

Great Falls CONNECTION

The Langley High School Fashion Marketing Department hosted its annual Fashion Show Saturday, Feb. 21. Hayley Mueller waits in the wings in a dress designed by one of her classmates.

OPINION, PAGE 6 ♦ CALENDAR, PAGE 10 ♦ FAITH, PAGE 12 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 15 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 17

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE CONNECTION

Langley High Presents Fashion Show

SCHOOLS, PAGE 10

Great Falls
Team takes
Lego Trophy

NEWS, PAGE 3

Mortgage,
Bankruptcy

NEWS, PAGE 3

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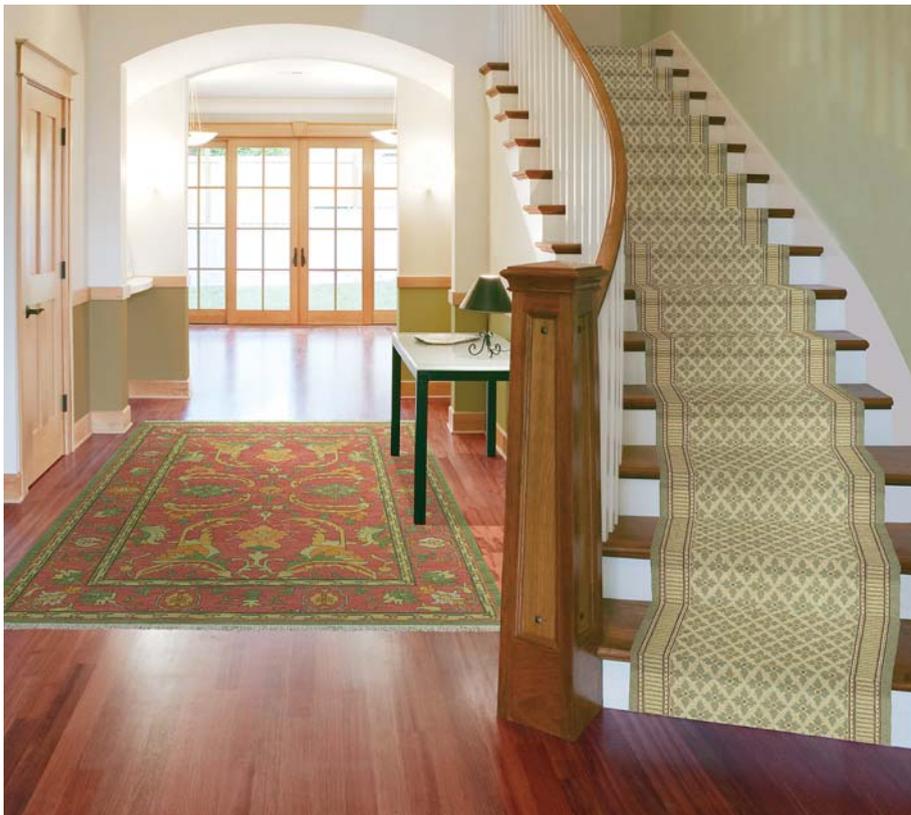
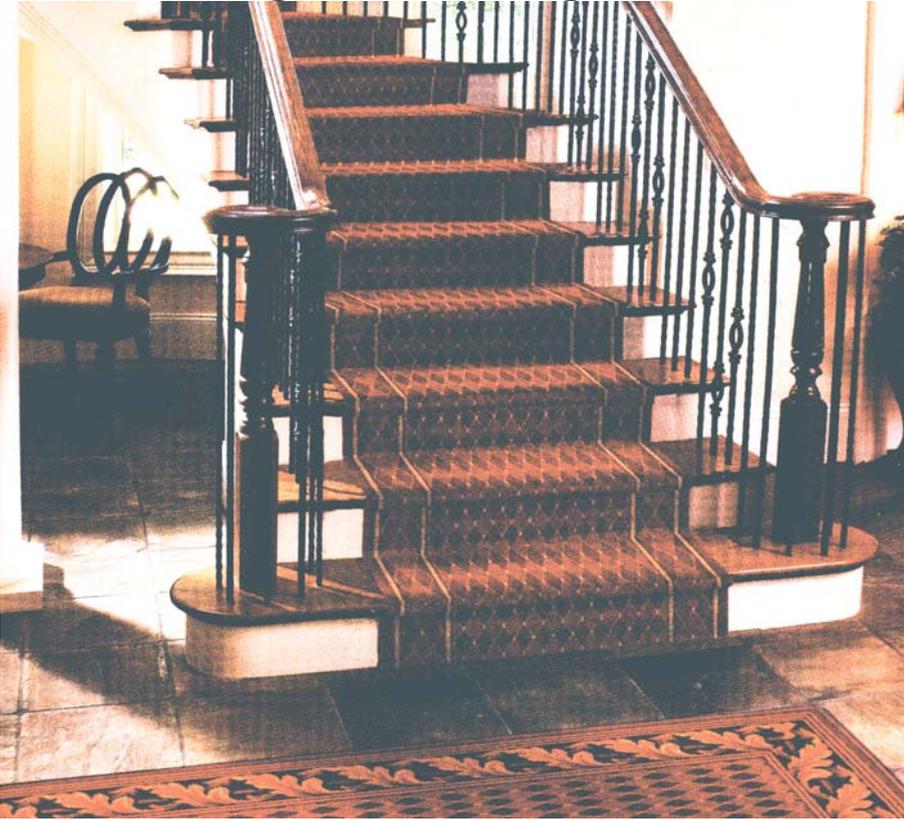
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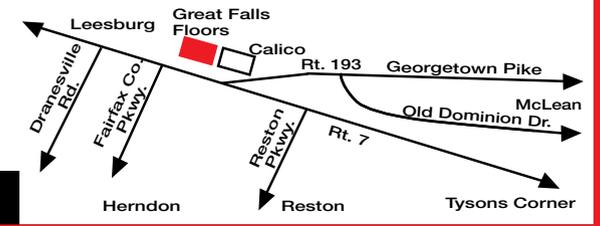




PHOTO BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION

Lego Warriors coaches Charlie Helfinstine and Chiquita O'Cain with team members Trevor Dankworth, Alex Helfinstine, Caleb O'Cain and Josh O'Cain. Not pictured are Scott Miller and Keenan Hero. Caleb holds a replica of the team's Duplo trophy, as the original sits in the office at Great Falls Elementary School.

Great Falls Team Takes Lego Trophy

Interest in children's robotics competition burgeons in Great Falls.

By MIKE DICICCO
THE CONNECTION

At the end of January, six boys from Great Falls Elementary School and their parents set out for Baltimore with a mobile climate-tracking device built of Legos. They returned with another Lego creation — a trophy built of Duplo bricks, their prize for winning the creative design category out of about 30 teams in the latest regional Junior FIRST Lego League competition.

Last year, Chiquita O'Cain had learned of the junior robotics competition online. Her two sons, first-grader Caleb and third-grader Josh, could have entered as a team on their own, but she thought it would be more fun with more team members. "I was talking with my husband one night and he said, 'You know, Charlie was saying the same thing,'" she said. She and family friend Charlie Helfinstine, father of third-grader Alex, put out a call for team members and received an overwhelming response.

"There's not a lot of publicity for the younger kids' group," said Pamela Williams,



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Lego Warriors team from Great Falls won the regional JFLL creative design award with this motorized climate-tracking device.

mother of third-grader Trevor Dankworth.

LEAGUES for older children, like FIRST Lego League and the FIRST Robotics competition, tend to be better known. But that doesn't mean there is no demand for younger children's leagues.

O'Cain and Helfinstine, who became the coaches for the "Lego Warriors," as their boys called their team, had to find a coach for a second team, since there is a limit of six children per team. The other team from

Great Falls, however, did not participate in the competition.

This year's challenge, issued in September, was to develop a machine that measures the environment. The boys floated ideas and voted on them and then discussed who would be good at which tasks. They settled on a motorized vehicle that carries a rain gauge, a metal detector, a thermometer, a model remote-controlled satellite and a drill and winch for sampling cores of rain

SEE LEGO, PAGE 14

Mortgage, Bankruptcy Fraud

A federal jury convicted Great Falls resident Richard A. Forde, 50, of conspiracy, bankruptcy fraud and bank fraud last Wednesday, Feb. 18 in Alexandria.

Forde faces a possible sentence up to 40 years in prison, five years of supervised release and a fine of \$9.7 million, according to Dana J. Boente, acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia.

U.S. District Court Judge Anthony J. Trenga is scheduled to sentence Forde on May 15, 2009.

Forde, the president of a now-defunct internet business tutornet.com, filed for bankruptcy in May 2001. He was facing foreclosure on his home on the 1000 block of Leigh Mill Road after struggling to keep current on his \$17,000 per month mortgage payments, according to court documents.

But between December 2001 and January 2004, Forde conspired with a mortgage broker, a settlement attorney who was the former president of the Northern Virginia Bankruptcy Bar Association, and the buyer of his home to keep million in proceeds from the sale of the home from going into his bankruptcy estate.

According to federal indictments filed in Forde's criminal case, Forde sold his property to Alladean Allobaidy. The sale was financed partly by Allobaidy's \$1.5 million promissory note from Allobaidy to Forde. Allobaidy's payments were supposed to go to Forde's creditors in bankruptcy, but instead, Allobaidy let Forde continue to reside at the Great Falls property rent free in exchange for not having to make the payments.

Forde and Allobaidy conspired in a side deal that resulted in Lehman Brothers Bank making a larger loan to Allobaidy than would otherwise have been permitted by its internal underwriting guidelines. When the mortgage later went into default, a Lehman Brothers Bank affiliate took back the property and sold it at a loss of approximately \$1.1 million, according to the U.S. Attorney's office.

According to Boente, David A. Freeland, the mortgage broker, was sentenced in 2008 to four years in federal prison and ordered to pay \$5.4 million in restitution. Leslie M. Lickstein, the settlement attorney, received a sentence in 2007 of 12 months and one day in federal prison and was required to pay \$1.1 million in restitution. Allobaidy was sentenced in 2007 to 15 months in federal prison and also had to pay \$1.1 million in restitution.

