Mount Vernon Gazette

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At the Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia ReStore are, from left to right, Sandra Mitchell, Benjamin Ruiz, Jason Martel, Kylin Fisher, Gina Broxterman, Virginia Patton, Julie Martel, Colin Campbell, Erica Einhorn, Tony Cruz and Valerie Dowling.

ReStore Benefits Housing for Needy

Non-profit raises money through resale of donated items.

By Gerald A. Fill
The Gazette

The Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia ReStore at 7770 Richmond Highway sponsored a wellness day on Saturday, Jan. Jan. 23, at its warehouse.

A steady stream of families and individuals came into the rear warehouse site to visit the event's sponsors in the nutritional, fitness area, and related organizations who were handing out their literature, free advice and counseling, and sponsoring a raffle. Approximately 25 volunteers and staff were on hand and busy moving donated or purchased furniture and other items in and out of the warehouse building.

Alexandria Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia ReStore manager Colin Campbell was at the hub of all the hustle and bustle of activity: "We were very happy to see donations and resale of donated items pick up in December and have continued through the month of January.

"The heart and soul of our program is our volunteers, and the folks out there who make an effort to bring their donated items here, so that we

See Resale, Page 5

Driver Beware

Do flashing lights warn drivers of pedestrians or distract them from the road?

By Michael Lee Pope
The Gazette

For years, pedestrians have darted across Richmond Highway. Many have been injured. A few have died. Still they come, year after year in rising numbers. Now a new series of warning signs and flashing lights have been installed just north of Woodlawn Plantation, essentially warning drivers that they are about to drive into an area of the highway notorious for jaywalking. But no new crosswalks have been installed. And some say the constantly flashing lights may do more harm than good.

"I personally find them very distracting," said Katherine Ward, co-chair of the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations. "Your eyes go up in the sky toward the flashing lights instead of staying on the road."

Officials at the Mount Vernon District Station of the Fairfax Police Department say they were not consulted in advance of installation of the new pedestrian safety devices. But public-safety officials

See Warning Signs, Page 5

Manhunt for Former Youth League Coach

Accused of sex offenses on minors, Hamilton fled U.S.

By Gerald A. Fill
The Gazette

John Hamilton

Fairfax County police continue to investigate the case of former Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association coach and umpire John Hamilton who was charged with aggravated sexual battery and three counts of taking indecent liberties with a child by a person in a supervisory relationship last May and subsequently fled the country.

"I am working with national police forces in Europe to bring him back to the U.S. and to see to it that justice is served,"

said Fairfax County Detective Jeremy Hinson. "I believe there are more victims out there who have yet to come forward; I want to encourage them to contact me or the Fairfax county police department to provide us with additional

See Police, Page 8

Decision on Police Shooting Nears

Commonwealth Attorney Ray Morrogh is expected to announce his decision this week about whether or not he would prosecute the Mt. Vernon District police officer who shot and killed Dave Masters on Nov. 13, 2009.

Masters, a former Green Beret veteran, and a suspect for petty larceny — for taking plants from a landscaping business in the 8800 block of Route 1 — was shot by a Mt. Vernon District police officer in the vicinity of Route 1 and Fort Hunt Road. The police officer who shot Masters was accompanied by two other police officers in the pursuit of Masters in response to an emergency dispatch call.

Since that incident, according to previous reports by the Fairfax County Police Department, an internal police investigation and Commonwealth Attorney review of the facts of this case had been under way.

As of Monday, Jan. 25 Mt. Vernon Supervisor Gerald Hyland announced that the police chief would meet with the Board of Supervisors in executive session on Tuesday, Jan. 26, and brief the board on the results of the police department's internal criminal investigation. The police internal criminal investigation report was submitted to the Commonwealth Attorney for his action.

— Gerald A. Fill

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Photos by Louise Krafft/The Gazette

Erin Eyler leads the students in the rising up of the Horse Dance.

Learning the Horse and Corn Dances

Second grade students performed two Native American dances for the first graders at Hybla Valley Elementary School on Lockheed Boulevard on Tuesday afternoon. The second graders had been part of an internship program of the West Potomac Academy Dance Course. Six students: Ingrid Amaya, Erin Eyler, Mandi Whetzel, Katie McCarn, Nina Suggs and Brittany Hall have been working with the second graders preparing them for the Native American program.

The second graders performed and chanted the rituals of the Horse and Corn dances to their underclassmen in the gym.

"Footprints: a sacred one, over it the blades float in the wind, through it the blades push upward, through it the blades radiate, over it the ears lean toward one another, over it I pluck the ears, over it I bend the stalk to pluck the ears, over it the blossoms lie gray, smoke arises from my house, there is cheer in my house, I live in the light of day …" — the song of the Corn Dance.

The dance instructors, students of West Potomac Academy: Ingrid Amaya, Erin Eyler, Mandi Whetzel, Katie McCarn, Nina Suggs and Brittany Hall are laden with gifts from the Hybla Valley second graders at the end of Tuesday's recital.

Britney Hall is followed by her students in the dance sequence of being home and "the smoke rises from my house," in the corn dance. Corn was a food staple for Native Americans.

The State No One Wants To Be In

Residents feels at odds with Richmond legislature.

By Julia O'Donoghue
The Gazette

With more than a note of seriousness in his voice, Greg Schuckman brought up the idea of a Northern Virginia secession from the rest of the commonwealth.

"Richmond is always talking about Washington overextending its reach in matters like health care. But it is Richmond that overextends all the time," said Schuckman, a Lorton resident who is on the board of Northern Virginia Community College. He floated the idea during a town hall with state Sen. Toddy Puller (D-36) and Del. Scott Surovell (D-44) Jan. 23.

Those attending seemed generally pleased with Surovell and Puller's efforts in the Virginia General Assembly. Like Schuckman, they used "Richmond" as a euphemism for powerful rural state legislators, primarily conservative Republicans, whose agenda is often at odds with that of Northern Virginians.

Schuckman said Surovell, Puller and other local legislators should seriously consider submitting a bill that would promote Northern Virginia breaking away and forming its own state. If anything, the proposition would at least get the attention of the down state representatives, who rely on Northern Virginia for tax revenue.

Photo by Julia O'Donoghue/The Gazette

State Sen. Toddy Puller (D-38) met with constituents in Mount Vernon Jan. 23.

"The People's Republic of Northern Virginia," joked Surovell.

"I am sort of serious about this. … Fairfax County is already larger than some states," said Schuckman.

MOST OF the approximately two dozen people attending the town hall doubted that Gov. Bob McDonnell (R) or the Virginia General Assembly would keep the interests of Northern Virginia in

See Listening, Page 7

County Settles Lawsuit Over McIntosh's Death

During the Board of Supervisors' meeting Tuesday, Jan. 26, the board agreed to pay an undisclosed amount to settle a civil suit filed by parents of slain Fairfax county teacher's aide Ashley McIntosh against former police officer Amanda Perry.

Ashley McIntosh was killed on a rainy night at the corner of Route 1 and Boswell Avenue on Feb. 12, 2008 in a crash with Perry who ran a red light while on an emergency call.

The county's agreement to settle the civil suit rather than go to trial on Feb. 8 brings an end this case. County attorneys, who defended the former police officer — the officer was discharged after it was discovered that while on restricted administrative duty she was submitting false time and attendance reports — recommended, and the board agreed, to settle the suit filed by McIntosh's parents rather than go through a jury trial.

Perry was ruled grossly negligent and denied sovereign immunity in a bench trial on Aug. 12, 2009, in response to a suit filed by the parents and family of McIntosh.

— Gerald A. Fill

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On Stage

Aldersgate Church Community Theater presented "Disney's Mulan Jr." on Sunday, Jan. 24.

Photos by LaShawn Avery/The Gazette

Margaret O'Meara plays Mulan's mother.

Emma Ekman plays grandmother Fa.

Kelsey Davis plays Mulan in the "Disney's Mulan Jr."

Hyland: Let's Study Jail Costs

Supervisor Gerry Hyland, chairman of the Board of Supervisor's Public Safety Committee, said that during board matters Tuesday he would discuss the matter of prisoners incarcerated in the local jail because they can't post the bond to get out on bail. Many of these prisoners are in jail for minor non-violent offenses, he said, and the daily cost of keeping them in jail is $125. The state contributes only $14 toward their cost.

Hyland said he would ask the board to support a request to call on the Chief Judge and the Sheriff to look into the number of prisoners sitting in jail for minor non-violent crimes because they can't afford the bond. The number of prisoners, the average stay, and the cost per prisoner of their total stay would be studied.

The supervisor wants to find out what could be done about revising the bond requirements to facilitate movement of non-violent prisoners out of the jails in some circumstances, and cut costs in the process. He also pointed out that the county also is paying for prisoners to stay in the local jail who should be transferred to the state penitentiary, but the state is overcrowded and has no room.

Hyland recently returned from a national meeting where jail overcrowding and cost issue was discussed.

— Gerald A. Fill

Resale of Donated Items Aid Needy

From Page 1

can resell them and raise money for housing projects to provide the needy a decent and affordable place to call home. In addition, shoppers come here knowing fully well that their money will go directly for housing programs for the needy."

The local marketing and communications director for Habitat for Humanity, Virginia Patton, helped organize the promotional wellness day event, coordinate volunteers, and answer questions. She and the contingent of volunteers relished the spike in the busy day of shoppers coming in to purchase items and the number of people dropping off donate items. It was a busy and productive day for everyone.

The ReStore program has trucks available by appointment to pick up large heavy donated items in good condition such as a refrigerator, couch, desk, or bed. For others it is an opportunity to purchase used kitchen cabinets and other items at a discount and to know that the money is going directly toward building homes for the needy. Volunteers are always welcome.

Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity builds or renovates homes, apartments, and condominiums for use by qualified applicants who are in need of affordable housing. Habitat for Humanity ReStore is an important fund-raising effort which supports the overall program. In Northern Virginia there are two Habitat for Humanity ReStore programs (Alexandria and Chantilly) that collect and resell a selected number of preapproved items to individuals and organizations at 50-90 percent below retail value. Donated items are tax deductable.

The proceeds of the resold items are used to finance the building and renovation of homes for needy families. Locally, the funds raised by the two Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia ReStore sites will be used for a new housing project: to convert an existing apartment building in Arlington, called Perry Hall, into a 12-unit condominium.

ACCEPTABLE DONATION ITEMS

(Must be in useable condition)
- Building supplies
- Electrical and plumbing
- Electronics
- Flooring
- Hardware and tools
- Windows
- Kitchen cabinets
- Lumber
- Office furniture
- New and used appliances

Websites: www.restorenova.org and: www.habitatnova.org

Wellness Day Vendors

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- Simplify for Life; Residential & Business Organizing Services: Karen Gardiner
- GNC; Fitness Instruction/Personal Training: Jordan S. Moore
- Golds Gym: Fitness Training

Warning Signs: Calming or Confusing?

