

Good Shepherd
Youths In
30-Hour Famine

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Mixing It
Up in Vienna

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Navigating Through Healthcare Maze

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Elisabeth Schuler Russell founded Patient Navigator after a 22-plus year career with the State Department Foreign Service. The business provides consulting services to families and patients as they make their way through the healthcare system.

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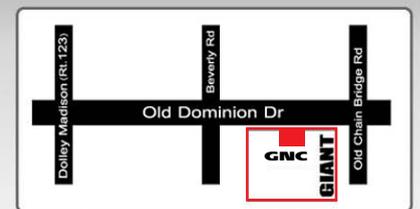
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Youths and adults of the Church of the Good Shepherd participated in World Vision's 30-Hour Famine Feb. 25-26.



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/
THE CONNECTION

Good Shepherd Youths Participate in 30-Hour Famine

Event raises awareness, encourages empathy and compassion.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

Thirty hours is a long time to go without eating. Ten children and teens and five adults from the Church of the Good Shepherd in Oakton dedicated themselves to the 30-Hour Famine created by World Vision, a Christian humanitarian charity. The goal of the fast is to raise awareness of hunger worldwide and at home, to promote empathy for the hungry and to encourage discussion of solutions to the problem.

The purpose of the "famine" is two-fold, said Rob Ulmer, Church of the Good Shepherd Youth Ministries Director in his sixth year organizing the World Vision fast. "We raise money for the hungry by asking people to sponsor us as we fast and we fast for

30 hours in order to have some idea of what it means to go without food, if only for a little while."

Churches all over the country participated in the Feb. 25 - 26 30-Hour Famine, several in the Vienna-Oakton area. Good Shepherd's program provided time for reflection and time for distraction. A core component was the opportunity to contribute to the hungry locally.

About 11 a.m., the youths and adults gathered in Fellowship Hall to make 1,000 sandwiches for distribution by Food for Others based in Fairfax. The church bought 63 one-pound packages of sliced all-beef bologna, 63 one-pound packages of sliced cheese and 100 loaves of bread. All-beef bologna permits the hungry of most faiths to eat the meat. The volunteers made the sandwiches assembly-line style.

"Fasting is a spiritual discipline," Ulmer said. "We're a church. We have a faith. So, there's a spiritual aspect to it. We help one another get through it."

Giant Food in Oakton, Ulmer said, was especially helpful to the youth group. The store saw no problem ordering 100 loaves of Giant bread as a special

SEE FASTING, PAGE 16



Rob Ulmer, youth ministries director at Good Shepherd, has coordinated the 30-Hour Famine for six years now.



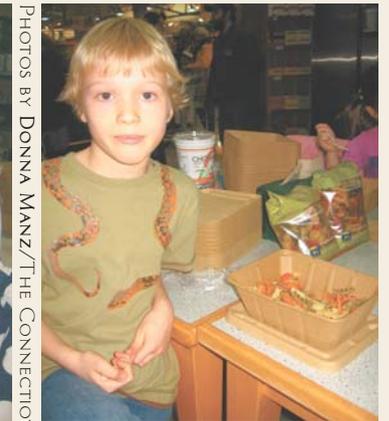
Julia Cogdell, Oakton, said the experience has made her grateful for what she has.



Fenja Ziel, an exchange student at South Lakes High School in Reston, is learning to appreciate food more and not waste it.



Twins Lily and Sarah Kersten of Vienna, 7, enjoyed eating the pasta salad as much as making it. Sarah is a cookie and cupcake connoisseur.



Collin Frederick, 10, of Vienna has participated in several Whole Foods programs for children. He and his brother Payton love to cook and eat what they make.

Mixing It Up in Vienna

Whole Foods hosts children's nutrition program.

And you thought Whole Foods just sold healthy groceries. The store on Maple Avenue also teaches nutrition. For children. With food preparation.

Seventeen children were registered for the Feb. 21 afterschool program but chilling rain kept some away. The nine children who did make it there were rewarded with cartons of fresh pasta salad. There were four pairs of siblings from toddler to 10 years old, the toddler doing more eating than stirring.

"They get excited when I tell them they're coming here," said Gretchen Frederick, mother of 10-year-old Collin and 6-year-

old Payton, brothers who have toured the bakery and fish departments as part of Whole Foods' kids programming. "The boys love to cook."

The programs for children are usually held once a month, occasionally more often. February saw the Feb. 21 class and a morning "Mommy and Me" on Feb. 25. Monday's program was not so much a cooking class as it was a lesson in nutrition. Food preparer Ashley Alcorn of Vienna is a nutritionist and an assistant director for personal training at a local Fitness First. A vegan, Alcorn knows the properties of ingredients that

SEE NUTRITION, PAGE 16



Arshan Chikkatur, 2, was more into the eating part than the preparation part.



Ashley Alcorn, of Vienna, shares her passion for healthy eating at Whole Foods programs.

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Vienna Lions Honor Young Musicians

The Vienna Host Lions Club held its 48th James A. Bland Music Contest on Saturday, Feb. 19 at the Assembly of God Church in Vienna. There were 14 contestants in the competition this year, ranging in age from 7 to 18 and from grades one to 12. The contest was one of 16 sponsored by Lions Clubs in Northern Virginia. First

place winners will compete in the Regional Contest March 15 in Falls Church.

In the group photo (above), from left, are Kristyna Gocova, Haina Li, Shannon Smith, Audrey Jo Rinehart, Christina Lee, Sara Larkworthy, Brent McKenna, Larissa Converti, Patrick Miller, Ivy Lim, Raymond Griggs and Yeonjae

Lim. In front are Gloria Boos and Rose Boos.

In the picture below: 1st Place – Instrument: Patrick Miller, 2nd Place – Instrument: Brent McKenna, Lions Club President James Boney, Vienna Bland Chair Nancy Volpe, 1st Place – Vocal: Sara Larkworthy, and 2nd Place – Vocal: Audrey Jo Rinehart.



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Half of the 200 members of LA Boxing are women.



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/ THE CONNECTION



LA Boxing Tysons owner Tate Marshall and General Manager Quinn Masi show some mixed martial arts moves in the 'cage.'

Fighting Words

LA Boxing opens gym at Tysons Corner.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

There's a new lexicon in the Tysons area and for anyone who's visited an LA Boxing gym, the words – Muay Thai punching bag, fighting cage, jabs – are familiar. They're fighting words and LA Boxing's members love them.

"There are other gyms around here that offer kickboxing classes," said gym owner Tate Marshall. "But, usually, they're taught by instructors who also teach spinning and other cardio classes. They're not fighters by training.

"Here, we hire real fighters and teach them to teach."

Marshall owns four LA Boxing franchises in the area.

LA Boxing is not a conventional gym. While there are pieces of common equipment, such as elliptical trainers, treadmills and weights, what sets LA Boxing apart is the focus on fighting techniques and the equipment that supports them. Thirty 150-pound Muay Thai punching bags center the boxing classes. There's a regulation ring and a cushioned-floor cage, a vinyl-coated fence, for practicing mixed martial arts [MMAs].

Marshall describes LA Boxing as a small sports-specific gym where "you're not working out mindlessly," he said. "You're learning skills under the tutelage of experts. Every one of these guys are boxers trained in different parts of the country, bringing different skills with them."

OF ITS 200 MEMBERS, half are women. It could be the 800 to 1,000 calories the workout burns that draw women to boxing. Fighting techniques, said Marshall, build endurance and strength,



Rebecca Diamond, Vienna, said she has more energy now that she has taken up boxing workouts. Her daughter Abby has started children's group instruction at LA Boxing.

working the lower and upper body. "When you're practicing fighting moves, you're always working different muscle groups," said Marshall.

Every adult at any level trains together in classes but novices are identified to instructors. It takes at least three weeks to get acclimated to boxing workouts regardless of current skills. Instructors know the goals of the club's members.

It isn't just adults who benefit from the rigorous boxing workouts. LA Boxing offers children's classes as well, with smaller gloves and a fun routine, capitalizing on the exercise children enjoy. Relay runs incorporate boxing techniques. Kids' classes are tailored to 6 1/2 years to 13 years. Over 13, kids join the adult classes.

"Kids are always told not to hit anything, but here they can hit all they want," said Marshall.

Rebecca Diamond of Vienna and her 9-year-old daughter Abby are

members of LA Boxing. Rebecca started training at the Reston-Herndon facility but moved to Tysons when the site opened in early January. "It's an alternative to a regular workout. It's fun and it's different, and it's kept me motivated," said Diamond, who has also modified her diet. "I've been coming here religiously since it opened in January." Diamond, who owns Rebecca Diamond Marketing, fits in eight-to-10 hours a week at LA Boxing. She works her boxing practice around her schedule. "I have more energy than I've had in a long time," she said. "You do what works for you."

Abby Diamond has just started taking the kids' boxing class and is excited about it. "I like when we do the relay races," Abby said. "I like the fun."

"There's a camaraderie in this ... When you're working this hard alongside somebody, at the end of the class, you can say, 'we did it.'"

