

Mount Vernon Gazette

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MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

APRIL 15, 2010



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE

Play Ball!

With a clear blue sky Saturday morning, April 10, and 491 players on the Red Steven's field, Fort Hunt Little League officially opened for the 2010 season.

MORE PHOTOS, PAGE 21.

Hospital's Finances: Better Than Ever

Inova Mount Vernon emerges stronger from fight to stay open.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE GAZETTE

When Inova Health System announced it was seriously considering closing its 200-plus bed Mount Vernon Hospital eight years ago, money was a big factor.

Inova, which operates several highly regarded hospitals in Northern Virginia, is a non-profit organization. Even so, the hospital on Parkers Lane had never covered its own costs and the situation appeared to be getting worse with

time.

"The fact that the hospital was not profitable was one of the reasons Inova gave for looking at closing it," said Supervisor Gerry Hyland (D-Mount Vernon).

But community outcry caused the health system to rethink its decision. In 2004, Inova committed to investing \$100 million into renovating the Mount Vernon facility with the hopes of changing the facility's financial course.

Six years later, Inova's initial investments in Mount Vernon hospital appear to

"Mount Vernon has really turned a corner, financially and in terms of quality of care."

— Barbara Doyle,
Mount Vernon Hospital CEO

SEE INOVA, PAGE 4

Armed Resistance

Open-carry advocates planning a 'Restore the Constitution Rally' Monday at Fort Hunt Park.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

Dozens of armed protesters from across the country are headed to Northern Virginia next week, staging a rally at Fort Hunt Park that will include loaded weapons and speeches

about the U.S. Constitution. Convoys of protesters will drive up the parkway to Gravelly Point, where the armed demonstrators will be within sight of the Capitol as airplanes fly overhead in the flight path of National Airport. The

SEE FORT HUNT, PAGE 4

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Athletic Club Hosts Fund-Raiser

The Mount Vernon Athletic Club is hosting its 1st Annual Children's Charity Event, "Mount Vernon's Helping Hands," on Saturday, April 24, 4-6:30 p.m. for children and 7-10 p.m. for adults. See the registration form online at <http://mtvac.net/events> or take one at the club's front desk. Register before April 19, and receive one free raffle ticket.

All proceeds will benefit the Inova Fairfax hospital For Children Pediatric Oncology Program.

Shelter Hosts Rabies Clinic

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter will take its low-cost rabies vaccination clinic on the road to reach the pets of South County residents by hosting its April 18 low-cost rabies clinic at the Mount Vernon RECenter, 2017 Belle View Blvd. from 2-4 p.m.

The cost for rabies shots at the clinic is \$12 per dog, cat or ferret. All pets will receive a one-year rabies vaccine. To obtain a three-year vaccine, citizens must bring their pet's rabies certificate showing the animal's current rabies vaccination and vaccination expiration date. Rabies certificates will be issued, no tags. All dogs should be on leashes and all cats and ferrets should be in carriers.

Fairfax County 2010 dog licenses will be sold separately at the clinic and cost \$10. per dog.

Cash or checks only will be accepted at the clinic. No credit cards.

The clinic is a partnership with the Mount Vernon RECenter and is being sponsored by the Fairfax County Animal Shelter and Deepwood Veterinary Hospital.

For more information about the rabies clinic at the Mount Vernon RECenter, call 703-830-1100.

MVCCA's 2010 Award Winners

The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations, Inc., has named the recipients of its 2010 Citizen of the Year, Organization of the Year, and Student of the Year awards.

Joan McLellan is the Citizen of the Year, and has served for many decades as her community's conscience and voice on the full range of social justice issues that affect the members of the Stratford Landing Citizens Association and the citizens of the Mount Vernon Magisterial District. She has been actively involved with the MVCCA Special Committee on Affordable and Workforce Housing, the Heritage Presbyterian Church Missions Committee and Ventures in Community (VIC).

The Organization of the Year is the Friends of Dyke Marsh. In 1969 an act of Congress established Dyke Marsh as a wildlife preserve under the management of the National Park Service. The Friends of Dyke Marsh was created in 1976 as a membership non-profit organization to ensure the continuation, preservation and restoration of Dyke Marsh. This group became active on the Hill, pushing for improved legislation to protect the Marsh. They work with local elected officials and community leaders, advocating for the Marsh's wetlands because they are important to the success of watersheds in the area.

The Student of the Year is a new award for MVCCA, and two recipients were selected for 2010 — Jasmin Lawrence from Mount Vernon High School and Rachel Lau from West Potomac High School. They work very hard at school, are very active in their churches, and have interests that they share outside of school and church. Challenges that might defeat other young people bring out the best in these two young women. Jasmin is very active in her church, and volunteers at a recovery clinic. Her wish is to become a rehabilitation counselor and eventually open her own clinic. Rachel is active in her church and Girl Scouts. She is also a very accomplished theater techie, working at her high school, her church, and with other groups in the Mount Vernon area.

All of these outstanding awardees will be recognized at the MVCCA Gala being held on May 1 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, at the intersection of US 1 and Fort Hunt Road. Reservation form is available at www.mvcca.org.

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY GALE CURCIO/THE GAZETTE

Felicea Meyer-DeLoatch, Lee Braun, Robert Hines, Art Monk and Kahan Dhillon.

Monk Emphasizes Service

Community responds with attendance and attention at UCM's Business Leadership Breakfast.

BY GALE CURCIO
THE GAZETTE

Cynthia Hull, executive director, United Community Ministries, and Art Monk, former Washington Redskin's wide receiver and NFL Hall-of-Famer, have something in common. They both grew up in families where giving back to others was part of growing up.

As such, Hull selected social work as her initial career path, and while Monk is known best for his football prowess, he has also spent a lot of time giving back to the community.

The featured speaker at last week's Behind-the-Scenes Look at UCM, Monk was part of a presentation designed to educate business leaders and community members about the work that UCM does.

Monk explained how his original teammates, also known as The Over-The-Hill Gang (so named due to the large number of veteran players on the team) expected all the players to be involved in community service.

"Two years playing with those guys — they were tough," said Monk. They played hard and demanded perfection. They also had a heart for serving in their communities — and expected all of us [players] to do the same."

"Community service didn't mean much to me when I came to D.C.," said Monk. "But the whole idea of helping was familiar — I was raised with that. My parents were always cooking, always providing, always giving something."

Monk went on to talk about the growing demand for social services, and that it's hard for people to understand their needs. That's why he got into more



Cynthia Hull notes that the need for services keeps growing.



Niki Wanner shows the different food supplies given to homeless clients versus those with homes.

hands-on community service.

Monk helped found the Good Samaritan Foundation with some of his Washington teammates; the foundation provides youth with the environment needed to equip them with the skills, training and resources necessary to compete successfully in society through the Student Training Opportunity Pro

SEE MONK, PAGE 7

Inova Mount Vernon Finances Improving

FROM PAGE 1

be paying off —literally.

If business continues at its current pace for the rest of 2010, the hospital will finish the year “in the black” for the first time since it opened in 1976.

“Last year, we came very close to breaking even, very close. Right now, it is early in the year but we are way ahead of our [financial] plan already,” said Barbara Doyle, chief executive officer of Mount Vernon Hospital.

SEVERAL FACTORS have contributed to the hospital’s financial upswing.

Starting in 2008, Inova engaged in a \$14 million physical renovation of Mount Vernon hospital.

“The facility was aged. It really needed a renovation of its lobby areas so that people would view it as state-of-the-art,” said Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee), who is chair of the Southeast Fairfax Health Planning Task Force.

Mount Vernon has not only modernized the entrance and lobby to the hospital but as brought in new equipment, such as cutting edge technology for breast care and treatment. The health system expanded the radiology department at Mount Vernon and brought the MRI machine into the building from a trailer where it used to be housed.

“There was a commitment on the part of



PHOTO BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE/THE GAZETTE

Officials said the newly renovated and significantly more efficient emergency room is one reason Mount Vernon Hospital generates more revenue than it did in the past.

Inova to make it a better facility. The bottom line is that it wasn’t what Inova thought it should be,” said Hyland.

INOVA has also aggressively recruited new staff for Mount Vernon hospital.

A new spine surgeon, for example, has attracted several patients to the facility, said

Doyle. The hospital has also hired more nurses to permanent staff positions, instead of picking them up through temporary contracts.

“With people losing their jobs, more nurses are coming back into the workforce looking for stable positions. That has been

a huge plus for us,” said Doyle.

According to Hyland, the relationship between hospital management and staff has also improved, particularly under Doyle’s leadership.

“The nursing staff and other employees are staying there for longer periods of time,” he said.

THE RENOVATION, new staff and technology investment have been targeted in certain medical fields where Mount Vernon Hospital has developed a reputation for expertise and excellence.

Mount Vernon’s Joint Replacement Center and Rehabilitation Center are now ranked among the top programs of their type in the country. Last year, The Joint Commission, a national hospital organization, awarded Mount Vernon Hospital a “gold seal of approval” for outstanding care.

“We underestimated the impact of that award. The volume of joint replacements that we are doing is significantly up from last year. We have had joint replacement patients from every state in the nation and 31 other countries,” said Doyle.

Inova is also hoping to gain recognition for its Breast Care Institute and Wound Healing Center at the Mount Vernon site.

“Mount Vernon has really turned a corner, financially and in terms of quality of

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‘Restore the Constitution Rally’ at Fort Hunt Park

FROM PAGE 1

event, dubbed by organizers as the “Restore the Constitution Rally,” is an effort to draw attention to the law allowing gun owners to openly carry firearms at National Park Service sites while drawing attention to what organizers say are concerning violations of the Constitution.

“We wanted to be as close to D.C. as possible,” said Daniel Almond, a Georgia real-estate agent who applied for the permit to conduct the rally. “The Constitution is being violated and ignored in many instances.”

Almond plans to come bearing arms. For starters, he’ll be packing an unloaded rifle. He’ll also be wearing a bandoleer with rifle ammunition. Then there’s the loaded pistol that he’ll keep holstered during the rally. That’s all perfectly legal as of Feb. 22, when a new law took effect requiring the National Park Service to conform to state gun laws. Because the event will take place on federal property, the National Park Service and the United States Park Police have the responsibility to maintain order. The Park Service turned down the offer from Fairfax County to coordinate local police assistance.

“Certainly, having firearms mixed in with visiting crowds would cause us some pause,” said Dottie Marshall, superintendent of the George Washington National Parkway. “At this point, we are faced with following the law.”

THE RALLY IS NOT being welcomed by some in Northern Virginia. The Rev. Keary Kincannon, pastor at Rising Hope United Methodist Church, said he thought the idea of bringing weapons to a rally represents a threat to civil order. Although he planned counter-demonstration with placards and leaflets, he said he backed down after being approached by the Mount Vernon District and the Park Police and asked to stand down.

“They made a persuasive argument to me that my showing up would lend credence to their protest,” said Kincannon. “Basically if I showed up to protest their protest, it would give them what they wanted and I don’t want to do that.”

Almond chose April 19 to commemorate the anniversary of the “Shot Heard Round the World” in Massachusetts that started the Revolutionary War. His original plan was to conduct the event at Gravelly Point, where he could benefit from Virginia’s gun laws while still in sight of the Capitol. But as more and more people began expressing



Daniel Almond

interest, Almond realized that parking would be a problem for the size of the expected crowd.

So he added a second site — Fort Hunt Park, the spacious picnicking location in Fairfax County on the parkway. This is where all the speeches

“It seems more like an exercise in intimidation than constitutional rights.”