From Page 1

have long been concerned about the part of the road between Highland Lane and Buckman Road. In the last few years, this segment has logged eight pedestrian injuries and five pedestrian fatalities making it the most dangerous stretch of Richmond Highway.

"Anything that can get drivers off their cell phones and paying more attention to the road, that's a good thing," said Lt. Michael Wall of the Mount Vernon District Station. "On the other hand, these new signs and flashing lights don't do anything to make it easier to cross the street."

THE ORIGINS of the new pedestrian safety measures date back to spring of last spring, when Supervisor Gerry Hyland called for construction of an overhead mounted pedestrian warning signs between Highland and Buckman. Funding for the $235,000 project came from the state transportation safety fund. The overhead signs, which were installed in December, are essentially continuously flashing beacons at unmarked crossings.

"This innovative approach to improve pedestrian safety is new to Fairfax County, and will alert drivers that extra awareness of pedestrians is required," Hyland wrote in a board matter from March 30, 2009. "The installation of these signs is expected to improve pedestrian safety for those crossing Richmond Highway to access homes, businesses and bus stops."

The northbound sign is located between Highland Lane and Wyngate Manor Court, and the southbound sign is situated between Skyview Drive and Frye Road. That leaves about a half-mile zone between the flashing signs where drivers are on high alert to watch out for jaywalkers. While neighborhood residents acknowledge the need for increased pedestrian safety, the installation of flashing signs at unmarked crossings strikes many as a Band-Aid solution.

"This needs a comprehensive approach," said Kahan Dhillon, chairman of strategic planning for the Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations. "Taking care of one segment is not going to solve the problem."

Business Notes

Send announcements to the Gazette, by e-mail to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos and artwork encouraged. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

John A. Hurley has joined Republic Capital Access, LLC, in Reston as vice president. Hurley will focus on expanding RCA's funding program, RCAAdvantage, to companies providing products, services and training to the national security, homeland security and law enforcement communities.

Hurley is active in Mount Vernon area civic associations.

The new Fairfax Village Neighborhood Center in the residential villages of Fort Belvoir has achieved a Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design — New Construction (LEED-NC) Platinum rating, becoming the first facility in the U.S. military to achieve that status. It is also the second building in Virginia to earn the highest sustainable rating possible awarded by the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED rating system.

Tammy Razmic has joined Inova Mount Vernon Hospital as its new chief financial officer, bringing nearly 20 years of experience in healthcare finance, planning and budgeting to her new role.

Before joining Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, Razmic served as the assistant vice president of Finance for Health Services at Inova Health System. While in that role, she managed system-wide financial planning and budgeting, implemented new financial-management reporting software and developed reports for improved fiscal analysis. Razmic also managed finances for Children's National Medical Center in Washington, D.C., as their Director of Financial Services and Corporate Controller, overseeing audits, payroll, research grants, donor funds and other accounting practices. In addition, Razmic held the position of vice president of finance at Adventist HealthCare and at George Washington University Hospital, managing financial revenue, annual budgets and business plans.

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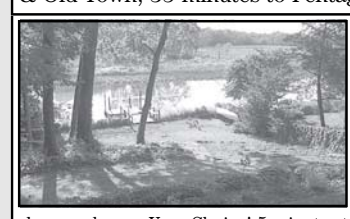

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Partners with CCH in the Haiti relief effort include: MedAssets; Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children; Missionary Flights International; and MTS Services.

"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 quicky as it can."

– Darrell Green, NFL Hall of Fame

Photo by © Cameron Davidson

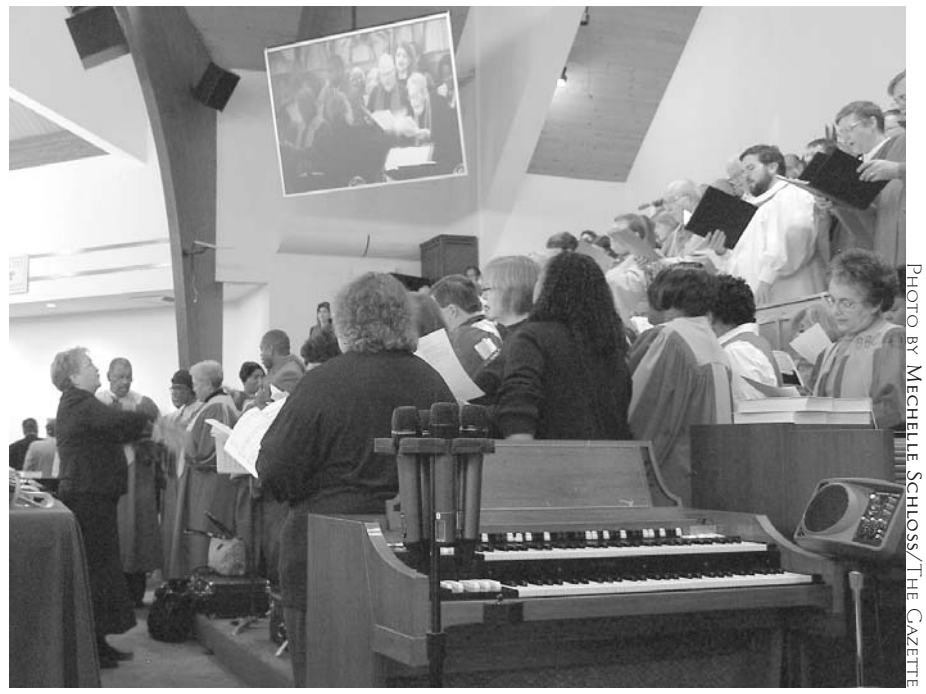

Photo by Michelle Schloss/The Gazette

Choir Festival **Dorie Arbach, music director, Metropolitan Washington Baha'i Chorale, leads the Mass Choir Sunday evening, Jan. 17, at annual Martin Luther King birthday celebration at Bethlehem Baptist Church.**

Obituary

Harry W. 'Murphy' Wright

Retired Naval Capt. Harry W. "Murphy" Wright, 75, currently from Alexandria and formerly of Watersmeet, Mich., died Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010, in Chicago, following a year-long illness.

Murphy was born Oct. 29, 1934, at the Marenisco Hospital to the late Harry and Genevieve (Codd) Wright of Watersmeet. He attended and graduated from the Watersmeet Township High School with the class of 1952.

On June 30, 1956, he married the former Edith Peterson, daughter of Harold C. and Violet Peterson of Watersmeet.

After attending Michigan Technological University in Houghton for two years, Murphy entered the Navy in October 1954 as a naval aviation cadet, and later obtained a bachelor's of science degree in 1963, and a master's of science degree in financial management in 1973.

Upon completing naval flight training in April 1955, he was commissioned an Ensign. After serving in various capacities in the U.S., in 1965 he reported for duty with Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron One at the Naval Air Station in Atsugi, Japan. His squadron, a vital unit of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, flew from attack aircraft carriers in the Gulf of Tonkin and the Da Nang Air Base in Vietnam.

In May 1971, Murphy became Commanding Officer of RVAH-11 in the Western Pacific. Following that tour he assumed command of Reconnaissance Attack Squadron Three at Key West, Fla., where he served until 1975 when he was assigned to Headquarters, Naval Electronic System Command, in Washington, D.C. There he served until retirement and was assigned duties in the command's project office for Electronic Warfare and Intelligence System Development.

In addition to numerous other service and campaign medals, Captain Wright retired from the Navy having earned the following Naval Decorations and Citations: 31 Strike-Flight Air Medals, three awards of the Navy Commendation Medal (with Combat "V"), Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal, six Navy Unit Citations, the Meritorious Unit Citation, the Vietnamese Air Gallantry Medal, and 14 Clusters to the Air Medal for meritorious achievement in flight recognition of his 329 support missions flown in connection with operations against North Vietnam.

Following retirement from the Navy, Murphy and his wife Edith made their home in Alexandria, Va., where until recent years Murphy was the proprietor of a successful equipment rental business, A&A Rental Station.

Murphy is survived by three daughters, Tamara (Robert) Deppen of Chicago, Kari Warren of Alexandria, Edith (Steve) Skidmore of Alexandria; nine grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Joyce Mott of Racine., Wisc., and Mrs. Bonnie Caron of Watersmeet; one brother, retired Captain Daniel (Barbara) Wright of Widbey Island, Wash.; two sisters-in-law, Susan Alexander and Karla Mirick; his best friends, retired Captain Lou and Olga Hettinger; and many nieces, nephews and cousins.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Edith Peterson Wright in 1998; his father, Harry W. Wright in 1970; his mother, Genevieve (Codd) Wright in 1992; a brother, Benjamin C. Wright in 1946; and a nephew, Michael Frahm in 2001.

Memorial services will be held at Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church (2001 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306) on Saturday, Feb. 6 at 10:30. Interment will be in Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, with full military rights accorded.

Listening to Constituents

From Page 3

mind during the 2010 legislative session.

For the past several years, Northern Virginia legislators have tried and failed to get a transportation package through the General Assembly that would eventually provide more road and transit funding to the region.

In general, the senate, where Democrats hold a majority, is opposed to passing a package without a statewide tax increase to fund transportation. In recent years, Puller, for example, has voted for bills that included an increase to Virginia's gasoline tax, which been a flat 17.5 cents since the middle of the 1980s.

But Virginia's House of Delegates, controlled by the Republicans, has refused to implement a statewide tax increase under any circumstances. In fact, several Democrats in the House, particularly those from rural areas, have also been opposed a hike in the gasoline tax, saying it would be difficult for their residents to afford.

SOME MOUNT VERNON community members are also opposed to gasoline tax increase, even if they believe taxes should be raised for transportation funding in general.

"I am really supportive of increasing taxes to help pay for services we need. But there are people that I work with in our community who can't really afford to put gasoline in their car right now," said Cynthia Hull, executive director of United Community Ministries, which provides social services to Mount Vernon's low-income residents.

Photo by Julia O'Donoghue/The Gazette

Del. Scott Surovell (D-44) held a meeting in Mount Vernon Jan. 23.

"If the gas tax goes up, the lowest income people suffer the most," said David Dale, a member of the Mount Vernon Council.

Surovell said he was in favor of bringing back the estate or "death" tax in Virginia to help deal with the commonwealth's general financial shortfalls, not just those related to transportation. He said the tax, which impacts families worth over $1 milllion, would not affect most of his constituents.

"I don't have a lot of people in my district with $1 million. This median income in this house district is $61,000, lower than any other House district in Fairfax County," said Surovell.

Week in Mount Vernon

Student Designs at Crystal Couture

West Potomac Academy Fashion Design students will be participating in the second annual Crystal Couture fashion event on Thursday, Feb. 4, sponsored by the Crystal City Business Improvement District.

