

CENTRE VIEW

SOUTHERN EDITION



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Lt. Rodney Vaughan's wife Erica and their two daughters (from left) Leah, 2, and Savannah, 4, kept him company before he left for Haiti.

Search and Rescue in Haiti

County teams dispatched.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

Following the 7.0 earthquake in Haiti, Fairfax County's Urban Search and Rescue Team (Virginia Task Force 1) was sent last week to look for and rescue victims.

Under the auspices of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), a 72-member team left last Tuesday night, Jan. 12, arriving the next day. And it quickly achieved success.

"We had a save Thursday morning [Jan. 14]," said county Fire and Rescue Department spokesman Dan Schmidt. "A U.N. security officer of Estonian descent was detected in a rubble pile and extricated in good condition by members of Virginia Task Force 1. And that's the essence of why firefighters do what they do — they want to save lives. So when they did, it was an incredible, adrenaline-booster for them."

But with the situation there still so dire, said Schmidt, "The USAID asked us to send a second team, and County Executive Anthony Griffin and Fire Chief Ron Mastin approved the request." So a 42-person contingent left Thursday, Jan. 14, arriving early Friday morning.

It's comprised of two doctors, structural engineers, paramedics, specialists in search-and-rescue and hazardous materials, plus a search canine and handler. The structural engineers include rigging specialists who help shore up unsafe ar-



Mary Anne Zandall, (on right), with the Family Support Services Team, checks the passport of canine search specialist Teresa MacPherson.

chitects using block and tackle, plus other methods, so firefighters can continue to extricate people.

As of Sunday night, Jan. 17, the two teams have rescued 15 people.

"The federal government funds all costs associated with training and deployment," said Schmidt. The team will be in Haiti, 10-14 days, while other firefighters fill in for them here. They flew on a chartered aircraft, with their bags of personal items, while a second plane carried their equipment, such as jackhammers, cameras, listening devices, concrete-cutting saws and medical supplies. Water and military MREs (meals, ready-to-eat)

SEE RESCUE TEAMS, PAGE 2

Putting Students In Tight Spots

Average class size bumps up against physical and legal constraints.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
CENTRE VIEW

Increasingly large classes in local schools could begin to threaten student safety as well as student learning, according to school officials.

Fairfax County schools superintendent Jack Dale said local class sizes are getting to a point where officials would have to be careful about going over the maximum capacity allowed in some classrooms.

"Quite frankly, we are getting to the point in some schools where

we are pushing the envelope in terms of the fire code," said Dale, during a budget presentation to the Fairfax County School Board Jan. 7.

Schools are being forced to cram 35 to 38 students into classrooms that were built to a 28-person capacity, said Dean Tistadt, Fairfax County Public Schools chief operating officer.

"If it is an older high school or an older middle school, we have some concerns about whether they can fit all the students into the

SEE PUSHING LIMITS, PAGE 5

WHS Dance Teams Rack Up Victories

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

In high school, sports teams often get all the glory. But Westfield High's dance teams are grabbing their own share of the headlines with first-place finishes in the recent Fairfax Dance Invitational.

Competing against 19 other teams, Westfield placed first in both the varsity and JV pom divisions. In addition, sophomore Alie Hughes was number one in the senior solo division, and varsity coach Cindy Kilmer received the overall best choreography award.

"Overall, the Westfield Dance team couldn't be happier with the outcome," said Kilmer, who coaches with Rebecca Canty. "The hard work and dedication of the team and coaches has paid off and allowed the dance team to bring several more first-place trophies back to Westfield."

"First place is extremely exciting to achieve, considering how technical and difficult dance has gotten over the past several years," continued Kilmer. "A first-place routine must include all the technical elements, be fast-paced and

SEE TEAMS, PAGE 17

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

From left: Deputy Mobilization Manager Paul Torpey and the USAR team's program manager, Keith Morrison, discuss the logistics of the team's impending departure for Haiti.

Rescue Teams Helping in Haiti

FROM PAGE 1

also went along. "This team deployed to Haiti in November 2008 for a school collapse, and many of those same members are returning," said Schmidt. The team's first mission was in December 1988 when it responded to an Armenian earthquake with a small, technical-rescue team. Since then, the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team has been deployed all over the world, including to Kenya, Iran, Taiwan, Turkey, Oklahoma City and the Pentagon after 9/11. It also responded after Hurricanes Katrina and Isabel.

LAST THURSDAY, team members reported to the county's Fire and Rescue Academy throughout the day. Some were accompanied by family members; each brought one red and one yellow bag. Lt. Diron Powell — who works at the Franconia, Kingstowne, Springfield and West Springfield stations — helped them check in.

Each person's bags had to be less than 90 pounds total for the two, and Powell made sure they contained all the necessary gear. Filling the red bags were uniforms, toiletries and personal items. The yellow bags were stuffed with operating gear such as flashlights, batteries, gloves, safety glasses, hearing protectors, rain gear, insect repellent and hand cleaner.

Team members went through several, check-in stations. They started with medical and passport

checks and turned in their cell phones, keys and pagers. Deputy Fire Chief Mike Reilly, of Centreville's Virginia Run community, worked as the mobilization manager, in charge of sign-in reception, food, equipment and getting everything to the departure point.

"I coordinate with the Family Support Services Team (FSST), making sure people get a checklist of everything required of them," he explained. "If something's missing — such as their shot card, ID or equipment — they'd be non-deployable. So they come to me and I see that their issue is handled." Reilly also had a canteen unit bring the members hot and cold beverages and ordered dinner for them from Firehouse Subs.

Teresa MacPherson of Catlett is the canine search specialist. She's not a member of the fire department, but has been on the team since 1993. Her partner's a 5-year-old black Labrador named Banks.

"We were in Haiti in '08 for the school collapse," she said. Before Banks begins a search, MacPherson unclips his leash so he's unencumbered. "We don't want any snagging," she said. "He can go places we can't. I say, 'Go find,' and he starts looking for live, human scent in the rubble. He covers a lot of area in a short amount of time. Where he finds the strongest scent, he starts barking; then someone will start searching."

MacPherson was eager to leave and get busy. "We train hard for



Fair Oaks resident Richard McKinney, captain of the Frying Pan station, begins the check-in process.

this," she said. "We want to go and help."

Lt. Rodney Vaughan is a rescue squad officer on the team. Formerly of Centre Ridge, in Centreville, he now lives in Gainesville and has been a team member since 1998. He responded to numerous hurricanes, including Katrina, plus Taiwan in 1999 and Iran in 2003. In Haiti, eight to 10 people will be assigned to him.

"When Technical Search locates victims — through listening devices, dogs or hearing them yell out — we'll confirm how deeply they're embedded," said Vaughan. "For example, they could have

SEE RESCUE TEAMS. PAGE 12

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ROUNDUPS

CVHS's Class Change Challenge

Starting Thursday, Jan. 21, Centreville High's SGA will be holding a competition between the four classes (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior) to see who can collect the most change for Haiti. The winning class will receive \$100 in their class account. The SGA plans to donate \$1,500 towards the fund-raiser from its own funds, and hopes to raise another \$1,500 in change from the competing CVHS students. The \$3,000 would then purchase enough books for Haitian libraries to equal about half of the CVHS library. Everyone — parents, students, members of the Centreville community — is welcome to contribute; there are buckets in the CVHS Main Office and the SGA room where donations can be dropped off.

Park Authority Listening Forum

Park Authority Director John Dargle is hosting a listening forum in the Sully District at Cabell's Mill, in E.C. Lawrence Park, on Thursday, Jan. 21, at 7 p.m. This forum gives Sully residents the opportunity to talk about the parks and park services and offer their ideas.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, Jan. 21, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

However, because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the proper use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

Recycling Event, This Sunday

Fairfax County residents may now recycle fluorescent light bulbs and tubes in addition to televisions, computers and peripheral electronic devices including keyboards, speakers, keyboards, printers, scanners, etc. Accordingly, the county's first "Electric Sunday" event for 2010 is this Sunday, Jan. 24, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at the I-66 Transfer Station at 4618 West Ox Road in Fairfax.

Indoor Farmers Market Opens

An indoor farmers market opened this week in a storefront within the Fairfax Corner shopping center, off Monument Drive in Fairfax. The address is 11895 Grand Commons Ave., between the Lucy and Il Vino stores, and the market will be open every Tuesday from 11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.

A wide selection of products will be offered, including winter fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy products, baked goods, gluten-free products and a large variety of prepared foods. It'll be run by Smart Markets which operated last summer's farmers market in both Centreville and Fairfax Corner. The market will be there through April, when it will return to its site in the shopping center's parking lot.

Centreville Immigration Forum To Meet

The next meeting of the Centreville Immigration Forum is Tuesday, Jan. 26, at 7 p.m., at Centreville United Methodist Church, 6400 Old Centreville Road in Centreville.

Sully District Council Land Use

Sully District Park Authority representative Hal Strickland will address the next meeting of the Sully District Council of Citizens Associations and its Land-Use Committee. It's set for Wednesday, Jan. 27, at 7 p.m., in the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900

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NEWS

CENTRE VIEW EDITOR STEVEN MAUREN
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PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Colin Powell Elementary's All-School Chorale performs "The Quest for Peace."