— Tate Marshall, owner

Veronica Rodas, 8, who takes classes with her cousin, agrees that boxing is fun to do because she has learned lots of punches and kicks, and it's good exercise. Her mom and dad take adult classes. Julianna, Veronica's 10-year-old soccer-playing cousin, said boxing is fun and she likes learning new stuff.

"Learning to box, the skills it requires, builds self-confidence and good sportsmanship," said Marshall. "Fighters are the nicest guys you will ever meet," he said. "They are self-assured with nothing to prove. They're world-class athletes, not street fighters."

Quinn Masi, General Manager of the Tysons LA Boxing club, gave up a six-figure salary to run this gym. A former college wrestler, Masi understands what the gym's clients get out of their workouts. "You're not just exercising," Masi said. "You're mastering skills and techniques.

"I was making really good money in my previous job but I was not happy doing it. I love this. And the members love it."

In addition to young children and adults looking for skill-focused exercise, LA Boxing also appeals to teens, some of whom are athletes on high school or college teams, crosstraining, and other teens who eschew team sports but still want to do athletics. "That group of kids [the latter] excel in here," Marshall said.

THE TROUBLE with most fitness programs, said Marshall, is that they're not fun and exciting.

"Do they look like they're having fun," asked Marshall, pointing out exercisers on the treadmills. Turning his head toward the students punching bags full-force, Marshall said, "They're having fun.

"There's a camaraderie in this," he said. "When you're working this hard alongside somebody, at the end of the class, you can say, 'we did it.'"

LA Boxing at Tysons Corner is located at 1524 Spring Hill Rd., McLean. www.LAboxing.com/TysonsCorner.

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to mclean@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

THURSDAY/MARCH 3

McLean Citizens Association Winter Membership Meeting. 7:30 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Deputy Director of the Department of Management and Budget Joe Mondoro will discuss county budget matters. 202-465-3290 or rhjackson@cox.net.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group. 10 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. 703-281-9515.

SUNDAY/MARCH 6

Parenting with Emotional Intelligence. 4 p.m. StarNut Gourmet, 1445 Laughlin Ave., McLean. www.bulldogcoaching.com.

TUESDAY/MARCH 8

Vienna Oakton NARFE Chapter Meeting. 1:30 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. F. Eugene Brown, President, Custom Financial Solutions, LLC., will discuss the importance of estate planning. All members and prospective members are invited to attend. 703-281-5123.

Healthy Eating for the Family. 9 a.m. Flint Hill Elementary School, 2444 Flint Hill Road, Vienna. With nutritionist and chef Michele Powers R.D. Open to parents of Flint Hill Elementary School or Thoreau Middle School students. www.fhespta.org.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 9

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meeting. 1:30 p.m. at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

FRIDAY/MARCH 11

VTRCC Youth & Education Luncheon "Green Day." 11 a.m. Westin Tysons Corner, 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Showcasing accomplishments of students in the Vienna and Tysons Corner area and highlighting opportunities for schools and businesses to partner in mutually beneficial ways. \$40 members, \$50 non-members. www.vtrcc.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 12

Women's Service Expo. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. 2034 Great Falls St., McLean. Learn about volunteer opportunities at local non-profits, assemble postpartum totes for new mothers, write letters to servicemembers, fill baskets for a women's shelter and more. Red Cross blood donation on site. Free. Sponsored by the Relief Society of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. jenniferheywood@hotmail.com.

Brinker Toastmasters. 9:30 a.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.E., Vienna. Meets second and fourth Saturday of the month. brinker.wordpress.com.

MONDAY/MARCH 14

Haven of Northern Virginia's Bereavement Support Group. 7:30 p.m. Haven of Northern Virginia, Inc., 4606 Ravensworth Road, Annandale. Six weekly meetings, through April 18. Free. Register at 703-941-7000 or www.havenofnova.org.

OPINION

Time for Adult Discussion on Deficits and Debt

BY MARK R. WARNER
U.S. SENATOR

With all of the current discussion about short-term federal spending resolutions and potential gridlock in Congress, you might think we have lost the opportunity for serious action on our longer-range deficits and debt.

I remain convinced that our country is at a critically important moment: We simply must seize this opportunity to get our fiscal house in order for the long term, and since last summer this has been one of my top priorities.

Partnering with my Republican colleague Saxby Chambliss of Georgia, we are working to try to turn the recommendations of the President's National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform into legislation.

Our current national debt stands at more than \$14 trillion. If adopted in full, the commission's recommendations would gradually reduce that debt by \$4 trillion over the next 10 years.

Unfortunately, the current debate is centered on deep cuts in short-term, discretionary and nonmilitary spending, which only makes-up about 12 percent of the overall federal budget.

The spending proposal recently adopted by the House of Representatives slashes funding for workforce training programs that are so important to many people across southwest and southside.

It targeted federal support for the multi-state, multi-year Chesapeake Bay cleanup effort, and



U.S. Senators Saxby Chambliss of Georgia and Mark Warner of Virginia.

GUEST
EDITORIAL

the House budget makes deep cuts in federal funding to Northern Virginia's Metro mass transit system.

The simple fact is, drastic and even painful cuts to these individual programs alone will not fix our larger structural budget problems.

That's why Senator Chambliss and I have been working with a growing number of our Senate colleagues to address these fiscal challenges in a more comprehensive and responsible way. We must work together to control government spending, simplify our tax code, and begin to gradually eliminate our deficits.

That is the only way we will fix our nation's balance sheet over the long term.

The deficit commission's recommendations, while far from perfect, represent a courageous first step in tackling our national debt in ways that will make our nation competitive for the 21st century:

❖ The commission laid out a plan to accelerate healthcare savings in Medicare and Medicaid, and it provides a responsible roadmap to strengthen Social Security for the next 75

years. The commission's plan protects Social Security, and does not use Social Security funds to balance the budget.

❖ It dramatically simplifies a tax system in serious need of an overhaul. It proposes closing loopholes and phasing out some deductions while lowering overall tax rates for individuals and corporations.

❖ It puts everything on the table, including entitlement programs and defense spending. We believe that this has to be part of the discussion, too.

As you might imagine, various political opponents and special interests already are mobilizing to short-circuit our work on this legislation, which demonstrates why this is such a difficult challenge. It also shows why Washington's typical political response has always been to kick this can down the road, and push the tough choices to another day:

❖ These choices do not get any easier simply by delaying action. Every day that we put off these difficult decisions, an average \$4 billion is added to the national debt.

❖ Every dollar that we spend simply paying the interest on our nation's staggering debt is disappearing into a fiscal sinkhole. These are resources that cannot be targeted toward creating jobs, expanding the U.S. economy or addressing any of our other shared priorities.

While there are plenty of recommendations in the commission's plan that I would not have chosen, this much is crystal clear to me and the other members of our bipartisan coalition: We simply cannot postpone this difficult discussion any longer.

Warner, a co-founder of Nextel and former Virginia governor, is a member of the Senate's Banking, Budget, Commerce and Intelligence committees. He can be reached at www.warner.senate.gov.

ing and judgment. Their trust was misplaced.

A 15-year-old child is dead. ... Your response is to direct the grieving parents to the SR&R.

As Kate Walsh, a member of Maryland's State Board of Education, so well said, "every aspect of what happened to that boy in Fairfax County is an abuse of school authority."

May Nick Stuban rest in peace. And may we as a community all bear the shame and responsibility for entrusting him, and the other children of Fairfax, to school officials who demonstrated a complete and utterly reckless disregard for any measure of fairness or reason or concern for this child or his life.

Margaret Ackerley
McLean

Assembly Held Hostage

To the Editor:

In the February 16-22 issue, the lead editorial opined that Governor McDonnell should sign the

recently passed legislation "that would require some insurance companies to provide limited but critically important coverage for therapy for children with autism." Yes, I agree completely that the governor should sign the bill. However, the editorial fails to criticize the General Assembly, in particular the House of Delegates, for not providing more. The sad truth is that the coverage truly is "limited" and that the General Assembly again shows how it is held hostage by corporate power, in this case the insurance companies.

The article by Julia O'Donoghue in the same edition provides the broader picture. While 23 other states have passed bills on mandated autism coverage, the one passed by Virginia is the most limited. Virginia's will only apply to children aged 2-6 and will have an annual cap of \$35,000. Most other states allow a wider age range (some into adulthood) and have a higher cap (one has no cap at all). And the number of families who might benefit from the mandated therapy coverage is extremely limited since the legisla-

tion does not apply to companies with 50 or fewer employees, does not apply to large companies that self-insure themselves, and does not apply to people who do not have health insurance through an employer but instead must buy insurance on the open market. Since the article points out that "at least 55 percent of people in Fairfax work for self-insured companies," it is easy to see how limited the legislation is.

And, so, for many families, the insurance companies will not have to provide the therapy at all and, when they do have to, will only have to pay for therapy for a small age-subset of people and a small cap. It is easy to see again that the General Assembly has bowed to the insurance companies. For the most part, insurance companies will still get away with what the mother of a child with autism says: "Some insurance companies charge higher premiums if an autistic child is on the policy. They charge more but they refuse to pay for treatment."