Students will showcase a runway collection based on the Crystal Couture event theme — Jungle, Jeans, Tats, and Tees — from 6 to 10 p.m. They will also staff a boutique display area to sell prom gowns and original garments; all proceeds will benefit the West Potomac Academy Fashion Design program.

Events are free and open to the public. Available retail space at 23rd Street and South Crystal Drive in Arlington will be turned into a runway, boutique, and night club featuring fashion trunk shows, live theater, disc jockeys, comedians, and dancing. Local non-profit groups will also be on site to collect donations of new or gently used clothing and footwear. Representatives from Go Red for Women, an American Heart Association movement to teach about and prevent heart disease and stroke in women, will also be present.

New Officers, Board Members at SFDC

The Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation (SFDC) has elected new officers and has six new members appointed to its board of directors for 2010.

❖ Kyle Talente of RKG Associates was elected president of the board, succeeding Richard F. Neel, Jr. who had served as board president for the past eight years. Other newly elected officers include First Vice President John Thillmann of Landmark Atlantic Holdings, Second Vice President Roger Reutershan (retired), and Treasurer Steven Blanco of Virginia Commerce Bank.

❖ Nancy Lindgren of M&T Bank, Ed Rowan of Cox Communications, and Derek Sauerwine of Baywood Hotels were named to at-large positions on the board.

❖ The Mt. Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce named Jeff Todd of Roy Rogers and Philip Son of Sun Florist to the board.

❖ Mt. Vernon Supervisor Gerry Hyland appointed Tamara Wichelns of Hampton Inn & Suites Belvoir/Mt. Vernon to the board.

The Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation promotes the economic revitalization of Richmond Highway by assisting businesses in identifying and procuring property to suit their needs. Visit www.SFDC.org to learn more.

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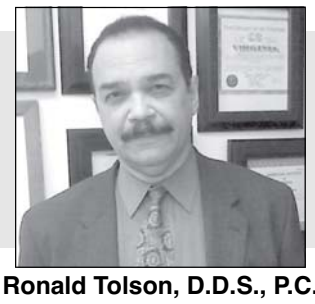
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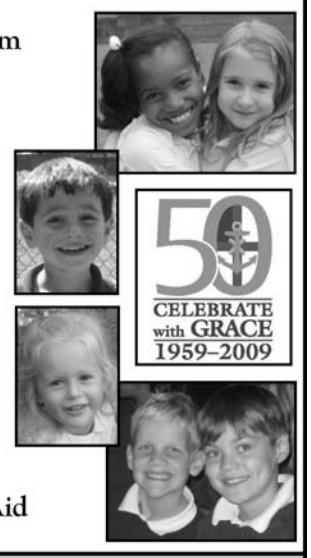
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News

Police Seek More Victims

From Page 1

information about John Hamilton."

In May, 2009 Hamilton, a former Bellevue neighborhood resident, was arrested. A Grand Jury indicted him, and a judge set bond, which was then revoked when Hamilton contacted one of the alleged victims. He was let out on bond a second time but the court failed to obtain his passport; Hamilton fled the U.S. He was supposed to have appeared in court to enter a guilty plea Oct. 7, 2009, but instead left the country in September 2009. Reports indicate he traveled to Frankfurt and then Mercerberg, Germany.

The Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association members and others within the community active in youth athletics have struggled with the revelations about Hamilton's misconduct which can be traced back to 1997 or earlier when he was a coach and umpire with the FHYAA. Initially, the charges were based on one victim coming forward in early 2009 to accuse Hamilton of sexual misconduct when the victim was 12 years old in 1997. Since then, according to Hinson, nine additional victims have come forward. Hamilton served for approximately 20 years in a youth league coaching or umpire capacity in Northern Virginia, and associated with hundreds of children as a result.

One parent currently involved in the youth league is exploring the possibility of convening a meeting of concerned parents in the Fort Hunt community to discuss the issue openly and candidly. The purpose of the meeting would be to educate parents on the subject, to encourage anyone who has knowledge of past misconduct by Hamilton or anyone else involving their or other children to come forward to advise the police, and to share their questions and concerns with others.

The Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association has, as of 2008, required all volunteer coaches to agree to a criminal background check before they are approved to participate in youth league activities in a supervisory role as a coach. In addition, Bob Burton, the president of FHYAA, described a current effort being considered by the Association to amend the Association By-laws to restrict or revoke the privilege of coaching if information is brought to the Association's attention that an individual's conduct is inimical to the best interests of the children who participate in youth league sports. The thinking is that even with a criminal background check someone could still slip through and be allowed to participate if there was no prior record of misconduct. The by-laws change would enable the Association to end a person's participation as a coach or other supervisory capacity for specific reasons due to present day behavior even with a clean background check.

America's Most Wanted television program is scheduled to review the Hamilton case as a special feature on an upcoming television segment on Feb. 27. They have issued an appeal encouraging anyone with information about Hamilton to come forward.

Anyone who has knowledge of Hamilton and his whereabouts is encouraged to contact Hinson at 703-246-7893, or the Fairfax county police department at: www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org

For the Record

Statement of the FHYAA regarding the arrest of John Hamilton:

"It is very painful for anyone who cares about children to hear of the allegations made against Mr. Hamilton. The fact that he was previously a coach in our program makes that pain even greater. We are committed to doing everything we can to assist the authorities in this case. Like all members of our community, we are saddened by the harm that has been reported to have come to the young victim." … "We have asked anyone in our program with further information that might assist the police to please come forward."

Excerpt of the FHYAA Criminal Background Check Policy initiated in 2008:

"Those persons who are determined by these checks to have adverse information (i.e., a "red-light") are prohibited from participating as coaches, commissioners, or administrators in any FHYAA program."

The full text of the FHYAA statement about John Hamilton and Part B of the Association's policy requiring criminal background checks is available on the Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association Web site: www.fhyaa.org

"I believe there are more victims out there who have yet to come forward."

— Detective Jeremy Hinson

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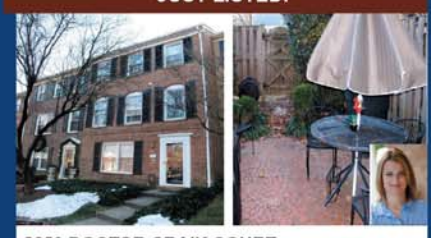

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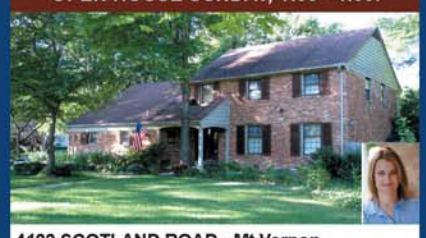

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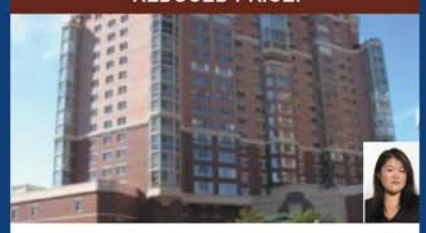

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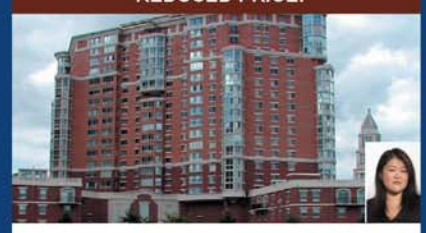

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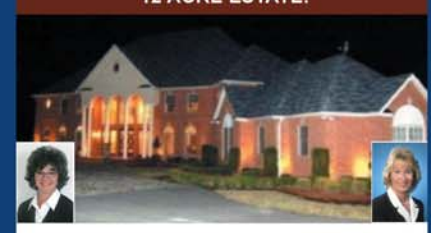

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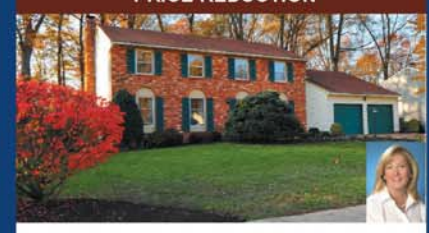

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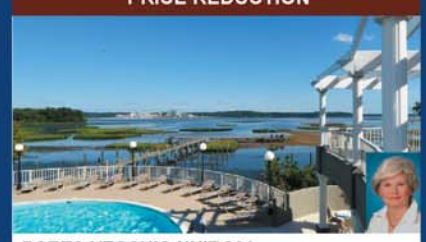

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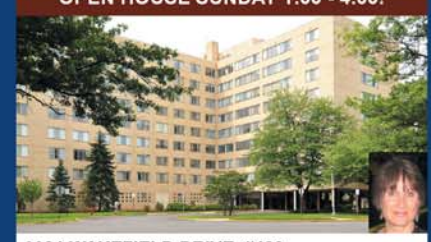

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Opinion

Time for Civil Redistricting

Governor campaigned on non-partisan redistricting; now is time for proposals in General Assembly.

Editorial

The U.S. Census is underway, an every-10-year process that attempts to count every single person in the United States at their home address. From the results of the count come a nearly infinite number of critical decisions. The way those decisions are carried out have consequences for every one of us.

One of those decisions is the redrawing of political lines for all political offices, including the General Assembly, U. S. Congress and local offices. In Virginia, the current process allows the political party in charge to draw the lines.

Proposals in the Virginia General Assembly could lead to a change in politics and democracy here. The measures would establish the Virginia Redistricting Commission to redraw Congressional and General Assembly district boundaries without the bitter partisan hatchet that has characterized Virginia' process under each party in the past.

Tradition in Virginia holds that the ruling party decides how to redraw the lines around political districts after each census. The process in the past has involved the majority party using its power without any checks or balances to create districts that protect incumbents of the majority party and try to force out incumbents of the minority party.

The losers in the process are the citizens of Virginia, who first find themselves in political districts that make little sense geographically or in terms of communities of interest. They then find that even if they are unhappy with their elected officials, the gerrymandering has created districts that have killed any competition between parties, and that each party strongly discourages any primary challenges.

The result: most voters have far less choice in who represents them than they should.

There are probably hundreds of ways to set up a commission or non-partisan board that would take the politics out of the process.

House Bill 323, introduced by Del. Ken Plum (D) of Reston, and Senate Bill 626, introduced by Sen. Jill Holtzman Vogel (R) pave the way for real reform and integrity in the political process.

