

Summer In the City

COMMUNITY, PAGE 18

By the time the movie starts at dusk, few spots are left for blankets or chairs. The crowd settles in to enjoy Saturday's movie, 'Avatar.'

PHOTO BY DEB COBB/THE CONNECTION
CALENDAR, PAGE 9 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 13 ♦ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 16

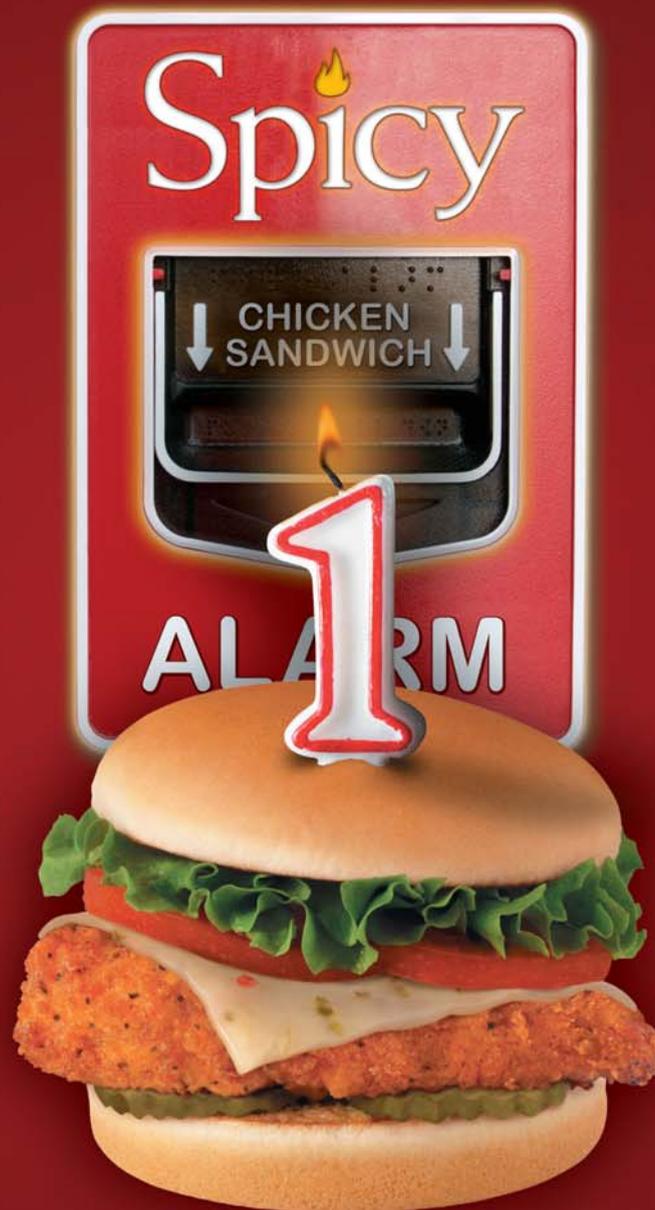
**New Council
Sworn In**
NEWS, PAGE 3

**Murder
Investigation**
NEWS, PAGE 3

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City of Fairfax Turns the Page

Recently-elected City Council, School Board members begin two-year terms at the city's swearing-in ceremony.

By JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

The flags were flying, the band was playing and smiles abounded, as the City of Fairfax could now look to the future led by its new leaders.

The newly elected members of the Fairfax City Council and School Board were sworn in at the Veterans Amphitheater at City Hall Tuesday, June 29. With one new City Council member and two more on the School Board joining nine total incumbents, the night brought a sense of optimism as fresh faces melded with veteran leaders.

"These fine individuals have all volunteered to serve the larger interests of the city and you, through the power of the ballot, gave them the authority," said Commissioner of the Revenue Page Johnson. "The task awaiting them is thankless, but in addition to the earnest thanks of a few, they have the satisfaction of knowing that they stepped forward to lead."

Several local dignitaries attended the ceremony, including U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) and Del. David Bulova (D-37), and each echoed the importance of local government, which was a central theme of the night. Each speaker noted that members of local government are so close and accessible to the people they serve that they are held to a higher standard. The speakers praised the individuals on stage for their acceptance of this notion.

"I honestly believe that local government is the most noble form of government," Connolly said. "It's the most accountable,



PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax City Council members take the oath of office in a June 29 ceremony.

We citizens know if the pothole doesn't get fixed, or if the snow didn't get plowed, so this means a great deal to our quality of life."

Following the speeches, Dirk Brouwer, the secretary of the city's electoral board, presented the certificates of election to the mayor and members of the City Council and City Clerk Melanie Burrell gave the oaths. Lederer, like his fellow council incumbents, touted the council's accomplishments over the last term and discussed how different the city is from when he began his service. The achievement they cited included the construction of the City of Fairfax Regional Library, the im-

provements at Fairfax High School and Old Town development.

"I'm proud to say that the city is a very different place than in 2002 [when I was first elected]," Lederer said. "We had a vacant post office, an aging library, an outdated building overshadowing the old city hall and our one-way traffic pattern diverted traffic away from downtown."

The newest City Council member, Ellie Schmidt, used her time at the podium to thank those that voted for her, and stressed that she is ready and willing to take on all challenges that the job brings. She also said that col-

laboration would be a keystone of her service, as she believes that reaching across the aisle is the only way to appease all of her constituents.

"Over the years, I have enjoyed many of the benefits of living in the city, and I am proud to have this opportunity to give back and I look forward to the challenge," Schmidt said. "While we may always agree on the issues that come before us, I'm confident that we will work together to act in the best interests of the citizens of this city."

Brouwer returned the stage to present the certificates to the School Board members, and Fairfax Circuit Court Chief Deputy Clerk Barbara Kenny gave the oath. The remarks from the School Board members were similar to the council members, as the veterans

SEE NEW COUNCIL, PAGE 5

"I believe that our team has a good heart."

— Janice Miller, School Board chairman

Homicide in Merrifield

Falls Church woman, 19, killed near Arlington Boulevard.

A 19-year-old Falls Church woman and 2009 James Madison High School graduate was found murdered Sunday, June 27.

According to the Fairfax County Police Department, officers responded to a report of a vehicle crash near the intersection of Arlington Boulevard and Williams Drive at approximately 3:34 p.m. At the scene, police found a 2008 Toyota Scion in a ditch on the south side of Arlington Boulevard with Vanessa Pham, 19, of

6700 James Lee St. deceased inside.

Pham, who just finished her freshman year at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, Ga., was found in the car with trauma to the upper body, which police discovered was not consistent with the mechanism of the crash. Autopsy results returned to detectives on Monday, June 28 determined that Pham was indeed murdered. No suspects have been identified.

"Vanessa was extremely gifted and one of the sweetest people I met during my

freshman year at SCAD," wrote college classmate Kaitlyn Ritter on Pham's Facebook page. "I absolutely cannot believe this has happened."

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



CONTRIBUTED

Vanessa Pham

Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131. The Vanessa Pham Memorial Fund has also been created, and donations can be mailed to Navy Federal Credit Union c/o Vanessa Pham Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 3100, Merrifield, VA 22119.

— JUSTIN FANIZZI



Dancers from Tiny Dancers Fairfax Studio perform 'Alice in Wonderland' for family and friends on June 13 at Fairfax High.

Tiny Dancers Present 'Alice'

On June 13, before a crowded auditorium at Fairfax High School, young dancers from Tiny Dancers Fairfax Studio wowed the audience of more than 700 family and friends with their performance of "Alice in Wonderland." From "In a Golden Afternoon" to "I'm Late, I'm Late" to "The March of the Cards," the dancers performed custom choreographed numbers in a rousing rendition of the classic tale.

Tiny Dancers, located in Fairfax City, offers a program of ballet, tap and hip-hop for children ages 2-12. For more information, visit www.tinydancers.com.

Nine Years for Ecstasy Dealer

Fairfax resident Jonathan Pai, 20, was sentenced last week in federal court to nine years in prison for conspiracy to distribute ecstasy and marijuana.

According to the statement of facts filed with his March 23 guilty plea, from February 2009 to February 2010, Pai obtained ecstasy and marijuana regularly from Chen Chieh Yam, 29, of Hyattsville, Md. Then Pai worked with several others to distribute these drugs throughout Northern Virginia and the surrounding area.

Those collaborating with Pai collected the drug proceeds and provided Pai with bulk payments. He then gave this money to Yam. In U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Pai admitted that, during 2009, he sold more than 7,000 ecstasy pills to an undercover, law-enforcement officer via a series of drug buys conducted at the Tysons Corner Center.

