Dec. 17. "Or you can be sentenced as a juvenile to the Department of Juvenile Justice, up to until your 21st birthday?"

"Yes, sir," replied Montenegro of 14119 Honey Hill Court in Centreville.

Schell also made him aware

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Making the Holidays Joyful

Our Neighbor's Child helps 757 families.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

Santa's elves would be hard-pressed to keep up with the volunteers of Our Neighbor's Child (ONC). As delivery day approached, last week, this nonprofit group of local residents was hard at work shopping, sorting, packing and organizing Christmas presents for 757 families in need.

They provided new toys and clothing for families in Centreville, Chantilly, Clifton and west of Fair Oaks mall. And with packaging help from SGA students at Centreville and Westfield high schools, they

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Dayna Young selects children's gifts at the ONC warehouse.

Festival of Lights 5K on New Year's Eve

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

For those resolving to stay or get fit in the New Year — or just wanting to help raise money for a good cause — the Third Annual Festival of Lights 5K race is just the ticket. It's slated for Wednesday, Jan. 31, at 3 p.m. in Bull Run Regional Park.

Proceeds will go to the park and also to Shaken Baby Prevention of Manassas. Entry fee is \$27 and online registration is at www.bullrunrunners.com. Participants will receive long-sleeved, commemorative T-shirts and, after the race, will be eligible for drawings for gifts donated by businesses in the local community.

"People can sign up at the large pavilion in the park on race day," said Race Director Michelle Newkirk of Centreville's Bull Run Estates community. "But I really hope they'll

register early because it's hard to plan everything at the last minute."

The course goes through a portion of the famed, Festival of Lights holiday display, and the first male and female finishers overall will each receive a gold watch. First- and second-place finishers in various age-group categories will also receive prizes.

"We had almost 270 runners last year, and my goal this year is 350," said Newkirk. "Every year, I pick a different charity to benefit. The first year, it was the Matthews Center for autistic children, and last year it was the Wounded Warriors project."

Newkirk runs in that park regularly and, three years ago, she founded the Bull Run Runners. "We meet on Saturdays and Sundays and run through the park, just to stay in shape," she said. "How far we run depends on what we're training for; if it's a

SEE REGISTER, PAGE 7



COURTESY OF MICHELLE NEWKIRK

The runners take off during last year's Festival of Lights 5K race in Bull Run Regional Park.

ROUNDUPS

Salcedo's Charges Are Dropped

On Feb. 23, Fairfax County police arrested Centreville's Italo Salcedo, 19, and charged him with one count each of possession of stolen property, possession with intent to sell stolen property and possession with intent to sell marijuana. At that time, they believed he was involved with four other people who stole items from members at Life Time fitness in Centreville, between August 2007 and Feb. 7, 2008. However, last Monday, Dec. 15, in General District Court, before Judge Donald McDonough, all the charges against Salcedo were dropped.

Rios-Leon Is Indicted

A Fairfax County grand jury last Monday, Dec. 15, indicted a 27-year-old man from College Point, N.Y., in connection with the theft of clothing from several stores in Fair Oaks Mall. He is Daniel Esteban Rios-Leon.

He was indicted on one count each of grand larceny, possession of burglary tools and larceny with intent to sell stolen property. He's slated to enter a plea, Jan. 26, in Circuit Court.

Charges Go to Grand Jury

In October, the Fairfax County Fire Marshal's Office arrested Brian Fletcher, 19, of 15163 Stratton Major Court in Centreville; Michael Mirch, 19, of no fixed address; and Alexander Bruce, 20, of 13807 Stonefield Drive in Little Rocky Run.

Each was charged with three counts of arson and one count of setting a fire maliciously in connection with the Oct. 3 destruction by fire of a blue, 2004 Honda CV-S2000 in the Carriage Park community in Fair Oaks. Fire officials say the fire spread to two other vehicles and the nearby trees.

On Dec. 10, in General District Court, the arson charges against all three men were dropped. Judge Lorraine Nordlund then certified their malicious fire-setting charges to the grand jury for possible indictment.

Underage Drinking Arrests

Fairfax County police have charged four teens with underage drinking and a 21-year-old with contributing to the delinquency of a minor. The adult charged is Saif Rehman of 4031 Dogberry Lane in Chantilly's Birch Pond community.

Police received a call, Dec. 5, around 1 p.m., regarding a group of juveniles allegedly drinking inside a home in the 13200 block of Pennerview Lane in Greenbriar. They arrested Rehman on Dec. 7 and later obtained juvenile petitions for a Fairfax boy, 17; Chantilly girl, 17; Oak Hill girl, 16; and Chantilly girl, 16.

Robbery Charges Move Forward

The charges against two people accused of the armed robbery of a 27-year-old Chantilly man are moving forward in the legal system. The incident occurred Oct. 20, around 11 a.m., as the man was about to make a bank deposit.

Fairfax County police say that, as the man approached the SunTrust Bank at 13900 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in Chantilly, another man walked up to him, displayed a handgun and demanded his bank bag. After a struggle, the suspect knocked the bag out of his hand, grabbed it and fled.

An officer patrolling the area saw the suspect get into a car and made a traffic stop. The alleged driver, Jessica Mitchell, 21, of Bristow, was charged with robbery. Jeremy Trujillo, 24, the suspect at the bank, was charged with robbery and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony. Another suspect, Dontay Wooden, 19, was charged with conspiracy to commit robbery. Trujillo and Wooden both live in Manassas Park.

On Dec. 10 in General District Court, Judge Ian O'Flaherty sent both Mitchell's and Wooden's charges to the grand jury for possible indictment. Trujillo's court date is Dec. 29.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will

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NEWS

Police Focus on Drunk Driving

Sobriety checkpoint is dedicated in honor of woman killed by teen.

The Fairfax County Police Department, Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Virginia State Police and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) dedicated a multi-agency sobriety checkpoint in memory of a Leesburg woman killed last year by a drunk driver from Centreville.

Kathleen Becker died in a crash, Sept. 20, 2007, on Route 15 in Loudoun County. The vehicle that struck her was driven by a 17-year-old girl who'd consumed alcohol at a football game at Westfield High.

The checkpoint took place in the Sully Police District from Dec. 19-20. Before it began, Becker's husband Henry said, "I hope they get some people that shouldn't be on the road. The hope would be that it

would save some lives and would be something honorable."

Capt. Susan Culin, commander of the police department's Traffic Division, also underscored the importance of the ongoing commitment to the fight against drunk and impaired driving.

"I hope they get some people that shouldn't be on the road."

— Henry Becker

"While we can never bring back the life of a lost loved one, we sympathize with the victims and the pain they feel as they suffer through their loss," said Culin. "Drunk driving is a tragedy, as well as a serious, yet preventable, crime. We hope that the dedication of the checkpoint will both honor the memory of Mrs. Becker [and] raise public awareness of the importance of sober driving and the problem of underage drinking."

— BONNIE HOBBS

Salmeron Pleads Guilty to Robbery

Cash stolen after woman uses ATM early morning.

Last summer, a Centreville man robbed a Chantilly woman after she withdrew money from her bank's ATM. But now Boris Nelson Salmeron, 23, of 14452 Rustling Leaves Lane in The Meadows community, has pleaded guilty to that deed.

The incident occurred Aug. 17, at 2:49 a.m., outside a bank in the 14200 block of Centreville Road in Chantilly. According to Fairfax County police, the woman, 24, had used an ATM card inside the bank lobby and, when she left, Salmeron approached her and demanded money.