The FBI investigated the case, which was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas H. McQuillan and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Dennis J. Early, of the Office of the U.S. Trustee.

— KEN MOORE

Cooper Middle Crowns Spelling Bee Queen

Champ could be contestant in Scripps National Spelling Bee.

BY ROB WILE
THE CONNECTION

Pallavi Rudraraju, an eighth-grader at Cooper Middle School in McLean, strode confidently up to the microphone as a cafeteria filled with nearly 100 people looked on. After more than an hour, she had spelled her way through 18 rounds of the second annual Cooper Middle School Spelling Bee. After parrying volleys like “withdrawal” and “ephemeral” with ease, just one last word stood between her and the Cooper spelling crown. She was never in doubt.

“S-i-l-i-c-o-n,” she said.

The room erupted in applause.

“It felt really amazing,” she said as she clutched her colorful trophy, which came adorned with a cut-out bumblebee. “Last year I didn’t even participate [in the schoolwide bee]. I thought that I’d get out on ‘herpetology,’ [one of her words from an earlier round]. I’d never really heard that word before.”

PALLAVI, a Vienna native, had outlasted the 33 other sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders — 22 boys and 12 girls — to take the title. Besides the trophy, Pallavi took home “How to Spell Like a Champ,” a book endorsed by the Scripps National Spelling Bee organization, the group in charge of the nationwide contest. She also received a subscription to Encyclopedia Britannic online. She now advances to the countywide bee, to be held March 21, at Hayfield Secondary School in Alexandria. The winner of that bee will immediately become a contestant in the annual National Bee in Washington, D.C.

Pallavi’s father, Prasad, president and CEO of an information technologies services company, said that he and his family had been turned away from attending by their daughter, who’d said they were going to make her too nervous.

“We were having a discussion with her before we left for school,” he said. “I said, ‘I’m going to be there,’ and she said, ‘No Dad, I’m going to be very nervous.’ She wouldn’t let me come! My pleas fell on deaf ears. But I’m really happy, we’re really proud of her.”

Prasad Rudraraju chalks up her daughter’s success to her love of reading and writing.

“She has been writing a lot of stories,” he said. “One of her favorite subjects is Harry Potter fan fiction and she hopes to publish a book soon. She’s got so many stories on her computers. It’s mostly from her ability to write — that’s where the spelling capabilities are coming from.”

THE BEE was run by Una Higgins and Julie Casso, two parent-volunteers, and organized by Laura McCafferty, a Cooper parent. The Fairfax Times was the sponsor. Eighth-graders Michael Woo and Tim Higgins, Una Higgins’ son, finished second and third, respectively.

Tim said he was just happy to have made it to the final rounds.

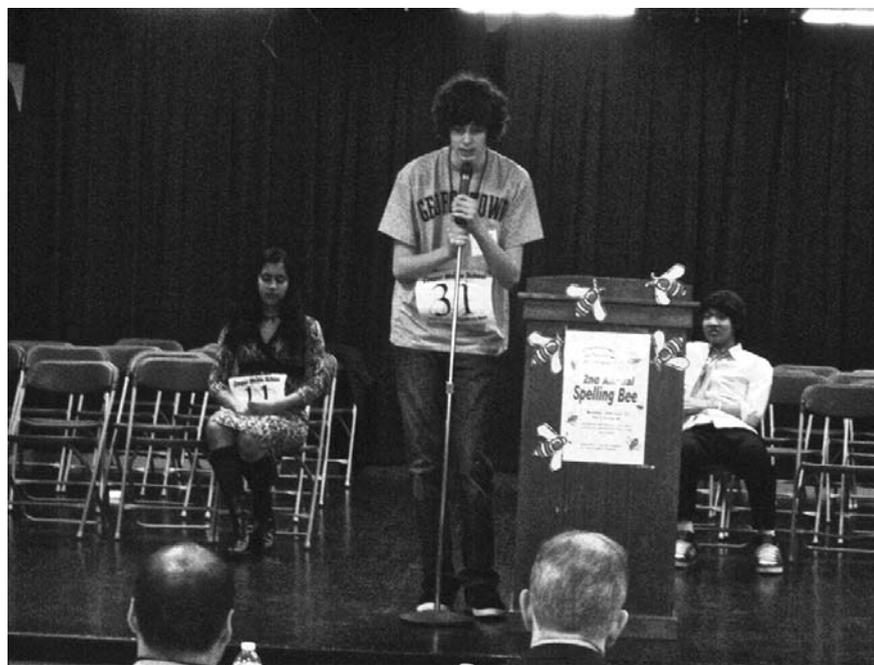
“It was good, it was exciting because I didn’t get that far last year,” he said. “It was good to be one of the top three.” He was ultimately felled by a rather insidious word — “insidious.” “When I heard that one [I knew I wouldn’t get it],” he said.



Pallavi Rudraraju shows off her championship trophy at Cooper Middle School Spelling Bee finals, as runner-up Michael Woo takes in the crowd.

“I thought that I’d get out on ‘herpetology.’”

— Pallavi Rudraraju, Cooper Middle School’s Spelling Bee, winner



Third-place finisher Tim Higgins attempts to stand his ground while the winner Pallavi Rudraraju and second-place finisher Michael Woo look on.

Langley Successful In Chorus Auditions

Langley High School choral students achieved outstanding success at the All-Virginia Chorus auditions held Feb. 12-14, earning nearly half of the District places. Out of the 24 students who will represent District XII at the state event, Langley High had 10 students selected and an additional three students were chosen as alternates. The students are all juniors and seniors and were required to participate in District XII Honors Chorus to be eligible to audition. The 10 students will be performing at the All-Virginia Chorus event in Massaponax April 23-25. The LHS students who were selected are: Soprano I, Caroline Dunigan and Chelsea Raitor; Soprano II, Sara Rainey; Alto I, Rachael Bumsted, Ariana Gover-Chamlou and Lauren Bailey, alternate; Alto II, Arianna Zell; Tenor II, Sean Fischer, Adam Check and Justin McKay, alternate; Bass I, Paul Goldberg, Ben Koppiar, alternate; Bass II, Robert Higgins.

Meet the Author

Local author Laura Elliot will be at Great Falls Library Monday, March 2, from 4-5:40 p.m., discussing her juvenile fiction “Give Me Liberty.” The book centers on the role teens and tweens play in the Revolutionary War.

L. M. Elliott is author of “Under a War-torn Sky,” a NCSS/CBC Notable Social Studies Book and Jefferson Cup Honor Book; “Annie, Between the States,” a Virginia Readers’ Choice finalist, IRA Teachers’ Choice, and New York Public Library Book for the Teen Age; and “Flying South,” winner of the Joan Sugarman Award for Children’s Literature. Her most recent novel, “Give Me Liberty,” is set in Williamsburg during the American Revolution and recounts how ordinary citizens risked all to seek liberty and often had to make the bitter choice to stand against their neighbors or friends in battle.

Scholarship Applications Being Accepted

The Women’s Association of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Great Falls is accepting applications for two Alexander De Filippis Scholarships of \$3,000 each for high-school students graduating in 2009 and going to college or post-secondary school.

Students must reside in Great Falls, Vienna, Reston, Herndon, McLean, Sterling and Potomac or have family registered as parishioners of St. Catherine of Siena.

Applications and complete details are available online at st-catherines.net or from the guidance office of high school. Strict adherence to the deadline of May 15, as well as to the completeness of the application is imperative.

INNOCENT LIVES AT RISK

Dear friends and neighbors:

Early in 2008, 7 members of the Bahá'í Faith in Iran were arrested and imprisoned on baseless charges. News agencies have widely reported that these individuals have been erroneously accused of "espionage for Israel, insulting [Islamic] religious sanctities and propaganda against the Islamic republic". Since then, they have been held without access to their legal counsel, Nobel laureate Shirin Ebadi, and it is expected that in the next few days, they will be placed on trial.

We write to ask that you add your voices in support of the most basic human rights denied to these 7 individuals, as well as other members of the Bahá'í Faith in Iran.

Representatives Frank Wolf and Jim Moran of Virginia, along with six of their colleagues have sponsored Resolution H. Res. 175 on the persecution of the Bahá'ís in Iran. We ask that you contact Congressman Frank Wolf or Jim Moran (based on jurisdiction) and voice your support for this resolution, calling for the release of these seven, and other prisoners held solely on account of their religious belief.

More importantly we ask that you request that Senators Webb and Warner (based on jurisdiction) sponsor a similar bill in the Senate. To assist you, brief instructions have been provided below, and this should take just a few minutes of your time. The situation is grave and those of us that freely enjoy human rights need to speak up for the voiceless.

With gratitude and hope,
Your Baha'i neighbors in Great Falls and McLean

WE NEED YOUR HELP

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Mark Warner

<http://warner.senate.gov/contact/contact.cfm>

Jim Webb

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1. Type URL
2. Enter name and info
3. Request that they introduce a resolution similar to H. Res. 175 on the persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran in the senate

CONGRESS

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http://www.house.gov/formwolf/contact_email_emailzip.shtml

Jim Moran

<https://forms.house.gov/moran/zipauth.shtml>

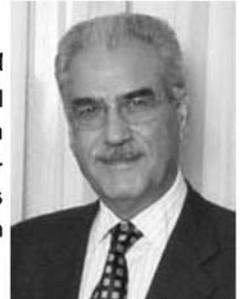
1. Type URL
2. Enter zip code
3. Insert name and info
4. Write note of support/ thanks for H. Res. 175 and submit

BRIEF PROFILES LIVES AT RISK: SERVICES



Fariba Kamalabadi, 45 years old, was denied higher education because of her Bahá'í beliefs. However, she received a post-graduate degree in Education and Developmental Psychology from Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education, an alternative institution established by the Bahá'í community of Iran to provide higher education for its young people. She is married with 3 children.