He also admitted that he and others obtained hundreds of kilograms of marijuana from Yam, and that the other conspirators operated stash houses to maintain, grow, store and distribute marijuana. Pai further admitted keeping a .45-caliber handgun at a drug stash house that he and others maintained. This gun was stolen during a burglary in December 2009, but was recovered by law enforcement while executing a search warrant there in February.

Pai is the first defendant from this investigation to be sentenced. U.S. District Court Judge James C. Cacheris sentenced him on Friday, June 25.

Several other defendants, including Yam, were also charged and have entered guilty pleas.

On April 29, Quang Huy Ho, 22, of Fairfax, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute ecstasy and marijuana and is slated for sentencing July 23. Paul Bang, 18, of Centreville, pleaded guilty May 7 to conspiracy to distribute ecstasy and marijuana, and is scheduled for sentencing Aug. 13.

Tam Phuong Tran, 23, of Chantilly, pleaded guilty May 27 to conspiracy to commit money laundering. He's slated for sentencing Aug. 20. In addition, Theodore Li, 23, of Fairfax, pleaded guilty to possession of a firearm in the furtherance of drug trafficking, plus being a felon in possession of a firearm.

This case is being investigated by the DEA, Virginia State Police

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 7

NEWS



Parks and Recreation Director Mike McCarty holds a plaque after winning three times at the 2009 Virginia Recreation and Parks Society Awards.

PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

City Parks Among Best

Fairfax's Parks and Recreation Department is a finalist for 2010 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Residents of the City of Fairfax have known for quite some time that the city's parks and public facilities are some of the finest around. Now, that poorly kept secret has spread to the masses, and the city is finally being recognized at the highest level for its hard work.

The City's Park and Recreation Department was named a finalist for the 2010 National Gold Medal Awards for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in early June. The city is up for the award, given by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association, along with three other localities.

"This award means so much to the City of Fairfax," said Jo Ormesher, the city's marketing director. "It is very important, not only for the parks and recreation department, but for the city and every one of its residents to be recognized as having some of the nation's best facilities."

The awards, which debuted 44 years ago, are handed out each year by the two organizations to recognize parks and recreation departments across the country that demonstrate excellence in long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship and program development. In addition, each agency is also judged on its ability to address the needs of those it serves through the collective energies of citizens, staff and elected officials.

The awards are distributed in five categories di-

vided by locality population and the city's department fell into Class V, which is for populations less than 25,000. According to the city's parks and recreations director Mike McCarty, only three area jurisdictions have won the award before, and noted that this is the first time that the city has been nominated. This year, the city's competition consists of departments from Green River, Wyo.; Golden, Colo.; and Cullman, Ala.

"As they score applications, judges focus on agencies that put an emphasis on planning and best utilizing their resources for meeting the needs of their communities," said Jackie Wallenstein, program director for the awards. "[The City of Fairfax] should take pride in its contributions to its citizens and the quality of planning and management of its systems."

According to McCarty, this year was the first time the city applied for the Gold Medal Award, though it

has been honored three times by the Virginia Recreation and Park Society Awards. He said that they chose this year to apply because of the growth and development of the city's parks and facilities over the last five years. Starting with the Comprehensive Plan revisions that gave the city 44 acres of land to build Stafford Drive Park in 2004, the city has since

built the new regional library, added to Draper Drive Park and began construction on the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, among other things. So, based on this track record, McCarty decided the city had the résumé to compete this year.

"It made an awful lot of sense to apply this year given our accomplishments over the last five years,"

"What we have is the best out there, so why not apply?"

— Mike McCarty, Parks and Recreation, director

SEE CITY PARKS, PAGE 7

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New Council Sworn In

FROM PAGE 3

recalled past successes and boasted about the city's schools advancements over time and the neophytes declared their eagerness for the challenges lying ahead. "Our new School Board will continue to seek ways to more effectively communicate and invest in our schools," said Chairman Janice Miller. "I believe that our team has a good heart, and I know that we will focus on what's best for our students."

Though the celebration provided a welcome respite from the arduous grind of local government,

the elected officials could not have been more anxious to get back to work and begin their terms. The city may be in great shape, they said, but with a shaky economy and uncertain budget situations still looming, there is much work to be done.

"While we're all proud of the achievements of the past, it's clear that we still have work to do," said Councilman Steve Stombres.

"I am so proud and humbled to be given the opportunity [to do that work and] serve the City of Fairfax for the next two years," Stombres said.

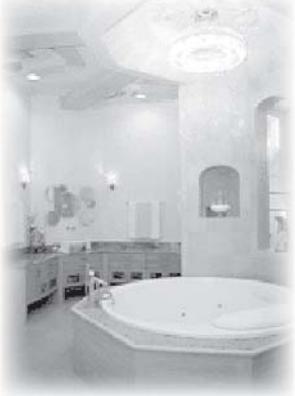
COLLEGE NOTES

On May 1, the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets conducted a Pass in Review to honor the Class of 2010 as they become alumni of the corps and to usher in the Class of 2011 as the new cadet officers and commanders of the Regiment.

Command will be passed from **Cadet Peter Laclede** of Fairfax, a senior double-majoring in political science and history in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and pursuing a minor in leadership studies, who will be an intelligence officer in the U.S. Air Force after graduation, to Cadet Micah Hafich

of Woodbridge, a junior Air Force ROTC cadet majoring in mathematics in the College of Science and pursuing a minor in leadership studies.

Brittany Rouin is the co-vice president of the 2009-10 officers of Tang Soo Do Karate Organization at Virginia Tech. A senior from Springfield majoring in interdisciplinary studies in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences with a minor in international business in the Pamplin College of Business, she is a fifth gup green belt.



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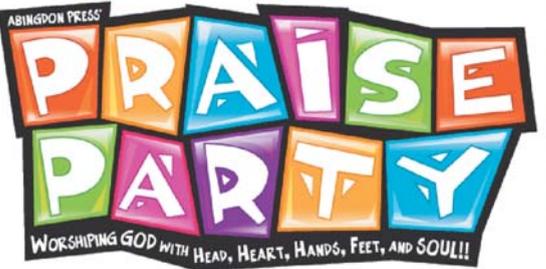
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COMMUNITY

Celebrate Independence Day a Day Early in Fairfax.

City celebrates July Fourth with events throughout the day on Saturday, July 3.

Leslie Herman, the special events manager for the City of Fairfax Parks and Recreation Department, talks about the city's Independence Day celebration.

How long does it take to plan the Independence Day celebration?

We start in September, so it takes probably about 10 months. The only breaks our committee takes are July, August and December, so other than that we kick off right in September, and we start rolling and working on our theme content, taking applications for the grand marshal this year, and we start inputting suggestions from last year to improve the event. So it's pretty much a year-round process getting the event together. It gets really busy once January hits because that's when the parade applications go out.

What are the most popular events every year?

The parade, by far, is the most popular, and definitely the fireworks.

What's going to be new or different this year?

There's something new that we're doing

this year with the evening show. The City of Fairfax's Parks and Recreation Department is a finalist for the gold medal award, which is awarded by the National Parks and Recreation Association, so something that we're going to do with the evening show this year is — something that the staff needs to do to win the gold medal is to submit an 11 minute DVD, and we're going to record the evening show, with everyone we're going to have a big red heart balloon and we're going to have the crowd yell out "We love Fairfax." We're going to get it on film and that's going to be the end of our DVD that we're submitting. It's pretty exciting that we're able to gather that many people for an event to support the city that way and we can catch it on camera.

We've been very fortunate with the support of the mayor and council to have high school marching band participation. Last year, we had seven marching bands participate, and this year we're having seven marching bands participate, although two of are out of state of bands — one's from New Jersey, and the other one's from Porterville, Calif. The one from Porterville,

this will be their sixth time visiting us. They rotate every four years they come, so it's been like 24 years they've been coming to the City of Fairfax parade. They have it on their calendar every four years. We feel pretty special that we have fans from out west that they definitely come to every four years.

Why is the city celebrating Independence Day on Saturday, July 3 this year?

Traditionally, when July 4 falls on a Sunday, the City of Fairfax has held the Independence Day Celebration on Saturday, July 3. Considering the Independence Day Celebrations events are held throughout the day starting with the arrival of parade participants beginning at 8:30 a.m. for the 10 a.m. step-off of the two-hour parade, the Fireman's Competition held during the afternoon and then the evening show and fireworks at Fairfax High School held from 7-10:30 p.m., we are able to maximize participation by holding the festivities on Saturday, July 3 instead of Sunday, July 4.

What is your favorite part of Independence Day?

My favorite part's probably the parade. It takes a lot of coordination. There are over 2,000 people that participate, so it's working with a lot of different groups, and there are a lot of groups you don't talk to during

INDEPENDENCE DAY

The City of Fairfax will celebrate Independence Day on Saturday, July 3 with several activities and events. More information can be found on their website at www.fairfaxva.gov or by calling 703-385-7855.