— Mary Kimm,
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Summary of Redistricting Bill

"Bipartisan Redistricting Commission created. Establishes a seven-member temporary commission to prepare redistricting plans in 2011 and each tenth year thereafter for the House of Delegates, state Senate, and congressional districts. Appointments to the Commission shall be made one each by the four majority and minority party leaders of the House and Senate and by the state chairmen of the two major political parties. Those six appointees shall appoint the seventh member and chairman of the Commission. If they cannot agree, they shall submit the names of the two persons receiving the most votes to the Supreme Court for the Court to select the chairman. The Commission will prepare plans and submit them as bills to the General Assembly. The General Assembly shall then proceed to act on the bills in the usual manner. The bill provides for Commission comments on plans as they change in the legislative process. It also spells out the standards and process to be followed by the Commission in preparing plans, including limitations on the use of political data and opportunities for public comment on the plans."

Source: http://leg1.state.va.us/lis.htm

Letters to the Editor

Put Bounty On Bottles

To the Editor:

Thank you for Elizabeth Martin's recent letter, "Why Not Bottle Deposit Program?" I fully agree with her suggestion of a nickel deposit on beverage containers to help reduce the amount of trash that is despoiling the shores of the Potomac. Years ago I participated in the annual Alice Ferguson clean-up targeting an area of the river where I spent many hours as a youth — obviously this was before video games rendered outdoor play a form of punishment. Back then cans, bottles and the occasional tire littered the shores just as they do now but not in the numbers that I encountered during my clean up. I found the volume of trash shocking. And Martin's photo is but a snapshot of a much larger problem along our shores.

That is not to say the waters of the Potomac were pristine during the 1960s, when I was growing up. So dirty was the water that in 1965 President Lyndon Johnson referred to the Potomac as "a national disgrace." While I remember far less trash along the shore, the water was considerably more polluted because raw sewage emptied into the river. I can still remember the sultry days of summer when the stench would reach well into Waynewood. Nevertheless, as boys we fished and explored the beaches of the Potomac with stern parental warnings — and the threat of a tetanus shot — to stay out of the water!

Since then two events have colluded to transform the Potomac from "a national disgrace" to what it is today. The first was the Clean Water Act of the 1970s that initiated a much-needed expansion of the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant to handle the volume of wastewater that was overwhelming the system. The impact of Blue Plains on water quality was significant. Recreational and commercial activities soon returned to the river along with normal looking fish.

Clean water, however, was only part of the restoration story. Just when and how hydrilla was introduced to the Potomac remains a matter of contention, but it most likely entered American waterways from a home aquarium. Officials originally feared this non-native plant would create havoc for the Potomac just as it had done elsewhere. A bane to boaters and

See Letters, Page 18

Photo by Louise Krafft/The Gazette

Snapshot **Work in progress: Mary Washington Public Library on Fort Hunt Road.**

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A Connection Newspaper

Opinion

Fighting for Education Funding

By Scott A. Surovell
State Delegate

Since travelling to Richmond, I have been focused on getting Mount Vernon and Lee residents our fair share of resources from the state. Last week, I discussed my transportation initiatives including a U.S. 1 Transportation District and modernizing the Commonwealth Transportation Board by using current population instead of Virginia's 1932 population.

Most people and businesses move here for our quality schools. Fairfax County delivers education with some of the lowest administrative costs in the Washington D.C. area. School officials are predicting a $176,000,000 shortfall resulting in a series of historically unprecedented service "cuts" or what are really decisions to shift public responsibilities to Mount Vernon's families.

The State provides only 19 percent of our school budget because of Fairfax County's relatively strong economic showing under the state's Local Composite Index or "LCI" which weights our relative real property value, per capita income, and student population against the rest of the Commonwealth. Additionally, the LCI is "rebenchmarked" every year for changed economic conditions.

Governor Kaine proposed to delay rebenchmarking by one year to save $23 million. However, this costs Fairfax County $63 million and I oppose it. This proposal is an unprecedented breach of a long-term understanding that I wrote about two weeks ago. I have co-sponsored a budget amendment with Del. Dave Albo (R – Lorton) to restore this funding. I will fight for this as hard as I can.

I have also cosponsored legislation with Del. Vivian Watts (D – Annandale) to mandate a new formula that is fairer to Fairfax County. This also highlights Fairfax County's unequal taxing authority compared with cities or our neighboring jurisdictions. The City of Alexandria can tax non-residents with an events admission tax, a rental tax, a hotel tax, and a meals tax – Fairfax cannot. Because the City of Alexandria has more legal options, it only relies on residential real estate taxes for 31.5 percent of its revenue while Fairfax County relies on residential real estate taxes for 47.8 percent.

Each year, Fairfax County asks the state for equal taxing authority to more evenly spread its revenue burdens and take pressure off Fairfax County homeowners. Therefore, I introduced legislation to add Fairfax County to the other five counties (including Arlington) that can adopt a meals tax by a unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors. Restaurant meals are optional, a luxury, and are also paid by people who live outside Fairfax County – such as the one million annual visitors to Mount Vernon. This would generate $80 million per year and cover more than half the schools shortfall. A House Finance Subcommittee voted this bill down 6-2 this week, but I appreciate the support of Del. David Englin (D – Alexandria) who argued for us and gave his vote.

Next week's column, will focus on some of my government efficiency initiatives. Good government depends on your involvement and you can contact me, comment on legislation, or request a meeting on my Web site – www.ScottSurovell.org or read more of my views on my blog The Dixie Pig at ScottSurovell.Blogspot.com.

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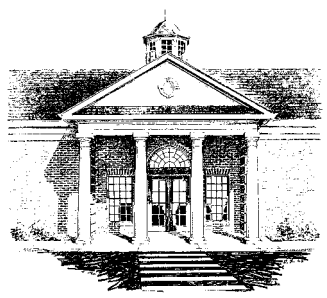

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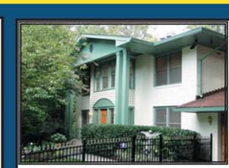
9316
Allwood Drive
$540,000
Stunning!

Home features bright, open floor plan with soaring cathedral ceilings in the main living area. This fabulous property has been substantially updated and is in absolutely impeccable condition. Gleaming hardwood floors, track lighting, finished lower level, garage and much more. Gorgeous setting on half acre tract fronting a quiet street in the heart of Mount Vernon. Open Sun 1-4. Pkwy S past Estate, L Ferry Landing, L Allwood to 9316.



3906
Rive Drive
$998,500
Stunning Property!

The most spectacular property you will ever find has been completely updated with breathtaking results! Bright & open floor plan, 3 fin lvls including full w/o LL, 4/5BR, 3.5BA, updated gourmet kitchen, stunning MBR suite and custom river view screened porch house with deck. Expansive glass window walls capture river views and natural beauty of almost full acre site.

7501
Park Terrace Drive
$1,150,000
Stunning!

Inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie style, this 1.13 acre property sits on a bluff overlooking acres of parkland with seasonal river views! Heart of redwood features, large room sizes, high ceilings and expansive glass window walls capture the natural beauty of the grounds. Off GW Pkwy just 3 miles from Old Town. (Adjoining 1.18 acre available for $975,000.)

4401
Jackson Place
$475,000
Special Value!

Spacious brick home on gorgeous half acre lot with open floor plan, hardwood floors, family room with fireplace, covered parking and extra driveway space. Fabulous custom deck overlooks magnificent level grounds. Rare opportunity to find a well maintained Mount Vernon home for under $500,000!

1208
Tatum Drive
$850,000
Villamay!

Magnificent Colonial in exceptional condition on one of prestigious Villamay's nicest streets! Three finished levels, large room sizes, updated kitchen and baths. MBR suite has private balcony which provides panoramic vistas of the area with seasonal river views. Elevated grounds afford the ultimate privacy with gorgeous custom pool.

4816
Stillwell Avenue
$525,000
Renovated!

Unique opportunity! Exceptionally large 5/6 BR home is located in a gorgeous setting on a ½ acre lot bordering acres of county parkland. Renovated throughout, it features an updated kitchen, refinished hardwood floors, finished lower level, in-law suite and large deck. A recently remodeled home of this size in a premier setting creates a truly one of a kind value!

4413
Ferry Landing Road
$559,900
Yacht Haven!

Recently installed top quality gourmet kitchen with custom cabinets & granite counters, hardwood floors, large deck & covered parking. Bright, open floor plan overlooks gorgeous half acre grounds in one of the area's leading waterfront communities! Less than 5 minutes from Ft Belvoir, GW Pkwy, Mt Vernon Yacht Club & Mansion House Club. Home warranty!

8108
East Boulevard Dr
$2,395,000
Premier Property!

Custom Boucher built classic on magnificent full acre lot just 3 miles to Old Town! Spacious residence with elegant Colonial detail, custom brick exterior, 3 finished levels, handcrafted cabinetry and brick work, gourmet kitchen, 4.5 luxurious baths, high ceilings, 4 frpls and 3 car garage. Magnificent private setting on professionally landscaped grounds, convenient to everything!

3102
Waterside Lane
$798,500
Waterfront Value!

Updated and expanded home on gorgeous elevated grounds overlooks Little Hunting Creek! Private dock, custom glass walled family room, updated kitchen with granite, stainless & custom cabinets, hardwood floors, two car garage and much more! Unique opportunity - do not miss out!

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8311 Mt Vernon Hwy

6616 E Wakefield Dr,
#B-2
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$260,000

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Alexandria
$649,000

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1691 HUNTING CREEK DR
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Oak Hill Estates/FFX
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7029 BEDROCK RD
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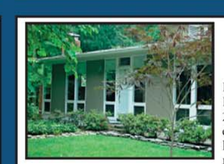

7800 ELBA ROAD
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Opinion

General Assembly Session Offers Some Challenges

By Toddy Puller
State Senator (D-36)

The 2010 Virginia General Assembly Session has begun. It will be a challenging Session as we try to find ways to make cuts to balance the budget.

Around 2,200 bills have been introduced. Of course, many of those will not be passed into law. On Saturday, Jan. 23, Delegate Scott Surovell (D-44) and I held a Town Meeting at the Mount Vernon Government Center that was well attended. Those in attendance asked thoughtful questions and expressed the needs of many of the people in our districts.

I have introduced a number of bills sought by constituents. As I discussed at the Town Meeting, the following are bills that may be of interest to many of you.

SB 31 and SJ 13 – Constitutional Amendment, property tax exemptions for certain veterans – SB 31 provides for a referendum at the Nov. 2, 2010 election to approve or reject an amendment requiring the General Assembly to provide a real property tax exemption for the principal residence of a veteran, or his or her surviving spouse, if the veteran has a 100 percent service-connected, permanent, and total disability. SJ 13 is the Constitutional Amendment that needs to be passed again this year to allow it to be placed as a referendum in the Nov. 2010 election. This Amendment was passed last year but Virginia law requires that it be passed two years in a row to be placed on the ballot for a vote.

