

Tyler and Courtney Walters, ages 8 and 5, respectively, enjoy the chocolate fountains provided by Capitol Chocolate Fountains at the 19th annual Chocolate Lovers Festival.

Longest Serving Deputy Retires

NEWS, PAGE 4

Chocolate City

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New Homes For 9 Families

NEWS, PAGE 3

PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION CALENDAR, PAGE 6 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 10 ♦ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 16

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Meeting 'Good Start' on Budget Review

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) hosts budget town hall meeting Tuesday, March 9.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) knows that this year's budget situation will be one of the most contentious in recent memory, so, like Uncle Sam, he wants you.

Cook hosted the first of four budget town hall meetings at Braddock Hall Tuesday, March 9, reaching out to his constituency for their opinions and concerns for the FY 2011 budget. The purpose of the first meeting, attended by Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large), Park Authority Director John Dargle Jr. and approximately 25 Braddock District residents, was to familiarize area residents with the budget.

"I came here just trying to understand the budget," said Mike Pereo of Burke. "I'm trying to learn enough so that I'll know what to be concerned about."

To help give the attendees a better sense of the budget's issues and statistics, Cook invited budget analysts Christina Jackson and Katie Horstman from the county's De-

partment of Management and Budget to lead the meeting. Jackson and Horstman gave a presentation that outlined all of the main facets of County Executive Tony Griffin's advertised budget, such as the \$257.2 million shortfall, the proposed \$.05 real estate tax increase, and the long list of proposed reductions to agencies across the board.

"As everyone knows, we have been in a recession since late 2007, and that has caused considerable economic downturn in the country," Horstman said. "What we have heard at 15 community dialogue meetings with over 1,100 people is that we should try to maintain the quality of life in Fairfax County. That is very important to the people in this area."

In addition to going over the key facts of the budget, Horstman and Jackson also took questions from the audience regarding the logistics of the budget creation. A primary concern of the attendees was not only what programs and services were being reduced or cut altogether, but how the county executive arrived at those decisions as well. Several audience members were worried



PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) and Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) answer questions at Cook's Budget Town Hall meeting.

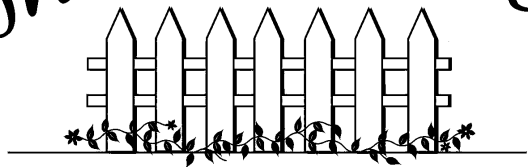
that the people making reductions may not have enough familiarity with the particular agency, and therefore, may not make the wisest choices. Horstman explained that Griffin gives each county agency a target dollar amount for their operating budget, and in turn, if those agencies cannot meet that number, then they propose the reduc-

tions themselves. However, this explanation did not allay all concerns.

"This budget stuff has nothing to do with reality," said Michael Keller a member of the Braddock District Council. "Sometimes, they will cut off a leg just to get things fixed

SEE BUDGET, PAGE 16

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Sweet Tooth Satisfied

City of Fairfax's 19th annual Chocolate Lovers Festival draws thousands.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Although the 19th annual Chocolate Lovers Festival kicked off a bit later than usual this year, it still provided enough smiles, laughs and of course, sugar, to satisfy all tastes.

The festival was originally scheduled for Feb. 6 and 7, but was moved to Saturday and Sunday, March 6 and 7 due to the two snowstorms that buried the city for nearly a week. A new date did not deter people from across the county, however, from coming out in droves to sample the region's finest chocolate.

"There was great selection, good prices and nice people," said Fairfax resident David Cline. "The atmosphere was very nice. It's just nice to have community events like this."

"This is what the City of Fairfax is all about."

— Dan Drummond, Fairfax City Council member

More than a dozen local confectioners packed into the Old Town Hall to sell their products, and for much of the two days, the line to get into the building wrapped around the corner. Fairfax City Council Member Dan Drummond sold cardboard Pogs to patrons upon entry, and each item had a Pog price, so that money would not have to be exchanged with each vendor. Stores like Victoria's Cakery of Fairfax, Aunt Joanie's Chocolate Shoppe of Manassas and Confection Connection of Winchester had booths on the first floor, and according to their representatives, the event was a success yet again.

"It's just a lot of fun," said Confection Connection owner Debbie Walsh. "People coming to the Chocolate Lovers Festival are always so happy. You always see lots of smiles. You get to make people happy."

More vendors were on the second floor of the Old Town Hall, but Melissa Guzman's chocolate fountains were the main attraction. Guzman, owner of Capitol Chocolate Fountains of Manassas, brought her three 24-inch chocolate fountains, two of which spewed melted chocolate while the other sprayed



PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

Customers browse cakes from Victoria's Cakery of Fairfax.

SEE CHOCOLATE, PAGE 13

Families Build Foundation for Future

Nine families move into new Habitat for Humanity community in Fairfax.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Victor Barrios has never had a home to call his own. The single father spent his days working at a Jiffy Lube in Alexandria and his nights sleeping on his sister's couch while his 5 and 10-year-old sons and 6-year-old daughter shared a bedroom with their cousins.

Stretched thin, Barrios wondered when his hard work and tireless dedication to his children would lead to better times. Then, Habitat for Humanity came into his life.

Barrios and his children were one of nine families that received the keys to units in Maple Ridge Condominiums Saturday, March 6, a brand new Habitat for Humanity community. The nine-unit building is located on Stevenson Street, just off of Lee Highway in Fairfax, and represents not only the "sweat equity" of hundreds of Fairfax County volunteers, but also a new start for those moving in as well.

"I was staying with my sister, who is a Habitat for Humanity owner as well," Barrios said. "It was so overcrowded, and I was



Luella Brown thanks Habitat for her new home

staying in the living room. I never had my own home, and we've had a rough upbringing, and I'm just so thankful to finally have a home. It's a total blessing."

According to Joe Facenda, chairman of the Habitat Board of Directors, the nine families moving into Maple Ridge were selected after a lengthy application process more than a year ago. Members of each family attended an orientation in late 2008, and after the session, submitted applications to be considered for a Habitat home. After a home review and a credit and reference

check, the nine families were selected from what Facenda said was a large pool.

After being selected, the nine families were accepted into the program provisionally until they met a requirement of 50 hours of "sweat equity" or volunteer work with Habitat. Some, like Barrios, volunteered at Habitat's ReStore, a second-hand store for home products, to meet this requirement, while others helped on other projects. Then, while their building was being constructed, each family was required to put in 300-500 more hours of work into

"I'm just so thankful to finally have a home."

— Victor Barrios

their own unit or in another unit in the building. All the while, the heads of each family attended night classes led by Habitat to prepare them for life as a homeowner.

"[Building this home] was a great experience for me," said Younes Lauofir, the father of one of the families moving in. "I have a good feeling being a part of this project, coming every Saturday to work. We built this house from the beginning, and we're so glad to see it at this point. I will never forget this."

Barrios added that in addition to the pride in workmanship that participating in the construction of the homes provided, it also taught him many things about home repair. Barrios said that he knew how to do some basic home repair before he began work at Maple Ridge, but after working at the site for more than a year, now knows much more.

"I didn't know anything about construction, but it was great because we learned a lot of things," Barrios said. "Now, if something goes wrong in the house, I know the type of handiwork that it will take to fix it."

The keys were turned over to the families at a ceremony on March 6, which was

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PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

Bank Robbery in Fairfax

The Cardinal Bank at University Mall was robbed Saturday, March 6.

According to the Fairfax County Police Department, a man entered the Cardinal Bank, located at 10695 Braddock Road around 11:20 a.m., brandished a weapon and demanded money. The bank employee complied and the suspect fled. He was last seen running across the parking lot toward businesses in University Mall. No injuries were reported.

The suspect was described as black, around 5 feet 10 inches tall and weighing between 150 and 160 pounds. He wore a black backpack, dark sunglasses, a mask, a brown hooded sweatshirt and jeans.