Jamaloddin Khanjani. A 76 year old businessman, dedicated husband and loving father of 3 daughters and 1 son. Once a successful factory owner, Mr. Khanjani was forced to shut down and abandon his factory which was later confiscated by the government. Mr. Khanjani later established a mechanized farm on properties owned by his family, but authorities continued to place many restrictions on him and his family.



Afif Naemi. A 47 year old industrialist whose dream of becoming a physician was shattered when he was expelled from medical school because he was a Bahá'í. Instead, he diverted his attention to business, one of the few avenues of work open to Bahá'ís, taking over his family's textile factory. He is married and has 2 sons.

Saeid Rezaie, 50 years old, a farming equipment engineer, scholar and author. He is married and has 3 children. Two of his daughters were among 54 Bahá'í youth arrested in 2006, while engaged in a humanitarian project helping underprivileged young people. Later they were tried and released, but three of their colleagues were sentenced to 4 years in prison on false charges and are currently incarcerated. Mr. Rezaie has experienced various forms of persecution for his beliefs, including arrest, detention and solitary confinement.

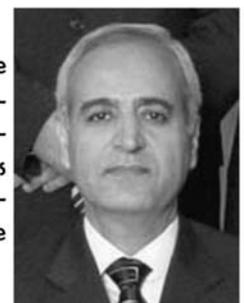


<http://news.bahai.org/>



Mahvash Sabet is a 56 year old former teacher/school principal with a degree in educational planning and an advocate for literacy programs. She was expelled from both her job and the literacy program, because of being a Bahá'í. For the last 15 years, she has been director of the Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education. Mrs. Sabet is married and has 2 children.

Behrouz Tavakkoli, 57, psychology major with expertise in the care of the physically and mentally handicapped. He worked in government as a social worker until the early 1980s when he was dismissed because of his faith. Prior to his current imprisonment, he has been subjected to intermittent detainment and harassment, including solitary confinement where he developed serious health issues. He is married with 2 children.



Vahid Tizfahm is a 37-year-old optometrist and owner of an optical shop. At the age of 18, he studied to become an optician, and later studied sociology, at the Advanced Bahá'í Studies Institute. Since his youth, Mr. Tizfahm has served the Bahá'í community in a variety of capacities. He was married at the age of 23. He and his wife have one son who is 9 years old and in fourth grade.

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OPINION

Three Steps on Health Care

Smoking restrictions, SCHIP, Cobra subsidies should lead to a healthier Virginia.

For a minute, some would be forgiven for wondering if we were still in Virginia. A smoking ban for many bars and restaurants? In Virginia? Amazing.

Long overdue, the result will be a healthier environment for many employees of bars and restaurants who have toiled for years while breathing in a carcinogenic soup. It's never appropriate to say that wait staff, bartenders and others can

EDITORIAL "choose" to work in places that are smoke-free if they want to.

In the current economy, the current job market, anyone who has a job knows they need to hang onto it if they can.

It's up to the state to ensure that employees work in a safe environment, and Virginia's new smoking restrictions are a good step in that direction.

The new rules will also benefit many businesses. In other areas, restaurant business has actually increased after smoking bans went into effect as more families and other people who were avoiding smoke-filled rooms come out to enjoy the newly cleared air.

SCHIP: All of Northern Virginia's members of Congress voted to reauthorize and expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program, a step for healthier children and families here. The SCHIP program helps states provide health insurance coverage to uninsured children, providing health insurance to children and some parents with incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid, but who can't afford private health insurance. The SCHIP Reauthorization bill expands health coverage to 55,000 uninsured Virginia children who do not qualify for Medicaid, in addition to the 155,000 children statewide already covered by the SCHIP program.

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) helps to extend health coverage to children in low-income working families with incomes above the cut-off for Medicaid coverage. Enacted in 1997, this program operates under the FAMIS (Family Access to

Medical Insurance Security). Families are eligible for this program with incomes up to twice (200 percent), of the federal poverty level. For example, in Virginia a family of four can make up to \$41,300 a year and still be eligible for FAMIS.

COBRA: As part of the economic stimulus bill recently passed in Congress, the Federal government will pay for 65 percent of the costs of continuing health insurance for people who lose their jobs. Going into effect March 1, the rule applies to people who lost their jobs or will lose their jobs involuntarily between last September 2008 and the end of 2009. (The subsidy is not retroactive; employees will be offered another chance to enroll in COBRA however.) Health insurance is available for terminated employees under COBRA, but without the subsidy, many unemployed people cannot afford the high premiums. The former employers will be required to pay the 65 percent, with the former employee paying 35 percent. Employers will be "reimbursed" by the Federal program by reducing their payroll taxes by that amount.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Young Citizens Make Difference

Youth projects help preserve Great Falls character.

BY KATHLEEN MURPHY
GREAT FALLS CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

Our youth are the pride of our community. We are inspired by their potential and their promise. We applaud their accomplishments and achievements. Yet when they come forward to make a difference in our community, we feel something special — they touch our hearts and expand our hopes.

It was only two years ago when we called for a teen focus group to surface issues for the 2020 survey — no youth showed up. Those who said they would come were deterred: there was more homework that day than expected; a soccer game ran into overtime; a general feeling of being overwhelmed and unable to participate was reported; or a feeling that if they shared their thoughts, it wouldn't change anything.

Things are changing. There are examples of young people who are stepping forward to make a difference in Great Falls. Here are a few ... (I am sure you can provide many more examples ...).

TRAILS are a burning issue to the youth in our community. In the last issue of the Great Falls Connection,

we saw that Cameron Hodge "completed his Eagle project in October of 2008 when he cleared a three-quarter-mile trail used by horse riders and dog walkers off Innsbruck Avenue in Great Falls." Cameron stepped forward last year and notified GFCA of his desired project. Working with Eleanor Weck, president of the Great Falls Trailblazers, Cameron received the guidance and assistance he needed to accomplish his plan. He translated his idea into a specific action plan, doing his part to convert the wishes of our community into a specific trail that neighbors can enjoy. Good work, Cameron.

"Preserving and protecting the semirural character of Great Falls" is another burning issue for our community. Jennifer Warren grew up in Great Falls and is an undergraduate student at East Carolina University majoring in urban and regional planning. She has contacted GFCA to offer to work with us in applying her practicum in planning class — which requires conducting research and preparing a professional report — on an issue in our community. She would like to prepare a strategic plan for Great Falls to preserve its rural and historic character, while prevent-

ing overdevelopment. Since such a plan falls under the Long-Range Planning Committee, committee members will be working with Jennifer through the end of the semester to give her an opportunity to gain realistic, hands-on experience, while benefiting from the analytic techniques her class is requiring. We value this opportunity to collaborate and look enthusiastically toward a valuable learning experience for all.

"Preserving and protecting Great Falls" as a unique and precious watershed is another burning issue in Great Falls. Gabe and Danny Rodriguez came forward at the North County Area Plan Review task force meeting to share their experiences with two ponds on their property that have been suffering due to unmanaged runoff and use of fertilizers in sensitive habitats such as ours. They have attended the stream monitoring class given by Dan Schwarz of Fairfax County Stream Monitoring, who shared with them how to build rain gardens and other techniques for managing and measuring the conditions in local streams. Naturally, it will take an entire network of teens to make a difference in watershed manage-

ment in Great Falls. Gabe and Danny have studied the science and learned the monitoring techniques required to protect the quality of our streams and ponds. If you have interest, Gabe and Danny can share with you what you can do to help out.

IF YOU HAVE IDEAS for projects that you would like to do to preserve and protect the semirural character of Great Falls, visit the GFCA Web site at www.gfca.org and let one of our board members know about your ideas and we will work with you to make them happen. If you have skills you would like to contribute to the community, but don't know how they could be used, let us know. Our committees could always use your support and assistance as we work on our projects to preserve and protect the semirural character of Great Falls. How do we reach the entire community and engage all segments of the community in dialogue about issues of importance? We need arms and legs to do the amount of outreaching required to be sure that everyone is participating. If you have community service hours and are looking for a community service project, GFCA is one place to call to get a few ideas.

THE CONNECTION

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
To discuss ideas and concerns,
Call: 703-917-6451
Fax: 703-917-0991
e-mail:

greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com

Kemal Kurspahic

Editor ♦ 703-917-6428
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Mike DiCicco

Community Reporter
703-917-6448
mdicicco@connectionnewspapers.com

Julia O'Donoghue

Education & Politics
703-917-6417
jodonoghue@connectionnewspapers.com

Ken Moore

Courts & Projects
703-917-6417
kmoore@connectionnewspapers.com

Rich Sanders

Sports Editor ♦ 703-917-6439
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Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm
703-917-6416
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief

Steven Mauren

Managing Editors

Steve Hibbard, Michael O'Connell,
Kemal Kurspahic

Photography:

Robbie Hammer, Louise Krafft,
Craig Sterbutzel

Art/Design:

Zohra Aslami, Geovani Flores,
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
John Smith, Stu Moll,
Wayne Shipp

Production Manager:

Jean Card

CIRCULATION: 703-917-6480

Circulation Manager:

Linda Pecquex
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS,
L.L.C.

Peter Labovitz

President/CEO

Mary Kimm

Publisher/Chief Operating Officer
703-917-6416
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Jerry Vernon

Executive Vice President
703-917-6404
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Wesley DeBrosse

Controller

Debbie Funk

National Sales
703-518-4631
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

John Lovaas

Special Assistant for Operations

PEOPLE



PHOTOS BY KIM MORAN

Jordan Craig-Kuhn, Churchill Road Elementary School teacher, announces on the morning news program that the \$20,000 goal has been met and he will be going through with getting his head shaved. From left, Laura Johnston, Craig-Kuhn, and morning news anchors, Aaliyah Booker and Ellie Womack.

Laura Johnston, top fundraiser, begins shaving Jordan Craig-Kuhn's head.

