

Fairfax Station ❖ Laurel Hill CONNECTION

Clifton ❖ Lorton ❖ Lorton Valley ❖ Crosspointe

From left, Justin Turner, Zack Wilson and Jason Krein pose for a photo in front of Kelly Wilson, who donned NASA spacesuit at the Lorton Station Elementary Career Fair.



When I Grow Up ...

NEWS, PAGE 3

Remembering Stan Parris

NEWS, PAGE 3

NFL's Randle El Visits Robinson

SPORTS, PAGE 10

PHOTO BY MICHAEL O'CONNELL/THE CONNECTION SPORTS, PAGE 10 ❖ CALENDAR, PAGE 9 ❖ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 12

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From left, Joe Clifton, 9, and Austin Tengesdal, 7, compare eggs they collected Saturday, March 27.



From left, friends Keeler Lambertson, 7, and Claudia Tengesdal, 9, proudly display the eggs they found.

Easter Bunny Comes to Town



The Werthmann siblings Anni, 6, and Jake, 9, sit down with the Easter Bunny in Clifton.

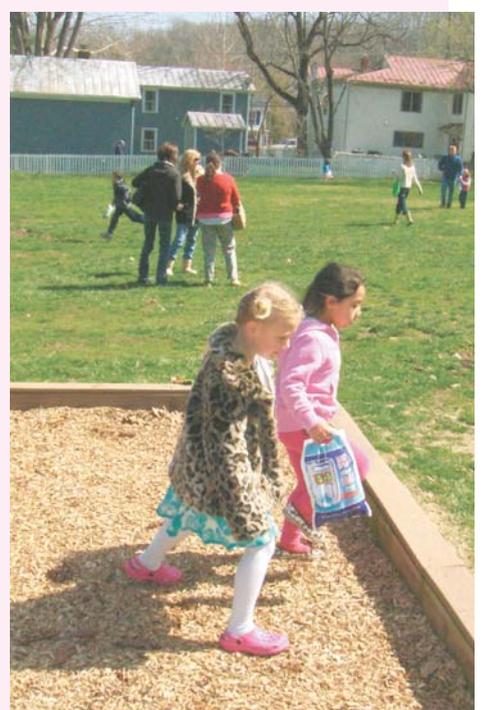


Easter Bunny Steve Hudson hugs son Tyler, 11.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



The Clifton brothers, Colter, 4, and Thomas, 5, show off their shiny eggs.



Children hunt for eggs in the Clifton Town Park on March 27.

Career Opportunities

Lorton Station students investigate possible futures at March 26 Career Fair.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL O'CONNELL/THE CONNECTION



Lorton Station sixth-grader Antara Sarkar, left, looks at pelts brought by Theresa Jefferson of the nearby Meadowood Recreation Area.



Audrey Johnson, left, and Brittany Sholes of the Edison Academy's Animal Science program answer questions about careers on Friday, March 26 in the Lorton Station Elementary gym.

Third-graders Chloe Sy, left, and Sophie Yohannes write down answers to questions they had about careers in journalism.



Admirers Say Parris Helped Shape Region

Former congressman, 80, dies March 27.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

When Stanford E. Parris took his first job on Capitol Hill in 1958, it wasn't glamorous work.

He ran a mimeograph machine in the basement beneath the House of Representatives. The wages helped pay his law school tuition at The George Washington University.

Fourteen years later, Parris returned to the Capitol in a far more high profile position. He served as the U.S. Representative from Virginia's 8th District from 1973 to 1974 and 1981 to 1990.

The former Republican congressman died March 27 at the age of 80 in Mathews County, Va. He is survived by his wife

Martie, three daughters and grandchildren.

AS A CONGRESSMAN, Parris represented a far larger geographic swath of Virginia than his successor, U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8), currently does. In the 1980s, the 8th Congressional District included the City of Alexandria, the entire southern half of Fairfax County, part of Prince William County and the tip of Stafford County.

Responsible for such a large territory, Parris had his hand in a range of regional transportation and economic development projects.

He is partly responsible for the Torpedo Factory Art Center along

the Alexandria waterfront and the "high occupancy vehicle" [HOV] lanes on Interstate 95. Parris was also on the founding board of directors at George Mason University.

"Stan was Fairfax. He is the only person in Fairfax's history to serve in all three levels of government."

— Tom Davis, who served in two



FILE PHOTO

Stan Parris' career as a local elected official spanned from the 1960s to the 1980s.