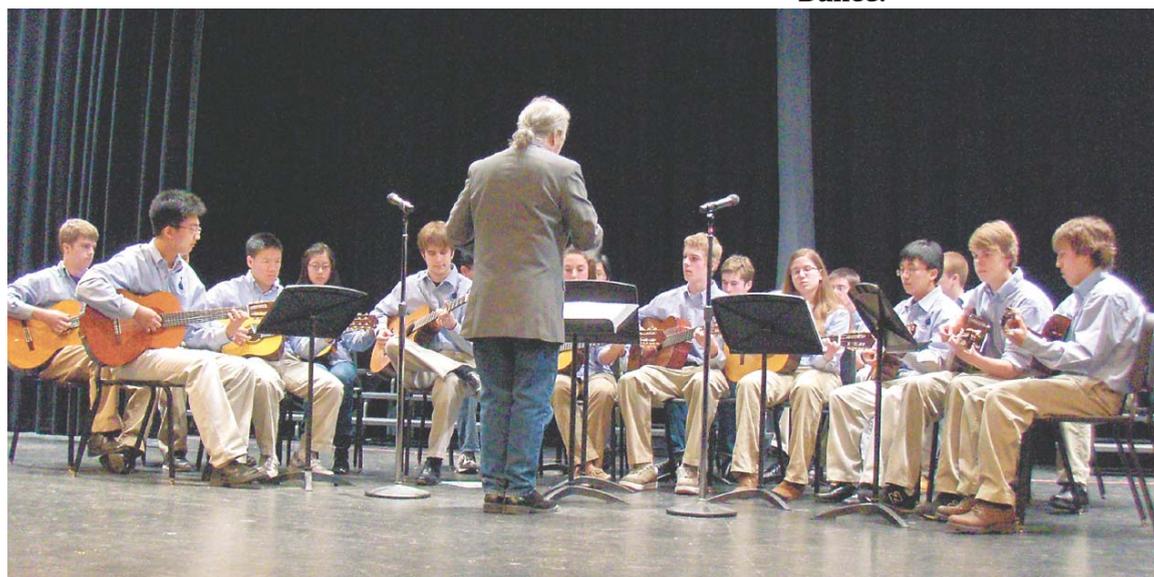
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The Westfield High Chamber Singers perform three songs.



Westfield High's Avery Hobbs sings "I Hope You Dance."



Centreville High's Wildcat Guitar Ensemble performs "Sunny."

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NEWS



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

Among the cast of Chantilly High's "The Kid who Talked to Penguins" are (from left) Alex Johnson, Mohammad Abou-Ghazalah, Adam Gaskins, Matt Manalel and Ben Zimmerman.

'The Kid Who Talked to Penguins'

Chantilly High presents
children's show.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

A little boy, talking penguins and a whole lot of laughs — that's what's in store for those attending Chantilly High's production of "The Kid who Talked to Penguins."

Show times are Friday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 23, at 2 and 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan. 24, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$5 at the door or via www.chantillyhsdrama.com. This children's play is double cast and features a cast and crew of 60.

"It's about a young boy named Billy who protects penguins at the zoo from being picked on by a bully," said Director Shannon Khatcheressian. "In exchange, they come to his house, in the middle of the night, and say they want to be his friends. They also tell him the winning numbers for the local lottery. The problem is that, when Billy tells everyone what happened, no one believes him."

Currently, the actors are busy rehearsing, and Khatcheressian says things are going well. "The kids worked hard over winter break to memorize all their lines," she said. "And this is one of my favorite shows written by [Chantilly Theater Director] Ed Monk. It's such a great comedy, truly written for the entire family. Adults could come to the show without little ones and still have a wonderful time, because the lines are so funny."

Portraying 6-year-old Billy is sophomore Adam Gaskins. "He's a clumsy kid who tries to fit in," said Gaskins. "He's the outcast of his family. Since his sister and brother are a lead actress and a football star, he tries to live up to their reputations. He's also defensive of himself, but very social — and he's awestruck by seeing the penguins at his house, and talk-

ing." Delighted to have the part, Gaskins said, "It's my first lead role here, so it means a lot to me. And I like acting for children's shows because I get to act big and goofy and have more fun with it than with a normal role. It's also something I can jump into. I have two little cousins, two little sisters and lots of little kids in my neighborhood, so this makes me feel like I can see things from their point of view."

He expects the show to be a big hit with the audience and says children "will love the interactive hide-and-seek scene between them and the penguins. It's not something that usually happens in plays."

Sporting a full penguin costume — complete with red bow tie, yellow webbed feet and a beak — sophomore Mohammad Abou-Ghazalah plays Norris the penguin. Each penguin also has a special accessory to correspond with his or her penguin personality, so Norris wears a big pair of glasses.

"Out of the four penguins, I'm the geeky, nerdy one," he said. "I keep getting them lost, and I'm a klutz, too. It's a great role to play. It's written in an excellent manner, and the personalities provided give you a new perspective toward penguins. We see the future, talk and fly and are super geniuses. And we see humans as inferior to us."

Abou-Ghazalah says the play contains humor for both children and adults, and audiences will laugh at the characters' personalities, plus the jokes. All in all, he said, "It's going to be a really fun play."

Portraying Billy's Aunt Terry is sophomore Kelsey Monk. "She's crazy, angry and very old-fashioned," said Monk. "She has her own ideas about how people should act and children should be raised. She's left in charge of Billy when his family goes out of town, so it's two opposite personalities working together on stage."

She especially likes her role because her older sister Maggie played the same part previously, so "it's cool to have it, too, and I get to yell and be crazy."

SEE THE KID WHO TALKED, PAGE 15

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Average Class Size in Local School Districts

The following numbers reflect the average number of students per classroom teacher at a grade level. Students and teachers involved with the school districts' pre-kindergarten, kindergarten and self-contained special education programs are not included for the purposes of calculating the formula. Fairfax County Public Schools provide the following data on its Web site:

School Division	Elementary	Middle	High/Secondary
City of Alexandria	19.6	23.7	25
Arlington County	18.6	19.7	17.6
Fairfax County	21.2	24.1	24.9
City of Falls Church	21.1	22.5	20.6
Loudoun County	22.4	19.8	24.8
City of Manassas	16	22.4	21.4
Montgomery County (Md.)	20.7	30.9	28.5
Prince George's County (Md.)	17.5	20.3	25.1
Prince William County*	22.3	31.0	28.5

* Prince William is the only school district to exclude alternative education teachers and alternative education students when calculating their average class size.

Pushing Limits on Class Size

FROM PAGE 1

classroom that they need to fit into the classroom because of building and fire code reasons," said Tistadt.

DALE SAID the school system does not have classes exceeding room or building capacities currently.

"There is nothing in violation now. We would never do that because I am not going to sit here and violate the fire code," said Dale.

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department said that it has received no complaints about violations in public schools. The department has a "proactive" approach to investigating county facilities, including public schools, though officials said the inspections are not necessarily done on a regular schedule.

"If we received a complaint about a school, we would investigate it immediately. ... We do inspect the school periodically but they also have their own inspectors," said Dan Schmidt, spokesman for the fire and rescue department.

If officials discover a class is too large for the room where it is scheduled to take place, they often move that section to a larger space, like a small lecture hall or assembly meeting room, he said.

"Sometime you have to move classes into a larger room that might not be the best space for that subject," said Dale.

IN SPITE OF CONCERNS about class size, Dale has suggested raising Fairfax's average class size by one student during the 2010-11 school year as a way of closing the system's budget gap of \$100 million to \$200 million. By increasing the average class by one student, the school system saves approximately \$17.1 million, according to budget documents.

The Fairfax County School Board has raised the average class size twice in the last two years in order to make up for past financial shortfalls.

"People are not going to be happy to see another increase in class size," said Dale.

Class size is likely to go up even more next year if the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors does not give the school system the extra \$57.8 million Dale has requested, he said. Without the extra funding, Dale and the School Board would be forced to bump the average class by more than one student in 2010 and 2011.

In March, the county supervisors decide on a bud-

get, defined primarily by the real estate property tax rate, and announce the county's total transfer to the school system. The School Board will then make its final decision about spending cuts, including whether to raise average class size again, in April.

Several School Board members fear that Fairfax County will either freeze or cut the school budget from where it was last year in order to avoid raising taxes. If the county were to hold the school budget to its present level, the school system would be have to make approximately \$160 million in cuts.

"If we have to cut \$160 million, there is going to be a lot of pain. If we have to cut \$160 million, we are going to have to increase class size," said School Board member Stu Gibson (Hunter Mill.)

PARENTS have been complaining to the county Council of Parent Teacher Associations about students having to sit on everything from radiators to bookshelves because some classrooms do not fit enough desks for each student to have their own.

"I have seen photos of classes that are so packed with desks already, there is no place to put some of the students," said Michelle Menapace, the parent organization's president.