SB 222 – Land use proposals; exempts localities and citizens groups from payment of certain Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) fees – This would allow VDOT and local governments to come together to work out agreements on the traffic impact that certain land use proposals may have. This would exempt fees from being imposed on citizens' groups, neighborhood associations or other non-profit groups when they propose comprehensive planning amendments.

SB 25 - Using transportation district trains without a valid ticket - Rewrites the Virginia code section that punishes unlawfully riding on a transportation district train without a valid ticket. It would make failure or refusal to pay the posted fare, or failure to properly validate a train ticket, as a Class 4 misdemeanor. Use of a fraudulent or counterfeit ticket would be a Class 2 misdemeanor. The bill limits the amount of recoverable costs to the amount of the maximum fine. (VRE has lost over $100,000 because of fraudulent tickets.)

SB 28 – Allows for criminal background checks including fingerprinting of applicants and employees of public transit services – This bill was requested by the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC). Three people were involved in a shooting in Prince William County resulting in one death. It was discovered one of the transit employees involved had a criminal record. Criminal background checks including fingerprinting would be required.

SB 221 – No community association shall prohibit natural drying devices (i.e. clotheslines) – Prevents community associations from prohibiting the installation or usage of a natural drying device on an owner's property after July 1, 2010. The bill provides that a community association may establish reasonable restrictions concerning the size, placement, duration and manner of placement of such natural drying devices.

SB 593 – Direct recording electronic machines (DRE's) for voting in localities - Presently, cities and counties are prohibited from acquiring new direct recording electronic machines (DRE's) for use in elections. The proposed bill would permit localities to obtain DRE's already owned by other localities for the purpose of providing accessible voting equipment used most often by disabled voters as required by Virginia and Federal law. (In the recent special State Senate election in Northern Virginia, 80 percent of voters chose DRE's rather than using scantron ballots.)

Budget Amendment to allow the Local Composite Index (LCI) for schools to be based on 2010 formula – I, along with other Northern Virginia legislators, have introduced a budget amendment to base the LCI on the current real estate market estimates rather then the higher older estimates. The LCI is used to measure a locality's "ability to pay" for K-12 education. In the outgoing Governor's plan to balance the budget, it was proposed to freeze the LCI composite. That would mean that Fairfax and Prince William counties would receive less education funding. If the freeze remains, Fairfax stands to lose about $61 million and Prince William about $24 million.

This session is challenging as we work to balance the budget while trying to protect the needs of the people of Virginia. Please let me hear from you with questions and issues of concern. My contact information during the Session is: Sen. Toddy Puller, General Assembly Building, Room 328, Capitol Square, Richmond, VA 23219; 804-698-7536; email: district36@senate.virginia.gov.

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Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) is accepting bids for the rehabilitation of the main building and restoration of the historic out buildings and related work at the Huntley Historic Site located at 6918 Harrison Lane, Alexandria, Virginia 22306. Bids are due Thursday, February 25, 2010, by 2:00 p.m. The project estimate is $1,900,000. Pre-bid Conference: Tuesday, February 9, 2010 at 11:00 a.m., at the Huntley Meadows Visitor Center located at 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria, Virginia 22306. Bid Documents may be obtained commencing Monday, February 1, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. from the Planning and Development Division, Fairfax County Park Authority, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fourth Floor, Suite 406, Fairfax, Virginia 22035. The Bid Documents may be purchased by check or money order made payable to the "Fairfax County Park Authority" in the non-refundable amount of $35.00 per set. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS: Federal funds are involved with this project and compliance with all Federal, State, and local laws, rules and regulations are required. Funding is being provided for this project by a National Park Service, Federal Save America's Treasures Grant.

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Arts ❖ Entertainment ❖ Leisure

Winter Shopping Event Set for Feb. 6

The Sixth Annual Boutique District Warehouse Sale, a one-day clearance spectacular featuring high-end boutique merchandise, will be held at the George Washington Masonic Memorial from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 6.

Local Theaters Earn Recognition

Nominations for Helen Hayes and WATCH Awards are announced.

By Brad Hathaway
The Gazette

Area professional theaters learned of their works' nominations for the coveted Helen Hayes Award for outstanding work on professional stages throughout the region on Monday night while the community theaters learned of the nominations for the Washington Area Theatre Community Honors (WATCH) Awards last week. Put together, work at 10 companies from Arlington and Alexandria received nominations.

With professional companies performing at many different venues, it is not always easy to tabulate how the work in one area fared. For example, while Arena Stage which performs both in Crystal City and in Washington, drew 10 nominations, only three of them were for work in Crystal City. However, they were in big categories: their production of the drama "The Quality of Life" was nominated for Outstanding Play, Outstanding Direction and outstanding Ensemble in a Play.

Similarly, Arlington-based Keegan Theatre received five nominations but they were all for a show performed in Washington. "Rent" was nominated for the Outstanding Musical and its directors Mark A. Rhea and Susan Marie Rhea, its musical director Aaron Broderick and actor Parker Drown who played "Angel" were also nominated.

Another company performing on both sides of the Potomac is Synetic Theatre, and again this year, they scored a host of nominations including three for choreographer Irina Tsikurishvili who continues her domination of that category having been nominated every year for the past dozen years, winning the award seven times. Her director/husband Paata Tsikurishvili, was nominated again this year as well. Resident designer Anastasia Ryurikov Simes also had multiple nominations in the costume design category. All together, the company drew 13 nominations including Outstanding Play for their wordless but charming "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

No such confusion is involved when it comes to the work at MetroStage in Alexandria which received seven nominations, six of which were for the musical "Cool Papa's Party" including one for Thomas W. Jones II who directed it and one for Maurice Hines who handled choreography. "Heroes," a touching three-character drama with Ralph Cosham, John Dow and Michael Tolaydo, was nominated for Outstanding Ensemble in a play.

Arlington's Signature Theatre which won last year's Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre had fewer nominations for the Helen Hayes award this year than it has in some years past. Among their eight nominations were nods in the direction of a num

See Theaters, Page 22

1 Actor - 35 Parts - 1 Incredible Story

Andrew Long tackles "I Am My Own Wife" at Signature.

By Brad Hathaway
The Gazette

Helen Hayes Award-Winner Andrew Long stars in "I Am My Own Wife" at Signature Theatre.

Even people who say they don't particularly care for solo performance shows because, after all, watching just one actor all evening long can often be something of a bore — find that the one-actor but 35-character play, which won the 2004 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, thoroughly engrossing and satisfying.

At least they do if the one performer is worth his salt and, in Andrew Long, Arlington's Signature Theatre found an actor who can hold the stage — and everyone's attention — for the full evening without seeming to resort to cheap tricks. His secret is that he trusts in the richness of the characters that author Doug Wright crafted in an effort to tell a most extraordinary story.

"I Am My Own Wife" is the story of Charlotte von Mahlsdorf who was born male in 1928 in what became East Germany, but chose to live life as a woman. Her passion was furniture, but her challenge was survival. First the Nazis and then the Communists cracked down on unorthodox life styles. In 1991, after half a century of surviving such repressions, she moved to Sweden to live out her final days. Ah, but what compromises did she really have to make to have survived the Third Reich and the Cold War?

Just covering such a multi-faceted story in one evening might be quite a challenge. But Wright found additional dramatic materiel in his own struggle to understand Mahlsdorf, so he wrote a play about his own efforts to research a play about Mahlsdorf. He structured it in such a way that one actor can play both the playwright and his subject as well as many people through whose memories the tale unfolds.

When the play was first produced in New York it earned a Tony Award for its one actor, Jefferson Mayes. When it closed on Broadway, Mayes took the show on the road, performing it in Washington at the National Theatre in 2005. Since then, local theater companies have found in it a property that can challenge an actor, a director and a design team and also can satisfy an audience while avoiding the expense of a large cast or multiple sets. In fact, the attraction to theater companies of such a potentially inexpensive show able to sell a good number of tickets has been so strong that a recent tabulation showed it to be one of the 10 most produced non-classic plays in the past 10 years.

Signature's production doesn't skimp in terms of talent. Andrew Long appeared at Signature in its somewhat strange production of "My Fair Lady" and its premiere of the musical "Saving Aimee." He is a classically trained actor who is well known to local theater lovers for many performances at the Shakespeare Theatre Company as well as notable roles at other local companies including Studio Theatre where he earned the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Actor in the searing drama "Frozen."

His is an almost subtle treatment of a very flamboyant script. It isn't that he shies away from the peculiarities of the multiple characters he has to bring to life, but rather he puts the emphasis on those characters and not on his transitions from one to the other. That way he avoids drawing undue attention to himself as an actor, and instead, concentrates the audience's focus on the story. And with a story this interesting and intricate, covering decades of challenges and deceptions, this concentration is a good thing.

Brad Hathaway reviews theater in Virginia, Washington and Maryland as well as Broadway and writes about theater for a number of national magazines. He can be reached at Brad@PotomacStages.com.

Where and When

"I Am My Own Wife" continues through March 7 in The ARK at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Avenue in Shirlington. Performances are Tuesday and Wednesday at 7:30 p.m., Thursday - Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 7 p.m. with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets are $47-$71. Call 703-573-7328 or log on to www.signature-theatre.org.

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Wednesday - All American Night
Meatloaf, Chicken Fried Chicken. Va. Ham

Thursday - Italian Night
Lasagna, Chicken Alfredo, Calamari

Friday - Fish Night
Crab Cakes, Shrimp & Scallops over penne pasta with white sauce

Saturday -Steak and Chop Night
Prime Rib, Lamb, Surf and Turf, Pork Chops, and Moussaka

Sunday
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Calendar

E-mail announcements to the Gazette, gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos and artwork are encouraged. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

ONGOING

The Kingstowne Area Artists' Association (KAAA) is looking for new members. The club meets once a month to network, socialize, learn from each other and participate in opportunities to show and sell its work. All visual artists, professional or hobbyists are welcome. Go to www.kingstoneartists.com. The group meets the second Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Kingstowne Active Adult Center, 6488 Landsdowne Center, Alexandria. Contact Ginny Wywyj at duchessducky@msn.com or Nancy Hannans at nancyhannans@yahoo.com.

The Del Ray Farmers Market is now open year round — located at the corner of Mt. Vernon Avenue and Oxford Avenue in Del Ray. During the winter months the market will be open 9 am to noon each Saturday. The Del Ray Market farmers that will be there are Smith Meadows meats, eggs, fresh pasta and sauces; Amish cheese, yogurt, bakery goods, eggs and jams and jellies; winter vegetables; fancy nuts; pralines; and bakery goods. Any questions, contact Pat Miller at pmiller1806@comcast.net.