"Stan was involved in almost every major thing in Northern Virginia," said U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10), who first got to know Parris when they both campaigned for congressional seats in 1980.

TOGETHER, Parris and Wolf worked to get Dulles International Airport transferred from the federal government to a regional

authority, which allowed the airport to advertise and modernize. Dulles had been losing business to Baltimore-Washington International Airport prior to the authority change.

"It was a great deal for regional economic development," said Wolf.

Former Fairfax County Supervisor Elaine McConnell (R-Springfield) said Parris also helped secure funding for and assisted with the upstart of the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commuter train.

"In 1983, I went to talk to him and he was the only politician I know who really moved on it and told me it could be done," said McConnell, who spent 20 years representing southern Fairfax County.

"I didn't have many supporters for VRE in 1983," she said.

PRIOR TO SERVING in Congress, Parris was also a member of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors from 1964 to 1967. He almost won a race for Fairfax County chairman.

The former congressman also served one term in the House of Delegates and was appointed Virginia's Secretary of the Com

SEE STANFORD PARRIS, PAGE 5



COURTESY OF CHRIS WEBER

Second grader Alex Nohra helps raise money and awareness for heart disease while Jumping Rope for Heart.

Clifton Jumpers Raise \$2,000

More than 350 students at Clifton Elementary jumped rope or shot hoops to raise money for the American Heart Association in the Annual Jump Rope for Heart/Hoops for Heart program. Don Dillon, P.E. teacher and program coordinator, estimated that the students raised more than \$2,000 this year.

BULLETIN BOARD

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.

TUESDAY/APRIL 6

Clifton Town Council Meeting. 7:30 p.m., in the Clifton Town Meeting Hall, 12641 Chapel Road in Clifton.

THURSDAY/APRIL 8

Navigating the Medicaid Maze: Waivers, Eligibility and Documentation. 7 p.m. at West Springfield Government Center, 6140 Rolling Road, Springfield. Eligibility criteria, screening process, required documentation, and home-based and nursing home care. 703-451-8873 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 14

The Springfield/Alexandria Women's Connection Guest Night Dinner. 6-8 p.m. at the Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Guests include guitarists Sarah and Chris Layman, and Frank Knipe, President of Employers Association. \$20 per person. Reserve by Friday, April 9 at 703-569-4670, 703-590-6562 or SpringWmConn@yahoo.com.

NEWS

Hospital's 'Dream Come True'

Inova Fairfax Hospital opens pediatric surgery center.

By JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Surgery is a frightening prospect for a person of any age, but perhaps even more so for young children. A large, daunting hospital building gives way to long, intimidating hallways and the child is then taken from the parents and led off into the unknown.

The staff of Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children in Falls Church recognizes these problems and is leading the way in allaying fears with the opening the brand-new Pediatric Surgery Center. The center, which is the first of its kind in Northern Virginia, offers a child-friendly atmosphere that specializes in giving the best pediatric care possible while providing a comforting environment.

"This is something that the hospital has wanted for years," said Mary Urso, the center's nursing director. "No child wants to have surgery, but if they have to, we want them to have it here and be glad that they did."

ACCORDING TO Urso, plans for the \$3.3 million, dedicated surgery center have been in the works for more than three years. Urso said that originally, children having surgery at the hospital were being sent to the hospital's main operating room and would then be transferred to general recovery. This set up, she said, did not work for a number of reasons, most notably in pre-surgery preparations and post-surgery recovery.

Urso said that before surgery in the main unit, parents were not able to accompany their child to the operating room, and after surgery, were required to wait in a central waiting room. These logistical require-



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Dr. Robert Mesrobian, pediatric anesthesiologist, and Dr. Allyson Askew, pediatric surgeon, check out the new equipment in the Pediatric Surgery Center.

ments, Urso said, made the experience more frightening for the children as they were essentially going into the surgery alone and had to wait for parents afterwards. In addition, in post-surgery recovery, Urso said that many children are in pain and cry loudly, which disrupted the recovery room and became a nuisance for older patients who were in beds alongside the children.

"It really was not the ideal situation for children or adults," Urso said. "Children do not want to be alone before surgery, and when an adult wakes up from anesthesia after surgery, hearing is heightened and

waking up next to a screaming kid was bad."

So, after identifying the problems that the existing setup produced, Urso said that the hospital began a planning process to build

"No child wants to have surgery, but if they have to, we want them to have it here and be glad that they did."