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

Virginia Increases Maximum Speed Limit to 70 MPH

The Virginia General Assembly has voted to increase the maximum speed limit in the commonwealth from 65 miles per hour to 70 miles per hour on certain interstates, highways and in high-occupancy vehicle lanes separated from regular traffic lanes by a barrier.

Gov. Robert McDonnell (R) has pushed for the change and is likely to sign the bill into law later this spring. McDonnell said the increase in the speed limit would help improve travel times for commuters in the commonwealth.

Some people who opposed the bill had safety concerns, believing the higher speed limit might lead to more traffic fatalities. The speed limit increase would only be implemented on roads with favorable engineering studies and traffic accident analyses, according to the governor's press release.

Those who opposed the measure included The Sierra Club, which stated that driving at 55 miles per hour is the most fuel-efficient speed. Increasing the maximum speed limit to 70 miles per hour on some roads promotes the wasteful use of oil, according to the organization.

Fairfax County legislators voted the following way on the bill:

IN FAVOR: Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34), Del. Tim Hugo (R-40), Del. Mark Keam (D-35), Del. Jim LeMunyon (R-67), Del. Ken Plum (D-36), Del. Tom Rust (R-86), Sen. George Barker (D-39), Sen. Mark Herring (D-33), Sen. Dick Saslaw (D-35)

NOT IN FAVOR: Del. Dave Albo (R-42), Del. David Bulova (D-37), Del. Jim Scott (D-53), Del. Mark Sickles (D-43), Del. Vivian Watt (D-39), Sen. Janet Howell (D-32), Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37), Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), Sen. Toddy Puller (D-36), Sen. Patricia Ticer (D-30)

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

Fairfax Hosts Snow Summit

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors transportation committee will host a "Snow Summit" at the Fairfax County Government Center March 16 at 3:30 p.m. to assess what did and did not work well during the region's two major snow storms.

The summit will be a public meeting but members of the public will not be given an opportunity to testify during the meeting. Instead, Fairfax County and the Virginia Department of Transportation are soliciting comments and stories about the snow storms in advance of the meeting.

County officials encourage people to provide input at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/snowsummit/> by

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 5



Members of the Sheriff's Emergency Response Team show their appreciation for Katherine Little's support.

Respect for Deputy Little

Longest-serving sheriff's deputy bids farewell.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

When Katherine Little joined the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office in July 1973, she was assigned as a deputy sheriff matron in the women's section of the jail and was issued a skirt. That was the uniform back then, and it underscored the fact that she was a woman in a male-dominated field.

But Little, now a captain, always hated that skirt. So it was with glee that she returned it to Sheriff Stan Barry at her Feb. 19 retirement party, after serving nearly 40 years in the department.

In her retirement speech, she said she believed in giving back to the agency that had been so good to her for so many years. "Everyone expected me to give Sheriff Barry a plaque," said Little. "I then 'gave back' that darn skirt [and] everyone roared with laughter."

Actually, Little planned to teach elementary school; but when she was looking for jobs, she said, "Female elementary-school teachers were a dime a dozen, and Fairfax County was looking for males."

However, she'd received her bachelor's degree from Mary Washington College in sociology, with an emphasis in criminology, so a chance meeting with some sheriff's deputies at a McDonald's led to her applying for a job with the Sheriff's Office.

"I told the chief deputy, 'I can't be mean to people; I'd want to help them,'" said Little. "He said I could help, and he told me I'd probably stay two years and then go on to the FBI or Secret Service, something bigger and better. Back then, the sheriff's department wasn't considered a career, just a job."

However, the five-year City of Fairfax resident, who previously lived 19 years in Burke, ended up serving longer than any deputy sheriff in the 268-year history of the Sheriff's Office. She achieved many milestones along the way.

Little was the county's first female deputy with a college degree. She was also the first woman to earn a promotion under the merit system, work in the male portion of the jail, be assigned a position outside female confinement and be assigned to the Criminal Justice Academy. Today, women and minorities have many more opportunities for job assignments and promotions than when Little began. Gender-based assignments no longer exist for Fairfax County deputies.

When Little joined, she was one of just five women in the agency and her only training came on the job. "I was given a set of keys and told, 'Go to it,'" she said. Just 22, she learned communication skills were most important. "It meant less trouble and fewer fights," she said. But it wasn't always easy.

"We only supervised the females, and some were violent and would throw things at you," she said. "There were times I was scared, but I just had to deal with it. It wasn't that way, all the time. My first night I worked, while searching a woman, I discovered she had a butcher knife hidden down her shirt and I had to take it from her. It's all in how you talk to people. If you treat them with respect, most of the time they'll do what you want them to do."

Sometimes, though Little had to get physical with people high on drugs or alcohol. "I had to wrestle a woman on PCP back to the cellblock, fighting all the way," she said. "She had me pinned against a bunk and almost choked me out. But I kicked her back against the cell wall, and it gave me just enough time to get up and lock her in."

"If you treat them with respect, most of the time they'll do what you want them to do."

— Katherine Little

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NEWS

FROM PAGE 4

March 15 at 8 a.m. The summit will be broadcast live on channel 16 in Fairfax County.

Weapons Charges

City of Fairfax police have charged a local man with two weapons offenses. He is John David Emory, 51, of 9400 block Lee Highway in Fairfax. Police say that, on Sat-

urday, March 6, at 5:24 p.m., officers responded to the Fairview 7-Eleven at 10020 Main St., for a report of a rifle being brandished in the parking lot. According to police, a 35-year-old Woodbridge man told police that, during a parking-lot dispute, a man pointed a rifle at him and then drove away.

Officers found the vehicle on Old Lee Highway and took the driver – reportedly identified as Emory – into custody. During

NEWS BRIEFS

a search incident to arrest, brass knuckles were located in one of his pockets. Emory was taken to the Adult Detention Center and charged with brandishing a firearm and having a concealed weapon. He was held on \$1,500 bond.

Farmers Market

An indoor farmers market is open in a storefront within the Fairfax Corner shopping center, off Monument Drive in Fairfax.

The address is 11895 Grand Commons Ave., between the Lucy and Il Vino stores, and the market's open for business every Tuesday from 11:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.

A wide selection of products is offered, including winter fruits and vegetables, meats, dairy products, baked goods, gluten-free products and a large variety of prepared foods.

The market will be there through April, when it will return to its site in the shopping center's parking lot.



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CALENDAR

To have community events listed, send to south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416 with questions. Deadline for calendar listings is two weeks prior to event.

THURSDAY/MARCH 11

- Swing Dance with Daryl Davis.** 7:30 p.m., at The Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. 703-424-1745 or www.headoverheelsdance.com.
- Storyteller Jim Weiss.** 7 p.m. at the Geshher Jewish Day School, 4800 Mattie Moore Court, Fairfax. Meet characters from a range of classic literature and folk tales. Bring used books to donate at the event and receive a coupon for a free book at the Geshher Used Book sale. gesherjimweissevent@gmail.com.
- Afternoon Book Discussion Group.** 1 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.
- Animal Crackers.** 10:30 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Stories and activities. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-293-6227.
- Jarrold Gorbel and Val Emmich.** 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$12. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.
- Anat Cohen Quartet.** 8 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. Clarinet and jazz. \$24. 703-938-2404 or wolftrap.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 12

- Tyrone Wells, Tony Lucca and Roy Jay.** 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15-\$22. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Greg Brown with Jason Wilber. 8 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. Contemporary guitar-heavy folk music. \$30. 703-938-2404 or wolftrap.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 13

- Fairfax Symphony Orchestra.** 8 p.m. at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. With Alon Goldstein, piano, and Avner Dorman, composer. 7 p.m. pre-concert lecture free to ticketed patrons. The Symphony requests concertgoers bring canned foods to the concert, to be donated to Food for Others. \$25-\$55. Tickets available at 1-888-945-2468 or Tickets.com.
- One-on-One Computer Tutoring.** 10 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Learn to use a computer and navigate the Internet. Call for an appointment. Adults. 703-249-1520.
- Irish Stew.** 3:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Irish-themed storytelling with Michael Forestieri. 703-249-1520.
- Three Hurdles to Federal Government Jobs.** 11 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Navigating the USA Jobs Web site and more. Adults. 703-293-6227.
- Microsoft Access.** 2:30 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Introduction to Microsoft's Access program. Adults. 703-293-6227.
- Irish Stew Songs and Stories.** 10 a.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Michael Forestieri performs Celtic songs and storytelling. 703-978-5600.
- Lopez Studios, Inc. Showcase**

Cabaret 2010. 1:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Girlyman. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$18. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Second City 50th Anniversary Tour. 7:30 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. Improvisational comedy. \$22. 703-938-2404 or wolftrap.org.