❖ **Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center Open House** from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 10209 Main St.

❖ **Independence Day Parade** from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in the downtown Fairfax historic district.

❖ **Civil War Interpretive Center** from 12-4 p.m. Historic Blenheim at 3610 Old Lee Highway.

❖ **Old Fashioned Fireman's Day** at 12:30 p.m. at 4081 University Drive.

❖ **Old Town Fairfax Walking Tour** at 6 p.m. at the Ratcliffe-Allison House, located at 10386 Main Street.

❖ **Evening Show and Fireworks** from 7-10:30 p.m. at Fairfax High School, located at 3501 Rebel Run in Fairfax.

the year except for at the parade, and there's a lot of community involved in it. We also strive to put on an entertaining parade, so that's always a lot of fun, selecting the helium balloons and then working with the different marching bands that participate, and the different service organizations that are putting floats through.

— ARIELLE RETTING

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City Parks Among Best

FROM PAGE 4

McCarty said. "Plus, in my opinion, what we have is the best out there, so why not apply?"

TO APPLY, the department had to fulfill a number of intensive requirements. First, McCarty and his staff had to fill out a 12-page application that included seven essays. These essays, McCarty said, asked the applicant to explain why it was worthy of the award, the planning and outreach processes, what makes the department unique and more. A group of George Mason University students were enlisted to help develop the essays, and, over the course of several brainstorming sessions, the essays were finished and the application was completed.

"It was a fun process [working with the students]," McCarty said. "After we listed out all that we've done during the brainstorming sessions, it really gave us the feeling that we truly had a chance."

The next step, McCarty said, is to make a 12-minute video showcasing the department and its accomplish-

ments and submit it to the awards organizers by July 9. McCarty said that Cityscreen 12 manager Rachel Roth is narrating and producing the video, entitled "A Sense of Place."

The video will use archival footage mixed with newly taped material to take the viewers on a tour of the city's parks and facilities and will also feature the myriad arts and cultural events that the city holds throughout the year. A five-judge panel will review the video, along with the essays, and the winner will be announced during the Oct. 25-29 National Recreation and Park Association's Annual Congress & Exposition in Minneapolis, Minn.

"I've been in this business for 25 years, and I've worked with some of the best along the way and many first-class agencies have never even been selected as a finalist after applying numerous times," McCarty said. "We may not have large aquatic facilities or a huge recreational center, but we have people who are willing to give their all and that really makes us unique, and makes this an amazing place to live."

NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 4

and the Fairfax and Montgomery County police departments. Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel Grooms and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Tritia Yuen are the prosecutors.

— BONNIE HOBBS

Inova Breaks Ground on 11-Story Tower

Inova Fairfax Hospital plans to construct a new 11-story South Patient Tower on its main campus. The tower will house 174, all-private intensive care and medical/surgical patient rooms. The additional 216,000 square feet will allow the hospital to meet future inpatient and outpatient needs and will allow for flexibility in the event of a surge in the number of patients. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$161 million.

Construction of the tower will begin this summer and is expected to be finished in the fall of 2012. The tower will be connected to the existing main hospital.

The design of the intensive care units (ICU) is organized by floor. The concentrated areas allow staff to work with those in their specialty and to form cohesive clinical teams.

The new design will allow patients to remain in their rooms rather than being frequently transferred.

The design of the South Patient tower includes environmentally friendly practices and incorporates a highly efficient energy system and insulation, as well as low- or no-VOC paints, carpets and furniture.

Wilmot Sanz Inc. designed the project and Turner Construction has been awarded the contract for construction. Both firms have previously completed successful projects for Inova Health System.

Six months Jail for

Online Solicitation

A Chantilly resident who was a part-time wrestling coach at Woodson High has been sentenced to six months in jail for electronic solicitation. He is Gary Anthony Debrielle, 27.

In August 2009, the Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office charged him with online child solicitation after he was snared in a sting while chatting online with a female deputy posing as a 14-year-old girl. Authorities said Debrielle had engaged in several online chats, the previous month, and they eventually turned sexual in nature.

Although he used a screen name, deputies were able to uncover his real identity and address. Then Fairfax County Police arrested him on a warrant from Spotsylvania County. Besides solicitation, he was also charged with attempted indecent liberties with a minor but, on Jan. 20, this charge was dropped.

Then on March 29 in Spotsylvania County Circuit Court, Debrielle pleaded guilty to electronic solicitation. He was sentenced to five years in prison, with four years, six months suspended, and was ordered to pay \$410 in court costs. Debrielle was not a teacher and is no longer a Fairfax County Public Schools' employee.

— BONNIE HOBBS

School Supplies Needed

Fairfax-based charity Our Daily Bread is seeking donors to provide school supplies to Fairfax County area children in need as part of its annual Back to School Program. Those interested in sponsoring a child or children or donating to the Back to School program may visit www.our-daily-bread.org For more information, call 703-273-8829 or e-mail info@ODBfairfax.org.

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PEOPLE

Accolades for Trombonist

Robinson's Stacey Kropaczek receives Memorial Band Scholarship.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Jim Lunsford and Jack Behrend started the band program at Robinson Secondary School and, as band directors during the 1970s, they taught and inspired hundreds of students. Now, graduating senior Stacey Kropaczek, who plays trombone, has received the fourth annual music scholarship named in their honor.

Established by former band students after their deaths, the \$2,000 scholarship was presented June 1 during the school's band awards banquet. And Lunsford's widow, Jan, was delighted with Kropaczek's selection.

"I'm glad they picked a trombone player because my husband played jazz trombone," she said. "I was impressed with her credentials. She served the Robinson band well, and she's going on to pursue music in college."

Kropaczek played first-chair trombone at Robinson and in District Band, Regional Orchestra, Jazz Combo, Brass Ensemble and Brass Quintet. She also played clarinet in Concert 3, Robinson's intermediate band, and was vice president of the school's band program. In addition, she was a member of the National Honor Society and received academic letters, all four years of high school.

Kropaczek has played trombone since fifth grade. "My older brother played it, too, so we had a trombone around the house and he helped teach me," said Kropaczek. "I like it because it's different. With the other instruments, you have to do fingering. But with this, you use your whole arm and it's fun. I love playing classical and jazz music on the trombone." She also enjoys playing clarinet because it familiarizes her with another side of band – woodwinds, and not just brass.

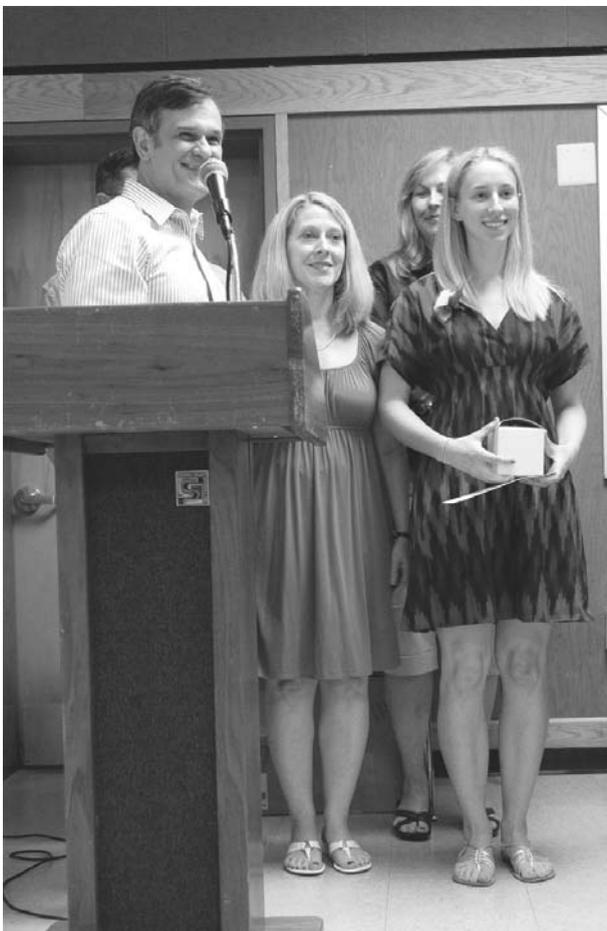
She applied for the scholarship and had to write an essay for it. She explained how playing instruments introduced her to music she hadn't previously known about. "Seeing how much I've grown and improved over the years makes me happy," she said.

IN HER ESSAY, Kropaczek wrote, "Music gives you the ability to express whatever emotion you're feeling, whenever you want to. When I go to elementary-school concerts and recitals with new, inexperienced players, I can't help but smile. My future will be a success if I can help other scared, weary students create some positive musical experiences for themselves."

Kropaczek will attend James Madison University in the fall to major in music education. "I want to be a band director, hopefully in high school, because I like the age and range of ability," she said. "I know how much of an influence my band directors have had on me. They helped me decide to make this a career, and I hope to help others do that, too."