When principal Laraine

Edwards told Stenwood Elementary School that they would have to cope with at least one very large fourth grade class of 35 students, it was obvious she had already racked her brain trying to find a different solution, said Kelly Grizzell, the Vienna school's parent teacher association president.

"Our principal works very closely with the PTA. She went over every possible scenario with us and kept us in contact about what her plans were," said Grizzell.

The parent added that Edwards and the rest of Stenwood's staff had done everything they could to devote extra instruction assistant hours and other staff support to the exceptionally large class. That Stenwood fourth grade section is one of the largest, if not the largest, of its kind at the elementary school level, according to Fairfax County schools communications director Paul Regnier.

"We are trying to make the best of a difficult situation. At Stenwood, class size is big concern for us," said Grizzell.

THE LARGER CLASSES are having a negative

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Class Size Proposal Puts Students in Tight Spots

FROM PAGE 5

impact on instruction, said several school advocates.

At the elementary school level, principals are being forced to create more combination classrooms, where students from two different grades are put in one homeroom class for most of the day.

This can result in very large classes

“Quite frankly, we are getting to the point in some schools where we are pushing the envelope in terms of the fire code.”

— Jack Dale, superintendent

for certain subject areas. School Board Member Liz Bradsher (Springfield) has had one constituent complain about elementary school math section with 42 students in Burke’s Cherry Run Elementary School.

Since math instruction is grade level specific, Cherry Run breaks up a fourth and fifth grade combination class and sends students to other homerooms for that subject. When fourth grade students from the combination class are added to another fourth grade class in the school, the result is one math section with 40-plus students, said Bradsher.

In high schools, an increase in the average class size has meant that electives, including advanced science and math courses, which do not attract a substantial number of students to sign up have to be dropped from the school schedules altogether.

Bradsher also said that middle and high school students have a particularly hard time fitting into science labs when classes are large.

“You see problems more in the labs in high schools. You can always move a bookshelf or a TV out into the hallway to make more room in a classroom. It is a lot harder to do that in a lab,” said Bradsher.

Teachers also complain that they are having difficulty moving around some classrooms and that they have had to seat children in areas of the classroom that they cannot easily reach for one-on-one instruction, said Leonard Bumbaca, president of

the Fairfax Education Association.

“It creates an element that is far more congested. You can’t move the walls and so you lose a lot of flexibility and sometimes the ability to teach properly,” he said.

Bumbaca said he has heard of several classes that exceed 32 students. Some music and physical education sections have 40 students, since they are not considered “core subjects.”

“Let’s be frank. The impact on instruction is already here and it is only going to get worse,” he said.

SEVERAL FAIRFAX classes already exceed the teacher-to-student-ratio laid out by the Virginia Department of Education in state regulations.

The commonwealth’s “standards of quality” in education call for the teacher-to-student ratio in an average kindergarten class to be one to 24. In Fairfax, the ratio is one to 26.25, according to this year’s budget documents.

State regulations also call for a teacher-to-student ratio of one to 24 for first through third grade classes and one to 25 for fourth and fifth grades. According to budget documents, Fairfax County is maintaining a staffing ratio of one-to-26.25 students in grades

first through six this year.

Fairfax school officials said the school system calculates their student-to-teacher ratio differently than Virginia’s Department of Education and that Fairfax is not in violation of state regulations, even if the budget documents suggest they are.

But in certain schools, several classes are much larger than Fairfax’s average class size as well as the Virginia Department of Education’s recommendations.

At Springhill Elementary School in McLean, parent Catherine Lorenze said two fifth-grade homerooms have 31 students and every sixth grade homeroom has 30 students.

According to Lorenze, Forestville Elementary School in Great Falls also has a third, fourth and sixth-grade class with 30 students each. Colvin Run Elementary School in Vienna has three fifth-grade classes with 31 students each and two fifth-grade classes with 33 students each.

“We have several fifth and sixth grade classes that are 30 to 35 students and primary class sizes that are 29 to 30 kids in the lower grades. Class sizes of 30 to 35 students are troublesome,” said School Board member Jane Strauss (Dranesville.)



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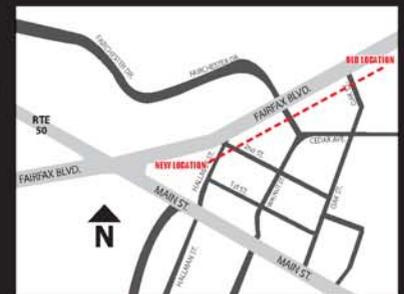
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Many Numbers Point to Needs

Challenging times as we commemorate vision of Martin Luther King Jr., inaugurate new governor.

Unemployed, uninsured, homeless, hungry. While on a percentage basis, Northern Virginia is better off than most of the rest of Virginia, in raw numbers, we have more people here who are unemployed, more people here who lack health insurance, more people who spend parts of most months without enough food on the table, more people who are homeless.

Some sobering numbers as we celebrate the day of hope and aspiration that is Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Sobering statistics as we inaugurate a new governor who has many good ideas, but no plans for new revenue. Cuts in the state budget will affect everyone in Virginia, even those who are not needy.

In November, more than 68,000 unemployed people were looking for full time work here in

Northern Virginia, according to the Virginia Employment Commission, up from just under 50,000 in November, 2008.

Later this month, officials and advocates will conduct the annual "point in time" census of homeless. Last January, there were 1,730 homeless people in Fairfax County at the "point in time" count, more than 1,000 of those are members of families, most of the adults with jobs. In the City of Alexandria, there were 360 homeless people. In Arlington, 527 homeless, about 200 of those were people in families.

According to the latest U.S. Census numbers, from 2008, there were about 200,000 people (under 65) in Northern Virginia without health insurance. These are people who can't get preventative care, can't get routine care for minor illnesses.

In Arlington County 38,018 or 21.1 percent of the population lacked health insurance. That number jumped to 62 percent of those living below 200 percent of poverty line.

In Fairfax County, 149,642 people or more than 16 percent of the population lacked health insurance. In the City of Alexandria, 22,399 people lack health insurance, or 18.2 percent of the population. In the City of Fairfax, 3,685 people lack health insurance, or 18.8 of the population.

Another measure of need, and a way of identifying concentrations of poverty, is to look at students who qualify for free or reduced-price

meals in public schools.

In Alexandria more than 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced meals.

In Arlington, more than one-third of students are eligible for free or reduced meals.

More than 37,000 students in Fairfax County Public Schools are eligible for free and reduced meals, that's 22 percent of the student body. And the needy students also tend to be concentrated in particular schools. For example, some schools, like Wolf Trap Elementary, had no students qualifying for free or reduced meals. Then consider Graham Road Elementary, with more than 78 percent of its students qualifying for free and reduced meals, Lynbrook Elementary with more than 76 percent of its students qualifying; Mount Vernon Woods, more than 75 percent; Mount Eagle more than 74 percent. The uneven distribution showed dozens of schools with very high rates of poor students lumped together; dozens with poverty rates in the single digits.

Food for thought. These numbers don't indicate a tiny population of needy people, they indicate a region with ongoing problems of "haves" and "have-nots." Those 15-30 percent of our populations in local jurisdictions who "have not" are about to have quite a bit less as the state and local budget processes move forward.

— MARY KIMM.
MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Support More Funding

To the Editor:

For the first time in anyone's memory, Fairfax County Public Schools is in the midst of a perfect storm. On the revenue side, the country is in recession, state revenues are down, and county home values have fallen. This year we are educating 4,000 more students than last year, with \$20 million less. The situation would be even worse had we not received nearly \$50 million in federal stimulus funds — and those funds will run out in a year. The new Governor and the General Assembly have to cut \$4 billion just to balance the state budget. The County Board of Supervisors funded the schools this year at the same level as last year — despite our increased enrollment — and threatens either the same or lower funding next year.

On the spending side, enrollment is up dramatically and the number of our neediest children — who cost more to educate — is growing even faster. In response, over the past two years, the School Board and Superintendent have taken prudent measures to control costs, including cutting central

administration by 15 percent, and streamlining and consolidating programs.

However, when we spend 85 percent of our budget on instruction, there is a finite limit to what we can cut without impacting teaching and learning. And the cuts that save the most money — freezing pay and raising class sizes — are both counterproductive and unsustainable. But that is where we have to cut to get to the numbers needed to balance our budget.

And so we face a crossroads. We can keep cutting — freshman sports, elementary band and strings, full-day kindergarten, more teaching positions that will raise class sizes, and again freezing all pay. Or we can advocate for the funding we need to maintain the world class school system that is not only nationally renowned, but which also fuels the economic engine that drives the county, and which contributes to the abundant quality of life we moved here to enjoy.

The School Board will make its choice on Feb. 4 when we will adopt a budget that seeks the resources we need to serve all 174,000 children who will walk through our doors next September. But then it is up to others — the

General Assembly, the Governor, and the Board of Supervisors — to decide whether we actually get those resources. You have a unique opportunity to affect the future of our children, schools and our community. Please join us in letting our elected officials know that you support Fairfax County Public Schools, and want those elected officials to provide us with the resources we need to maintain our very successful system. We invite you to learn more at www.fcps.edu and step up to let your voice be heard.