— Del. Bob Brink (D-48)

will take place, and the largest crowds will assemble. Unlike the vast majority of other National Park Service sites, alcohol is allowed at Fort Hunt Park. The blend of guns and alcohol has become a concern for some neighborhood residents, many of whom have contacted Mount Vernon Supervisor Gerry Hyland to express their concerns.

“That’s an obvious concern,” said Hyland. “I’m kind of holding my breath at the prospect of mixing guns and alcohol.”

CONCERNED RESIDENTS have also

been contacting Del. Scott Surovell (D-44), whose district includes Fort Hunt Park. He said that his experience with Second Amendment advocates is that they know the law very well, and that he doesn’t expect any problems. Yet he said he’s also troubled by some of the rhetoric being used by the demonstrators online, including language from protesters about taking loaded firearms “step up to the edge” of the border between Virginia and the District of Columbia.

“I don’t think they are doing their cause any favors by using language like that,” said Surovell, who taught his children how to ride a bicycle in Fort Hunt Park. “There are better ways to get your point across, like writing a letter to the editor.”

On the other end of the parkway, Del. Bob Brink (D-48) agrees. His district includes Gravelly Point, another site where protesters are preparing to gather. Brink said that he welcomes dissenting opinions, and he has no problem with people who want to express their ideas about the Constitution. Yet he is uncomfortable with that message coming at the point of a gun.

“It seems more like an exercise in intimidation than constitutional rights,” said Brink. “They don’t need to brandish a gun in order to achieve a redress of grievances.”



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE

Opening Next Week

West Potomac High School students rehearse "Godspell" for their upcoming performances April 21-24 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10. For more information call 703-718-2585 or email westpotomactheatre@gmail.com

Center Named after Gartlan and Wife

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to rename the Mount Vernon Center for Community Health after late state Sen. Joe Gartlan (D-36) and his wife Fredona on April 6.

The facility, located at 8119 Holland Road, will now be called the Joe and Fredona Gartlan Center for Community Mental Health.

Joe Gartlan, who died in 2008, represented Mount Vernon and Springfield in the Virginia General Assembly from 1972 to 2000. He had been a champion of and passionate about mental health issues.

As a state legislator, Gartlan successfully helped to

repeal a statute that caused the forced sterilization of 8,300 mental health patients. He also crafted a plan to modernize Virginia laws governing mental illness. Even after retiring from public office, Gartlan fought to keep INOVA Mount Vernon hospital open in 2003.

Soon after his death two years ago, Fairfax supervisors directed staff to work with the Mount Vernon community on renaming the mental health facility after Gartlan. Center staff and other stakeholders suggested the county should also include his wife, Fredona, in the commemoration.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

PEOPLE NOTE

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

Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions. **Laura Derby**, the executive director/church administrator of the Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church, has officially retired as of March 5. In

the interim Derby's duties will be filled by a number of Route One Ministry Board Members and volunteers under the direction of Board Chair Sharon Emory.



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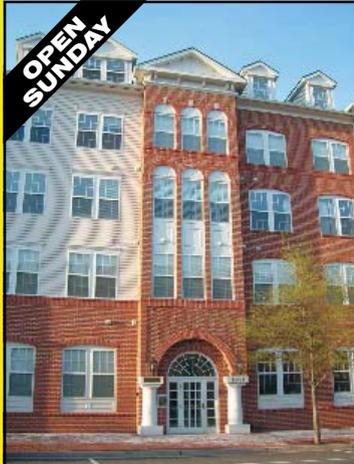


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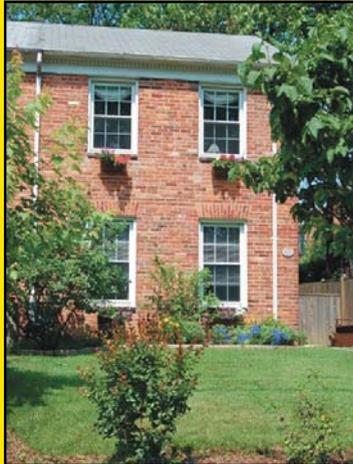
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Alexandria \$475,000
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3411 Beechcraft Drive
Mary Katherine Tyler 571-233-9855

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Importance of Giving Back to Community

FROM PAGE 3

gram (STOP).
 “The fund-raising events I appeared at were nice, but I felt I needed to do something more,” said Monk. “I wanted to see results. So I rolled up my sleeves and got involved — I saw the need. It does something to you. It shows how blessed we are and how much we take for granted.”

Monk likes the fact that money given to UCM is “kept right in your backyard.”

HULL EMPHASIZED the need when she said that, “We continue to expand the number of people we serve. We are pedaling as fast as we can, trying to keep up with the increase in need.”

She also spoke about some of the programs offered at UCM: working with children who are at high risk for sexual abuse; offering after-school programs for teenagers; providing parents with affordable day care options for their children; and delivering food and prescriptions to the elderly.

“We serve people from ‘cradle to

Get Involved

For more information on UCM, visit www.ucmagency.org or call 703-768-7106.

grave,” she said.

Nikki Wanner, development director, United Community Ministries, explained that there is much more to UCM than the Back Porch Thrift Store and emergency services. She spoke about the workforce development center; neighborhood and community development programs; early childhood development assistance; and housing programs.

She gave some statistics — last year, UCM served 13,193 people, and said, “This was our biggest year and it continues to increase.”

Monk’s appearance at UCM was facilitated by Kahan S. Dhillon, Jr., UCM board member. When he introduced Monk, he explained how he grew up with Art Monk as a role model, and said, “I wouldn’t be where I am without him as a role model.”

Felicea Meyer-DeLoatch, presi-



Carolyn Russo, Elaine Kolish and Pat Goode welcome Art Monk to UCM.

dent, UCM board of directors, spoke about how she learned about UCM many years ago when she was able to help one of her students get the assistance that they so desperately needed. Dan LaMay, Dan’s Van Lines, was helped by UCM when he attended one of their microenterprise courses. That was what he needed to launch his own business and he

has done well since then.

Herb Lea, director of community programs, closed the presentation by speaking about one of UCM’s clients. He was a gentleman from Ghana, who was in desperate need of work, but needed help transferring his references. With some help from UCM, that process was completed and he is now gainfully employed at Gaylord Hotel.

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OPINION

Minds Wide Open: Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts

BY ELIZABETH MURPHY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FAIRFAX SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Three years ago the arts and cultural community of Virginia embarked on a great adventure. The Virginia Council on the Arts convened the heads of the major arts organizations of the Commonwealth to encourage us to take more leadership on behalf of the entire cultural sector. Despite the many challenges facing our individual agencies, we all agreed that we needed a high visibility project to demonstrate the breadth, diversity, and intrinsic value of the arts to state decision-makers in Virginia.

The 23 major arts organizations of Virginia selected a theme, picked a time period, and invited all artists and cultural agencies of the state to create programs on the common theme during a defined time period with a statewide and regional marketing campaign. Thus was born our first endeavor: MINDS WIDE OPEN: *Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts*, with planning underway three years ago. The celebration began March 1, 2010 continues through June 30, 2010.

Through the regional meetings, local gatherings, email listserves, and speeches and presentations at every possible opportunity, we invited every artist in the state, every arts or-

ganization, history museum, library, college, and university to join the statewide celebration of women in the arts. As of this writing, we have listed more than 2,000 events on our website www.vamindswideopen.com. (Altria, Dominion Power, SunTrust Bank, the Norfolk Southern Foundation, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and the Virginia Tourism office have all made significant financial contributions to the statewide marketing campaign.)

The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra is pleased to participate in this initiative, with a special program planned for May 1, 2010. The FSO wanted to explore the theme of Women in the Arts within the somewhat narrow confines of symphonic repertoire, and to bring attention to the different ways in which women

contribute currently to our art form. The guest artist for this concert is a woman (Julie Albers, cello), playing Elgar's Cello Concerto. Additionally, the orchestra will perform a piece (blue cathedral) by a popular, living female composer and 2010 Grammy winner, Jennifer Higdon.

What will MINDS WIDE OPEN accomplish? First and foremost, we hope to raise the visibility of the arts industry in our state. Of equal importance is building more collaboration within the Virginia arts and cultural community. We hope that MINDS WIDE OPEN: Virginia Celebrates Women in the Arts will lead to many more partnerships and alliances within

GUEST EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Protecting Taxpayers

To the Editor:

Like so many of Ken Cuccinelli's critics, Mary Kimm is now searching for a crime to match the admonishment she seems to think he deserves. Kimm's shot against our

new Attorney General ("Cuccinelli Misleads on Costs," editorial, April 8) attacks him on several fronts — all the while inferring he cannot also multitask.

Yet, in Kimm's scattershot disparagement, she actually hits on the validity of Cuccinelli's actions while apparently not realizing it. She notes that one of the 14 stated

duties of the Attorney General is to "enforce laws that protect businesses and consumers." To wit: In challenging Obamacare, he is enforcing recently enacted bipartisan legislation that prohibits coercing citizens to buy health care insurance against their will. He is protecting taxpayers from potential no-win lawsuits by pointing out to

college and university administrators that they lack similar legislative authority to enforce specific anti-discrimination policies with regard to sexual orientation. Action against federal regulations on emissions are rooted in concerns held by trusted institutions from chambers of commerce to the Congressional Budget Office that regulatory overreach to combat yet-unproven man-made climate change will negatively affect the economy and our safety.

Being out front in these efforts is nothing for Virginians to be "embarrassed" about. These are actions in which state-level officials nationwide are similarly engaged. What is not yet proven, and cannot yet be proven from his three-month tenure, is that Ken Cuccinelli is shirking his responsibilities on things such as consumer protection and legal assistance. Kimm is welcome, and should be encouraged, to revisit this at a later date — when it is more appropriate.

David W. Almasi

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 10



Bicycle Safety

Members of Fairfax County Police Department's Bike Team taught children taking part in United Community Ministries' afterschool program at Creekside Village about bike safety on March 31. After the presentation, the police officers helped the youngsters fix broken bicycle parts and pump up flat tires.

Events in Our Area

Northern Virginia arts organizations hold many local events for statewide celebration. See www.vamindswideopen.com for more:

- Lucy Kaplansky, April 23, 2010**, The Barns at Wolf Trap, Vienna, www.wolftrap.org
- The Bobs, April 28, 2010**, The Barns at Wolf Trap, Vienna, www.wolftrap.org
- Exhibition: Beautiful - Virginia Women Artists and the Body, April 29, 2010**, Greater Reston Arts Center, Reston, www.restonarts.org
- Bonnie Rideout, April 30, 2010**, The Barns at Wolf Trap, Vienna, www.wolftrap.org
- Fairfax Symphony Orchestra Celebrates Women in the Arts, May 1, 2010**, Fairfax Symphony Orchestra, Fairfax, www.fairfaxsymphony.org
- Greater Reston Arts Center & Hub Theatre Mini-Festival, May 6, 2010**, Greater Reston Arts Center & Hub Theatre, Reston, www.restonarts.org
- Sheryl Crow with Special Guest: Colbie Caillat, June 17, 2010**, The Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, Vienna, www.wolftrap.org
- Natalie Cole, June 24, 2010**, The Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, Vienna, www.wolftrap.org
- The Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess", Apr 23-25, 2010**, Virginia Opera, Fairfax, www.vaopera.org
- Cats, Jun 18-20, 2010**, The Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, Vienna, www.wolftrap.org
- Riverdance: Farewell Tour, Jun 2-6, 2010**, The Filene Center at Wolf Trap National Park for the Performing Arts, Vienna, www.wolftrap.org

the entire cultural sector of our state. Plan attend as many of our wonderful events as possible between now and the end of June. Visit our Web site at www.vamindswideopen.com.

