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Kamber Danay of Fairfax Station and her daughter Adaleigh enjoy the April 2 Chick-fil-A Easter Egg Hunt at Fairfax High School.

Mason Lodge
Put On Hold

NEWS, PAGE 3

Project Reuses
Waste Water

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Egg-static

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Unexpected Expense Halts Masons

Acacia Lodge faces an unexpected \$16,000 bill to restore its power.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

A acacia Lodge Worshipful Master Brent Baber and his fellow Masonic brothers know a thing or two about being knocked down and getting right back up. Once again, their will is being tested as another daunting challenge has arisen.

The lodge, which was severely damaged by flooding as a result of Tropical Storm Hanna in 2008, is in the final stages of repairs and renovations to the building after tireless work to secure donations to fund them. However, the members of the lodge were recently informed that they owed \$16,000 to Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative (NOVEC), and until the bill is paid, the building will have no power.

"[NOVEC] claims that we owe them \$16,000 for rerouting [power lines] and the installation of new poles," said Baber, who also serves as chairman of the Lodge Building Committee. "It was a great surprise to me and everyone else at the lodge. It's \$16,000 you don't have and didn't budget for."

The lodge, located on Main Street in Clifton, was

originally built in 1877 when it was chartered and moved to its current location in 1920. Situated below the floodplain, the lodge sustained water damage inside and outside the building from flooding in 2006 and again in September 2008 after Hanna drenched the region. According to Baber, after seeing the lodge damaged again, the members of the lodge began planning significant renovations to the building to ensure that it is protected from future floods.

The first series of renovations, which were made by the Masons themselves serving as the general contractor, began soon after, with extensive changes to the building's foundation. They first poured concrete into the foundation to reinforce it and then installed floodgates, which let water in underneath the house and then drain it out after the water recedes. During the process, the building itself had to be moved and put on a lift on land adjacent to the foundation.

After the building was moved back to the foundation, work began on a two-story addition, which is currently in progress. The first floor addition will be two handicap accessible bathrooms and the second floor is for office space. Finally, the antiquated utilities are being replaced, such as electric wiring. Throughout the entire one-and-a-half years of construction, the Masons have been meeting at the Henry Lodge in Fairfax.

"Our lodge has been making great strides in the

"It's \$16,000 you don't have and didn't budget for."

— Brent Baber



PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

The Acacia Lodge is back on its foundation, but has no power.

SEE MASONS, PAGE 5

Going Green, Saving Green

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Environmentalism and fiscal conservatism more often than not are thought to be mutually exclusive, but in this instance, Fairfax County is proving that those ideologies can coexist.

The proposed Water Reuse Project, planned for the Lorton area, is quickly becoming a reality, as plans are currently being finalized and construction slated to begin this summer. The project calls for the construction of a pipeline that will carry water to areas throughout Lorton for irrigation and process purposes and is predicted to benefit both the environment and local taxpayers.

"This is a project that is good for the environment and can save taxpayers money," said Brian Worthy from the county's Office of Public Affairs. "It is something that the county has wanted to do for a long time."

ACCORDING TO THE Department of Public Works and Environmental Services, the project's purpose is to conserve and recycle wastewater by making the treatment

process more efficient and environmentally friendly. The proposal calls for the installation of a 4.6-mile water pipeline from the Noman M. Cole Jr., Pollution Control Plant on Route 1 to the Covanta Fairfax, Inc. Resource Recovery Plan and to other sites in the county.

The pipeline will originate at the Noman Cole facility, where the area's wastewater is collected and treated. From there, 560 million gallons of treated, reused water will be directed to the Covanta Fairfax Inc. Energy Resource Recovery Facility each year. In addition, 24 million gallons of water will be distributed to both the Laurel Hill Golf Course and the Lower Potomac Ball Fields on Richmond Highway across the street from the Lorton Library for irrigation purposes.

According to Worthy, switching to the new system would benefit taxpayers because the

"This will keep 1.5 million gallons [of waste water] from going into Chesapeake Bay every day."

— Brian Worthy, Office of Public Affairs

system reduces the amount of wastewater that needs to be treated. He said that Covanta currently uses potable drinking water for the majority of its work at the plant, which includes burning solid waste in order to create electricity and then using water to cool the systems down. Covanta does not need the water to be purified to that level to use in its plant, and the direct source of water from the Cole facility would be treated, but not to drinkable quality.

"Taxpayers benefit because we will have to treat less waste water in general," Worthy said. "We are going to reuse water by using a different source of water. Instead of using purified drinking water at Covanta

Planned pipeline from Cole Pollution Control Plant will protect environment, save taxpayers money.

and to water our fields, we will use pre-treated storm water."

THE PROJECT will also not only be environmentally friendly, but it will actually be beneficial. Worthy said that the reused water from the Cole plant would be discharged to Pohick Creek if the pipeline were not built and the storm water used at Covanta and the golf course and ball fields. Since Pohick Creek eventually empties into the Chesapeake Bay, reusing the storm water would reduce the amount of harmful nutrients like phosphorous and nitrogen discharged into the bay.

"The state has introduced new regulations to reduce the amount of nutrients discharged [into the Chesapeake Bay] so the county is doing a number of things and this project is one that will help," Worthy said. "This will keep 1.5 million gallons [of waste water] from going into Chesapeake Bay

SEE LORTON, PAGE 5

Gunston House Fire

A home in the final stages of construction in Gunston was destroyed in a fire on Wednesday, March 31.