Jump Rope for Heart

On Wednesday, Feb. 11, Churchill Road Elementary School physical education teacher Jordan Craig-Kuhn had his head shaved on the morning news program, as the culmination of the school's Jump Rope for Heart fund-raiser on behalf of the American Heart Association. Craig-Kuhn agreed to shave his head if

the school raised \$20,000 for the charity. When the final moment arrived, the 234 students and families amount fell shy of the goal by a mere \$39 and Craig-Kuhn wrote the final check himself. All of the students at Churchill Road were delighted to see the top fund-raiser, fifth-grader Laura Johnston, shave Craig-Kuhn's head live on the news program.



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THE COUNTY LINE

Tax Rate Hike To Fund Reduced Budget

Ninety-five percent of residential properties decline in value; proposed budget raises average tax bill by \$14.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Executive Anthony Griffin proposed holding most residents' real estate taxes relatively steady in 2010 even though Fairfax experienced the single largest drop in home property values ever recorded this year and most citizens' real estate taxes would have gone down significantly otherwise.

Griffin has suggested the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors raise the real estate property tax rate 13.5 cents per \$100 of assessed property value, potentially the largest real estate tax rate increase in the county's history. The measure would help close the approximately \$650 million gap in Fairfax's fiscal year 2010 budget, which goes into effect July 1.

It compensates for the sharp decline in the county's real estate values and, therefore, real estate tax collection. Since last year, residential property values have fallen 12.55 percent in value and commercial properties have fallen 4.51 percent in value.

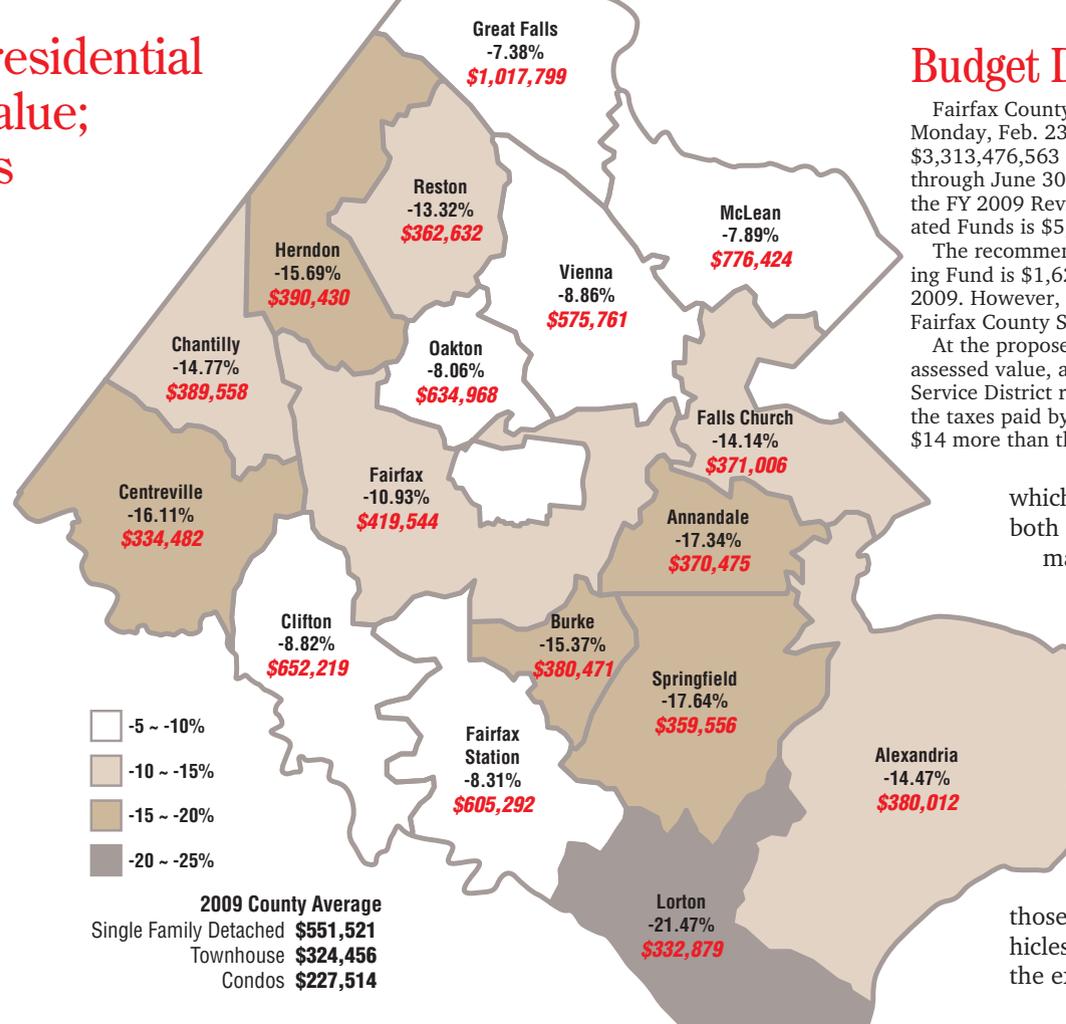
If the supervisors adopted Griffin's recommendation, the real estate tax rate will go from 92 cents per \$100 of assessed value to \$1.05.5 per \$100 of assessed value. The average homeowners tax bill would increase approximately \$14 from last year.

Griffin has also proposed cutting county jobs, freezing county employee pay and reducing some services. Residents would also see an increase in some user fees, he said.

FAIRFAX COUNTY Public Schools has been spared more than other county agencies in Griffin's proposal.

His recommendations call for the school system to receive the same amount of operational funds as last year and not to sustain the cuts that most other county departments will have. Griffin would reduce the school system's annual capital budget slightly next year, from \$155 million to \$140 million.

Even with a flat operational funding transfer from the county, school officials have indicated that they would still have to make drastic changes and cuts to their programs. Earlier in the year, the Fairfax County School Board had been prepared to ask for



2009 ASSESSMENT YEAR RESIDENTIAL ANALYSIS BY ZIP CODE AREA

Vacant and Improved Residential Property

| ZIP CODE AREA | 2008 MEAN | 2009 MEAN | PERCENT CHANGE |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| ALEXANDRIA | \$444,287 | \$380,012 | -14.47 |
| ANNANDALE | \$448,178 | \$370,475 | -17.34 |
| BURKE | \$449,573 | \$380,471 | -15.37 |
| CENTREVILLE | \$398,728 | \$334,482 | -16.11 |
| CHANTILLY | \$457,053 | \$389,558 | -14.77 |
| CLIFTON | \$715,300 | \$652,219 | -8.82 |
| FAIRFAX | \$471,010 | \$419,544 | -10.93 |
| FAIRFAX STATION | \$660,179 | \$605,292 | -8.31 |
| FALLS CHURCH | \$432,102 | \$371,006 | -14.14 |
| GREAT FALLS | \$1,098,936 | \$1,017,799 | -7.38 |
| HERNDON | \$463,073 | \$390,430 | -15.69 |
| LORTON | \$423,871 | \$332,879 | -21.47 |
| MCLEAN | \$842,924 | \$776,424 | -7.89 |
| OAKTON | \$690,635 | \$634,968 | -8.06 |
| RESTON | \$418,371 | \$362,632 | -13.32 |
| SPRINGFIELD | \$436,583 | \$359,556 | -17.64 |
| VIENNA | \$631,767 | \$575,761 | -8.86 |

"I didn't see any real structural changes in how we do business."

— Supervisor Patrick Herrity (R-Springfield)

budget would be "devastating" since the current level of funding falls short of what is needed to repair all the schools facilities.

On the whole, Griffin has asked the supervisors to increase Fairfax's general fund, which would be approximately \$3.3 billion, by .4 percent. But due to rising costs, the

a three percent increase in its funding transfer from the county, a proposal that would already have required program reductions because of the school system's rising costs in areas like enrollment.

The schools chief operating officer Dean Tistadt had also said any reduction to the school system's capital

county would have had to grow its general fund by four to five percent just to keep all the county and schools' staffing and program levels the same as this year, he said.

SEVERAL SUPERVISORS were concerned about the impact Griffin's proposed budget would have on county staff. If adopted, county employees would be asked to forfeit their the cost-of-living-adjustment they usually receive, any scheduled pay raise they were expecting, and "performance pay," for some salaried county employees.

Griffin also recommended eliminating 524 full-time "merit" county positions, which he said could result in approximately 200 county employees losing their jobs. Approximately 300 "limited term" positions —

Budget Down, Tax Rate Up

Fairfax County Executive Anthony H. Griffin proposed Monday, Feb. 23, a General Fund budget of \$3,313,476,563 for Fiscal Year 2010 — July 1, 2009, through June 30, 2010 — a decrease of 3.7 percent from the FY 2009 Revised Budget Plan. The total of all Appropriated Funds is \$5,839,237,244.

The recommended transfer to the Public School Operating Fund is \$1,626,600,722 — the same level as Fiscal Year 2009. However, the transfer request approved by the Fairfax County School Board on Feb. 5, is \$1,683,372,525.

At the proposed real estate tax rate of \$1.04 per \$100 of assessed value, along with the newly proposed Stormwater Service District rate of \$0.015 per \$100 of assessed value, the taxes paid by the average residential taxpayer will be \$14 more than the FY 2009 tax bill.

which are typically lower paying but include both full time and part time employees — may also be cut.

Supervisor Linda Smyth (D-Providence) asked Griffin to try and be more flexible when dealing with employees. She said he may want to ask for volunteers who would be more comfortable working shorter hours or retiring early before he starts to eliminate jobs.

Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee) wondered whether the county could increase some fees, like those for people who park commercial vehicles on residential streets illegally, and use the extra income to keep some of the positions being eliminated, particularly in the public safety department. "We should be charging the maximum [fine allowed under state law] for those violations if it spares jobs," said McKay.

A few supervisors were also angry to see the fee to participate in the county's recreational sports teams increase from \$5.50 to approximately \$13. "At a time when you are dealing with gang violence and gang prevention, it is self-defeating to increase a tax on kids participating in sports by 200 percent," said Supervisor Michael Frey (R-Sully).

Griffin said all the revenue generated by the fee increase would go to fully fund those programs and to avoid cuts in youth sports.