— Mary Urso, nursing director

the surgery center. She said that the hospital created a building committee that identified the center's needs and then met with an architect who designed it. After nearly two years of planning, designing and construction, the center was completed.

According to Hospital Spokeswoman Jeanne Mayer, the surgery center is equipped with a slate of child-friendly rooms and features. A new pre-operation area was constructed in which Child Life Specialists will be available to comfort the child and family and offer information on exactly what will happen before, during and after the procedure. The center will also allow parents to walk with the child to the operating room and also has a surgical waiting room for parents in which they can receive continuous updates on their child.

In addition, the center has child-friendly operating rooms, procedure rooms and recovery rooms that keep the child isolated from the adult population and contain specially sized beds, tables and more. These rooms are also larger than a standard hospital room so that they can accommodate families and have child-friendly touches such as star and moons painted on the white panel above the beds. A centralized nurses' station was also constructed which allows for open communication among staff and



The waiting room at the center.

SEE PEDIATRIC, PAGE 7

Stanford Parris Dies

FROM PAGE 3

monwealth in 1978, between his two stints in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"Stan was Fairfax. He is the only person in Fairfax's history to serve in all three levels of government," said former U.S. Rep. Tom Davis (R-11), who was a Fairfax supervisor when Parris was in Congress.

Parris acted as a booster for the business community and embraced development, which resulted in the current vibrant economy, said Davis and others.

"He came around at a time when the county was beginning to develop. He was very important in the formation and making of Fairfax County as we know it today," said Davis.

Parris was also one of the forebears of the modern Republican Party in Virginia. Virginia, including Fairfax County, was dominated by southern Democrats until the late 1970s.

He was the only Republican on the Fairfax County Board and one of nine Republicans in the 100-member House of Delegates.

"He and Jack Herrity, they were part of a small group that really started the Republican Party in Fairfax in the 1960s and 1970s. There weren't really that many Republicans in Fairfax back then," said Wolf.

The former congressman also had a series of spirited political campaigns.

Mount Vernon resident and former U.S. Rep. Herbert Harris (D-8) ousted Parris in 1974 after Parris had served just one term. It was the election directly after the Watergate scandal broke, which several people said gave Democrats an inherent advantage.

"I think he worked hard on what he believed but many of the things he believed I was opposed to," said Harris.

But Parris faced Harris in two more elections, beating the Democrat in 1980.

"The Parris-Harris debates, they were like the Lincoln-Douglas debates," said Wolf of the 1980 campaign.

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OPINION

Connolly Failing His Own Test

To the Editor:

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) said he would vote for the health care reform bill only if it met these tests:

- ❖ Will it bring down premium costs for families and small businesses?
- ❖ Will it reduce the deficit?
- ❖ Will it protect their choice of plan and doctor?
- ❖ Will it improve access to care?
- ❖ Will it protect and improve Medicare?

It failed all those tests, but he voted for it anyway.

According to the non-partisan Congressional Budget office, Gerry Connolly's health care plan will increase premiums by 11 to 13 percent on average, or \$2,100 a year for middle-class families.

According to an analysis by members of the House Budget Committee, it will increase the deficit by \$662 billion over the next 10 years.

The Associated Press has reported that companies are considering dropping prescription drug coverage for retirees, forcing them into a Medicare plan.

According to the Medicare Chief

Actuary, the Health Care Reform law will put 33 million people, many of them seniors, in danger of losing traditional Medicare.

It will also destroy the military's TRICARE system, which is a disservice to our veterans, their families and those currently serving overseas.

There is no question that our health care system needs some reform. This is the only major segment of our economy where choices are not in the hands of the consumer. However, what we do not need is the health care bill that passed, which increases deficit spending, creates a whole new entitlement program, negatively impacts our job creators — small business — and results in government-run health care.

The people of America deserved an open and transparent process focused on bipartisan commonsense solutions to health care problems that lowers costs and offers greater access to affordable health care. We need a plan that fixes what is broken and keeps what is working and not a massive new government program.

Commonsense health care reform includes:

- ❖ Free-market solutions such as

health savings accounts and pooling by small businesses and cooperatives to allow all Americans access to affordable, private health care.

- ❖ Implementation of tort reform to reduce the presence of frivolous lawsuits that drive up the cost of insurance for medical practitioners.

- ❖ Eliminating restrictions on competition between health insurance companies in different states and expanding the portability of plans.