According to the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, units responded to a house fire at 11205 Gunston Road at approximately 3:15 a.m. Upon arrival, firefighters encountered heavy fire coming from the front and rear of the two-story single family home. They set up a water shuttle operation to extinguish the fire because the neighborhood is a non-hydrant area. It took firefighters approximately 40 minutes to bring the fire under control.

Damage is estimated at \$2.2 million. The home is a total loss.

According to fire investigators, the fire was accidental. The cause of the fire was an electrical anomaly. There were no injuries reported.

Meetings Set for FCPS Regional Planning Study

Parents of children attending public schools in the southwestern region of Fairfax County may participate in a new community engagement process that addresses Fairfax County Public Schools' elementary school capacity and overcrowding; the location of elementary school programs, such as advanced academics and foreign languages; renovation needs at Clifton Elementary; and the potential for future boundary changes at elementary schools throughout the Southwestern Regional Planning Study area. Schools in the Southwestern Regional Planning Study area include Bonnie Brae, Brookfield, Bull Run, Centre Ridge, Centreville, Clifton, Cub Run, Deer Park, Eagle View, Fairfax Villa, Fairview, Greenbriar East, Greenbriar West, Laurel Ridge, Lees Corner, London Towne, Navy, Oak View, Poplar Tree, Powell, Providence, Sangster, Silverbrook, Terra Centre, Union Mill, Virginia Run, Waples Mill and Willow Springs Elementary Schools. Two representatives from each school have been selected by the schools' PTA and PTO presidents to serve as members of a planning study committee. Planning study committee members will discuss the issues facing the affected area schools at a series of focus groups in April. Focus groups are scheduled from 7-9 p.m. on:

* Tuesday, April 13, at Robinson Secondary School in the blue cafeteria, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax.

* Thursday, April 15, at Chantilly High School cafeteria, 4201 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly.

* Monday, April 19, at Stone Middle School cafeteria, 5500 Sully Park Drive, Centreville.

* Tuesday, April 20, at Centreville High School cafeteria, 6001 Union Mill Road, Centreville.

Planning study committee members will include parent feedback gathered at the focus groups in their final report to the Fairfax County School Board on May 10. This study may affect every school in the Southwestern Regional Planning Study area, so parent participation is important. Participants are asked to sign up to attend a focus group to ensure that sufficient materials will be available at each meeting. For more information, visit <http://www.fcps.edu/news/swcountyschls.htm> to view committee resources and register for one of the focus groups.

FAITH NOTES

Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church Friday Night Film Series: "Renewal." Friday, April 9, 7 p.m., at the church, 10215 Lakehaven Court, Burke. The film captures individuals and communities driven by religious and spiritual commitment to combat global warming and mountaintop removal, promote food security, environmental justice, recycling and more. 703-503-4579 or www.accotinkuuc.org.

Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road in Fairfax, hosts the seminar and workshop "Perpetuating Truth Through Teaching" on Saturday, April 10, at 9 a.m., for Sunday School teachers, children's leaders, youth and adult group leaders. Lunch is included. Register at 703-383-1170 or www.jccag.org. The Jubilee Women's Ministry will host a free brunch on Saturday, April 17, at 10 a.m., with speaker Rev. Nita Edwards.

NEWS



Members of the Lake Braddock Band stand in front of the Beijing Children's Palace.

Music the Universal Language

Lake Braddock band members return home after a week in China.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

The musicians tore through Beijing, China, giving a tour-de-force series of performances in front of packed venues at night and spending their days dodging throngs of photo seekers and being shuttled around to some of the country's most breathtaking sites.

This was not The Beatles storming the Far East, nor U2 finishing the Asian leg of a summer tour, however, but instead the talented, wide-eyed members of the Lake Braddock Secondary School Band participating in a cultural exchange.

The band went on a 10-day excursion to China, from March 23 to April 1, as part of a program sponsored by the U.S.-China Cultural and Educational Exchange Foundation. During the trip, the band members played seven shows at seven different venues, visited with Chinese students and went sightseeing all in an effort to immerse them in a culture most had never experienced before.

"It was an amazing chance for us to see the Chinese culture and the people themselves," said Jack Colbrun, a freshman who plays the French horn. "We hear a lot about Chinese culture, but you don't often get to meet the people and this [trip] gave us that opportunity."

The group, consisting of 160 students, 60 parents and a couple of faculty members, was immersed into Chinese culture almost immediately after getting off the plane in Beijing. According to Margi Flynn, mother of Hayley, a junior flutist, the group jumped right into the first of three cultural exchange sessions, with the first performance at the Children's Palace in Forbidden City. Here, the Lake Braddock

students met a group of Chinese music students ages 10 to 20 and the two groups each played a specially prepared song for one another then joined together for an ensemble piece.

The purpose of the event was to share cultures, but the true cultural exchange occurred after the show, Flynn said. After the last number was finished, all of the students gathered backstage to be introduced and mingle. The Lake Braddock students were initially nervous to meet their Chinese counterparts, especially due to the language barrier, but soon enough, Flynn said, all of the students were conversing in the one language they all were fluent in.