He then grabbed her, knocked her to the ground and took her cash. But a police K-9 unit found him nearby and he was arrested and charged with robbery and abduction. The latter charge was dropped in General District Court, but the robbery charge moved forward and, on Nov. 17, the grand jury indicted Salmeron on it.

On Wednesday, Dec. 10, he appeared in Circuit Court and pleaded guilty to robbery. Before accepting his plea, however, Judge Bruce White made sure that Salmeron was entering that plea freely and voluntarily and because he was, indeed, guilty. White then set his sentencing for Feb. 6.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Police Alcohol Stings Nab Three People

Undercover operations check 23 locations.

Fairfax County police arrested three adults recently for allegedly purchasing alcohol for underage, undercover police cadets. One arrest was made Dec. 5, when members of the Sully District Station patrol, plus a member of the Operations Support Bureau, conducted business-compliance checks at several locations in Chantilly and Centreville.

Two more arrests were made Dec. 12 during a shoulder-tap operation conducted in Centreville and Chantilly. These undercover operations were part of the ongoing Safe December alcohol enforcement campaign.

The shoulder-taps took place in parking lots outside businesses holding state ABC licenses to sell alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption. Police cadets dressed in plain clothes approached adults and asked them to buy alcohol for them.

If asked their age by the adult, the cadets were told to respond with their true ages. If asked for identification, they were to say they'd had left their identification at home or in the car.

If the illegal purchase of alcohol occurred, a plain-

clothes officer watching the transaction had a nearby uniformed officer arrest the adult. The "Shoulder Tap" operation was conducted by one cadet, two plain clothes officer, and one uniformed officer serving as team security.

During the business-compliance check, 23 locations were entered and one arrest was made at the 7-Eleven at 13941 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in Chantilly.

During the shoulder-tap operation, 80 individuals were approached at eight locations. Two arrests were made at Chantilly Cash & Carry, 13919 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in Chantilly; and the 7-Eleven, 13830 Lee Highway in Centreville.

Authorities say that, during the New Year's holiday, nearly 70 percent of all traffic fatalities are alcohol-related. So Sully District Station police officers will be conducting DWI patrols throughout their district, until Jan. 3, to deter and apprehend intoxicated drivers.

Sully police are also teaming with local restaurants and bars to save lives. On New Year's Eve, beginning at 6 p.m., these establishments will serve free sodas to anyone acting as a designated driver and promising not to consume alcohol. Establishments wishing to participate should contact the Sully District Station at 703-814-7000.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Our Neighbor's Child Helps 757 Families

FROM PAGE 1

also distributed nearly 20,000 homebaked cookies.

After the gifts donated by the community were brought to the ONC warehouse, hundreds of volunteers matched up each item to the wish list provided by the recipient parents for their children. And although the volunteers all have Christmas wishes to fulfill for their own friends and families, they willingly — and joyfully — gave up their own time to make the holidays brighter for others.

"I've done it, off and on, for 11 years," said Dayna Young of Centreville's Compton Village community. "It makes my heart feel good; you want to help the families in need."

Busy searching for the toys on a particular family's list, she was delighted when she located just the right gift. "One little boy wanted a remote-control car, and I found an awesome one," she said. "He's 9 years old —

"These may be the only presents these people get."

— **Scot Townshend, ONC volunteer**



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Stone Middle eighth-graders (from left) Michael Thorpe, Nathan Kiley and Andrew Gidzinski help organize the bicycles.

he'll love it."

ALSO DOING THEIR PART were the firefighters of Station 15 in Chantilly. They "adopted" a family, themselves, purchasing all the presents for the family's eight children — three boys and five girls, ages 2-12.

"We got art supplies and educational toys, plus Dora the Explorer and princess toys for the girls, and bikes for the boys," said Capt. Mike Ciarrocchi. "They're also getting a tree."

"The manager of the Target store in Chantilly donated a Christmas tree and gift certificates for each child," added firefighter Julie

Sehnal. "And we're going to deliver the presents and the tree."

Ciarrocchi said many of the fire stations hold gift exchanges between their employees but, instead, Station 15 "would rather do something special to help out the public. And we get a lot more out of it by helping someone else."

For the Townshends of Chantilly's Century Oaks community, volunteering with ONC is a family affair. Bonnie Townshend helps call the gift recipients to learn their requests, and her husband Scot and daughter Paige, 9, worked in the warehouse last Thursday, Dec. 18.

"We're picking up bags already



COURTESY OF KELLY LAVIN

Sully Station's Jessica Grivas and daughter Shannon, a Virginia Run Elementary sixth-grader, led the committee decorating ONC's warehouse to make it festive for the volunteers.

packed, seeing what's missing, checking what's supposed to be in them and supplementing them with extra gifts — a gift card, basketball, baby doll — so the families get everything they'd asked for, and more," said Scot Townshend. "It's important because these may be the only presents these people get."

He said they initially learned about ONC through their church, Floris United Methodist, and helping others is part of being a good person. Said Townshend: "We feel very privileged and want to give back as much as possible."

Many students pitched in, as well, including Westfield seniors Marco Gutierrez and Morgan Hicks, plus 2008 WHS grad Jon Blank. "I have fun doing this because we're helping kids," said Gutierrez. Added Hicks: "It helps me realize how fortunate I am to have what I have. It's good to help those not as fortunate enjoy Christmas, and it's a great way for the community to come together to help others in the community."

Blank knew students who'd volunteered with ONC previously and they invited him to help, this year. He, too, had a good time, while discovering that "it's as much fun for me to be able to do a charitable thing as it is for them to be receiving these gifts from everybody."

As for Kelly Lavin, the executive director of ONC, pulling off this undertaking each year has become a major part of her own family's Christmas.

"I said to my kids last year that we don't do certain holiday traditions together because we're so busy with Our Neighbor's Child," said Lavin. "And my oldest son Ryan, now a college senior, said, 'Mom, Our Neighbor's Child is our family tradition.' And it is — and over the years, they've taken part in all of it."

"But so have the children of all our project leaders, and they're all

SEE ONC, PAGE 15



COURTESY OF KELLY LAVIN

Westfield High's football players unloaded the trucks bringing toys and games to the warehouse for packaging.

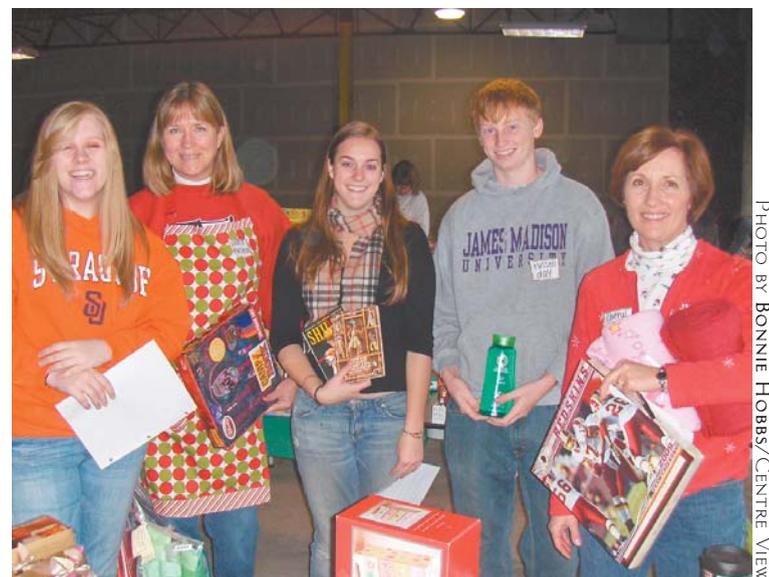


PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

From left: Amy Dykstra, Syracuse University, and mom Valerie; Ann Marie McKenzie, UVA; Russell Day, JMU; and Cheryl Thuot all lend a hand on packaging day. All three students are 2008 WHS grads.