Kropaczek said former Robinson Band Director Denny Stokes "talked to us as people, not just students, and also gave us daily life lessons." Regarding current Band Director Mike Cook, she said, "He knows how to push us to be the best players we can be, but still have fun."

At the awards banquet, Robinson alumnus John Oyhenart, scholarship-fund president, called Kropaczek a deserving musician. "Robinson band students continue to learn about teamwork, leadership and the art of making music from the great Robinson music staff, much as we did from Jim Lunsford and Jack Behrend," said Oyhenart. "We are pleased that this scholarship we created in their



During the scholarship presentation are, from left, Bill Siegfried, RHS '78, LBSF vice-president (obscured); John Oyhenart, RHS '77, LBSF president; Denise Cassety Rachel, RHS '75, LBSF treasurer; Linda Kivi Porter, RHS '77, LBSF board member (partially obscured); and scholarship winner Stacey Kropaczek.

honor continues to inspire excellence in Robinson musicians."

A portion of Kropaczek's essay was read during the ceremony, and she was thrilled to learn she'd won the scholarship. "It was pretty exciting," she said. "I had a big grin on my face. It's always a good thing to get some scholarship money."

She said receiving this award "just makes me want to pursue my education more, because I know they believe in me and believe that I can do this for a living. And I want to say thank you to the whole, Robinson Music Department and to my family for supporting me all through high school."

Cook called it "a cool and generous thing" for the band alumni to set up this scholarship to honor a Robinson student. "As always, there were several, deserving candidates and Stacey was one of them," he said. "I think she was chosen, in part, because of her words and actions. She's not only a remarkable musician, but a remarkable, all-around person."

He said Kropaczek understands the importance of each musician to the band, as a whole. "She's selfless and giving and supports those who need it," said Cook. "She leads by example and is respected by her peers for her personality and her musicianship. She understands that she's contributing to a tradition that's been here a long time and she's helping it continue."

The scholarship goes to Robinson students pursuing higher education while staying involved in music. Contributions to the Lunsford/Behrend Scholarship Fund are both welcome and tax-deductible; to learn more or make a donation, visit www.lunsfordbehrend.org.



Caroline Megan Simpson and Louis Edward Guerrini

Simpson, Guerrini To Wed

Mrs. Christine Simpson of Fairfax and Maj. Gen. (Ret) and Mrs. Charles Simpson, of Southlake, Texas announce the engagement of their daughter, Caroline Megan Simpson to Louis Edward Guerrini, son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Guerrini of Spring Valley, Ill.

The bride-elect is a 2001 graduate of Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax and a 2005 graduate of Pennsylvania

State University with a bachelor of science degree in evolutionary and biological psychology. An intelligence officer in the United States Air Force, Capt. Caroline Simpson is currently deployed overseas as chief of a Com-

bat Intelligence Cell.

Louis Simpson graduated from Hall High School in Spring Valley in 1994 and received a bachelor of science degree in geography from the University of Illinois in 1998. A major in the United States Air Force, he is an F-15 pilot currently stationed at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. as chief of F-15C programs, conducting operational testing on current and future weapons, software and hardware for the F-15C. He is presently deployed overseas.

A fall 2010 wedding on the beach in Florida is planned.



Academy Bound

Damien Ashley of Fairfax met with Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.) June 11, on Capitol

Hill in Washington, D.C. Armstrong will attend the U.S. Air Force Academy this fall.

SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT

Keeping It Cool

Many ways to cool off for summer fun.

Those looking for a way to cool off from the summer heat have several options in the Washington D.C. metro area.

Among those is the **Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole** in Reston. Located at 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, the park features a bit of an old west theme for children, with covered wagons, rattlesnakes and ore carts involved in the water fun. There are also enjoyment opportunities for teenagers and adults with water volleyball or tubing on Rattlesnake River. The park is open six days a week, from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. On Wednesdays, the park is open from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., but season pass holders may use the park from 5-8 p.m. Daily admission is \$13.50 for those taller than 4 feet and \$11.25 for those shorter than 4 feet. Cost is \$8.25 after 5 p.m. Monday-Friday and those 2 and younger enter free. Go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/watermine/ for more information. 703-471-5415

Atlantis Waterpark at 7700 Bull Run in Centreville features a 1,000 gallon dumping bucket, waterfalls and squirters. There is also a 230-foot open slide and a 170-foot closed slide. Mermaids and dolphins help set the atmosphere for water fun. The park is open daily from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. On Aug. 23, hours change to 12-6 p.m. on weekdays and 12-7 p.m. on the weekends. Admission is \$8 for those taller than 4 feet and \$6.75 for those shorter than 4 feet or 55 and older.



A highlight of the Atlantis Waterpark in Centreville is a 1,000 gallon dumping bucket.

Cost is \$5 after 4 p.m. on weekdays. Go to www.nvrpa.org/park/bull_run/content/water_park for more information. Atlantis 703-631-0550

Great Waves Waterpark at 4001 Eisenhower Ave. in Alexandria offers twisty four-story waterslides and speed slides. It also has a tad pool for toddlers. It is located in Cameron Run Regional Park, which also has miniature golf and batting cages. The waterpark is open from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Daily admission is \$14.25 for individuals taller than 4 feet and \$10.95 for those shorter than 4 feet. Admission after 4 p.m. on weekdays and for those 55 and older is \$8. Children 2 and younger get in free. Go to www.nvrpa.org/park/cameron_run for more information. Great Waves 703-960-0767

Volcano Island Waterpark at 47001 Fairway Drive in Sterling features a Polynesian theme, with tiki thatching, bamboo, painted murals, palm trees and a constantly smoking volcano. The park is open from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. On Aug. 23, hours change to 12-6 p.m. on weekdays and 12-7 p.m. on weekends. Daily admission is \$8 for those taller than 4 feet and \$6.75 for those shorter than 4 feet and 55 and older. Cost is \$5 after 4 p.m. on weekdays. Go to www.nvrpa.org/park/downpour_at_algonkian for more information. Volcano Island 703-450-4655

Pirates Cove Waterpark at 6501 Pohick Bay Drive in Lorton features a 300-gallon dumping bucket, water cannons and a waterslide. The park is open daily from 11 a.m.-7 p.m., with hours changing on Aug. 23. Daily admission is \$7 for those taller than 4 feet and \$6 for those shorter than 4 feet and 55 or older. Cost is \$4 after 4 p.m. on weekdays. Go to www.nvrpa.org/park/pohick_bay/content/outdoor_pool for more information. Pirates Cove 703-339-6104

Upton Hill Waterpark at 6060 Wilson Blvd. in Arlington is also an option. The park is open daily from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. with hours changing Aug. 23. Daily admission is \$8 for those taller than 4 feet and \$6.75 for those shorter than 4 feet and 55 or older. Cost is \$5 after 4 p.m. on weekdays. Go to www.nvrpa.org/park/upton_hill/content/pool for more information. Upton Hill 703-534-3437