"Some people just started a jazz baseline and members of both bands just jumped right in," Colbrun said. "There was a language barrier, but everyone knew how to communicate through the music. We found that it really is a universal language."

The second cultural exchange occurred at Beijing School #57, a local high school. The students played a couple of songs for one another, then played together and after the show, the Lake Braddock students

were given a tour of the school. Instead of a jam session this time, however, the students joined to play games of basketball and table tennis and even got a lesson in Tai Chi.

Perhaps the biggest venue the group played in during their trip was at Beijing's Wuzi University. Before the show, the Lake Braddock students and their parents

were given one-on-one tours of the institution and later that night, they played a full-length, nearly two hour show in a sold out concert hall. The experience, Flynn said, will never be forgotten.

"The house was packed," Flynn said. "Even after the concert, the audience hung out to see the kids after they got off the stage. It was just amazing."

While not performing, the students ventured out into Beijing to check out the local culture and see historic landmarks, getting a true taste of Chinese life. In addition to touring the Forbidden City, the students went to Tiananmen Square, Olympic Park

SEE BRUIN, PAGE 8

Masons Dispute Power Bill

FROM PAGE 3

renovations," Baber said. "It's taken us a while to get our plans straight. We've been out of the building so long that it's been disheartening to our members."

Late last year, Baber said, the plans for the last phase of construction were finally in place, as the rest of the \$100,000 needed for the renovations was secured. The members created the Acacia Lodge Foundation to raise the necessary funds. They raised nearly \$15,000 through various fund raisers and the rest of the money came from donations from members of other Masonic lodges around the state.

Around the same time, Baber said that he contacted NOVEC to have power turned on at the lodge and was told that the lodge owed \$16,000. NOVEC told Baber that the bill must be paid before power would be turned on. The news blindsided the lodge. Baber said that he was never informed that money was owed and did not know why such a cost was incurred. Subsequently, the move back into the lodge was in question, as the lodge did not have the money to pay the bill in full.

"Any money the [Acacia] [F]oundation raised has been used for the renovations," Baber said. "We have the money to complete the renovations but not to pay the \$16,000. The only money we have access to is our members' pockets and this is wildly in excess of what they have at the moment."

According to Baber, NOVEC told him that the bill was the result of the rerouting of power lines on the land that the lodge was to sit on and the installation of new poles to support those lines. Baber said that NOVEC told him that when Ayers House Movers of Spotsylvania moved the building in 2008, it was moved under a high voltage electric line and that the line needed to be rerouted for safety reasons. However, Baber claims that the lodge was never informed about the costs for this work until they contacted NOVEC to turn the power on.

"They insisted on rerouting some of the lines so they didn't go anywhere near where [the building] was sitting at its temporary position," Baber said. "They didn't tell us [about the charges for this] until we contacted them 15 months later. We certainly have protested the charges."

Baber said that he has contacted the owner and president of Ayers House Movers, Jason Ayers, and will explore getting assistance in paying the money owed to NOVEC. Baber said the company should have known about the power line and either moved it to a different location or explored alternatives such as insulating blankets on the building to allay NOVEC's

concerns and avoided the rerouting.

Ayers, in response, said that his company was told where to move the building and simply did what it was told. In addition, he said that it was both the lodge's responsibility to check with the power company to ensure that the move was acceptable and NOVEC's duty to inform both the lodge and Ayers House Movers about potential costs associated with rerouting power lines.

"The Acacia Lodge acted as a general contractor and the power company was notified as to where the building would be moved and we proceeded with that," Ayers said. "We did not handle the electric part, and it was their responsibility to contact the power company. The electric company also knew where it was going. I think they may have dropped the ball on it."

NOVEC Vice President of Electric System Development Robert Bisson countered that the temporary location the lodge was moved to was below a 12.47kV power line, which NOVEC deemed unsafe. Furthermore, Bisson said that the lodge never notified NOVEC that they were moving the building, which violated federal safety codes. Therefore, he said, NOVEC was legally obligated to reroute the power line, which resulted in a charge to the lodge.

"The proximity of the building to the [power] line violates clearance requirements in the National Electric Safety Code," Bisson said. "By law, NOVEC needed to act immediately in order to reduce the possibility of anyone working on the building being electrocuted. In accordance with the terms and conditions filed with the State Corporation Commission, NOVEC charges for correcting a safety hazard created by a group or individual."

Baber and Bisson both acknowledged that they have had preliminary talks about putting the lodge on a payment plan to satisfy the charges. Bisson said that the initial proposal was to pay installments over a five-year period.

"We may enter into a payment plan, but that doesn't make it any fairer to charge us this amount," Baber said.

Baber originally planned for all activities to return to the lodge on July 1, but with the new developments, that goal is in limbo until some resolution is reached, whether through negotiation or through the legal system. While the members of the Acacia Lodge are anxious to get back into the only building the group has ever known, Baber said, for now, all they can do is pray for a swift and fair outcome.

"God will provide and we will do something here," Baber said. "It would be a shame for a building whose genesis was in the 1800s if we didn't."

Lorton Waste Water Pipeline

FROM PAGE 3

every day."

According to Worthy, the project was something that the county had conceived years ago, but never got past the planning stage as money to fund construction never materialized. However, when the federal government announced that it would be distributing stimulus money for public works projects through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act last year, Worthy said that the county quickly applied.