PEOPLE

Rotary Club Hosts Event For Homeless Families

Santa and the Rotary Club of Fairfax brought holiday cheer to homeless families on Dec. 15 at the club's eighth-annual Christmas Party for Homeless Kids. Verne Tuininga, the Rotary club's community service director, served again this year as the chair of the event, which was held at American Legion Post 177 in Fairfax City.

SAYS TUININGA, "Members of the Rotary Club of Fairfax have been donating gifts and funds for the event for weeks. I am touched as I always am by the outpouring of generosity from my fellow Rotarians." In all, Tuininga says, the Fairfax club's members donated \$1,150 to buy gifts for the children and gift cards from Target for the parent of each homeless family. Tuininga adds, Fairfax City area Girl Scouts supported the program again this year by providing reading books for the children wrapped in holiday paper.

The honored guests at the event were families with children that are temporarily housed in motels along Route 50 from Fairfax Circle to Route 123. The guest list was developed with the help of the staff of FACETS (Fairfax Area



Santa brought holiday joy and presents on Dec. 15 to the Rotary Club of Fairfax's Christmas party for homeless families. Here, one of the guests shares a moment with Santa Claus.

Christian Emergency & Transitional Services, Inc.). Fairfax City CUE buses provided free transportation to and from the American Legion facility for the homeless families.

IN ALL, 58 guests were invited to the event. Twenty-two Rotarians, several of their spouses and children, and members of the staff of FACETS also took part in the fes-

ivities, rounding out the total number of participants to more than 80. The Rotary Club of Fairfax meets on Mondays at 12:15 p.m. at the American Legion Hall on Oak Street in Fairfax City. For more information about the Rotary Club of Fairfax, visit the club's Web site at www.fairfaxrotary.org. Or email the Rotary Club of Fairfax's Executive Director, Irby N. Hollans, Jr., at ihollans@earthlink.net.



BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

'I've Got \$50; Who'll Bid \$100?'

Auctioneer Scott Dratch conducts a lively auction for the Centreville chapter of Quilters Unlimited, Nov. 13, at Colin Powell Elementary. Founded in 1972, Quilters Unlimited is a nonprofit organization of Northern Virginia quilters dedicated to preserving the tradition, culture and history of quilting.



Soldiers Show Their Appreciation

The Democratic Women of Clifton (DWC) sent 31 holiday packages to a military unit serving in Iraq last month. According to DWC steering committee mem-

1st Lt. Robertson II is in the first row, third soldier from left.

ber Yvonne Garcia, of Centreville's Cabell's Mill community, 1st Lt. James "Jeff" Robertson II of the XVIII Airborne Corps and his section sent their thanks in a holiday card signed by the soldiers, as well as a picture of the unit.

The soldiers were so appreciative in their thank you notes, said Garcia. Some of the items delivered included toothpaste, soap, shaving cream, chewing gum, sun-

flower seeds, beef jerky, cookies, trail mix and other snacks. As one soldier put it, "I got the box with the walnut chocolate chip cookies. That was the jackpot!"

DWC Chairman Jane Barker said that this effort was in its second year because of the success that they had last year. It is DWC's way of thanking them for their service especially during the holiday season.

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Big Goals for Smaller School

Emphasis is on improving student achievement.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

For years, whenever people talked about Westfield High, its huge enrollment of some 3,200 students was always mentioned. But this time, it started the new school year with 2,935 students.

"It's the first time we've been under 3,000 in several years," said Principal Tim Thomas. "It's partly because of the new boundaries and because last year's graduating class was our largest ever, with close to 800 students. This year's is 740."

Only about a dozen new staff members were hired, teaching subjects from art to special ed to science. "Because of our decrease in enrollment, a number of teachers were reassigned to other schools, plus a couple retired," said Thomas. "And we had several who left and returned, so that's kind of nice."

Westfield has a new counselor, Nikki Bender, and a new administrator, Scott Davies. He's the subschool VI principal, in charge of science, health and P.E. "He's also a founding staff member of the Westfield family," said Thomas. "He replaces John Werner, who's the new principal of Clarke County High School, and we wish him well."

Westfield also has a new Professional Learning Communities initiative to improve student achievement. Called Bulldog Block, it's a 35-minute, rewards and remediation period offered to students, Tuesdays and Fridays. It allows them the opportunity to get help from their teachers without staying after school.

"It's a way of ensuring that students in need of additional support can get it during the school day, and it's mandatory for those failing classes," said Thomas. "We did it last year on a trial basis and saw that it had a measurable and positive impact on student achievement. So we felt it was warranted to retain it on a more permanent basis."

Thomas is also excited about a new, character-education initiative called Westfield PRIDE that he also hopes will become permanent. The letters in PRIDE stand for personal responsibility, respect (for self, others and property), integrity, discipline and excellence in all endeavors.

"Given information provided through surveying students, staff and parents, we felt that PRIDE is representative of a common set of core values," said Thomas. "And these values will help guide or define the behavior expectations of all the stakeholders of Westfield High."

The school plans to promote Westfield PRIDE through messages to the community, T-shirts, banners, magnets, signs, etc. "We're designing some instructional programs for the classroom, as well, to promote this," said Thomas. "To me, it's a comprehensive set of core values that



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

Westfield High School
Principal Tim Thomas.

could be demonstrated in the classroom, on and off the athletic arenas, in the community and at home, as well. So Westfield PRIDE is not just a slogan — it's a way of life." Another initiative — this one intended to increase Hispanic student achievement — is a program titled Hispanos al Progreso (Hispanics Moving Forward). "It's a collective effort from students, staff, community members and parents to encourage parents to take more of an active role in their children's learning," said Thomas. "And it's a way to illustrate our theme this year, 'Bridging Gaps and Building Relationships.'"

Like many Fairfax County schools these days, Westfield is less than 60 percent Caucasian. According to Thomas, the student body is about 57 percent Caucasian, 19 percent Asian, 11 percent Hispanic, 9 percent African-American and 4 percent other. "It certainly opens the door to celebrate diversity," he said.

On Oct. 22, the school held a Westfield Minority Achievement parent dinner featuring a panel discussion on ways to eliminate existing achievement gaps. And on Nov. 18, there was a Hispanos al Progreso meeting.

OVERALL, Thomas said Westfield has had "terrific" opening months of school. "To accommodate the Bulldog Block period, we decreased the time between classes from 10 to eight minutes," he said. "And the students seem very motivated and are adjusting well to the new bell schedule."

Westfield also sports a brand-new, electronic marquee at the student entrance off Stonecroft Boulevard. Said Thomas: "It's a great way to promote events here, and I'm extremely appreciative of all the student, parent, PTSA and booster groups who contributed to make this happen."

He's now in his third year as principal there and is looking forward to celebrating the school's 10th anniversary next year. "Every day is an exciting day," he said.

"These kids are the greatest, and I work in a terrific community. It's a top-notch staff, always willing to reflect on instructional practices and ways to improve student behavior and achievement."

Thomas said each year has its challenges but, "For me, the annual challenge is to find and implement new ways to impact our students in a positive way. This is a great place for kids, and the efforts of the community are much appreciated."

"It's a top-notch staff, always willing to reflect on instructional practices and ways to improve student behavior and achievement."