- ❖ Free-market-based insurance exchanges that individuals could access for coverage.

- ❖ Using technology to reduce the fraud and waste in the system.

- ❖ Increasing the length that children are able to stay on their parents' plans.

- ❖ Options for those with pre-existing conditions to access health care.

Health care reform should not increase the federal deficit and the government should not be making health care decisions. Those choices are best left between patients and their doctors. As your representative to Congress, I would work tirelessly to repeal this bill and to bring about commonsense, real health care reform that returns health care

decisions and choices to the consumer.

Supervisor Pat Herrity
R-Springfield

Pat Herrity serves as Springfield District supervisor and is currently running against Keith Fimian for the Republican nomination to challenge U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) in November. The Republican primary is June 8.

Letter of Thanks

Dear U.S. Gerry Connolly:

We write to thank you for your courageous vote for healthcare reform in our nation. In a hard fought campaign for the Bill, truth and civility sometimes suffered. We are grateful for your willingness to step beyond the fray and to vote to extend healthcare to 32 million people in the United States while not changing existing law on federal funding of abortion. We affirm your courage and willingness to act for the needs of those who live without access to healthcare. We were heartened by the many faith voices who weighed in on this important issue, even though we did not all end up with the same position on the Bill itself. This vigorous dia-

logue demonstrated our shared core value for the sanctity of life.

As we move on to the other issues of our time, we believe that Abraham Lincoln's words express our fervent prayer: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for [those] who shall have borne the battle and for [the] widow and [the] orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

Sister Simone Campbell
NETWORK, A National
Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Washington, D.C.

Second Term For Connolly

To the Editor:

I commend U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) and those in the Congress who stepped up to make the tough vote supporting comprehensive health care reform. The Senate and House bills contain amendments from both parties,

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14



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Pediatric Surgery Center

FROM PAGE 4

enables nurses to directly see all of the patients.

"We just want to make it less scary," Urso said. "Everything is child-sized and it eases concerns. Everything is bright and cheerful. It doesn't look like a hospital, except for the high-tech equipment."

Urso estimated that the new center would

handle about 15-20 patients a day, with the most common procedures performed being appendectomies, hernia surgeries and tonsillectomies. The center will have three dedicated pediatric surgeons, and according to pediatric anesthesiologist Dr. Robert Mesrobian, a team of 55 anesthesiologists, 13 of whom specialize in treating "at-risk" children who are undergoing more serious procedures. According to Mesrobian,

though the expertise was already there, the center will allow them to do their job even more efficiently and effectively than before.

"We can now put all of the children in one space dedicated to them and their families," said Mesrobian. "We already had the expertise, now it's all in one spot and it's much more efficient."

The center had its grand opening Thursday, March 25, but due to unforeseen delays with its computer systems, as of press

time, had not yet opened to the public. Urso said that the hope is for the center to open

to patients March 31, and that cases are already scheduled for that date.

While Urso and other hospital employees are anxiously awaiting the official opening so they can get to

work, they are nonetheless basking in the satisfaction of the completion of a long-awaited project.

"This has been a dream of the hospital's for years," Urso said. "And it's finally here."

More

Go to www.inova.org/children for more information on the new pediatric surgery center.

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THINGS TO DO

The following events and exhibits are open at the Workhouse Arts Center, which is located at 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. For more information, call 703-495-0001 or visit www.workhousearts.org.

Building W- 7, the GlassHouse, celebrates International Art Glass Month in April by featuring the studio artists in group exhibit that showcases the diverse forms, styles, and visual impressions glass can make as an artistic media.

Building W-8 Studio Exhibition: Ceramics Resident Artists. The Ceramics Building has a regular recurring group exhibit of Ceramic Resident Artists work.

Building W-9 Featured Artist: Linda Rose Larochele. Her work will be on display in Gallery 9 from April 7-May 2. Larochele is a graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute and a veteran art educator from Arlington County. Her love of printmaking has been woven throughout her career as an artist, but she works in watercolor and pastel as well.

Building W-10 Featured Artist: Katie Cassidy. Cassidy is a licensed interior designer and professional member of the American Society of Interior Design (ASID) and International Institute of Interior Design Associates (IIDA). She was selected the first "Artist of the Month" by the Association of Interior Design Professional (AIDP) at the annual meeting held at Workhouse Arts Center.