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 8

Worthy Undertaking

To the Editor:

The editorial ["Cuccinelli Misleads on Costs" of April 8] opines that the Virginia Attorney General has embarrassed us by putting us in the national spotlight by declaring recently passed landmark legislation as unconstitutional. It also states that the efforts add injury to insult by not annotating the costs of these efforts. I suggest that the article misrepresents the key issues at stake in the arguments against the passage of this legislation. I cannot think of any other worthy effort for our Attorney General to undertake than to challenge the constitutionality of this legislation. And I for one do not have any concern of the cost of this effort. We are at great risk of losing our personal liberties and loss of our states rights if this legislation is allowed to stand. So I say to the Attorney General, "Go for it" and I am behind you 100 percent! I am certainly not embarrassed by the Attorney General's actions.

Edward Little
Alexandria

Need To Repeal Health Care Reform

To the Editor:

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly 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, Gerry Connolly's 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.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11



Day School Olympics

Aldersgate Day School hosted its own Day School Olympic Games on Feb. 25. Pictured are 4-year-olds in Cathy McPeck's class with their gold medals.

POETRY

One Nation

When did Old Glory cease to wave
for all of us, the free and the brave?
How did we become a country so
divided
that we have lost our being as a nation
united?
We, a nation, formerly of mixed hues,
are now half in reds, the others in
blues.
Hyper-partisanship grasps our land.
A nation divided on itself cannot stand.

To counter a president it considered so
divisive,
a new motto, "Hope and Change"
proved decisive.

The election of Barack Obama from the
Midwest
posited an opportunity to settle the
nation's unrest.

With eloquent rhetoric, he offered a
new way
to the many who listened to hear each
word he would say.

So where are we now with this "Hope
and Change?"
Are we more transparent? Are we any
more sane?

We have a triumvirate in Obama, Pelosi,
and Reid.

Do we have more confidence in those
who lead?

Or are we concerned that all of the
government's heft
echoes too closely the call of the Far
Left?

Alas, the law professor has flunked his
own test:

Doesn't he know that, when America
works together, she works her best?

An Obama adage that history proves
but laments,
"Elections do, in fact, have conse-
quences."

The Democrats and Republicans have
created their own ballast.

Fortunately, America is better than the
names on her ballots.

Many of us believe, under God, we are
one nation.

Seemingly, we are sentenced to wait out
this Administration.

We need to disinfect ourselves of the
partisan germ
that presently defines this presidential
term.

We need to recover President
Washington's definition of "Americanism"
that recognizes America by her unity,
rather than her factionalism,
and make us unto ourselves to be true
under the one flag of the Red, White,
and Blue.

— PATRICK RHOADS

My House

If there is a surface,
I will fill it up.

If there is an empty spot,
it will hold my cup.

If there is an answer,
it's lost beneath debris.

And if it is disorganized,
it belongs to me.

— FONDA BELL MILLER
ALEXANDRIA

Watching over Washington

A bitter wind snaps the flags
And the cold bites at my nose and
fingers.

The frozen Potomac is a bare glimpse
through the trees

As I place the evergreen wreath, ever
present here.

I stand before his tomb, its walls
protecting me from the icy blast
Because he stood crossing the frozen
Delaware protecting us.

The heavens pour forth a fresh torrent
And the water gushes out the down-
spouts,

Flowing down the pavers, greening the
grass, budding the trees.

The water puddles around my boots;
many of his soldiers had no shoes.

I stand with him in the rain, speaking to
his guests.

Because he stood with his men in the
mud, reassuring them.

The sun beats down baking the bricks
Behind my back and beneath my feet.
Sweat trickles down my brow as I
answer the questions.

"He is on the right; the eagle as his
seal."

The marble firm and cool, as he was
guiding a nation's future.

I stand before him now, a guide to
others about his past.

The leaves lay scattered across the
grounds

Like his enemies scattered before him.
A plane drones lazily above, birds and
squirrels chatter about.

If peace has a sound, you can hear it at
Mt. Vernon.

Millions are drawn here, so different,
yet alike in Respect.

I watch over him as he watched over us,
and stand a little taller.

— TRICIA O'NEILL-POLITTE,
HISTORIC INTERPRETER AT WASHINGTON'S
TOMB



Generous Community

Members of the Mount Vernon Kiwanis Club asked shoppers entering the Hollin Hall Safeway on Fort Hunt Road on March 27 if they would donate some dry food items to the UCM's Food Pantry on their way out. The generosity of the Hollin Hall community usually results in about 1,000 pounds of food and hundreds of dollars in donations to UCM each of the five times a year the club holds its food drives at the Hollin Hall Safeway, which has a most cooperative management and staff over the years. Pictured are Mount Vernon Kiwanis Club members staffing their collection positions.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 11

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 will 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.

Pat Herrity

Herrity, a Fairfax County supervisor, is running for the nomination to be the Republican candidate in the 11th congressional district.

How Low Can One Go?

To the Editor:

Cindy Spak was already struggling to make ends meet with her local gardening company, GreenSpace. She had spent the past couple of weeks organizing her inventory in preparation to reopen for the season. When she came to work recently, she noticed some petals leading to the parking lot. She soon realized that somebody had broken in the night before and stolen \$400 worth of merchandise. They appeared to be

professionals because they took all the best plants. Cindy has filed a police report, but if anybody knows anything about this lowly crime, I'm sure that the police would appreciate a call.

Gale Curcio

Reform Health Care Reform

To the Editor:

Congressman Connolly states in his March 25, Mount Vernon Gazette opinion piece that he voted for the health care reform package "After careful and thorough review of the legislation. I was satisfied that the final reform package met each of those tests" (Constituents' concerns) that are: bring down premium costs for families and small businesses, reduce the deficit, protect their choice of plan and doctor, improve access to care and protect and improve Medicare.

First, if the reform package did all those things and they are good for Americans, why did he vote to exempt the Congress, the President and certain of their staff from the provisions of the bill?

Second, does Congressman Connolly really believe that spending about a trillion dollars or more and cutting \$523 billion from Medicare will reduce the deficit and won't harm benefits for seniors, respectively?

Third, here are some data for you to consider and ask yourself if they meet the above stated criteria for Congressman Connolly's vote for the reform package:

According to media reports, the cost of

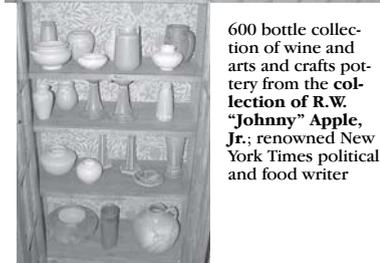
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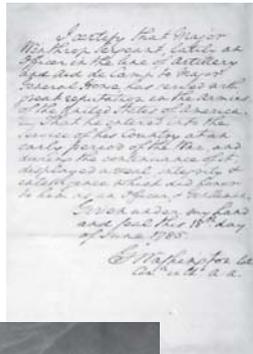
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Patrick O'Connell
The Inn at Little Washington

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 11

the health care bill will total \$2.5 trillion and not the nearly one trillion dollars as published by its proponents. Based on past government estimates, the \$2.5 trillion estimate is more realistic. For example, Medicare's estimated cost when established was to be \$12 billion by 1990 but its actual cost was \$98 billion or about 8 times greater than predicted.

According to the Chief Actuary for Medicare, 8.5 million seniors and disabled people are at risk of losing the Medicare Advantage plan. The average annual benefit loss of 11 million seniors and disabled people in Medicare Advantage plan is \$816. Twenty percent of hospitals would become unprofitable after Medicare spending cuts. If they go out of business, more shortages of facilities will probably result in rationing. Very bad for all concerned.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, premium increase for the average family will be \$2,100 by the end of the President's current term of office and some insurance companies predict that health care insurance premiums will increase for individuals ranging from 54 percent to 111 percent. Also, according to the minority House Ways and Means Committee, 16,500 new IRS agents are to be hired to enforce the penalty or new tax provision of the health care bill. With such dire news, how can Congressman Connolly realistically state that health care premiums will be reduced?

Also, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that 8 to 9 million will lose their employer plan.

According to media reports, some small businesses complain that the taxes to be imposed on them will cause them to either lay off workers or not hire. The laid off workers probably will be at some risk of losing their health care coverage.

There are other provisions that

interfere with the doctor/patient relationship that Congressman Connolly conveniently does not discuss such as creating 159 new government organizations or service, according to media reports, to administer and set rules for health care providers, etc. In other words, some Washington bureaucrat coming between the patient and doctor.

I urge everyone to become informed as you can about what is in the health care bill and be ready to help do whatever is reasonably necessary to repeal the "Historic Achievement" and reform health care that covers preexisting conditions, increases competition to reduce costs by allowing the purchase of insurance anywhere in the USA, provides incentives to all people to help them obtain health care insurance, strengthens the doctor/patient relationship, improves health quality delivery for everyone at reasonable costs and strengthens control of health care decisions between patients and doctors instead of placing decisions with Washington bureaucrats.

Frank Medico

Protecting Pumping Station Site

To the Editor:

On April 13, the Mount Vernon APR Task Force considered several Comprehensive Plan nominations of note. My nomination (10MV) and that of the MVCCA (9MV) concerning the Little Hunting Creek Pumping Station were considered together. The Task Force voted unanimously (19-0-0) to approve the staff alternative.

If finally approved by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, the Comprehensive Plan will be amended in the following respects (1) designation of the site as a treatment plant will be changed to a "pumping station" in

conformance with the site's operations for many years; (2) the statement will be made that the site should be maintained in the long term as a sewage pumping station (with an amendment to the staff alternative approved that will ensure that the only type of public facility permitted on the site will be a pumping station); and (3) a statement concerning possible residential use, should the site be surplus, will be deleted. I had urged that a sentence be added making clear that there will be no public access to the site. Marianne Gardner, chief of the County's Policy & Plan Development Branch, assured the Task Force that this language was unnecessary because, as a matter of County policy, the public is barred from access to County properties such as pumping stations. I am pleased with this result because, it will ensure that the Little Hunting Creek Pumping Station will remain undisturbed into the future. None of its acreage will be declared open space or conveyed to a third party outside County control, there will be no park or walking path through the site that could compromise its security or the safety of visitors and none of the site will be developed for anything other than expansion of pumping station infrastructure.

A similar result occurred concerning the MVCCA's nomination regarding the Dogue Creek Pumping Station (6MV) although the vote was not quite unanimous.

Another MVCCA nomination, 13MV, was considered. This one concerns a proposal to create a "campus" at the Mount Vernon Hospital, police and fire stations, Burke & Herbert Bank and adjacent service station, Sherwood Hall Library and Whitman Middle School.

Staff pointed out that the proposed increase in intensity from .35 FAR (floor area ratio) to .50

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 13

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

FAR would add over 12,000 daily vehicle trips. Readers will recall that an increase of more than 5,000 daily vehicle trips triggers a transportation study (costing at least \$15-20,000) that must be paid for by the nominator (MVCCA) prior to submission to the Planning Commission. Several residential neighbors expressed their opposition to the nomination in light of the dramatic traffic impacts.

A lawyer for the hospital expressed interest in the proposal but indicated some changes would have to be made to garner the hospital's support. County Staff opposed the proposed increase in FAR. Task Force member Katherine Ward made a motion to defer vote on the nomination to later this month - the motion was approved. Ms. Ward was an MVCCA Co-chair when their nominations were proposed, formulated and filed. She does not recuse herself (nor do other MVCCA-affiliated Task Force members) when the Task Force considers MVCCA nominations.