But both Frey and Supervisor Patrick Herrity (R-Springfield) were upset that Griffin had set aside 1.5 cents of the tax rate for storm water management. Last year, only one cent of the tax rate had been used for storm water management.

"At a time when we are cutting everything, why are we increasing storm water management by 5 percent?" said Frey.

Herrity and Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) said they would also have liked to see more structural changes and consolidations undertaken in the county government. During his budget presentation, Griffin said he had only overhauled one county agency, the planning department and planning commission staff.

"I didn't see any real structural changes in how we do business. ... We did not find any real structural savings," said Herrity.

New York City Art Gallery Recruits Great Falls Talent

Great Falls Studios' Web site is key to "discovery" of local painters — four go to Big Apple.

After launching an artists' talent search from Boston to Philadelphia, a new art gallery in the Big Apple has "discovered" four Great Falls artists and brought 26 of their paintings to New York City for display, with the likelihood that several other local artists will follow.

The gallery, named Chelsea32, opened Dec. 16 a block from the Empire State Building in a neighborhood sometimes called "Korea Town." It caters to recent homebuyers in New York and to tourists, many from Korea and Japan, as part of guided tours of New York.

"You have a lot of talented artists in Great Falls," said Rachel Kim, art director of the Chelsea32 Art Group, who visited Great Falls in January on a hunt for new painters to represent. "I was very impressed."

The gallery became linked to Virginia when the gallery owner, a Korean businessman who chooses to remain anonymous, visited the area. "He is passionate about art," Kim said.

That trip, Kim recounts, eventually led to the discovery of Great Falls Studios, a network of painters based in Great Falls. The organization's Web site, www.GreatFallsStudios.com, played a major role in what happened next. The site links to the personal Web sites of many Great

SEE ARTISTS, PAGE 19



PHOTO BY AL REITAN

Painter Elaine Elinsky shows off several of her oils in her studio in Great Falls. She is one of four Great Falls artists recruited by New York gallery Chelsea32 to exhibit there. All four are members of Great Falls Studios and were discovered through the art organization's Web site.



"Salt Marsh Overlook" is a landscape by Karen Bateman on display at the New York gallery. Gallery officials picked eight of her works to hang in New York.

Great Falls Studios' Web site

To find more than 75 artists in Great Falls and to follow the Great Falls arts scene, go to the Great Falls Studios Web site, www.GreatFallsStudios.com. The site includes links to the Web sites of many individual artists, a commissioning section on local portrait painters and a list of local art teachers. It is constantly being updated and later this spring will undergo a major renovation. Most members of Great Falls Studios offer art for sale in a variety of media. Painters, weavers, sculptors, photographers, quilters, potters, leather craftsmen, paper artists, jewelry designers, computer artists and others are represented, with new artists being added periodically.

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LIFESTYLE

Fashionistas in Training: Student Design. Directed by Farhana Khan. Designers: Kaity Hinojosa, Brittany Stinger, Tess Higgins, Jessica Place, Anna Herbert, Lena Welch and Farhana Khan. Models: Maddison Abboud, Holly Doda, Maddi Arndt, Lauren Stewart, Danielle Place, Kathryn Caine, Stormy Budwig, Clare Herbert, Hayley Meuller, Lauren Fernandez, Ana Loria, Celine Amani, Jessie Wheat, Jordan Blessing and Simon Jensen.



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/CONNECTION

Langley High Presents Fashion Show

The Langley High School Fashion Marketing Department hosted its annual Fashion Show Saturday, Feb. 21. The highlights of the show included current and popular trends that have dominated the fashion industry like little black dresses, vests and suspenders, men's wear inspired, leather and lace, neon and a number of others. The show featured Langley High School students, faculty, administrators, as well as Principal Matthew Ragone.



Mime Du Style: Black and White. Directed by: Sara, Jocelyn and Adrienne. Models: Maddie Boyer, Anna Thomas, Claudia Ho, Michelle Holt, Magali Carrillo Rodriguez, Leah McSteen, Allie Mendenhall, Isabella Naujoks, Michelle Pineiro, Stefanie Rowland, Erin Stewart and Nikki Turner.



Chelsea Juergensen rehearses a dance number before the show.



Tame the Untamed: Little Black Dresses. Models: Leah Eyob, Lexi Gallucci, Evelyn Han, Lauren Iaconetti, Haley Johnson, Chelsea Juergensen, Chelsea Lipford, Gabby Mariotti, Natalie Might, Maddie Minnich, Taylor Mohrnann, Shayda Rezazad, Alex Roueche, Lauren Rule, Lindsay Shelby, Carly Snively and Jarred Zuccari.



Farhana Khan, center, with her models wearing her designs: Jordan Blessing, Ana Loria, Celine Amani and Jessie Wheat.



IONA, the East Coast's premier pan-Celtic group, will perform live Sunday, March 1 at the Old Brogue Irish Pub in Great Falls.

Send announcements to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 25
Sing Along with Miss Belle, 10:30 a.m. Hugs and songs with Miss Belle. All Ages. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-757-8560.
Jungle Film Series. 7 p.m., Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. "Beneath the Jungle...and Beyond" with Dale Johnson. Watch films about Mesoamerica. Go to the Alden Theatre Box office or call 703-573-SEAT to purchase tickets.

THURSDAY/FEBRUARY 26
George Winston, folk pianist. 8 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$35. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.
Griffin House and Charlie Mars. Rock/folk. 8 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.
The Common Threat, Along Those Lines, The Hard Lessons and Fall Back Plan, 10 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.
'The Last Days of Judas Iscariot,' 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Harris Theater, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$12, \$8 students and seniors. 703-993-8888.

FRIDAY/FEB. 27
George Winston, folk pianist. 8 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$35. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.
Red Molly. Folk/bluegrass. 7 p.m. \$12 advance, \$15 at the door. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.
Antique Show and Sale. 11 a.m.-7

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CALENDAR

and collectibles. Admission is \$4.50. 703-255-6360.
Pig Farm. 8 p.m., 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A comedy by Greg Kotis, playwright of "Urinetown." Tickets: \$25 adults, \$15 students. 1-800-838-3006 or www.1stStageSpringHill.org.
'The Last Days of Judas Iscariot,' 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Harris Theater, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$12, \$8 students and seniors. 703-993-8888.

SATURDAY/FEB. 28
Aztec Two-Step. Acoustic duo. 7 p.m. \$20. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.
George Winston, folk pianist. 7:30 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$35. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.
Planting Gardens. 10:30 a.m., Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Chief Horticulturist Doris Rodriguez will share ideas about removing existing vegetation and the use of soil amendments and fertilizers, plus preparing ground for planting. Free. 703-255-3631.
Justin Trawick band. 10 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.
Antique Show and Sale. 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Dealers will display and sell a variety of furniture and collectibles. Admission is \$4.50. 703-255-6360.
Dave Parsons Dance, 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Center for the Arts, on the Fairfax campus at the intersection of Braddock Road and

Route 123. The company includes Billy Smith, a 2007 George Mason University dance alumnus. A free pre-performance discussion begins at 7:15 p.m. on the Center's Grand Tier III. Tickets are \$22-\$44. Charge by phone at 888-945-2468 or visit www.ticketmaster.com.
Furia Flamenca. 8 p.m., Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Flamenco dance. \$30 per person, \$25 McLean district residents. Purchase tickets at the Alden Theatre Box Office, call 703-573-SEAT or visit www.ticketmaster.com.
Joe the Plumber. 6 p.m. Barnes and Noble, 7851 Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Samuel Wurzelbacher, a.k.a. Joe the Plumber from the 2008 campaign, will sign copies of "Joe the Plumber: Fighting for the American Dream" with co-author Thomas Tabback.
'The Last Days of Judas Iscariot,' 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Harris Theater, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$12, \$8 students and seniors. 703-993-8888.

SUNDAY/MARCH 1
The Master Singers of Virginia present Francis Poulenc's three best-known works, the Mass in G Major, the Prayers of St. Francis for men, and the Petites Voix for women. 4 p.m. at Saint Luke Catholic Church, McLean. Season tickets are \$38 for adults and \$30 for seniors or students; individual

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 16

Multimedia presentation with author

Eric Etheridge

and Mississippi Freedom Rider

Rev. Reginald Green

March 5, 2009, at 7:30 p.m.
 Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center
 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean

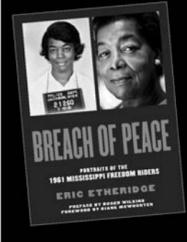


Etheridge is the author of *Breach of Peace: Portraits of the 1961 Mississippi Freedom Riders*.

Rev. Reginald Green shares his experience as a Freedom Rider.

Registration is not required; tickets will be distributed beginning at 7 p.m. on March 5; limit of four tickets per person, first come, first served.

For information on additional spring speakers visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library or call 703-324-8428



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—Thomas Jefferson



PHOTOS BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION

From left in back are Deborah Schade Adamou and Margaret Haddad; in the middle row are 7- and 8-year-old students Lillian Fennell, Ila Sharma, Isabella Hendricks, Kianna Berg, Isabelle Hamilton and Reagan Carlton; seated are 5- and 6-year-olds Maggie Karim, Serena Karam, Hope Partrick, Ryan Embt, Sophie Smith and Lindsey Bertin.

Haddad Students Put to the Test

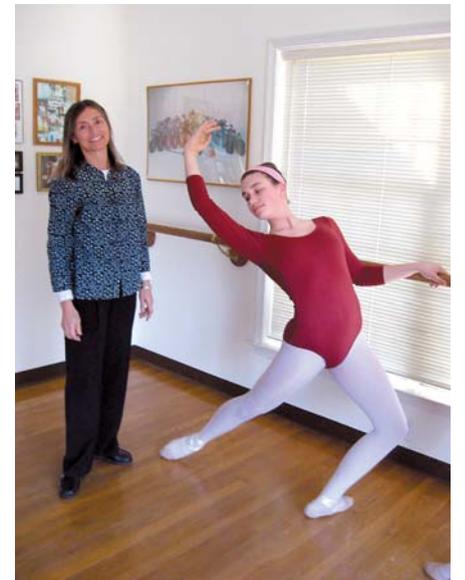
School of classical ballet brings examiner from Cyprus for Russian Ballet Society certifications.