Celebrate Life Crop. 8 a.m.-8 p.m. at West Springfield High School Spartan Hall, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. Door prizes, a small goodie bag and mini-classes. Proceeds benefit the American Cancer Society. Suggested minimum all-day donation \$50; suggested minimum half-day donation \$30. Space is limited. ourcarlins@verizon.net.

SUNDAY/MARCH 14

- Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia Trunk Show.** 11 a.m.-6 p.m. at the JVCC, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Rugs and fine art photography. Hand-crafted clocks, ceramics, jewelry, fiber designs, glass, wood and more. \$10 JCCNV members, \$15 nonmember. 703-537-3063 or IreneG@jccnv.org.
- Celtic Fiddler Eileen Ivers.** 4 p.m. at the George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Dancers from the O'Neill-James School of Irish Dancing will accompany Ivers and her band. A pre-performance discussion, free to ticket holders, begins 45 minutes before

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 7



Thesis Exhibition at GMU

Cwynneth VanLaven and Nelly Sarkissian, master of fine arts candidates in George Mason University's School of Art, are displaying their work at a thesis exhibition. The exhibit includes VanLaven's multimedia installation titled "Please Wait," which addresses her experiences with healthcare; and Sarkissian's autobiographical video art titled "Across the Body," in which she explores her Lebanese-Armenian cultural identity on a journey to the Holy City of Jerusalem.

The exhibition runs March 15-20, in the Fine Art Gallery, Art and Design Building George Mason University's Fairfax campus. A reception is Thursday, March 18 from 6-8 p.m. in the Fine Art Gallery.



Saturday, March 20, 2010 @ 8pm

- Vivaldi:** Recorder Concerto in F major, RV 434
Vivaldi: Harpsichord Concerto in A major, RV 780
Vivaldi: Flute Concerto, RV 438 in G Major with child prodigy Emma Resmini
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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 6

performance on the Center's Grand Tier III. \$22-\$44. Youth through grade 12 half price when accompanied by an adult. Tickets available at 888-945-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu.

Garden Activity in Preparation for a Rose Show. 2 p.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Learn to make beautiful cut roses whether to exhibit or for your home. Free. Refreshments, door prizes and more. 703-371-9351.

An Evening with Red Molly. 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Second City 50th Anniversary Tour. 7:30 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. Improvisational comedy. \$22. 703-938-2404 or wolfrap.org.

MONDAY/MARCH 15

Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia Trunk Show. 8 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at the JVCC, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. \$10 JCCNV members, \$15 nonmember. 703-537-3063 or IreneG@jccnv.org.

After-School Special: Games, Games, Games! 3:30 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Old-fashioned games. Age 6-12. 703-978-5600.

Chess Club. 3:30 p.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Learn the rules and strategy. Play the game. Age 6-14. 703-644-7333.

Sherwood, Hot Chelle Rae, Black Gold and Reece. 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 in advance, \$13 at the door. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

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OPINION

No Way

Assembly should kill bill that would pave way to hand state tax revenues to private companies in public-private transportation projects.

While most states are working on ways to increase revenues during the recession, which cost states across the country more than \$80 million in just 12 months in 2009, Virginia's governor appears to be looking for a way to give away future state revenue.

Virginia already has a public-private transportation act, which paved the way for the ongoing construction of "High Occupancy Toll" Lanes on the Beltway for example.

Public-private partnerships have their place.

But a last minute proposal in the Virginia General Assembly would not only allow the private entity to collect direct revenue from a project, like tolls, but would also allow agreements that would pay the private company a portion of increases in tax revenues that might result from the project.

If this were in place when the HOT-Lanes agreement was written, for example, the Commonwealth of Virginia might be paying the private company in this public-private partnership quarterly payments equal to as much as 50 percent of income taxes paid by construction workers and engineers working on the project, plus a similar proportion of sales taxes paid on equipment and materials purchased for the project, plus "multiplier or spin-off economic activity," and so on, in addition to the agreement that allows the company to collect the tolls on the road for more than half a cen-

tury.

Consider: The bill, HB 1395, allows for the state to pay grants to a private entity out of a "portion of the growth in state taxes attributable to the development of the project."

"State tax revenues attributable to such economic activity may include, but shall not be limited to, state tax revenues from (i) wages, salaries, and contract payments paid to persons in the development of the transportation facility; (ii) purchases of machinery, equipment, and materials in the development of the

EDITORIAL

transportation facility; (iii) insurance premiums paid; (iv) the production of goods or services at business locations within a geographical area surrounding or adjacent to the transportation facility; and (v) multiplier or spin-off economic activity relating to the development of the transportation facility including, but not limited to, wages, salaries, and contract payments paid to multiplier or spin-off jobs."

The money would be paid out of the General Fund, money intended to pay for basics of education, public safety and a social safety net, all facing draconian cuts right now.

If that isn't scary enough, the bill would also allow localities and "authorities" to enter into such agreements.

MANY OTHER STATES that have entered

into public-private transportation projects have done so by having the private company pay huge up-front cash payments, billions of dollars, in exchange for "leasing" a toll road, that is collecting the tolls for some often very long period of time into the future. In the HOT Lanes example, the company is widening the Beltway and replacing and repairing bridges, etc., between approximately the American Legion Bridge and the Mixing Bowl, in exchange for being able to charge an as-yet-to-be determined toll to drive in a lane that will be kept free of congestion by raising the tolls, likely much higher than the \$4.15 each way currently charged on the Dulles Greenway. Vehicles with three or more occupants (high-occupancy) will ride in the congestion-free lanes without charge. Or that's the plan.

At the point that the state believes that it's appropriate to collect tolls approaching \$10 for a round trip on a portion of their commute, it makes sense to investigate the funds available to the state directly by issuing bonds based on that revenue stream.

It's not clear who is looking out for the best interests of the citizens of Virginia in these partnerships. Details of some proposals, like a proposal for HOT-Lanes on I-95 appear to build in many guarantees and protections for the private companies, but less for the Virginians who would be paying the tolls or who could be getting less benefit for their tax dollars.

How To Unsnarl I-66

Solutions are at hand to address I-66 congestion.

BY SEN. CHAP PETERSEN
D-34

According to his biographers, Richard Nixon as a young boy used to listen to the trains rolling by his house in rural California and draw inspiration that one day he could visit places far away.

The young Nixon had the good fortune to not live next to Interstate 66 in Fairfax County. Because nobody draws inspiration from stalled traffic.

Fairfax County has been wrestling with the congestion of Interstate 66 since the early 1980s. When I joined the Northern Virginia Regional Commission as City Councilman in 1998, traffic along Interstate 66 was already the #1 complaint of my constituents.

A year later, the Commission voted and passed the Interstate 66 "MIS" study, which promised a dual solution for the corridor: (a) adding more lanes inside and outside the Beltway, and (b) extending the Orange Line Metrorail from Vienna to Centreville (and eventually Manassas). Solutions were at hand.

Twelve years later, nothing much has happened. Instead, the Interstate 66 solution has been forgotten amid the hoopla surrounding Fairfax County mega-projects like "the Mixing Bowl" or "Rail to Dulles." Yet that corridor continues to carry hundreds of thousands of vehicle trips a day, while incurring

traffic jams at all hours.