If the FAR is not reduced to bring the increase in daily vehicle trips below the daily 5,000 threshold, a transportation study will be required (that the MVCCA cannot afford to pay). From the hospital's lawyer's comments, it appears that an FAR at or about the proposed .50 level will be required to satisfy the hospital's future plans for expansion. Since the hospital appears to be a prime target to pay for the transportation study, they have leverage to extract amendments to the proposal.

However, I surmise Supervisor Hyland will not support a dramatically increased FAR, given adjacent neighborhood opposition. I estimate that increasing the FAR to .40 would not trigger a transportation study. If such an increase is acceptable to the adjacent neighborhoods (even though this is less than the hospital would like), the nomination has potential to be approved.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

BULLETIN BOARD

SUNDAY/APRIL 18

Low-Cost Rabies Clinic. 2-4 p.m.
Cost is \$12 per dog, cat or ferret. Dog licenses will be sold separately for \$10/dog. At the Mount Vernon RECenter, 2017 Belle View Blvd., Alexandria. Call 703-830-1100.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 28

Become a Foster Parent. 6-7:30 p.m.
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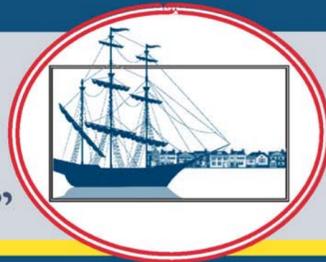
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Politicians Put General Assembly Session Behind Them

BY GALE CURCIO
THE GAZETTE

During this week's Newsmakers Business Lunch, state Sen. George Barker was asked what surprised him about his first time working in the General Assembly. His response was that "it went so well." As it turns out, this is not just the sentiment of a new senator, but the concurrence of veteran Virginia officials as well.

During the lunch that was sponsored by the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber at Belle Haven Country Club, Sen. Linda "Toddy" Puller, Sen. Patricia "Patsy" Ticer, Del. Dave Albo, Del. Mark Sickles and Del. Scott Surovell and Barker all gave their thoughts on the 2010 Virginia General Assembly session. This year's session convened on Janu. 13, running for 61 days until concluding on March 14. It was a budget session, so the legislature spent a lot of time dealing with the state's financial problems, and ultimately approved a budget with many cuts and new fees.

"The budget was clearly the main focus — if anybody had said we could do it ...," said Barker. "We closed the hole, balanced the budget and brought more money back for Fairfax County Public Schools — and only a day late. There were no significant cuts in public safety or healthcare services. I'm pleased that we got out of town before they realized what we had done."

Sickles agreed, saying, "It was an invigorating session — I'm glad to be home."

Puller said, "This was the first time in 10 years that we were solidly united — we were very successful in bringing back money [to this area]."

Ticer was also glad that it was over, but added, "The budget certainly wasn't the budget we would have liked to have."

Albo, who referred to himself as the "token Republican" [in the group of six], had a different take on it, saying, "I've never seen anything like it — it was quite brutal."

He broke down the process into easy to understand numbers and explained how the three major players weighed in and how it was resolved.

"Last year, we budgeted \$15B for general funds. We were \$1B short and then another \$1B because of federal funding. That left us \$2B short — or 15 percent of the budget. The Governor cut \$1B, and raised fees

"I didn't like what the governor did," said Albo, "but he showed what he had to do."

"The Senate version cut \$1.5B and raised \$500M in fees. The House cut \$2B, showing that if you have to live within your means, this is what happens."

"In the end, we split the baby in half and approved \$250M in fees," said Albo.

All of the senators and delegates sponsored different bills and amendments, with varying success. Puller sponsored the constitutional amendment directing the General Assembly to exempt from taxation the real property of certain veterans.

Barker's name is on the consti-



State Sen. Linda "Toddy" Puller, Sen. George Barker, Sen. Patricia "Patsy" Ticer, Del. Dave Albo, Del. Mark Sickles and Del. Scott Surovell gather with Michael Gailliot, vice-president, Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce.

tutional amendment that will allow the General Assembly to authorize localities to grant property tax relief for homeowners not less than 65 years of age or permanently and totally disabled, as well as the one that increases the permissible size of the Revenue Stabilization Fund by 50 percent of the Commonwealth's average annual tax revenues derived from income and sales taxes for the preceding three fiscal years.

All three of these amendments will likely appear on the ballot to be approved by the voters in the November 2010 election.

Ticer introduced the measure that would prohibit the issuing of a permit for coal surface mining operations unless certain conditions relating to the disposal of waste materials are met. While she knew that this bill didn't have much chance of passing, she said, "I wanted to start the conversation; it is an important issue."

Sickles sponsored the bill charging a 50-cent fee for prepaid wireless E-911 charges. He is also working to make sure that Virginia develops Wet Laboratory spaces. These types of lab, defined as laboratories where chemicals, drugs, or

other material or biological matter are tested and analyzed requiring water, direct ventilation, and specialized piped utilities, are critical to drawing biotech firms to Virginia.

Surovell worked on several bills relating to local businesses including one that changes the civil penalties for unstamped cigarettes; one that establishes a joint subcommittee to study the creation of a U.S. Route 1 Corridor; and another that designates Route One in Virginia as an historic landmark.

"I hope that this will bring new attention and new interest to Route One," said Surovell.

PEOPLE NOTES

Volunteer Fairfax and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will honor local volunteers at the 18th annual Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards, Friday, April 23, at the Fairview Park Marriott in Falls Church. In Mount Vernon, the following residents have been nominated:

❖ **Barb Williams** volunteered at the Sherwood Regional Library, and is nominated for the Benchmark 250 award.

❖ **Bev Morse** volunteered at the Sherwood Regional Library, and is nominated for the Benchmark 250 award.

❖ **Campbell "Cam" Gibson** volunteered at the Volunteer Learning Program, and is nominated for the Adult Volunteer 250 Hours & Under award.

❖ **Emily Wilson** volunteered at Childhelp Children's Center of Virginia, and is nominated for the Benchmark 250 award.

❖ **Emma Montgomery** volunteered at the Sherwood Regional Library, and is nominated for the Benchmark 250 award.

❖ **Erika Macias** volunteered at

the Fairfax County Department of Family Services, and is nominated for the Benchmark 250 award.

❖ **Janet Jacobi** volunteered at the Sherwood Regional Library, and is nominated for the Benchmark 250 award.

❖ **Neil Burke** volunteered at Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia, and is nominated for the Youth Benchmark 100 award.

❖ **Sheila Sheehan** volunteered at the Sherwood Regional Library, and is nominated for the Benchmark 250 award.

❖ **Susan Hitch** volunteered at the Sherwood Regional Library, and is nominated for the Adult Volunteer 250 & Over award.

Torria Baker, a preschool teacher at the NAEYC-accredited Inova Mount Vernon Hospital Child Care Center is being recognized for her work by being featured as the cover story of the April/May issue of NAEYC's Teaching Young Children (TYC).



Daniel Scalph as Captain Hook and Emily Whitworth as Peter Pan star in the Mount Vernon Community Children's Theater's production of "Peter Pan."

Presenting 'Peter Pan'

Mount Vernon Community Children's Theatre will present the musical "Peter Pan" through April 18 at Carl Sandburg Middle School. Cast members are drawn from the following schools: Burgundy Farm, Clermont ES, Carl Sandburg MS, Fort Hunt ES, George Washington MS, Geshner Jewish Day School, Grace Episcopal, Hollin Meadows ES, homeschools, John Hanson French Immersion, Mark Twain MS, Maury, Mount Vernon HS, Seton Home Study, Silverbrook ES, Springfield Estates ES, St. Bernadette, St. Louis Catholic School, St. Mary's Catholic School, St. Stephens and St. Agnes, Stratford Landing ES, Swanson, Waynewood ES, and West Potomac HS. Preschool and Elementary age children will receive a free prize when they come dressed as their favorite character in "Peter Pan." Tickets are \$8 for students and seniors and \$10 for others and are available for purchase online at www.mvctt.org or call 703-360-0686. Organized groups receive a discount and can order group tickets by calling 703-360-0686.

Schaeffer Directs New Musical on Broadway

Recreates early days of Rock 'n' Roll.

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
THE GAZETTE

For Signature Theatre's Artistic Director, Eric Schaeffer, the third shot may prove to be the charm. This week he opened the third musical he has directed on Broadway. The first two may not have hit big, but this new one, to judge by either the rollicking reactions of audiences at New York's Nederlander Theater, or by the generally positive opinions in the early reviews, may have a healthy run. It is one of those rare shows that makes you wish it would just start right over when the lights come up.

"Million Dollar Quartet" is the latest jukebox-type show based on the catalogue of pop music icons. What icons they are (or were)! The show recreates an actual day in 1956 when rock and roll star Johnny Cash, would-be star Jerry Lee Lewis, gold record holder Carl Perkins and superstar Elvis Presley found themselves in the same recording studio at Sun Records in Nashville and whiled away a few hours doing what musicians do — making music for each other's enjoyment and playing a musical game of "can you top this?"

The secret of the show's success is twofold. First it is the casting of actors who are not mere impersonators, although each of the four manage spot-on replications of their respective subjects. The audience does really come away feeling as if they have sampled the thrill of seeing Jerry Lee Lewis wail away on "Great Balls of Fire," heard the unmistakable voice of a young Johnny Cash singing "I Walk the Line," rocked along with Carl Perkins' infectious rockabilly riffs about his "Blue Suede Shoes" and fallen under the spell of Elvis whether he's jumping on "Long Tall Sally," romping on "Hound Dog" or wailing "That's All Right."



PHOTO BY JOAN MARCUS

Robert Britton Lyons as Carl Perkins, Levi Kreis as Jerry Lee Lewis, Eddie Clendening as Elvis Presley and Lance Guest as Johnny Cash in the musical "Million Dollar Quartet" on Broadway.

They also get a glimpse of the person behind the performance because Lance Guest (Cash), Levi Kreis (Lewis), Robert Britton Lyons (Perkins), and Eddie Clendening (Presley) act as well as they sing and play.

Added to the mix is some dynamite on the female side of the ledger as Elizabeth Stanley plays Elvis' girlfriend of the moment who comes along for the ride and shakes things up with her own brand of heat with Peggy Lee's "Fever" and sizzle on "I Hear You Knocking."

THE SECOND reason the show works as well as it does is that it avoids just being some sort of live greatest hits compilation by adding just a touch of a story — giving a hint of tension and suspense over the fate of the record company that gave each of the stars their starts, Sam Phillips' Sun Records. Hunter Foster plays Phillips with a smooth, southern charm that is the glue holding the whole thing together. His is a non-singing role which means audiences don't get to hear how good he can be with a song, something that Signature Theatre patrons here in Virginia know full well after his impressive performance in "Kiss of the Spider Woman."

"Million Dollar Quartet" can be assumed to draw its audience from people who remember and revere the sounds of the era of "the birth of rock 'n' roll." As such, it has significant competition from another new show this season. "Memphis" is a thoroughly fictitious piece using a newly composed score blend-

ing gospel with what was called "race music" in the south in the 1950s. Whether Broadway can support two shows aimed at that market and, if not, which of the two will survive, will be determined by the box office figures over the next few months.

Schaeffer wisely stages the entire program as a single thrill-packed act rather than breaking for an intermission. The show is listed as lasting 90 minutes but the performance I saw lasted nearly a hundred, possibly a result of prolonged applause after numerous rocking numbers. The story portion of the evening actually ends rather promptly. Then Derek McLane's recording studio set flies up to reveal a bank of flashing lights, and the cast launches into a 12-minute blast of highlight after highlight. Each of the four rock out one more number, ending with Levi Kreis leading everyone in a no-holds barred "Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On," which, come to think of it, suitably sums up the entire show.