Ms. Senior Virginia America is searching for candidates statewide for this year's May Pageant, which will be held Thursday, May 6 at the Lee Center Kauffman Center, 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria. Doors will open at 1:30 p.m. Showtime is 2-4 p.m. Admission is free with a donation of $10. A deadline for entries will be Feb. 8. Call 703-978-3663 and directions at 703-838-4343. The current Ms. Senior Virginia America, Maureen Ribble, will end her reign in May. The Pageant showcases women age 60-plus who live in Virginia and are U.S. citizens.

FRIDAY AFTERNOONS

Tea Dances. 1-3:15 p.m. Group class from 1-1:30 p.m. Ballroom, Latin and Swing music. $11/person. At the Dance Studio Lioudmila, 18 Roth Street, 2nd Floor (off Duke Street), Alexandria. Call 703-751-8868.

JAN. 28, FEB. 4 AND 11

18th Century Dance Classes. 7:30-9:30 p.m. Learn the dances of Jane Austen, George Washington, and Abigail Adams in Gadsby's Tavern Museum's historic ballroom. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street. Cost is $30/series or $12/class. Call 703-838-4242.

FRIDAY/JAN. 29

Balalaika Quartet Nalimov. 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $20/advance, $25/door. At the Lyceum. Go to www.balalaika.org or call 703-549-0760.

SATURDAY/JAN. 30

Comedy Night. 8 p.m. To say thanks for supporting Haiti with $7,000 last weekend at the charity yard sale in Del Ray. Some of the area's most promising comedic talent will be performing. Donations accepted. At 2413 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Contact Meghan Shapiro at 703-915-9594, shapiro.meghan@gmail.com.

Musical Extravaganza. 4 p.m. Free. Celebrating Alexandria's Sister City of Helsingborg in Sweden. The program features the "The Seven Sopranos", "Lucia Girls," a Helsingborg-based teen choir, the Alexandria Choral Society, "The Swedish Jazz Duo" and "The Groomsmen," Alexandria Harmonizers. Helsingborg's Mayor, Carin Wredström, will be in attendance. Helsingborg has been a Sister City of Alexandria since 1966. At Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-746-5588 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/arts.

SUNDAY/FEB. 14

Valentine's Day Concert. 7 p.m. With blues singer/guitarist and historian Scott Ainslie and David LaFleur. Tickets are $18 general, $15 in advance at FocusMusic.org. Part of the Focus Music Series. At Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beauregard St., in Alexandria. Contact: Kay Coyte at kay@focusmusic.org or 703-501-6061.

Book Signing. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Photographer Judy Heffner will be at A Show of Hands to sign her new book, "On the Avenue, Faces of Del Ray," which features Del Ray business owners. At A Show of Hands, 2301 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-683-2905 or visit www.ashowofhands.biz.

Seed Exchange. 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Hosted by Washington Gardener Magazine. Includes two lectures, a seed swap and more. Everyone will leave with a bag full of seeds. Cost is $15/person. Call 703-641-5173. Held at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria.

SUNDAY/JAN. 31

Mysteries of Orchid Pollination. 1:30 to 3 p.m. Come hear Tom Mirenda, Smithsonian horticulturalist, demystify orchid pollination. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Cost is $10 per person. Call 703-642-5173 to register.

Winter Dance Showcase. 1-6 p.m. At Dance Studio Lioudmila, a local dance studio specializing in competitive and social Ballroom Dancing. Features 20 different dances by amateurs and professionals. At 18 Roth St., Alexandria. Call 703-751-8868 or email: dancestudiolioudmila@hotmail.com.

Pruning Workshop. 2-4 p.m. Free. At the Alexandria Central Library, 5505 Duke Street, Alexandria. Visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us. Call 703-228-6423 or email to ex013mg@vt.edu.

"Love in the Time of Tamiflu." 3 p.m. Concert features Melissa Coombs, Bailey Whiteman, Terrance L. Johns, William Heim, Virginia Rice Sircy and Jon Kalbfleisch. At Trinity United Methodist Church, 2911 Cameron Mill Road, Alexandria. Call 703-549-5500 x103 or www.trinityalexandria.org.

Combo Fun with Cards and ATCs. Noon to 4 p.m. Create handmade cards for Valentines. Materials supplied with suggested donations. Artist Trading Card-ers are invited to trade/swap and participate in DRA's New Year's theme of What is "In" and What is "Out" for 2010. Contact Karen at schmityk@yahoo.com or Theresa at tkulstad@verizon.net or www.theDelRayArtisans.org. Del Ray Artisans gallery is located at 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria; call 703-838-4827.

Capitol Steps Benefit Show. 5 p.m. At the Knights of Columbus Hall. Hosted by the Friends of UCM. General seating is $40; and $70 with food and beverages. At Friends of UCM, 2009 Windmill Lane, Alexandria.

TUESDAY/FEB. 2

Braddock's March - A Pilgrimage of Destiny. 6 to 8 p.m. Author and Alexandria resident Thomas E. Crocker will speak about his new book Braddock's March. At Morrison House, 116 South Alfred St., Alexandria.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 3

Sea Chanters Chorus. 7:30 p.m. Part of the U.S. Navy Concert Band. Plays at Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria. Call 703-361-6599 or go to www.navyband.navy.mil.

FEB. 5 TO FEB. 21

Artioms. Artists are being challenged to express their favorite (or not so favorite) idioms, clichés, word phrases or play on words in their artwork.

See Calendar, Page 17

Wine Tasting Series at Lee-Fendall House Museum and Garden

Join the Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden for a series of four wine tastings, focusing on wines from Virginia, Argentina, California, and France. Tastings will be held on Feb. 11 (Virginia), Feb. 25 (Argentina), March 10 (California), and March 24 (France). All tastings will run from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. and will be led by Wilkinson Wine Cellar. The fee is $25 per person, per session. Participants can also sign up for all four sessions at a discounted rate of $75 per person. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 703-548-1789. Visit the Web site at www.leefendallhouse.org.

Calendar

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Reception Feb. 5 from 7-10 p.m. A prose reading by the Tuesdays at Two Writers Group is on Friday, Feb. 12, at 7 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans at the Nicholas A. Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org or 703-838-4827.

SATURDAY, FEB. 6

Historical Gala. 6:30-11:30 p.m. At the Holiday Inn Old Town, 625 First Street, Alexandria. Dance the night away for a good cause! Enjoy cocktails, dinner and dancing while supporting the City's historic sites. Tickets are $150 per ticket or $300 sponsor level.

Benefit for Haitian Relief. Ten Thousand Villages Alexandria is donating 15 percent of the day's sales to the Mennonite Central Committee, earmarked for Haiti.

Evening with the Chefs. Featuring prominent chefs from local restaurants showcasing their finest cuisine. Hosted by the Dunbar Alexandria Olympic Boys and Girls Club. Proceeds will benefit the club's youth programs. At the Belle Haven Country Club, Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Contact Dave Woodbury at 703-867-5570 or e-mail chefsdinner@cox.net.

Boutique District Warehouse Sale. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. A one-day clearance spectacular featuring high-end boutique merchandise from Old Town Alexandria's boutiques. At the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria.

John Carlyle's Birthday Celebration. Noon to 4 p.m. $5 admission. Costumed interpreters will be dancing and performing 18th-century music throughout the house. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Go to www.nvrpa.org or call 703-549-2997 or e-mail carlyle@nvrpa.org.

Family Fun Flower Power: Blooming Branches for a Winter Bouquet. 2-3 p.m. Get a jump on the seasons by forcing flowers. Learn to cut branches of flowering trees and shrubs and coax them to bloom indoors for an early spring! $18/project includes branches and containers. At Green Springs Gardens.

Alexandria Coin Show. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be 50 tables with U.S. coins and currency, world coins, banknotes, ancient coins, hobby books, gold, silver, medals, tokens and collectibles. Prizes and coins are given away. At the Hampton Inn & Suites on the corner of the I-495 beltway and Route 1, Alexandria. Visit the Alexandria Coin Club Web site at: www.members.cox.net/alexandriacoinclub.

SUNDAY/FEB. 7

Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic. 3 p.m. Free. Pre-concert lecture at 2:15 p.m. Ulysses S. James, Music Director. At Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria.

Super Bowl Party. Mayor Euille's 13th annual Super Bowl Party. At Joe Theismann's Restaurant, 1800 Diagonal Road, Alexandria. Tickets are $35/free agent; $60/Top Draft Pick; $100 Hogette's Rate (family of four). Call 703-751-7970 or contact www.euilleformayor.com.

Jazz Leanings. 2 p.m. United States Marine Band performs. With Michael Mower and Michael Colgrass. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, NVCC, Alexandria Campus, 3001 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria. Call 703-845-6156 or www.schlesingercenter.com

Managing Wildlife Conflict. 1:30-3 p.m. Are you having troubles with deer and rabbits feasting on your garden? This is the lecture for you. Victoria Monroe, Wildlife Biologist for Fairfax County will discuss strategies for managing wildlife conflicts in your garden. $10. At Green Springs Gardens. Call 703-642-5173 to register.

TUESDAY/FEB. 9

Ars Choralis. Recruiting singers in all sections for a concert featuring Ars Choralis. The concert is entitled "Spirituals and All That Jazz." Rehearsals from Tuesday, Feb. 9 through Sunday, April 18. The concert will be performed twice: Saturday, April 17, 7 p.m. and Sunday, April 18, 7 p.m. Rehearsals are 7:45-9:45 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 South Pitt St., Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-549-3312 or email douglas@stpaulsalexandria.com.

Books to Film Discussion Group. 7 p.m. Readers and movie buffs are invited to talk about the film, "The Accidental Tourist" (1988), based on the novel by Anne Tyler. All should read the work and view the movie before attending. At Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Call Mark at 703-519-3498.

Fine Arts

JAN. 30 THROUGH MARCH 1

"Winter Thaw." Oils by Nikolai Antyuchin (Moscow). At the von Brahler Ltd./Gallery, 1437 Powhatan Street, North Old Town, Alexandria. Opening weekend Saturday and Sunday, Jan 30, Feb. 1, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call Bob Murray at 703-798-8686.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 31

Ceramic Artistry. With clay artists from Washington's Ceramic Guild showing their wares. At Scope Gallery, Studio 19, 101 North Union Street, Alexandria. Hours are Monday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., with Thursdays open until 9 p.m. Call 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope.

NOW THROUGH FEB. 1

"Timbuktu." Kathleen Stafford's Solo Artist Exhibit at The Art League Gallery. Stafford spent 18 years immersed in African culture. "Timbuktu," her solo artist exhibit at The Art League Gallery, celebrates the compelling people she met and the brilliant textures and colors of West Africa through her unique artistic process. The Art League Gallery, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Call 703-683-1780, www.theartleague.org.

NOW THROUGH FEB. 5

East to West Landscapes. Works by Mary Anne Warner in the Tyler Gallery, Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria Campus. Tyler Gallery is located at 3001 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria. Call 703-845-6239.

