

Elena Jordon admires a collage of pictures of her daughter, Emma, given to her by a staff member of Silverbrook Elementary School on March 27.

# Fitting Memorial

NEWS, PAGE 3

## Freshman On the Hill

POLITICS, PAGE 8

## Budget Input

NEWS, PAGE 3

PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION  
CALENDAR, PAGE 10 ❖ SPORTS, PAGE 14 ❖ HOME SALES, PAGE 15 ❖ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 16

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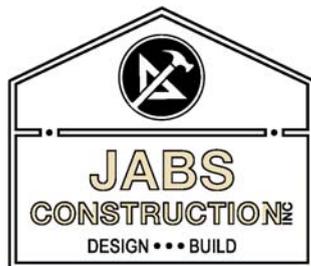
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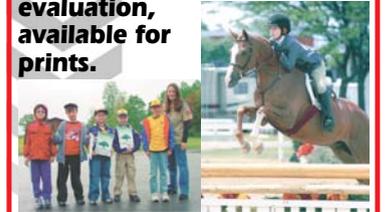


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## A Swing for Emma

School dedicates swing for student who died of cancer in 2008.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Just 7, Emma Jordon of Fairfax Station was a ballet dancer, cheerleader and lacrosse player. But what she especially loved to do was swing. So it was fitting then, that her school, Silverbrook Elementary, dedicated a garden swing in her honor, Friday morning, March 27, outside the school library.

A bright, high-spirited girl, Emma died Sept. 18, 2008, of Wilms' Tumor, a form of kidney cancer, during her Make-a-Wish trip to Disney World. She was there with parents Stephen and Elena Jordan, and brothers Zach, Will and Sam, then 4.

"Swings were a part of Emma and, just prior to her passing in the hotel room, our 4-year-old asked if there'd be swings in heaven for Emma," said Stephen Jordan. "I said, 'Certainly,' and she smiled. She passed away that evening."

But though her life was short, she left a lasting impression on all who knew her. So besides the swing and plaque in her memory in the library garden, the

school also had a fund raiser called "Change for Change" during three weeks in March.

Her parents established Emma's foundation to raise money for Wilms' Tumor and awareness for pediatric cancer. "The Student Council and PTA worked together to collect almost \$7,000 for her foundation," said school librarian Joe Maniscalco. "This year's yearbook is also dedicated to her. At Friday's ceremony, the Art Department presented a framed collage of Emma to her parents and it'll be a full page in the yearbook."

**"This community has embraced us beyond all expectations."**

— Stephen Jordon,  
Emma's father

Emma was diagnosed at the end of kindergarten. "It's just not fair," said Stephen Jordan. "She didn't have a chance to enjoy all that potential to do marvelous things in her life. But we know she's in a much better place and she's waiting for us."

Stephen Jordon said there's "a hole in our hearts that'll always be there, but we also have

three vibrant, full-of-energy boys, ages 13, 11 and 5" also dealing with their sister's death. But, he said, school, Scouts, sports and their church have kept their minds active and are helping them heal.

"We pray to Emma every day," said Stephen Jordon. "She's our little angel. Her littlest brother talks to her on a toy phone. So she's a daily part of our lives, and we wouldn't have it any other way. She fought cancer, a year-and-a-half, and never really com



PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

Steve, Will and Zachary Jordon test out a new swing at Silverbrook Elementary School that was dedicated to their sister, Emma, who died of cancer in September 2008.

SEE SILVERBROOK, PAGE 5

## Public's Turn To Speak Out on Budget

Hearings draw feedback on proposed 2010 county budget.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE  
THE CONNECTION

Approximately 150 people showed up to testify at the first two public hearing the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors conducted on the locality's 2010 budget March 30 and 31. Two subsequent hearings, scheduled for April 1 and 2, took place after The Connection went to press.

Residents who spoke were alarmed either by the programmatic cuts or the tax and fee increases included in the initial draft of the county's 2010 budget, which goes into effect July 1. Last month, county executive Anthony Griffin proposed some drastic measures in order to close a \$650 million financial shortfall in county's approximately \$3.3 billion general fund next year.

The bulk of Fairfax's shortfall comes from the 12 percent drop in residential real estate property values, which account for the majority of the county's annual revenue.

Griffin has recommended the supervisors

raise the real estate property tax rate 13.5 cents per \$100 of assessed property to offset the drop in the county's home values. If the county board adopts this proposal, many residents would pay the same amount in real estate taxes as they did last year, even though their homes are worth less than before.

The supervisors, who have the final say on the budget, will "mark up" their draft of the spending plan April 20 and take a final vote on April 27.

The following are some concerns local residents expressed about the budget at the hearing:

### Denise Gulley

Fairfax Station resident Denise Gulley pleaded with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors not to cut funding for the juvenile drug court, which is a "non-adversarial" intervention program for minors who are repeat non-violent offenders and moderate to heavy substance abusers, according to



Denise Gulley

Fairfax County documents.

Gulley said her 16 year-old family member has been enrolled in the drug court program since January and her family has seen several improvements in his behavior since that time. According to Gulley, her family member has struggled with drug addiction for the past two years.

"There is no doubt of the success of drug court. ... [The family member] was so lost in addiction and when there was no hope, this program came along," said Gulley at the hearing. She is appreciative of the family component of the program and the amount of individual attention her son receives.

Due to the large budget shortfall, Fairfax County executive Anthony Griffin has proposed cutting a lot of counseling services, including the drug court program, out of next year's budget, said advocates.

### Diana Kroner

Laurel Hill resident Diana Kroner is excited about the new Laurel Hill Elementary School but fears she will not be able to send her son there when he enters kindergarten next year.

Both Kroner and her husband work full time and the pair would need Fairfax County to provide both full-day kindergarten and the School Age Child Care (SACC) program at the site. Currently, full-day kindergarten and SACC are provided at some but not all elementary schools.

If full-day kindergarten is not provided at Laurel Hill next year, Kroner said she would petition to place her son in a public school farther away from their home that has the program. If the school system does



Diana Kroner

SEE SUPERVISORS, PAGE 7

## SACC Changes Considered

Fairfax County may be looking to make changes to its popular School Aged Child Care (SACC) program, which provides before and after school supervision for students in public elementary schools.

County executive Anthony Griffin has proposed looking at an alternative model for SACC, which staff hopes might be more affordable, serve more schools and make better use of available facility space.

Staff will launch a pilot program for the alternative SACC model at the county's two newest elementary schools in Herndon and Lorton, which are set to open next school year. Prior to the pilot program, these schools were not funded to receive a SACC program at all, said Fairfax County chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large).

But the specter of changes to the SACC program has alarmed some parents already.

"I had lots of other choices of daycare I could have picked from," said Fairfax parent Rhonda Cook at the county's budget hearing March 30.

"Parents are able to go to work and not worry about what will happen to their child. ...I would just like the program to stay the way it is," said Cook.

Some supervisors also have concerns about what form changes to the SACC program would take. Several supervisors said they are being inundated with calls from parents worried about what a new SACC might look like.

Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) has also not been able to get a straight answer about what the alternative SACC program might look like.

"I have been totally unable to get a definition of what that means," said Foust.

Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) indicated that she would be very reluctant to support any changes to SACC.

"We have a world class program serving a breadth of needs. It challenges any private program that is available. How do you build upon that?" said Hudgins.

Other supervisors disagreed, saying every program deserves a second look when the county is facing a \$650 million shortfall in its budget next year.

"I don't see how you can take one program completely off the table," said Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee).

McKay added that he was tired of fielding calls from families who are still on the waiting list for SACC. If an "alternative model" can expand the program to new schools and more families, the county should give it a serious look, he said.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

## Intruders Flee Lorton Home

Fairfax County Police are looking for whoever tried burglarizing a Lorton house last Friday while the owner was home. The incident occurred March 27, around 9:37 a.m., in the 9200 block of Gilmore Drive.

Police say a 26-year-old man was upstairs in his home when he heard noises on the lower level. He went downstairs to investigate and found two unknown men at the bottom of the staircase. When he asked what they were doing in his home, they immediately fled. The homeowner ran after the suspects and eventually lost sight of them; he was not injured and no items were stolen from the residence.

Both suspects are described as Hispanic. One was in his early 30s, about 5 feet 5 inches and 200 pounds, with a shaved head. He wore a gray hoodie, tan pants and white gloves with red fingertips. The second suspect was in his late 20s, about 5 feet 7 inches and 160 pounds, with straight black hair. He wore a red shirt, tan pants and white gloves with red fingertips.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at [www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org](http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org) or text "TIP187" plus a message to CRIMES/274637 or call police at 703-691-2131.