Michael Shaw
Reston

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NEWS

Senate Rejects Parent Notification In Suspension Cases

A bill that would have required public school administrators to notify parents when their child is caught doing something that would likely result in a recommendation for expulsion or suspension died in the Virginia General Assembly on Feb. 21.

The House of Delegates passed the legislation unanimously but the Senate voted it down 12 to 28. With the exception of Dave Marsden (D-37) and Toddy Puller (D-36), all other Fairfax County senators voted to support the bill.

Del. Kaye Kory (D-38), a former member of the Fairfax County School Board from the Mason District, sponsored the legislation. It garnered support and attention from Fairfax County residents when a teenage boy committed suicide last month after being kicked out of Woodson High School in Fairfax.

The teenager's family and several other parents have called for a massive overhaul of the disciplinary process in Fairfax County Public Schools, which they describe as being punitive, isolating and harsh.

Students caught for nonviolent offenses — such as the possession of a small amount of marijuana —

are almost always transferred to another school. Many students also spend several weeks homebound, unable to set foot on any Fairfax campus, even for off-hours activities like Boys Scout meetings.

Kory's bill would have ensured that school officials, such as principals and their assistants, would have to notify parents relatively soon after a child's disciplinary infraction if it appeared likely the child would face being removed from school.

The Virginia School Board Association and Fairfax County Public Schools fought Kory's bill, saying it was too broad and would unnecessarily tie the hands of school administrators.

But several parent organizations in Fairfax, including the FAIRGRADE, Save Clifton Elementary and Fairfax Zero Tolerance Reform, said Kory's legislation is necessary.

Principals, school police officers and other authority figures frequently question students and get them to write a statement admitting their guilt before the parents are even notified of the situation, said Caroline Hemenway, head of Fairfax Zero Tolerance Reform,

which advocates for changing the disciplinary policies in Fairfax schools.

"The kids are interrogated by these authority figures that they have been told to trust and they don't understand that they have rights. They are just trying to be honest and tell the truth ... They end up harming their futures irrevocably," said Hemenway.

School Board Member Tina Hone (At-large) said she is supportive of Kory's legislation, even if the Fairfax school system has fought it.

According to Hone, she is familiar with one case where the student was held and questioned for three hours before anyone from the school called the parent about the disciplinary incident.

She is concerned some students might incriminate themselves without full knowledge of what they are doing. Hone said the Fairfax County prosecutor's office has access to the school system's files, including the written statements students give related to disciplinary matters, and could potentially use that information to move on charges if they wanted.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

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- Back to Basics with Chef Robyn Alexander:** March 7, March 14, March 21, 7-9:30 pm, \$190 for the series - Students will learn to prepare delicious classics, including New England clam chowder, chicken Marsala, rice pilaf, and carrot cake with cream cheese frosting.
- Regional Italian with Chef Stephen Sands:** March 9, March 16, March 23, 7-10 pm, \$185 for the series - Get a taste of three regions of Italy from its native son Chef Stephen: Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Piedmont, and Sicily.

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LifeCircle Alliances Announces Four Grant Winners

LifeCircle Alliances, a non-profit charitable organization that champions the concerns of older adults and adults (18+) with disabilities in Fairfax County, announces the winners of the second round of Haywood Incentive Fund Grants. INTEGRITYOne Partners of Reston provided the funding for this round of Haywood grants. Businesses or groups interested in funding a round of grants should contact the Executive Director of LifeCircle Alliances, Christine Hyland, at 571-321-2018.

ROUND TWO of the Haywood Incentive Fund Grants will support:

* Chesterbrook Residences, Falls Church - \$2,500 to enhance internet accessibility to the residents of this assisted living facility.

* Jewish Foundation for Group Homes - \$5,000 to partially fund expansion of the agency's MOST (Meaningful Opportunities for

Successful Transitions) program into Fairfax, Fairfax County. This program is a one year individualized program designed to facilitate a smooth transition into the adult community for young individuals with disabilities.

* Dementia Subcommittee of the Fairfax County's Long Term Care Coordinating Council - \$1,500 to fund a pilot project addressing education resources for physicians and for families with dementia.

* Shepherd Center of Oakton-Vienna - \$1,000 to provide operating support for this nonprofit that provides services, personal enrichment and volunteer opportunities for adults 50 and over. Their services address the needs for medical and errand transportation; handyman assistance; health & wellness; record keeping; volunteer calls and visits.

The funding for this second round of Verdia Haywood Incentive Fund grants has been provided by INTEGRITYOne Partners, a business and technology consulting services firm based in Reston,

offering a specific set of consulting and technology solutions customized to the U.S. Federal Government.

Grant Selection Committee members included: Dr. Michael Behrmann, Chair of the LifeCircle Alliances Board of Directors, Board member Kay Larmer, Board member Verdia Haywood, and Michael Waddell, CEO of INTEGRITYOne

The Verdia Haywood Incentive Fund was established by LifeCircle Alliances in 2009, when Harriet and Jerry Hopkins of Oakton provided the incentive funds for the agency to found the Verdia Haywood Incentive Fund in honor of Haywood's service to long term care. Haywood, the former Fairfax Deputy County Executive for Human Services, requested that gifts in recognition of his retirement be designated LifeCircle Alliances to continue the support of programs and services he has championed for thirty years.

To learn more about LifeCircle Alliances and their programs for



Picture above (from left) includes representatives of the four chosen recipients: Nancy Dezan, Executive Director, Alzheimer's Family Day Center and Chair of the Dementia Subcommittee of Fairfax County's Long Term Care Coordinating Council; Michele Scott, Executive Director, Shepherd Center of Oakton-Vienna; Verdia L. Haywood, LifeCircle Alliances Board member and founder of the Verdia Haywood Incentive Fund grant program; Marilen King, Executive Director, Chesterbrook Residences; Irma Gennaro, Marketing & Development Manager, LifeCircle Alliances and Dr. Deborah Fisher, Deputy Director, Jewish Foundation for Group Homes. Not pictured Michael Waddell, INTEGRITYOne Partners of Reston.

adults (18+) with disabilities, older adults and caregivers, contact Christine Hyland, Executive Director, 571-321-2018 chyland@lifecirclealliances.org or visit their website at www.lifecirclealliances.org.

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SCHOOLS



Kilmer Team Wins 2nd Place Overall in Science Olympiad Regional Competition

On Saturday, Feb. 26, Kilmer Middle School competed with 22 schools in Division B (grades 6-9) Science Olympiad Regional Competition. Kilmer was represented by three teams of 45 students from 7th and 8th grade. After a long day of competition in 22 various science events, Kilmer teams were placed 2nd, 6th and 7th in the competition and won 62 medals. Kilmer Saturn Team won 2nd Place Overall Trophy. Kilmer Saturn team consists of 15 students: Pranav Balan, Edi Danalache, Sean Foley, Alexis Gillmore, Peter, Kim, Cory Kim, Jaisohn Kim, Chris Liu, Alex Nelson, David Noursi, Ramya Radhakrishnan, Vikram Sardana, Nathaniel Taylor, Sasha Trubetskoy, and Nate Vollbrecht. The team was coached by Samia Noursi.

SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

Marshall Academy students participated in career experience activities at the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), a civilian agency that supports over 190 schools throughout the world, at DoDEA's offices in Arlington. Marshall Academy is one of six high school academies in Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). DoDEA's chief information officer, Jeffrey Friedler, will speak via video teleconference from Europe. Students will learn about DoDEA's information technology operations and will participate in a cyber protect exercise followed by a one-on-one job shadow experience with an IT professional.

The Oakton Elementary PTA will hold a fun-filled adult only evening, Casino Royale Evening and Silent Auction Fundraiser, on Friday, April 8, at Hidden Creek Country Club in Reston, 8 p.m. — 12 a.m. Register today at OESPTA Casino Royale Evening. The cost is \$85/person, it includes: Entrance; 2 Cocktails (open cash bar also available); Heavy appetizers, passed and stations; Casino Chips; Dancing with a D.J.; Silent Auction with over 70 items ranging in retail value from \$30-\$7000; Starting bids as low as \$5. Maximum capacity 200 people.

Oakton residents **Lourdes South, Sofia Lang, Jocelyn Lewis, Karen Strat and Stephanie Brownley** have been named to the fall 2010 dean's list at the University of Mary Washington of Fredricksburg, Va.

Jackson DeWeese of Vienna has been named to the fall 2010 dean's list at Worcester Polytechnic Institute of Worcester, Mass. DeWeese is a sophomore majoring in mathematical sciences.

Oakton residents **Courtney Sparrell**, a junior majoring in chemical engineering, and **Andrew Feeney**,

a sophomore majoring in computer science, have been named to the fall 2010 dean's list at Worcester Polytechnic Institute of Worcester, Mass.

Eric Noll of Vienna has been named to the fall 2010 dean's honor list at Gettysburg College of Gettysburg, Pa.

Oakton High senior **William Dale** won the Poetry Out Loud regional contest at the Signature Theater in Arlington. He competed against 14 students from Alexandria City and Arlington and Fairfax Counties. He advances to state competition on March 17 in Richmond, where regional winners will recite three poems. Oakton High student **Leah Shamlian's** poem "Masterpieces of Emily Dickinson," is a national winner in the 13th annual National High School Poetry contest, and advances to a scholarship contest. Poetry Out Loud is sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation, and the National High School Poetry Contest is sponsored by the Live Poets Society of New Jersey.