— Tim Thomas, principal, Westfield High

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SCHOOLS

Fairfax High School Theatre Department is offering a three-day winter break Drama Camp for grades 1-8, Monday through Wednesday, Dec 29-31, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501, Rebel Run, Fairfax.

Campers may sign up for mornings or afternoon sessions (\$75 for 3 half-day sessions) or both sessions (\$165 for the full 3-day camp.). Newly added activities include musical theatre and puppetry. See www.fxplayers.org for more information and a registration form, or call 703/818-0926.

All proceeds benefit the FHS Theatre students' trip to London.

The 15th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Festival will take place on Sunday, Jan. 11 from 4-6 p.m. in the Centreville High School auditorium. The program is free, open to the public and sponsored by the **Mark Your Calendars!**

Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student Achievement Committee (CPMSAC). The Festival is a blend of entertainment and education to display the students' array of talents. Performances may include choirs, bands, orchestra, vocal and instrumental soloists, dancers (group or solo), and orators. The 2009 MLK Committee is made up of Kim Graham, Brenda Johnson, Wanda Tanks-Gregory and Deneen Vaughn.

A total of 325 students participated in Coastal Carolina University's fall commencement ceremony on Saturday, Dec. 13 at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center. Congratulations to these students who graduated:

- Amanda Hunter of Centreville;
- Jennifer Holt of Chantilly;
- Mary McGee of Fairfax.

Clifton Children's Academy will be holding a registration open house for Kindergarten and morning, afternoon and full-day preschool classes on Thursday, Jan. 22, from 9:15 - 11:30 a.m. and 1-2 p.m. This is for registration for Fall 2009. Bring your child and come to tour the school. The school is located at 14315 Compton Road in Centreville. Call 703-968-8455. Visit the Web site at www.childrensacademy.com.

The Centreville High Wildcat Music Department presents the following concerts:

- Band /Jazz — Feb. 19, May 7, May 14;
- Choir — March 18, June 4, June 5;
- Orchestra — March 12, May 21;
- Guitar - Jan. 30, May 8;

To help keep the music playing, keep an eye out this fall for CVHS Wildcat Band Scrip cards, car washes and fruit sales. Be sure and join us for the Wildcats' home football games and the halftime entertainment your generous support provides.

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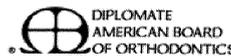
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Teen Pleads Guilty to Robbery

FROM PAGE 1

that, by pleading guilty, he may also waive his right to appeal any decision of the court. The judge noted, as well, that a plea agreement had been reached in his case. Montenegro was also charged with use of a firearm in the commission of a felony, but the commonwealth agreed to drop that charge in exchange for the teen's guilty plea to robbery. It further agreed to prosecute him as a juvenile.

The judge accepted his plea, and then Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Dylan Gallagher explained what the prosecution's case would have been, had it gone to trial. He said the victim was walking near London Towne Elementary, the night of July 10, when he was accosted.

"Three individuals shoved him to the ground," said Gallagher. "A tall male held a gun to his head while another held a baseball bat. He relinquished his backpack, containing a watch and other items, and they fled."

In a Sept. 19 affidavit for a warrant to search Montenegro's home for evidence, police Det. Eric Deane wrote that the stolen property included a black shoulder bag containing — among other things — a silver Omega Speedmaster Professional watch with a black face and three posts on the side.

According to the detective, investigation revealed Montenegro later bragged about "robbing an old guy" near London Towne Elementary in July. Deane also

wrote that the teen told someone a gun was used during the robbery, showed off the stolen items and — a couple days after the incident — was "wearing an expensive, new, silver watch with a black face and three posts on the side."

Police arrested and charged Montenegro on Sept. 19, and he was certified as an adult, for prosecution purposes, on Oct. 30. Also charged with the same two offenses in connection with this robbery was Taurus Finley Dean Jr., 19, of 14626 Outpost Court in Centreville's Centre Ridge community. Arrested Oct. 28, he was scheduled for a Dec. 23 preliminary hearing in General District Court.

Gallagher said police developed Montenegro as a suspect after Dean identified him as a participant. "Taurus Dean admitted to being the man who'd held the gun," said Gallagher. "And on Oct. 24, Montenegro told Det. Deane that he'd held the bat."

The prosecutor said the gun was later retrieved from Dean's home and "turned out to be a bb pistol which had been fitted with a cartridge from a real, 9 mm gun. Montenegro told the detective he thought it was a real gun and he'd be harmed if he didn't go along with the robbery. He also identified the third participant."

Judge Schell then ordered a pre-sentencing report be made on Montenegro and set his sentencing for Feb. 6. Until then, he'll continue being held in the Juvenile Detention Center.

"Montenegro ... thought it was a real gun."

— **Dylan Gallagher, Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney**

Register for Festival of Lights 5K

FROM PAGE 1

marathon, we'll run 10 or 20 miles at a time."

Regarding this 5K event, Newkirk thought it would be fun to have a race through the Festival of Lights and was delighted

when the park manager gave her approval. Now it's in its third year and going strong, and Newkirk's directed it since the start.

"I want to get people outside, enjoying nature, and help benefit the community," she said. "We're fortunate to run — a lot of people

aren't. So why not use our legs to help others?"

People may also walk or volunteer. "Better yet, just come the day of the race and encourage the runners," said Newkirk. "I know, as a runner, it makes you feel great when someone cheers for you."

Illegal Gambling, Money Laundering Charged

Fairfax County police have charged a Centreville woman with one count each of conducting an illegal gambling operation and money laundering. She is Diane Thanh Diep Tran, 28, of 6505 White Post Road in the Gate Post Estates community.



Tran

Police say an investigation conducted by organized crime/narcotics detectives revealed that she was allegedly engaged in a sports-betting operation. She's employed in the county's Tax Administration Office as an administrative assistant.

Search warrants were executed

at both her workplace and her home, and police arrested her last Thursday, Dec. 18. Tran was held at the Adult Detention Center, and police say the investigation is ongoing and additional charges are possible.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call police at 703-691-2131.

— BONNIE HOBBS



FALBO THOMAS

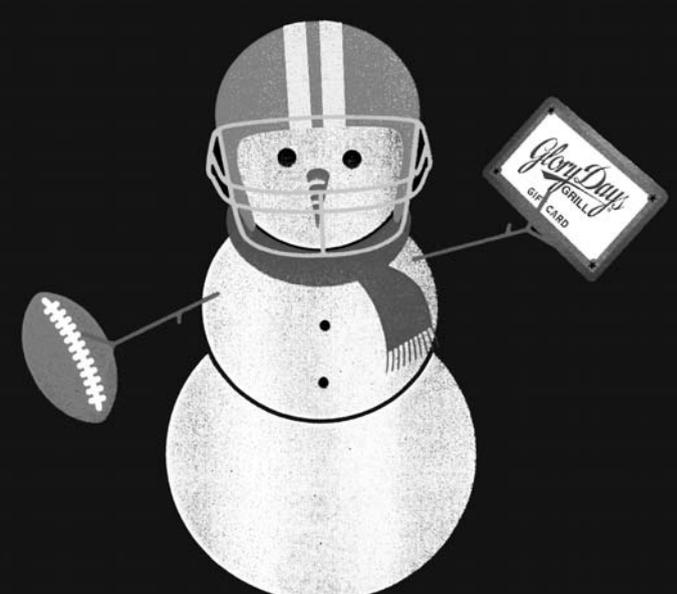
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WORTH NOTING

ONGOING

Austin Grill in Centreville is holding a Kids Eat Free (2 per paying adult) on Tuesday evenings from 6-8 p.m.