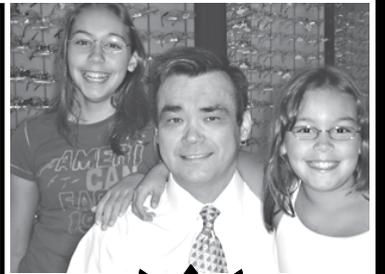
The application was accepted soon thereafter and the county was awarded \$6.5 million for the project.

The county put out a request for proposals, and after a competitive bidding process, M.A. Bongiovanni, Inc. was chosen as the contractor after submitting the lowest bid. A wastewater consulting firm, the company also entered into a team design build agreement with Fairfax-based planning and design firm Dewberry to work on the project.

"We have worked on many projects of various sizes with Fairfax County," said Dewberry Spokeswoman Molly Wagner. "We are always thrilled to support its projects and we are very happy to work on this critical issue with [the county]."

Worthy said that construction will begin in June and will be finished in August 2011.

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Cuccinelli Misleads on Costs

Perhaps we need a referendum to decide if and when Virginia will spend time, resources and image on challenging federal actions?

Some of us are probably prepared to admit that we are embarrassed, as two of Virginia's major newspapers warned we might be. But no one predicted that there would be so much to blush about so soon.

Suddenly, Virginia is in the national spotlight, not for being home of the Internet along the Dulles corridor, not for being the place for lovers (too many exceptions apply), not for being the mother of many presidents, not for its history, not for its wine.

No, Virginia is in the national spotlight because our newly elected Attorney General, Ken Cuccinelli of Clifton, Fairfax County, has taken to court declaring recently passed landmark health care legislation as unconstitutional. He also sued to stop the regulation of greenhouse gasses and now will challenge new federal standards for auto emissions (even though even the auto industry would rather have federal controls that a patchwork of state regulations).

He opened his administration telling Virginia's dramatically underfunded colleges and universities that they could not include sexual orientation in their anti-discrimination policies.

Last October, before the election, the Virginian Pilot warned: "Cuccinelli's election would bring embarrassment to Virginia." The Washington Post, a few days later: "Cuccinelli would drive away qualified lawyers from an office that

functions as the state government's law firm, and, given his bizarre ideas, he would very likely become an embarrassment for the commonwealth."

ADDING INJURY TO INSULT, Cuccinelli denies that these escapades are costing the Commonwealth anything, releasing a statement claiming, for example, that the only costs involved are the filing fees, \$350 in the case of the constitutional challenge to the health care.

That's like saying it didn't cost anything to close the Federal Government in the snow emergency in February. The actual cost was about \$70 million a day.

Cuccinelli owes his constituents a real accounting of the costs, the amount staff time devoted to the efforts. The Office of the Attorney General is Virginia's law firm, and there are established methods for billing and assessing costs.

Most important is admitting the opportunity costs. What is it that his office is not doing because of the time and focus playing national politics?

His two immediate predecessors, Gov. Bob McDonnell and Virginia Supreme Court Justice Bill Mims, both focused on consumer protection. McDonnell launched the "consumer alert of the month," a column which addressed real problems faced by ordinary Virginians in

terms of financial fraud, identity theft and other critical issues. Mims maintained the monthly effort. The columns appeared in media around the state, and served both as a warning and as a means of reaching out to people who had been victims.

The last such "alert" was filed the month before Cuccinelli took office, after monthly entries for four years through 2009. (www.oag.state.va.us/CONSUMER/Consumer_Alert_Archive.html)

Taking care of Virginian's interests is not at the top of the priorities of the current attorney general.

The 14 duties and powers of the Office of the Attorney General (see www.oag.state.va.us/OUR_OFFICE/Role.html) include providing information on identity theft and remediation, help Social Services collect child support, prosecute certain environmental and computer crimes, enforce laws that protect businesses and consumers, represent consumers in utility matters before the State Corporation Commission, in addition to providing legal advice and opinions to the Governor, General Assembly and other state agencies.

Ken Cuccinelli was elected state senator representing the 37th District, part Prince William and Fairfax counties, in a special election in 2002. The election drew 16.6 percent of registered voters after state Sen. Warren Barry (R) resigned to take a job with the Warner Administration. Cuccinelli was reelected in 2003 and then in 2007 held onto his seat by less than 100 votes.

— MARY KIMM
MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

tions, aka rationing, to patients.

The recently passed healthcare bill can also be expected to have a negative impact on unemployment, already a major problem for our country. This past week many companies — 3M, AT&T, Caterpillar, John Deere, Verizon, etc. — announced large increases in expenditure under ObamaCare. This certainly won't help to create new jobs and will probably result in more job loss.

With the American economy in dire straits, raising taxes is a bad idea. However, there are big tax increases that are part of ObamaCare.

And, last but not least, in a free country, a person cannot be forced to buy something. ObamaCare takes away our freedom by forcing people to buy health insurance. What will we be forced to buy next?

On a side note, if ObamaCare is so wonderful, why is Congressman Connolly exempt from it?

Susan Lider Hutson
Clifton

Undercounting Hurts Families

To the Editor:

People are often surprised to learn that children are routinely undercounted in the U.S. census. Many might also be surprised to learn that Census counts and the accuracy of data personally affects them. Most major federal funding decisions — and many state and local ones — rely at least in part on census data, including funding for early childhood education, schools, roads, environmental protection, healthcare and nutrition.