The Margaret Haddad School of Classical Ballet in Great Falls Village Centre received a guest from out of town last Thursday. Deborah Schade Adamou, vice president of the Russian Ballet Society, flew in from the Republic of Cyprus to certify the students according to the society's criteria. Testing went on for four days at the school, from last Thursday through Sunday, as dancers sought to qualify at the elementary, intermediate, advanced and, for one girl, soloist levels.

"It's lovely. They're doing very well," Adamou said Sunday afternoon, with most of the testing done.

Haddad has her students tested every two years. "Other children around the world are doing the same kind of work at the same levels, so it's meaningful to them," she said. "It makes it something to work toward and be proud to have accomplished." She said the testing also teaches the dancers how to present themselves and to cope with situations that place them under scrutiny.

The certifications also preserve the traditions and syllabus of the Legat School of Ballet, and has the added benefit of demonstrating that "I'm not just teaching any old



Deborah Schade Adamou watches one of the older girls, Paula Novacki, 17.

thing here," Haddad said.

The first child in England to receive a ballet scholarship, Haddad attended the Legat School, as did all other teachers in the Russian Ballet Society. "I've been proud through the years to go out into the world and pass it on," she said.

The society has teachers in the U.K., Thailand, Italy, Germany, Japan and Malta, as well as Cyprus and the U.S.

Haddad said she didn't know of any other dance school in the area that offered this sort of international certification.

— MIKE DICICCO

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COMMUNITY

Great Falls Girl Scouts Serve 'Sunday Supper'

Project part of work on the Silver Award.

On Feb. 9, Girl Scout Troop 3134 from Great Falls, headed to the Children's Inn at the National Institutes of Health. The seven Teen Scouts — Maddison Abboud, Mary DeFriest, Alexis Unwalla, Chrissy Sweet, Laura Roman, Ally Sahagun and Margaret Kriso — were on their way to complete their service project as part of their work on the Silver Award, the second highest award a Girl Scout can earn.

The Children's Inn takes care of sick children and their families while they are getting treatment in the hospital. Every Sunday, they permit community groups to host a "Sunday Supper," where volunteers prepare and serve food to the children and their families staying at the inn. The Great Falls troop prepared and served a Sunday Supper last week.

They made it interesting by having a Hawaiian luau themed dinner in February. As a group, they made and served Hawaiian foods, including ham, teriyaki chicken, potato-mac salad, mac and cheese, fried rice, sesame cabbage salad, ambrosia, pineapples with jello and chocolate chip and oatmeal cookies.

It took almost a year of just planning to accomplish this event. The troop started last

March, picking a topic for the Silver Award. As a troop, they decided that they were most interested in doing a service project that would help children. After learning of the Children's Inn and their Sunday Supper program, the troop went to the inn to meet with the director of the program who interviewed the girls before deciding whether she would let the troop take part in the Sunday Supper program. The troop was elated when she said yes.

The troop knew it would have to raise money for the food, supplies and decorations. In the summer, they got to work and held two car washes, cleaning more than 100 cars and raising lots of money. The troop also sent out letters to local grocery stores asking for food donations. They were fortunate to receive a donation from Whole Foods, which donated most of the ingredients for the dinner. The troop is also thankful to Costco, Giant, Safeway and Wegmans for gift cards. Ultimate Florist also donated flowers. Thanks to all these community donations, the troop was able to donate a kitchen cart to the inn for other Sunday Supper groups to use in the future.

Once the fund raising was complete, they got down to work and started selecting recipes and making decisions on the activities for the luau dinner. They had one rehearsal dinner and decided that all of the food was



Great Falls Girl Scouts Alexis Unwalla, Mary DeFriest, Ally Sahagun, Margaret Kriso, Laura Roman, Chrissy Sweet and Maddison Abbou complete their service project as part of their work on the Silver Award.

delicious and ready to go. The day before the dinner, the girls prepared most of the food and put together all of the decorations.

The Sunday Supper project really opened up the girls eyes, teaching them that community service and volunteering really feels good. They learned that with a little hard

work and planning, they could do anything. A special thanks to troop advisors: Kristen Runke and Silvia Gonzalez Roman. The troop is very proud of what it did and hopes to participate in other community service projects.

— LAURA C. ROMAN

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SCHOOL NOTES

Send School Notes to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com.
Deadline is Friday.

Margaret Smith of Great Falls, a Langley High School graduate and daughter of William and Eileen Smith, was named to Ohio Wesleyan University's dean's list for the fall 2008 semester.

Michelle Bovee of Great Falls, a Langley High School graduate and daughter of Greg and Candace Bovee, was named to the James Madison University's dean's list for the 2008-09 fall semester.

Three area students were named to the 2008 dean's list at Colby College in Waterville, Me.: **Tamar H. Hassan**, sophomore, son of Hany and Deborah Hassan of Great Falls. **Duncan H. Hardock**, sophomore, son of Randolf and Anne Hardock of McLean. **Sally H. Klose**, freshman, daughter of Thomas Klose and Elizabeth Hull of McLean.

Great Falls residents **Mahsa Kazemifar** and **Ryan Link**, have graduated from James Madison University in Harrisonburg.

Kirsten Gamotis of Great



Langley High School junior Jimmy Bickel took second place recently in a Virginia High School League Sports Feature Writing Contest. Jimmy is the assistant sports editor of "The Saxon Scope" and his story on the Lady Saxons' trip to Miami and the impact that trip had on the team's season will be featured in the 2008-09 VHSL State Basketball Championship Souvenir Program.

Falls has been named to the fall 2008 president's list at James Madison University.

Oakcrest School has been awarded the National Endowment for the Humanities Picturing America grant.

Picturing America is a new initiative from the National Endowment for the Humanities to bring masterpieces of American art that showcase our country's history and character to classrooms and libraries nationwide.

Oakcrest history teacher Muriel Croston applied for the grant earlier this year.

Chesterbrook Kindergarten Orientation for parents of children who will turn 5 by Sept. 30, 2009 and live in the school's boundary will be held on Tuesday, March 3, from 7-8 p.m. in the school's cafeteria. This parent information meeting will provide an overview of the kindergarten curriculum and help prepare parents for this new chapter in their child's life. Chesterbrook Elementary is located at 1753 Kirby Road, McLean. Chesterbrook Elementary School PTA will be auctioning off a number of items to bid on to raise money for the school through March 8. Visit the auction catalog at www.chesterbrook.cmarket.com.

Lego Teams Need Coaches

FROM PAGE 3

forest mud. It would be designed to track the environment in the Amazon region.

Since he had previously built a go-cart, Alex was chosen to build the vehicle that would carry all of the equipment. "I made the steering system like a real car," he said, except that the rack-and-pinion device was controlled by a crank instead of a steering wheel. He mounted the motor on the rear of the frame, which he built "with blue Legos, mostly," he said.

Trevor built the metal detector, made with a magnet on a pulley, which would turn a lever in the

presence of metal.

Josh and Caleb had worked on the drill and Josh built the model satellite, while Caleb built a model remote controller for the satellite. "I was reading this climate sheet in the car on the way home from school and it was talking about ways to measure the environment," Caleb said. One of those methods was by satellite.

THE BOYS, also including teammates are Scott Miller and Keenan Hero, had found books, films and downloads about measuring the environment to research their project, Josh said. And, over the

holidays, they monitored the weather at home in Great Falls and in Manaus, Brazil, the largest city in the region for which their project was designed.

Helfinstine said he thought the competition pushed the boys to learn while also indulging their interests and offering the opportunity to bring home an award. "They could play and have a good time, but also be creative and learn something," he said.

"I call it a brain sport," O'Cain said, noting that the exercise gets children interested in subjects like math, science and engineering while allowing them to have fun.

Next year, the boys, except for first-grader Caleb, plan to move on to the FIRST Lego League competition for children ages 9 to 14. O'Cain said she expected neither Caleb nor the others to encounter a shortage of teammates. Already, she said, enough Great Falls Elementary students had expressed interest to form four or five teams between the two age groups and the older teams can accommodate up to 10 children. The problem, she said, will be finding enough coaches.

Also, O'Cain said, she hoped to have some coed teams created next year. The families on her sons' team this year did not have daughters in the same age group. "But I'm soliciting girls," she said.

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Sensational Saxons Shine in Title Game Win

Baker hits 3-pointers to lead Saxons to Liberty District title.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

For much of the winter basketball season, the Langley High boys team was almost an afterthought in its own Liberty District.

The Saxons, who a year ago captured the district title and shocked the Northern Region with their first trip to the state AAA playoffs, started this season slowly and were not as highly regarded as district teams such as Woodson, South Lakes and Madison. During one stretch in January, Langley lost four straight district games to fall to 2-4 in district play. At that point, the Saxons looked anything but a team that would successfully defend their district crown.

"I don't think anyone thought of us as reigning champs," Derek Baker, Langley senior guard, said.

BUT IN QUITE a remarkable turnaround, Langley put things together over the second half of the season, winning eight of its final nine regular season games — all within district play — to earn a No. 3 seeding at last week's eight-team district tournament.

There, the Saxons just kept rolling. Following a frightening first-round overtime win over scrappy No. 6-seed Marshall, Langley defeated crosstown rival McLean in a semifinals game on Feb. 18. That put the Saxons into Friday's title game against top-seeded Woodson. Langley (18-6), in the finals game, played one of its best games of the season in a decisive 52-36 win over the Cavaliers in the contest played at South Lakes. Langley jumped out early, 15-3, and never looked back.

It marked the second straight year in which Langley garnered the tourney title. A year ago, the Saxons defeated McLean in the championship game. It was not easy, but Langley, with the win over Woodson, had once again earned the title.

"It's unbelievable," Langley senior guard



The Langley boys won the Liberty District banner for the second straight year with their triumph over regular season champion Woodson last Friday night in Reston.