# Lending a Helping Hand

## Clifton firefighter aids Lakota Tribe.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

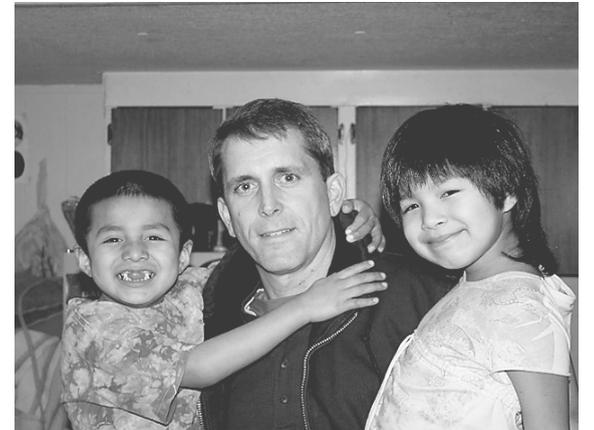
**T**he first time Jay Corwin visited the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, he went with members of the Centreville-based, travel baseball team he coached. He and his team brought backpacks full of school supplies for the elementary-school children of the Lakota Tribe.

Last year, they returned to Pine Ridge, S.D. and built beds for the children through the nonprofit RE-MEMBER which does home repairs and provides blankets for the 30,000 people on the reservation. Recently, Corwin — a Town of Clifton firefighter and resident of Centreville's Country Club Manor community — returned with his son Kyle, 15, a freshman at Westfield High.

"We took the \$525 we'd collected here via fundraisers and a donation from the firefighters of Fire Station 14 In Burke," said Corwin. "And when we landed in Rapid City, we went to Wal-Mart and loaded up numerous shopping carts with blankets, pillows, food and toys."

According to RE-MEMBER, 97 percent of the Pine Ridge Lakota live below the federal poverty level on an average annual income of \$3,700. No public transportation or industry exists, so the unemployment rate is 85 percent. Although temperatures range from 60 below zero to 120 degrees, most homes have no heat, air conditioning or running water.

**CORWIN FIRST LEARNED** of the plight of the Lakota on the Pine Ridge Reservation while studying American Indians. He immediately wanted to



Jay Corwin holds, from left, Striker and Jetta, who were delighted to see him again.

help, and he's done so on an ongoing basis.

Last year, he helped build beds for a brother and sister, Striker and Jetta, now 6 and 7, respectively, who lived in a trailer with black mold and no running water. So he and Kyle returned to see them.

"We gave them food, coats and hats, blankets, coloring books and crayons — which they were the most pleased about," said Corwin. "Their mother passed away, last spring, after we left; their grandmother was taking care of them. They remembered

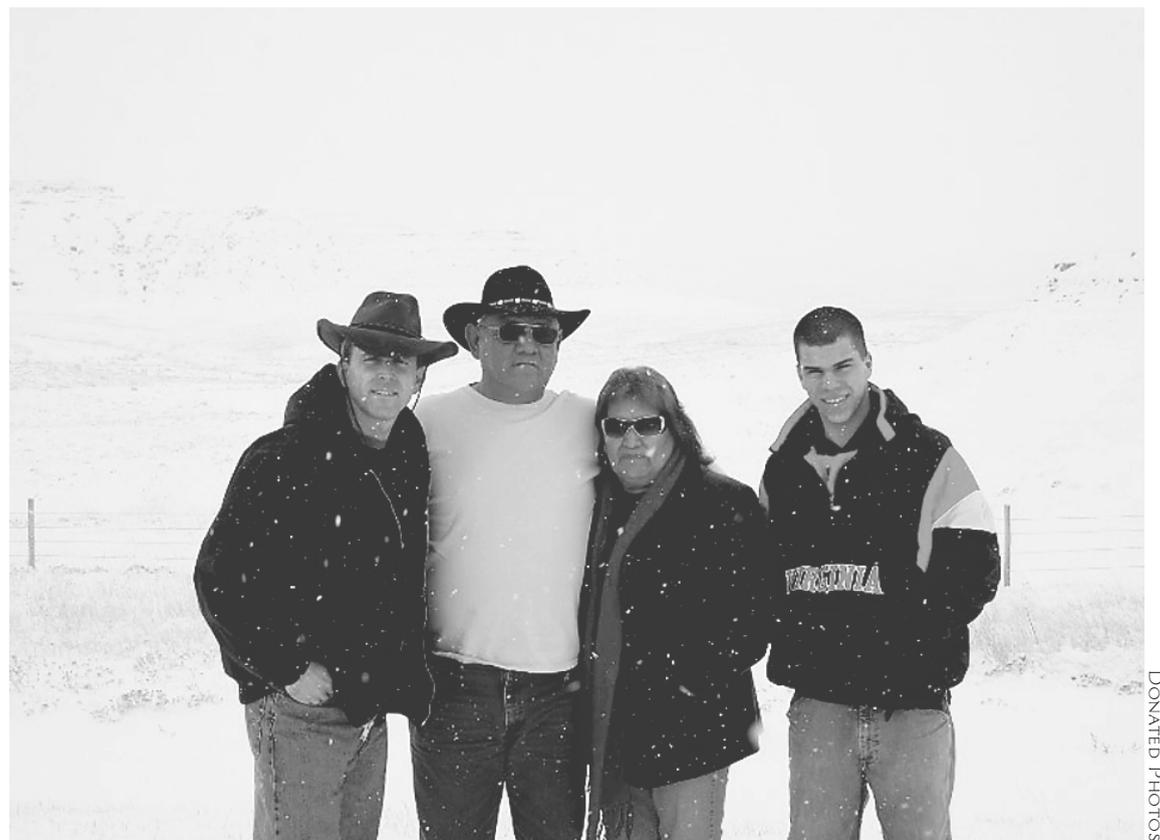
us and jumped right up in our arms, and it was nice to know a bond had been made."

Kyle became attached to Jetta and Striker and, said Corwin, "Every time we go back, I can see a deepening relationship between them. And I saw this time that their living conditions ripped at Kyle's heart and he felt sad for them — they're still cold and hungry."

**"They're still cold and hungry."**

— Jay Corwin, describing the Lakota people

SEE FIREFIGHTER, PAGE 9



From left are Jay Corwin, Jerome High Horse, Theresa High Horse and Kyle Corwin.

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PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

**Steve and Elena Jordon and their sons Steve, Will and Zachary attend a dedication ceremony for a swing at Silverbrook Elementary School in the school's garden in memory of former student Emma Jordon**

## Silverbrook Swing

FROM PAGE 3

plained, and we're honoring her spirit with the foundation." Money raised will go to CureSearch, doing pediatric-cancer research, plus the Make-A-Wish Foundation and Believe in Tomorrow, two organizations that take care of the families. Funds will go, as well, to Parents and Children Fighting Cancer, for military families at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where Emma received most of her care.

Contributions to the nonprofit, Emma Jordon "Kidz Fighting Cancer" Foundation may be sent to: 9603 Oakington Drive, Fairfax Station, VA 22039.

Stephen Jordon is a U.S. Navy captain who will soon move to Canada to become a Naval attaché in Ottawa, with his family joining him later this summer. But Fairfax Station and Silverbrook Elementary will always remain in their hearts.

"For a military family on the move, our whole life, this community has embraced us beyond all expectations throughout this fight," said Stephen Jordon. "The care the school had for us was overwhelming, and I don't think we'd be in the shape we're in without the love, care and support we got from everybody."

Since swings were such a part of Emma, he said, it was "just fantastic" that Silverbrook dedicated one in her honor. "It was very fitting," said Stephen Jordon. "And if life someday takes us back to this area, it would be all right with us. It would be like coming home."

### COLLEGE NOTES

Clifton resident **Kayla Weiner**, a B.A. student in interior design, has been recently inducted into the Delta Epsilon Sigma National Scholastic Honor Society at Marymount University. To be eligible, undergraduates must have

completed 75 percent of their requirements with at least a 3.5 grade point average (GPA). Additional considerations include good character, intellectual activities and leadership promise.



FAMILY PHOTO

**Emma Jordon, 7, died on her Make-a-Wish trip on Sept. 18, 2008.**

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### ■ Great for Teenagers

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# OPINION

## Connection Wins Awards

Reporters, photographers, editors bring home Virginia Press Association awards.

The Connection Newspapers and sister papers Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and Centre View, won more than 40 editorial awards for all aspects of its coverage in 2008.