Nationally, census counts are used to distribute more than \$400 billion of federal funds to states and localities for more than 140 child-focused programs such as:

- ❖ State Children's Health Insurance Program
- ❖ Foster Care
- ❖ Head Start
- ❖ Special Education Grants to states

Undercounting children in Virginia could cost the state tens of millions of dollars and set back

efforts to support programs that help our most vulnerable children. That is why it is critical that all families fill out their census form and to include all of their children, even newborns, in the count.

According to the Census Bureau, young children are missed at a higher rate than any other age group. In the 2000 census, there was a net undercount of more than 1 million children under age 10. More than three-quarters of a million children under age 5 were missed, which amounts to 4 percent of this population group, by far the largest number missed in any age group.

Children in poor households are the most likely to be missed, so an undercount typically ends up hurting exactly those children that need the most help.

In Northern Virginia, more than 43 percent of children are either foreign-born or live in a household in which at least one parent is foreign-born.

Many of these residents do not speak English well and may have

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

Proud Virginian

difficulty understanding the importance of the census.

Without good data, decision-makers are left in a vacuum, forced to either ignore growing problems or make changes based on assumption and anecdote.

Kathy May

Director, Northern Virginia Initiative of Voices for Virginia's Children

To the Editor:

Having used the courts to get its way over the objections of the majority for years, the left is outraged when an attorney general seeks to use the courts to uphold the Constitution. Polls clearly show that a majority does not want the unprecedented government intrusion into their lives, the massive debt or the drain on productivity that comes with this

health insurance legislation. They are appalled at the corrupt means by which elected representatives were bought or intimidated to support this bill.

Last November's election proved that a large percentage of Virginians want to be protected from this federal power grab at our rights. The Virginia legislation against forcing anyone to purchase health insurance was passed by a significant bipartisan majority with no manipulation, buying of votes or

intimidation.

The attorney general is obligated to address this conflict between the Commonwealth's effort to protect our rights to control our healthcare and the federal attempt to rule over us.

And the Democratic Party's concern? Three hundred and fifty dollars expended in the challenge. They support a \$1 trillion program that will degrade the quality of our healthcare, as demonstrated everywhere this has been attempted,

but are concerned about \$350. This shows they are fearful that Attorney General Cuccinelli (R) will be successful and that they have no sense of the appropriate allocation of your money.

I am proud that Virginia is leading in the strike for freedom with a legitimate challenge of this unconstitutional attack on the best healthcare system in the world.

Steve Hunt

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Commissioners of Fairfax County Commission for Women pose for a photo with Keynote Speaker Maureen McDonnell, First Lady of Virginia.

County Commission Hosts Women's Voices Forum

On March 20, the Fairfax County Commission for Women conducted a Women's Voices Forum at the Fairfax County Government Center. Keynote Speaker was

First Lady of the Commonwealth, Maureen McDonnell. McDonnell returns to her home area, Northern Virginia for the first time since her husband was elected as governor of Virginia.

Bruin Band Visits China

FROM PAGE 4

and the Great Wall, but it was during meals and their transportation between sites that offered the truest glimpse of the culture. Flynn said that the students were given authentic Chinese cuisine for all of their meals, though she said their hosts were careful to keep the more exotic dishes at bay. All of the students enjoyed the food, she said, but a couple of McDonald's pitstops were made nonetheless.

"The food isn't at all like American Chinese food," Colbrun said. "They don't have egg rolls or fried rice. It's a lot of healthy things like vegetables and things like that. Some [of the group] were nervous about the food, but it was great."

PERHAPS THE strongest feeling of being a foreigner, they said, came when the group was walking through the streets of Beijing. Flynn said that the students' light hair and fair skin made them stand out, and many times, local residents would ask them to pose for pictures and even pulled some students out of the group to talk. Though the experience was slightly awkward, she said, the hospitality and welcoming nature of the people was never in doubt.

"We had certain students who were fair, with light eyes and light hair," Flynn said. "They would get literally pulled out of the group to have their photo taken. They were just so nice. We never felt any untoward feelings from

them."

On the long plane ride home, the students said, they were given the time to reflect on their experiences from the past week and were in awe of what they had seen and done. Hunter Langdon, a sophomore in the Color Guard, said that on the way back, all she could think about was how many of her preconceived notions of the country were dispelled. She said that after years of social studies classes and being told that China was a communist country, she expected a grim atmosphere with unhappy people, but found the exact opposite.

"You're told for so long that it is a communist country, but when we got there, all we found was people trying to be friendly and kind to us," Langdon said. "They did everything they could to make us feel like we were at home."

Flynn said that another common feeling the return trip home was a sense of appreciation, because many of the students and parents realized that they most likely would not be going back to China ever again. Though there was much more they wanted to do, Flynn said that she was satisfied that the students took advantage of their time there and learned as much as they could. Her only hope was that the Chinese students and people they met got as much out of the interaction as they did.

"We wanted to go over there and leave the people we interacted with a good impression," Flynn said. "The world is a big place, and America is just a small part of it."

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 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 Dwarfs: 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. Ladies free, men \$10. 703-569-5940.
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 & 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 Dwarfs: 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. Ladies free, men \$10. 703-569-5940.
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.
Friends of the Library Book Sale. 10 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Used book sale. 703-339-4610.
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.