Jade Zaharoff of Vienna was awarded all academic honors by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association. Zaharoff is a graduate of Madison High School and a junior at Christopher Newport University.

Allison Pepper of Vienna has been named to the fall 2010 dean's list in Villanova University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Villanova, Pa.

Caitlin Klimavicz of Vienna has been chosen to be a part of "Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges" for the 2010-2011 academic year. Klimavicz is a senior majoring in instrumental music performance at Millikin University of Decatur, Ill.

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BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

Elisabeth Schuler Russell spent 22 years as an American Foreign Service officer, but, it was the life-threatening illness of her toddler that drew out her true calling.

Not long after returning to the United States from a tour of duty in Nicaragua, 25-month-old Claire Russell suddenly developed severe motor problems. The child's pediatrician, who saw Claire the morning after the symptoms manifested themselves, had the little girl undergo a CT scan. What the scan showed being the darkest period in Russell's life. Claire was diagnosed with a tumor embedded in her brain stem.

"We had no experience on which to draw," said Russell as she sits in her home office in Vienna. "We had always been healthy. There was nothing to prepare us for being thrown into this cancer universe with no lifeline. I realized I had to get really smart really fast."

The Russells, having just moved to Vienna from Nicaragua, didn't even know where Inova Fairfax Hospital was, let alone the "who" of specialists.

FROM HER EMBASSY DAYS, Russell was programmed to get up to speed quickly. She learned to "speak the language of the disease" to confidently research it and speak with doctors about Claire's condition.

Russell has much to smile about now, to be thankful for, but it wasn't that way when Claire was struck with the brain stem cancer. As Russell sat in her office, she detailed the journey from nightmare to joy and the path that led her to help other patients and their families in the turmoil of medical crises.

As Russell takes time to share her story, Claire, now 14, and her father are out at an animal adoption event, volunteering. Her son is downstairs. It's a long way from the

helplessness of October 1998.

Her daughter's diagnosis was grim, six months to live. Russell did what her State Department career had demanded of her. She gathered her skills – organization, research, communication – and applied them to saving her daughter's life.

"She was really sick when she was diagnosed," said Russell. "We did not have much time to explore options." Treatment, with six weeks of daily weekday radiation, and steroids to control the symptoms, was begun within a week of diagnosis.

Navigating the healthcare system, from doctors and hospitals to familiarity with the language of oncology, intruded on the attention Russell and her husband wanted to devote to two year-old Claire, and the Russells' four and half year-old son Alex.

"In my case, getting thrown into that meant leaving no stone unturned," said Russell. "That was my coping mechanism, to learn everything I could to be Claire's advocate." When Claire Russell was diagnosed with her brain stem tumor, the only medical advocates in the industry were associated with hospitals and clinics. It was up to the Russells to navigate their way through the healthcare system.

Over six months, Claire's tumor grew and then shrunk. In May 1999 the family got news that made them euphoric. The tumor was shrinking. The Russells celebrated their good fortune with friends at Anita's Restaurant.

DURING THE COURSE of Claire's treatment, physical therapy and recovery, Russell's colleagues in the Foreign Service in Washington came through to help her maintain her job there. Together, they donated close to 2,000 hours of personal leave to Russell. "Thanks to them, I was able to stay home and be with her," Russell said.

When Claire reached cancer's five-year survival mark, Russell felt there was something else she needed to be doing with her life.



Elisabeth Schuler Russell with daughter Claire.

During the time the family was contending with Claire's condition, other people turned to Russell for guidance and direction, and Russell helped out whenever she could.

"The whole thing for me has been the spiritual journey," she said. Most patients with Claire's disease died. Claire's survival was a miracle, the greatest blessing. Talking with her pastor about her gratitude, Russell asked him, "how can I possibly thank God for this?" His response lifted a load off her shoulder, she said. "He told me, 'you help other people going through the same thing.'"

"Okay, I thought, I'm starting to understand what this is all about," said Russell.

Not long after, Russell was out walking with a State Department colleague. She explained to him what she wanted to do, to help people navigate through the system. Patient Navigator was founded in October 2004.

Along with Deborah Harvey, a contract colleague, Russell operates Patient Navigator, a multi-faceted patient advocacy and patient consulting business. What Patient Navigator does is assume the research and administrative components of a client's medical journey. Russell and Harvey developed a

network of resources since the business was founded. They identify the top doctors in their fields and set up appointments. They gather a patient's medical background to present to new physicians. When need be, they work with social service agencies and private nonprofits around the country to provide services to patients.

In the six-and-a-half years that Patient Navigator has been in business, the company has gone from being one-of-a-kind to what business journals call an emerging industry, a "hot" career. Most of Patient Navigator's clients come from outside the D.C. area, finding the company through Internet search engines. From a woman in New Mexico to a neighbor in Vienna, Russell and Harvey have helped patients and their families find doctors, arrange patient transportation and home meal delivery and offer educational resources through their website. In some cases, Patient Navigator asks medical specialists to validate a diagnosis and treatment plan previously given to a patient.

Linda Gaus of Vienna turned to Patient Navigator when Gaus' father was diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma of the tongue three and a half years ago in



Elisabeth Schuler Russell

Williamsburg. Gaus wanted to be confident that her father's diagnosis was accurate and the treatment appropriate to the disease. His doctors in Williamsburg proposed partial removal of the tongue and the removal of the neck's lymph nodes. When Gaus communicated with Patient Navigator, Harvey immediately contacted a Fairfax specialist whose office set up an appointment with Gaus' father the next day. The diagnosis and treatment was validated. Gaus was pleased with Patient Navigator's help.

"My main concern was to make sure he was getting the appropriate care, getting what he needed," said Gaus. "Part of healthcare is knowing the right people with the right contacts. If I had called the doctor here myself, I would have been offered an appointments six months out."

"What we got was the security of knowing you have access to the best doctors and hospitals," Gaus said.

Free Tax Assistance at Suntrust Bank

Trained and Certified Community Volunteers prepare Basic Tax Returns free of charge for seniors and moderate income taxpayers, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., Monday-Friday from Feb. 1-April 18, at Suntrust Bank, 515 Maple Avenue, Vienna, Third Floor Community Room.

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WEEK IN VIENNA

School Board to Review Discipline Topics

The Fairfax County School Board agreed at its Feb. 24 work session to review topics related to student discipline procedures. This review could produce changes to the Student Responsibilities and Rights regulation and handbook.

"We believe that in order to ensure a thorough review, the Board needs sufficient time to explore our discipline policies and procedures," said Kathy Smith, chairman of the Fairfax County School Board. "We will schedule work sessions over the next three months to examine our values on student discipline and possibly recommend changes to the process."

Meetings will be announced on the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) website at www.fcps.edu.



McLean Community Center
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Here's What's Happening at MCC

The Philadelphia International Flower Show Springtime in Paris Monday, March 7

What could be better than springtime in Paris? The 2011 Philadelphia International Flower Show is the answer. Visitors will be treated to walks along the Seine, the Tuileries gardens, a glimpse of the Eiffel Tower, artists' canvases, floral courtyard cafes and even a peek at the daring Moulin Rouge.

Storybook Festival Saturday, March 12 11 a.m.-2 p.m. \$5 per person; children age 2 and younger are free

Come enjoy entertainment, craft projects, books, book-related materials, refreshments and more!

Sunday Soireé In the Groove Sunday, March 13 3-5 p.m.

Dance or just listen to the music of The Wayne Tympanick Trio. It's the perfect way to spend a Sunday afternoon.



Rockin' into Spring Friday, March 18 8-11 p.m.

Advance tickets: \$20/\$10 district residents

Join us for a rockin' and rollin' evening of dancing to the "oldies but goodies." Live music will be provided by The Fabulous Hubcaps.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Send announcements to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 2

"Jamnesty" Concert. 6 p.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. Featuring student musicians and artwork. Tickets \$3-\$5. Proceeds will help fund Madison's Amnesty International Club activities. soccerdolphinsgirl@yahoo.com.

Ian Axel and Sub-Radio Standard. 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Scottish Singer/songwriter Al Stewart. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. \$22. www.wolftrap.org.

THURSDAY/MARCH 3

Peter Shaffer's "Equus." 8 p.m. George Mason University TheaterSpace, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A psychosexual crime drama about a disturbed 17-year-old. This production contains explicit scenes and nudity. \$12 adults, \$8 students, seniors and groups. Charge at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

Tracy Bonham, Jim Boggia and Bleu. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Leon Redbone. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. \$25. www.wolftrap.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 4

Atomic Tom and Hotspur at 7 p.m., **Atomic Tom and Andy Zipf** at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Comedian Josh Blue. 8 p.m. 1st Stage Theater, 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean. No one under 18 years old admitted. Mature subject matter, explicit language. \$25-\$35. 703-854-1856 or www.1ststage.com.