This year in Richmond, a small group of legislators is trying to break the impasse. It is clear to us that, without a public-private project like HOT Lanes, there is not sufficient public money to fund cost-intensive solutions like fixed-rail or the widening of the current Interstate 66 corridor.

It's time to think outside the box.

Over the past decade, the technology behind "bus rapid transit" (or "BRT") has made it a cost-efficient service with the ability to transport the same number of people as fixed rail at a fraction of the cost. Modern cities like Seattle and Toronto rely on BRT to move their commuters within a large urban community.

The Interstate 66 corridor is a perfect match for BRT for a number of reasons. First, there is a high demand for transit service heading inside the Beltway. Second, there is an existing interstate with dedicated lanes along the corridor. Third, the interstate already has parking areas and access to arterials like the Fairfax County Parkway.

Like any good solution, it won't be free. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation estimates a cost of \$250 million to establish a functioning network with sufficient parking, at-grade boarding and direct access ramps from Interstate 66. Notably, that is about 6 percent of the cost to build the Dulles Rail line from East Falls Church to Wehle

Democracy's Demands

To the Editor:

It was heartening to read that Sen. Chap Petersen (D-35) and Del. David Bulova (D-37) committed to "do whatever is necessary" to preserve Fairfax Public Schools in the article "Not a lot of Good News" [Connection, Feb. 25-March 3, 2010]. Unfortunately the

LETTERS

proposed solutions to yet another year of budget troubles is to the same old—raise the real estate tax and fees, cut and close. Year after year, we are presented with a false choice: a fair wage for service employees or healthcare; schools or firefighters; librarians or social workers.

If this keeps going, we will lose the institutions that keep our community healthy, educated and safe. Our elected officials' job is

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

THE CONNECTION

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BULLETIN

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/MARCH 11

Herrity/Bradsher Budget Town Hall Meetings. 7 p.m. at West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. County budget meeting with Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) and School Board Member Liz Bradsher. Christian.Deschauer@fairfaxcounty.gov.

MONDAY/MARCH 15

Budget Town Hall Meeting with Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) and Braddock District School Board Member Tessie Wilson. 7:30 p.m., Robinson Secondary School cafeteria, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. For more information, contact the Braddock District Office at 703-425-9300.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 17

George Mason Republican Women's Club (GMRWC) Annual Membership Luncheon. 11:30 a.m., at Army Navy County Club-Fairfax. Deanna Gelak, an advocacy trainer and author, will be the guest speaker. For reservations, call 703-978-3218.

SATURDAY/MARCH 20

Budget Town Hall Meeting with Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock). 10 a.m., Ravensworth Elementary School gymnasium, 5411 Nutting Drive, Springfield. For more information, call 703-425-9300.

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Running 101/201 Group Training Programs:

Start a group training program this spring! Group programs are offered at several area locations. Programs meet for two one-hour sessions each week, and are offered in regular, repeating 8-week blocks. Participants focus on a common goal or goals and work together toward them.

- **Running 101** is designed for the novice runner or athlete returning to the sport after a layoff or injury. By the end of the 8-week session, participants should be prepared to complete a 5K or 10K race.
- **Running 201** is offered for intermediate and advanced runners and/or as a step up from Running 101. It is tailored to the runner seeking to improve his/her performance.

Evening Running 101 sessions begin the week of March 15 at a variety of locations. Running 201 will be offered in Reston starting in March with more locations coming this year. =PR= Training Programs also offers a Distance Training Program, designed for runners preparing for race distances of 10 miles or longer. This program will begin at three DC area sites in June. Tailored, individualized training is also available. For details on session dates and location offered, please visit www.prtrainingprograms.com.



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Can This One Go To 11?

Robinson tennis team ready to extend their championship streak into a new decade.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

Robinson senior Kevin Castellow sat on a bench during tryouts on March 4 rolling a tennis racket handle in his hands, waiting for a chance to hop on the court to practice.

He's wearing a gray Virginia Tech shirt, the school he's committed to play tennis at next season. While the senior is anxious to be a Hokie, his top concern is the upcoming tennis season at Robinson.

"There's a lot of pressure on our team," he said. "The competition in our district has gotten much stronger."

Castellow, who is nationally ranked No. 423 for 18-year-olds by tennisinformation.com, said the pressure doesn't just come from Concorde District foes but also from Robinson's rich tennis history:

Since 2000, the boys' tennis team has won 10 consecutive Concorde District titles, six Northern Region titles (01, 02, 05, 06, 07, 08), and three Virginia AAA state titles (06, 07, 08).

As the team's leading senior, Castellow said he doesn't want the district title streak to end on his watch, but more is at stake.

"[The team's goals] have a lot to do with the pride of Robinson tennis," Castellow said. "It motivates us to go that extra mile, and [the history] pushes us harder and to try and achieve more."

As a senior, it's Castellow's job to help his



Kevin Castellow and Dakota Holloway are expected to be the Rams' leading players this season. Castellow is nationally ranked No. 423 for 18-year-olds by tennisinformation.com.

younger teammates understand the importance of the team's success.

Sophomore Dakota Holloway joined the team last season with only a slight understanding of the Rams' past success.

"Before I joined, I found out they had won three previous state titles," he said. "But I had no idea how good they were."

Holloway, Castellow's doubles partner and a 2009 All-Northern Region team selection, found himself a major player for the Rams.

As the team's fourth-seeded player last season, he developed an appreciation for

the Rams' past success.

"I want to make sure we keep that streak going," he said. "It's a big deal to me now."

Robinson head coach Paul Fisher says camaraderie plays a major role in the team's success.

"We've developed groups that have stayed together throughout the years" Fisher said.

Fisher, head coach since 1993, has watched numerous tennis players pass through Robinson. The one constant between the varying groups is the friendships his team have formed.

"Even after [Robinson tennis is over], our players still meet up and even go to each other's weddings," he said. "I try to have alumni come back and play and work out with [the new team]."

Still, good times on the courts can only take a team so far, Fisher said.

"We've been blessed with talent," he said. "The guys come in here and they're already well developed [as tennis players]."

Fisher said his team members tend to spend much of the off-season taking responsibility for their development when he can't provide guidance.

"Playing tournaments, taking lessons, clinics, those things. They're very important," he said.

With all the ingredients for success, Fisher said he doesn't put too much emphasis on district titles. He lets the kids motivate each other.

"I know the kids want to do well and win titles," he said. "They think of it as defending our honor."

They'll get their chance on March 23, when Robinson opens the season at home against Chantilly.

"There's a lot of pressure on our team."

— Kevin Castellow

5 Qs with Robinson tennis player Dakota Holloway

Q: Favorite music to listen to before a match?

A: Anything that can get me up and going.

Q: Finish the sentence. I love tennis because ...

A: It's what I like to do and I'm good at it.

Q: How'd you get started playing tennis?

A: A friend of mine got me started in it when I was 8-years old. I really liked the game and how fast it was.

Q: Do you plan to play tennis in college?

A: I'd really like to play tennis in college because I think I can make it there. I'd like to go to the University of Florida.

Q: What type of racket are you using right now?

A: It's a Babolat pure drive and it cost about \$180.



REED S. ALBERS

Dakota Holloway

— REED S. ALBERS

Football Hall of Fame Ceremony

The Fairfax County Football Hall of Fame will be honoring three new inductees on March 14, at 4 p.m., at the McLean Hilton Hotel

The 2010 class includes Dallas Cowboys tight end and former Vienna Youth player Jason Witten, Nick Hilgert of Robinson Secondary and Richard Herman of Fort Belvoir Youth Sports.

Awards for high school and youth football players from the area will be handed out as well.

For ticket information, contact Betty Powell at bpowe1@aol.com or 703-273-3216.

Submit Youth Sports Headlines

The local youth winter sports seasons are ending and the Connection doesn't want any child's accomplishments to go unnoticed.

In order to have youth sports items printed or posted on the Web, send the information to Sports Editor Reed S. Albers at ralbers@connectionnewspapers.com.