Mother's Day Multi-Vendor Event. 9 a.m.-1p.m. at the Community Business Partnership, 7001 Loisdale Road, 2nd floor, Springfield. Jewelry, handbags, chocolates, beauty items, teas, gifts and more. 703-451-8871.
Introductory Spring Wildflower Walk. 10:30 a.m. at Hidden Pond, 8511 Greely Blvd., Springfield. Join a naturalist for a leisurely walk in the Pohick Stream Valley. Reservations required at 703-451-9588.

SUNDAY/APRIL 11

Soyfoods Cooking Class. 10 a.m. 9302 Hallston Court, Fairfax Station. Tofu, tempeh, miso, soymilk and more. \$50. Registration required at 703-643-2713. www.veggourmet.wordpress.com.



Swing Into Spring

Vocalist Nancy Scimone performs at the benefit Swing Into Spring Jazz Concert with guitarist Steve Herberman and bassist Victor Dvoski on Thursday, April 22, from 7:30-9:30 p.m., at Church of the Holy Spirit School, 8800 Braddock Road, Annandale. Suggested Donation: \$10. For more information, call 571-232-1873 or e-mail LiveJazzConcerts@verizon.net.

MONDAY/APRIL 12

Latin Dance Nights. 10 p.m. at Jaxx, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. Ladies free, men \$10. 703-569-5940.
PAL Reading Visits. 4 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice reading with a trained therapy dog. Dogs will remain with handlers as children read to them. Call to register. 703-249-1520.
Early Reader Book Discussion. 4:15 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Call for titles. Age 6-8 with adult. 703-971-0010.
Hugs for Bugs. 10:30 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Story time about bugs. Age 24 months to 5 years with adult. 703-339-4610

TUESDAY/APRIL 13

Dine Out Night for Koinonia. 5-8 p.m. at King Street Blues, corner of

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 9

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

Kingstowne Blvd. and South Van Dorn St., Alexandria. The Koinonia Foundation, a local social services organization, will receive 20 percent of every restaurant check. Diners must mention "Koinonia" to their server. 703-971-1991 or www.koinoniacares.org.

Open Mic w/Bob Gaynor of The Roadducks. 8 p.m. at Jaxx, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. 703-569-5940.

Fun for Twos and Threes. 10:30 a.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Stories and activities. Age 2-3 with adult. 703-971-0010.

Second Tuesday Evening Book Discussion. 6:45 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Say You're One of Them by Uwem Akpan. Adults. 703-339-4610.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 14

Open Irish Song Session. 8:30 p.m. at Hard Times Cafe, 6362 Springfield Plaza, Springfield. Open to anyone who would like to sing or listen to Irish songs. 703-913-5600.

Nonfiction Book Discussion Group. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.

Older Adults Book Group. 2 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. "The Story of Edgar Sawtelle" by David Wroblewski. 703-339-4610.

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 15

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

Earth Day: Birthday! 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Earth Day stories, songs and activities. Age 2-5 with Adult. 703-249-1520.

Let's Go to the Library. 10:30 a.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Stories about libraries and a tour. Age 3-5 with and adult. 703-339-7385.

FRIDAY/APRIL 16

St. Bernadette School Art Show. 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. at St. Bernadette School, 7602 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. The centerpiece of the exhibit is a life-sized paper mache tree made by the art teacher and parents and filled with students' origami projects. 703-451-8696.

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

SATURDAY/APRIL 17

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

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.

PAWS to Read. 11 a.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Read with Chance, a trained reading therapy dog, for a ten-minute session. Call to register. Call to reserve. 703-339-7385.

MONDAY/APRIL 19

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



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Rams, Bruins Set Goals for Track Season



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Genamarie McCant finished first in the girls' 400-meter dash with a time of 58.75. Her goal is to run a 55-second race this season.

Lake Braddock, Robinson track teams compete in Leslie Sherman meet.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

Robinson sophomore Genamarie McCant sat on a bleacher huffing and puffing out tired breaths following her victory in the girls' 400-meter dash at the Leslie Sherman Memorial Invitational on April 1 at West Springfield.

She finished first in the first heat of runners, which featured many of the area's best sprinters, but McCant was more focused on her overall time than her finishing position.

"I don't know my time, so I don't know how I did," she said.

McCant knew she finished first in the fastest heat of the race, meaning it would take an unlikely run from the second and third heats to beat her, but her goals are beyond finishing first.

"I've trained really hard," she said. "But I'm trying to get down to a 55- or 54-second range. If I run a 59, then I need to get my head in the right direction."

Her final time came in: 58.75 seconds.

It's wasn't quite the time McCant had hoped for, but it did display her total domination of the track in the 400-meter dash. The second place finisher, Edison's Toni Duvall, crossed the finish line at 1:02.83.

Coming within four seconds of her goal isn't a bad way to start the 2010 outdoor track season. Like

many athletes in attendance, McCant used the Leslie Sherman Memorial Invitational as a benchmark for the season.

"I was trying to get out there and see what I could do," she said. "I wanted to see how good a shape I was in. Then I could try to do better next meet."

Senior hurdler J.W. Seo used the meet not only as a benchmark, but also to test his conditioning.

"I've been in shape because of the indoor track season," he said. "So I felt pretty good today."