Kathy Smith
Chairman, Fairfax County School Board

Facts about Climate

To the Editor:

Mr. Hatch, in Centre View (Jan 7-13, 2010) sharply disagreed with Dr. Margaret Fisher's description of the impact that the expected change in the earth's climate "was probably the most serious environmental threat of all time." He deemed this statement "outrageous." He was also displeased with the conclusions presented by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which

indicate that the average temperature is increasing.

In his critique Mr. Hatch asserts that "natural sources of greenhouse gases" dwarf "anthropogenic (manmade) sources," and that "water vapor is by far the most important (greenhouse gas)." These statements are simply misleading. The facts are that "anthropogenic gases," primarily carbon dioxide add to natural sources, thereby increasing CO2 density that now exceeds maximum values that occurred during the previous half million years. Mr. Hatch has questioned Dr. Fisher's assertion that pollen increase will result from climate change. In fact evidence of changes in pollen levels and increased transport abound. For example measurements made in the Caribbean have revealed that pollen (and other stuff) originating in Africa are blown from the Sahara and the Niger region and deposited in the Caribbean. This material reaches coral reefs causing coral die off ...

There is a broadly accepted theory that guides projections of earth's climate properties. It is strongly supported by geologic data, analysis of glacial ice cores, tectonic circulations and proper

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 9

Safety First, and Second, and Third

BY JOHN BROCKMEYER

On the mean streets of Centreville, my 13-year-old son waits for his school bus. At the stop a parent accompanies each child. These guardians stand in constant vigilance. Watching. Protecting. Hovering.

Meet the Helicopter Moms and Dads.

Had my mother even entertained the notion that as a 7th grader her protection at the bus stop was necessary I would have crawled across broken glass to convince her otherwise. If she still deemed I needed her there I can assure you the greatest threat to my safety and psyche would have occurred once I was on the bus.

Let's move from the bus stop to the kitchen where Mom is preparing a cake. The kids look upon that bowl full of creamy cake

batter eagerly. Licking the bowl clean is one of the joys of childhood. But no, we can't do that. Cake batter is actually a hideous, toxic substance masquerading as a treat. It contains raw eggs and raw eggs have salmonella bacteria in them. How many eggs

COMMENTARY

Rocky Balboa and drink raw eggs five at a time each morning, could go two or three lifetimes without encountering a tainted egg.

So now the kids want to head to the park to play baseball, kick the soccer ball around and shoot some hoops. Absolutely not, there are bad people there. You want to play? We have organizations run by adults. They will

tell you where to play, how to do it, where to stand. It will be so much better than doing on your own. You'll be supervised. You'll be safe. And you'll get a ribbon.

What are we doing? Yes, children need to be taught there is risk and danger in the world. But let's not overstate the case. The 24/7 all news media has an insatiable need for content and makes national news out of every incident. The fact that such stories are reported with such fervor testifies to how rare they actually are.

We're teaching our children the world is a scary, evil and dirty place from which they must be protected from at all times. Our obsession with eradicating every bacterium children may come in contact with is producing a generation with little resistance to the common bugs of everyday life. But even worse, our protectionism can produce

children with little emotional immunity.

Psychology Today asked a few years ago if we are raising "A Nation of Wimps"? Are we "protecting" our children so much they fear the unfamiliar and are unable to cope when they finally leave the nest? It's already happening according college administrators and mental health professionals. When the "emotional training wheels" as Psychology Today puts it, finally come off universities are seeing increased levels of anxiety, depression and substance abuse. What's the answer then — a room in the dorm for mom or dad?

Or perhaps it's to stop treating 13 year-olds like they're 4 year-olds. Give them their space and let them discover the world. Children grow up so fast. We should let them.

John Brockmeyer lives in Centreville.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 8

ties of earth's ocean currents and bottom deposits. Temperature patterns, evaporation cycles and movement of air masses all depend on energy received from the sun and also on energy from the earth itself. Intensity and distribution of solar energy are determined primarily by earth's orbital properties. Solar energy (about 450 watts/sq meter, mid latitude, full sun) varies widely. Earth's surface also reflects energy (the albedo effect) back into space; ice caps reflect most. As a "black body" the sun emits most of its energy as visible light plus some in the ultra violet band. Emissions are not constant, however. Solar flares occur irregularly, sometimes lasting for centuries, usually increasing energy emission during these periods.

Earth's orbital properties control basic climate sequences: its elliptical path around the sun changes in cyclic fashion as the plane of rotation tilts slightly from the ecliptic plane. Also eccentricity, related to the distance between foci of the ellipse, changes cyclically, about 100,000 years. Earth's polar axis tilts about 25 deg from a perpendicular to the plane of rotation, producing change of seasons during earth's yearly rotation. But the polar axis "swings around"

(precesses or oscillates) every 20,000 years or so, shifting distribution of solar energy between hemispheres. Also the polar axis "wobbles about 1- 2 deg" every 20,000 years. (Our night-day 24 hour cycle also is a factor: solar radiation is received only during daylight, although polar regions are irradiated for 24 hrs during summer, none during winter).

There are several cycles linked to each mode although three dominate. Synchronies occur at long intervals causing glaciers (and glacial weather) to form or recede. But this does not account for all climate sequences. In fact there are two "black bodies:" the sun and earth itself that contribute energy to the atmosphere. Nuclear fission near earth's center heats our planet to about 20-30 deg. "Black body earth" then radiates at longer wavelengths below infrared bands. Radiation in this band also excites CO2 molecules in the atmosphere; these proceed to reflect (re-radiate) energy in all directions, so about half returns to earth, the rest goes into space. This process is continuous around the clock Thus CO2 acts as a blanket; the more CO2 in the atmosphere, the more energy continuously reflected back onto earth, making it warmer and warmer. Changes in temperatures can

happen in relatively short periods of time.

When energy levels vary from point to point, dynamics of the atmosphere cause pressure patterns to develop, winds to blow, clouds to form, rain and snow to fall. This is weather, such events can be predicted (sometimes) by meteorologists. When energy levels rise, temperatures increase: storms and hurricanes become stronger; drought develops more frequently and intensifies. These events can be predicted statistically, and just as a roulette wheel spins,

they will happen.

In this light the concerns and comments of Mr. Hatch have no meaning. Should the roulette ball drop into a red slot, spin the wheel again. It will land in a black one eventually.

Finally as global temperatures increase, sea levels will rise. Weather patterns will change. Winds will blow and pollens will increase and spread. These are facts.

Larry Baldwin
Centreville



COURTESY OF SYDNEY SAWYER

Holiday Music

Festive musicians and music filled the halls during the Strolling Winter Concert at Clifton Elementary School. Here, saxophone players Evan Goldsmith and Carly Feldenkris spread the holiday spirit.

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WORTH NOTING

To have community events listed in Centre View, e-mail to centreview@connectionnewspapers.com. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412.

ONGOING

New Neighbors League Club (NNLC) of Northern Virginia is looking for women who are new to the area, looking to reconnect, or just interested in meeting new people for fun and friendship! Come to one of the monthly coffees or luncheons. Then you can join one of the numerous clubs such as bridge, couples bridge, mah jong, gardening, quilting and stitching, Bible study, bowling, bunco, Southern living dining, movie outings, cards or board games, couples mixers, book club, nursing home sing-a-longs, and many other activities. Visit the web site www.newneighborsvirginia.com.

Music Education Program. Offered through St. John's Episcopal Church through the Royal School of Church Music. Learn to sing, read music and music theory. Grades 1-5 meet Sundays at 12:15 p.m. for rehearsal and study; Grades 6-12 meet Sundays at 4:30 p.m. for rehearsal and study. At 5649 Mt. Gilead Road, Centreville. Visit www.StJohnsCentreville.org. Call 703-803-7500.

Neighborhood Watch Training Dates — The Fair Oaks District Police Station is offering four training dates in 2010, for the Neighborhood Watch Program. They will be held at the police station, located at 12300 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, at 7 p.m. in the roll call room and will last approximately two hours. These opportunities are designed for communities that want to expand their existing Neighborhood Watch participation, those who wish to begin a new Watch program or those who would like a refresher course. We look forward to serving you and maintaining the quality of community and police partnerships that we have both come to depend on and enjoy.

The training dates are as follows:

- Tuesday, April 20, 2010
- Tuesday, July 20, 2010
- Tuesday, Oct. 19, 2010

FRIDAY/JAN. 22

Swing Dancing. The Cutaways and Jack and Jill Dance Off. Cost is \$15. Swing lesson from 8:30-9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. With Sue and Gary Caley. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

JAN. 22, 23, 24

Outdoor Sportsman's Show. Over 100 exhibitors. International outfitters, fishing charters and guides, fine sporting arms, hunting rifles, custom knives, hunting gear and more. Friday 3-8 p.m.; Saturday 9-6 p.m.; Sunday 10-5 p.m. Admission: Adults \$10, 3-day pass \$15, Children \$5. At the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. Visit www.nationsoutdoorshow.com. Call 1-888-715-0606.