Senior League Registration

Northern Virginia Senior Softball (www.nvss.org) seeks players, men 50 and older and women 40 and older for fun, fitness, and fellowship.

Participants will play two slow-pitch seven-inning softball games Tuesday and Thursday mornings, April 13-Aug. 12, on Fairfax County fields.

NVSS fields 26 teams, average age 65, organized into three skill-level conferences.

Players are assigned to a team at their skill level by skill assessment, not a try-out. Eleven play defense. Everyone present bats.

NVSS runs an Indoor Conditioning Program until April 8. Those interested in player should contact Dave Scheele at 703-524-5576.

Synchronized Swimming

The Northern Virginia Nereids Synchronized Swimming Club will hold its fifth annual introductory clinic on Saturday, March 20, at Audrey Moore RECenter in Annandale. Nereids coaches and athletes will introduce girls aged 7-15 to the graceful, powerful Olympic sport of synchronized swimming. For details, visit <http://nvnsynchro.com>.



COURTESY PHOTO

The Paul VI girls' basketball team, coached by Scott Allen, poses with the championship plaque.

Paul VI Girls Capture VIS Title

The Paul VI girls' basketball team ended an incredible run of basketball with their fourth state championship in a row.

The team played four games in five days en route to the title.

The Panthers won the Virginia Independent School

state title in a double overtime thriller with Flint Hill. Paul VI won the game 80-74.

Blair Koniszewski, Maya Singleton and Jess Long were named to the All-Tournament team and Long earned the most valuable player award for the tournament.




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Balancing Act of Life and Gymnastics

Jake Sowder battles cystic fibrosis while becoming premier young gymnast.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

Lying on the couch in the living room of his Mantua home, Jake Sowder watches a DVD of a parallel bars routine from his latest gymnastics meet.

"I got first place on this one," he said.

The 7-year-old's eyes cling to the television. As the video plays, Jake's body transitions from sofa to floor, flipping over like a slinky down a staircase. Finally, Jake vaults into a handstand for all to see.

His mother Suzy, sister Helena, 10, and father, Jim, roll their eyes as he holds the handstand with perfect balance. His arm muscles tighten, displaying a strength not commonly seen in one his age.

"Al right Jake, let's calm down," Jim Sowder said.

Jake lowers his body, pops up to his feet and launches himself onto the couch.

For seven hours each week, the Mantua Elementary first grader practices gymnastics at the Fairfax Gymnastics Academy.

Every few weeks, he goes to competitions where he typically cleans up. In his two-year gymnastics career, Jake has earned 30 medals.

His practice time doesn't include the "extracurricular" work he does at home — practicing his high bar routine on the family swing set, somersaulting around the house or spinning around on the mush-

room, a circular pommel horse practice apparatus.

Jake runs a mile-a-minute at times, but twice a day he has to sit still. His wellness depends on it.

Jake has cystic fibrosis, which, according to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, is a life-threatening disease that causes mucus to build up and clog vital organs in the body such as the pancreas, lungs and digestive tract.

The illness can create further health complications. "People with cystic fibrosis have difficulty keeping up their weight and getting nutrition which puts you at higher risk for when you have a cold," Suzy Sowder said.

For 20 minutes in the morning and night, Jake wears a vest with air tubes connected to the back. The vest is hooked up to an air pulse generator that vibrates the vest, lightly shaking Jake's 42-pound body.

"We do this to help shake up and break up the mucus his lungs," Jim Sowder said.

Along with the vest, Jake wears a mask connected to a nebulizer machine to deliver more medication. He also takes various pills to

help battle the illness.

"On a good day, with no extra medicine, Jake takes about 15 pills in addition to the other therapies," Suzy Sowder said.

For Jake, his daily routine of treatment and gymnastics is normal. This is the only life he's known.

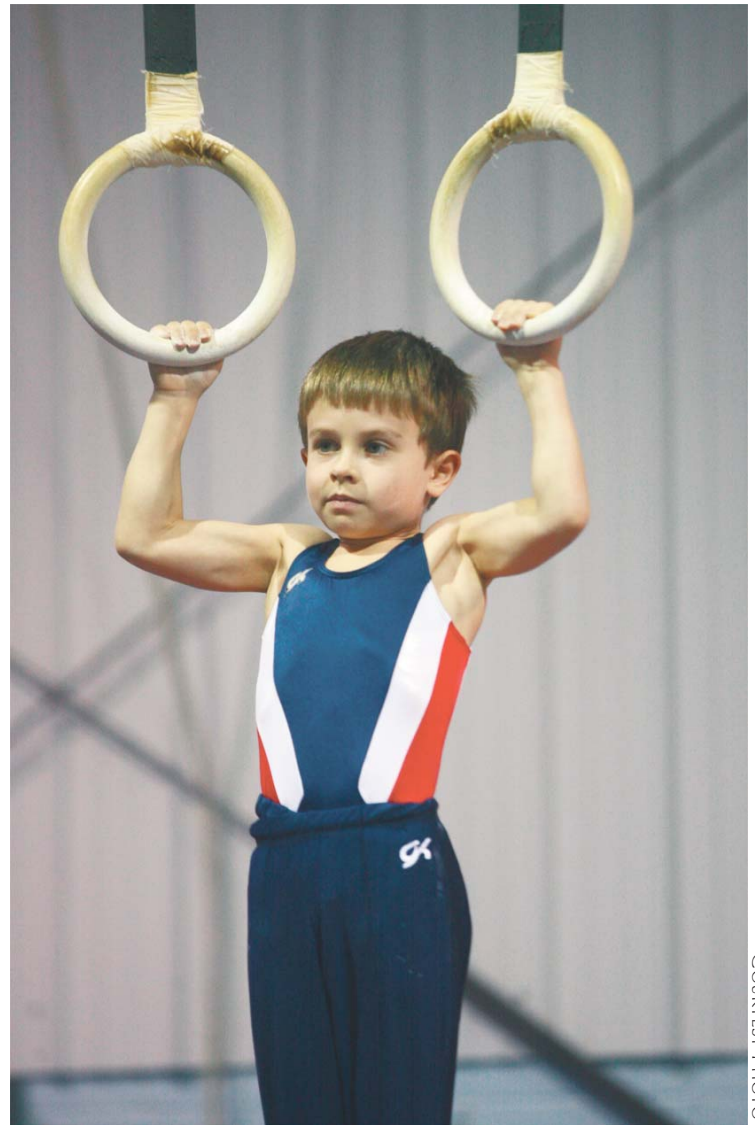
"This is how it's been since he was young," Jim Sowder said.

Since Jake was 3-months-old, he's battled with the disease. Both of his parents carry the cystic fibrosis gene, but Jake is the only child in the family with the condition.

"It's a 25 percent chance you will give it to some

"There's only been two or three meets where he doesn't win every medal."

— Suzy Sowder



COURTESY PHOTO

Jake Sowder, seen here during his rings routine, has cystic fibrosis, a disease that causes mucus to build up and clog vital organs.

SEE YOUNG, PAGE 15

Region Lacrosse Teams Honor Ailing Coach

Area lacrosse teams to honor lacrosse pioneer Dennis Stewart of Lake Braddock.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

For Lake Braddock senior defender Steven Puffenbarger, lacrosse practice is missing a familiar sound: the booming voice of assistant coach Dennis Stewart.

"He yelled at me throughout freshman and sophomore year, he never said anything good to me," Puffenbarger said.

Puffenbarger used to take Dennis' criticisms hard, wondering why he was the source of his ire.

During his sophomore and junior seasons, Puffenbarger finally realized why he had been getting an earful.

"I thought he hated me," he said. "He really just wanted me to be the best that I could."

Stewart, 50, was set to begin his fifth season at Lake Braddock, but on Sept. 25, 2009 he had a massive stroke, putting his coaching days on hold.

"Coach Stewart has been a big part of the Lake Braddock program," Puffenbarger said. "To not have him around is a big change."