While Seo's body held up during the 300-meter hurdle race, he noted his fifth place time of 42.18 needs improvement as well as his race technique.

At the end of the race, near the 200-meter mark, Seo said he felt fatigued and had trouble with the remaining hurdles.

"You get tired and it becomes hard to see the hurdles," he said. "They get a bit blurry."

Despite a disappointing finish, Seo said he knew that plenty of time remained before the district and regional meets to im-

prove.

"It's just the beginning of the season," he said. "Hopefully, I'll get a better time next meet."

LAKE BRADDOCK senior Megan Bumgarner is another hurdler who hoped to set new goals by competing in the spring break meet.

Bumgarner finished first in the girls' 100-meter hurdles with a time of 15.79. She took second in the 300-meter hurdles with a time of 48.02.

"I didn't have anything to base my times off this season," Bumgarner said. "So, I was just trying to get a good mark to work from. Now I know where to

"I've trained really hard."

— Genamarie McCant

SEE RAMS, PAGE 14

Lake Braddock Excels under Victor Chen

Introduction of team-first offense helps girls' lacrosse team to 4-2 start.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

While some coaches might focus only on their team's next opponent, new Lake Braddock head girls' lacrosse coach Victor Chen prefers to take a wider view beyond Patriot District and Northern Region title runs.

"Right now, what we have to do is turn the [Lake Braddock] program from people playing lacrosse to [people becoming] lacrosse players," he said.

Boys' lacrosse has flourished in the Northern Virginia area, and Chen credits the boys' youth systems for fueling the school's powerhouse teams.

Chen wants to help create a similar early interest in the sport among girls.

"We're working on getting more feeder programs in this area," he said. "[Youth programs] will increase the awareness of the game. If I can increase the interest, everything else will fall into place."

But Chen isn't going to wait for elite players to come to him courtesy of youth systems. Right now, his work is with the Bruins and their goal is to make noise in the Patriot District.

Chen doesn't expect his team to be district contenders this season,

but so far his structured offensive style has

"They've got to learn a whole new set of philosophies."

— Victor Chen

SEE CHEN'S, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY REED S. ALBERS/THE CONNECTION

From left, Alex Kelly, Colleen Garrott and Vicky Sica are three of the team's senior leaders who are enjoying success under Victor Chen's team-first approach.

SPORTS

Chen's Changes Boost Bruins

FROM PAGE 10

paid off in a 4-2 record.

"They've got to learn a whole new set of philosophies," he said of his players. "That's the most difficult part for the girls. They know it's a system that will work and they're working hard at it."

Senior attacker Vicky Sica is excelling in Chen's system. "He's way more focused on us getting better as players," Sica said. "He's really making us work hard for what we want to accomplish."

IN THE BRUINS' first three games, Sica has scored 12 goals and has been an offensive catalyst for the team.

Senior midfielder Colleen Garrott said the team relies more on offensive units rather than individual play.

"He's got a different approach," Garrott said. "We have more set plays now. We're more focused, too. It's less freelance play and more sticking to the plan."

For senior Alex Kelly, part of that plan meant shifting from attack to midfield at the coach's request.

While the change has lowered her offensive output, Kelly said she's happy to play an important role for the team.

"It's a bit scary because I've been playing attack since fourth grade," she said. "This year, it's all about being a team and I'm happy to do anything that will help our team."

The Patriot District is expected to be one of the toughest districts in the region, but with a steady game plan, Chen is confident his team can compete.

"We've got some very tough competition forthcoming," he said. "As long as we keep [reaching] our goals, we'll be competitive."

Rams, Bruins at Sherman Meet

FROM PAGE 13

go from here."

The meet wasn't just a testing ground for runners, for Lake Braddock's Matt Hoogland it was a chance to compete in a new event.

Hoogland is best known for his pole vaulting ability, but the senior had a rare race in the 300-meter hurdles.

"I haven't really been working much with the hurdles," he said.

Hoogland finished fourth with a time of 42.07, but the reigning Northern Region indoor pole vault champion said he's expecting to see more action in the hurdles.

"I think I'll be doing more hurdles this season," he said. "It's one of my favorite events along with the long jump, triple jump and pole vault."

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12. RIGID GENDER ROLES: Expects you to serve, obey and remain at home.
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OPINION

Isn't It Obvious?

Transportation problems are still the elephant in the room.

BY SEN. DAVE MARSDEN
D-37

Once again, we have balanced our budget in Virginia in the most difficult and challenging financial environment since the Great Depression of the 1930s. It was my goal for this session of the General Assembly that we accomplish three things: first, that we maintain the car tax relief we currently enjoy, second, that the Local Composite Index (LCI) for school funding that finally adjusted to Fairfax County's favor not be frozen at last year's level granting us an additional \$60 million over the biennium, and thirdly, that cuts to K-12 funding be minimal as the quality of our schools are the most critical factor in maintaining our home values.

COMMENTARY

The budget put forth by the Senate accomplished these goals. The House of Delegates and governor wanted to cut K-12 by \$620 million and \$721 million, respectively, but the Senate position prevailed in a compromise and far less was cut, \$253 million. Northern Virginia did much better than I could have hoped for. This being said, the cuts that were ultimately agreed to were painful and many of our citizens will feel the impact very dramatically.