Peter Shaffer's "Equus." 8 p.m. George Mason University TheaterSpace, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A psychosexual crime drama about a disturbed 17-year-old. This production contains explicit scenes and nudity. \$12 adults, \$8 students, seniors and groups. Charge at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

MPA Art Appetizers. 7 p.m. McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. "Beyond the Pale" featuring the works of Amber Robles-Gordon, Huguette Roe, Suzanna Fields, Gina Denton, and Joseph Barbaccia; "Shiny New Tomorrow: Work by Bill Gusky" and "Of a Piece: Paintings by Deborah Addson Coburn." \$20. Reserve at info@mpaart.org.

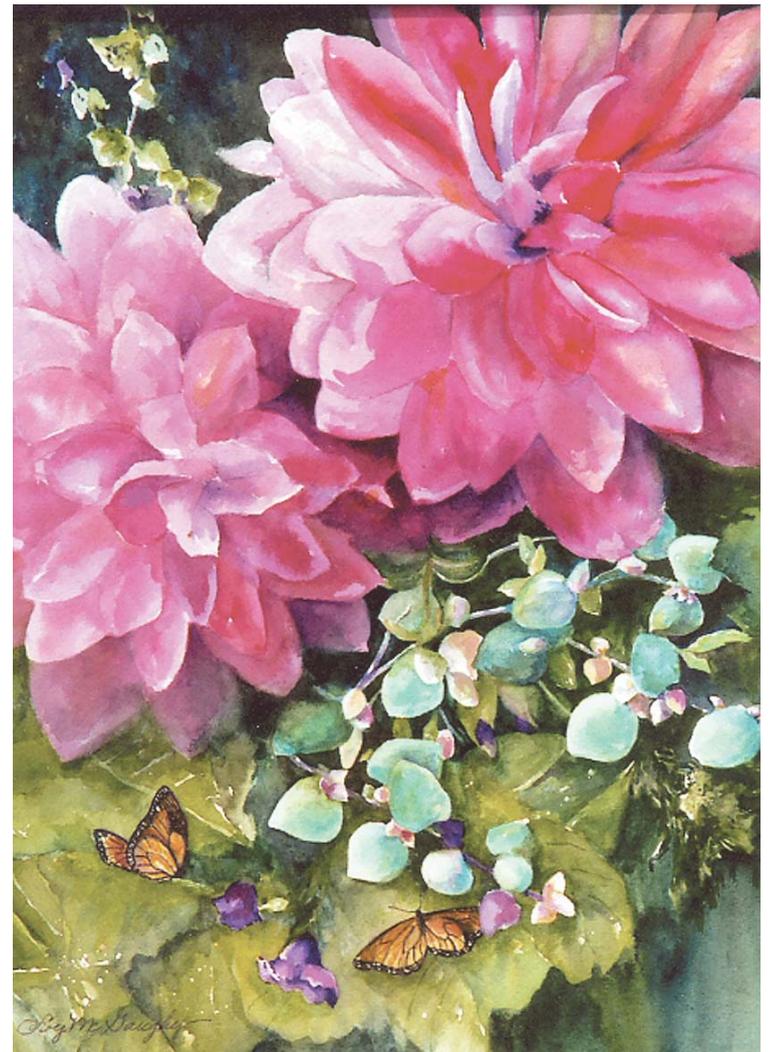
Discovery Series: Wind Quintet Imani Winds. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. \$35. www.wolftrap.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 5

Bobby Long and Kaleb Griffin Band at 7 p.m., **Native, Caspian and Chiaroscuro** at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Comedian Josh Blue. 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. 1st Stage Theater, 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean. No one under 18 years old admitted. Mature subject matter, explicit language. \$25-\$35. 703-854-1856 or www.1ststage.com.

Aesop's Fables and Other Tales: A Family Concert. 4 p.m. Vienna Baptist Church, 541 Marshall Road S.W., Vienna. Stories in song about



"Think Spring!" is an all-member show of original art at the Vienna Art Society's Gallery in the Village Green, 513 Maple Ave. W, Vienna, through March 26. 703-319-3971 or www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

the Tortoise and the Hare, the North Wind and the Sun, the Forest of Loo, the Kookaburra and more. \$20 adults, \$15 seniors and students, \$35 family. Tickets available at the door or www.viennachoralsociety.org.

Tango Buenos Aires: "Fire and Passion of Tango." 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Dancers, vocalists and instrumentalists trace the history of the Argentine Tango. Tickets are \$23-\$46 at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

Peter Shaffer's "Equus." 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. George Mason University TheaterSpace, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A psychosexual crime drama about a disturbed 17-year-old. This production contains explicit scenes and nudity. \$12 adults, \$8 students, seniors and groups. Charge at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

25th Annual Jazz & Tap Dance Festival. 8 p.m. Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus Theatre, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Rasta Thomas, director of the Bad Boys of Dance, with Capitol Movement, Center Stage Dance, Encore Performers, Impulse, MetroTap, MYTE, Urban Impact, and FootWORX. \$18 in advance, \$20 at the door. www.dance-festival.org.

Pianist John Eaton: The Fabulous '40s. 7:30 p.m. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. \$25. www.wolftrap.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 6

That 1 Guy. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

Robin Bullock. 4 p.m., 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Celtic

bouzouki, mandolin and fiddle. \$15. 703-759-3309 or www.ionamusic.com/brogue.shtml.

Tango Buenos Aires: "Fire and Passion of Tango." 4 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Dancers, vocalists and instrumentalists trace the history of the Argentine Tango. Tickets are \$23-\$46 at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

Spring Wild Flowers of the Potomac Valley Collection. 2 p.m. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Walk through Meadowlark's native plant collection. Free. Reserve at 703-255-3631.

Peter Shaffer's "Equus." 2 p.m. George Mason University TheaterSpace, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A psychosexual crime drama about a disturbed 17-year-old. This production contains explicit scenes and nudity. \$12 adults, \$8 students, seniors and groups. Charge at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

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Vienna Art Society's "Tea and See." 1-3 p.m. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Preview original artworks donated for the fifth annual Ticket to Art raffle, coming on March 19. Meet the artists while enjoying light refreshments and a performance by

SEE ENTERTAINMENT. PAGE 13

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 12

the Harmonia School of music and Art.
Free. 703-319-3971 or
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MONDAY/MARCH 7

Chase Coy, Jimmy Robbins and School Boy Humor. 7:30 p.m.
Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E.,
Vienna. jamminjava.com.

TUESDAY/MARCH 8

Escaping Detection: Civil War Women Spies and Women who Fought as Soldiers. 7 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Historian Mary Lipsey will discuss women who passed on information about the enemy or posed as men to fight. Sponsored by the Vienna Branch of American Association of University Women. Free, public invited. 703-321-7499.

Along Those Lines Mardi Gras Spectacular with Static Cinema, Kurtis Parks Band, Big Paper Airplanes and Playground Etiquette. 6:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 9

California Guitar Trio 20th Anniversary Tour. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. Wolftrap.org.

Tony Lucca, Jerad Finck and Brad Rhodes of Melodime. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.



Tango Buenos Aires: "Fire and Passion of Tango" will be performed on March 5 at 8 p.m. and March 6 at 4 p.m., at George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Dancers, vocalists and instrumentalists trace the history of the Argentine Tango, an integral part of the Argentine culture, born in the dance halls and brothels in the late 19th century. Tickets are \$23-\$46 at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.



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Oakton Girls' Fall to Spartans at Region Semifinals

First basketball loss of the season prevents Cougars from qualifying for states.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

A return trip to the Virginia State AAA playoffs fell just short for the Oakton High girls' basketball team, which experienced its first and only loss - a season-ending 66-51 setback at the hands of West Springfield High last Friday night, Feb. 25. The Northern Region semifinals playoff contest took place at Robinson Secondary.

West Springfield (27-1), with the win, earned a trip to Monday night's championship game earlier this week versus Patriot District rival T.C. Williams on Feb. 28. There, coach Bill Gibson's Spartans' squad garnered the region championship by defeating the Titans 46-41.

Both the Spartans and T.C. Williams will represent the Northern Region at the upcoming, eight-team state tournament.

Oakton, meanwhile, with the loss to West Springfield, saw its season end with a 25-1 record. The Cougars, coached by Fred Priester, had won the past two region titles - including a finals victory over the Spartans last year.

West Springfield, in Friday's semifinals win over Oakton, built a 17-7 lead after one quarter and held a 24-7 lead at one point in the second quarter. The Spartans were still well in control after three quarters with a 41-28 lead.

Oakton's backcourt duo of Caroline Coyer and Zora Stephenson both scored 16 points in the loss, while Danielle Davis contributed eight points. Junior guard Katherine Coyer, who had missed Oakton's prior two region tournament games with an ankle injury, came off the bench to score five points, and Elizabeth Manner, the Cougars' talented inside player, put up four points.

The Spartans, meanwhile, received outstanding scoring balance as five players ended up in double-digit point totals. Logan Battle, a junior forward, led West Springfield with 17 points. Junior guard Jordan Miller was the team's next leading scorer with 16 points, while freshman forward



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUZEL/THE CONNECTION



Fred Priester, shown here talking to his Oakton team during its playoff game versus West Springfield, saw the Cougars go a remarkable 25-1 this season.