Stewart's brother, Peter, said the stroke affected his brother's brain stem and he's lucky he survived. He cited statistics that show 95 percent of patients who suffer a stroke of this severity die within three weeks.

The rehabilitation process has been long and arduous, but has yielded some results. Peter Stewart said his brother is learning to communicate with sign language and "has been wowing doctors" for the past month and a half.

"They didn't think that he would be able to have any cognitive thought," Peter Stewart said. "He's doing fantastic and he's been going through rigorous physical and speech therapy daily."

Stewart's struggle has played on the minds of

Steve Price.

When others in the tight-knit Northern Virginia lacrosse community found out about the stickers, the movement spread.

"The whole Northern Region decided that they were going to wear the stickers," Price said. "A few other schools out of state and colleges will, too."

Lake Braddock's cross-town rival West Springfield is one of the teams that jumped at the sticker idea.

"We're definitely planning on wearing them," West Springfield head lacrosse coach Scott Settar said. "Dennis is close to our neighborhood and is a friend of our program."

College players at Ohio State University and Denison University, programs where Stewart once coached, also will don the stickers throughout the 2010 season.

The Stewart family has started the Finish



To Help

More information about the Finish Hard Foundation can be found on the soon to be launched Web site www.finishhardfoundation.org.

Lake Braddock's players and coaches since September.

The team has dedicated its 2010 season to Stewart and will wear stickers, featuring a lacrosse player and Stewart's initials, on their helmets, said head lacrosse coach

SEE HONORING, PAGE 15

COMMUNITY

Man Finds Healing Beat

Alan Yellowitz starts a therapeutic music class for senior citizens.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Like many others, Alan Yellowitz has had to put doing what he loves most on the backburner in order to bring home a steady paycheck. Now, in the most difficult of economic conditions, Yellowitz is getting the chance to not only do what he loves, but get paid for it as well.

Yellowitz, a Fairfax resident, started his own company, The Beat Goes On, an interactive musical therapy class that serves senior citizens across the Washington, D.C. area. The class, he said, allows senior citizens to be physically active and socially engaged by partaking in one of Yellowitz's greatest passions: playing the drums.

"I'm one of the few people who go out and do this kind of activity for seniors," Yellowitz said. "This is something that they need, because it engages them. You stick a drum in front of one of the quiet ones, and all of a sudden, it's like they feel like they're in a band."

Yellowitz, a married father of two daughters, ages 12 and 7, created The Beat Goes On last October. Yellowitz had a job for more than 20 years selling information technology to the federal government, but after being laid off, found himself unemployed for 14 months. So, Yellowitz called his friend Steve Gurney, who was working with a company that was doing IT work with senior citizen centers and asked him about a job. Gurney, however, had something else in mind.

"I went to Steve asking him about a business that was doing IT work for seniors," Yellowitz said. "I was ready to go down that road when Steve asked me 'what's your hobby?' And I told him that it's been drums for the last 30 years."

Gurney, who has worked within the senior citizen community in several capacities, said that he had seen therapeutic drum circles being held around the area, but that he had never seen one geared toward the elderly. So, he encouraged Yellowitz to gather his drum collection and create a short program in which he could lead residents of local retirement communities through a series of songs on the drums. The goal, they decided, would be to get seniors engaged in a group activity that would not only provide entertainment, but would give them a physical workout.

"I saw this type of activity being provided, and I thought that drum circles would be great for retirement communities," Gurney said. "People have these stereotypes about what an activity is in a senior home, like Bingo, but Alan is changing that."

Currently, Yellowitz has a partnership with Sunrise Retirement Communities to lead drum circles at several of their facilities, including their locations in Bethesda, Md., Friendship Heights in Washington, D.C., Arlington and Oakton. Once a month, he goes to each location and leads drum circles with several different groups, beginning with Alzheimer's and



PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

Alan Yellowitz leads the group at Bluemont Sunrise Retirement Community in Arlington in a rendition of 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat.'

dementia patients, then on to the assisted living residents, ending with the independent living residents.

Yellowitz begins each session by passing out a drum to each member of the group and explains where each drum came from and what makes it different than the others. Then, he teaches the group a rhythm and then guides them through it, eventually letting the group take over and play the beat themselves. After learning how to keep a beat, he teaches them how to play songs, and the group plays them and sings along. Each session lasts about an hour.

"It's very different teaching the Alzheimer's groups, but it's the most rewarding," Yellowitz said. "Some of them haven't been out in a while and then you see them getting into the rhythm that you lay down. A lot of them like to count off the beats out loud, and some even shake their bodies."

Though the level of business is not quite where Yellowitz wants it, he said that the company has been taking off in recent weeks as word has spread through the Sunrise living facilities. Yellowitz said that he led 14 drum circles in February and was already scheduled to appear at 14 more in March.

"I would have never thought in my wildest dreams that my drum collection would be used for something like this," Yellowitz said. "But whether I find a job or not, I've found something that I'm always going to do."

"Whether I find a job or not, I've found something that I'm always going to do."

— Alan Yellowitz

The Beat Goes On

To learn more about Yellowitz's company or to book him, go to www.thebeatgoeson.us.

Chocolate Festival

FROM PAGE 3

melted white chocolate. Patrons dipped marshmallows, cream puffs, strawberries and Rice Krispie Treats into the fountains and needless to say, this was a big hit with the event's youngest chocolate lovers.

"A kid looked at the fountain earlier today and said, 'I feel alive.' It was priceless," Guzman said. "It's interactive and the fact that the kids get to dip candy into the chocolate makes it different from the other retailers here. Lots of people return just for this."

The festival began, like always, with the Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast in the fire station on University Drive and continued at the city library, where Girl Scouts from Troop 1194 in Fairfax helped children of all ages make chocolate-themed crafts. A craft show and bake sale ran in Fire Station 3 as well. On Sunday, confection sales continued in Old Town Hall, and the festival's annual silent auction.

The festival concluded Sunday afternoon with its signature event, the Chocolate Challenge. Local professional and amateur artists made sculptures out of chocolate, and festivalgoers voted on their favorite. Alexandria-based cake maker Occasional Cakes won the main competition for its "A Choco-holic's Breakfast" chocolate sculpture, while Rachel Birch of Springfield won the amateur event with "Charlie and the Chocolate Festival."

"It's great to see the downtown area alive," Drummond said. "This is what the City of Fairfax is all about."

Building a Future

FROM PAGE 3

attended by nearly every volunteer who worked at Maple Ridge, a number of Habitat officials and Fairfax County Board Chairwoman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) and Supervisors Pat Herry (R-Springfield) and Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill). At the ceremony, Habitat's team of volunteer leaders were recognized for their efforts, while a number of sponsors, like Freddie Mac, which donated care packages to each family, were thanked.

The families were then introduced one-by-one by their personal sponsors and given quilts that were handmade by Habitat volunteers. Facenda and Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia President and C.E.O. Karen Cleveland then turned the keys over to the new residents to conclude the ceremony. After the event, each family went to their unit in the building and gave the event's guests tours of their new homes. While the new homeowners talked to every visitor, the pride and excitement was tangible in each of their faces and voices.

"I never thought I'd be standing here today owning my own place," Luella Brown said. "I don't have to worry about worrying where I'm going to sleep tonight."

COLLEGE NOTES

Christine Tran of Fairfax was among 35 rising college freshmen who spent July 2009 preparing for the rigorous study required for academic majors in science, technology, engineering and mathematics — STEM fields — at their respective schools, James Madison University, Bridgewater College, Eastern Mennonite University and Blue Ridge Community College.

Adina Rubinstein of Fairfax, a University of Denver Daniels College of Business undergraduate student, made the Hornbeck scholars list for spring quarter of the 2008 and 2009 school year. The dean's List honors those un-

dergraduate students who have achieved a quarterly grade point average of 3.75 or above while taking at least 15 credit hours.