The awards, including 17 first place awards, were announced at the annual Virginia Press Association editorial conference in Norfolk on Saturday, March 21. Connection writers won in categories including investigative reporting, government writing, education, health, science and environmental writing, public safety writing, features, sports, business and financial writing, and editorial writing. Our papers also

won multiple awards for lifestyle/entertainment pages, page design, and photography.

Connection political reporter Julia O'Donoghue won first place in depth/investigative reporting for her three part series on different categories of voters. She also won first place for government writing.

### EDITORIAL

Mirza Kurspahic won first place for general news writing for his coverage of immigration issues in Herndon.

**THE CONNECTION** won multiple awards for ongoing sports coverage and sports photogra-

phy.

Mark Giannotto won first place awards in both the Alexandria Gazette and one in the Arlington Connection for sports writing portfolio. Jason Mackey won for sports coverage in the Fairfax Connection and the Springfield Connection.

Connection photographer Robbie Hammer won eight awards while Louise Krafft won nine awards in all.

Centre View's Bonnie Hobbs garnered two awards, one for public safety writing and one for her ongoing coverage of immigration issues.

The Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection was also recognized for excellence of its lifestyle and entertainment pages, and editor Mike O'Connell also won for page design in Fairfax Station.

### Connection Newspapers 2008 VPA Awards

#### FIRST-PLACE AWARDS

- ❖ General news writing, Mirza Kurspahic, Oak Hill/Herndon Connection, Controversy in Herndon; Judges' Comments: "Compelling story told fearlessly."
- ❖ Government writing, Julia Sheehan O'Donoghue, Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection
- ❖ Sports writing portfolio, Mark Giannotto, Arlington Connection
- ❖ Editorial writing, Mary Kimm, Fairfax Connection
- ❖ Sports news photo, Robbie Hammer, Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection, Subject: Wrestling
- ❖ Feature photo, Robbie Hammer, Springfield Connection, Subject: Synchro Swim Team
- ❖ Picture story or essay, Robbie Hammer, Springfield Connection, Subject: Lee HS Prom
- ❖ Government Writing, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ In-depth or Investigative Reporting, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Health, Science and Environmental Writing, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Education Writing, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Sports Writing Portfolio Mark Giannotto, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Lifestyle/Entertainment pages; Rebecca Halik, Greg Wyshynski, Louise Krafft, Michael Lee Pope, Mary Anne Weber, Chuck Hagee; Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Pictorial Photo, Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Picture Story/Essay, Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ In-depth or Investigative Reporting, Julia O'Donoghue, Mount Vernon Gazette,

#### SECOND-PLACE AWARDS

- ❖ Combination picture and story, Julia Sheehan O'Donoghue and Louise Krafft, McLean Connection, Subject: Feature on the home of

Terry McAuliffe

- ❖ Sports writing portfolio, Jason Mackey, Fairfax Connection
- ❖ Feature photo, Robbie Hammer, Vienna/Oakton Connection, Subject: Family support
- ❖ Sports feature photo, Robbie Hammer, Fairfax Connection, Subject: Soccer players in defeat
- ❖ Public safety writing, Bonnie Hobbs, Centre View Northern Edition
- ❖ Feature series or continuing story, Bonnie Hobbs, Centre View, Subject: Immigration
- ❖ General news writing, Jennifer Lesinski, Ashburn Connection, Subject: Catholic Charities' food program
- ❖ Personal service writing, Jennifer Lesinski, Ashburn Connection, Subject: Loudoun Interfaith Relief
- ❖ Business and financial writing, Nicholas M. Horrocks, Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection
- ❖ Public Safety Writing, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Feature series or continuing story, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ General News Photo, Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Feature Photo, Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Personality or Portrait Photo, Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet

#### THIRD-PLACE AWARDS

- ❖ In-depth or investigative reporting, David Schultz, Arlington Connection, Subject: Unscrupulous landlord evicts tenants



Connection award winners, from left, Photographer Robbie Hammer, Sports Editor Jason Mackey and Managing Editor Michael O'Connell.

- ❖ Page design, Michael O'Connell, Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection
- ❖ Lifestyle or entertainment pages, Michael O'Connell, Lea Mae Rice, Paula Friedrich, Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection
- ❖ Sports writing portfolio, Jason Mackey, Springfield Connection
- ❖ Picture story or essay, Robbie Hammer, Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection, Subject: Robinson HS Marching Band Camp
- ❖ General news photo, Robbie Hammer, Fairfax Connection
- ❖ Sports news photo, Robbie Hammer, Vienna/Oakton Connection, Subject: Lacrosse celebration
- ❖ General News Photo, Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Column Writing, Kenneth Lourie, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Feature Writing Portfolio, Chuck Hagee, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Lifestyle/Entertainment pages; Rebecca Halik, Louise Krafft, Greg Wyshynski, Mary Anne Weber, Chuck Hagee, Michael Lee Pope; Mount Vernon Gazette

### Plan To Keep Best Teachers Teaching

To the Editor:

I would like to respond to Supervisor Pat Herry's (R-Springfield) article "Changing the Equation" [Connection, March 26-April 1, 2009]. His proposal to save class size and reduce expenditures makes complete sense. As a matter-of-fact, it is exactly what needs to be done to the proposed school budget. This is a

bold policy statement that can save the education of all children attending Fairfax County Public Schools. The Board of Supervisors should support its schools. The School Board should be cognizant that their first responsibility is to educate children, not feed the bureaucracy. Bill Gates has said it's more important for your child to have a great teacher than go to a great school.

### LETTERS

The proposed budget does not keep our best teachers teaching. FCPS has a horrendous

teacher attrition problem, and while neighboring school districts are giving step and/or COLA, FCPS plans to do neither and to raise class size. The Fairfax County Federation of Teachers says slash ineffective and superfluous programs, keep instruction as the number one priority, reduce the administrative bloat, and pay teachers an adequate salary.

**Mark L. Glaser, Ph.D.**

President  
Fairfax County Federation of Teachers

## THE CONNECTION

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# Supervisors Hear from Constituents

FROM PAGE 3

not agree to place him somewhere else, then she would consider private school options, said Kroner.

"To not be able to send our son to Laurel Hill would be truly upsetting," said Kroner.

## Norman Grimm

Chantilly resident Norman Grimm wants to protect funding for the eight police officers that train students to be school safety patrols.



Norman Grimm

"This program has been in existence for over 50 years," said Grimm, who is also representative for the AAA Mid-Atlantic Foundation for Safety and Education.

The instruction that school education officers provide to safety patrols has saved lives. Over approximately 30 years, the patrols have save at least 13 students from dying, he said.

## John Niemiec

Fairfax County executive Anthony Griffin proposed cutting 6 percent – the equivalent of \$10 million – out of the county's firefighters and emergency services budget next year due to the budget shortfall.



John Niemiec

John Niemiec, president of the Fairfax County Professional Firefighters and Paramedics, said that would result in the loss of four to six fire stations worth of personnel.

"Any reduction will have a negative impact. ... It will compromise citizen and fire fighter safety," he said in a presentation to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Griffin's \$10 million cut equals the loss of 89 "uniformed" positions, nine civilians positions and three limited term or "part time" employees, said Niemiec, who lives in Fairfax.

## Amy Smith

Amy Smith is concerned that Fairfax

County would cut a supervised visitation program that allows her to see her daughter on a weekly basis.

Smith said she made some poor choices with her life in the past but she has been sober for two years and was working on rebuilding her relationship with daughter, who is under 5-years old.



Amy Smith

During their supervised visitation, she plays with her daughter's hair and paints her nails. Smith uses the visits as an incentive to stay clean and on track, she said.

"I look forward to my 90-minute visit and it is important that she gets to see me," said Smith.

## Megan McLaughlin

Fairfax resident and school advocate Megan McLaughlin asked the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to exert pressure on Fairfax County Public Schools to rethink its budget. She wants the school system to put less money toward the school

**"Any reduction will have a negative impact. ... It will compromise citizen and fire fighter safety."**

**— John Niemiec, Fairfax County firefighters and paramedics union president**

system's central administration costs.

"Please instruct the school system to revise its budget by putting the needs of students and teachers ahead of central administration," said McLaughlin.

McLaughlin specifically wants Fairfax County Public Schools to reconsider freezing teacher pay and increasing class sizes if the school system faces budget cuts. She said cuts could be made in other places.



Megan McLaughlin

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## POLITICS

# Freshman in a Fishbowl

**U.S. Rep. Gerald Connolly settles in at U.S. Capitol.**

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE  
THE CONNECTION

A few tell-tale signs remind U.S. Rep. Gerald Connolly (D-11) that he is new to the U.S. Congress. After eight weeks on the job, Fairfax County's greenest congressman stumbled upon the U.S. House of Representatives' "members only" dining room by accident, while trying to find an attending physician's office in the Capitol complex March 19.