Ginger White Hergenroeder is the Associate Artist of the month for

April. She graduated with honors from Virginia Commonwealth University with a bachelor of fine arts in painting and printmaking. Currently she is working in the mediums of chalk pastel and charcoal.

Spot-LYTE Presents: "Mother Goose Is Eaten by Werewolves." March 31 and April 1, 10 a.m.; and April 2 and 3, 1 p.m., in Gallery W-16, Second Floor. Spot-LYTE presents a fun and entertaining performance of "Mother Goose is Eaten by Werewolves." by Steph DeFerie. Seating is limited. Tickets \$5 each.

Spot-LYTE Presents: "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie." March 31 and April 1, 1 p.m.; and April 2 and 3, 10 a.m., in Gallery W-16, Second Floor. Tickets \$5 each.

2nd Saturday Art Walks. Saturday, April 10, 6-9 p.m., Campus wide, Free. Each 2nd Saturday Art Walk will feature opening receptions in Workhouse studio buildings, where guests can meet featured Workhouse studio artists of the month. In Gallery W-16, visit the Workhouse Associate (WA) and Workhouse Art Guild (WAG) exhibition for the opening exhibition reception from 6-9 p.m., featuring the WA Artist

AT THE WORKHOUSE



'Recent Work' by Linda Rose Larochele



'Serenity' by Katie Cassidy

of the Month.

In conjunction with the Art Walk, a reception in W-16 from 6-7 p.m. will bring together artists, the general public and members of the Association of Interior Design Professionals (AIDP) to talk about incorporating original art into interior designs. The interior design professionals will visit the artist studios with their clients and other interested parties during Art Walk hours.

Gallery After Hours: "Goldenberg Duo." Saturday, April 18, 6 p.m., in Gallery W-16, Second Floor. This duo is composed of William Goldenberg on the piano and his sister Susan Goldenberg on the violin. Tickets \$15-25

"Women's Studies." Saturday, April 24, 7:30 p.m., at Gallery W-16, Second Floor. The Workhouse Film Institute will screen the independent film, "Women's Studies" [www.womensstudiesmovie.com], which plays to the horror and thriller genres. Writer and director of "Women's Studies" Lonnie Martin [<http://www.lonniemartin.com/>] will be on-hand to speak about the film prior to the screening. Tickets \$5-10

Ongoing Gallery W-16 Exhibition: Ceramics. The Workhouse will exhibit work by internationally acclaimed ceramic artist Mitch Lyons in Gallery W-16, Second Floor, through April 25. Lyons' [<http://www.mitchlyons.com/>] clay monoprints can be found in numerous private and public collections throughout the United States, including the Brooklyn Museum of Art, Woodmere Museum, American University and the University of Delaware.

Exhibition: Congressional Children's Art Competition - An Artistic Discoverer. The Lorton Arts Foundation partners with U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) for the Congressional Children's Art Competition: An Artistic Discovery April 7-25 in Gallery W-16, Second Floor. The exhibitions will be on display at the Workhouse from April 7-25. All the participating artists, along with their families are invited to the reception at the Workhouse on April 18 from 2-4 p.m., in Gallery W-16, where Connolly will announce the winning entry.

Workhouse Film Institute:

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CALENDAR

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/APRIL 1

Spot-LYTE Children's Performance: If You Give a Mouse a Cookie. 1 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, Gallery W-16, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$5. 703-584-2921.

Spot-LYTE Children's Performance: Mother Goose is Eaten by Werewolves. 10 a.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, Gallery W-16, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$5. 703-584-2921.

Bunny Tales. 10:45 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Bring a plush bunny for hopping fun stories. Age 13-23 months with Adult. 703-249-1520.

Daytime Book Discussion Group. 12:15 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Marie Antoinette: the Journey by Antonia Fraser. Adults. 703-339-4610.

FRIDAY/APRIL 2

Spot-LYTE Children's Performance: If You Give a Mouse a Cookie. 10 a.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, Gallery W-16, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$5. 703-584-2921.

Spot-LYTE Children's Performance: Mother Goose is Eaten by Werewolves. 1 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, Gallery W-16, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$5. 703-584-2921.

SATURDAY/APRIL 3

Spot-LYTE Children's Performance: If You Give a Mouse a Cookie. 10 a.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, Gallery W-16, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$5. 703-584-2921.

Spot-LYTE Children's Performance: Mother Goose is Eaten by Werewolves. 1 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, Gallery W-16, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$5. 703-584-2921.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 10 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Learn to use a computer, navigate the Internet and work with common software applications. Call for an appointment. Adults. 703-249-1520.