Yoplait Pink Lids are being collected by the Western Fairfax Alumnae of Zeta Tau Alpha. Yoplait will donate 10 cents to the Susan G. Komen Foundation and 5 cents to the ZTA Foundation for every lid sent in by Zeta. A pink drop box can be found in the Centreville United Methodist Church narthex (intersection of Route 28/New Braddock Road) on the mission table until Dec. 9.

Chick-fil-A at Fair Oaks Mall hosts "Family Night" every Wednesday from 5-7 p.m. Every week there is a free, different activity to entertain kids of all ages. Come celebrate at Fair Oaks Mall, located inside the main entrance between Sears and Macy's. Call us 703-279-1883 or email at CFAEVENTS@aol.com.

TUESDAY, DEC. 23

The Fairfax County Park Authority is freeing up some shopping time for busy parents this year. On Tuesday, Dec. 23 from 10 a.m. to noon, the staff at E.C. Lawrence Park will watch children ages 3 to 5. The kids will be kept busy and entertained with nature stories around the campfire, a snack, and they will make

a holiday craft. Reservations are required and the cost is \$12 per child. E.C. Lawrence Park is located at 5040 Walney Road, Chantilly. Call 703-631-0013 to reserve a spot for either activity.

FRIDAY/DEC. 26

Swing Dances are held every Friday night at the Dulles Hilton in the Red Fox Room with Sue and Gary Caley. Drop-in beginner lesson included in price of admission from 8:30-9 p.m. Live music from 9 p.m. to midnight. Cost is \$15. All ages welcome, large dance floors, air conditioned. Hilton Washington Dulles Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. Go to www.gottaswing.com for details etc.

* Dec. 26 — JP McDermott and the Bop, also the annual PJ party so wear your Pajama's!

DEC. 27, 28, 29

The Virginia Ballet Company and School will present the classic Nutcracker ballet in its 59th consecutive season. These performances are at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. each day at the Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus in the Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater. Tickets are \$30 for adults and \$20 for children, students and seniors.

Group pricing is available for groups of 10 or more for the same performance. Tickets may be purchased through the web site, www.virginiaballetcompany.org or at the door. A limited number of \$10 open seating tickets is available for the working stage rehearsal on Dec. 26 at 6:30 p.m. They must be purchased in advance and may be purchased through the Web site. Go to www.virginiaballetcompany.org or call 703 249-8227.

MONDAY/DEC. 29

The Richmond Guitar Quartet will perform at Sully Historic Site on Monday, Dec. 29 at 2 and 3 p.m. Four guitars, four individuals, one unique new sound. The Richmond Guitar Quartet is dedicated to fine performances of new music and transcriptions by Richmond composers. A house tour is included in the \$10 ticket fee and refreshments will be served in the original 18th century kitchen. Call 703-437-1794.

TUESDAY/DEC. 30

IONA returns to Sully Historic Site on Tuesday, Dec. 30 at 2 and 3 p.m. One of the top rated pan-Celtic groups in the world, IONA treats its audience to high-energy

entertainment featuring Scottish fiddling, driving percussion, and strong vocals presenting music of the Celtic countries. A house tour is included in the \$10 ticket fee and refreshments will be served in the original 18th century kitchen. Call 703-437-1794.

SATURDAY/JAN. 3

Meteors to streak across sky above Sully Woodlands. Over 100 glowing chunks of asteroid debris may be visible each hour during the peak of the annual Quadrantids meteor shower on Saturday, Jan. 3. Join a Fairfax County Park Authority naturalist for a sky watching program at Sully Woodlands in Chantilly from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. The dark sky above Sully Woodlands' 4,000-acre expanse is known to be one of the best places in the area for stargazing. This program is hosted by nearby Cub Run RECenter and coincides with the meteor shower's activity. The cost is \$4 per child and \$2 per adult. Due to limited parking, registration is required for this program. Call 703-817-9407 to make a reservation.

THURSDAY, JAN. 8

Mothers First - Chantilly/Centreville is a nonprofit support organization dedicated to helping

women who have chosen to alter their careers to raise their children at home. Meetings are first and third Thursdays at 10:15 a.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St Germain Dr., Centreville. Contact 703-827-5922 or www.mothersfirst.org.

THURSDAY, JAN. 15

Larry King of CNN's "Larry King Live" will host a panel discussion in "Beyond the Secret," on Thursday, Jan. 15 at 8 p.m. The movie screening takes audiences beyond the fundamental teachings of the book, "The Secret." It will be shown at Fairfax Towne Center Theatres, 4110 West Ox Road, Suite 12110. Tickets are available at presenting theatre box offices and online at www.FathomEvents.com.

La Leche League of Centreville/Chantilly will hold its January meeting on Thursday, Jan. 15 at 10 a.m. The topic is "The Advantages of Breastfeeding to Mother and Baby". Pregnant and nursing women as well as their children are welcome to attend. Meeting location is the Centreville Library, 14200 St. Germaine Drive. Free. Call a La Leche League Leader at 703-471-7762 or 703-449-0131.

Communities of Worship
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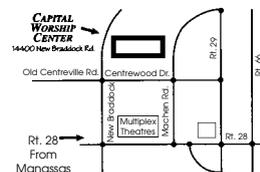
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Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 pm- 9:00 pm



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9:00 am-Morning Prayer
11:00 am-Holy Communion
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Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Service - 10:30 p.m.
Dec. 25 - Christmas Day Service -10:00 a.m.
Jan. 1 - New Year's Day Service -10:00 a.m.

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Centreville, VA
703-830-3176

FAITH NOTES

Wellspring Church celebrates Christmas with a special Christmas Eve family candlelight service at 7 p.m. on Dec. 24, at Centreville Fire Station No. 17. There will also be Christmas worship on Sunday, Dec. 28, and Pastor Richard Thayer will lead both services. Sunday worship is at 11 a.m., at the chapel on Route 29, 13510 Lee Highway, Centreville. The chapel is on the north side of Route 29, just west of the Lee Highway-Union Mill Rd. intersection.

Sunday School for children meets during the Sunday worship hour. Following worship there is a fellowship hour with fair trade coffee and treats, and visitors are welcome.

The Immigration Forum and covenant groups meet in homes in January. Check the web site, wellspringucc.org, or call Sara Little at 703-257-4111 for information on these and other special events.

Wellspring United Church of Christ is thoughtful, prayerful, justice-seeking, and open and affirming to seekers of all backgrounds. Worship is informal.

Congregation Yad Shalom of Centreville provides a variety of programs in a traditional format with a modern flair. It openly invites inquiries about participation in these activities by the community. There are a number of activities for the family for the new year:

❖ Come light the candles at a special

Chanukah event on Sunday, Dec. 28 — see the Web site for further details.

❖ Join us for a Friday night Shabbat service with Cantor Zucker on Jan. 9, 2009 at 8 p.m. at Little Rocky Run Community Center # 3.

❖ Ask about the K-2 Hebrew school for the children for the fall semester. Check out an extensive variety of educational opportunities with the congregation.

❖ Check out the Web site — keep up with the activities scheduled throughout the year.

For further information and/or directions, contact the Congregation at 703-579-6079, or visit the Web site at www.yadshalom.com.

This Christmas season, don't miss the opportunity to receive the greatest gift of all — one filled with hope and life! Join Centreville Community Bible Church to celebrate the real gift of Christmas!

❖ **A Special Pre-Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**, Sunday, Dec. 23, 7 p.m. The December Sermon Series:

"The Greatest Gift". Meeting in Deer Park Elementary School, 15109 Carlbern Drive, Centreville. Call 703-815-8860 www.ccbc-va.com.