Oakton's Katherine Coyer (10) positions herself for a possible rebound during the Cougars' region semifinals game against West Springfield last Friday at Robinson.

Amy Berglund, junior guard April Robinson, and senior forward Nora Osei scored 12, 11, and 10 points, respectively.

OAKTON won the Concorde District tournament title game two weeks ago on Feb. 18 with a 47-33 victory over Robinson. The Cougars then moved on to the 16-team region tournament where they won a first round game over visiting Annandale, 66-38, on Feb. 21. That set up a quarterfinals round meeting versus Vienna-area rival Madison High. In the game played at Oakton on Feb. 23, the home team Cougars defeated the Warhawks, 55-45. The two teams had also played one another earlier in the season on Dec. 17, a game won by Oakton, 57-56, on Madison's home floor.

The more recent region playoff win by Oakton over Madison advanced the Cougars to the semifinals meeting versus West Springfield. For Madison, the round two region playoff loss to Oakton ended its season at 16-9.

Madison, under coach Kirsten

Roberts, had entered the region tournament following a title game loss to Stone Bridge in the finals of the Liberty District tournament on Feb. 18. It was a tough setback for the Warhawks, who had captured the district crown in each of the past few years.

Madison, however, came back strong with a 51-41 home win over Yorktown in a first round region tournament game on Feb. 21 to set up its quarterfinals round meeting with the Cougars.

IN REGION BOYS' tournament action, Annandale High turned out to be the surprise team of the season. The unheralded Atoms, runner-up at the recent Patriot District tournament, defeated Langley High, 53-47, in a region semifinals contest last Saturday afternoon at Robinson. The victory moved the Atoms on to Monday night's region finals where they lost to T.C. Williams. Nevertheless, Annandale, by reaching the championship game, automatically qualified for the upcoming eight-team state tournament.

Annandale (20-8) earlier this postseason had reached the Patriot District tournament finals with wins over West Potomac and Lake Braddock before losing to T.C. Williams, 69-56, in the title game. Then, at regionals, the Atoms edged a talented Westfield High squad, 73-71, in the first round before winning at National District champion Mount Vernon, 70-51, to set up the meeting with the Saxons. Annandale was led in its semifinals win over Langley by Karl Ziegler (15 points), D'Angelo Boyce (13) and Melvin Robinson (11 points, 11 rebounds).

The Saxons, with the setback to the Atoms, saw their season end with a record of 20-8 and one region playoff victory short of reaching the region title game and qualifying for the Virginia State AAA playoffs for the third time in four years.

"It's really disappointing," said Langley junior guard Austin Vasiliadis, of the season-ending loss to Annandale. "We know we have one of the best teams in the region and wanted to get back into the finals and go to states again. We were all confident [going into the game]. We knew Annandale was a good team."

Langley, under the direction of veteran head coach Trevor Hess, lost just one district game this entire season - an upset defeat at the hands of re-building Madison near the end of the regular season. At the district tournament, the No. 1 seeded Saxons reached the finals with victories over Marshall and Fairfax before defeating South Lakes for another district crown.

That gave Langley high hopes of making another great run at the 16-team region tournament. Last year, the Saxons won three straight region tournament games to reach the finals meeting against Chantilly.

This year's region tournament for the Saxons began with a dominating 63-30 home win over Washington-Lee, an Arlington school and member of the National District, on Feb. 21. Three Saxon players had big scoring games that night - junior guard Daniel Dixon with 17 points, senior guard David Adams with 11 and senior guard Jeff Cochran with 10. Braden Anderson, a senior guard who this past autumn, as one of the region's top football quarterbacks, led the Saxons to a fine season on the gridiron, chipped in with eight points as well.

The victory over the Generals put Langley into the region quarterfinals and a meeting versus Lake Braddock, a member of the Patriot District and a team under the guidance of one of the finest head coaches around in Brian Metress. The Saxons trailed the always-tough Bruins by 16 points in the first half before rallying for an incredible 58-56 win at home. A late basket by senior center Brenden Dwyer with 40 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter put Langley ahead for good and sent the Saxons into the semis and the meeting with Annandale, this year's surprise team from the Patriot District.

In the win over Lake Braddock, Dwyer led the Saxons with 13 points and Adams scored 12. Other good scoring contributions came from Cochran (9), Dixon (8) and Vasiliadis (7). Langley, which trailed at halftime 38-25, outscored the Bruins 33-18 in the second half for the win.

"It was really exciting," said Dixon, of the incredible, come-from-behind win. "At halftime we didn't really feel we would lose - even though we were down by 13. We regrouped and came out fired up. Our [home] fans were really big that game."

Swimming for a Cause

PVI Splash-A-Thon raises funds for accessible waterpark.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Joey Pizzano was the third of Robert and Paola Pizzano's eight children. He and two of his brothers had intellectual disabilities, making it difficult for this Vienna family to go on outings together.

"So we got a place on Virginia's Northern Neck, on the Chesapeake Bay, where we could have family time and the kids could have fun on the water," said Robert Pizzano. "But in 1998, when Joey was 6 years old, unfortunately, a gate was left open and he got out. We searched for 20 hours – 250 people came and helped – but he'd fallen in the river and drowned."

The Pizzanos then started a fund in Joey's honor to help other families with special-needs children. And in 2001, the Joey Pizzano Memorial Fund (JPMF) formed a public-private partnership with Fairfax County to promote water safety for the special-needs community.

Running throughout the year, the JPMF Splash Program teaches five, basic, water-safety rules. Under an instructor, children are paired up with volunteers who help them learn water skills and swimming safety.

"We do 1,500 sessions a year in Fairfax County," said Robert Pizzano. "My wife, who's a former lifeguard, developed this program with others and it caught on. We now do it in seven different Fairfax County Rec Centers."

"Work is also proceeding on Our Special Harbor Sprayground – the county's first and only fully accessible waterpark – at the Lee District Rec Center. "We wanted to bring the joy we had during our special family time on the Chesapeake to other families," explained Pizzano. "And that's the dream behind Our Special Harbor."

The waterpark is now 70 percent completed and is slated to open on Memorial Day. The Pizzanos are just halfway to their \$1 million fund-raising goal to make it a reality, so Splash-A-Thons held by various swim teams are critically important.

The Paul VI Swim and Dive team recently held such an event at the Oak Marr Rec Center. Students either solicited donations or received pledges for the number of laps they swam during an hour. The school has an Options Program for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities, and the swimmers are their mentors, so their special-needs buddies came and cheered them on.

A few also expressed their feelings about the new, accessible spraypark. "I like the fact that they have a pool for special-needs people, and I feel very welcome to go to it," said junior Becca McKenna. "Sometimes, at the other pools, people aren't very nice to you, at all. They aren't respectful or don't talk to you." And she likes to swim because "it helps me form muscles and gives me exercise."

Senior Evan Patchett also enjoys swimming. "I go



PHOTO BY DEB COBB/THE CONNECTION

Robert Pizzano Jr., president of the Joey Pizzano Memorial Foundation, shows a drawing of the Special Harbor Sprayground that the Paul VI Splash-a-Thon is helping to fund.

to three or four different pools during the summer," he said. "I can go underwater and swim like a fish." As for Our Special Harbor, he said, "It's going to be awesome – there'll be water slides, fountains and spray areas."

Also excited about it is senior Sean Cross. "Both of my sisters were on swim teams," he said. "And I like to play in the water and swim."

Organizing PVI's Splash-a-Thon was junior Sarah Plombon, who said 52 students participated. "We don't have a fund-raising goal; we just want to raise as much money as we can," she said. "We'll be collecting through Feb. 28."

"I feel that PVI has a great connection with the Options students, and this is another way to help them and raise awareness of the school," added Plombon. "I did 110 laps today, and it makes me feel great. I'm swimming for a cause now – not just to improve my time."

Swim team member Megan O'Keefe, a sophomore, mainly does the 100-meter butterfly and expected to raise \$200 for her efforts in the event. "I was really excited," she said. "I got a good workout and got to help other kids in the community. It's good to know you can help just by swimming around."

Swimmer Greg Brainard, a freshman, swam 25 laps and hoped to raise \$100. He was glad to do it because "we're helping out those who need it."

Similarly, sophomore Kyle Weitendorf, a freestyler, logged 54 laps, fueled by flat donations from his parents and grandparents. Said Weitendorf: "I like to help the special-needs students as much as I can."

Pizzano was also at Oak Marr, watching them, and it meant a great deal to him to see young people helping his dream come true. He said it's important to provide outlets for people with special-needs and places where they can share happy times with their friends and families.

Once the park is completed, he'll turn it over to the county Park Authority, which will maintain and operate it, free of charge, to the users. The wheelchair-friendly, zero-depth sprayground will include a beach area, two-masted schooner, skipjack, crab boat, water tables, spray areas and Chessie the Sea Serpent.

For more information, see www.jpmpf.org. To contribute to the fund-raising, go to www.jpmpf.org/donate.html and put "Our Special Harbor" in the description.