"Million Dollar Quartet" is playing an open ended run at the Nederlander Theatre, 208 West 41st Street in New York. Tickets are \$56.50 to \$136.50.



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

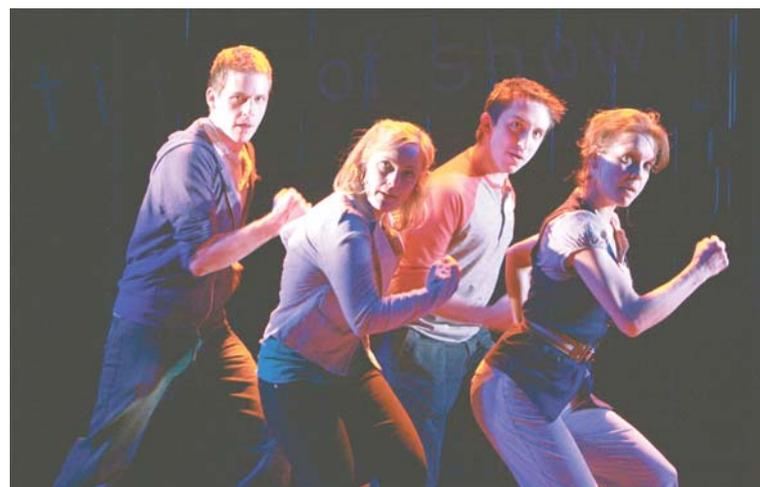


PHOTO BY KARIN COOPER

Sam Ludwig, Erin Driscoll, James Gardiner, and Jenna Sokolowski in the Washington area premiere of the hit musical comedy "[title of show]" at Signature Theatre through June 27.

Signature's Small Musical a Charmer

A musical about writing a musical.

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
THE GAZETTE

Friendship and a shared passion for musical theater are both the subject of Signature Theatre's latest show and the hallmarks of the production. While Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer is up in New York opening his own Broadway show, his Shirlington company is hosting young performers and creators in a musical about musicals going to Broadway.

The strangely titled "[Title of Show]" is a success story dear to the hearts of musical theater fans everywhere. It began as a project of two young men who wanted to write a musical to submit to the New York Musical Theatre Festival but didn't quite know what to write about. So they wrote a musical about two young men writing a musical for the New York Musical Theatre Festival. (On the application for the festival the first blank to be filled in was "[Title of Show]" which they kept as the name of their musical.)

The musical needed a cast of four — the two young men who were writing it and the two young women who helped them work it into performable shape. It didn't require a lot of scenery, just four chairs. Orchestra? No, just a keyboard player sitting on stage with them.

The show was accepted by the festival and was so well received that an off-Broadway production followed — so they wrote additional scenes about getting an off-Broadway production. Then the nearly unthinkable happened. It was so well received off-Broadway

that a Broadway production was staged — still with just a cast of four and one keyboard player. It managed to last over 100 performances on Broadway and now the piece is being performed in professional theaters around the country.

Signature's mounting brings together some very talented young performers who have worked together before and a sense of camaraderie pervades the nearly two hour intermissionless performance. Sam Ludwig and James Gardiner team with Erin Driscoll and Jenna Sokolowski. Sokolowski was in "Urinetown" with Driscoll who was in "Sweeney Todd" with Ludwig who was "Les Miserables" with Gardiner. In fact, at least two of the four appeared together in half a dozen shows over the past half decade.

Add James Gardiner's brother Matthew to the mix. He is the resident assistant director at Signature and takes on full direction and choreography duties for this production with a sure hand. Among other things, he sees to it that both the spoken dialogue and the sung lyrics are clear and understand

SEE SHOW, PAGE 20

Where and When

"[Title of Show]" plays through June 27 at Signature Theatre in Shirlington. Performances are Tuesday - Wednesday at 7:30 p.m., Thursday - Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 7 p.m. with matinees Saturday - Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$52 - \$76. Call 703-573-7328 or log on to www.signature-theatre.org.

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that on Friday, April 16, 2010, between 9:00 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., a brief fireworks display will take place as part of a private event at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens. The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association thanks you for your tolerance and apologizes for any disruption.

To receive Mount Vernon fireworks notifications via e-mail, write to Events@MountVernon.org

CALENDAR



SATURDAY, APRIL 24

Native Plant Sale. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Free. Largest native plant sale in D.C. metro area hosts 14 vendors from five states selling perennials, shrubs, and trees. Parkfairfax parking lot, 3601 Valley Drive, Alexandria. Call 571-232-0375 or visit www.home.earthlink.net/~sknudsen/.

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

FRIDAY AFTERNOONS

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

THURSDAY, APRIL 15

18th Century Dance Class. 7:30-9:30 p.m. Cost is \$12. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal Street, Alexandria. Visit www.gadsbystavern.org or call 703-746-4242.

Djesben. 7-9 p.m. Free. Djesben includes a trio of multi-instrumentalists whose backgrounds guarantee to delight with a variety of styles: jazz standards, bebop and bossa nova. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565 or go to www.torpedofactory.org.

APRIL 15, 16, 17

Spring Garden Market. District II Garden Clubs "Carpe Diem — Seize the Day" Standard Flower Show. Alexandria Horticultural Society (AHS) Members' Night is Thursday, April 15 from 4-8 p.m. The public sale is Friday, April 16 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday, April 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria. Call 703-768-5700

APRIL 16-18

20th Annual Art Show. The exhibition hours are: Friday, April 16, 1-8 p.m.; Saturday, April 17, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Sunday, April 18, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. The exhibition and sale will include paintings and sculpture by many area artists. Cash or check only; 20% tax deductible. Visit www.stpaulsalexandria.com. At St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 South Pitt Street, Alexandria.

FRIDAY/APRIL 16

The Bland Contest. 7:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Northern Virginia Lions Clubs, District 24-A Level. Open for any vocalist or instrumentalist attending elementary, junior or senior high school. At the Alexandria Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria.

"Coal Country" Screening. 7 p.m. Representatives from several organizations will be on hand to show the connection between coal mining

and how to respond to the threat of climate change. Sen. Patsy Ticer will talk about legislative efforts in the General Assembly. At Aldersgate United Methodist Church.

An Evening of Music for Strings. 8 p.m. Free. With the U.S. Air Force Band Chamber Players Series. At George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Call 202-767-5658 or visit www.usafband.af.mil.

Bag Swap. 7-9 p.m. Free. Bring "gently used" or an "un-favorite" bag and swap it out for something "new-to-you." At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Contact Theresa Kulstad, 703-283-0399 or tkulstad@verizon.net or Karen Schmitz, 703-232-4526 or schmityk@yahoo.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 17

College Survival 101: Building the Tools for Success. 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free for students; \$20 for parent workshop. The goal is to educate and prepare minority and at-risk juniors and seniors for the challenges of college life ahead. Sponsored by the Northern Virginia Urban League Young Professionals Network. At Northern Virginia Community College (Alexandria Campus), 3001 North Beauregard St., Alexandria. Registration forms available online at www.nvulypn.org.

Flea Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. In addition to the Flea Market, there will be baked goods, books, a children's corner, collectibles, attic treasures, lunch and more. Proceeds will go to local charities. At Trinity United Methodist Church, 2911 Cameron Mills Road, Alexandria. Call 703-549-5500.

10-Year Anniversary of Beatley Central Library. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Open House at Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Call 703-519-5900 or www.alexandria.lib.va.us.

Soldier-Led Walking Tours. 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Free. At Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, 4301 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Call 703-746-4848 or visit www.forward.org.

Tavern Dog Contest. 1 to 4 p.m. Hosted by Gadsby's Tavern Museum Society. Registration is \$35. At Market Square, 301 King street, Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-823-1395 or visit www.gadsbystavernmuseum.us.

Grand Ball. 8 p.m. to 11 p.m. Tickets are \$45/person, \$50/door. Live music, dance instruction, a special Queen's cake and dessert collation, "gaming," and a cash bar. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street, Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-746-4242 or visit www.gadsbystavern.org.

Good Shepherd Housing — Dreams Do Come True Gala. 6-11 p.m. Features cocktails, dinner, auctions

and dancing to live music. Black Tie optional. Tickets are \$150 (\$175 if purchased after 3/26/10); \$100 Next Generation ticket price (Age 40 and under). Visit <http://www.goodhousing.org>. At the Crowne Plaza, 901 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria.

Herb and Wildflower Sale. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Friends of Carlyle House Garden Day Herb and Wildflower sale will feature both culinary and decorative Herbs from the Mount Vernon Greenhouses. In addition to the herbs, local artisans and crafters will be selling a variety of handcrafted art, jewelry, herbal, food and other nature related products. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria.

Earth Day Every Day. 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Come celebrate with NCM as they highlight the importance of creating wildlife habitats in your own backyard. Learn how to create colorful butterfly gardens and make a butterfly feeder and other crafts at the Launch Zone! At the NCM Launch Zone at the National Harbor.

APRIL 17, 18

"Peter Pan." Sponsored by the Mount Vernon Children's Community Theatre. Show times are April 9, 10 and 17 at 7:30 p.m.; April 11 and 18 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$8 and \$10. Preschool and Elementary age children will receive a free prize when they come dressed as their favorite character in Peter Pan. At Carl Sandburg Middle School, 8428 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Visit www.mvccct.org. Call 703-360-0686.

SUNDAY/APRIL 18

Maurice Lyles. 4 p.m. \$15 donation. Sponsored by the Committee for Jazz at Meade. At Meade Church, 322 N. Alfred St., Alexandria. Call Gwendolyn Halford at 703-920-3997.

Low-Cost Rabies Clinic. 2-4 p.m. Cost is \$12 per dog, cat or ferret. Dog licenses will be sold separately for \$10/dog. At the Mount Vernon RECenter, 2017 Belle View Blvd., Alexandria. Call 703-830-1100.

Pianist Edward Newman. 4 p.m. Free. Will showcase piano compositions from a variety of styles and eras, including Classical, Romantic and 20th Century Russian. At the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria.

Jewish Genealogy Society of Greater Washington. 1:30 p.m. Business meeting; 2 p.m. Program. Free to JGSGW members. "What It Was Like to Arrive in America Through Ellis Island." At Beth El Hebrew Congregation, 3830 Seminary Road,

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 19

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 18

Alexandria. Visit <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgsgw/>
Don White with Nick Annis. 7 p.m. Heartfelt original songs and humor (especially for parents of teens). Tickets are \$18/general, \$15/advance at www.FocusMusic.org. At Church of the Resurrection — FOCUS, 2280 N. Beaugard St., Alexandria. Contact Kay Coyte at kay@focusmusic.org or 703-501-6061.

German Masterworks. 2 p.m. Free. The U.S. Marine Band with Capt. Michelle Rakers, conducting. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, NVCC, Alexandria Campus. Call 703-845-6156 or www.schlesingercenter.com

MONDAY/APRIL 19

Duncan Book Discussion Group. The book to be discussed is "Charming Billy" by Alice McDermott. At the Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria. Call Ruth at 703-838-4566.

15th Annual Spring Golf Outing. Noon check-in; 1 p.m. shotgun start. Players participate in an 18-hole best-ball scramble with prizes awarded for things such as the longest drive, closest-to-the-pin, and lowest score. At the Mount Vernon Country Club. Sponsored by the Campagna Center. Contact Justin Wright at 703-224-2344 or jwright@campagnacenter.org.

