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**Rajika Mahan provides a last-minute adjustment to daughter Simran Mahan's hair. Simran is a member of the Kings Jesters, an after-school club that started nine years ago and has become the organization that produces a fully-staged musical each year at Kings Glen Elementary School.**



**Theresa Moulder stars as Willy Wonka (center). She is surrounded by classmates (in no particular order) Ewuraesi 'Sunny' Daniels, Sydney Miller, Caroline Farias and Helen Moreau. They are Oompa Loompas one through five.**



## 'Willy Wonka Junior' At Kings Glen Elem.

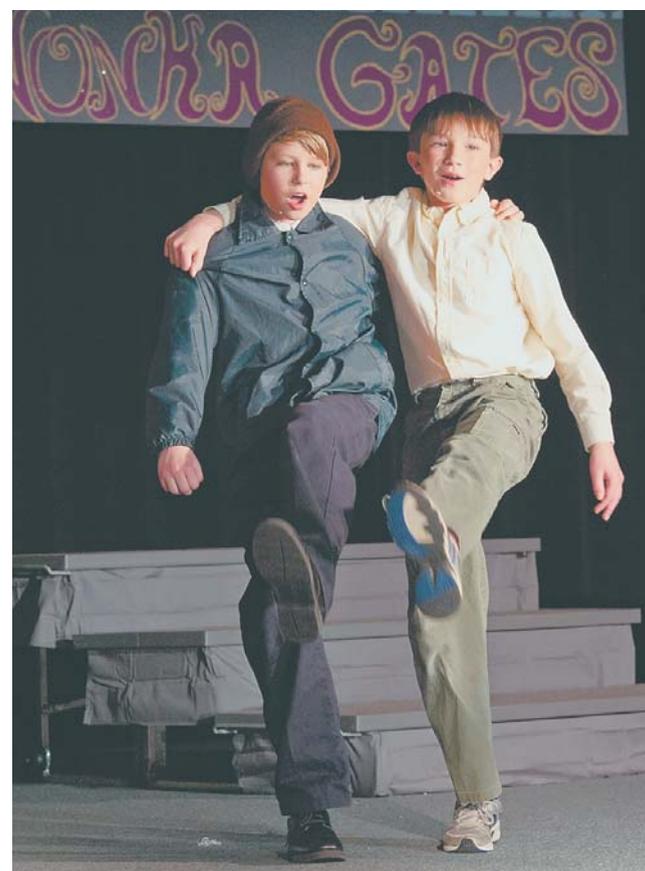
Tuesday April 12 was opening night for the Kings Glen Elementary School Kings Jesters Student Performers as they presented Ronald Dah's "Willy Wonka Junior." One hundred and thirty students are involved in the production as actors, crew and hospitality team. Preparation for the production began in October 2010, when interested students participated in audition workshops. They learned songs, a monologue, choreography and the blocking for a scene in preparation for their audition. Parents and staff members contributed significantly to the production.

Students performed to a full house, with about 330 tickets sold. An additional performance will take place Thursday, April 14.

— DEB COBB

**(Right photo): Mitchell Brennan (left) and Sean Miner, performing as Mr. Bucket and his son Charlie from Ronald Dahl's 'Willy Wonka Junior.'**

**(Left photo): Hannah Hirsh, dressed as an Oompa Loompa, does some pre-performance stretching.**



## Lyme Disease Task Force Holds Final Hearing

Medical experts will testify on a broad range of public education initiatives during the final hearing of Governor Robert McDonnell's Lyme Disease Task Force on Monday, April 25. The hearing, which is free and open to the public, will be held at the Fairfax County Government Center from noon to 3:30 p.m.

"(These experts) are helping to address a rapidly evolving Lyme disease epidemic. Residents from five regions of the state told their personal stories of

frustration and loss to the task force in March, and many common themes emerged that urgently need solutions," said Monte Skall, executive director of the National Capital Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Association.

Jorge R. Arias, Ph.D., an entomologist with the Fairfax County Health Department's Disease Carrying Insects Program, will testify at the hearing.

The task force, comprising state officials and medical professionals, will gather in-

formation on what schools, parks, community groups, public officials, legislators and medical professionals need to know about Lyme disease and how the information can best be communicated.

"Lyme disease is dramatically misdiagnosed and there is too much denial by doctors that chronic Lyme exists," said Michael Farris, task force chairman.

McDonnell has designated May as Lyme Awareness Month in Virginia. The Virginia Department of Health states that the num-

ber of human Lyme disease cases in Virginia has increased substantially over the past several years, increasing from 357 reported cases in 2006 to 908 cases reported in 2009. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the numbers may be 10 times as high.

For more information on the meeting, go to [www.natcaplyme.org](http://www.natcaplyme.org).

—VICTORIA ROSS

# Retirement Not in Community Champion's Vocabulary

Gary Gaal to be honored for dedicated volunteerism.