Michael Tannenbaum, son of Fairfax residents Jordan and Fran-Linda Tannenbaum, graduated with a bachelor of science degree from Ithaca College's School of Health Sciences and Human Performance. The degree was awarded in May 2009.

Boston University awarded academic degrees to 1,603 students in September 2009. Among the graduates was **Gary R. Boyer** of Fairfax, who received a master of criminal justice in criminal justice.

FAITH

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10215 Lakehaven Court in Burke, presents "Listening and Speaking to Create Peace: Promoting understanding in families and communities," at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 14. Learn skills for transforming conflict into positive communication in a free two-hour workshop. Reservations appreciated at 703-440-6709.

The Accotink Friday Night Film Series Presents "Baraka" at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 12, at Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court in Burke. The word Baraka means "blessing" in several languages. The movie draws connections between people and the spaces they inhabit. 7:30 p.m., discussion will follow. Bring dinner. www.accotinkuuc.org.

The Cranford United Methodist Women's 110th Annual Ham & Oyster Dinner will be on Saturday, March 20, 4-7 p.m., at Cranford United Methodist Church, 9912 Old Colchester Road in Lorton. The menu includes fried oysters, baked ham, potato salad, cole slaw, deviled eggs, green beans, applesauce, rolls, beverages and desserts. All proceeds from this dinner go to mission work with women, children, and youth. Contact 703-339-5382.

The Institute of Catholic Culture presents a program that focuses on the disintegration of both the Christian secular cultures in the modern world. The featured speaker is Father Paul

Scalia, pastor of St. John the Beloved Catholic Church in McLean. The program takes place on Saturday, March 27 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Leo the Great Catholic Church, 3700 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Free. For more, visit www.InstituteofCatholicCulture.org or call 703-504-8733.

Help pack meals. Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria, needs volunteers to help prepare meals for the homeless along the Route 1 corridor in Alexandria on Thursday, March 25, at 6:30 p.m., and deliver the bags on Friday, March 26, at 6 p.m. If interested, call 703-971-5151 or e-mail admin@franconiaumc.org.

Palm Sunday Service. Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria, invites the public to worship on Palm Sunday, March 28, 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. services to celebrate the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem in the days before his Passion and Crucifixion. Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are handicapped accessible and assisted listening devices are available. Childcare is available for infants to 3. Contact 793 971-5151, admin@franconiaumc.org.

Maundy Thursday. Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria, invites the public to Maundy Thursday, April 1, 7 p.m. A short presentation by persons in costume represents those who knew Jesus. The pastor will bless the elements, and those taking communion will serve one another around a large table. Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are handicapped accessible and assisted listening devices are available. Childcare

is available for infants to 3. Contact 793 971-5151.

Good Friday. Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road Alexandria, celebrates Good Friday, April 2, 7 p.m. Service will include contemplation on the meaning of the last seven words Jesus uttered on the cross at his crucifixion immediately before He died. Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are handicapped accessible and assisted listening devices are available. Childcare is available for infants to 3. Contact 793 971-5151.

Easter Services. Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria, has Easter services, on Sunday, April 4, 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are handicapped accessible and assisted listening devices are available. Childcare is available for infants to 3. Contact 793 971-5151, admin@franconiaumc.org, http://www.franconiaumc.org.

St. George United Methodist Church, 4910 Ox Road in Fairfax, will present a Good Friday Passion program at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 2. The choir and orchestra will use music, lighting effects and narrations to depict the betrayal, trial and death of Christ. Free, nursery care will be provided.

Pender United Methodist Church, 12401 Alder Woods Drive in Fairfax, will have an Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 3, 10 a.m. Event includes puppet show crafts, and an appearance by the Easter Bunny. Free. Easter Services on Sunday, April 4. Traditional services are at 8:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. and a contemporary service at 9:30 a.m. Call 703-278-8023.

COMMENTARY

FROM PAGE 8

Avenue.

This week, a number of "outside the Beltway" lawmakers signed a letter which proposed that we "green light" a BRT system along Interstate 66 "as soon as possible" and without waiting on more time-consuming studies of a problem which we all know exists. Instead, let's let private companies bid on this contract and show us how the service can be best optimized at a reasonable cost.

Perhaps years from now, a child in Fairfax County will hear the BRT bus going by and dream of destinations unknown. Or at least know that his parents will be getting home from work.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 8

to administer our resources to benefit society and to advance bold solutions that will keep us on the road to progress. Fairfax County and the Commonwealth are some of the most affluent areas of the country. We have the money to meet the challenges of a faltering economy without compromising the values and integrity of our communities.

The truth is that our decision makers just choose to spend money on other things. Last year, the people paid more than \$19 billion in income taxes and corporations paid \$1.9 billion to the Commonwealth. Yet, this year the governor wants to spend \$50 million to attract potential business instead of investing that \$50 million in firefighters, healthcare, education and libraries. Instead of following that same old broken model, our elected officials at the county and the state level must create jobs and raise revenue by making the budget match our priorities as a democratic society.

Lucero Beebe-Giudice
Alexandria

COMMUNITIES OF WORSHIP

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Easter Sunday 8:00, 9:30, 11 am

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- Presbyterian
- Christ Presbyterian Church 703-278-8365
- Fairfax Presbyterian Church 703-273-5300
- Korean Presbyterian Church 703-321-8090
- New Hope Presbyterian 703-385-9056
- Providence Presbyterian Church 703-978-3934
- Shalom Presbyterian Church 703-280-2777
- Seventh Day Adventist
- Fairfax Seventh Day Adventist 703-978-3386
- United Church of Christ
- Little River United Church of Christ 703-978-3060

- Assembly of God 703-383-1170
- Jubilee Christian Center 703-383-1170
- Fairfax Assembly of God 703-591-4284
- Way of Faith Assembly of God 703-573-7221
- Baptist
- Braddock Missionary Baptist 703-830-4125
- Calvary Hill Baptist Church 703-323-1347
- Fairfax Baptist Church 703-273-1820
- Fairfax Circle Baptist Church 703-573-737
- Greater Little Zion Baptist 703-764-9111
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- Northern Virginia Primitive Baptist 703-255-0637
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- Barcroft Bible Church 703-425-3800
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- St. Leo the Great Catholic Church 703-273-5369
- St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church 703-978-4141
- St. Paul Catholic Church 703-968-3010
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COURTESY PHOTO

Dennis Stewart, middle, suffered a stroke on Sept. 25, 2009. Stewart has been a major player in the local lacrosse scene, holding various coaching jobs in the region.

Honoring Ailing Coach

FROM PAGE 12

Hard Foundation, named after a phrase Dennis Stewart repeatedly uttered during lacrosse practice. Peter Stewart said the foundation's goals are "to help Dennis when he gets out of the hospital, and to help raise stroke awareness."

Price isn't surprised by the outpouring of support for Stewart from the lacrosse community.

"He's well respected across all lacrosse programs," Price said. "When he walks into a room, everyone knows him."

Stewart's history with Northern Virginia lacrosse began in the 1970s when the sport took hold in this area.

Dennis Stewart was one of Price's first players when he formed the Lake Braddock lacrosse team in 1975. The midfielder played in the first lacrosse game between two Fairfax County public schools in 1977.

After high school, Stewart played at Drexel Uni-

versity from 1978-79. He returned to Lake Braddock in 1983 where he spent three seasons as an assistant coach.

STEWART COACHED Bishop Ireton's lacrosse team from 1987 to 1993, but left for the college coaching ranks. He was an assistant coach at Denison University in Granville, Ohio, from 1994 to 2001. In 2002, he joined Ohio State University's lacrosse staff and stayed there until 2005.

Stewart returned home to help his brothers Peter and Patrick form a local youth lacrosse organization, TripleEDGE lacrosse, and take on a role as assistant coach at Lake Braddock.

Peter Stewart said he's not sure when, or if, Dennis will return to coaching, but the family is optimistic he'll encourage kids to "finish hard" soon.