TUESDAY/APRIL 20

Doggie Happy Hour. 8 p.m. Join Aveda and Potomac Conservancy staff for cocktails, enter to win raffle items, and visit pet psychic Gena Wilson, Sketchy the sketch artist and the Barkley Bar for some puppy snacks. All proceeds will benefit Potomac Conservancy, the Aveda Southeast Earth Month partner as part of Aveda's Earth Month clean water campaign. At Hotel Monaco, 480 King Street, Alexandria.

Author Martha Grimes. 7 p.m. Will discuss and sign her new Richard Jury novel, *The Black Cat*. At Barnes & Noble Potomac Yards, 3651 Jefferson Davis Highway, Alexandria.

Aveda Earth Month Doggie Happy Hour. 5-8 p.m. Join Aveda and Potomac Conservancy staff for thirst-quenching cocktails, enter to win raffle items, and visit pet psychic Gena Wilson, Sketchy the sketch artist and the Barkley Bar for some puppy snacks. All proceeds will benefit Potomac Conservancy. At Hotel Monaco, 480 King Street, Alexandria. Visit www.potomac.org.

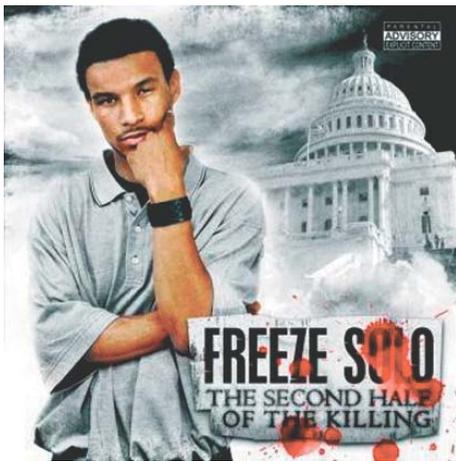
Mount Vernon Genealogical Society Meeting. 1 p.m. Free. Professional researcher Sharon Hodges presents "City Directories." Meets at the Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Room 112, Alexandria. Call Harold McClendon at 703-360-0920 or haroldm@erols.com.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 21

Dough-Raiser. 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. For Jackson Dundon, who has a brain tumor and is the grandson of Alexandria's former Mayor Kerry Donley. Supporters can call and order pizza and mention that they would like their order to benefit "Jackson." Domino's will donate \$2 of Jackson's orders to the "Jackson Dundon Recovery Fund." At City of Alexandria Domino's Pizza Stores: Alexandria West / Landmark; North Old Towne; and Skyline.

Swing Dancing. 9-11 p.m. Cost is \$10. With the band, Smokin' Polecats. At Nick's Nightclub, 641 South Pickett Street, Alexandria.

NurtureShock: The Inverse Power of Praise. Ashley Merryman, co-



FRIDAY/APRIL 23

Hip Hop Artist Freeze Solo. 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. At the Weyone Lounge, Landmark Mall, Alexandria. For ages 21 and up. The show is hosted by Jo'lyce of AroundDaBlock.

author, to speak. 7 p.m. Free. At Burgundy Farm Country Day School, 3700 Burgundy Road, Alexandria. Visit www.burgundyfarm.org.

Duncan Book Sale. 7-9 p.m. At Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria. This is a Friends Preview. \$10 for non-Friends. Call 703-838-4566.

APRIL 21-24

"Godspell." 7:30 p.m. West Potomac High School presents the musical by Stephen Swartz and John Michael Tebelac. April 21, 22, 23 and 24th at 7:30 p.m. in the Kogelman Theater. Tickets are \$10. At West Potomac High School, 6500 Quander Road, Alexandria.

THURSDAY/APRIL 22

Gardening for All Ages. 6-8 p.m. Clever and practical ways to continue (or start) this great hobby, even when your body is losing its bend-ability. Includes creative ways to inspire younger members of the family. At Marina Towers, 501 Slaters Lane, Alexandria. With Master Gardener Jane King, resident of Del Ray and Vice Chairman, Alexandria Commission on Aging. Sponsored by AHA! At Home in Alexandria.

Duncan Book Sale. 9:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. At Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-838-4566.

U.S. Navy Concert Band Performs. 7:30 p.m. Free. Featuring the winner of the 2010 Navy Band High School Concerto Competition. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria. Call 202-433-2525, or visit www.navyband.navy.mil.

U.S. Army Band. 7-9 p.m. Free. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565 or go to www.torpedofactory.org.

FRIDAY/APRIL 23

Mount Vernon High School's Golf Scramble. Hosted by the Parent Council for the Class of 2010, will be at Fort Belvoir Golf Club to support the All Night Grad Party. Flyer can be downloaded at www.MVHSClass2010.com or e-mail mvhs2010golf@live.com.

SATURDAY, APRIL 24.

Big Sale. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Hosted by Habitat for Humanity's ReStore and the Washington Metro Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers. Designer donated items for sale include wall hangings, fabrics, trim, cabinets, blinds, shades, architectural details, countertops, tile, curtain rods, furniture and much more. All proceeds go to Habitat for Humanity. At ReStore, 7770 Richmond Highway (behind Gold's Gym), Alexandria.

Contact Joann Manzek, ASID at 703-731-4968.

Earth Day Celebration. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This year's theme is "Teach (Green), Learn (Green), Live (Green)." At Ben Brenman Park, 4800 Brenman Park Drive, Alexandria. Visit www.alexearthday.org.

Rummage Sale. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Hollin Meadows Elementary School's Care and Share Committee will be hosting their second annual rummage sale at the Earth Day Celebration. Books, toys, housewares, clothes and more. At Hollin Meadows Elementary School, 2310 Nordok Place, Alexandria.

Alexandria's Largest Flea Market. 150-plus families have donated furniture, kid/baby gear, toys, electronics, sporting goods, household items and more. Early admission is 8 a.m. (\$10); general admission is 9 a.m. (free). Everything 50 percent off after noon; free after 2 p.m. At Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Avenue, Alexandria. Visit www.mvbigflea.com.

Spring Modern Dance Performance. 7 p.m. All new works by local choreographers. Tickets are \$10/adults, \$5/ages 12-17. At George Washington Middle School, 1005 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Visit www.ccpdance.org, ccpdance@gmail.com. Call 703-683-2070

Grace on the Road: Silent and Live Auction. 7-9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and include tasty tidbits and beverage. Items up for bid will include Tinga Tinga art from Tanzania, Washington Nationals baseball tickets, a week at a beach house, and tea for 20. To purchase tickets in advance, contact Eleanor Reed eleanor.reed@gracealex.org, Cindy Diehl (cindy.diehl@gracealex.org), or Theresa Lewallen (theresa.lewallen@gracealex.org).

2010 Spring UCM Gala. 6 to 11 p.m. Benefits the United Community Ministries. This year's theme is "UCM in Bloom: Helping Our Community Flourish" and includes cocktails and a formal dinner. At the Mount Vernon Country Club, 5111 Old Mill Road, Alexandria. Tickets are \$125 and can be purchased by calling 703-768-7106 or online @ www.ucmagency.org.

Helping Hands Fund-Raiser. 4-6:30 p.m. for Kids; organized tennis 7-10 p.m. for adults. Round Robin Tennis, tennis drills, fastest serves, and games. Proceeds benefit the Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children Pediatric Oncology Program. At Mount Vernon Athletic Club, 7950 Audubon Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-360-7300.

7th Grade Sneak Preview. 5-6 p.m. For seventh-graders and their families. At Bishop O'Connell High School, Upper Gym, 6600 Little Falls Road, Arlington. Visit www.bishopoconnell.org or call 703-237-1433

APRIL 24 AND 25

Wine and Pottery Auction. Collection of Bon Vivant Food Writer R.W. Apple. Wine will be sold along with 100 items from Apple's collection of Arts and Crafts pottery by artisans such as Rookwood, Roseville and Fulper. At the Potomack Company, 526 North Fayette Street in Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-684-4550 or visit www.potomackcompany.com.

SUNDAY/APRIL 25

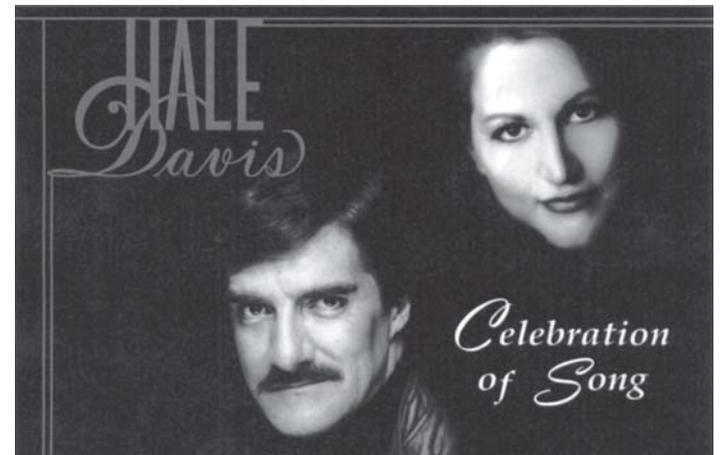
Family Tour Days at Gadsby's Tavern Museum. 1-4 p.m. Families are invited to tour the historic tavern as Junior Docents, volunteers from grades 3 through 6, share their enthusiasm for history with your family. At 134 North Royal Street. Call 703-746-4242 or visit www.gadsbystavern.org.

Benefit Concert

For United Community Ministries (UCM)

Thursday, May 6, at 7:00 p.m.

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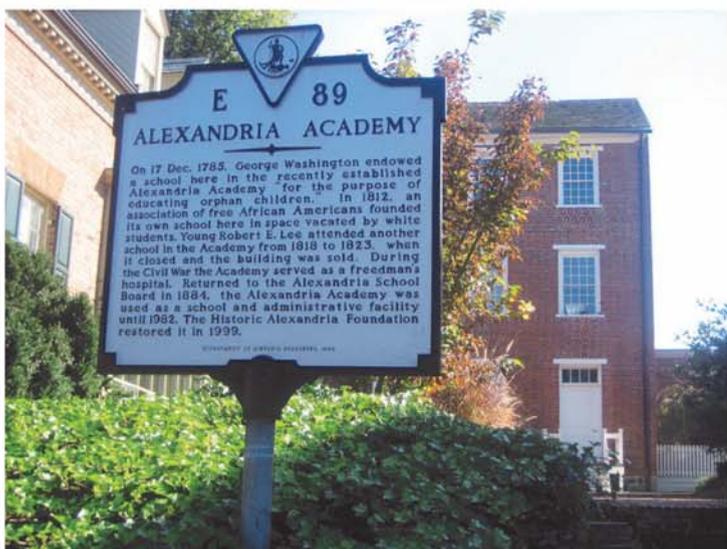
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FINE ARTS

FRIDAY/APRIL 16

Bag Swap. 7-9 p.m. Bring "gently used" or an "un-favorite" bag and swap it out for something "new-to-you." At the Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Check www.TheDelRayArtisans.com. Contact Theresa Kulstad, 703-283-0399 or tkulstad@verizon.net or Karen Schmitz, 703-232-4526 or schmityk@yahoo.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 17

Workshop. Art Theory and Developing the Artistic Identity. 10 a.m. to noon. \$10/members, \$12/non-members. At the Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Contact Matthew Cuenca at 703-768-1726 or matthew@matthewcuenca.com. Visit www.thedelrayartisans.org.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 25

Kiln Club Annual Juried Show. Scope Gallery hours are Monday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., with Thursdays open until 9 p.m. At 101 North Union Street, ground floor Studio 19, Alexandria. Call 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope.htm

APRIL 27 THROUGH JUNE 27

Paintings of the Potomac Valley Watercolorists — Green Spring Gardens Show. Free. Opening reception is Sunday, May 2 from 1-3 p.m. at the Horticulture Center. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Call 703-642-5173.