Theaters Earn Recognition

From Page 19

ber of performers including four for "Show Boat," Harry A. Winter, Will Gartshore, Kimberly Schraf and Delores King Williams, as well as a nomination for the entire ensemble. Both John Dosset and Ashley Robinson were nominated for "Giant" and Holly Twyford drew three nominations at three different theaters including one for her work in Signature's "The Little Dog Laughed."

We have a robust community theater scene as well. The Washington Area Theatre Community Honors organization presents its WATCH Awards each year for exceptional work in as many as 30 theater companies — five of which are in Arlington and Alexandria. All five of them received at least one nomination for work in 2009.

Drawing the most nominations among the five was the Little Theatre of Alexandria where work on seven different shows was nominated. Top of the list was the Little Theatre of Alexandria with 27 nominations for work on seven different shows. The play about Oscar Wilde's prosecution for "Gross Indecency" had nine nominations including Outstanding Play and a nomination for the director, Frank D. Shutts II. "It Runs in the Family" was also nominated for Outstanding Play and its director Roland Branford Gomez received one as well. In all, it drew six nominations. Three of LTA's productions had three nominations each, "The Foreigner," "Leading Ladies" and "Art of Murder" while "Gypsy" had two and "Greater Tuna" had one.

The Arlington Players productions garnered 18 nominations with by far the majority going to their production of "Follies" which will compete for awards as the Outstanding Musical as well as Outstanding Direction of a Musical (Christopher Dykton). Their other musical, "Bye Bye Birdie," captured five nominations while "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" drew one.

DOMINION STAGE'S production of "Glorious!" had two nominations and "Jeffrey" one while two Port City Playhouse production each had one and the Aldersgate Church Community Theatre's "Inherit the Wind" resulted in a nomination for James Day for Outstanding Cameo in a Play.

The WATCH Awards will be given out at the annual gala ceremony at the Birchmere on March 14. The Helen Hayes Award ceremony will be April 5 at the Warner Theatre in Washington followed by a party at the JW Marriott Hotel half a block away.

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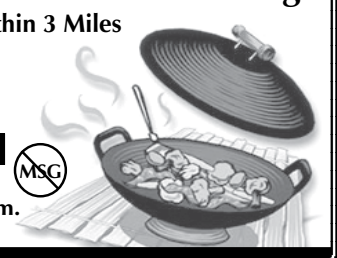

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From Page 10

a threat to native water plants, the ubiquitous nature of hydrilla enables it to choke off both! Of course, that is assuming you have a river that is hospitable to boaters and aquatic life. Back when the Potomac was functioning as an open sewer only the most robust organisms survived its mucky waters and recreational boaters were crazy to ply the river without biohazard suits.

Exotic plants and animals will always find a way into our ecosystem however. The most recent and infamous example is the toothy Frankenfish found locally in Dogue Creek. But as hydrilla spread, surprisingly a number of benefits followed. Birds previously not seen on the river began to appear. Species of geese, ducks and swans that had sense enough to bypass the river when I was growing up began to make the Potomac their home. With clean water and plenty of hydrilla to eat, the only threat facing our feathered friends now is birdshot on Saturday mornings. Credited with stabilizing the river bed and serving as an avian welcome mat, hydrilla also oxygenated the water and provided young fish a refuge from predators.

But the redemption of the Potomac is not complete. One last event remains unfinished and it involves dealing with the steady stream of cans and bottles that flow into the river from storm drains throughout the region. Placing a nickel bounty on these items will help along with other efforts to mitigate the debris. We owe it to others before us, and the progress they have made, to finish the task.

Thomas M. Beattie
Mt. Vernon

Out-of-State Litterers

To the Editor:

In the Jan. 14 edition of the Mount Vernon Gazette, Stratford Landing resident Elizabeth Martin suggests that Virginia "needs a beverage container deposit law in order to reduce litter waste, especially in Virginia streams and rivers and the Chesapeake Bay." As one justification for this proposal, Ms. Martin cites the commendable work over the past decade of her unincorporated association, Friends of Little Hunting Creek, picking up bottles and trash from Little Hunting Creek. But where are those bottles coming from? Over 90 percent of the shoreline of Little Hunting Creek is either privately owned or is part of the George Washington Parkway National Historic Park. Residents living on the Creek are not throwing bottles and trash into their own backyard. The Creek is a tidal body of water connected to the Potomac River, most of which is in the State of Maryland. As one of those waterfront property owners, I note that it is a daily occurrence to see bottles and trash floating by as the tide comes in. Adding a layer of bureaucracy and expense where much of the problem comes from out of state will not solve the problem. Moreover, the less fortunate will see the increased up-front costs of buying bottled beverages become one more expense they can't afford. Fairfax County has an extremely effective recycling program. There are also laws against littering. They should be strictly enforced.

Michigan has been struggling with its bottle refund law with people from out of state bringing bottles in for refund where they didn't purchase the beverage in Michigan. Since Northern Virginia is in close proximity to West Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, this is an issue that must be addressed. Making drink manufacturers provide special markings for beverages delivered to Virginia places a heavy burden on them. Only a handful of states provide refunds for water bottles. As reported by MSNBC.COM on Oct. 26, 2008, rather than benefiting the environment, Michigan's bottle deposit law carries a $10 million a year deficit from people coming from out of state to obtain reimbursement for their bottles that they didn't purchase in Michigan. Again, let's let our current laws work and strictly enforce them.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

Undermine Public Schools?

To the Editor:

Hats off to the Mount Vernon Gazette for its coverage of Fairfax County's budget challenges. Your articles, editorials and letters to the editor help all of us make informed decisions.

Jay McConville's Jan. 21 letter was less helpful. After a 2009 campaign promising unidentified "creative solutions," he now proposes to cut county employees' and teachers' salaries and benefits in a state where teachers' salaries are already below the national average and in a state that ranks ninth in per capita income.

A major reason Fairfax County has high-quality schools is that we offer salaries and benefits that attract and retain talented teachers. Everyone knows that a quality teacher is the heart of a strong education system. And being able to retain teachers is critical. Frequent teacher turnover can cause turmoil in a school and be very disruptive to children's learning.

Mr. McConville again returns to his mysterious "creative solutions" mantra by calling for a "firm commitment to address the systemic problems in our budget" and he wants to "address the entire budget," but he does not tell us what his other solutions are in a year that Fairfax County must cut nearly $1 million per school and $1,000 per child from the budget.

Del. Scott Surovell was elected in the Mount Vernon area to reform state education funding formulas and fight for the state funds our schools deserve. He has cosponsored both bipartisan legislation and budget amendments to do just that in Richmond right now. Cutting teacher salaries and benefits would undermine our schools, not strengthen them.

Ron Brandt
Alexandria

Correction

To the Editor:

In my letter to the editor published last week, I said that at the Jan. 12 meeting of the West Potomac High School PTA, Del. Scott Surovell had said he favored increasing the BPOL tax and adding a restaurant meals tax. This was based upon a report I had received from what I considered to be a credible source who had attended that meeting. I spoke with Delegate Surovell subsequently and he confirmed his support of the meals tax, but told me that he had not stated he favored raising the BPOL tax. Rather, he informed me that, during a discussion of the State's contribution to our Board of Education based upon the Local Composite Index (LCI) that represents a locality's ability to fund public schools and forms the basis for the State's contribution, he had explained that the BPOL tax is one of the few revenue sources under control of Fairfax County. I thought it was only fair and appropriate to report what Delegate Surovell told me.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

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Mount Vernon Gazette Sports Editor Jon Roetman
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Leadership Important for Point Guards

Mount Vernon senior returns after questioning desire.

By Jon Roetman
The Gazette

Jalinda Venable figured to be an integral part of the Mount Vernon girls basketball team's quest to repeat as National District champions in 2010.

The senior point guard had talent: "She sees plays two and three seconds before they actually happen," Mount Vernon head coach Terry Henderson said before the season in the Dec. 3 edition of the Gazette. "Sometimes she's actually putting the ball in places girls should be and just haven't made it there yet."

She had credentials: Venable garnered first team All-National District honors her junior season.

But she didn't have desire.

Venable practiced with the Majors in late November but decided she no longer wanted to play around one week before the team's Dec. 4 season opener at West Potomac.

"I felt like this wasn't what I was meant to do," Venable said Tuesday. "My heart wasn't in it."

Venable missed Mount Vernon's first three games — the Majors went 2-1 — before being convinced she belonged on the hardwood. It wasn't so much a rush of desire that returned Venable to the Majors, but rather a realization that working hard in an area of ability would better her tomorrow. Venable has a goal of going to college.

"After awhile people talked to me about it and I realized it's not so much what I want to do now but it will help me in the future, so I decided to keep on playing," Venable said. "A lot of people stayed on top of me [saying], 'If you're so good, why don't you want to play? Why would you waste talent?'"

Venable joined the Majors for their trip to California for a holiday tournament Dec. 26 and 28-30 at Oaks Christian School in Westlake Village. As one of Mount Vernon's best players and its point guard, Venable is in a leadership position. After missing three games, however, Venable felt like a hypocrite upon her return.

"I felt like at one point I let them down," she said. "Who am I to be like, 'You need to work hard.' But they respected me so I just kept leading."

Venable said the close-knit nature of the Majors helped ease her transition.

"It was awkward to a certain extent, but at the same time all my teammates had talked to me and really wanted me to be back on the team," she said. "We're like a family so it was easier for [me] to come back. We're real close to each other so it wasn't that hard."

Henderson said the team responded well to Venable's return.

"I think the girls accepted her back," he said Tuesday. "Jalinda is the type of person — I'd like her to be more of a leader in practice [rather than just during games] — she does look out for other girls' feelings. Just coming back, she probably didn't feel she demanded that respect. But she's Jalinda Venable. It was an awkward situation that we went through but every team goes through a little adversity. We weathered the storm and we're ready to roll."

Mount Vernon has won eight of 12 games since Venable came back. The Majors are 10-5, 7-2 in the National District.

On Tuesday, Mount Vernon hosted its biggest threat to the district crown: Edison, which won five straight titles before last season. Edison was led by National District MVP Myisha Goodwin, the one point guard in the Northern Region Henderson said he considers superior to Venable. The Eagles prevailed, 62-59, and Goodwin outscored Venable, 23-13. The two rarely defended one another. Regardless, Venable's talent's were on display as she knocked down a pair of 3-pointers, scored on several drives to the basket and her quickness made her a defensive presence. She isn't knocking down as many perimeter shots as Henderson would like, but the coach is confident her shots will start to fall.

"She's a point guard that can score," Henderson said. "One of her best attributes is she sees the floor extremely well. … She can flat out score. We'll take those wide-open 3s. They haven't been falling. That's good and bad. Right now, they're not falling, but the more she keeps shooting them and [keeping] that confidence going, they're going to fall when we need them to."