JAN. 23-24

Train Show. Over 200 booths of manufacturers and retailers, 15 spectacular operating model railroads, The Walt Disney Railroad Story Exhibition and Seminar. Free Thomas the Tank Engine train rides for kids. Hours are Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$10/adults, children under 16 are free. At the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. Visit www.wghshow.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 23

Open House. Sponsored by Centreville Preschool Inc. Registration packets will be available for the 2010-2011 school year. Morning and afternoon co-op and

non co-op classes are available to children who turn 3 or 4 by Sept. 30, 2010. A beginners non co-op morning class is offered to children who turn 2 1/2 by Sept. 30. At 13196 Braddock Road, Centreville. Call 703-830-5656 or email register@centrevillepreschool.com.

SUNDAY/JAN. 24

National Christian Choir Concert. 6 p.m. At Jubilee Christian Center. NCC has 24 recordings, including hymns, spirituals, inspirational, Christmas songs, patriotic, and others over the past 25 years. Jubilee Christian Center is at 4650 Shirley Gate Rd., Fairfax. Call 703-383-1170, or visit www.jccag.org.

Democratic Women of Clifton. 3-5 p.m. Former Delegate Margi Vanderhyde will address the group on the subject of Virginia's 2010 General Assembly Session. Will also discuss the election of officers. Meets at Clifton Community Hall, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton. Visit DemocraticWomenofClifton.org.

THURSDAY/JAN. 28

Relay for Life Kick-Off. 7-8:30 p.m. Enjoy refreshments, be inspired by a cancer survivor's personal story, and learn about the American Cancer Society's signature fund-raiser, coming to Centreville High School in May 2010. RSVP to Committee Chair, Marion Rantis at CentrevilleRelay@gmail.com. Visit www.CentrevilleRelay.com. At Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton.

JAN. 29, 30, 31

Sugarloaf Crafts Festival. More than 250 artisans will be offering crafts and fine art in all mediums, including pottery, sculpture, glass, jewelry, fashion, furniture, home accessories and photography. Friday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$7/online, \$8/door. At the Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Place Center, Chantilly. Visit www.SugarloafCrafts.com or call 800-210-9900.

FRIDAY/JAN. 29

Swing Dancing. Sock Hop with the Rock 'n Roll Relics. Wear your poodle skirts and bowling shirts. Cost is \$15. Swing lesson from 8:30-9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. With Sue and Gary Caley. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

SATURDAY/JAN. 30

Peter Douskalis Performs. 7-9 p.m. Free. At Pacino Ristorante, 5653 Stone Road, Centreville. Reservations not required but recommended. Call 703-222-5885.

TUESDAY/FEB. 2

Haiti Fund-Raiser. 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. At Ledo Pizza, which is donating 20 percent of all sales to Haiti relief. Three Ledos are participating: Ledo in Fairfax, 11725 Lee Highway, Fairfax; Ledo in Chantilly/Westfields, 5081 Westfields Blvd.; and Ledo in Centreville, 14115 St. Germain drive.

FRIDAY/FEB. 5

Swing Dancing. With Gina DeSimone and the Moaners. Big Game Football Night — wear your favorite team's colors. Cost is \$15. Swing lesson from 8:30-9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. With Sue and Gary Caley. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

SATURDAY/FEB. 6

Super Saturday. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Workshop on Financial Aid and FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Financial aid information presentation from 9-10 a.m.; FAFSA completion between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. with help by trained counselors. At Centreville High School, 6001 Union Mill Road, Clifton.

Choral Cabaret. 7-10 p.m. At Centreville High School. Will feature a variety of musical acts performed by students; a dessert assortment of cakes, pies, cheesecakes and cookies served table-side; a raffle; and a silent auction. Tickets are \$10 general, and \$5 students. To order tickets, contact Lana Zarger at lanazarger@cox.net.

FEB. 6-7

Virginia Wine Showcase. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission is \$35. Features unlimited tastings of boutique farm wineries of Virginia and beyond. At the Dulles Expo Center, 4368 Chantilly Center, Chantilly. Email: donna@vawinewine.org or call 703-823-1868.

FRIDAY/FEB. 12

The Brain Show and Family Food Court. 5-9 p.m. The Brain Show is an educational trivia game show with the look and feel of a real TV game show. Also a food court with Chic-fil-A, Baja Fresh, Cici's Pizza, Sushi Sashimi and more. At Centreville Elementary School.

Swing Dancing. Have a Heart Hop. Valentine's treats and dance floor Valentine deliveries. With the Natty Beaux. Will be raising money for the Fairfax Humane Society by auctioning off many of the dancers. Cost is \$15. Swing lesson from 8:30-9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. With Sue and Gary Caley. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

FRIDAY/FEB. 19

Swing Dancing. Jack and Jill Dance off. With King Teddy. Cost is \$15. Swing lesson from 8:30-9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. With Sue and Gary Caley. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

SATURDAY/FEB. 20

Mystery Book Sale. At Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germaine Drive, Centreville. Call 703-830-2223.

FEB. 25-28

Capital Home and Garden Show. At the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. The show offers a broad selection of home improvement-related businesses. Get ideas, investigate new products, gather information and meet the professionals to help you make your next remodeling, renovation, or decorating project a breeze. Cost is \$9/online, \$12/door, \$3/children. For tickets, go to <http://www.capitalhomeshow.com/ME2/Sites/>

FRIDAY/FEB. 26

Swing Dancing. With the Cutaways. Cost is \$15. Swing lesson from 8:30-9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. With Sue and Gary Caley. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

FRIDAY/MARCH 5

London Towne Art Showcase Fund-Raiser. Student artwork will be exhibited throughout the school. At London Towne Elementary School, Stone Road, Centreville.

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The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra
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Friday, February 5, 2010

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6:30 pm – Silent Auction and Cocktail Reception

8:00 pm – Dinner

9:30 pm – Fairfax Symphony Orchestra in concert, featuring Robert Petillo, tenor, and Jeanine Thames, soprano

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The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors
and the 2010 Valentine Pops Gala Committee

SCHOOLS



Dragon Tales

Gary Lloyd, storyteller and retired librarian, told three dragon stories to Deer Park Elementary School students at an assembly on Tuesday, Jan. 19. Children have been reading throughout the year and, after each book read, they add a scale with their name on it to a dragon head outside of their classrooms. Lloyd is shown holding a gong that a student would sound before each story. Also shown are Reese Arnold, Trey Gregg and Tiffany Hough.

The Centreville High Bagged Mulch Sale is coming. Free delivery of 3cu ft/bagged premium double shredded hardwood mulch with purchase of 10 bags or more within the ZIP codes 20120, 20121 and 20124. The delivery dates are March 19, 20, 21. This fund-raiser helps Project Graduation, the alcohol/drug free All-Night After Graduation Celebration, After Prom and senior scholarships. Place your orders at www.CVHSmulch.org.

Catherine Lightburn of Centreville made the dean's list at High Point University in North Carolina for the fall of 2009 where she is a sophomore. Students on the dean's list are those who have attained a 3.5 GPA for the semester. She is a 2008 graduate of Westfield High School and the daughter of Bob and Jeannine (now deceased) Lightburn of Kentwell Circle in Centreville.

An Open House at The Boyd School is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 23 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The Boyd School has seven campuses in Northern Virginia serving infants through middle school. The Boyd School is fully accredited with the American Montessori Society and The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. It is licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services and maintains many affiliations with Montessori and academic organizations throughout the area. Visit the Web site www.theboyschool.com or call Herndon/Oak Hill at 571-203-8686 or Westfields/Chantilly at 571-321-0362.

Centreville Preschool Inc. (CPI) is hosting an Open House on Saturday, Jan. 23 from 9 a.m. to noon. Registration packets will be available for the

2010-2011 school year beginning in September. Morning and afternoon co-op and non co-op classes are available to children who turn 3 or 4 years of age by Sept 30, 2010. A beginner's non co-op morning class is offered to children who turn 2 1/2 by Sept 30th. Established in 1969, CPI is a non-profit cooperative preschool located in a renovated Victorian house at 13196 Braddock Rd. in Centreville. Bring your child's birth certificate and meet the staff of professional teachers. Call 703-830-5656 for more information or email register@centrevillepreschool.com.

Pleasant Valley Preschool will be holding its annual Open House and Registration on Friday, Jan 29 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. PVP is a non-profit cooperative preschool with half day programs for 3- to 5-year-olds. The school is located in the Greenbriar Community Center, 4615 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Email info@pleasantvalleypreschool.com or 703-378-6911 or visit the Web site at www.pleasantvalleypreschool.com.

Thirty-six Fairfax County public schools have been recognized by Virginia Governor Tim Kaine with the 2010 Governor's Award for Educational Excellence. This award is the highest honor bestowed by the Virginia Board of Education under the Virginia Index of Performance incentive program.

The following local schools were recognized with the Governor's Award for Educational Excellence: Carson Middle, Franklin Middle, Greenbriar West Elementary, Oak Hill Elementary, Rocky Run Middle, Virginia Run Elementary, Willow Springs Elementary.