"I've never been in here before," said Connolly as he looked around the ornate and deserted facility. Food service workers were already clearing the lunch buffet and the only "member" in the room was U.S. Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-Md.), who sat at a wooden table alone eating a piece of cake.

EVENTUALLY, Connolly found the physician with the help of a Capitol Hill staff member who was going to the doctor's office for some aspirin. Connolly

is traveling to Colombia this month on official congressional business and needed some precautionary shots before going on the trip.

"This is a quick place for a member to get a shot and that is a good thing," said David Ciomperlik, who was at the check-in desk for the House of Representatives' attending physician.

This, by the way, is not a normal doctor's waiting room.

Ciomperlik sat behind a large, mahogany desk that looked like something more at home in a law firm than a physician's office. A huge congressional seal with "Office of the Attending Physician" scrawled across it hung over Ciomperlik.

Two large televisions were mounted on the walls, where members can watch the action on the floor of the House of Representatives and U.S.

Senate live as they wait to meet with the medical staff.

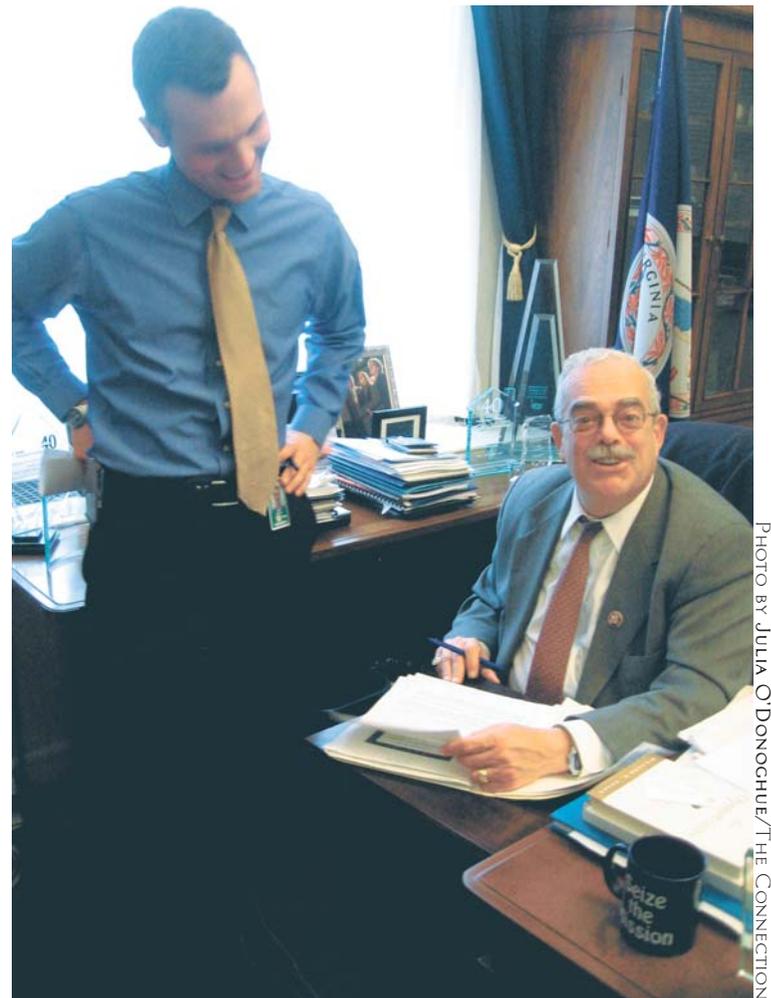
"I can tell you when the next vote is," said Ciomperlik to Connolly before he went into the doctor's office.

After receiving his shot, Connolly emphasized that the medical services are not a perk for members.

"These medical services are not free. I have to pay

**"Some things have changed. Some things have not."**

— U.S. Rep. Gerald Connolly (D-11)



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) and his chief of staff James Walkinshaw review paperwork in Connolly's new office on Capitol Hill.

SEE FRESHMAN, PAGE 12

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# Firefighter Helps Tribe

FROM PAGE 4

Last year, Corwin also made friends with Jerome High Horse, who lives on the reservation and helps RE-MEMBER build beds. This time, High Horse took Corwin and his son to a food bank in Rapid City where they filled up two dozen boxes of food for the Lakota families.

"Jerome's brother had passed away, the day before, so we went to his Native American funeral and shared some of our food with the people attending," said Corwin. "We also visited some families we'd met previously and gave them food. For example, we took food to three brothers — the oldest, in his 70s. They only speak Lakota, so Jerome translated and said they were pleased we remembered them and came back."

Corwin said the weather was colder, this year. One night, during a snowstorm, he said, "It was 40 degrees below zero, without a wind chill. So when we brought a blanket to someone, we knew that person would now be warm at night."

RE-MEMBER is now building homes there for those with the most dire living conditions. "It really made me feel good that change has taken place, at least on a small scale," said Corwin. "The more awareness of the Lakota that we can bring to others, all over the U.S., hopefully, the more help they'll receive."

"The first time we went, I thought it was an awesome learning experience, but just a one-time thing," he said. "I never dreamed we'd be constantly looking for ways to get back there and help these people. We want things to work out for them. Both the people and the place have attached themselves to us."

For Kyle, it was a large dose of reality. "I realized that no improvements have been made, nor any attempts by the government to fix the problems," he said. "They really don't deserve to live like that because they were actually the first people here and we pushed them aside. So the least we could do is try to help them; we all have to pitch in to make a change and a difference."

**"We all have to pitch in to make a difference."**

— Kyle Corwin, Westfield High freshman

He always looks forward to seeing Jetta and Striker. "It's heartwarming to see their faces light up," said Kyle. "I know that, because of their living conditions, they rarely smile. So when we gave them toys and food, they smiled for the hour or two that we were there."

Corwin and Kyle will return in January 2010 and want local residents to go, too, so more people will know about the Lakota and their needs. For more trip information or ways to help, call Corwin at 703-475-3286 or see [www.re-member.org](http://www.re-member.org).

Now, whenever Kyle comes home to Virginia from a trip there, he sees "the drastic differences between our world and theirs, and I feel there's even more I could be doing."

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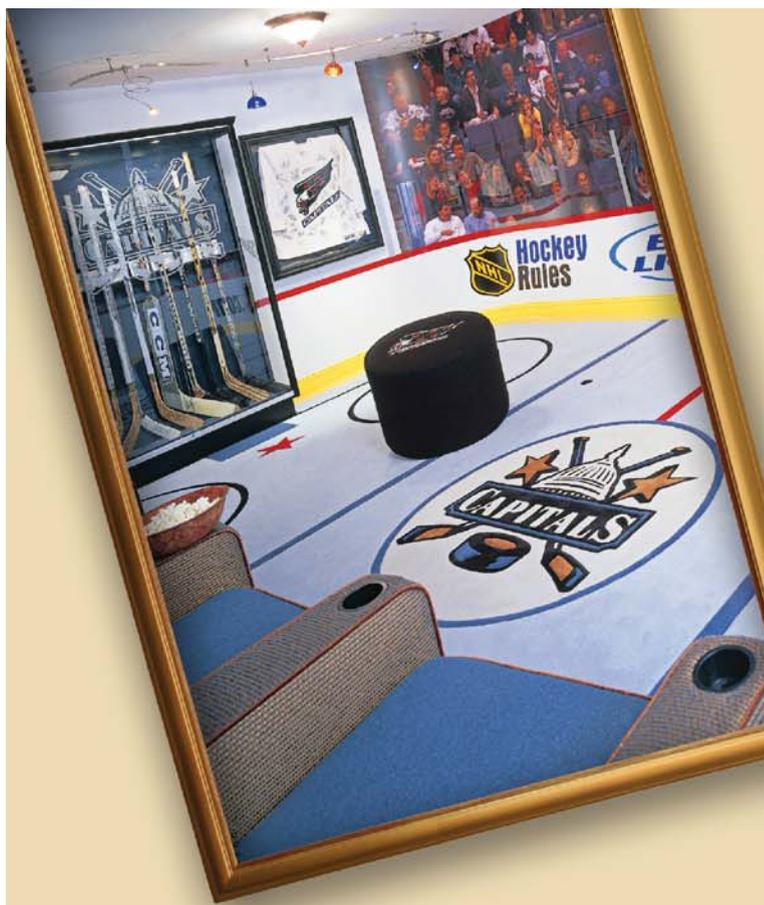
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Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-917-6459. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

## THURSDAY/APRIL 2

**Bunny Tales**, 10:30 a.m. at the Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stories, songs and activities about bunny rabbits. Bring a plush bunny. Age 13-23 months with adult. 703-249-1520.