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Fasting in Solidarity with Hungry

FROM PAGE 3

order for Good Shepherd. Once the sandwiches were made and packaged, Ulmer delivered them to Food for Others. The participants were tasked with shopping for ingredients for the meal that would end their fast. To feed the group of 15, the volunteers had a budget of \$25. "We want to get them thinking about what's nutritious," said Ulmer. "They've got to come up with a nutritious meal for 15 on \$25."

THE VOLUNTEER FASTERS ranged from elementary school to high school. Adults volunteered to fast and prepare the sandwiches, as well. To the kids, some of whom were repeat participants, the fast was an eye-opener to the plight of the hungry.

"This is a good cause, a new experience for me," said 14-year-old Julia Cogdell of Oakton.

Julia said the experience is teaching her that there are so many people who do not have the "average" things she has each day.

"It really makes me grateful for what I have," she said.

Fenja Ziel, a 16-year-old exchange student from Hamburg, Germany, is active in the Church of the Good Shepherd, the church her host family – the Whaleys of Reston – attends. Fenja belongs to the church's youth group and wanted to extend herself to the fast.

"I think it's a very good program because it helps other children while we experience something similar [going hungry] at the same time," said Fenja. The

South Lakes High School junior said she was not surprised there were people going hungry in Fairfax County despite the County's affluence. "Every place has people who aren't as fortunate," she said.

"I'm learning to appreciate food more and learning not to waste it."

The youths started fasting at noon on Friday and ended on Saturday at 6 p.m. with a worship service and communion. After the service, the participants broke their fast with the meal they planned earlier while shopping for groceries.

Throughout the fast, the children were invited to take a juice break whenever they wanted it.

THE YOUNG PARTICIPANTS are collecting money and being sponsored by their neighbors, their families and church members. The youth knocked on doors, made phone calls and spoke with people after church services. By Feb. 26, they had raised almost \$3,000 dollars.

"Every day, 24,000 children around the world die of hunger and of preventable disease," said Good Shepherd famine volunteer Connie Whaley, Fenja Ziel's host mother. "We are bringing attention to this tragedy."

An hour and 15 minutes after sandwich production began, a youngster carrying a tray of sandwiches called out, "600."

Everyone cheered.

To learn more about the annual 30-Hour Famine and World Vision programs, go to www.30hourfamine.org or www.worldvision.org

Nutrition Program at Whole Foods

FROM PAGE 3

make for a healthy, nutrition-dense meal. Her demonstration was interactive.

Before demonstrating preparation of the pasta salad, Alcorn solicited the favorite food of each child. Chocolate, cheese, fruit and chicken came out on top.

"Who can give me an example of a grain?" she asked the children seated along two sides of a long table. They played along ... bread, cereal, they answered.

For each ingredient addition, Alcorn explained what the ingredient supplied, from tri-colored whole wheat fusilli to a variety of chopped vegetables and cheese. Alcorn scooped, the children stirred and tasted.

From chopped heirloom tomatoes to black beans, hearts of palm and the requisite fat – avocado oil – Alcorn explained the importance of each in a person's healthy meal plan. The most popular ingredients came at the end of the program, sea salt and pepper. The children loved turning the grinders for each seasoning. The salt

was coarse and pink and every child wanted to try turning the grinder holding it.

"I like the pepper and tomatoes," said Collin Frederick. "And the sea salt."

When asked what she thought of the vegetable and bean pasta salad, Sarah Kersten, half of almost 7-year-old twins, answered with wide-eyed enthusiasm, "I love it." Sarah and her twin sister Lily liked coming to the nutrition program. They agreed it was fun. Not bad for a child whose favorite cooking event includes making cookies and cupcakes. "I like the frosting."

After they had sampled their salads, the children covered their boxes securely to take home, chatting with their parents and describing their finished products. Collin, the oldest child in the group, said he would come again to another Whole Foods program.

"They like to taste-test everything, and there's all those treats to try," Gretchen Frederick said.

—DONNA MANZ

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HOME SALES

In January 2011, 40 homes sold between \$2,185,000-\$202,000 in the Vienna and Oakton area. This week's list represents those homes sold in the \$457,000-\$202,000 range. For the complete list, visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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8408 IDYLWOOD RD	3	2	0	VIENNA	\$438,000	Detached	0.35	WEDDERBURN HEIGHTS	
504 MOOREFIELD RD SW	3	2	0	VIENNA	\$430,000	Detached	0.39	MOOREFIELD	
12132 WAPLES MILL RD	3	2	1	OAKTON	\$410,000	Detached	0.49	PEN ACRES	
9802 BRIGHTLEA DR	4	2	1	VIENNA	\$410,000	Detached	0.20	EDGELEA WOODS	
9644 MASTERWORKS DR	3	2	2	VIENNA	\$401,000	Townhouse	0.04	COUNTRY CREEK	
2827 GROVEMORE LN	3	3	1	VIENNA	\$380,000	Townhouse	0.03	DUNN LORING VILLAGE	
10321 BUSHMAN DR	3	3	1	OAKTON	\$375,000	Townhouse	0.03	EVERGREEN SQUARE	
9486 VIRGINIA CTR BLVD#417	2	2	0	VIENNA	\$345,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		MARQUIS AT VIENNA STATN	
9486 VIRGINIA CTR BLVD#419	2	2	0	VIENNA	\$330,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		MARQUIS AT VIENNA STATN	
2726 GALLOWES RD #1316	2	2	0	VIENNA	\$323,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		WILTON HOUSE	
2996 BERGE ST	3	2	2	OAKTON	\$310,000	Townhouse	0.04	CHERRYWOOD SQUARE	
8659 DELLWAY LN	3	3	1	VIENNA	\$300,000	Townhouse	0.05	DUNN LORING VILLAGE	
9943 LONGFORD CT	3	3	1	VIENNA	\$275,100	Townhouse	0.03	WATERFORD	
3030 SUGAR LN	3	3	1	VIENNA	\$270,000	Townhouse	0.03	CYRANDALL VALLEY NORTH	
3049D TREVOR HOUSE DR#108	2	2	0	OAKTON	\$255,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		TREVOR HOUSE	
10208B ASHBROOKE CT #18	2	1	0	OAKTON	\$230,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		TREVOR HOUSE	
3053A TREVOR HOUSE DR#93	2	1	0	OAKTON	\$224,900	Garden 1-4 Floors		TREVOR HOUSE	
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2765 CENTERBORO DR #247	1	1	0	VIENNA	\$209,900	Garden 1-4 Floors		MARQUIS AT VIENNA STATN	
2765 CENTERBORO DR #251	1	1	0	VIENNA	\$202,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		MARQUIS AT VIENNA STATN	

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REAL ESTATE

To have real estate information listed in the Connection, send to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

Bruce Green, regional vice president of Weichert, Realtors, announced the 2010 Weichert's President's Club Winners from the region. This award recognizes the top one percent of Weichert's sales associates. The region consists of offices throughout Virginia. The associates named to the President's Club include:

Carol Ellickson, Christine Richardson and Dianne Van Volkenburg - Great Falls office; H. Lee Cronin, Jenifer Justice, Ann Romer and Ashton Vessali - McLean/Dolley Madison office; Patricia Derwinski and Kim Sharifi - McLean/Old Dominion office; Brenda Davis and Alexander Lianos - Vienna office.

Weichert has nearly 18,000 sales associates in approximately 500 company-owned and franchised sales offices in key markets throughout the U.S. A family of full-service real estate and financial services companies, Weichert helps customers buy and sell both residential and commercial real estate, and streamlines the delivery of mortgages and home and title insurance. For more information, Weichert's customer service center can be reached at 1-800-USA-SOLD or at Weichert's Web site, www.weichert.com. Each Weichert franchised office is independently owned and operated.

Regional vice president Bruce Green recently announced the 2010 Weichert, Realtors Ambassador's Club winners from the region. These top producers are recognized in the top 2 percent of all Weichert, Realtors associates. Green's region consists of offices throughout Virginia.

The associates who earned membership to the Ambassador's Club include:

FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

Epiphany United Methodist Church, 1014 Country Club Drive in Vienna, is hosting a Women's Health Issues Series every Sunday morning in March. "Women's Breast Health" will be presented Sunday, March 6 at 9:45 a.m. Free, reservations required at 703-938-3494 or office@epiphanyumc.com.

Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd. in McLean, will have a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday, March 8 from 5-7 p.m. with pancakes, sausage and apple sauce. Cost is \$5 person/\$12 per family. Proceeds benefit Trinity's Mis-

Tatiana Moody, Sepideh Farivar, David M. Swartzbaugh and Lisa Ann Thompson of Weichert McLean/Dolley Madison office; Philip Cefaratti and Joan J. Stokes of Weichert Great Falls; Louise A. Molton, Randy Becker, Erin A. Mendenhall, Priti L. Malhotra, Valerie Gaskins, Charles H. Mayhew, Cindy A. Beline, John Seggerman and Arada Suwande Grantz of Weichert McLean/Old Dominion; Suzanne M. Gaibler and Sloan C. Weisen - Weichert Reston; Claire M. Driscoll and Laura L. Maschler - Weichert McLean Center; and Cindy Dwyer, Marilyn S. Fisher, Nancy E. Kane, Elizabeth A. Petree and Shailaja Raju - Weichert Vienna.