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Partners with CCH in the Haiti relief effort include: MedAssets; Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children; Missionary Flights International; and MTS Services.



"In addition to our prayers, the people of Haiti are in great need of our compassion and assistance."
— Charles Mann, Inova Health System Board Member



"Luciana and I have worked with the Community Coalition for Haiti and we ask you to join us in supporting the humanitarian efforts that are under way."
— Robert & Luciana Duvall



"We all need to take swift action to make sure that relief reaches the people of Haiti as quickly as it can."
— Darrell Green, NFL Hall of Fame

Photo by © Cameron Davidson

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—Arnold Glasow

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Rescue Teams Helping in Haiti

FROM PAGE 2

been on the first floor of a six-story building that collapsed, so we coordinate the rescue effort.”

“If we need heavier equipment than we have, we’ll work with heavy riggers, de-layering [debris] ’til we get to them,” he continued. “We’re not going to stop ’til we get to them.”

THEY’LL probably work in 24-hour shifts, to start, with down time, here and there. Normally, half the team would work days, and the other half, nights. But, said Vaughan, “Due to the amount of work, it’s ’round the clock now.”

He, too, helped with the mobilization, “pushing paperwork, getting everything in order,” and looked forward to “getting down there and doing what we train relentlessly to do — rescue people. It’s a lot like a soldier trains for a war — not that you want one — but when that time comes, you want to be able to put it to good use.”

Vaughan said they’d all “done this enough” so that they can quickly assess whatever situation they encounter and proceed accordingly. Hardest, he said, was wanting to get there as fast as they could, but understanding that it takes six to 14 hours to assemble all the gear, get the plane ready and the equipment on board.

“It’s a huge undertaking — and we’d like it done in 30 minutes,” he said. “Then, once we’re on the ground, the physical work and sleep deprivation will eventually take a toll on us. But when we’re working, we don’t let it bother us.”

Vaughan will miss his two daughters and wife Erica, though. But, said Erica Vaughan, “I’m so proud of what he’s doing. He’s been training to do this and I hope he’ll save some lives.” She said she never gets used to his deployments and worries about him while he’s gone. But, she added, “I know he’s in the Big Man’s hands and [the fire department] does a good job of keeping us updated.”

Technician Kevin Dabney of Vienna has been on the team more than 10 years. A rescue specialist, he helps with team organization and works under the Task Force leaders, Fire Chiefs Jim Strickland and Robert Zoldos.

“I’ll command others to do search and rescue, and we’ll help in any way we can,” said Dabney. “We’re 100-percent self-sufficient and don’t need anything from the local government.”

After receiving a geographical location to search, the Command and General Staff Team that Dabney’s on determines which people should go where and sees that they’re properly equipped. It also handles safety, logistics, medical, planning and operations matters.

We ask, ‘Is there medical transport? Where do we send survivors?’” said Dabney. “What about security issues — are there roadblocks?” So behind the scenes, there’s a whole lot of work.”

When they hear of possible survivors needing rescue, first a small reconnaissance team assesses whether it’s a workable location. Then, if it’s a go, six to 80 people — including medical personnel, technical search specialists, dogs and structural engineers — would respond. The size of the response depends on the size of the site and the suspected number of victims needing rescue.

SINCE THE FIREFIGHTERS communicate by radio, Lt. Wes Rogers’s specialty is also crucial. Rogers, of Oak Hill, works in communications in the Massey



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS / CENTRE VIEW

The team members’ red and yellow bags are piled on the floor at the Fire and Rescue Academy prior to being loaded on a truck for transport to the airport.

Building in Fairfax and also on the USAR team.

“I set up repeaters, enabling the radios to talk further than line of sight,” he said. “Depending on the terrain, we could have a 4-mile range. I’ll also set up satellite communications to talk to our Operations Center at the Fire and Rescue Academy and will establish communications with our USAR team already in Haiti.”

Typically, team managers receive radio updates about the victims, plus the status of the search teams — where they are, if they’re all right and if they need anything.

Last Thursday, Rogers could hardly wait to get there already and start helping. “Everybody here has that attitude,” he said. “I’m proud of the team; everybody works together and we all want to save some lives.”

Squad officer Richard McKinney of Fair Oaks is captain of the Frying Pan station. He’s a 30-year member of the fire department and has been on Task Force 1 since its inception.

“We’ll search buildings, going in void spaces and looking for trapped people,” he said. “USAID will tell us which buildings and areas to check.” What makes it so dangerous, said McKinney, is the unknown. “You really don’t know what you’re getting yourself into,” he said. “Once an earthquake’s destroyed a building, it’s unstable.”

But he’s glad to do what he can and he likes the camaraderie among the people on the team. “Most of them I’ve known, my whole career, so they’re just like a second family,” he said. He’s been with them to Oklahoma City, Taiwan and the Pentagon after 9/11.

Toughest, said McKinney, is “the death and seeing people at their worst.” But he finds satisfaction in “the chance of finding someone alive — or even finding deceased people so their families can have closure.”

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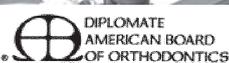
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PEOPLE

Hacker and Briancesco Are Engaged

Mr. and Mrs. Peter R. Hacker, formerly of Virginia Run now residing in Fountain Hills, Ariz., are pleased to announce the engagement of their daughter Mallory Eva Hacker to Kevin Russell Briancesco, son of Ms. Georgia Nelson of San Francisco. The couple met while attending classes as students at Arizona State University.

Kevin is a professor of communications at ASU's Hugh Downs School of Communication. He is a widely published and acclaimed poet both in the San Francisco Bay area and here in the Phoenix area.

Mallory is a graduate student, studying towards a master's of education in Secondary English and Theatre. She is a frequent performer at Fountain Hills Community Theater, her recent roles



Mallory Hacker and Kevin Briancesco.

are Peggy Sawyer in "42nd Street," Millie in "Thoroughly Modern Millie" and Ella Patterson in "Annie Warbucks." Currently she is ap-

pearing as Ado Annie in "Oklahoma!" at Desert Stages Theater in Scottsdale, Ariz.

A July 2010 wedding is planned.

Joining DAR

The Centreville-based Lane's Mill Chapter Daughters of the American Revolution, held its monthly meeting in Clifton on Dec. 4. During the meeting, Honorary Chapter Regent Van Lee and Chapter Vice Regent Charlene Gross installed new member Deborah Holmes. To become a member, Holmes provided documentation that she is the lineal descendant of an ancestor who aided in achieving American independence. Prospective members are welcome to attend chapter meetings. Contact jsmithtot@aol.com for more information.



ROUNDUPS

FROM PAGE 3

Stoncroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Call Jeff Parnes, evenings, at 703-904-0131. Strickland will give a Park Authority status report.

American Cancer Society. RSVP to CentrevilleRelay@gmail.com.

Relay for Life Meeting

The kick-off party for Relay For Life of Centreville-Clifton is slated for Thursday, Jan. 28, at 7 p.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, at Union Mill and Twin Lakes roads in Clifton. The community is invited to join the fun and learn how to be a part of Relay 2010, a fund-raising event for the

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The Fairfax County School Board wants to improve communications with and outreach to parents and the larger community. Those interested may complete a survey at: <http://www.fcps.edu/survey/> to help the School Board understand how to better serve its constituents.

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'The Kid Who Talked to Penguins'

FROM PAGE 4

You could do the most extreme things and still have this role work. You get to do so much with the lines."

The cast is using the same platforms Chantilly used for "A Christmas Carol." But, said Monk, "We create the scenes with our acting and help the audience see what we see. It's different from any other play they've ever seen and challenges their imagination."

Freshman Matt Calvert plays Skip, Billy's older brother, the star of his high-school football team. "He's this big, macho kind of dude — a typical football player — and kind of a dunderhead," said Calvert. "He's full of himself and puts up with his little brother, but sometimes picks on him."

Enjoying the role, Calvert said, "I've never played a jock before, so I get to really play it up. This is my first kids' show, so I have to be really animated and completely over the top."

He described the play as "a really nice story with a great moral, funny lines and interesting characters.

For example, the German therapist called in to help Billy with the penguins has his own, imaginary friend. The moral is that, growing up, you're not going to be good at everything, but you'll get better and smarter — and everybody's special in their own way."

The stage manager is Amanda Lupone. "During rehearsals, I read the lines alongside the actors and give them a line if they need it," she said. "And if anything's messed up, I make a note and, at the end, we'll go over it. During the show, I'll be in the booth, giving sound and light cues, or helping out backstage, making sure everyone's in their places."

"I love it," said Lupone. "It's a great experience working with everyone, and I've made some good friends. It also helps with my organizational skills — which helps with schoolwork and people skills; it just kicks in naturally now."

As for the play, she said, "The audience will love it. It has a lot of great actors and actresses and is a really good, family show."

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Herndon, Westfield Girls Go Down to the Wire

Late trey by Ramirez lifts Bulldogs to Concorde District basketball win.

BY RICH SANDERS
CENTRE VIEW

In a game that featured numerous standout players last Friday night, Westfield High junior guard Yawrely Ramirez might have tended to get lost in the action. But, at game's end, it was the junior guard's clutch, timely three-point basket that proved to be the difference in the Bulldogs' 57-54 win over Herndon. The Concorde District contest between the two elite teams took place at Herndon.