❖ **On Thursday, Dec. 25**, what's a Jew to Do? Join in the Chinese Maccabees — A Chanukah family party

in the Far East. Enjoy an all-you-can-eat Chinese buffet, an entertaining Jewish movie, a grand Menorah Lighting with latkes, Dreidels, and chocolate "gelt". Thursday, Dec. 25 at 5:30 p.m. at 3939 Prince William Drive, Fairfax. Cost is \$20/person. RSVP at www.chabadva.org or call 703-426-1980.

❖ **Chanukah on Ice** is Sunday, Dec. 28 from 5:45 – 7:15 p.m. at the Fairfax Ice Arena, 3779 Picket Rd. Fairfax. Featuring a figure skating show ❖ Grand Menorah lighting ❖ Ice-skating to Chanukah music ❖ Hot latkes and donuts ❖ Chanukah Crafts. Cost is \$12 per person. Go to www.chabadva.org or call 703-426-1980.

Temple Beth Torah is a Reform Jewish congregation and member of the Union of Reform Judaism (URJ) that meets at St. John's Episcopal Church in the heart of Centreville. Religious school is held at the Goddard School in Chantilly. The congregation offers the Northern Virginia Jewish community services that provide numerous spiritual, educational, support and social opportunities including religious school for member children age 3 through Bar/Bat Mitzvah and confirmation. The congregation welcomes all members of the community to attend services or events. Call 703-263-2252 or visit www.BethTorah.net.

BUSINESS NOTES

The Chantilly-Centreville Chamber of Commerce and Network Solutions present a program aimed at taking financial mastery to the next level with a better understanding of the power of QuickBooks. The speaker is "**The QuickBooks Guru**" Armit Khalsa who, over the last 18 years, founded, managed and sold two successful service companies. This Brown Bag Luncheon takes place on Friday, Jan. 9 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Chantilly-Centreville Chamber presents these monthly luncheon seminars at the Dulles Regional Chamber's office, 3901 Centerview Drive, Suite R, Chantilly. Register online at www.dullesregionalchamber.org or by calling 571-323-5304.

The Herndon Chamber of Commerce announces a series of special programs for 2009 to celebrate its 50th anniversary. The Chamber turns 50 years old in January. Launching the celebrations will be the Birthday Party Mixer, taking place at the Herndon Municipal Center on Jan. 15 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Municipal Center, located at 777 Lynn Street, Herndon. \$15 Members; \$20 Non-Members; Reservations can be made at www.dullesregionalchamber.org/events.

The Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce and Title Sponsor Access National Bank invite new and prospective members to be their guests for lunch at Chamber 101 on Wednesday, Jan. 21 from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. To RSVP, contact Vickie Walton, Membership Director, 571-323-5308. Chamber 101 will be held at the Dulles Regional Chamber's Chantilly Office, 3901 Centerview Dr., Suite R, Chantilly.

The Chantilly-Centreville Chamber hosts the monthly Power Networking Breakfast on Thursday, Jan. 22 from 8-9:30 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Select - Dulles Expo Center, 4335 Chantilly Shopping Center. Cost for members is \$25; non-members \$30. Contact the Chamber at 571-323-5304; or to register online, visit dullesregionalchamber.org/events.

The Chamber will stage its premiere celebration with an Anniversary Gala titled Hour Story: Eat, Drink and Dance Your Way Through Five Decades. This will include silent and live auction, a scrolling visual history of the Chamber events and leaders interspersed with major events of those decades. The event is being held on Saturday, Feb. 21 from 7 p.m. to midnight, at Westfields Marriott in Chantilly.

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Sunday school for children meets during worship
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www.wellspringucc.org
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JEWISH

Congregation Yad Shalom...703-802-8901
Temple Beth Torah...703-263-2252

LUTHERAN

King of Kings Lutheran Church...703-378-7272
Lord of Life Lutheran Church...703-323-9500
St. Andrew Lutheran Church...703-830-2768

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December 21
Christmas Eve
(Dec 24)

A Shepherd's Heart
Caroling after 11:00 AM
Children's Service 5:00 PM
Gathering at the Manger
Candlelight Service 7:00 PM
The Meaning of Christmas

Services are at 8:45 & 11:00 am
unless otherwise indicated

www.PleasantValleyUMC.net

CENTREVILLE

Sunday Morning Services 8:30 & 11:00

Joy to the World

Dec. 24
Christmas Eve Services
5:30 pm Outdoor Manger
7:30 & 10:00 pm Candlelight

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15450 Lee Highway • Centreville

Celebrate Christmas at Centreville Baptist Church

Sunday Worship Services 8:00 am & 9:30 am Celebration Service	Dec. 20 & 21 7:00 pm Christmas Musical (Childcare available for ages 0-5)
11:00 am Contemporary Service	Dec. 24 4:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service 6:00 pm & 8:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Services
Sunday Bible Study 9:30 am & 11:00 am	

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Athletic Cuts Score Poorly with Community

With two sports on the chopping block, questions abound concerning athletic cuts.

BY JASON MACKEY
CENTRE VIEW

Dan Hayden knows that he's the exception, not the rule. With a daughter that's an accomplished club gymnast who also competes at Herndon High School, Hayden spends between \$400 and \$500 every month and shells out as much as \$5,000 for a five-week camp over the summer for her to compete at a local gymnastics club.

The money is worth it to Hayden because gymnastics has become something Maria Hayden, a junior at Herndon, enjoys. She'd have to. She spends 17 to 18 hours a week doing it.

And then there's her high-school career.

"High-school gymnastics allows girls that don't compete in club to compete," Dan Hayden said. "High-school gymnastics gives them the opportunity to stay in gymnastics, but not commit their whole life to it."

AT A FAIRFAX County Board of Supervisors meeting midway through November, Schools Superintendent Jack D. Dale unveiled three proposals that included cuts to sports as part of closing a \$180 million budget shortfall for the school district.

In all three options, girls gymnastics would be cut from the 2010 budget, while indoor track and field was nixed in the most severe case.

"Systemwide we have to make significant cuts," said Bill Curran, Fairfax County director of student activities. "It's one of those situations where you hope for the best and prepare for the worst."

Curran cited the availability of gymnastics at the club level and its declining level of participation as a high-school sport as the two overriding factors. Girls gymnastics is currently the county's smallest sport, with approximately 125 female-athletes total.

But parents and coaches say the sport is growing and it has many benefits for the girls who participate.

"Lake Braddock had the most girls try out this year in 10 years and had cuts for the very first

time," said Janelyn Price, whose daughter is a freshman on the girls gymnastics team at Lake Braddock. "I'm very disappointed that Fairfax County is considering something like this."

"Being a gymnast, you learn a lot about hard work, dedication and there's a little bit of perfectionist that's thrown in there," said Angela Peterson, Oakton girls gymnastics coach. "You really un-

Proposed Budget Cuts

At a Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting in November, Schools Superintendent Jack D. Dale introduced a multilayered proposal to close a \$180 million budget deficit for the school district. All three called for eliminating girls gymnastics and one also called for the elimination of indoor track and field.

derstand the work that it takes to achieve at a certain level."

But the hottest point of contention among parents and those associated with the sport is that club gymnastics is very different than high-school gymnastics.

THE COST IS one difference, with the cost of club competition soaring beyond what many or most families can pay. At the club level, the emphasis is on the individual, too.

"On a club team you're more competing for yourself," said Olympian Justin Spring, who graduated from Lake Braddock and won the all-around national championship as a senior. Boys gymnastics was eliminated as a sport the following year.