— JON ROETMAN

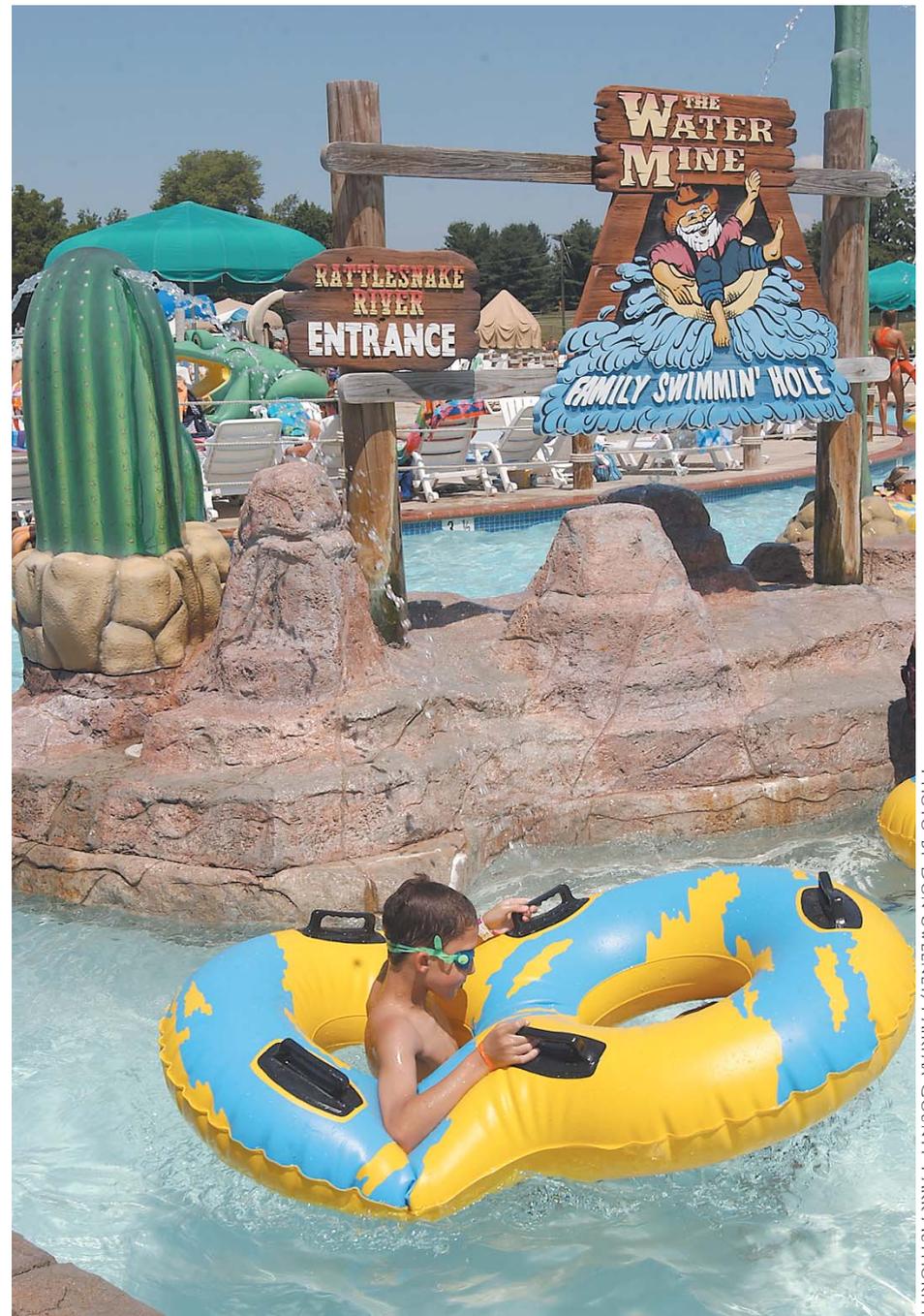


PHOTO BY DON SWEENEY/FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

Intertubing is just one way to enjoy one's time at the Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole in Reston.



CONTRIBUTED

Pirates hang out at the pool at Pohick Bay Regional Park during the third annual Pirate Day on June 12.

SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY AMANDA RANOWSKY/THE CONNECTION

Master Gardeners offer free advice at the Burke Farmers Market. From left, Margaret Kerr-McKown, Peggy Fisher, Louise Davidson, and Kelley Shealy.

Ask a Master Gardener

For those who are going green, or simply looking to brighten their yards with a few perennials, planning and planting a garden can turn up some tough questions. Luckily, the Fairfax County Master Gardeners are ready to offer a wealth of free advice at their plant clinics.

“Now that gardening is becoming popular, it’s good for people to know good gardening practices,” said Louise Davidson.

The most important rule, the Master Gardeners said, was to put the right plant in the right place. They suggested that homeowners observe their gardens before buying plants, to see which areas are sunny and which are shady. Just as important, they said, is proper watering, as not all plants need the same amount of water to thrive. The Master Gardeners can also cure diseased plants at their clinic.

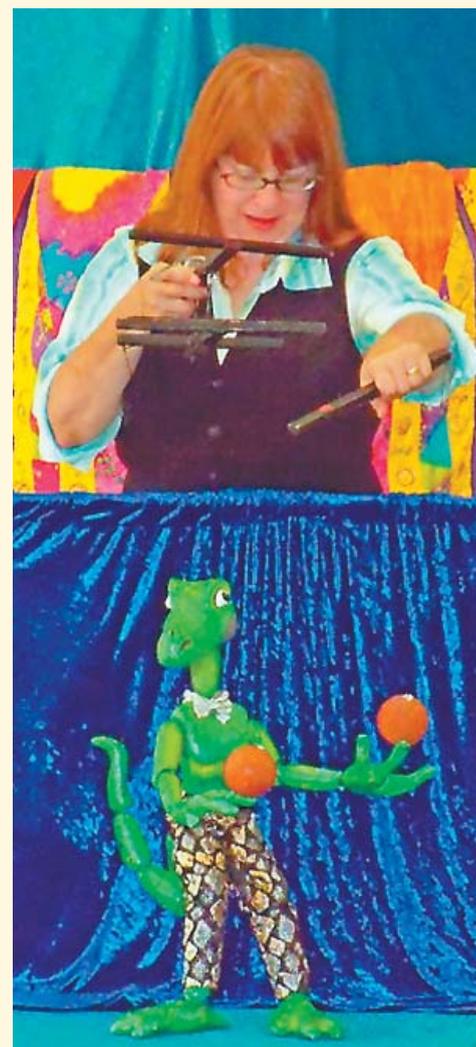
Plant Clinics take place at the Fairfax County Farmers Markets and at several regional libraries. For the full schedule, go online at www.fairfaxmastergardeners.org, or contact the help desk at 703-324-8556.



Beale Street Puppet’s founder Jill Kyle-Keith, aka ‘Ms. Jill,’ carries one of her puppets towards children in the audience, at a June 29 performance at the City of Fairfax Regional Library. The children in the audience were grinning and snickering throughout the entire show.

Check Out the Library

The City of Fairfax Regional Library offers a variety of events and workshops for people of every age throughout the summer. The library is located at 10360 North St. in downtown Fairfax and is open on Sunday, from 1-5 p.m.; Monday through Wednesday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m.; Thursday



PHOTOS BY JASON KAZI/THE CONNECTION

and Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

For more information, call 703-293-6227 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/FX for more information.

— ARIELLE RETTING

World Cup Fever — Catch It



PHOTO COURTESY/ESPN SOCCERNET

The World Cup finals will take place Sunday, June 11. In Fairfax, the big game will be celebrated with a Fan Fest block party.

Street Party in Fairfax July 11.

The thrill of World Cup 2010 and U.S. men’s soccer fans celebrated a late-game miracle goal by Landon Donovan in a 1-0 win over Algeria on June 23. That goal catapulted the U.S. team into the round of 16 and went from being life support to perhaps the greatest moment in team history.

Here at home, that meant a huge shot of soccer adrenaline for the faithful. There are lots of places to enjoy the World Cup games over the remaining few weeks of competition.

One of the grandest celebrations in Northern Virginia will take place at the World Cup 2010 Fan Fest in Old Town Fairfax City on Sunday, July 11. The atmosphere and electricity surrounding Fan Fest in Fairfax is sure to be at a fever pitch.

“We’re going to have a proper street party,” said an event spokeswoman. “And the way things are going it should be the place to be.”

The event, a soccer-inspired neighborhood block party as such, will begin at 1:30 p.m. with the game tabbed to begin at 2:30. There will be a big screen for viewing, live music and good food throughout the afternoon. Local food and business vendors will be on-hand. North Street in Fairfax City, between Chain Bridge Road and University Drive, will be closed for the Fan Fest. Plenty of parking will be available downtown. Call 703-273-6097 for more information.

Summer Fun Talk of the Town

Brewing Up Choices

For years, restaurants have catered to wine connoisseurs with tastings, pairings and alternatives. But increasingly foodies are finding that some beer deserves the same treatment as fine wine — and some craft beers approach the same alcohol content as wine as well. Americans are no longer limiting their beer choices; now hundreds of smaller breweries have sprung up across the country offering a wider range of options for the public's palette. Many stores and restaurants are also importing specialty beers from abroad for their patrons. A few nearby restaurants have started hosting beer tastings, where they pair their favorite specialty beers with dishes that will complement the brews' taste. For local beer lovers, here are some best bets for a good selection.