Venable said she didn't get caught up in the pressure of facing Edison or Goodwin.

"[Last season I did], but then I just took it as another game,"

See Playing, Page 20

Photo by Louise Krafft/The Gazette

Mount Vernon point guard Jalinda Venable, a first-team All-National District selection last season, is back playing at a high level after missing the first three games of the season.

Sports Briefs

Majors Beat Edison

Led by 28 points from Jesse Konadu, the Mount Vernon boys basketball team defeated Edison 68-59 on Tuesday. The team improved 12-3, 8-1 in the National District.

Skylar Jones scored 15 points for the Majors and Sean Stewart added 14.

Mount Vernon also beat Washington-Lee 81-58 on Friday. Robert Smith scored a team-high 16 points. Konadu and De'quan Doyle each had 12 points. Eleven different Majors scored at least one point.

Mount Vernon hosts Wakefield at 7:45 p.m. Friday.

MV Girls Fall Short Against Edison

The Mount Vernon girls basketball team missed a potential game-tying 3-point attempt in the closing seconds during a 62-59 home loss to Edison. The Majors fell to 10-5, 7-2 in the National District — both district losses came against Edison.

"If we had been playing that hard all year and that type of basketball all year, this would probably be our first loss," Mount Vernon head coach Terry Henderson said. "The regular season doesn't really mean a thing. … It's going to be us and Edison in the district championship game. If we win that game, this [loss] is out the window. It's about getting that No. 1 seed from the district tournament. They know from this game tonight that we can beat them."

Tracy King led Mount Vernon with 15 points. Jalinda Venable scored 13 points for the Majors and Jasmine McDonald added nine.

Mount Vernon travels to face Wakefield at 7:45 p.m. Friday.

West Potomac Boys Lose to South County

The West Potomac boys basketball team lost to South County 73-61 at home Tuesday. The loss dropped the Wolverines to 9-7, 5-4 in the Patriot District.

Daryl Copeland led the Wolverines with 29 points. Martez Redfearn and Keevyn Hankins each scored 11.

The Wolverines beat Lee 64-62 on the road Friday. Shawn Lee knocked down a pair of free throws with 2.3 seconds remaining for the win.

West Potomac hosts Lake Braddock at 7:30 p.m. today.

Fort Hunt Softball Registration

Registration for Spring Softball is available. Prior to registering a child for a Fort Hunt Spring sport, review the Spring 2010 Season information for the sport. See the "Softball" link at the top of the fhyaa.org Web site for information on the softball program. Register online at fhyaa.org. For questions about the spring softball season, contact Commissioner Ilene Dranoff (fthuntsoftball@yahoo.com).

Fort Hunt Baseball Registration

Registration for Spring Baseball is available. Prior to registering a child for a Fort Hunt Spring sport, review the Spring 2010 Season information for the sport. See the "Baseball" link at the top of the fhyaa.org Web site for information on the baseball program. Register online

See Sports Briefs, Page 20

Playing Point Guard

From Page 19

Venable said. "I have to do what I have to do regardless of who we're playing or if the other team has a good point guard. My team needs me. I'm not going to change how I play just because I'm playing against another good point guard."

DEALING WITH PRESSURE

Few know more about dealing with pressure than Bishop O'Connell point guard Kendall Marshall. As a sixth-grader, the Dumfries, Va., native garnered media attention when an editor of an online publication ranked Marshall the nation's No. 1 recruit for that age group. As a high school sophomore, Marshall committed to the University of North Carolina. As a senior, Marshall is the nation's No. 22 overall recruit in the class of 2010 and the No. 6 point guard, according to ESPN.com.

While Marshall plays a position which attracts the focus of others, the 6-foot-4 left-hander has faced scrutiny longer than many could imagine.

"It's tough. That's probably one of the hardest things for me as I've grown up — since I was 12 years old. I've always been in the spotlight," Marshall said. "You just have to keep working hard and be able to get through that because at the end of the day, people are going to criticize you. The more you're in the spotlight, the more they're going to be nitpicky, the more they're going to notice all the [bad] things instead of the positive things you do, so you just have to be able to stay positive and work hard."

Marshall said he felt more pressure once he committed to North Carolina.

"I had that target on my back now," he said. "All eyes are on me every time I step on the court. People whisper behind your back, they're talking about you: 'That's the kid right there.' So I just have to go out and perform every night."

Marshall has the ability to score, but makes his biggest impacts distributing the ball, playing defense and being a leader.

"I approach every game, first of all, thinking I'm going to win," he said. "You have to go into the game with that mentality. … Second of all, I have to put my team on my back. Not scoring-wise, but to put them all on the same page. … It takes a lot of confidence. … [There is] a fine line between being cocky and confident. You have to be able to yell at a player and realize off the court you all are still going to be cool, but he can hate you … on the court. He will follow you if you tell him the right thing."

Dr. Keith Kaufman, a Washington, D.C. therapist specializing in sports psychology, said the best way for a point guard to deal with pressure and be a successful leader is to maintain balance in his or her approach.

A point guard should "be decisive and confident but at the same time be balanced and incorporate as many facets as possible," Kaufman said. "… Basketball players like to get really fired up but they need to make sure they're not too fired up so they're making good decisions and thinking clearly. … [A point guard should] express confidence and decisiveness but at the same time survey the opinions of teammates. … If you have a point guard who isn't buying into what the rest of the team is doing that can create a lot of problems."

Sports Briefs

From Page 19

at fhyaa.org.

For questions, contact the appropriate baseball representative: President Paul Murphy (FortHuntBaseball@msn.com) or Registrar Jeff Lerner (fhll.registrar@verizon.net).

Fort Hunt Lacrosse Registration

Registration for Spring Boy's and Girl's Lacrosse is still available. Prior to registering a child for a Fort Hunt Spring sport, review the Spring 2010 Season information for the sport. See the "Lacrosse" link at the top of the fhyaa.org Web site for information on our lacrosse program. Register online at fhyaa.org. For questions about the spring Lacrosse season, contact: Boys Lacrosse Commissioner John Stamos at fhboyslax@gmail.com or Girls Lacrosse Commissioner Patrick Condon at forthuntgirlslax@gmail.com.

NoVa Lacrosse Registration

NoVa West Lacrosse is currently registering for its summer select teams which include U11, U13, U15 and three levels of High School play. For more information about these elite summer select teams visit http://novawestlax.com/Team/index.asp. For more information about summer clinics, camps, personal instruction and leagues, visit http://novawestlax.com.

Umpires Needed

Northern Virginia Baseball Umpires Association (NVBUA) is in need of officials for baseball and volleyball. Umpires are needed for colleges, men's leagues, high schools and youth recreational leagues. Experience is helpful but not required. 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 Washington D.C. Metro area. Support your local community's sports leagues by signing up. Call Ken Williams (703-400-3232) for more information or go to umpires.org to fill out a "New Ump" form.

Umpires Needed for Adult Slowpitch Softball

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

NoVA Flash Softball Looking for Players

The NoVA Flash, a 14U fast-pitch girls softball travel/tournament team, is looking to add a few committed players from the Northern Virginia area for the 2010 Spring-Summer season. Formed late last summer, the Flash participated in four tournaments during the Fall 2009, compiling a record of 12 wins and 7 losses, with one second place tournament finish. At least one additional pitcher is needed to augment the current staff, as well as defensive players with solid skills and strong bats. The Flash uses practice fields in the McLean area. Players, 13 or 14 years old as of Dec. 31, 2009, who are interested in learning more about the NoVA Flash or arranging a tryout during Saturday afternoon winter batting practices should contact coach Mike Wheat at wheatsbaseball@aol.com, or by calling 703-966-3805.

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Angry Over School Funding

Supervisors weigh legal action.

By Veronica Garabelli
Capital News Service

Gov. Bob McDonnell's plan to continue using an education funding formula that takes money from more affluent school districts and gives it to less affluent ones has so upset Fairfax County supervisors that they are considering legal action.

"This is really a cut-and-dried issue," said Jeffrey C. McKay, supervisor for the county's Lee District. "It's outright discrimination against Northern Virginia."

McDonnell's decision will cut $61 million from the Fairfax County Public Schools' budget, said Paul Regnier, a spokesman for the school district.

According to the school system's Web site, Fairfax County's schools budget for the 2010 fiscal year is $2.2 billion – so the funding cut amounts to 3 percent of the budget. Regnier said that could mean larger class sizes, the elimination of full-day kindergartens or the curtailment of foreign language emergence services.

McDonnell's office confirmed Friday that he would uphold the use of the school funding formula proposed in December by then-Gov. Tim Kaine.

Details will be given to agency heads next week, McDonnell's press secretary, Stacey Johnson, said in an e-mail to Capital News Service.

State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) said he was furious when he heard the formula would be frozen at the level set by Kaine.

Petersen noted that because the real estate market had fallen in Northern Virginia, Fairfax, Prince William and Loudoun counties received lower scores on the scale than they had in the past. Ordinarily, the lower scores would have resulted in more money from the state for basic education.

"Now, thanks to the plan that was put forward by Gov. Kaine, the rules are being changed on us," Petersen said.

On Jan. 12, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted 10-0 to look into legal action if the McDonnell administration upheld the freeze in the school funding formula.

The formula is called the Local Composite Index, or LCI. It determines which localities can pay the most for basic kindergarten-through-12th-grade education and which ones cannot. It is calculated using adjusted gross income, taxable retail sales and true value of real property.

This year, Fairfax's score went from .76 to .71; Loudoun fell from .67 to .58 and Prince William dipped from .44 to .40.

That should have meant more money for those school districts. However, Kaine — and now McDonnell — decided to freeze the formula at the previous scores.

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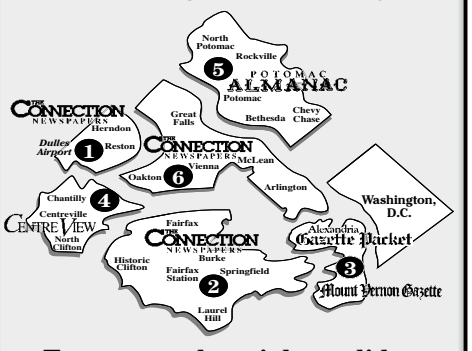

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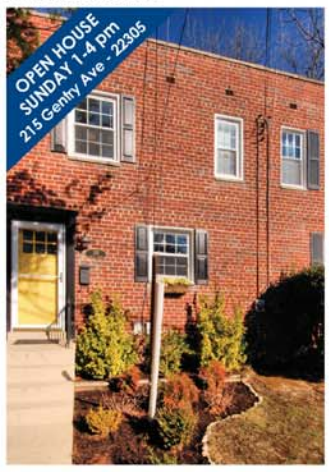

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