"When you're competing for your school against other schools, you start to build that team identity," said Spring, who was a member of the U.S. men's gymnastics team that won a bronze medal in the Beijing Olympics this past summer. "I think that's really crucial because gymnastics is a team sport, despite how a lot of people see it."

It's not realistic to think that club competition will be a viable alternative if girls gymnastics is eliminated as a high-school sport, coaches point out.

"I've got 16 girls and not one of them competes at the club level," said Becky Slight, South Lakes coach. "It's hard because they can't just walk into a club at their age and



FILE PHOTO

A pack of runners takes off during the Northern Region indoor track and field championships at the George Mason Field House last winter.

compete. They can play around and take a class, but they can't compete."

Indoor track and field is the only sport that is offered multiple seasons, with cross country in the fall and an outdoor season in the spring.

"The reason that the athletic department came up with indoor track [as a proposed cut] is because the school system will continue to support outdoor track in the spring," said Dale, the schools superintendent. "So the opportunity to support the sport will still be available."

BUT MORE than 2,700 students participated in indoor track and field last winter, which is the third highest number among sports in Fairfax County. Some participants might want to keep occupied between cross country season and outdoor track and field and others might want to improve their quickness for football or lacrosse.

For some students who play other sports in the spring and fall, indoor track and field provides a shot at trying something new that would not have been possible if not for the winter indoor season.

As a freshman at Westfield High School, Karen Woolley couldn't wait for the spring soccer season to start.

But after a meeting with Westfield's girls soccer coach, who convinced Woolley that she should run indoor track and field to improve her conditioning, soccer lasted only one more season. Woolley was hooked.

Now, she's a heptathlete at Dartmouth.

"We know that Fairfax County needs to tighten its budget. That's a foregone conclusion," said Dan Woolley, Karen's father and president of Friends of Indoor Track (FIT). "The reality is that the whole-

sale elimination of a sport is not a viable alternative, nor do we think it's a well thought-out decision." Others, like Edison parent Julie Homes, said that indoor track and field gave her son, Teddy, who's a sophomore at the school, a sense of confidence and a narrowed focus.

For West Springfield parent Debbie Tobin, indoor track and field gave her son, Steven, something to do between cross country and outdoor track and field.

Steven Tobin has Attention Deficit Disorder and chronic migraines. When he began running track and field, the ADD became easier to control and the migraines occurred less frequently.

SHORTLY AFTER the cuts were proposed, Chantilly cross country and track and field coach Matt Gilchrist joined five others in starting a Facebook group to rally support.

As of Wednesday evening, 3,033 members had joined the group titled "Save Fairfax Indoor Track" and 1,978 had signed a petition addressed to Curran, Dale and the Board of Supervisors.

"We've got a grassroots campaign that's building and we know that we don't have a lot of time, but I feel like we're started in the right direction," Gilchrist said.

But is it enough?

County officials originally projected the county budget shortfall for the next fiscal year at \$450 million, but it has now ballooned to more than \$600 million and could continue to grow. The proposed cuts in these two sports are merely a drop in the bucket, saving only 2.6 percent of the school district's shortfall.

"As big as the budget is, we're insignificant as far as what they're trying to save," said Mike Cooper, W.T. Woodson and Falls Church girls gymnastics coach.

Some, including Woolley and Gilchrist, have championed uniform cuts across the board, so that no one program is completely eliminated.

The School Board will have a budget hearing Thursday, Jan. 21, at 6 p.m., at Jackson Middle School. School Board members are also invited to the FIT (Friends of Indoor Track) Invitational at the Prince George's Sports and Learning Center Dec. 29.

"Let's take a step back and see what other options we have," said Mike Mangan, Lake Braddock cross country and track and field coach. "If we go by the premise that these are a valuable thing for our students, then the next question is how do we make this work?"

Connection staff writers Julia O'Donoghue and Mark Giannotto contributed to this report.

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Happy Holidays

We wish our readers a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukah, and an exciting New Year. There is much to fuel optimism here, despite the drumbeat of dismal economic news.

While Northern Virginia is certainly feeling some of the effects of the economic crisis, this is probably the best place in the nation to weather the storm. Employment is strong here, with unemployment still below 4 percent.

This region's economy will get a boost from the January change in administration. Events and visitors for the inauguration itself will bring an infusion, the movement of officials in and out of the region will create economic activity.

And the sheer optimism and enthusiasm for change, and for this particular change, will lift spirits and boats.

Close-in real estate, inside the Beltway, is holding its value. At the bottom end of the real estate spectrum, some condos, townhouses and even some single family detached homes have reached levels of affordability not seen in many moons, and that should bring out first-time home buyers. When first time homebuyers enter the mar-

ket, this can kick off a kind of domino effect, allowing owners of the houses they buy to move up.

At the same time, we'll all feel the effects of budget cuts in local government, from reduced library hours and other services to the possibility of larger class sizes. There are many more families in Northern Virginia feeling the pain of the recession, with thousands of foreclosures and, while unemployment is low, the loss of some jobs. This has dramatically increased demand on groups that provide emergency help for food, housing, utilities and more.

Even groups that help animals are seeing a huge surge in trouble. Some owners are giving up beloved pets when they face foreclosure, while others say they can no longer afford to feed their pets. The Humane Society of Fairfax County, for example, has started a PET food pantry to help people keep their pets.

Enjoy the holidays, and remember to give locally.

For a list of local charities in need, see "Give Locally," <http://connectionnewspapers.com/article?article=322554&page=68&cat=110>

January Is for Fun

This is the last "regular" edition of the Centre View for 2008. The edition that will be delivered after Christmas is our annual Children's Connection, featuring the writing and art of area students.

Our first publication date in January will appear on Jan. 7, kicking off a four-part series on fun, with more than 100 ideas for fun local activities in each of our 17 weekly papers. This will no doubt add up to more than 1,101 ways to have fun near home. We'll include tips on free fun, outdoor

fun, indoor fun, arts, music, theater, fun at home, food fun and more.

If you have an idea that you think we should include, please let us know. The Jan. 7 issue will also be our chance to catch up on news and events that happen between Dec. 18 and the beginning of the New Year. In the meantime, we encourage you to check our Web site to read hundreds of stories from Northern Virginia. See www.ConnectionNewspapers.com.

— MARY KIMM.

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Hive and Go Seek



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

"M&M Premiums." Just what I needed to see for sale at my local drugstore; with "Triple Chocolate" being one of the varieties, no less. God, give me strength. How is a pre-diabetic chocoholic supposed to cope when manufacturers create such sweet enticements? It's bad enough that M&M/Mars, makers of Snickers, Milky Way and 3 Musketeers, among countless other extremely familiar brands (including the relatively new "Dove" brand) already dominate the top-ten-candy-bar-sales list nationwide with its present inventory, but to add another layer of lusciousness on top of its well known and impressive array of bars and bags is, to quote my mother, Celia, "Too much for any body's nerves."

Granted, I have free will, so I am certainly able to resist, but, as any "Star Trek Next Generation" fan knows, "Resistance is futile," for most species, and as much as I try to resist, I fear the species I most closely resemble — human, will be unable to resist. Eventually, we'll all be assimilated and buying candy will no longer be voluntary but mandatory, almost as if we're all part of a "collective": see — buy, see — buy, see — buy.

Wait a second. I must be assimilated already. Every time I see chocolate, I buy chocolate, without even thinking about it. The only thing that stops me is a person, that person being my wife, Dina.