VITA Tax Assistance. 10:30 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. IRS-certified volunteers help taxpayers who earned up to \$49K. Adults. 703-339-4610.

MONDAY/APRIL 5

Become a Friend of the Library. 7 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Hear ways to become involved in the neighborhood library. 703-971-0010.

TUESDAY/APRIL 6

Teen Book Club. 6:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Food, fun and reading. Age 12-18. 703-249-1520.

Wednesday/April 7

Needlework Group. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Bring a project to work on in the company of other needlecrafters. Adults. 703-249-1520.

One-on-One Genealogical Research Assistance. 6 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Get started on genealogical research with the

assistance of experienced volunteers. Adults. 703-249-1520.

Practice Your English. 10:15 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-339-4610.

THURSDAY/APRIL 8

Latin Dance Nights. 10 p.m. at Jaxx, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. Ladies free, men \$10. 703-569-5940.

Afternoon Book Discussion Group. 1 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.

FRIDAY/APRIL 9

Rose Hill Elementary School presents "Snow White and the Seven Dwarves: the Musical." 7 p.m. at Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. The fairy tale is brought to life with an eclectic score and is performed by kindergarten-sixth graders. Adults \$5, children \$3. Concessions available. jacquie.clark@gmail.com.

Latin Dance Nights. 10 p.m. at Jaxx, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield.

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

SATURDAY/APRIL 10

Fairfax County Park Authority Watershed Cleanup. 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. Pick up everything from plastic bottles and bags to discarded mattresses, rusting auto parts, old appliances, rubber tires and other debris illegally dumped in local waterways. Participants are encouraged to wear boots and old clothes. Bring gloves. Trash bags will be provided. 703-569-0285 or www.fergusonfoundation.org/.

Snouts and Scouts. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Felix and Oscar's, 6671 Backlick Road, Springfield. Brownie Troop 579 will join Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League's Spring Celebration. Face painting, temporary tattoos, silent auction, games, raffles, Girl Scout cookies and bake sale. lauriezoock@gmail.com.

Indoor Yard Sale & Vendor Fair. 7 a.m.-1 p.m. at Robert E. Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. More than 20 yard sale participants offering a variety of items and 20 vendors/crafters with jewelry, sweets, beauty items, household, gifts and more. Free admission, refreshments available for purchase. Sponsored by the Lee Sports Boosters. 703-836-5566 ext. 101.

Rose Hill Elementary School presents "Snow White and the Seven Dwarves: the Musical." 7 p.m. at Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. The fairy tale is brought to life with an eclectic score and is performed by kindergarten-sixth graders. Adults \$5, children \$3. Concessions available. jacquie.clark@gmail.com.

Daventry Community Multi-Vendor Charity Event. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Daventry Community Center, 7721 Painted Daisy, Springfield. A portion of the proceeds will go to the Susan G. Koman Cancer Foundation. Jewelry, handbags, food and more. 703-866-7620.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 10 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Learn to use a computer, navigate the Internet and work with common software applications. Call for an appointment. Adults. 703-249-1520.

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PHOTO BY REED S. ALBERS/THE CONNECTION

Seventh and eighth grade students pose for a photo with Antwaan Randle El. Robinson students conducted surveys to find healthy snacks for the school and as a reward, Randle El visited the school.

NFL Star Fuels Up Rams

Former Redskin speaks to middle school students about eating healthy.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

With his fists raised in victory, Robinson Secondary School seventh grader Osama Ghamem walked off the Robinson gymnasium basketball court on March 26 to the cheers of his classmates. Ghamem had just won a game of “knockout,” a basketball challenge in which a player must sink a basket before another shooter can score, knocking the first player out.

Ghamem’s triumph wasn’t just in winning the game. Now he can spend his spring break bragging about knocking out former Washington Redskins wide receiver Antwaan Randle El.

“It felt good to beat him,” he said. “It was a lot of fun.”

Randle El’s first shot bricked off the hoop and while the newly signed Pittsburgh Steeler casually walked to collect his ball, Ghamem drained a free-throw shot to eliminate Randle-El. The students cheered and Randle El shook his head when he realized he had just been beaten by a seventh grader.

“I didn’t know about the rules,” he said, with a laugh. “I’m used to playing it different. I was just trying to play around, but I didn’t realize I could lose.”