APRIL 21-25

Young Artist Showcase. Featuring work by Alexandria high school students to be held at the Torpedo Factory's Target Gallery. Reception and awards ceremony is Sunday, April 25 at 4:30 p.m. At Target Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria; call 703-838-4565, ext. 4; visit www.torpedofactory.org

NOW THROUGH APRIL 25

Art in the Gardens. Free. Featuring the watercolors of Marni Maree and photographs of Jefferson Evans. Open noon to 4:30 p.m. daily. At Green Spring Gardens Park Horticultural Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.GreenSpring.org.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 25

What's Your Bag? This show explores the "Bag as Art" in all mediums and interpretations — handbags, backpacks, tea bags, suitcases, sacks, paper or plastic. Closing reception Sunday, April 25 from 3-6 p.m. Numerous workshops and events scheduled. At the Del Ray Artisans gallery at the Nicholas A. Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Visit www.thedelrayartisans.org.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 26

Annual Student Art and Design Exhibition. At Marymount University's Barry Art Gallery. The works presented in the juried show have been judged in a number of disciplines including Fine Arts, Graphic Design, Fashion Design, and Interior Design. The Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday and Saturday. At the Reinsch Library, Main Campus, 2807 North Glebe Road, Arlington. Contact Judy Bass, the Barry Gallery curator, at 703-284-1561 or visit



"Conversing" wood-fired stoneware statues by Elke Seefeldt of Arlington.

APRIL 26 TO MAY 23

Above the Curves: A ceramic celebration of women through earthy forms. Curves are presented in clay art as Washington Ceramic Guild potters embrace womanly organic forms with delicate and intricate clay detailing. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center's Scope Gallery. The gallery is located on the ground floor Studio 19, 101 North Union Street Alexandria. Hours are Monday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., with Thursdays open until 9 p.m. Call Scope Gallery at 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope and www.vamindswideopen.org

<http://www.marymount.edu/academic/artandsci/barrygallery/>

NOW THROUGH APRIL 26

Works by Anne Marchand. The Luminous Exhibition — where art and the universe merge. Luminous is part of the Crystal City BID's ARTFUL program. At 2231 Crystal Drive, Arlington.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 26

From Meadow to Marsh. 6:30-8:30 p.m. New works by landscape painters Jill Garity and Mollie Vardell. At the VanderZee Gallery, 105 South Lee Street, Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-683-1814.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 28

Alexandria History Awards. Thomas E. Crocker will receive the 2010 T. Michael Miller Alexandria History Award at 7:30 p.m. at the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street in Alexandria. Ruth Lincoln Kaye and the Rev. Dr. and Mrs. Lee A. Earl will receive special awards. Senator Patsy Ticer will present the 2010 Alexandria High School History Awards to Christopher Aplin of T.C. Williams High School, Christopher H. Ring of Bishop Ireton High School, Charles Austin Boyd of Episcopal High School, and Mathias F. Heller of St. Stephens/St. Agnes High School. Keynote address by Robert G. Stanton, former Director, National Park Service. Reception. Open to the public. Free. No reservations. Call 703-746-4994 or www.alexandriahistorical.org.

Signature's Small Musical a Charmer

FROM PAGE 17

able, pacing the performance so that the laughter — of which there is a great deal — doesn't cover up important plot points.

The musical is humorous and self-referential, peppered with dozens of in-jokes about musical theater, the funniest of which actually is a sight gag inserted by director Gardiner about "Glory Days," the show James co-wrote and on which Matthew was assistant director that, like "[Title of Show]" managed the unpredictable accomplishment of transferring to Broadway. Unlike "[Title of Show]," which ran for three months, "Glory Days" closed immediately. In the song in this show

in which the cast sings about flop musicals, the program from "Glory Days" is given a featured spot.

The warmth and humor of the show captures the youthful blend of self confidence and angst that afflicts many in their mid-twenties. It is precisely that blend, however, that makes it so infectiously entertaining. (Be forewarned, however. It also features some of the language that twenty-somethings tend to overuse that in more mature circles is frowned upon in mixed company.)

There are songs about the hopes and fears of youngsters just setting out on their adult lives and pursuing their dreams, as well as those about the peculiarities of musical

theater. You don't need to understand all the in-jokes to enjoy the show. Whenever a reference to an obscure old musical or song or performer crops up (which is approximately every 30 seconds) it is quite clear that it is a reference and just what its meaning is intended to be.

Besides, Ludwig, Gardner, Sokolowski and Driscoll deliver the lines and sing the songs with such relish and enthusiasm it is a pleasure to go along for the ride.

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

COMMUNITY



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE

AJ Melvin and Sarah Burr lead the players in reciting the Little League Pledge. With the players is league president Paul Murphy.

Fort Hunt Little League Hosts Opening Day

With a clear blue sky Saturday morning, April 10, and 491 players on the Red Steven's field, Fort Hunt Little League officially opened for the 2010 season. President of the league Paul Murphy called off the names of the 46 teams playing this year as the players ran onto the field. Dick Alderson of the Fort Hunt Sportsman's Club presented the league with a \$1000 donation.

The Paul A. Massey Volunteer of the Year award was presented to Barry Meuse. Players from the West Potomac High School JV and Varsity Baseball team with team manager Jim Sullivan were also in attendance. AJ Melvin and Sarah Burr led the players in the Little League Pledge. The annual Home Run Derby is scheduled for May 15.



The Genuario Construction Twins take the field.



Barry Meuse accepts the Paul A. Massey Volunteer of the Year Award from league president Paul Murphy.



Pirate coach Jimmy Finn gathers his t-ball players for a photo before the official ceremony at the Red Steven's Field.

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NEWS

Inova Mount Vernon's Fiscal Success

FROM PAGE 4

care," said Doyle.

THE NEW PATIENTS who have come to Mount Vernon as a direct result of the hospital's recent improvements are more likely to be covered by private insurance, which helps the hospital's bottom line.

"The hospital has attracted new doctors who have brought in more paying customers," said McKay.

Two years ago, approximately 48 percent of Mount Vernon hospital patients had health insurance through the Medicare program, which often does not cover the entire cost of treatment. Now, only 42 percent of Mount Vernon patients are covered by Medicare, said Doyle.

"The payer mix is a little bit better now," she said. Inova's new Lorton Healthplex, set to open in a couple of years, is also supposed to boost the percentage of hospital patients with private insurance. In general, people who would use the healthplex are expected to be younger and therefore not de-

pendent on Medicare.

Once built, the Lorton Healthplex will be considered part of Mount Vernon Hospital. Healthplex revenue will go to help pay for care given at the Mount Vernon facility. People who seek treatment at the healthplex will also be referred to Mount Vernon Hospital if they need further medical care.

OVER THE PAST year, Mount Vernon Hospital has also expanded its funding stream by streamlining its emergency room.

In addition to the renovation, Doyle has worked with emergency room staff to make sure the intake process for walk-in patients is smoother.

"We have seen an increase in the volume of people we serve in our ER. We spent a lot of time engaging our staff in the ER and working with them so it hasn't been getting backed up so much," said Doyle.

Hyland, who said he has made several trips to the Mount Vernon emergency room over the years, said staff has cut his typical visit from three hours to approximately 45 minutes.

MILITARY NOTES

Army Reserve Pfc. Theodore J. Blanchard has graduated from Basic Combat Training at Fort Sill, Lawton, Okla. He is the son of Helene Blanchard of Sage Drive, and Ted Blanchard of Tilbury Road, both of Alexandria. Blanchard is a 2009 graduate of Thomas Edison High School.

Air Force 1st Lt. Christina J.

Willy has graduated from the Air Force Institute of Technology, Graduate School of Engineering and Management at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio. She is the daughter of James M. and Nancy A. Willy of Cameron Mills Road, Alexandria. The lieutenant received a bachelor's degree in 2005 from the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind.

Air Force Airman Lacey N. Freebern graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

She is the daughter of Kirt Forrest of Long Valley Road, Penn Valley, Calif., and sister of Deidra Daniel of Sunny Vien Drive, Alexandria. Freebern is a 2001 graduate of Bear River High School, Grass Valley, Calif.

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New Year, New Look, New Attitude for Majors

Mount Vernon boys soccer team off to 6-0 start.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

It is tradition for members of the Mount Vernon boys soccer team to follow their coach on a run from the locker room to the field prior to a home game. Head coach Robert Garza maintained the tradition on April 12 by leading the Majors to the field before their contest against Centreville.

He did so with a broken left foot.

Garza, who suffered a hairline fracture while playing soccer one day prior, removed his protective boot before the run and put it back on for the game. But exhibiting toughness didn't stop there for the coach, who told the Majors during a halftime speech they needed to pick up their play during the final 40 minutes. If Garza could run on a broken foot to maintain tradition, he expected the Majors, who during the opening half fell behind for the first time this season, to suck it up.

Mount Vernon responded to its coach, highlighted by the effort of junior captain Francisco Rodriguez. With the game tied at



Mount Vernon junior Francisco Rodriguez, left, battles for the ball against Centreville's Pat Luke during the Majors' 3-2 win April 12 at MVHS.

2 in the 74th minute, the forward pulled himself off the ground just long enough to score the deciding goal in a 3-2 victory over the Wildcats. Rodriguez, positioned to the



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

Mount Vernon sophomore Bryan Castellon (8) is hugged by his teammates after tying the game at 2 with a goal in the 51st minute.

right of the goal, found the net after initially falling to the ground. He fell again after striking the ball, but at that point he was able to sit back and enjoy the result.

Sophomore Bryan Castellon "chested [the

ball], I called for it and he just let it go," Rodriguez said. "I fell, but I still fought for it and shot the ball in. I was watching the ball go in laying down."

Mount Vernon defeated Falls Church the following evening, 3-2, to improve its record to 6-0, 2-0 in the National District.

THE MAJORS entered 2010 with the motto "new year, new look, new attitude." After blowing a pair of leads last season during a playoff loss to Yorktown, Garza decided it was time to blow up the team's philosophy. The Majors use new formations, approach practices and games with a new confidence and even sport new kits. Several returning players were let go and younger athletes, like freshmen Simond Kargbo (midfielder) and Lucas Belanger (goalkeeper), have seen extensive playing time.

The result is, to this point, an undefeated season.

The biggest difference this season is "the change in the whole attitude of the team," senior captain Dylan Bischoff said. "This is my fourth year and in the past we never had real good chemistry. Practices were always disruptive. This year, the team's finally come together."

Against Centreville, Mount Vernon twice fell behind by a goal. A header by senior

SEE NEW LOOK, PAGE 24

SPORTS BRIEFS

Majors, Wolverines to Compete in All-Star Games

Mount Vernon senior basketball player Skylar Jones will participate in the Capital Classic on April 15 at American University's Bender Arena. Jones will play for the Suburban All-Stars, who will face the District All-Stars at 6 p.m.

Mount Vernon's Robert Smith and Tre' Ferguson and West Potomac's Martez Redfearn and Keevyn Hankins will participate in the 2010 Northern Region All-Star boys basketball game festivities on April 24 at Wakefield High School. Players from the Patriot and Liberty districts will face athletes from the National and Concorde districts. There will also be a dunk contest and 3-point shootout.

Hankins and Redfearn will compete in the dunk contest, which begins at 6:30 p.m. The game starts at 7:30 p.m.

Mount Vernon Baseball Wins Alexandria Tourney

The Mount Vernon baseball team defeated Hayfield 7-1 on April 9, giving the Majors a 3-1 record against teams participating in the Alexandria City Championship tournament and the tourney title.