Barrett Hunter said of the championship game win. "I knew we could do it again. We put ourselves in great position. We played great defense. It's great to win the district championship your senior year."

This week, Langley opened play at the 16-team Northern Region tournament with a first-round game against visiting Lee. The Saxons were hoping to duplicate last year's success at regionals when they went all the way to the finals before losing to T.C. Williams.

THIS SEASON turned for the better for Langley Jan. 16, when it defeated the same Woodson team, 52-50, it would ultimately defeat for the district crown. The Saxons, on a four-game losing streak going into the home contest against the first-place Cavaliers, were in desperate need of a victory. It was not easy against a talented Cavaliers' squad, but the Saxons got it. And they have been winning since.

"That win was the turning point of our season, to be honest," Langley coach Travis Hess said of the Jan. 16 victory. "All good teams go through hard spots [on the schedule]. That's where we were."

Hess told his club at that time that he

believed the Saxons and Woodson would ultimately meet in the tournament finals.

Baker, who earned tournament MVP honors on Saturday, recalled coach Hess encouraging his players during the tough losing streak.

"Coach just said, 'Keep playing hard,'" recalled Baker. "We couldn't go lower than we had. We kept playing hard in practice."

Langley went on to win seven straight following the win over Woodson and was playing solid basketball going into the district playoffs. But Langley nearly got tripped up in its first-round game against Marshall, which led by four points in the final minutes of regulation. The Saxons fought back and won, 51-44 in overtime. A loss there would have finished the Saxons' season.

"That Marshall game was a nightmare," said Baker, who scored 19 points in the victory. "None of our shots were falling. We were a little nervous, but we got into overtime and it was a new game from there."

"We shouldn't have won," said Hess. "Marshall had us."

Baker scored 21 points in the Saxons' semis win over McLean to help Langley advance to the finals against Woodson.

There, the Saxons took charge from the start. Hunter knocked down a 3-pointer to

start the game's scoring and Langley scored the game's first seven points on way to a 26-9 halftime lead. The score was 39-19 after three quarters.

"We came out confident and played like we'd been there before," said Hunter. "[Winning the title] last year gave us a lot of confidence."

Baker nailed four 3-pointers for Langley on way to a game-high 16 points. Other top scorers for the Saxons were Hunter (nine points), senior center Aaron Justus (eight points, five rebounds), senior guard Thomas Kody (eight points) and senior guard Danny Pritchett (seven).

IT WAS A dominant showing, especially on the defensive end for the Saxons. Woodson senior forward Stephen Stepka, this year's District Player of the Year, was held to seven points. No Cavalier player scored in double figures as the Saxons' defense totally shut Woodson down. Throughout the game, Langley, the second-best defensive team statistically in the region this season, was quicker to loose balls and passionate about its defense. Hunter covered the 6-foot-6 Stepka most of the night.

"Defense [was the key]," said Hess. "We had a game plan to try to limit Stepka's touches. We played him man, box-in-one. Barrett Hunter did an awesome job."

Baker also credited Hunter.

"Barrett came out real strong. He hit that early 3-pointer and he shut down an MVP player. He and TK [Thomas Kody] both played great defense. We knew we had a great defensive team."

Offensively, Langley hit its shots early on to build a lead. Baker, one of the region's best players who has been particularly red hot shooting over the past month, continued his wondrous play. His 3-pointer from the left of the key midway through the second quarter gave the Saxons a 20-6 lead. Moments later, he drained another long-ranger from the right corner to make it 23-6.

"He's brimming with confidence," said Hess. "His shooting stroke looks great. He's our best player and he's what's making us go."

Baker, the tourney MVP, and Kody both made the six-member All-Tournament Team.

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

The **Marshall High athletic office** is announcing an opening for a head varsity football coach. Marshall athletic director Joe Swarm will be collecting resumes through Friday, March 6. Applicants can send their resumes to Mr. Swarm by e-mail to Joe.swarm@fcps.edu or by fax to 703-714-5490, attention Joe Swarm. Former Statesmen coach JT Biddison will be taking over the football program at West Springfield High School. Marshall appreciates the hard work and dedication coach Biddison put into the Statesmen's program during his tenure at the Liberty District school.

The Marshall High School Boosters' **annual mulch sale** to benefit the students at Marshall High will be held

Saturday, March 28. Mulch will be available to purchase at the school or to be delivered to homes with a preorder purchase of 10 bags or more. Home deliveries will be March 27-28. Preorders must be received by March 19. For more information go to www.gcmboosters.org or contact Sonnie Campos at vicepres@gcmhsboosters.org.

McLean Youth Soccer is still accepting registrations for the spring 2009 season on the league Web site at www.mcleansoccer.org for all returning and new families. MYS offers various programs for children ages 4-19, including House/Recreation, Travel and McLean Premier Soccer Travel, U5 for Pre-K players and TOP Soccer for children with special needs. The season will

begin March 30 and run through June 14. Contact the MYS administrator at admin@mcleansoccer.org for more information or call the MYS Office at 703-506-8068.

Langley sophomore Stephen Richards won the boys 100 breaststroke event and finished second in the 200 individual medley at last weekend's state AAA swim and dive championships at Freedom Center in Manassas. Here, Richards is shown competing at the recent Northern Region Championships, held two weeks ago at Oak Marr Recreation Center.



PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE II

ticket prices are \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors or students in advance (\$2 more at the door). 703-655-7809 or www.msva.org.
Bo Bice. Southern roots and blues. 7:30 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$25. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.
Celtic Concerts, 4 p.m., 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. at The Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Celtic music by Iona. \$15. 703-759-3309.
Antique Show and Sale. 12-5 p.m., Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Dealers will display and sell a variety of furniture and collectibles. Admission is \$4.50. Call 703-255-6360.

Pig Farm. 2 and 6 p.m., 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A comedy by Greg Kotis, playwright of "Urinetown." Tickets: \$25 adults, \$15 students. 1-800-838-3006 or www.1stStageSpringHill.org.

Charity Tennis Exhibition. 5:30-8:30 p.m., McLean Racquet and Health Club, 1472 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Featuring Richey Reneberg, a seven-time Davis Cup winner, U.S. Olympic tennis team member and the world's number one rated doubles player. Proceeds go to the Washington Tennis and Education Foundation and to Childhelp. \$45 per person, \$23 children under 12. 703-356-3300.

'The Last Days of Judas Iscariot,' 2 p.m. at the George Mason University Harris Theater, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$12, \$8 students and seniors. 703-993-8888.
Susquehanna University Choir and Chamber Singers, 7:30 p.m. at Herndon United Methodist Church, 701 Bennett St., Herndon. The Susquehanna University Choir includes area students Allison Bramnick of Fairfax, Allison Edwards of Springfield, and Margaret Frost of Herndon. Free admission. www.herndonumc.net.

Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children's "Every Kid's a Rock Star" Fundraiser, 3-6 p.m. at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Live music. Children can ride a virtual

roller coaster, get airbrush tattoos and meet an interactive robot. Meet Miss Virginia Outstanding Teen 2008 Lexie Overholt of Oakton. Nike golf challenge and a green screen station for surfing, snowboarding or tennis. Silent auction items include Britney Spears and Wizards tickets, an overnight stay for two at The Ritz-Carlton, and a Nike one-week summer golf camp for children. 703-208-6629.

MONDAY/MARCH 2

Laura Elliot. 4-5:40 p.m., Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Elliot will discuss her juvenile fiction book, "Give Me Liberty," on the role teens played in the revolutionary war.
Greg Laswell and Jay Nash, 8 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.
Laura Elliot, author of Give Me Liberty. 4 p.m. at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-757-8560.

TUESDAY/MARCH 3

August by August, 7:30 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 advance, \$12 at the door. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 4

Peter Mulvey, 8 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.

THURSDAY/MARCH 5

BeauSoleil avec Michael Doucet. General admission dance. 8 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$25. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.
Tyrone Wells, Brendan James and Keaton Simons. Pop/rock. 8 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.
White Burgundy and Pinot Noir.

6:30-8:30 p.m., Ritz-Carlton Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. A wine tour of one of the wine French regions and experience the delicate grape varietal.

The Bird and the Bee, 8 p.m. at The Barns. \$20. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

Portraits of Freedom Riders. 7 p.m., Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Eric Etheridge and former Freedom Rider Rev. Reginald Green will speak. Etheridge is the author of "Breach of Peace: Portraits of the 1961 Mississippi Freedom Riders." Tickets are first-come, first-serve with a limit of four per person. 703-324-8428

Citrus Sale. 9 a.m.-6 p.m., Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, 9916 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The Great Falls Lions Club will be holding its semi annual citrus sale. Valencia oranges, tangerines, red and white grapefruit will be on sale at \$25 per box or \$13 per half box. All profits go to support local and national Lions charities.

FRIDAY/MARCH 6

Emmanuel Ceysson, harpist. 8 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$35. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

Shane Hines CD Release Show, Stepanian and Madi Diaz. 8 p.m. Rock. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$12. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.

Mariza sings Portuguese Fado, 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University at the intersection of Braddock Road and Route 123. A pre-performance discussion, free to ticket holders, begins 7:15 p.m. on the Center's Grand Tier III. Tickets are \$23-\$46. Charge by phone at 888-945-2468 or visit www.tickets.com. www.gmu.edu/cfa.

Pig Farm. 8 p.m., 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A comedy by Greg Kotis, playwright of "Urinetown." Tickets: \$25 adults, \$15 students. 1-800-838-3006 or www.1stStageSpringHill.org.

OPEN HOUSES Sat. & Sun., February 28th & March 1st



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When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in this Connection Newspaper. For more real estate listings and open houses visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com, click the Real Estate links on the right side.