Compiled by Julia O'Donoghue
Graphics by Laurence Foong



C SWEETWATER TAVERN **D**

Head brewer Nick Funnell creates 35 different varieties of beer annually exclusively for distribution at Sweetwater. The restaurant employs some brewers who used to work for Old Dominion Brewing Company.
3066 Gatehouse Plaza, Merrifield; 703-645-8100
14250 Sweetwater Lane, Centreville; 703-449-1100
www.greatamericanrestaurants.com/sweetmainster



B JAY'S BREWING

Interested in making your own beer? The founder of this store grew up in Clifton and sells all the beer-making equipment and products you need.
12644 Chapel Road, Suite 113, Clifton; 703-543-2663
www.jaysbrewing.com



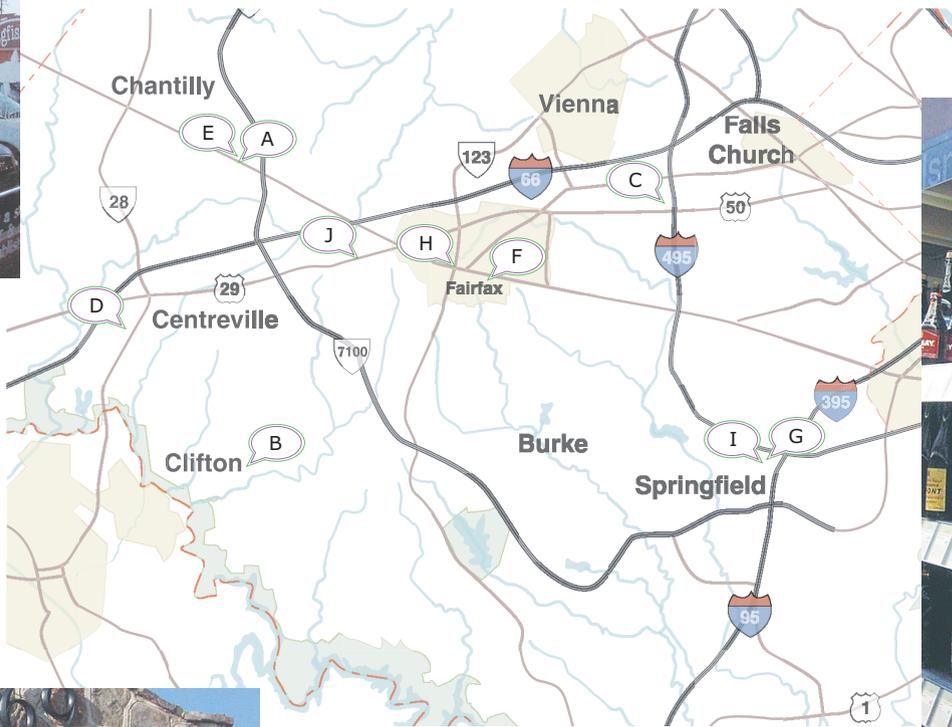
J WEGMANS

This luxury, super-sized grocery store has almost anything you would ever need — including dozens of types of beer in stock. The beer aisle is large enough to have separate "European," "West Coast American Microbrew" and "East Coast American Microbrew" sections.
11620 Monument Drive, Fairfax; 703-653-1600
www.wegmans.com



A DOGFISH HEAD ALEHOUSE

Known for experimentation and bold flavors, Dogfish Head Craft Brewery consistently produces brews that win high marks from beer critics around the world. The company is based in Delaware but has opened up three restaurants in the area, where several of its products are available on tap.
13041 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax; 703-961-1140
www.dogfishalehouse.com



For more suggestions see the Connection's Guide to Summer Fun online.



H HARD TIMES CAFÉ & CUE **I**

With approximately 20 beer taps, this establishment offers one of the widest selections of draft brews in southern and central Fairfax County. In addition to staples like Sam Adams and Miller Lite, the bar also carries lesser known but well-regarded beers like Magic Hat's #9, Shiner Bock and Dogfish Head's 60 Minute IPA on tap.
4069 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax; 703-267-9590
6362 Springfield Plaza, Springfield; 703-913-6300
www.hardtimes.com



E F TOTAL WINE & MORE **G**

This national chain boasts more than 1,000 types of beer at each of its retail locations. Customers are encouraged to create custom six packs and bottles can be bought individually.
Greenbriar Town Center, 13055-C Lee Jackson Highway, Chantilly; 703-817-1177
Pickett Shopping Center, 9484 Main Street, Fairfax; 703-250-0604
Tower Shopping Center, 6801 Bland Street, Springfield; 703-912-9387
www.totalwine.com

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CALENDAR

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

THURSDAY/JULY 1

Pat McGee Band. 8 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. \$57-\$471. 703-938-2404 or www.wolftrap.org.

Wolftrap Childrens Theatre in the Woods. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. 10 a.m. Dinorock: The Great Dinosaur Mystery, 11:15 a.m. Hayes Greenfield's Jazz-a-Ma-Tazz. Free workshops follow the 10 a.m. performance; reservations required at 703-255-1824. \$8-\$10. Wolftrap.org.

Groovy Reading. 2:30 p.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Sing and dance with Groovy Nate and his puppets. All ages. 703-644-7333.

FRIDAY/JULY 2

Gipsy Kings. 8 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. \$58-\$471. 703-938-2404 or www.wolftrap.org.

Rites of Ash CD Release, Along Those Lines with DJ I-Dee. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. jamminjava.com.

Hot Society Orchestra of Washington. 7:30 p.m. Lake Accotink Park, 7500 Accotink Park Road, Springfield. Hot jazz and dance music of the '20s-'40s. Free. 703-324-7469 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances.

Swing Speak. 7:30 p.m. Royal Lake Park, 5344 Gainsborough Drive, Fairfax. Swing music. Free. 703-324-7469 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances.

Rites of Ash CD Release, Along Those Lines and DJ I-Dee. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. jamminjava.com.

SATURDAY/JULY 3

Gipsy Kings. 8 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. \$58-\$471. 703-938-2404 or www.wolftrap.org.

Wolftrap Childrens Theatre in the Woods. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. 10 a.m. Dinorock: The Great Dinosaur Mystery, 11:15 a.m. Hayes Greenfield's Jazz-a-Ma-Tazz. Free workshops follow the 10 a.m. performance; reservations required at 703-255-1824. \$8-\$10. www.wolftrap.org.

Parade The Day Reunion Show, Boys Will Be Boys and Safety Word Orange. 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 advance, \$13 day of

show. jamminjava.com.

Burke Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. at VRE parking lot, 5671 Roberts Parkway, Burke.

Northern Virginia Country

Western Dance Association. At Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke. Line dance lessons at 7:30 p.m., couples specialty dance at 8 p.m., open dancing 8:30-11 p.m. Two Step, Waltz, Line, Swing, Cha Cha, and specialty dances. Admission \$5-\$12. www.nvcwda.org or 703-860-4941.

Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association, Inc. 10 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Master Gardeners provide horticultural tips, information, techniques and advice to home gardeners. Adults. 703-293-6227.

Neighborhood Plant Clinic. 10 a.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. The Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association gives tips and strategies. Adults. 703-978-5600.

TUESDAY/JULY 6

Wolftrap Childrens Theatre in the Woods. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. 10 a.m. Cullin School of Irish Dance: Tir na nOg, 11:15 a.m. Robbie Schaefer: Songs for Kids Like Us. Free workshops follow the 10 a.m. performance; reservations required at 703-255-1824. \$8-\$10. www.wolftrap.org.

SmartMarkets Weekly Farmer's Markets. 3:30-6:30 p.m. at the corner of Monument Drive and Government Center Parkway in Fairfax Corner. Every Tuesday through Oct. 26. www.smartmarkets.org.

Fairfax Farmers Market. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. at Van Dyck Park, 3720 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax.

Deep River and Marie Miller. 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. jamminjava.com.

Fishy Fun. 2:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Silly songs, stories, and poems about our scaly, swimmy friends with storyteller Gary Lloyd. All ages. 703-249-1520.

Calling All Guys. 7 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. New meeting night. Book discussion group for boys. "Call of the Wild" by Jack London. Age 9-12 with adult. 703-978-5600.

Neighborhood Plant Clinic. 10 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. The Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association gives tips and advice. Adults. 703-644-7333.

Barnyard Fun: Storytime for 2's and 3's. 10:30 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road,

Burke. Share stories, music and activities all about animals that live on the farm. Age 2-3 with adult. 703-644-7333.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 7

Mamma Mia! 8 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. \$44-\$231. 703-938-2404 or www.wolftrap.org.

Todd Wright's 40x40 Finale Show and Scott Simons. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$12. jamminjava.com.

Wakefield Farmers Market. 2-6 p.m. at 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale.

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

Lunch Bunnies. 12 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Bring lunch and listen to stories. Birth-5 with adult. 703-978-5600.

Rainforests Alive. 7 p.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Discover the world of tropical rainforests and meet unique creatures that call the jungle their home. Presented by Reptiles Alive. 703-644-7333.

Writers' Roundtable. 7 p.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Discuss your work with other writers. 703-644-7333.

THURSDAY/JULY 8

Mamma Mia! 8 p.m. at Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. \$44-\$231. 703-938-2404 or www.wolftrap.org.

Swing Dance with Junk Yard Saints. 7:30 at The Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. \$10. www.headoverheelsdance.com.

Wolftrap Childrens Theatre in the Woods. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. 10 a.m. Cullin School of Irish Dance: Tir na nOg, 11:15 a.m. Robbie Schaefer: Songs for Kids Like Us. Free workshops follow the 10 a.m. performance; reservations required at 703-255-1824. \$8-\$10. www.wolftrap.org.

Boyce Avenue and Tamar Kaprelian. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$12. jamminjava.com.