THE STATE budget is now lower than when I first started to serve in the General Assembly in 2006. While this may be good news in some respects it ignores the elephant in the room — transportation.

We did not address our growing transportation problem in both construction and maintenance during this past session. The snow took a huge bite out of the maintenance budget, (15 percent), which was far

greater than anticipated, and left our roads a potholed mess. I have had two bent rims this year, which cost more than \$800 to repair. I hit a pothole on Interstate 64 in Richmond during the session and spoke about it on the Senate floor to remind the Senate that lack of transportation dollars is costing our citizens greatly. The next day, one of the Senate clerks hit the same pothole and bent her rim also. I am assuming that many of you are experiencing damage to your vehicles as well. Our transportation problems regarding maintenance are becoming just as critical as our lack of infrastructure investment.

This coming fiscal year, starting July 1, we can either provide maintenance funding or make our federal highway dollars match wherein we would get \$4 for each dollar we put up. We can't do both and this is a catastrophe. The expense of car repairs due to poor road maintenance will cost us now. The loss to businesses, and future business development, that stems from not investing in a transportation system that can adequately move goods, services, commuters and create jobs will cost us for years to come. We are currently out of money and cannot meet our obligations.

It is good news that the governor is re-opening some rest stops. It is also good that the governor is pursuing off-shore drilling to raise transportation funds, although the benefits may not be apparent for seven-10 years and then only if Congress grants Virginia royalties. It is essential, however, that he call a special session of the General Assembly so that the governor can put his transportation plans before the legislature and give us an opportunity to weigh in. Only the governor can call this special session, and he has pledged to act. It's time we got started.

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Fimian-Herrity Debate. 1:30 p.m. at Greenspring Retirement Community, Hunters Crossing Conference Center, 7430 Spring Village Drive, Springfield. Keith Fimian and Pat Herrity will debate ahead of the June 8 primary election to choose the Republican candidate for Virginia's 11th District congressional seat. John McCaslin, host of America's Morning News radio show, will moderate. 703-923-4690.

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.

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Absolutely Magnificent Garage TH A gorgeous property with every bell and whistle. 4 levels include loft & deck, 2 fireplaces, 9' + ceilings, gleaming hardwoods on main level, chef's dream gourmet kitchen, G'town brick/slate patio, and much more!! Planning on listing yours? Call Kay Hart This beauty: Under contract in 4 days. Call Kay Hart for information about others: 703-503-1860

UNDER CONTRACT IN 4 DAYS!

Want to sell? Ready to downsize? Need to upsize? Owe more than value?

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Carol G. Ford, REALTOR GRI, ABR, Member REBAC Real Estate Buyer's Agent Council 703-503-4027
Call.ford@longandfoster.com
Timely articles updated each month at carolfordsellshomes.net



CRS, Associate Broker
Life Member, NVAR Multi-Million Dollar Sales Club
Life Member, NVAR TOP PRODUCERS
Ann Witherspoon
703-503-1836



Lake Frederick \$549,900
Immaculate Beauty in Adult Community - 3 Years Young - Shows Like a Model - 3 Large BR - 4 Large BA - 3 Finished Levels w/walk-out LL - 9 Ft Ceilings - Gas FP - Main Floor MBR - Fabulous Community Amenities.
CALL / EMAIL ANN WITHERSPOON
703.503.1836 ann@annwitherspoon.com

Sheila Adams
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Fairfax Station \$850,000
SIX+ ACRES
This beauty was APPRAISED IN OCTOBER 2009 FOR \$924,000 - Fantastic buy!!! Custom Built Solid Brick Colonial featuring 6+ acres, 5 Car Garage, 4 BRs, 3 1/2 Baths, Custom quality Wood Cabinets/Granite/Ceramic Tile/Center Island, 4 FP's, Huge Finished LL w/Recreation Rm/Game Rm/Exercise Rm, Pool/Hot Tub.
CALL SHEILA ADAMS 703-503-1895



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Laurel Hill \$799,500
Gorgeous 5BR, 4.5BA Hampton Model in Laurel Hill. Over 4500 Sq Ft of living space! Beautiful large yard on cul-de-sac backing to trees. Huge master suite with gas fireplace & luxury bath. Fantastic Finished Basement, Rec Rm, Game Rm, dance floor/bar area & Guest Bedroom w/full bath.



Fairfax Station \$775,000
Gorgeous Waterfront Colonial on 5+ wooded acres. Charming interior with all modern conveniences. Updated Kitchen, Baths, Pella windows, Hardiplank exterior, Landscaping & new HVAC. Picturesque view of lake, tiered deck, foot bridges, creek and in-ground pool. Private location.



Richard Esposito
703-503-4035
Richard@LNF.com
Service is the difference I provide



Clifton Coming Soon!
This former model home has 5 bedrooms, 3 1/2 Bathrooms and 3 finished levels. Hardwood floors in the kitchen, dining room, living room, family room and on the stair case. Kitchen has granite counters, Family room has a fireplace, deck off kitchen, lower level is a walkout with a second kitchen, bedroom and a full bath.
Richard Esposito richard@lnf.com 703-503-4035

ELLIE WESTER

703-503-1880

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ellie.wester@longandfoster.com



Burke \$630,000
Delightful 4 bedroom colonial in Signal Hill with a gorgeous park-like view. Lake Braddock School, walk to the VRE, and shopping is just minutes away.

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