For more information, Weichert's customer service center can be reached at 1-800-USA-SOLD or at Weichert's Web site, www.weichert.com.

Jim Weichert, founder and president of Weichert, Realtors®, has been selected for the Inman News list of the 100 Most Influential Real Estate Leaders for 2010. This year's selection is the fourth consecutive year that Weichert was honored with this distinction. Jim Weichert was recognized in the Brokerage category, which is reserved for company leaders who command the attention of real estate professionals through their words and actions. During his more than 40 years of sales experience, Weichert has led the development of Weichert, Realtors from a single office in 1969 to one of the largest privately held real estate companies in the nation.

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sions. Trinity's Ash Wednesday services will be March 9 at 12 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. 703-356-3312 or www.umtrinity.org.

Antioch Christian Church, 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna, will host an Ash Wednesday worship service on Wednesday, March 9 at 7:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday derives its name from the practice of placing ashes on the forehead as a sign of choosing to go a new Godly direction in life. Open to the public. www.antiochdoc.org or 703-938-6753.

The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road in Vienna, will publish its 12th annual Devotions for Lent and distribute more than 19,000 copies to church neighbors. Printed copies will first be available at the church's March

Brokerage in Vienna has announced its sales associates, and teams who have earned the company's International President's awards. The winners include - Individual Achievements: International President's Elite - Michael Huling and Carol Kalinowski; International President's Circle - Susie Carpenter, Mark Goedde and Dee Murphy; President's Club - Lisa DeCarlo, Kay Graff, Neshia Khargie, Frank Lattanzi and Lori Polley.

Group and Team Achievements: International President's Elite -

The Jurek-Moffett Team, International President's Circle - Alice Chambers and Sharron Jones.

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in McLean has announced its sales associates who have earned the company's International President's awards. The winners include - Individual Achievements: President's Club - Linda Knowles and Sue Jin Song.

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Greater Washington, D.C. has announced that Carol Kalinowski and Susie Carpenter from its Vienna office were recognized as being among NRT's Top 1,000 sales associates nationally in the third quarter of 2010. NRT is the parent company of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage. To put this achievement in perspective, the Top 1,000 NRT sales associates represent the top 2 percent of performers among NRT's 45,000 sales associates across the country. In addition, the Vienna office, led by Branch Vice President Mark Ackermann, was among NRT's top brokerage offices for the quarter. For more information about buying or selling a home in the Greater Washington, D.C. area, contact visit Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage online at www.cbmove.com.

9 Ash Wednesday service at 7:30 p.m. The church also shares the devotions each day (March 9-April 23) by e-mail at www.GoodShepherdVA.com.

Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. in Vienna, presents the 12-week program "Passages," for those experiencing the pain of separation or divorce. The DivorceCare series meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m. Cost of materials \$20, scholarships available. 703-938-9050 or Passages@ViennaPres.org.

Centering Prayer offered at St. Dunstan's, 1830 Kirby Road, McLean, Tuesdays at 7-7:45 p.m. Centering prayer is meditation and contemplative prayer, wordless, trusting, opening of self to the divine presence. Instruction offered. marjorie.cole@gmail.com.

OPEN HOUSES

Saturday & Sunday, March 5 & 6



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When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in this Connection Newspaper. For more real estate listings and open houses visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com, click the Real Estate links on the right side.

Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times.

Vienna

- 2701 Bellforest Ct. #409...\$330,000...Sun. 1-4...Ron Fowler...Weichert...703-691-0555
- 903 Plum St., SW...\$1,274,000...Sun 1-4...The Belt Team...Keller Williams...703-242-3975
- 9627 Podium Dr...\$639,000...Sun 1-4...The Belt Team...Keller Williams...703-242-3975

Reston

- 1956 Barton Hill Rd...\$749,950...Sun. 1-4...Kathleen Quintarelli...Weichert...703-862-8808
- 10816 Oldfield Dr...\$559,900...Sun. 1-4...Stan Goldberg...Weichert...703-941-0100
- 2225 Double Eagle Ct...\$411,995...Sun. 1-4...Steve Spear...Coldwell Banker...703-361-9161

Herndon

- 12404 Shallow Ford Ct...\$449,900...Sun. 1-4...Nancy Kane...Weichert...703-938-6070
- 2556 Chase Wellesley Dr...\$369,000...Sun. 1-4...Debbie Tittle...Weichert...703-821-8300

Great Falls

- 754 Ellsworth Ave...\$1,699,999...Sun 1-4...Dianne Van Volkenburg...Weichert Realty...703-980-4553
- 1078 Mill Field Court...\$1,999,000...Sun 1-4...Jane Price...Weichert...703-628-0470
- 401 River Bend Rd...\$1,425,000...Sun 1-4...Ronnie Lancaster...ZipRealty...703-966-5766

McLean

- 1008 Eaton Dr...\$1,545,000...Sun.1-4...Jane Price...Weichert...703-628-0470

Ashburn

- 21925 Gullane Way...\$549,900...Sun. 1-4...Diana LeFrancois...Century...703-930-6682
- 21925 Gullane Way...\$549,900...Sat. 1-4...Denene Crabbs...Century 21...202-487-4949

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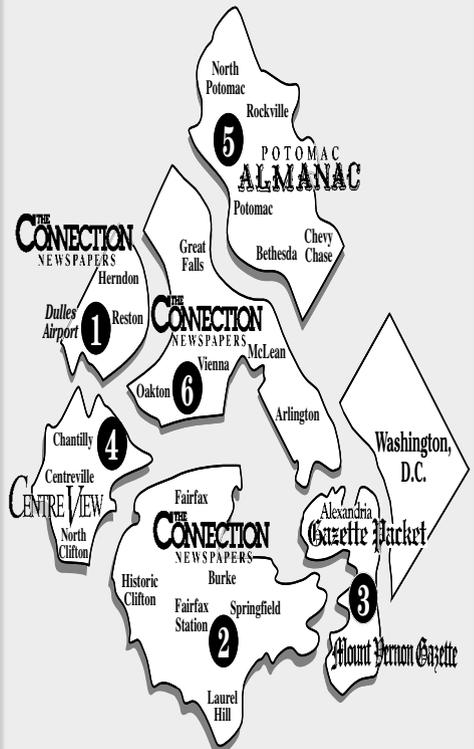
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Make Believe



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

There's a part of me (a bigger part than I would like to admit) that is afraid to be honest with family and friends concerning my cancer and the cancer-related circumstances with which I might be dealing, sooner rather than later. Conflicted doesn't begin to describe that thought process. Do I or don't I, is the short question. The longer answer is what follows in this column.

If, as a cancer patient, I sound good and look good, then people won't react negatively to me - and thereby won't express nearly the level of concern that they would if my manner and appearance were not positive. And if in turn, people are reacting positively to me, then I won't be feeling bad about what I'm hearing. And if I don't feel bad about what I'm hearing, then maybe the cancer won't have reason to assert itself. Moreover, if I refuse to give the cancer its rightful due/level of significance, maybe it won't move and/or grow as per diagnosis-to-date, it hasn't?

However, if my desire/strategy of not involving/not alarming people about certain thoughts/fears I'm experiencing - as sort of a ruse to not elevate cancer's insidious hold on/in me, is merely just an amateurish attempt - by me, at mind over what matters, then maybe I'll be neglecting signs/symptoms that really matter. Ultimately, who am I kidding? Not that any of this is a laughing matter, but I doubt denial is a medically-prescribed and prudent course of treatment. Still, there seems to be a self-preservation instinct in me which prevents me from being honest with myself - and with the people closest to me, in some delusional attempt at hiding the truth behind a mask of normalcy and/or maybe even indifference: if I don't speak of it, don't admit to it, maybe it doesn't really exist/isn't that serious?

In my mind, as soon as I start admitting to having symptoms, then the slippery slope upon which all cancer patients teeter starts pitching forward and downward, hastening an inexorable descent to a premature death. If I don't utter the words or accept what's happening to me, maybe it won't actually happen. Naive? Denial? Wishful thinking? A great attitude? Totally wrong? Whatever works for me? All of it, none of it. Ergo my confusion and "confliction," to quote one of the many made-up words from my deceased father's unique vocabulary. No one told me this cancer trip was going to be easy. In fact, I was told that it was going to be the most difficult thing I've ever done; they weren't lying.

A supposed justification for my awkward sort of behavior; this lack of honesty, fear of some truths/inevitableities, is a meager attempt - by yours truly, at saving myself from myself; any port in a storm. And I'm certainly in the middle of a storm. A storm, the likes of which I've never experienced before. Having experienced it now going on two years, I will admit to one thing: confusion. I never know from one day to the next how I'll feel, what I'll feel; is it the cancer, is it middle age? Am I outliving my diagnosis because of, or in spite of what I'm doing (some non-Western pursuits, in addition to the standard protocols I'm following)? Should I be changing my tactics? Adding something (mega doses of vitamin D, as an example) or stopping something (the eight tablespoons of pureed, canned asparagus I consume every day)? I don't know anything, really. I've been a pretty good listener, though. Pretending however, seems to be working.

The less said, the better - or maybe not?

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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