Brain Benders. 10:30 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. See everyday objects through scientific eyes. Presented by Maryland Science Center. Age 6-12. 703-293-6227.

Dig Those Dinosaurs. 2:30 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Beale Street Puppets presents prehistoric performers that bring the past alive. 703-978-5600.

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JULY 12 - JULY 16 ALIENS IN THE ATTIC (G)
JULY 19 - JULY 23 STUART LITTLE (PG)

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photoFx@connectionnewspapers.com

Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, and identify all people and pets in photos. Submission deadline July 21.

Virginia Tech's Berman Cuts to Chase

Robinson Secondary graduate Jared Berman finds his stride in steeplechase event.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

Jared Berman never imagined his freshmen year of college as a long distance runner at Virginia Tech would be filled with such drama. But the 2009 Robinson Secondary School graduate, as it turned out, experienced enough highs and lows during one school year of athletics to fill an entire college career.

"I had trained real hard [last summer] because I wanted to do real well as a freshman," said Berman.

All of that hard summertime work, which included long distance runs of 7 to 9 miles called "steadies," a timed practice routine in which Berman and former Edison High runner Lee Degfae took part in together, ultimately paid off for the Fairfax Station resident.

But there were times when it appeared Berman's first year as a Hokie runner would be less than fulfilling.

Throughout the first half of last fall's cross country season, Berman had not yet been called upon to participate in a meet. As a freshman, that is not unusual as newcomers to the program often play secondary roles to more seasoned team members. So Berman was thrilled when long distance coach Ben Thomas informed him he would be competing at Tech's midseason meet at Appalachian State (N.C.).

At the time, Berman was struggling with an injury to his right foot but was not about to let that hold him back. So, in his first race as a Virginia Tech runner, Berman gave it all he had and finished an impressive 23rd place overall.

That night back on Tech's campus in Blacksburg, Berman was in so much pain that he called upon an athletic trainer at 1 a.m. That's when he learned he had run with a stress fracture and would be sidelined at least a month.

"That was terrible," said Berman, who credited his mother, Deborah, back home in Northern Virginia with encouraging him to do the work over the ensuing weeks to regain his health and running form. "I was kind of disappointed."

For a stretch of time, he had to wear

a protective boot on his right foot. He said it often dragged on the floors or walkways where he moved about, leaving a black streak in his path. Fellow students always knew where Berman had been.

"I had this ridiculous boot on my foot and there were a bunch of skid marks [where I'd dragged it]," said Berman with a laugh. "Girls thought it was funny."

Berman never returned to action that cross country season and was still on the mend when the winter indoor track and field season started up. Eventually, after the winter break, it was decided he would be red-shirted for the indoor season, meaning he would not compete over the winter but

still retain four years of eligibility.

The red-shirt status actually carried into the outdoor season as well, so it appeared Berman's

school year of running was over. He was still allowed to practice with the team, however, and was nearly back to full strength. He began, at Thomas' suggestion, practicing the 3,000-meters steeplechase run, a long distance event in which participants, running around the track, must clear numerous hurdles as well as a few water barrier jumps.

Berman had no idea his work in the event would lead to his return to competition that spring. But that's what happened. Thomas found a loophole to get Berman back on the active roster and he was no longer a spring red-shirt. Berman, in his first outdoor competition, ran well in a 5,000-meters race at William & Mary.

One of Berman's best moments of the year was when he received his running gear, including team warm-ups, prior to that meet in Williamsburg.

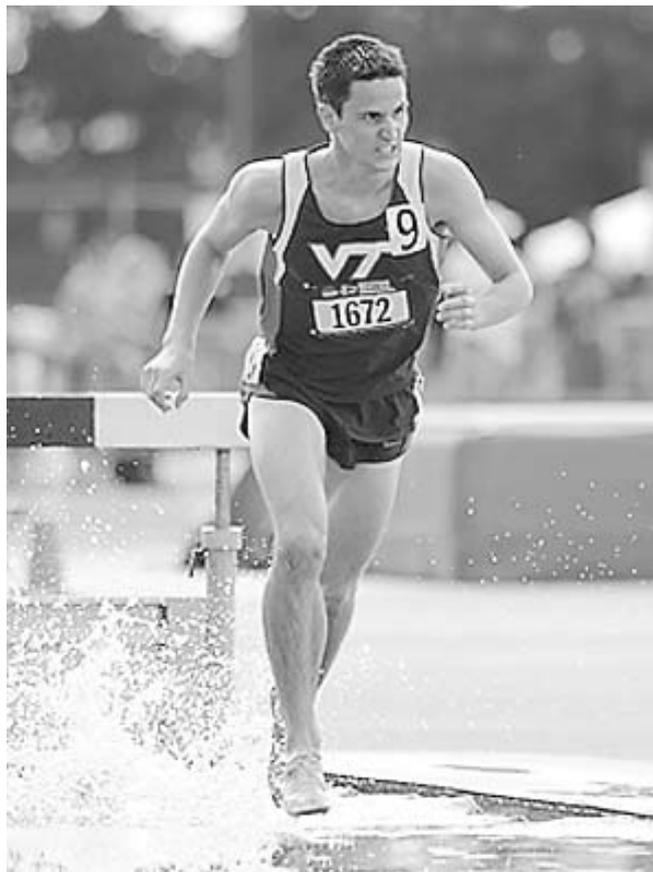
"Before the William & Mary meet, Coach Thomas texted me and told me to come in and get my gear," said Berman. "I was like, 'How is this possible, I should [still be] red-shirted?' But he told me I would be racing at William & Mary and that I would be on the roster."

Two weeks following the William & Mary meet, Berman made his steeple chase debut at none other than the ACC Championships at Clemson University.

"I was a little scared," he said. "I was in the steeple for the first time."

But Berman was outstanding. He nearly tripped early in the race when his trail foot hit the third barrier on a hurdle. But he kept going and ultimately finished sixth at the championship event.

It was an incredible showing for the first-year collegiate runner who, several weeks earlier, never dreamed he'd even be on the active team roster.



Fairfax Station resident Jared Berman will be competing for Virginia Tech in the steeplechase event at the World Junior Track and Field Championships July 19-25 in New Brunswick, Canada.

Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. There, much like his showing at the ACC Championships, Berman came up big once again with a stunning second place steeple finish.

Going in, Berman was confident he could better his ACC sixth place time of 9:04.60 at the Junior Championships. He barely missed, timing at 9:04.76 in Des Moines. But his second place finish, behind winner Dakota Peachee (9:03.43), was still exceptional.

Going into Nationals, the confident Berman was totally focused.

"I was ready for a PR (personal best time) and knew I could," said Berman. "I knew I had to get down to business. I was ready to compete and have one of the biggest races in my life. I had a good warm-up and was ready."

Berman's strategy was to stay at the back of the running field for most of the race and then make his move with 1-1/2 laps to go. He did just that, making his move with about 150-meters remaining and even taking the lead. Peachee, however, passed Berman on the down-stretch. But finishing second was a thrill nonetheless.

"It was a huge crowd and Drake Stadium is beautiful," said Berman. "Finishing second, I had a lot of energy and adrenaline."

By finishing in the top two, Berman qualified for the upcoming World Junior Championships in Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, July 19-25.

"I'm so excited," he said. "Me and [Coach Thomas] are going crazy getting stuff done [for the trip]. Virginia Tech is helping me get my passport."

"Finishing in the top two at the USA Junior Championships is quite an honor for him," said Thomas.

"The steeplechase is something Jared just picked up and started in January."

Berman, the Concorde District cross country champion during his senior year at Robinson, has quickly learned how challenging the steeplechase event is.

"The hardest part of the event is probably going over the barriers with a bunch of people all around you in a pack," he said. "My favorite part is that it's an interesting race. It's not just running, but you've got barriers and its pretty challenging."

Make no mistake, Berman loves a challenge. And he had plenty of those his freshman year at Tech.

"I'm very proud of Jared's accomplishments," said Thomas. "He's just a fearless racer. I love the way he puts himself into a race. He goes after it. He's a real tough competitor who obviously has some talent to go with that tenacity. I think he's going to do great things in the future. He's going to be a special athlete for us over the next three years here at Virginia Tech."

PHOTO COURTESY OF HOKIE SPORTS.COM

OPINION

Summer Fun, Safely

Enjoy your summer fun, including our features on places to go with great beer selections, but plan ahead; SoberRide needs more sponsors.

This week's Connection includes Summer Fun pages, with information about waterparks, local base ball and golf, places to watch the remaining weeks of World Cup Soccer, highlights of coming Independence Day events and, yes, a map of places to go that offer great beer selection. Enjoy.

By week's end, you'll find the listings and stories from all of our papers online at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com under Summer Fun.