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| 860 Nicholas Run Dr | \$2,995,500 | Sat 11-5 | Mark McFadden | Coldwell | 202-333-6100 |
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| 8380 Greensboro Dr #226 | \$633,000 | Sun 1-4 | Sharon Sheldon | Long & Foster | 703-231-8000 |
| 1200 Ballantrae Ln | \$2,300,000 | Sun 1-4 | Beverlee White | Long & Foster | 703-867-7653 |

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To add your Realtor represented Open House to these weekly listings, please contact:
In Great Falls, Salome, 703-917-6467, or salome@connectionnewspapers.com
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GALLERIES

The work of local plein-air painters **Jack Warden and Karen Bateman** is featured in a show hosted by the McLean Project for The Arts at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls through the end of February. Warden and Bateman both work almost exclusively outdoors and do a lot of their painting right here along the Potomac River.

The artwork of **Ronni Jolles** of Great Falls will be on display at Katie's Coffeehouse, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls through Feb. 28. Visit www.RonniJolles.com.

The **U.S. Geological Survey**, National Center Art Hallway, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, presents paintings by Pauline D. Lorfano March 3-30, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m.-6:30 p.m.

Drawings, collages, and sculptures by students of Great Falls Elementary School under will be on display in the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, **March 3-31**. On March 5, 3-5 p.m., an ice cream social to celebrate the students' art will be held in the conference room.

Exhibitions by Deanna Clayton and Keith Clayton will be on display March 5-April 20 at Habatat Galleries, 8020 Towers Crescent Drive, Tysons Corner. The opening reception will be March 5, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Habitat will also host "Habitat for Healing," a fundraiser for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Donated pieces from several artists will be on display March 5-April 20. The pieces will then be auctioned off in a silent auction April 7. Call 703-989-7110.

Nature paintings by **Jola Noska** will be on display beginning **March 15** at the Vienna Arts Society Gallery, 513 W. Maple Ave., Vienna. The gallery is open Tuesdays-Saturday s, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Call 703-319-3220.

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 25

On the Importance of Girlfriends. 7-9 p.m., The Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.E., Vienna. Learn to establish a similar circle of friends that can be as dear as the ones in the past. Fee: \$45/non members; \$35/Center Circle Donors (Members). Visit www.thewomenscenter.org or call 703-281-2657 to register.

Project Support Grant Deadline. Project Support Grants for Arts Organizations are due at the Arts Council offices by 5 p.m. Call Jeannette Thomas, Grants Administrator, at 703-642-0862 x4.

Clergy Abuse Peer Support. 7-8:30 p.m., Tysons-Pimmit Hills Regional Library, 7684 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. The monthly peer support group for survivors of clergy abuse and others affected by the abuse will meet. The group meets on the last Wednesday of every month. Free. Confidential. No registration required. For information or directions, contact Ellen Radday at 703-538-6128.

SATURDAY/FEB. 28

Empowering Partnerships. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., George Mason University Johnson Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Learn more about innovative collaboration strategies from the experts to expand your reach and audience. \$5/person, free for members. Reserve seats by e-mailing rsvp@artsfairfax.org.

MariTal Assets and Your Rights. 10 a.m.-1 p.m., The Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. Learn how Virginia courts divide assets and liabilities upon divorce, how to determine whether property is marital or separate and the factors the court must take into account in making its decisions. \$55/person, \$45/Center Circle Donors. To register go to www.thewomenscenter.org or call 703-281-2657.

SUNDAY/MARCH 8

Republican Women's Club. 1 p.m., Kena Temple Center, 9001 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. The Western Fairfax Republican Women's Club will hold a membership luncheon. Call: 703-425-6542.

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'Total' Confusion



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

Recently, my wife Dina, was in a car accident on Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C., through no fault of her own, admitted to on the scene by the other driver. Fortunately, no one was hurt. However, Dina's car appears to have been "totaled." At present, two weeks after the accident, we're still waiting for both sides to adjust/agree on the car's assessment and therein lies the confusion.

Both companies, brand name insurers of unquestioned and unparalleled integrity, have reacted quickly to their respective client's call-ins. So quickly, in fact, that neither company has had the real-time information in as timely a manner as we have since the claims process has been tended to with the utmost care and concern. What I mean is, Dina (as the driver) and yours truly (as the owner) are both receiving calls from both insurers seeking information and status concerning what action has been taken (car seen/adjusted, car towed, where towed; and hearing who else had to determine what in order for all interested parties — insurers and insureds — to agree) or still needs to be taken, all in an extremely efficient and responsive pursuit of the truth, justice and settlement of the pending claim and ultimate disbursement of funds.

The problem is that both insurers' proactiveness has caused Dina and I to act cautiously, so cautiously in fact that, two weeks after the accident, no decision has been made; no repairs have been authorized, and of course, no settlement has been offered. Let me amend that. A settlement offer was made to me by my insurance company. However, when I told the other driver's insurance company's claims person of my company's offer, she balked at its legitimacy, so to speak, because she said that her company's adjuster hadn't even seen the car yet. As a result, rather than upset the other driver's insurance company, who I had hoped would settle with my insurance company — and its subrogation department, and include my \$1,000 collision deductible in the "total" check, I called my insurance company and withdrew my consent to their settlement offer, paperwork concerning which I had not yet "over-nighted" due to the criss-crossing of customer service/claims phone calls we were still both continuing to receive.

When I advised my car insurance company's claims representative of this decision/further delay, she was a bit perturbed (I realize it was costing them money; storage fees, no sale at auction, etc.) and asked what insurer I wanted to "go through" to settle this claim. I replied that I didn't preferably want to "go through" anybody (my insurance company versus the other driver's), I simply wanted to involve all the parties that, based on the number and variety of insurance company phone calls that Dina and I were receiving, sounded like I was supposed to, to facilitate the claim. At the very least, I thought, both sides needed to have an equal opportunity to gather all the information deemed appropriate/necessary to assess the damage/make a settlement offer (what do I know?). Given her attitude, apparently, I wasn't supposed/expected to do that.

I guess I was supposed to do what my insurance company advised me to do. Whatever confusion I was experiencing, whatever cross-communicating we were still receiving, would all be sorted out at settlement, if and when a final offer was made, and I should let the professionals work it all out on my behalf.

And though it all still sounded reasonable, I couldn't help wondering exactly who wants to know what and why, and how all of it affects Dina and me, and what's all the rush anyway?

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

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COUNTY BRIEFS

Easing Return To Federal Jobs

U.S. representatives Gerry Connolly (D-11), Jim Moran (D-8) and Frank Wolf (R-10) recently introduced a bill that would remove financial penalties that retirees currently endure if they chose to return to the federal workforce.

Under the current system, people who have left the federal government put their retirement benefits in jeopardy should they chose to return to their old jobs, said Connolly.

"We want to allow some people whose expertise we need to return. For example, we need more people who can manage large complex contracts that the federal government outsources and we need to attract some of these people back to the federal government," said Connolly.

"We do not want to penalize people if they are returning to federal service," added Connolly.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

Homeless Prevention Director Named

On Feb. 9, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appointed Dean Klein, formerly of the Freddy Mac Foundation, as director of the locality's office to prevent and end homelessness.

Affordable housing advocates praised the appointment of Klein, who worked on homelessness issues for Freddy Mac, but said they were disappointed Fairfax County

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

had not made more progress since the supervisors passed a countywide program to end homelessness 11 months ago.

"While we are very pleased to have Klein as the director, deadlines have been missed and we've lost momentum since the approval of the plan last spring. Unfortunately, in the interim, the number of homeless in the County has increased due to the recession," said Gerry Williams, chair of Communities of Faith United for Housing.

There is some disagreement on the board about whether the county should be setting up a new homelessness office and hiring a director when Fairfax expects to see a projected \$650 million budget deficit.

"The number of directors should not be expanding as we lay off other county employees. ... It is like re-paving your driveway while your house is burning down," said Springfield Supervisor Patrick Herry (R).

But county chairman Sharon Bulova (D) said the new director is not an added expense for the county.

Fairfax is using funds already allocated to homeless prevention to set up the new office and hire the new director, she said.

"The county needs to take more ownership of that issue. ... We are actually overdue in taking that action. We have made a commitment to the community to try and get our arms around the homeless population so we don't have people living in the woods," said Bulova.

Artists Go to Big Apple

FROM PAGE 9

Falls member artists and enables visitors, such as Kim, to see much of the work created here. She quickly seized on several painters that interested her and then made arrangements to see some of the actual work in person.

ONE OF THE ARTISTS selected was Karen Bateman, a "plein air," or outdoor, painter who spends many hours along the Potomac and other spots creating landscapes using oil paints. Bateman drove to New York with a load of her work and the gallery immediately selected eight pieces to display.

Kim later came to Great Falls to inspect other local art. She and her gallery director loaded their van with work from three additional painters — Elaine Elinsky, Jennifer Duncan and Jill Banks. The gallery representatives shuttled these pieces back to New York, where they are part of an exhibit that rotates every month. "I was able to visit the gallery in New York several weeks after it opened. It was thrilling to see my work there — there is just no place like New York City," Elinsky said.

Elinsky paints landscapes, many incorporating area barns, and still lifes in a contemporary impressionistic style. Banks cre-

ates still lifes and figurative paintings that celebrate everyday life, with subject matter varying from donuts to scenes of friends and family enjoying a meal together. Duncan combines her media to create bright, sometimes whimsical, representations of landscapes, animals and figures.

They are not the only Great Falls artists on Kim's radar. "I saw a lot of other artists I like. I'd like to visit again," Kim said of plans to recruit more Great Falls painters.

ROBIN KENT, a Great Falls Studios board member who heads a committee responsible for the group's Web site, is enthusiastic about the role of the Internet in calling attention to Great Falls. "Our site is a basic tool that we established to introduce our artists to the Great Falls community, but the Internet has also introduced us to the world," he said. "Now we are in the unique position of telling people in Great Falls that art shown in New York was actually created here. Our neighbors can go to New York and we hope they visit Chelsea32. But they can shop right here first. Great Falls is a regional center for reasonably priced local art of a quality that also makes the cut in midtown Manhattan."

The Chelsea32 Gallery is located at 2 West 32nd St. in New York, visit its Web site at www.chelsea32.com.

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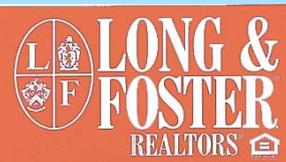
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