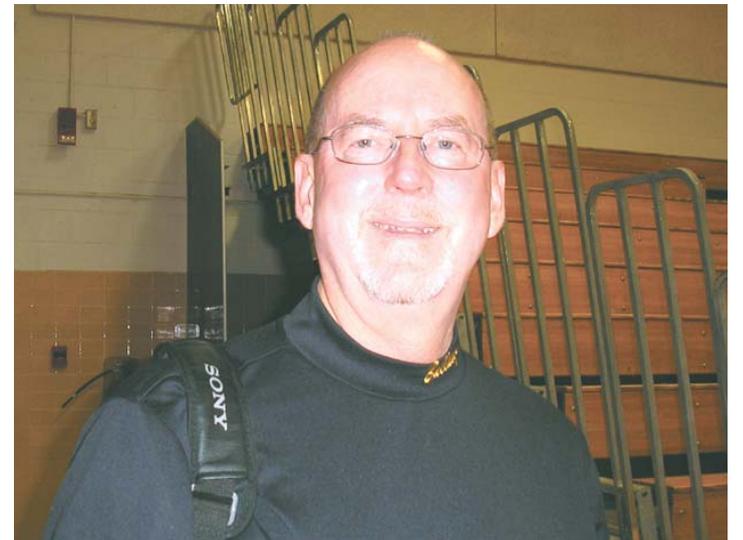
While the game's standout players such as Herndon's Phyllis Martin (game-high 22 points) and Alexis Lewis (18 points, 10 rebounds), along with Westfield's Shelby Romine (14 points), Jessica McNamara (13) and Siobhan Beslow (10) contributed many of the night's top highlights, it was Ramirez, a steady Bulldog starter who is averaging seven points per game, who made the game's most memorable basket.

Following a pair of free throws by Martin, Herndon's talented senior backcourt player, the Hornets held a 54-52 lead with 25 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter. After a timeout, Westfield worked the ball around looking for a game-tying or go-ahead basket. But Herndon's aggressive defense forced a loose ball around the area around the top of the key. In the scramble for the ball, Westfield gained possession. The ball then was passed left to Ramirez on the perimeter. The 5-foot-7 inch guard dribbled left, spotted up behind the three-point line and converted from long range. Just like that, Westfield was on top, 55-54, with eight seconds showing.

Moments later, Westfield's Beslow, a junior forward, came up with a steal as Herndon was trying to get off a game-tying or game-winning shot. She then converted both free throws to make the score 57-54 with two seconds left. The Hornets could not get off a shot after that and the visiting



Shelby Romine scored 14 points in her team's Concorde District win at Herndon last Friday night.



Westfield High girls' basketball coach Pat Deegan.

PHOTOS BY RICH SANDERS/CENTRE VIEW

Bulldogs had come out with the hard fought triumph.

"We wanted to get a big [defensive] stop," said Herndon coach Reggie Barnes, of the Westfield possession that resulted in the big three-point basket by Ramirez. "We wanted to know where Shelby Romine was and stay with her. The play seemed to break down but Ramirez stepped up and made the shot."

Pat Deegan, Westfield's coach, said Ramirez got a good look at the basket and made a textbook shot, displaying good shooting form and not rushing.

"She got a good look, she wasn't rushed and she just stepped up like in practice every day," said Deegan. "I wasn't surprised it went in."

With the win, Westfield improved to 12-2 overall and remained perfect in district play at 4-0. Herndon slipped to 8-5 and 1-2 in the district.

HERNDON, behind five first half three-pointers, carried a 31-28 lead into halftime. But Westfield opened up the second half with 13 straight points, capped by a backdoor layup basket by junior forward Dani Knox (4 points) to make the score 41-31 Westfield, with about three minutes left in the third quarter.

Westfield outscored the Hornets 18-8 in that third quarter and carried a 46-38 lead into the final quarter. Herndon came right

back, getting within 46-44 on a three-point shot off the right wing by Martin early in the final stanza and eventually re-gaining the lead, 48-47, on two foul shots by Lewis, a senior wing, with 5:48 remaining.

The Herndon lead had extended to 51-47 a few minutes later on a baseline layup basket off the left side by Martin with 2:35 left. But several possessions later, Westfield's McNamara, a junior shooting guard, drained a three-pointer from the left side of the top of the key area to deadlock the game at 52 with 50 seconds remaining. Herndon would retake the lead on Martin's two free throws with 25 seconds left, setting up the game's final dramatic seconds and the game-winner by Ramirez.

"We finished it off at the end, that's what matters," said Westfield's Romine, who a year ago was the District Player of the Year and is averaging 16 points per game this season. "We struggled a little bit in the [fourth quarter] with our shooting and rebounding. Herndon is a very tough and physical team. I've been playing against them a long time."

BOTH TEAMS, throughout the game, took advantage of the three-point line, with Herndon converting seven treys and Westfield five. Martin nailed four of the long range shots, while teammates Jasmine Johnson (6 points) drained two and Jenna

Aschenbach one. For the Bulldogs, McNamara and Romine both made two three-pointers and Ramirez had one. Ten of McNamara's 13 points came in the third quarter.

Herndon held down Romine in the second half after she had scored 12 of her 14 points in the first half. Overall, the 5-8 senior played an excellent all-around game, passing the ball and defending well, rebounding the ball (6 boards) and getting it down the court.

"She's sort of like the engine that drives everything," said Deegan, of his talented backcourt player. "She gets up on the boards and rebounds and plays great defense. She can score and run the break well."

Deegan said Herndon did a good job defending Romine.

"Herndon played real well and had an idea what we wanted to do," he said. "They wanted to take things away from Romine."

Barnes, the Herndon coach, was proud of his team's play but disappointed the Hornets could not finish the game off and get the win. He credited Westfield with playing well.

Herndon, this week, was scheduled to host Robinson on Tuesday, Jan. 19 before playing at Chantilly on Friday, Jan. 22. Westfield, meanwhile, was set to play home games against Chantilly and Oakton on Tuesday and Friday, respectively.

SPORTS NOTES

Connor Bach of Centreville High has signed a collegiate letter of intent to play baseball at Virginia Military Institute (Lexington) next school year. Bach, who resides in Clifton, is a three-year letterman for the Wildcats. Last year as a junior, he earned All-Concorde District honors as both a left-handed pitcher and an outfielder, helping the Wildcats qualify for the Northern Region playoffs. This past summer, Bach was a member of the USA Select team that traveled to the Dominican Republic.

Bach plans to major in mechanical engineering at the VMI.

VMI baseball coach Marlin Ikenberry looks forward to Bach being a part of the Keydet program.

"Connor throws a fastball between

82-86 mph and can throw all three pitches for strikes," said Ikenberry. "Offensively, he has gap-to-gap power and is projected to play first base and corner outfield for us. He comes from a very good high school program at Centreville, which is well coached by Morgan Spencer. Connor also comes from the same high school as [current VMI pitcher] Ryan Barefoot."

The annual **Westfield Bulldog Bash** girls' and boys' basketball tournaments were a success. The girls champion was the host Westfield High team. The Bulldogs, in the finals, defeated the Freedom Eagles (South Riding), 54-42. In the third place game, the Potomac Panthers defeated James

Madison, 51-39.

The boys' champion was Centreville, which defeated the Langley Saxons, 66-44, in the finals. Finishing third was Patrick Henry, which defeated Westfield, 64-54.

The 2009 Bulldog Bash All Tournament boys' team was made up of: MVP Warren Denny (Centreville), Outstanding Tournament Player Austin Kriz (Langley), Troy Thomas (Flint Hill), Martez Redfearn (West Potomac), Darius Smith (Woodbridge), Brian Orr (Freedom High of South Riding), Terrell Wilson (Patrick Henry of Roanoke), Zach Elcano (Westfield), Austin Vasiliadis (Langley) and Bobby Warhurst (Centreville). The girls' All Tournament Team was made up of:

MVP Shelby Romine (Westfield), Outstanding Tournament Player Kelsey Buchanan (Freedom of South Riding), Kayna Jacobs (Potomac), Erin Kavanaugh (Madison), Eireann Anastasi (St. Hubert's of Philadelphia), Audrey Dotson (Flint Hill), Madison Haesy (McDowell High of Erie, Pa.), Dionna Scott (Freedom of South Riding), Jessica McNamara (Westfield) and Jessica Andre (Westfield).

Northern Virginia Baseball Umpires Association is in need of officials for baseball and volleyball. Umpires are needed for college, men's leagues, high schools and youth recreational leagues.

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quired. Formal classroom and on-the-job training will be provided. Classes will begin in mid-February. Umpires are needed for all communities in the greater D.C. area. Call Ken Williams at 703-400-3232 for more information or go to umpires.org to fill out a "New Ump" form.