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

**A**s smart as he is, Gary Gaal does not understand the concept of "retirement."

After 20 years in the U.S. Army, Gaal could have spent his days relaxing on the golf course. Instead, he became an auxiliary police officer with the Fairfax County Police Department in 1997, an EMT instructor with the county's fire department and a firearms, special weapons and tactics instructor with the FCPD.

In the past 15 years, Gaal has logged 18,800 volunteer hours with Fairfax County's police and fire departments. "He is the gold standard for volunteerism," said Lee District Supervisor Jeffrey McKay, who will present Gaal with a Fairfax County Community Champion Award at the April 14 Board of Supervisors meeting. "He has approached volunteerism with the same dedication that he gave to his army career."

Gaal also serves as the assistant chief of the Franconia Volunteer Fire Department. He joined the Franconia VFD in 1996, became a firefighter in 1998 and served as the assistant chief since 2002.

"He's very hard-working and he keeps things running. I like to say he is one of these 'clean-desk' men, which means that he tends to do things immediately. He never puts things off," said Pat Decker, vice president of the Franconia Volunteer Fire Department.

**ORIGINALLY FROM ST. LOUIS,** Gaal attended the University of Missouri on a military scholarship. Always up for an adventure, Gaal said he joined the military as a way to travel, serve his country and help others.

"What I found most interesting during my military career was working and training with officers from other countries, such as Germany, Spain, Belgium, Great Britain, Canada, Korea, Japan, Thailand and Australia," he said.

Throughout his 20-year military career, he and his wife of 33 years, Luise, have lived all over the world - from Ft. Polk in Louisiana to Schweinfurt, Germany. In 1994, he retired as a lieutenant colonel after working for three years at the Pentagon. During his military career, he received numerous



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Gary Gaal will receive Fairfax County's Community Champion award for volunteering nearly 19,000 hours with police and fire departments.**

awards, including the prestigious Legion of Merit award, the National Defense Medal, the Air Assault Badge and the Army Commendation Medal.

The military also gave him the opportunity to hone his skills in emergency medical care, which he uses nearly every day in his volunteer work. Because he is often the first responder on the scene, Gaal said he keeps current on his skills in winter emergency care and up-to-the-minute search and rescue techniques.

"Every time I run a call it's the worst day of someone's life. My job is to make it better or keep them alive long enough to transfer them to a higher medical authority," Gaal said. He won't hesitate to help a stranded motorist or apply his emergency medical training when he is on an accident scene.

"I have been the first arriving unit to a struck pedestrian in the middle of Franconia Road and had to pronounce her dead. I have been the first on the scene to help an 11-year-old struck on a bicycle and thrown 30 feet with severe head trauma. I have found a passed-out drunk driver in the middle of the road and the only thing holding the vehicle back was his foot on the break," Gaal said.

Gaal has also worked with the New York City police department's auxiliary and reserve unit for of-

ficers killed in the line of duty.

"The NYPD has an auxiliary force of over 3,000 officers, who are not armed. Every year in April they have a memorial service for their officers killed in the line of duty," Gaal said, adding that hundreds of auxiliary officers from the entire East coast attend the event. The Fairfax auxiliaries drive up as a unit and return the same day.

**IN 2001,** Gaal provided

operational support to the FCPD after the death of Captain Tommy F. Bernal, who was killed in June when his motorcycle was struck head-on by a vehicle while he was conducting a training exercise with several agencies near Front Royal.

In addition to working with the police and fire departments, Gaal also volunteers with the National Ski Patrol as a patroller on the Wintergreen Resort Ski Patrol for the last 16 years.

"That provides the best of both worlds, maintaining order and safety on the slope and providing patient care under the most difficult conditions," he said.

When he's not volunteering, Gaal said he enjoys running in the Army's 10-mile race, which he trains for all summer, skiing in the mountains and scuba diving at the beach.

"While many choose to relax after retirement, Mr. Gaal chose to continue as a professional volunteer. His military expertise has assisted Fairfax County in various ways, including firearms instruction, winter emergency care and under water search and rescue operations. His service to Fairfax County has proven to be irreplaceable and we are very excited to have him as one of this year's Community Champions," said Christine Coffey, who manages special events for Fairfax County.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER BOLLARD

**Moe and friends with Gypsy Sons.**

## Moe Traish Celebrates His Birthday in Style

**Moe Traish's Birthday Party on Saturday, April 9, was the beginning of celebrations for Moe's Peyton Place Restaurant. The Gypsy Sons, a popular local band, rocked the house as the main act. As an opening act, new talent Fuse Box debuted to an enthusiastic crowd. Moe's will be celebrating 40 years in business serving the Springfield and surrounding communities with a main event to be held Saturday, May 7.**



PHOTO BY PATRICK BURNS

**Moe Traish**



PHOTO BY PATRICK BURNS

**New talent Fuse Box debuted to an enthusiastic crowd as the opening act.**

## FAITH

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

**Harvester PCA**, 7800 Rolling Road in Springfield, will hold a Good Friday Service on Friday, April 22 at 8 p.m., with a sermon by radio host Ron Kronz, interpretive dance and music. 703-455-7800.