**Daytime Book Discussion Group**, 12 p.m. at the Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. "Into the Wild" by Jon Krakauer. Adults. 703-339-4610.

## FRIDAY/APRIL 3

**Virginia Opera Presents "The Barber of Seville,"** 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 \$44-\$98. Charge by phone at 888-945-2468 or visit www.tickets.com. 703-218-6500 or www.gmu.edu/cfa.

**Lunch Bunch**, 12 p.m. at the John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Bring lunch and join us for stories. Birth-5 with adult. 703-971-0010.

**An Incredible Evening of Russian Music** featuring Dr. Anna Balakerskaia and her Friends. 8 p.m., at Harris Theatre, George Mason University, Fairfax. Free. Reception will follow. Paid parking is available in the parking deck.

**Dreaming of Eden CD Release Show, with Envy Insane, the Common Threat, The Chuck Shaffer Picture Show and Redshift.** 7:15 at Jaxx Night Club, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. \$10 in advance, \$12 day of show. 703-569-5940 or jaxxroxx.com.

**"The Judgment Seat II" by Dr. Russ Houck**, 7:30 p.m. at The Harvester Presbyterian Church, 7800 Rolling Road in Springfield. 703-455-7800 or harvesterpca.org.

**Theater Performance.** The Providence Players of Fairfax will perform the mystery "Rehearsal for Murder" by Richard Levinson and William Link, 7:30 p.m., at the James Lee Community Center Theater 2855 Annandale Road, Fall Church. Tickets are \$15 for adults \$12 for children and seniors and can be reserved by phone at 703-425-6782, e-mail at providenceplayers@cox.net. For more, visit www.providenceplayers.org.

## SATURDAY/APRIL 4

**Burke Centre Renaissance Festival**, 11 a.m. at the Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Join us and the Virginia Renaissance Faire for a festival! Enjoy story-telling, songs, sword play and much more. All ages. 703-249-1520.

**VITA Tax Assistance**, 10 a.m. at the Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Adults. 703-339-4610.

**Cherryholmes**, 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Center for the Arts, on the Fairfax campus at the intersection of Braddock Road and



'Fishmarket,' an oil painting by Lydia Jechorek. An Artist's Reception for Lydia Jechorek takes place on April 5 from 1-4 p.m., at The Loft Gallery in Occoquan.

Route 123. A pre-performance discussion, free to ticket holders, 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 www.tickets.com. www.gmu.edu/cfa.

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**"The Judgment Seat II" by Dr. Russ Houck**, 7:30 p.m. at The Harvester Presbyterian Church, 7800 Rolling Road in Springfield. 703-455-7800 or harvesterpca.org.

**Theater Performance.** The Providence Players of Fairfax will perform the mystery "Rehearsal for Murder" by Richard Levinson and William Link, 7:30 p.m., at the James Lee Community Center Theater 2855 Annandale Road, Fall Church. Tickets

reception starts at 5:30 p.m. and tickets are \$125. Tickets can be purchased at www.WorkhouseArts.org or by calling 703-584-2900.

**Eggstravaganza and Easter Egg Roll and Hunt.** 12:30-2:30 p.m., at the Fairfax County Government Center (the grassy area behind the building), 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Moon bounces, carnival games, egg roll and hunt, hot dog lunch and prizes. Free, and sponsored by Jubilee Christian Center of Fairfax. 703-383-1170 for further information. www.jccag.org.

## SUNDAY/APRIL 5

**Divas 4 Divas Concert**, 6:30 p.m. at the George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Featuring Filipino pop singers Kuh

Ledesma, Zsa Zsa Padilla, Pops Fernandez, and Regine Velasquez. Tickets are \$58-\$150. Tickets are available through www.ticketmaster.com or via Phonecharge at 703-573-SEAT.

www.divas4divas.com or www.patriotcenter.com.  
**Artist's Reception for Lydia Jechorek**, 1-4 p.m. at The Loft Gallery, 313 Mill St., Occoquan. The paintings in Jechorek's "Around Town" exhibit capture urban and rural scenes and people doing ordinary things. Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday 1 a.m.-5 p.m., and Sunday 12-5 p.m. 703-490-1117 or www.loftgallery.org.

**Virginia Opera Presents "The Barber of Seville,"** 2 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 1:15 p.m. on the Center's Grand Tier III. Tickets are \$44-\$98. Charge by phone at 888-945-2468 or visit www.tickets.com. 703-218-6500 or www.gmu.edu/cfa.

**MSG-Schenker Barden Reunion In the Midst of Beauty US Tour 2009.** 7 p.m. at Jaxx Night Club, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. \$25 in advance, \$30 day of show. 703-569-5940 or jaxxroxx.com.

**Vegan Cooking Class.** "International Cuisine." 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at 9302



Listen to Bunny Tales, with stories, songs and activities about bunny rabbits at the Burke Centre Library on Thursday, April 2. Children age 13-23 months are encouraged to bring their own plush bunnies.

are \$15 for adults \$12 for children and seniors and can be reserved by phone at 703-425-6782, e-mail at providenceplayers@cox.net. For more, visit www.providenceplayers.org.

## An Evening With Tina Louise.

Spend the evening with actress and author Tina Louise 7-9 p.m., at the Workhouse Arts Center. Join Louise for a reading of her children's book "When I Grow up" to be followed by an informal Q&A session. Tickets for the evening are \$25 for adults, which includes a signed copy of the book, and \$10 for children. Join Louise for a wine reception, photo op and book signing preceding the event. The

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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Hallston Court, Fairfax Station. \$50/person. Learn meat and dairy-free cuisine from other cultures without leaving home with guest chef Shashi Chopra from the Taj Mahal restaurant in D.C. Class includes food samples, recipes and coupons. Pre-registration required. Call 703.643.2713 for space availability. [www.localdc.com/](http://www.localdc.com/).

## MONDAY/APRIL 6

**Friends of the John Marshall Library**, 7 p.m. at the John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Annual meeting and program. Adults. 703-971-0010.

**Geology of Mars**, 4 p.m. at the Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. A local scientist explains common Martian geology and why understanding it is important to us. Learn about NASA's previous and current space exploration missions. 703-339-7385.

**Destruction, Krisiun, Mantic Ritual and Krass Judgement**. 6:15 p.m. at Jaxx Night Club, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. \$20 in advance, \$23 day of show. 703-569-5940 or [jaxxroxx.com](http://jaxxroxx.com).

## TUESDAY/APRIL 7

**Computer Tutoring**, 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. at the Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Get one-on-one help with computers, common software applications and navigating the Internet. Call to sign up. Adults. 703-249-1520.

**VITA Tax Assistance**, 6 p.m. at the Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Adults. 703-339-4610.

**Teen Book Club**, 7 p.m. at the Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Enjoy fun, food and great book discussions! Age 12-18. 703-249-1520.

## WEDNESDAY/APRIL 8

**Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus**, 7 p.m. at the Patriot Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$14-\$95, available by Phonecharge at 703-573-SEAT or online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

**Science and Stories**, 4:30 p.m. at the Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Join us for stories and simple science experiments. Age 4-6. 703-249-1520.

**Careers in Law Enforcement**, 4:30 p.m. at the Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. A Fairfax County Police Department officer discusses career options in law enforcement. Age 13-18. 703-339-7385.

**Practice Your English**, 10:15 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation groups for adults learning English. 703-339-4610.

**English Conversation Group**, 6 p.m. at the Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Practice your English with other adults. 703-339-7385.

**NARFE Springfield Chapter 893**, 1:30 at American Legion Post 176, 5620 Amherst Ave., Springfield. Guest speaker Veronica Li, author of "Journey across the Four Seas: A Chinese Woman's Search for Home." Contact Dick Gallagher at [rmgallagher@verizon.net](mailto:rmgallagher@verizon.net) or 703 455-4373.

**Hats Off to Fashion**. The Women's Associations of Northern Virginia are

the sponsors of a Spring Fashion Show Luncheon and Silent Auction to raise money for the Northern Virginia Coalition. The fashion Show and Luncheon is 11 a.m., at the Springfield Golf & Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Those interested in attending this event, contact Barbara DeRose at 703-451-5054 to make a reservation by April 3. The cost is \$30, with \$3 going to the charity.

**Strategies for a Safer World/ Encouraging Public Conversation about the Middle East: Part One. Seminar** presented by the League of Women Voters, 9:30 a.m., 7902 Bracksford Court, Fairfax Station. Contact: Lois 703-690-0908.