Mount Vernon, Hayfield, West Potomac, St. Stephen's/St. Agnes, Bishop Ireton and Episcopal participated. Mount Vernon defeated West Potomac, Bishop Ireton and Hayfield and lost to Episcopal.

Hayfield's loss was its first of the season.

Mount Vernon travels to face Wakefield at 6 p.m. April 16.

MV Softball Wins Third Straight

The Mount Vernon softball team won its third consecutive game on April 12, a 26-2 defeat of Falls Church. The Majors travel to face Wakefield at 6 p.m. on April 16.

Mount Vernon Girls Soccer Falls to Centreville

The Mount Vernon girls soccer team dropped to 3-2 with a 6-0 loss to Centreville on April 12. The Majors had won consecutive games prior to the loss, beating Falls Church (2-0) and Marshall (2-1). The Majors travel to face Yorktown at 7 p.m. April 16.

West Potomac Girls Lacrosse Drops 2 of 3

The West Potomac girls lacrosse team lost to Woodson 18-5 on April 9, beat Lee 15-2 on April 10 and lost to George Mason 15-11 on April 12. The Wolverines host West Springfield on April 19.

WP Boys Soccer Loses

The West Potomac boys soccer team fell to 2-4 with a 1-0 loss to Annandale on April 12. The Wolverines host Lee at 7 p.m. on April 16.

SEE SPORTS BRIEFS, PAGE 24

5Qs Five questions with Mount Vernon senior defender Dylan Bischoff

Q: What location is the farthest from the Washington D.C. metro area that you've traveled?

A: I went to Panama this past summer. My sister did a volunteer program down there, working all summer, so I went to visit.

Q: What is the best feeling one can have during a soccer game?

A: Probably scoring a goal ... especially from the sweeper position, because it's pretty rare.

Q: You'll be studying engineering at Virginia Tech next year. What are you most looking forward to about the transition?

A: Meeting new people and broadening my horizons.



Q: As a soccer player, how do you react to people with a negative perception of the sport?

A: I hate when I hear that kind of stuff: when people say, 'Soccer players dive, they do all this.' They just see stuff off the pros, little highlights. They've never been to a real high school game. Half the people that talk about it never come out to one of our games. ... One of my friends, he always thought soccer was soft. He came to one game last year and his whole mindset changed about the sport.

Q: What's your favorite movie?

A: "Armageddon." It just gets everything in there: action, sadness, humor.

— JON ROETMAN

SPORTS

New Look, Look Attitude

FROM PAGE 23

Adam Garrity gave the Wildcats a 1-0 lead in the 18th minute, but Kargbo answered with a ball in the upper right corner of the goal from 30 yards out to tie the score in the 25th minute. Another Garrity header put Centreville up 2-1 two minutes later, an advantage the Wildcats would take into halftime.

Castellon tied the score at 2 when he chipped the ball over the Centreville goalie in the 59th minute.

"We played good," Kargbo said. "All the guys gave it all they got. Even when we were down we still didn't give up."

AGGRESSIVE PLAY and disagreements with a referee's calls led to emotional play on both sides. In the end, it was the Majors celebrating.

"I've been here for four years and that was definitely the most intense game I've ever played in my life," Bischoff said. "The lead changes, just going back and forth and tying it up and [the game] coming down to the last minutes like that, it gets real intense. People's emotions kind of get in the way of their playing, but it's

all for love of the game. It's nothing personal. It's just playing hard."

Kargbo, Amardo Oakley and senior captain Dannish Decard-Nelson scored goals for Mount Vernon during its victory over Falls Church.

Castellon, Bischoff, Damaro DaCosta, David Heller and keeper Belanger are key defensive players for the Majors. Rodriguez, Kargbo and Nery Cruz-Lainer are standouts at midfield or forward.

Kargbo showed Garza what he had as a junior high athlete.

"He practiced with us once as an eighth-grader," Garza said, "and embarrassed our whole starting defense."

Whether Mount Vernon can maintain its new approach could have a lot to do with the Majors' long-term success. As far as continuing their pregame tradition of coach running with players?

"I guess I will keep taking the boot off, it's tradition," Garza wrote in a text message. "I always tell my players to suck it up so they are expecting me to as well."

Mount Vernon's next home game is against Yorktown at 7 p.m. April 16.



MVHS Football Team Takes Time to Volunteer

Seventeen members of the Mt. Vernon High School Football Team served as volunteers on March 31 for the Lose the Training Wheels Camp held at the Lee District Recreation Center. Lose The Training Wheels is an opportunity for children with disabilities to develop the skills and confidence they need to ride a two-wheel bike for the first time, giving them a sense of accomplishment and independence. Many people view learning to ride a bike as a rite of passage. However, for many of the camp's participants this would not be a reality without the camp.

SPORTS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 23

Sportsman's Club Meeting

The Alexandria Sportsman's Club will host a meeting April 20 at the Old Dominion Boat Club. The guest speaker will be former Maryland basketball standout and NBA player Walt Williams.

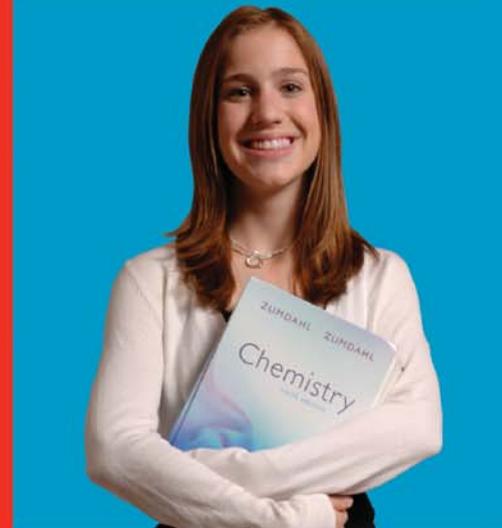
Social hour begins at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public and free food and beverages will be served.

Awards Banquet

The Alexandria Sportsman's Club will hold its 55th annual awards banquet May 18 at the Westin Hotel at 400 Courthouse Square. Sal Sunseri, assistant head coach of the national champion University of Alabama football team, will be the guest speaker.

Tickets are \$60 per person. To purchase tickets or for more information call Richard Downs at 703-647-1205 or 703-677-1266 or e-mail him at RDowns@lindsaycollision.com.

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FROM PAGE 3

Results from Sobriety Checkpoint

Fairfax County police officers from around the county conducted a sobriety checkpoint to deter and apprehend intoxicated drivers on Saturday, April 10 from 11:30 p.m. until 2:30 a.m. Sunday. All motorists were stopped and drivers were checked to assure that their abilities to drive had not been impaired by alcohol or drugs.

Approximately 689 motorists passed through the checkpoint in the 6000 block of North Kings Highway. Three arrests were made for DWI. Three additional charges were placed for possession of marijuana. Two summonses were issued for miscellaneous traffic offenses.

Accidental House Fire

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department units responded to a house fire Wednesday, March 31, at approximately 3:15 a.m., at 11205 Gunston Road.

Firefighters encountered heavy fire coming from the front and rear of the two-story single family home upon arrival. The home was in the final stages of construction. Firefighters set-up a water shuttle operation to extinguish the fire. The neighborhood is a non-hydrant area. Due to the heavy volume of fire within the structure, a defensive exterior attack was initiated to extinguish the fire. It took firefighters approximately 40 minutes to bring the fire under control. There were no injuries.

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

SCHOOL NOTES

Rehearsals are underway at Mt. Vernon High School for "Into the Woods," the Stephen Sondheim musical that won a Tony for Best Score and Best Book in 1988. The play, which was inspired by Bruno Bettelheim's book, *The Uses of Enchantment*, intertwines the plots of several fairy tales, including Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, Cinderella and Rapunzel. The characters meet each other in the woods after pursuing what they wish only to find that what they wish for isn't really what they want. "Into the Woods" will be presented at the MVHS little theatre from May 6-8 at 7p.m. and May 9 at 5 p.m.

The cast members, in order of appearance, are: Jen Davidson (Narrator), Tai Evans (Cinderella), Bryan Azucena (Jack), Charlie Nieman (Milky-White), Logan Beveridge (Baker), Sarah-Marie Wood (Baker's wife), Sabrina Pherson (Cinderella's stepmother), Rachel Fiscus (Florinda), Darian Abenes (Lucinda), Clare Cahill (Jack's mother), Ashley Franken (Red Riding Hood), Jenna Kraynak (Witch), Ryan Solivio (Cinderella's father), James Beveridge (Mysterious Man), Kodie Badolato (Wolf), Deborah Kamara (Rapunzel), Andrew McKellips (Rapunzel's prince), Jessica Merkman (Granny), Malcolm Montgomery (Cinderella's prince), Francisco Montenegro (Steward), Kim Stoll (Giant), Maya Huges (Snow White), Amber Huges (Cinderella's mother, Sleeping Beauty). Peasants: Elizabeth Portaluppi, Ashley Vanlandingham, Jessica Viera, Pei Chang, Suzy Gearing.

The play is directed by Elizabeth Becker, MVHS Drama department. The musical direction is by Judi Belzer and the choreographer is Philip Clark. Tickets are available by calling 703-619-3100 x. 3259 or via email to Elizabeth.Becker@fcps.edu.

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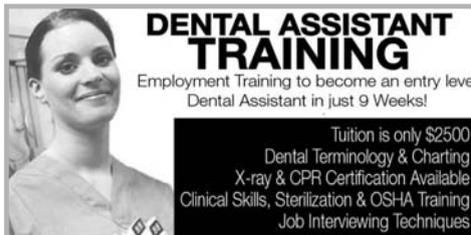
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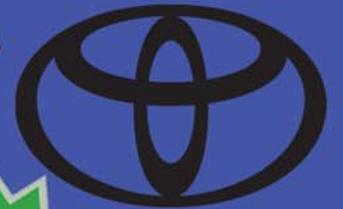
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SCHOOLS



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Dr. Gabriela Chavarria, Ph.D. talks with Lisa Guide and Mollie Passacantando. Chavarria has been mentoring Mollie in her bee research and project development for the past two years.

As Busy as Bees

The fourth grade students at Hollin Meadows Elementary School attended a special presentation Tuesday, April 13, on bees given by Dr. Gabriela Chavarria, Ph.D. of the Natural Resource Defense Fund and Dr. Sam Droege, a research scientist at the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

The students are taking part in a solitary bee monitoring project. The program was designed by the two scientists as part of a new national bee monitoring program. The bees being observed are solitary, Osmia, non-stinging bees. They do not live in hives and colonies like honey bees. They sometimes live in the ground and have been found in the woodland area of the Hollin Meadows garden.

The scientists designed a fabricated housing unit that will also attract the bees made of thin bamboo stems. The students have been making these habitats and placing them in the gardens around the school. These solitary bees are important pollinators of flowers and fruit tree. The students will monitor and record what kind of bees are nesting and the times that they start and stop. Students at Stratford Landing Elementary School are also participating in this program.

The bee monitoring program is part of Stratford Landing Elementary School students Mollie



USGS research scientist, Dr. Sam Droege, shows the students one of his bee catching nets. Droege is currently working on collecting information for a Native Bee Survey.

Passacantando and Jacob and Cecilia Brower's "Let A Thousand Flowers Bloom" science and advocacy project.

In 2008, as a fourth grader, Mollie Passacantando won the Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes for spearheading a national letter writing campaign to protect the polar bears. The campaign resulted with the polar bear being placed on the Endangered Species list. The cash prize was given on condition that it be used for education and advocacy purpose. And "Let A Thousand Flowers Bloom" was born.



The two visiting "Bee Doctors" brought boxes of specimen bees to show the students.