It seems that if we're together in a store that sells chocolate, I'm able to mask my needs/urges and pretend that the chocolate I see (and crave) means nothing more to me than the salad bar does; that means something that is readily available but not the least bit interesting. For different reasons, of course, but apparently, spouse/peer pressure and/or having a fellow adult in close proximity (to me), and an adult who eats like one, seems to be an effective deterrent to an adult who, also in close proximity, eats like a child. If left to my own devices, I will devise a way where buying and then eating chocolate will serve some greater good other than feeding my face. What that "way" is, other than being the "go-to-guy" for chocolate information for our friends and family members, is a bit unclear. But as my friend, Sanford, so often says, "Everybody needs a hobby."

The problem for me is, that being a chocoholic is not a hobby, it's a way of life. It's an avocation, it's a vocation, and it's an occasion to eat sweet, morning, noon and night. It's an extremely hard habit to break and/or brake, nothing like an addiction, at least not on the level of those brought on by repeated consumption of alcohol, drugs or nicotine, I would imagine (but don't really know). Nevertheless, certainly there seem to be overwhelming urges to buy and try, especially when something relatively new appears on the grocer's shelves. The kind of a new thing that you've been wondering about in your own mind for years, perhaps, even before the product showed its packaging; like the Entenmann's chocolate covered, creme-filled, chocolate cup cakes; or DoubleStuf Oreo Cookies; or Ben&Jerry's Peanut Butter Cup ice cream, and now, gourmet M&Ms. What will they think of next?

On the one hand, I can't help wondering what took them so long, while on the other (where they're still not melting), I have to wonder, why now, when I'm most vulnerable? I realize it's not always about me, but when it comes to chocolate, it's hard to think about anybody else.

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

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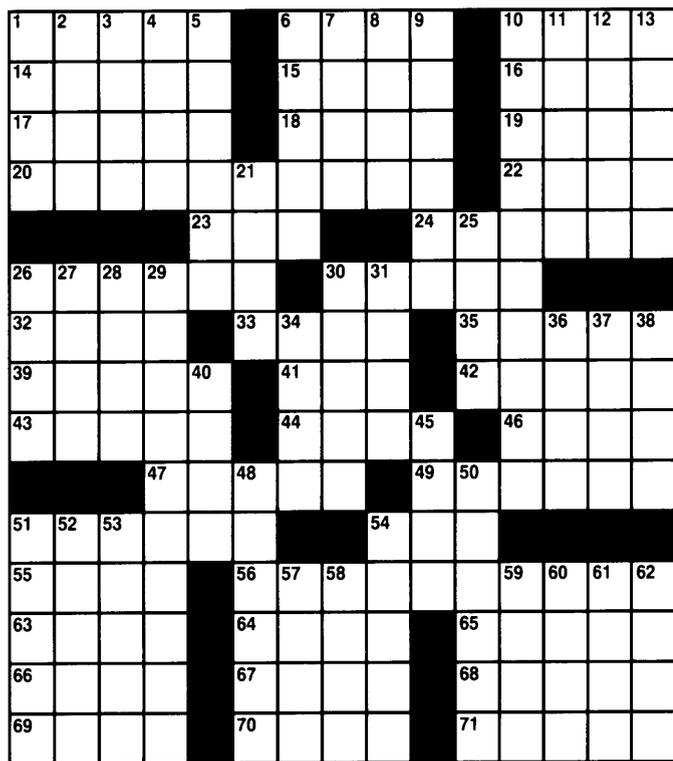
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- 16 Has a tab
- 17 Suffix with sea or moon
- 18 Grocery vehicle
- 19 College course division
- 20 Production in a given period
- 22 Trait determinant
- 23 Pirouette point
- 24 MacNeil's longtime partner
- 26 Sombrero accompanier
- 30 Transparent
- 32 "_____ 'Clock Jump"
- 33 Classic soft drink
- 35 Italian tourist center
- 39 Third-stringer

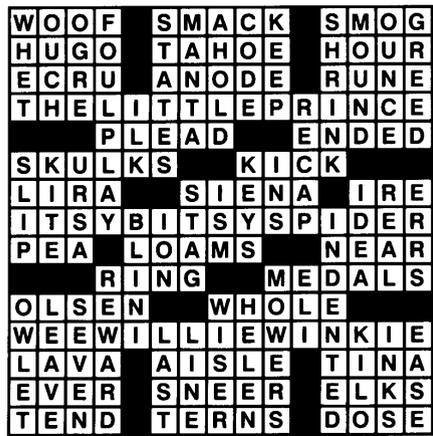
- 41 Sharpshooter's gift
- 42 Beat by a whisker
- 43 Use weasel words
- 44 Meat loaf serving
- 46 "Holy moly!"
- 47 Papa Doc ruled it
- 49 Stats for a porous defense
- 51 Battle site of 1916
- 54 Gulped down
- 55 Mideast bigwig
- 56 Pro-slavery Northerners, before the Civil War
- 63 Mission cancellation
- 64 Folklore fiend
- 65 Speechify
- 66 Lone Star State sch.
- 67 Chemicals giant
- 68 Hertz _____ Car
- 69 Slippery critters
- 70 Sit a spell
- 71 Alma _____

DOWN

- 1 In the cellar

- 26 Swanky
- 27 Years ago
- 28 Uncool sort
- 29 Cold comfort?
- 30 Burger or dog topper
- 31 Vegetable soup bean
- 34 All-star game side, often
- 36 Waffle brand
- 37 Warm, so to speak
- 38 States further
- 40 Belle's man
- 45 One of Alcott's "Little Women"
- 48 Like some pools or paint
- 50 _____ Judaism
- 51 Stage or stadium, say
- 52 Ham it up
- 53 Star in Orion
- 54 Insurance seller
- 57 Look lustfully
- 58 "QB VII" author
- 59 Field of study
- 60 Defeatist's word
- 61 Politically incorrect suffix
- 62 Mark with a branding iron

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



SEE YOUR NAME IN PRINT!

Be the first person to fax in the correct crossword puzzle answers, and we'll put your name here! Fax the completed puzzle, with your name, the puzzle number, and the time and date of the fax, to the Crossword Puzzle Desk, fax #703-917-0998.

Note: Due to space limitations, the crossword may not appear from time to time. In that case, you may look on our Web site: www.connectionnewspapers.com and click on the "Print Editions" button. It should appear in a newspaper from a different Classifieds zone.



From left: Westfield seniors Marco Gutierrez and Morgan Hicks, plus 2008 WHS grad Jon Blank of UNC, Greensboro, hold presents for packaging.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW



From left: Westfield High sophomores Christine Rooney, Molly Cronin and Karlee Sposa help package toys for the recipient families.

ONC Brings Christmas Joy

FROM PAGE 3

so amazing because they keep coming back, every year," continued Lavin. "Most

of our project leaders have been with us, 12-14 years and — for that matter — most of our volunteers. And if they didn't come back, we wouldn't be able to do this."

ROUNDUPS

FROM PAGE 4

perform free, child safety carseat inspections, Tuesday,

Dec. 30, from 5-7:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves, so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140 to confirm dates and times.

Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Contact Jennifer Cooper at 703-966-8304 or jalcooper@aol.com.

Springfield/Fairfax Land Use Meeting

The next meeting of the Springfield District/Fairfax Center Land-Use Committee is Tuesday, Jan. 6, at 7 p.m., in rooms 9 and 10 of the Fairfax County Government Center. Call Marlae Schnare at 703-451-8873. The 11-7 Associates are proposing construction of a three-story office building at 11717 Lee Highway.

Westfield Community Coalition To Meet

The Westfield Community Coalition will meet Monday, Jan. 5, at 3:30 p.m., in the



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