**The Springfield Art Guild April Meeting** at Grace Presbyterian Church, 7434 Bath St. Springfield. Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. with refreshments, a short business meeting at 8 p.m. followed by a program by Brenda Belfield, who will critique artwork. Contact Donnalynne Lefever at 703-644-6677 or [magickaldl@earthlink.net](mailto:magickaldl@earthlink.net).

## THURSDAY/APRIL 9

**Ringling Bros and Barnum & Bailey Circus**, 7 p.m. at the Patriot Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$14-\$95, available by Phonecharge at 703-573-SEAT or online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

## FRIDAY/APRIL 10

**Eggsploration: A Community Event at the Journey**. Egg hunt, games, crafts, light snacks and an all around good time. 10 a.m.-12 p.m., at 6427 Franconia Road, Springfield. 703-971-0277.

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# Freshman Congressman Makes Himself at Home

FROM PAGE 12

for them and I have the same health insurance as other federal workers," he said.

Still, being a member of the U.S. House of Representatives is hardly a typical federal government job.

**TWENTY YEARS AGO**, Connolly worked as a staff member for the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. In January, he returned to Capitol Hill as a member of Congress after 14 years on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, including five as the county chairman.

"Some things have changed," said Connolly, about life on Capitol Hill. "Some things have not. ... So many of the actors are still here, but they might be doing something a little different."

The congressman likens his experience to that of Rip Van Winkle, the Washington Irving short story character who falls asleep and wakes up 20 years later. Connolly frequently sees people he used to work with two decades before.

On March 19, Connolly ran into two former colleagues from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee who now work for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee at an evening dinner for the interest group's local chapter. On the same day, Connolly ran into a current Senate Foreign Relations

staff member who had just started working for the committee as Connolly was preparing to leave in the late 1980s.

"Having been a staffer, it helps me in this job. ... It matters to me how members treat their staff," said Connolly.

The congressman may also take a special interest in how members of Congress and others treat Capitol Hill staff members, not only because he was one but because he also represents so many of them.

On his first day in office, Connolly found out that the House of Representatives parliamentarian, who is sometimes referred to as Congress' "coach," is a constituent. When an official from the Army Corps of Engineers came to meet with the congressman, he also mentioned he was a Burke resident and represented by Connolly.

"Half the people that work up here in live in my district. ... In one walk from my office to the Capitol, five people stopped me to say that they were constituents, including [U.S. Rep.] Tom Perriello's press secretary," said Connolly.

Some other members of Congress also own property and live in Fairfax County while Congress is in session, he said.

U.S. Rep. Dale Kildee (D-Mich.) insists on calling Connolly "Mr. Chairman," because Connolly represented Kildee, a McLean homeowner, on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

**"They know what is going on and they want to talk to him about it."**

— **George Burke, Connolly's press secretary**

Connolly's constituency is not only well informed but also close by, which means that they have higher-than-average expectations for seeing their member of Congress.

"Tons of people come across the river. They are an educated group. They know what is going on and they want to talk to

him about it," said George Burke, Connolly's press secretary.

Burke said Connolly's office was purposefully designed with a large waiting area so that staff could accommodate as great an influx of constituents as possible. Rhonda Gillis, Connolly's scheduler, said she receives several hundred requests each week for meetings with the congressman.

"I have talked to other schedulers and they tell me that they panic at least once every single day. It's also tougher if your district is close by. ... They don't all come in from Kansas but they all come in from Fairfax," she said.

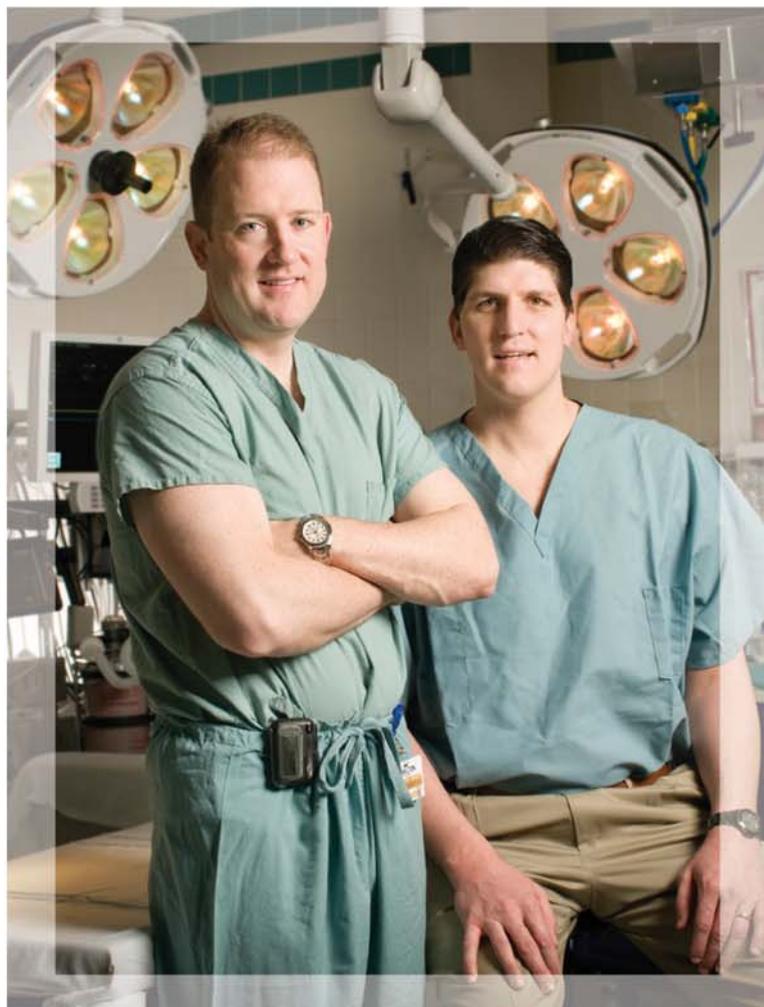
For Connolly, one of the toughest parts of the transition from Fairfax County chairman seat to 11th Congressional District seat has been Capitol Hill's unreliable schedule.

Connolly has always been busy. Before he joined Congress, he worked for Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), a government contractor, in addition to his job as Fairfax County chairman. He attended night and weekend community meetings approximately 360 day per year and often worked 12-hour days to fulfill his obligations to both jobs.

But as the leader of a 10-person policy body, Connolly could set the county board's agenda and, to a certain extent, control the supervisors' schedule. Now, as a freshman in the 435-member House of Representatives, Connolly has little, if any control, over when a vote or meeting takes place.

In March, Connolly had to miss most of the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce's Valor Awards ceremony, which honor county public safety employees, because his committee meeting ran later than expected and then an afternoon vote took place before it was scheduled. Connolly said he was particularly upset about having to leave that event early, since he had attended every one of the awards ceremonies in the previous 14 years.

SEE RETURN, PAGE 18



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# NEWS

## Money for Public Safety

At the Monday, March 30 Board of Supervisors meeting, Supervisor Gerald Hyland (D-Mount Vernon) introduced two board matter addressing what he saw as too great a cut in the public safety spending in the county's proposed 2010 Budget.

On Monday, March 16, both the fire and police chiefs had presented budget reductions to the board, requesting that the county restore two tiers of positions and services. In his Board Matter, Hyland, who chairs the board's Public Safety Committee, stated that the proposed cuts in the Advertised Budget were too deep.

"We must keep first responders on our streets, in our schools and in our shopping centers," stated Hyland. "I also believe the cuts to the Volunteer Fire Stations will have deleterious effects on our partnerships with local communities."

Hyland asked the Board of Supervisors to add the Fire and Rescue and Police departments' request to restore Tier I and Tier II in an amount totaling \$14,767,024 as Consideration Items to the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget. He also moved that the board add \$490,677 as a Consideration Item to the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget to fund the utility expenditures for the Volunteer Fire Stations.

In another Board Matter, Hyland asked the board to add the amount of \$80,284 as a Consideration Item to the Fiscal Year 2010 Budget in order to fund the county's fireboat. Part of the Fire Chief's request was that the budget includes \$1,341,169 to staff the Hazardous Materials Unit and emergency preparedness staff. That amount did not include the fuel, maintenance, training and certification costs for the department's fireboat and swift-water and flat-wa-

ter response boats. Hyland proposed the Board Matter to maintain and protect the county's boaters and shorelines.