"It's hard to say right now if he'll coach again," Peter said. "But eventually, yeah, he'll be back, that's the way we see it."

Young Gymnast Perseveres

FROM PAGE 12

one," Suzy Sowder said.

The battle has been long and hard, but the Sowders have persevered.

As Jake grew older, his parents looked for ways to help keep him healthy. They found a new, fun treatment in the form of gymnastics.

"A friend of mine told me about gymnastics so we checked it out," Suzy Sowder said. "It's actually good for his condition because it keeps him healthy."

Jake joined the Fairfax Gymnastics Academy and soon began working on his abilities. Not long after joining, he was invited to join the competition team. Soon after joining the team, the awards flowed in.

"There's only been two or three meets where he doesn't win every medal," Suzy Sowder said. "On occasion, he has a medal for sixth place, but most of

the time it's first."

It turned out gymnastics had spawned another form of treatment: winning. It didn't matter if it was a trophy or medal, Jake enjoys the thrill of victory.

"Sometimes they have competitions after the meets, like who can hold a handstand the longest," Suzy Sowder said. "Well, Jake won that. So he comes running up to Jim and says 'Dad! Look what I just won! A yo-yo!'"

On March 28, Jake will compete with Virginia's best level four gymnasts at the State Gymnastics Championship in Hampton Roads.

His current coach, Ray Hacker, said Jake's chances of winning the meet are "very good," but that his potential could carry him farther.

"He's very strong for how small he is. He just has that natural gymnastics talent," Hacker said. "Right now, at his age, the sky is the limit."

THIS IS "MARGARET"



Jack Russell Mix, Spayed Female, 22 lbs., D.O.B. February 20, 2008. Here's Margaret saying hello. She's our little chill girl. She's very sweet, extra lovable and best of all her favorite hobby is sitting by your side while you tell her how beautiful she is. She's only 22 pounds, has gorgeous markings on her short coat and is a very young adult at only 2 years old. She's good with other dogs (especially her best pal Harmony) and great with kids. Come out and meet Margaret and her sister Harmony...they are the perfect double package all wrapped up and ready for you. Attributes: Two cutie patooties!



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Budget

FROM PAGE 2

now instead of worrying about the long term. We were all riding the bus to prosperity, and now we're trying to figure out who to kick off."

Another concern for the attendees was composition of the school budget. Several people acknowledged that the county has a premier school system, but they questioned why it requires nearly \$19,000 per student in funding while other local jurisdictions, like Arlington County, spend significantly less but have a similarly robust school system. Furthermore, more than one audience member felt that the school system was demanding more than it necessarily needed, which results in cuts to other important county services.

"This budget situation is alarming," said Burke resident Jeanne Kadet. "What you hear most about is the schools, but I'm concerned about parks and libraries. We keep cutting them, and eventually, you degrade things so much that they cannot be recouped."

Afterwards, Cook stated that he wished that discussion was more "give and take," but thought that it was a good first step. He said that it was important that citizens obtain a clear picture of the budget first, so that they can provide feedback at the next three meetings and at the Board of Supervisors' public hearings in April. He also said that citizen contributions to the budget are important, given that the Board does not discuss the budget among themselves at all.

"We're just combing through the budget and hopefully, collecting idea from citizens because we need as many ideas as we can get," Cook said. "Our board is so afraid of discussing it, but the only way to get things going is to start a discussion, and I hope we're going to do that."

Cook said that the few concerns expressed at the meeting were valid, and added that he has his own concerns with specific facets of the budget, too. He said that it is crucial that the Community Services Board, which assists county residents who have mental health issues or intellectual disabilities, gets spared from losing 15 positions and \$5,249,344, as proposed. In addition, he said that he hopes the cuts to school resource officers and reduction in Park Authority funding is avoided, too.

"Most of the cuts proposed outside the schools are necessary," Cook said. "But we've got to look at other ways to get money [to avoid certain cuts]. We need to get more money back into the Community Service Board's budget, and we need to keep our school resource officers. There are other ways that we can save money."

Cook closed the meeting with a bit of optimism for an otherwise dreary budget climate. "Frankly, the chair and I agree on 98 percent of the budget," Cook said. "As bad as we all make it sound, we are better off than a lot of places in the country. We're talking about a 1 to 2 percent cut in overall spending, while other counties are dealing with 15 to 20 percent unemployment."

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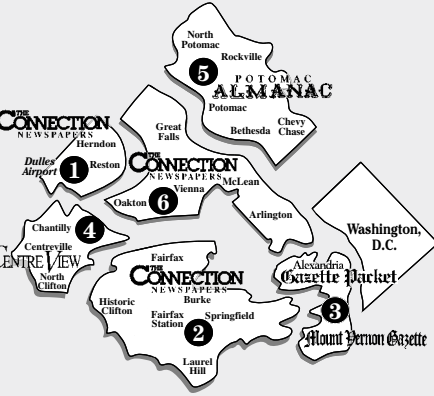
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Fairfax County Sheriff Stan Barry makes a presentation to Katherine Little at her retirement party.

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Deputy Little Retires

FROM PAGE 4

"I'd never been in a fight before," she said. "Two male deputies were watching, the whole time, and didn't lift a finger. They didn't believe women should be in that profession. I didn't say a word to anyone. I was determined to show them I could handle the situation. But this wasn't typical, most deputies would have helped."

Promoted to corporal in 1976, Little became academic coordinator and general instructor at the Northern Virginia Police Academy. "It was a wonderful experience," she said. "And I met a lot of people from other jurisdictions, which helped later in my career because I had contacts everywhere."

In 1977, she developed and coordinated the first, combined, minimum-standards training for the sheriff's department. "It was a course combining law-enforcement, corrections-offer and court-security training," she said. "Prior to that, each had its own, separate course with lots of repetition. This was much more efficient."

Also that year, Little wrote the basis for the crisis-intervention and conflict-management standards used by law-enforcement officers throughout Virginia. During her career, she worked in administrative, correctional and support services and dealt with budgets, planning, policy development and human resources.

Although she retired Feb. 16, her impact will long live on. For example, in 1975, she wrote the proposal to establish inmate programs and it was later implemented. As a result, people can now obtain education and substance-abuse help while in jail.

"My idea was to prevent recidivism," said Little. "I'd researched and found that most of the inmates had a low, educational level, which had a high correlation with criminal activities. And a GMU study found recidivism is lower for those who've had intensive programming and [the structure] Fairfax County's jail provides."

She was promoted to captain in 1993 and

finished her career in the Alternative Incarceration branch, encompassing work release, electronic monitoring and community labor force. She was also pleased to have input in the group Sheriff Barry implemented in 2000 which discussed, made recommendations and helped decide the direction of the Sheriff's Office.

Most of all, she said, she's enjoyed the daily interaction with her colleagues. "That's what I'll miss the most," said Little. "In my opinion, I worked with some of the most talented, honorable, courageous and selfless people anywhere."

"Kathy will really be missed," Barry said. "She had that rare combination of toughness and empathy that made her perfect for this job. The Sheriff's Office changed tremendously during the 36 years Kathy was here, and she led the way in many of those areas. She made significant changes in Training, Budget, Work Release, Community Outreach, Inmate Programs and our record-keeping systems. Kathy was very good at her job, but it's her relationships with the people that she'll be most remembered for."

Little now plans to spend more time with friends and family, read, see Broadway shows and travel to Scotland and Ireland. "I love not being on the clock," she said.

Her advice to women joining the Sheriff's Office today would be to "maintain one's basic values and not lose sight of the goodness in most people. Embrace the brotherhood and sisterhood of law enforcement as a unique and powerful bond, but never become cynical and callous."

Little said women must retain their sense of themselves as people with much to contribute to the profession, rather than becoming "one of the boys." Most importantly, she said, "I would tell them to do what they know in their hearts to be right, even if it's difficult or unpopular. I'm proud of the Sheriff's Office and how far it's come in the last 36 years, excited about [its current] direction and full of hope for its future."

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