Fairfax Adult Softball is seeking umpires for its adult slowpitch softball leagues in Fairfax County. Umpires are paid monthly. Net pay starts at \$25 per one-hour game. Experience is desired but ASA training is provided beginning early February. Flexible scheduling based on availability. Contact FAS at 703-815-9007 or email to: office@fairfaxadultsoftball.com.

SCHOOLS



PHOTOS COURTESY OF REBECCA CANTY

WHS varsity coaches Rebecca Canty and Cindy Kilmer, with WHS JV coaches Samantha Edwards and Danielle Edwards, and their first-place pom trophies.

Teams Place First at Invitational

FROM PAGE 1

have the correct level of difficulty. The girls must also perform the routines with complete energy and personality — which takes a lot of practice and confidence.”

Regarding her own, overall award for choreography for the entire competition, Kilmer said receiving such an honor is “always gratifying because it goes beyond the division your routine was entered in and ranks you among every routine performed that day.”

Paul VI Catholic High School hosted the event, run by Universal Dance Association — a national, training organization for high-school and college dancers. Both Westfield squads prepared for it for weeks by learning, breaking down and polishing their pom routines while still learning and fine-tuning other routines to finish up the Bulldog football season.

AS WESTFIELD’S only entrant in the high-school solo division, Hughes vied against 40 top solo dancers from other schools and all-star dance squads. She performed a contemporary piece to the instrumental, “Solid Ground.”

She believes she won because her dance was “different than what the judges expected. I have more techniques than most dance-team girls because I also perform at a competitive dance studio, Creative Dance Center in Chantilly. I was really excited; it was my first time doing a solo at a dance-team competition.”

Hughes joined Westfield’s team to be involved in the school and because she “also wanted to learn new routines and make friends.” Toughest, she said, is the stamina required during performances, but she especially loves being part of a close-knit group and dancing at Westfield’s football and basketball games. Said Hughes: “The crowd gives you adrenaline and it’s fun.”

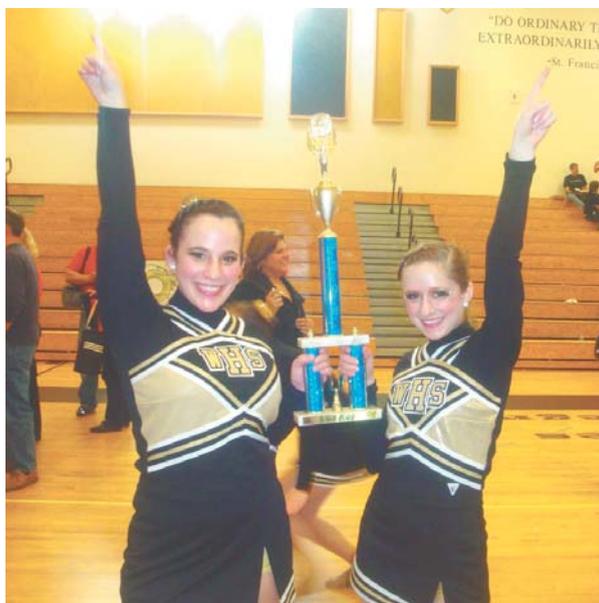
Varsity captain Leah Rothenberg has been on the team all four years. “I love dancing, and my

teammates and coaches are really nice,” she said. Rothenberg leads warm-ups at practices and will choreograph a routine for Senior Night. Of the recent victory, she said, “The hard work we put in with stamina runs paid off. And the last few weeks before the competition, we really stepped up our game.”

She said the team was “ecstatic” to win. “As soon as they named who was second place [Oakton High], we all started screaming,” said Rothenberg. “It was unexpected because our competitors were really tough.”

THE GIRLS FOCUS mainly on pom routines — a group number at competitions, plus solos. Next up

SEE DANCE TEAMS, PAGE 19



WHS Varsity Seniors Leah Rothenberg and Stephanie Turner with the first-place trophy in varsity pom.

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Not Able Without Cable



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

It's only now, the Sunday afternoon following the previous Thursday night, that I'm able to recount the difficulties and demands of the 15-day, eight-hour period beginning 1:34 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 16 and ending at 8:45 p.m., Thursday, New Year's Eve. It had nothing at all to do with my cancer and/or any consequences there to (not really, anyway). It had to do with my Cable. Specifically, not having Cable service, meaning no television and computer for over two weeks.

Let me try to explain as patiently as I am able to do so, now, the events leading up to and the ultimate conclusion to some of the worst two weeks of my life (death, taxes and health-related news notwithstanding).

On Wednesday, Dec. 16, a contractor for Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission began digging up my neighborhood street to solve a much-needed browning-of-our-tap-water problem. Days before the initial dig, I noticed spray paint markings on the street and on my driveway indicating Miss Utility had been contacted. (Little did I know that certain colors were missing; had I known that, the subsequent pain and suffering that we endured could have been avoided. But alas, poor Yurik, I know very little of what I'm talking.) Within an hour of the beginning of the dig, sure enough, the unmarked ground did not direct the construction crew away from my cable and phone lines and as a direct result, I received one (two, actually) of the most unkindest cuts.

I will spare you the details of the many phone calls made by yours truly to rectify the problem because that's not really the point of this column, and besides, I can't do the story justice in print as I can in voice. The point of this column is to discuss how one survives when they lose something that is most crucial to their day-to-day existence and lose it not because of anything they said or did, but lose it (and then not have it repaired or responded to in a reasonable time) due to the negligence of others. Collateral damage is how I found myself characterizing my circumstances.

If truth be admitted to, I barely survived. Every day that the problem persisted, I fell deeper into an emotional hole. Every day that the much-needed connections to the outside world remained disconnected, I fell even deeper into that abyss. Every day that progress was supposed to be made to repair the lines (and then ultimately wasn't) took an ICC-type toll on my psyche. Every day that I couldn't resume my routine: work, play, business, banking, hobbies, areas of interest, areas of need, etc., via the television and computer and thus fill my day accordingly was yet another day spent not in paradise (we did borrow DVDs from a neighbor, one of which included the first two seasons of Magnum PI; he was in paradise, literally and figuratively) but one spent in a blackening hole, cratering more and more every day.

When the third (fourth? fifth? I've lost track) cable technician/team knocked on my door on Dec. 31st at 8:15 and asked if I had a picture, I thought I had died and ended up back on my couch watching television. It wasn't until 30 minutes later that my service was 100 percent restored, finally; you can't imagine the emotional release I experienced when that service returned to normal. It's still taken me a few days to regain my composure, resume my routine and get myself back on track, however.

In retrospect, I don't know how I managed, really. Given that I'm a homebody, not a reader and connected to the outside world electronically (like most people), being cut off as I was, without any warning was almost too much; in fact, it may have been one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. I may be reconnected now, but I feel like I've lost two weeks of my life, two weeks that I really didn't have to lose.

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

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SCHOOLS

Dance Teams

FROM PAGE 17

is the Reach the Beach competition in February in Ocean City. Said Rothenberg: "It's our final competition and we'll compete against different teams than we're used to seeing."

Junior Sara Abruzzo has been on varsity since freshman year and got her previous training at Rhythm Street dance studio. "I love it," she said. "We all get along well and it's fun."

At competitions, the girls use gold pompons and do a two-minute routine. At Paul VI, the songs in their routine included "Boom, Boom Pow" by the Black-Eyed Peas, "Shake It" by Metro Station, "That's Not My Name" by the Ting Tings and a remix of "Kiss Him Goodbye" by Steam.

Abruzzo said they were thrilled to win. "Our team did a good job of staying together in our moves and keeping our energy high," she said. Regarding Reach the Beach, she said, "We've never done this one before but, hopefully, we'll do well."

JV captain Katie Johnson, a sophomore, also danced at a studio, but wanted to do it on a school team. The varsity has 17 members, and the JV, seven. Johnson said the JV triumph at Paul VI was terrific.

"We were really excited, and surprised — because we'd just finished the dance, that week," she said. "So we were really happy. Some people think dancing's easy or a sissy sport, but it's not — you have to work really hard."

THE SQUAD had 90 seconds for its routine, but that was enough. "Games and competitions are nerve-wracking because there are people watching you and you really don't want to mess up," said Johnson. "But we have fun as a team and bond to make new friends."

The dance teams also competed Dec. 13 at GMU. This time, Westfield's varsity was second, but the JV — under coaches Samantha and Danielle Edwards — captured another victory. "We didn't want to get overconfident so we practiced just as hard," said Johnson. "We had a good routine and brought it on strong."

JV member Hayley McDonnell, a freshman, especially likes performing at games. "I've been dancing since I was 7 and friends told me about Westfield's dance team, so I tried out and made it," she said. The hard part, said McDonnell, is balancing her time between homework and practices.

"I like the routines and coaches," she said. "And we get to wear our costumes to school on game days." At GMU, Westfield's JV routine was a mix of "Walk this Way" by Aerosmith and "Back in Black" by ACDC. "It was faster than the other teams' routines and that made it more difficult," said McDonnell. "But we worked hard on it to perfect it."

So to what does she attribute her team's win? Said McDonnell: "It was probably the fast music — and our coach, Samantha Edwards, told us to stay energetic and keep smiling, the whole time, no matter how tired we got."

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