## Hyland, Storck Host Budget Sessions

Supervisor Gerry Hyland (Mount Vernon District) and School Board Chairman Dan Storck (Mount Vernon District) host two informational meetings about the County Government and Fairfax County Public Schools FY 2010 budget on Wednesday, April 15, at 7 p.m. in the Lorton Station Elementary School cafeteria and on Thursday, April 16, at 7 p.m. in the Whitman Middle School lecture hall.

Budget staff members will present highlights of the budget, examine budget issues facing the county and the schools, outline the budget process and calendar, and discuss how individual schools and services will be affected.

Lorton Station Elementary School is located at 9238 Lewis Chapel Road in Lorton, and Whitman Middle School is located at 2500 Parkers Lane in Alexandria. For more information, call 571-423-1069.

## Volunteers Needed

Volunteers to help older people and adults with disabilities are needed in the Clifton area. This includes Meals on Wheels, driving people to medical appointments, helping with grocery shopping and making friendly visits. Times are flexible and may be worked around volunteers' schedules. Call Volunteer Solutions at 703-324-5406 or e-mail [DFSAAAvolunteer@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:DFSAAAvolunteer@fairfaxcounty.gov).

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7400 LOUGHBORO LA.....\$649,000 ..... Sun 1-4.....RE/MAX.....Gloria Banks.....703-922-8500  
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### Clifton (20124)

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6535 ROCKLAND DR.....\$599,000 ..... Sun 1-4.....Samson.....Donny Samson.....703-864-4894  
12601 CLIFTON HUNT LA.....\$834,900 ..... Sun 1-4.....Keller Williams.....Diane Lenahan.....703-283-7328

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# Stallions Make It Look Easy

South County's boys' and girls' soccer teams jump out to 8-1-2 start.

BY JASON MACKEY  
THE CONNECTION

South County's girls' soccer team entered this season with two of the Northern Region's top juniors in Morgan Duffy and Alex Reed. The South County boys' soccer team, meanwhile, began this campaign with two gaping holes to fill on its back line, as the Stallions graduated a pair of three-year starters in David Forrester and Justin Griggs.

At about the quarter pole of this spring season, Duffy and Reed have continued to light up the scoreboard while the losses of Forrester and Griggs have been more than accounted for, with the boys' team having still not allowed an opponent to score.

All of that has led to a whole bunch of optimism at South County, not to mention the teams' combined 8-1-2 record, which has both teams atop the Patriot District standings.

"They're off to a great start, but they're very level-headed and they know they have to take care of the little things and the big things will take care of themselves," said Erich Gunderman, head coach of the boys' team, which finished 7-3-3 last spring and lost to Lee in the district quarterfinals. "They understand that there's always something we can do better."

"Our core group really works well together," said girls' coach Maureen Saale, whose team went 13-2-

2 in 2008 before it was upset by West Springfield in the district semifinals. "What we're seeing now is a lot of teamwork and working together."

**IN ADDITION** to junior goalkeeper Javier Hernandez, a three-year starter, Gunderman returns a pair of hard-working midfielders in Willie Roque and Zach Willner and a top-notch defender in Max Kleess, who are all seniors.

Besides Reed (16 goals and eight assists in 2008) and Duffy, Saale welcomes back first All-District defender Megan Rea and second team All-District forward Liz Hodges, who hopes to fill the void left by an injury to Kelly Johnson, who is out for the season with a broken fibula.

While the girls' team, which totaled 16 goals during victories over Mount Vernon and Lee, has done it with offense, Gunderman's boys' team has been sound defensively, executing his philosophy of the sooner the ball is taken away, the better.

"We're preaching with the kids that when we lose the ball, the best time to get it back is right then," said Gunderman, whose team has never won a playoff game in its

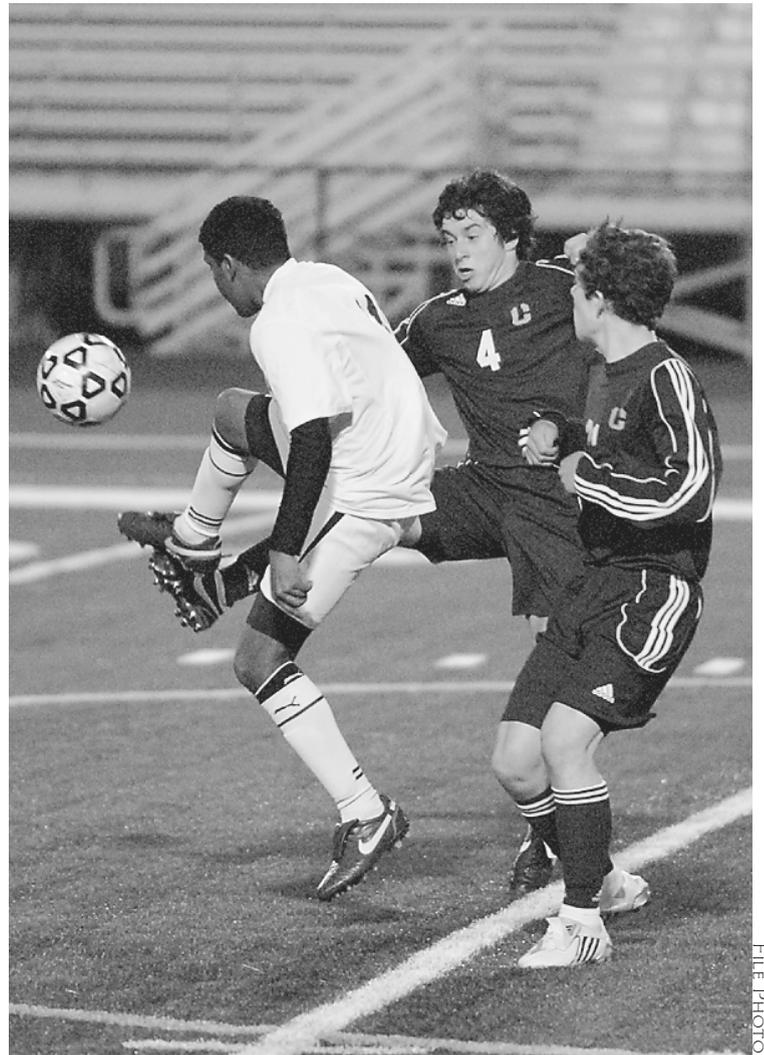
four-year history, a trend the Stallions hope to snap this season.

Saale's group has benefited from the performance of Paige Ritari, who, despite tearing her anterior cruciate ligament during the district semifinals last spring, has rejoined the team and has seen her playing time increase gradually.

"She inspired a lot of the players to really work hard because they saw a player out there who was working hard and they saw her with the trainer and then coming out and not being able to play," Saale said. "Everyone has enjoyed watching her progress."

**"They're off to a great start, but they're very level-headed."**

— Coach Erich Gunderman,  
South County Secondary



South County senior midfielder Zach Willner, middle, battles for a ball during the Stallions' 1-0 win over Madison last season. So far this spring, South County is 6-0.

FILE PHOTO

# Fresh Face Helps Rams Girls' Soccer

Robinson freshman Barb Platenberg adds scoring touch to already potent lineup.

BY JASON MACKEY  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n your average soccer team, a freshman's desire to "go and win states again" or to "get a state ring" would probably be met with a cock-eyed look and a push to the side, exhorting that freshman to keep his or her mouth shut. And probably with some added advice to go seek help.

But when that same line comes out of Barb Platenberg, the Robinson girls' soccer team's freshman phenom who'll join LeighAnne Baxter, Audrey Barry and Jensen Smith to defend the Rams' Virginia AAA state title from a year ago, those words are somehow believable.

Platenberg was a team manager on last year's group, which went 20-1-0, swept the

Concorde District and Northern Region titles and defeated Battlefield, 2-1, in the state final. With this year's bunch, she's just another one of the Rams' many offensive weapons.

"It's been challenging," said Platenberg, who notched a hat trick during Robinson's 5-1 win at Centreville on Monday. "With all the practices every day, you have to work hard to win your spot."

While Platenberg figures to show up on more than a few score sheets throughout the season, the reality remains that, even if her name were somehow absent, Robinson would still manage. The Rams graduated two key members from last year's team, goalkeeper Katherine Yount and midfielder Kristen Smith, who are both playing at Wil

SEE RAMS, PAGE 15



PHOTO BY PATRICK TAITANO

With 31 goals and 24 assists last spring, Robinson junior Audrey Barry, middle, earned first team All-State honors. Her girls' soccer team also won the Virginia AAA state title.

# SPORTS

## Rams Defending State Champs

FROM PAGE 14

liam & Mary.