**A Divorce Recovery Workshop** will be held at Messiah United Methodist Church, 6215 Rolling Road, Springfield, on Wednesdays, April 27 through June 15 at 7:30 p.m. Conducted by trained facilitators, eight regular sessions with a special session on finances. The workshop and childcare are free. Resource books are available for \$12. Childcare must be requested at registration. [rringler@messiahumc.org](mailto:rringler@messiahumc.org) or 703-569-9862, ext. 210.

**St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**, 6509 Sydenstricker Road in Burke, has announced their upcoming events. Contact the church at 703-455-2500.

❖ Sunday, April 17 at 10 a.m. On Palm Sunday, the church body will march around the parking lot singing waving palm branches.

❖ Saturday, April 23 at 4 p.m. Easter egg hunt and party.

**The Truro Parish Choir presents the Duruflé Requiem** as part of the Good Friday worship services on Friday, April 22 at 7:30 p.m. at Truro Church, 10520 Main St., Fairfax. The Requiem, op. 9, by Maurice Duruflé is a work in which most of the thematic material comes from chant. The choir will be accompanied by organist Andrea Boudra. 703-273-1300.

**Burke Presbyterian Church**, 5690 Oak Leather Drive in Burke, will host a small group Lenten Study through April 23. Small groups will meet on a variety of days and times throughout the week to explore John Indermark's book *Gospelled Lives: Encounters with Jesus* which covers varied responses of biblical characters to direct encounters with the living Christ. [www.BurkePresChurch.org](http://www.BurkePresChurch.org) or 703-764-0456.

**St. Peter's in the Woods**, 5911 Fairview Woods Drive in Fairfax Station, has announced several Holy Week events. Contact the church at [www.SPIW.org](http://www.SPIW.org) or 703-503-9210.

❖ **Agape Dinner & Holy Eucharist**. Thursday, April 21, dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the service at 7:30 p.m. Bring a Mediterranean-inspired dish to share. Childcare available immediately following the dinner.

❖ **Good Friday service**, Friday, April 22 at 7:30pm.

❖ **Easter Sunday services**. Sunday, April 23 at 6:30 a.m., 8 a.m. and a family-friendly service at 10:15 a.m. An all-ages Easter egg hunt will take place immediately following the 10:15 a.m. service. Bring a basket and hunt for eggs on the church grounds.

**Providence Presbyterian Church**, 9019 Little River Turnpike in Fairfax, has announced their Holy Week events. Contact the church at 703-978-3934 or [www.providencechurch.org](http://www.providencechurch.org).

❖ Sunday, April 17. 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. services, with music and the procession of the Palms on Palm Sunday.

❖ Monday, April 18. 7:30 p.m. Lectio Divina, a Holy Week prayer service.

❖ Thursday, April 21. Soup Supper at 6:30 p.m., Maundy Thursday service at 7:30 p.m.

❖ Sunday, April 24. "Why Easter Matters". Sing the Hallelujah Chorus with choir, organ and brass at 9 and 11 a.m. services, or rejoice with praise band at 11:15 a.m. Brunch at 10 a.m.