That said, we know that Independence Day, like Halloween and Saint Patrick's Day, is a holiday that coincides with a higher rate of drinking and driving. When you head out for your celebration, plan ahead, arrange for a designated driver, or choose to abstain if a

designated driver isn't available.

One safety net for those who might find themselves in the unfortunate position of drinking without a safe way home is the Washington Regional Alcohol Program SoberRide. Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), has offered free cab rides home on the Independence Day beginning at 10 p.m. July 4 and continuing until 6 a.m. the following day as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period. During this 12-hour period, area residents celebrating with alcohol could call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-cost (up to a \$ 50 fare), safe way home.

EDITORIAL

Education Needed

To the Editor:

While Retired Col. Douglas Englund has undoubtedly served this country well, his letter to the editor published in the June 24-30 edition of the Connection did a disservice to your readers in the understanding of an issue of importance to the citizens of the U.S.

The founders of the Federal Government originally established several checks to the misuse of power by our elected leaders. This included not only the split between the judicial, legislative and executive branches, but also a split legislative branch, House and Senate. The House was to be elected "by the people of the several states" (article 1, section 2). The Senate was to be elected by "two senators from each state chosen by the legislature thereof" (article 1, section 3). The people thus had their say in the House and the states had their say in the Senate in forming the laws of the land. The 17th Amendment in establishing Senate elections as, "two senators from each state elected by the people thereof," has effectively cut off the states from influence in the federal legislative process as they no longer have a voice.

We can currently see the result of this change in many areas, not the least of which is state governors begging for both prompt federal help from the Gulf oil spill in Louisiana and from the crime and budgetary problems due to illegal

immigration in Arizona. Repealing of this amendment and restoration of the original intent of the Constitution would place the senators, not on the campaign trail or in front of the cameras and the press, but rather on the carpet of their state legislatures explaining why these types of statewide problems are not being solved.

Dennis H. Pedder
Springfield

Independent Voice? Hardly

To the Editor:

Two of your letter writers stated that voting for U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) would be a vote for an independent voice. [Connection, June 24-30]. That almost made me laugh out loud. Congressman Connolly has voted with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) 98 percent of the time, so I do not see how that represents an "independent voice." But I guess that if you love Nancy Pelosi, voting for Gerry Connolly would make sense.

Criticizing [Republican congressional candidate] Keith Fimian for saying that repealing the 17th Amendment (popular election of senators) "has merit" is of little value. There are many people, including constitutional scholars, who agree that the idea "has merit," and that the framers of our Constitution had solid reasons for having the House of Representa-

tives represent the people and the Senate represent the states. Besides that, Keith Fimian said he was "inclined to say no" to repealing the 17th Amendment, and a congressman has very little power to change the Constitution. But the facts don't matter to Connolly.

Let's discuss the issues that a congressman does have power to change — like reducing taxes or enacting laws that encourage private sector job growth. Vote for Keith Fimian.

Mary Bell
Springfield

Economic Not Political Answer

To the Editor:

Bob Paine's letter in the June 17-23 Connection ["No Laughing Matter"] attacks U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) for asking Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke if there is "enough spending to be cut?" When Mr. Bernanke responded "of course" he was speaking in economic, not political terms.

We could cut many billions of dollars each month by bringing all of our troops home from Afghanistan, but that would endanger our national security. I think both the Democrats and Republicans agree that this is not the place to cut. What about unemployment compensation? Should we wipe this out of the budget and have millions of Americans relying on char-

Founded in 1982, WRAP is a public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington-metropolitan area, but its work is endangered by a combination of growing ridership on key holidays and a drop in funding. At presstime, the organization was counting up donations to be sure they would be able to offer the service this year.

Last Independence Day, 331 people in the Washington-metropolitan area used the area's SoberRide program as opposed to possibly driving home drunk.

A 60 percent increase in use of the program since 2008 combined with a 35 percent decrease in corporate underwriting is threatening the free cab ride service to prevent drunk driving.

Behind SoberRide's services is a three-person charitable organization (WRAP) paying a projected \$73,000 in cab fares this year alone. WRAP relies on corporate sponsorship to offset these costs, but the recent downturn has contributed to the drop in funding. WRAP is actively seeking contributors to bridge SoberRide's \$31,000 shortfall. Call 800-200-TAXI for a free carbide (up to \$50 fare) home if you need it on July 4. See www.wrap.org for sponsorship opportunities.

ity and soup kitchens? Probably not a good idea.

What Mr. Paine means is lets cut programs that he and [11th District candidate Keith] Fimian (R) don't agree with. Which ones? The Department of Education? The National Endowment for the Arts? Medicare? Oversight of offshore rigs, food safety or border security?

It's easy to criticize our elected officials like Mr. Connolly or [Speaker of the House Nancy] Pelosi (D-Calif.). It's a lot harder to figure out how to fairly and effectively govern 330 million people representing the entire spectrum of values, beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, ages, financial conditions, etc.

Thomas L. Schwarz
Burke

On This July Fourth

To the Editor:

Eight years ago, my handbag, with my Chinese passport in it, was stolen in front of the Chinese embassy in D.C. Just then, I was meditating in front of the Embassy in protest of the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China. Earlier that year, a friend was tortured to death in a Chinese labor camp. He refused to sign a government paper promising he would give up this traditional meditation discipline. The para

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 15

THE CONNECTION

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 14

noid communist party sees this popular practice as a competitor for the hearts and minds of the Chinese people.

I tried to apply for a new Chinese passport. After waiting 10 months, I was finally called in by the embassy for a meeting — or more like an interrogation. The officer questioned me for an hour about what I do related to Falun Gong, other than meditating in front of the embassy. After the meeting, he said they needed more time to study my case. As for when I could get a new passport, he did not know.

I was a graduate student here on a student visa at that time. Without a passport, I literally could not function. So, I was forced into political asylum.

Now, eight years later, I will finally get a new passport in a few weeks — a U.S. one, as I am becoming a U.S. citizen.

On this July Fourth, I feel lucky to live in this free country, my new homeland. And it is not just me. In Fairfax County alone, there are at least 13 other families who have been persecuted or had relatives persecuted in China for practicing Falun Gong. We are thankful not only to find a new home in Virginia, but for our elected officials who speak up for those still suffering. In March, the U.S. House nearly unanimously passed a resolution condemning Beijing for the persecution of Falun Gong in China. We are es-

pecially proud of U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10) who was one of the 81 co-sponsors of this resolution.

Thank you, America.

Anne Yang
Fairfax

Graduation Coverage

To The Editor:

I am bothered by your columns on local high school graduations because of how much smaller the column on Robinson is than the ones on Woodson or Fairfax High. Also, Fairfax High has all of its pictures in color unlike the others, which are in black and white. The articles talk about students receiving awards and who spoke at the ceremony, except the extremely short article on Robinson. In addition, all of the other articles have quotes and are much longer, which makes little sense because Robinson has many more students and more graduates. A larger percentage of your readership attends Robinson, so why did it receive the briefest write-up? I think these articles are extremely lopsided and not fair.

Joshua Von Holtz
Rising eighth grader
Robinson Secondary
Fairfax

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21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

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-Albert Einstein

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-Werner Heisenberg

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COMMUNITY



Jackie Ong, a Fairfax City resident and volunteer with Truro Church helps make popcorn for the event. Cox Communications provided the popcorn and Truro Church provided the labor. All proceeds from popcorn sales are donated to Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children.



The crowd grows as the sun begins to set.

Fund and Friend Raiser for the Children

Cox Movies Under the Moon benefits Inova Fairfax Hospital.

For four nights last week, Van Dyck Park became home to a 40-foot wide by 22-foot high movie screen and 12,000 lumen movie projector as art Cox Movies Under the Moon.

The fund raiser for Inova Fairfax Children's Hospital was as much a community picnic and reunion for

long-time attendees as a means to raise money for the hospital. Food vendors donated portions or the entirety of their proceeds to the hospital, and a "bucket brigade" walked through the crowd throughout the evening collecting donations from the crowd. All were asked to donate something to the cause.

Attendance this year was slightly above last year's attendance, with between 8,000-8,500 people coming out over the four-night event. Even with the event running one night less than last year, it raised \$13,000 for Inova. That figure does not include the money from sponsorships.

— DEB COBB



The crowd watches 'Maggie's Story,' a family testimonial about the care and service this family received at Inova Fairfax Children's Hospital.



From left, Michelle Castilly of Fairfax City, a three-time Movies Under the Moon attendee, brought her two friends, Alvaro Oviedo and Jessica Morales, both of Falls Church, to enjoy the show.

PHOTOS BY DEB COBB

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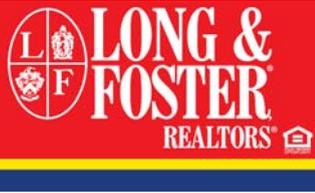


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