OK, so it’s not quite LeBron James getting dunked on during a high school basketball camp, but for Randle El, it was part of delivering a message to the students.

During a pre-spring break pep rally for the Robinson seventh and eighth grade classes, Randle El appeared as a guest speaker promoting the National Dairy Council and National Football League’s Fuel Up to Play 60 campaign.

The campaign’s goal is to educate students about healthy eating and lifestyle choices and to encourage children to engage in 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

NFL players such as Randle El serve as program ambassadors and conduct various school appearances in an effort to educate local youths.

While Randle El said that he never had an athlete come to his school and speak to him, he hoped his presence would help drive home the message.

“That’s what makes this so much better,” he said.

“We only had our parents and coaches telling us to be in shape and eat right. To have an NFL player or NBA player come and talk to the kids about it, they hear it a little more.”

During halftime of a student versus teacher basketball game, Randle El spoke about making wise eating choices and urged stu-

dents to play sports or engage in physical activity after school.

“It’s going to take more than gym class to be healthy,” he said. “And you can’t always go to McDonald’s to eat.”

The lessons were reinforced by games with the students such as knockout and a football throwing competition with Robinson quarterback Mike LoPresti.

Randle El then earned a victory as coach of the student-led team in the faculty versus student basketball game where the students trounced the faculty 41-21.

“It’s going to take more than gym class to be healthy.”

— Antwaan Randle El

Bruins Find Their Swing

A 1-3 start to the Lake Braddock softball season hasn’t fazed head coach George Rumore or changed the way he is approaching upcoming games.

With a spring break’s worth of time to think about where his starting nine girls should play, Rumore is more concerned about building team chemistry than cranking out early wins over non-district opponents.

“We’re a very young team,” he said. “We want to work on our chemistry. We have been playing as many girls as possible so we can try and build that chemistry.”

A glimpse of that team chemistry came together on March 25 during the Bruins 10-1 victory over West Springfield. Rumore credited sophomore pitcher Anna Delaney and her seven strikeouts as the key to the game.

“We played well and we got good pitching from [Delaney],” he said. “And it was an important game because it was a Patriot District game.”

The Bruins followed their victory over West Springfield with two losses during a spring break tournament at Madison to Hylton (8-1) and Centreville (7-3) on March 27.

“We’re just getting our bats going,” Rumore said. “I think we stranded nine runners in the Centreville game. But we have time to work on everything.”

The Bruins next game is at home on April 7, at 6:30 p.m., against South County.

Robinson Crew Plant Sale

The Robinson Crew team will be conducting its annual plant sale on May 1 at the Burke Nursery and Garden Center.

The Burke Nursery and Garden Center will be donating a percentage of its total sales to the club when shoppers purchase items at the school’s booth on May 1 and with at least one \$10 certificate sold by members of the crew team.

The certificates can be pre-purchased from a member of the crew team at anytime leading up to the fund raiser.

The crew team is not funded by Robinson Secondary School and all fund-raising efforts help pay for the team’s coaches, boats and regatta fees.

For more information, please contact Chris Veale at cv622@aol.com, Louise Lewis at lewisfamily6@verizon.net.

Public Safety Football League

On April 10, Fairfax High School will be the site of the first game of the National Public Safety Football League (NPSFL) of the season.

The game will feature the Washington D.C. Generals versus the Orlando Guardians.

Gates open at 3:30 p.m. and kickoff is at 4:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5 a person and children 12 and younger attend for free. Proceeds will be donated to the City of Fairfax Firefighters Benevolent Fund, DC Firefighters Burn Foundation and Washington DC Chapter Concerns of Police Survivors.

Pre-game entertainment will also be presented.

Prior to the kickoff, city fire personnel will have public safety equipment in the parking lot for tours and information.

For more information, please visit the D.C. Generals Web site at www.dcgeneralsfootball.org or call 703-309-9220.

Cavalier Charge Golf Tourney

The W.T. Woodson Athletic Boosters will be hosting the seventh annual Cavalier Charge Golf Tournament on April 12 at the Country Club of Fairfax.

Registration is \$150 per player and includes range, green fees, a golf cart, a box lunch, a buffet dinner and a chance to win door prizes.

Additional seating at the buffet dinner and auction for those who do not want to golf is available for \$40.

For reservations, contact Andy Sosa at 703-346-3323 or at andy.sosa@tasc.com. An application for the tournament is available at the W.T. Woodson activities office and online at www.wtwoodsonsports.org.