The Rams' significant returners are many. Barry, a junior forward who earned first team All-State honors last spring, scored 31 goals and added 24 assists. LeighAnne Baxter, a senior forward who added 20 goals and 18 assists last spring, also returns.

"We have a great group of girls that works hard every day," said Baxter, who will play soccer this fall at the University of Richmond. She's one of four starters that are committed to Division-I programs. "That's a big part of it because when you're having fun, it helps everything to flow," she said.

**"Gone are the days when freshmen have to carry the water jug and balls."**

— Coach Jim Rike, Robinson Secondary

**WINNING ISN'T** a bad morale booster, either. Since 29th-year head coach Jim Rike took over at Robinson, the Rams have gone 394-97-41, winning 10 district, 10 region and five state titles. But none of Robinson's state crowns have come in consecutive years, providing the team with even more incentive.

"That's our goal for the team and that's what we want to accomplish this year," Platenberg said.

Repeating last year's success seemed a long way away when the Rams opened with a 2-2 tie against W.T. Woodson on March 11. In that game, Rike felt the team's performance was way too inconsistent. In successive wins over Woodbridge and Lake Braddock, Robinson again did not perform up to its

potential, Rike said.

But against Centreville, the Rams finally broke loose. Tied 1-1 at the half, they scored four unanswered goals during the second 40-minute frame, finally playing to their own expectations rather than their opponent's.

"That's my big challenge right now is to get these kids to play at their level, make other teams play at our level and stop lowering our level down to the teams we play," Rike said. "But they realized, if they don't come out and put a couple more in the net, they could lose the game."

In addition to Barry (William & Mary), Baxter and Platenberg, Robinson will benefit from Smith (Richmond), who had 10 goals and 19 assists last season, and senior Monika Criman, a defender who scored two goals and added five assists in 2008 when she was a second team All-District pick.

But while the contributions of Robinson's nine returning starters have been expected since the moment the team hoisted its trophy on a sweltering afternoon at Westfield High School, Platenberg's emergence has been bonus, the kind of bonus that's normally not expected out of a freshman.

"Gone are the days when freshmen have to carry the water jug and balls," said Rike, whose team played host to Herndon Wednesday night, which ended after this edition went to press. "We return nine starters and then you add Barb in the mix ... that helps."

### REAL ESTATE NOTES

The Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation announced that four new members have joined its Board of Directors for 2009.

♦ **Katy Fike** of McNearney Commercial Real Estate, appointed to represent the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce.

♦ **Jim Davis** of Davis Keyboard Instruments, appointed to represent the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Asso-

ciations.

♦ **John Thillmann**, vice president of Landmark Atlantic, elected an at-large director by the SFDC Board of Directors.

♦ **Steven Blanco**, assistant vice president and branch manager of Virginia Commerce Bank, elected an at-large director by the SFDC Board of Directors.

A complete list of new and returning

SFDC board members is available at [www.sfdc.org](http://www.sfdc.org). The Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation promotes the economic revitalization of Richmond Highway in Fairfax County by assisting businesses in identifying and procuring property to suit their needs. The SFDC also markets Richmond Highway as a commercial center, promotes active economic restructuring and develops urban design plans.

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13571 RUDDY DUCK RD	2	3	0		CLIFTON	\$199,900	Townhouse	0.03		CENTREVILLE GREEN
8036 OAK HOLLOW LN	4	3	1		FAIRFAX STATION	\$530,000	Detached	0.34		SOUTH RUN OAKS
8301 ARGENT CIR	4	3	1		FAIRFAX STATION	\$625,000	Detached	0.24		CROSSPOINTE
11278 CHINN HOUSE DR	4	3	1		FAIRFAX STATION	\$840,000	Detached	0.79		FAIRFAX STATION
9229 HAINES DR	6	5	1		LORTON	\$822,000	Detached	0.64		JOHN LEARY
8501 INDIAN PAINTBRSH WAY	4	3	1		LORTON	\$600,000	Detached	0.18		LAUREL HILL
7609 BUCKLAND PL	4	3	1		LORTON	\$435,000	Detached	0.10		LORTON TWN CNTR LNDBAY
9663 HAWKSHEAD DR	4	2	1		LORTON	\$430,000	Detached	0.08		VILLAGE AT LORTONVALLEY
9763 PLASKETT FOREST LN	4	2	1		LORTON	\$392,000	Detached	0.10		MASONS PASSAGE
13563 RUDDY DUCK RD	2	2	0		CLIFTON	\$240,000	Townhouse	0.03		CENTREVILLE GREEN
8917 PURPLE LILAC CIR	3	2	2		LORTON	\$360,000	Townhouse	0.05		LAUREL HILL

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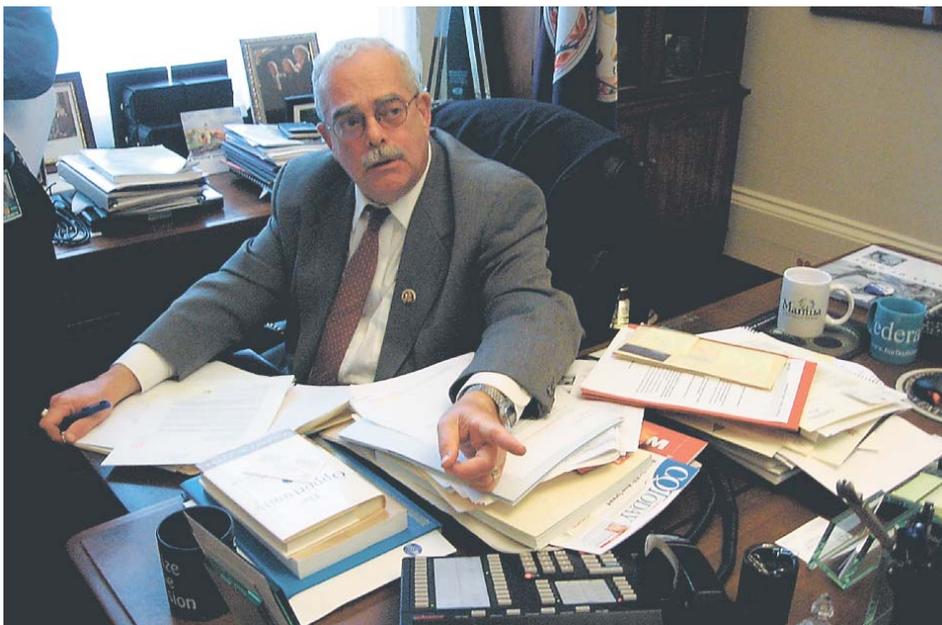


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**U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) is getting acquainted with life in the U.S. Congress after 14 years on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.**

# Return to Capitol Hill

FROM PAGE 12

"It is most frustrating. People think nothing of adding votes and caucus meetings. If I have an emergency meeting that lasts an hour or more, my entire schedule is thrown. ... I am learning to live with that," said Connolly.

**THE CONGRESSMAN** is also getting used to his higher profile.

A joke he made at a Fairfax County Democratic Committee event in January ended up drawing national criticism when it was replayed on FOX News' "The Sean Hannity Show." Connolly has also been invited to appear on "The Colbert Report," popular

cable news show spoof that airs on the Comedy Central network. "I definitely feel like I live in more of a fishbowl," he said.

The representative reluctantly agreed to appear live on Fox News Channel the morning after he voted with most other House members to tax financial bonuses insurance giant AIG awarded to its employees after receiving assistance from the federal government.

Connolly felt confident about his vote and said he was "outraged" AIG would do such a thing. But he was not so sure he wanted to have to be at Fox's studio in downtown Washington and on television by 7 a.m.

"I am not a morning person. I consider the morning an assault," said Connolly.



## Erin Go Bragh

**On St. Patrick's Day, Silverbrook Elementary School in Fairfax Station was treated to several performances from the Irish dance group Aobhneas an Rince. The group specializes in**

**traditional Irish dancing and enthralled the Silverbrook students with their skillful dance steps and their ornate dress. Denise Fumagali is the group's director, but Silverbrook was clearly most thrilled to see their third grade teacher Maureen Eck as a featured dancer.**

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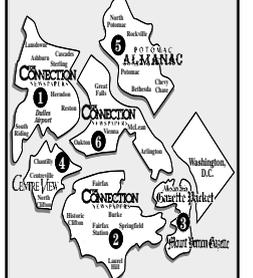
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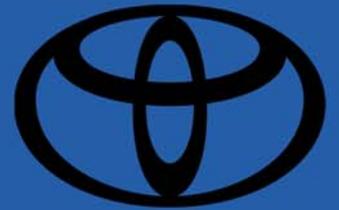
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