SEE RANDLE EL, PAGE 11

SPORTS

Randle El at Robinson

FROM PAGE 10

Randle El's visit didn't happen by chance. As part of the Fuel Up to Play 60 campaign, some Robinson students conducted surveys to find new healthy snacks for students to eat after-school.

"They found students wanted to have some additional after-school fitness activities," said Mary Aunon, after-school program specialist. "But they always like to have some healthy snacks."

After surveying the students, popcorn and sherbet were added to the school's after-school snack offer-

ings.

As a reward for the hard work, the school decided to host a pep rally the last day of school before spring break and try to get an NFL player to participate.

"As part of the [Play 60] program, the NFL has player appearances," Aunon said. "We applied for one and we got Randle El."

While the event was designed to be fun, Randle El hoped the students wouldn't ignore his message.

"It's not just about an NFL player coming out to speak to the kids," he said. "We want them to actually take it and listen to what we said."

WEEK IN SPORTS

Senior League Softball 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.

Lady Tarheels AAU Team Seeks Players

The Lady Tarheels Amateur Athletic Union basketball team is seeking players between the ages of 15 and 17 for their travel teams.

For more information, please call coach Edwards at 571-490-2147 or coach Watson at 571-243-4142.

Be not curious to know the affairs of others, neither approach to those that speak in private.

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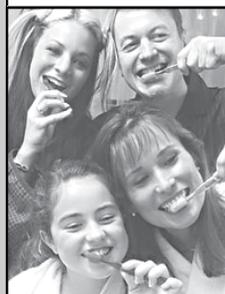
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PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Non-profit serving the needs of individuals with mental illness and their families is seeking a F/T Program Director to coordinate educational and support programs in the No Va area. The position requires leadership, people and computer skills. Must have own car and ability to work from home. Please send letter, resume and three references to naminorthernva@gmail.com.

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

which results that neither political base is satisfied, but each bill is a huge step forward to address the dysfunction and expansive costs of our healthcare system.

Our current healthcare system is a perverse program where corporations exhibit very little accountability to the people who pay these same companies a huge part of their income to support their family's health care, but narrowly focus on their company's profits and how to increase those profits by reducing cost (services delivered), arbitrarily raising rates, and canceling policies. Some will say that's what corporations are supposed to do, and I would agree. But then you have to ask if it's right for corporations to be involved with the responsibility of deciding who lives or dies through providing or denying healthcare. And that's where the public option becomes the viable entity.

The healthcare issue breaks down to whether our representatives work for the benefit of "for-profit companies" where bureaucratic administrators and their advisory panels deny and diminish, or outright cancel family coverage solely on the basis of company profits; or do our representatives work to support the working families and our small business owners by controlling healthcare costs and quality with responsible policy. It really depends on who's in Congress and who do they consider to be their constituents.

Connolly denounced the radical fringe groups with their bumper-sticker politics last year by voting with his conscience to support his constituent's eagerness for reform. An overwhelming majority of Virginians and citizens across the nation understand what the ominous threat our current healthcare system is and support strong healthcare reform. There would be even more public support if there weren't a constant barrage of deception and disruption from corporate interests on cable TV and in our Congress.

To conclude over eight months of a public and Congressional debate, including policy negotiation, our Congress needs to swiftly move forward with healthcare reform.

Healthcare reform is not something that can wait as some Washington insiders and partisan "news" pundits demand. Our Congress needs to act now before our healthcare system collapses from its own outrageous expansion of cost due to corporate waste and profit increases. And before another 45,000 Americans die annually because of the lack of healthcare.

Connolly and the rest of our Congress are serving in one of the most challenging times in our history. We can return to the policies of "do nothing" or "do less" that are favored by the previous majority and current minority — that brought us to where we are today — and which would decimate our recovering economy while continuing to ignore the growing cost and dysfunction of our healthcare system.

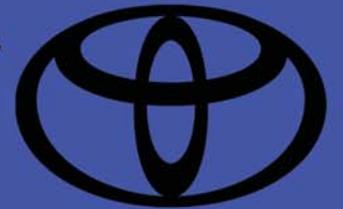
Or we can support courageous and innovative legislators like Gerry Connolly who are working to improve the healthcare system, promote renewable energy, address environmental and educational concerns, reduce government waste, and address a whole host of other challenges while moving forward in the direction of progress.

It is clear to me that we need U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly to be re-elected to a second term in Congress this November.

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