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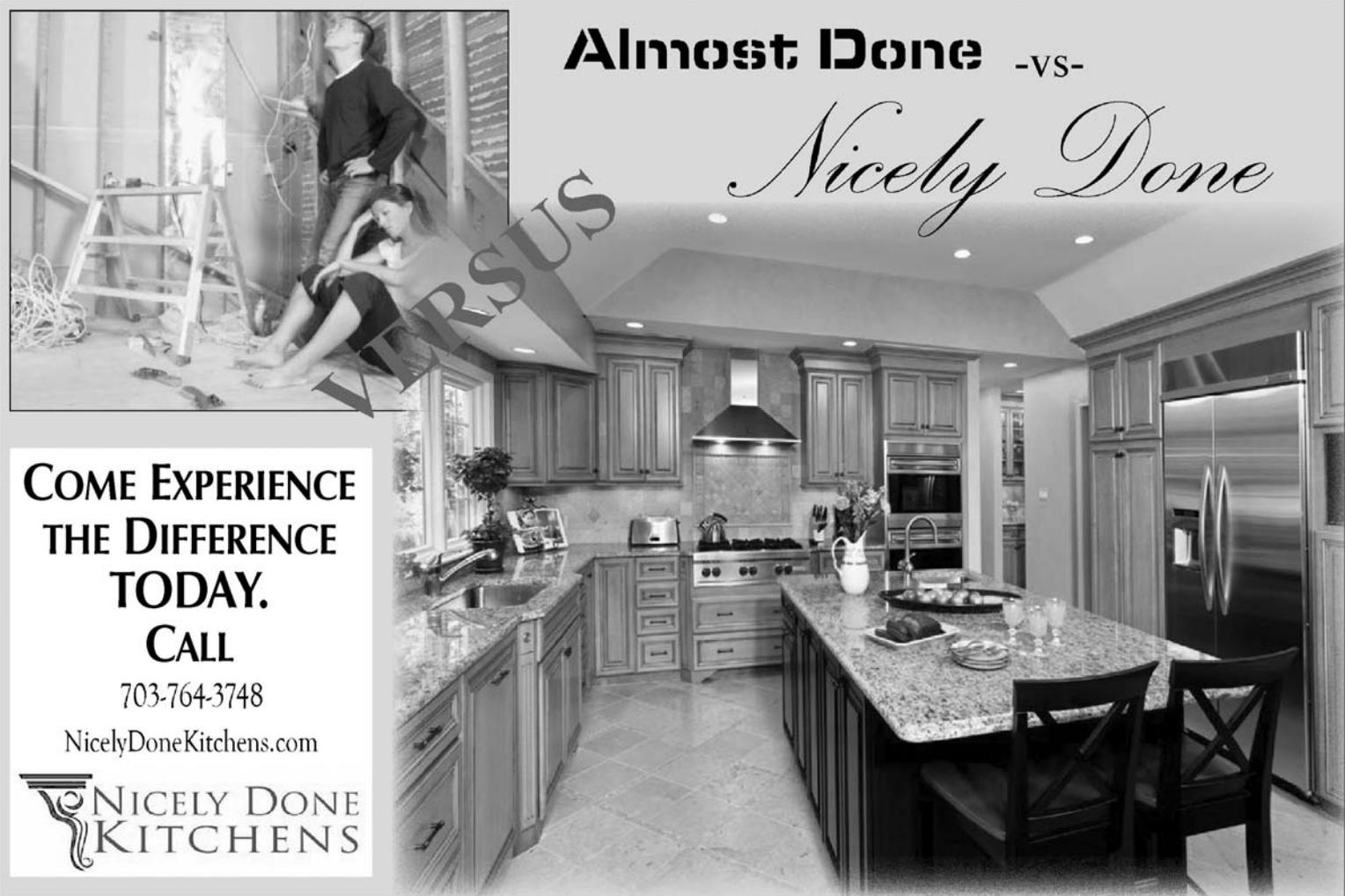
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# OPINION

## Striving to Tell Community Stories

The Connection Newspapers, including the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette and the Centre View, won dozens of news awards for work published in 2010. Awards were announced at the Virginia Press Association annual conference in Norfolk on April 9.

Michael Lee Pope won nine awards writing for the Arlington Connection, the Alexandria Gazette Packet and the Mount Vernon Gazette, including investigative writing, public safety writing, education writing, breaking news writing, business and financial writing, obituary writing, feature writing and headline writing. Pope also reports for WAMU radio and authored a book, "Ghosts of Alexandria," in 2010. Pope's award-winning writing included local police departments' lack of transparency and refusal to share information that is public in almost every other state.

Alex McVeigh garnered awards for public safety writing for his coverage of the burglary spree in Northern Virginia, and for feature writing in the Reston Connection.

Julia O'Donoghue won first place for her coverage of Fairfax County School Board decision-making and communication on redrawing school boundaries and decision to close Clifton Elementary School.

Bonnie Hobbs, longtime reporter with the Centre View, won first place for her well-known public safety writing, and also for feature series for her compelling coverage of 3-year-old Rachel D'Andrea's struggle with neuroblastoma; Rachel died in January.

Managing editor Mike O'Connell won two awards, one for page design and one for overall newspaper design.

Mary Kimm won two awards for editorial writing, including editorials on police power, remembering on Memorial Day, Virginia's challenge to the health care law, transportation, budget and breast cancer.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Remove Amendments

To Gov. McDonnell

Supervisor Linda Smyth (D-Providence) and I understand that you have proposed amendments to HB 2103 and SB 843, identical bills that passed unanimously by the 2011 General Assembly. As passed, the legislation would require performance standards to be established for large aboveground petroleum storage tanks that have been in existence prior to Jan. 29, 1992, so that over the course of the next 10 years, the operators of those tanks would bring them into substantial compliance with regulations adopted to prevent oil discharges. The legislation applies only to such tanks located in the City of Fairfax.

The tank farm in the City of Fairfax is located in close proxim-

ity to Fairfax County. Releases of petroleum products from this site over the past many years, particularly massive underground releases, have resulted in significant adverse environmental impacts on numerous Fairfax County residents. Back in the early 1990s, between 60 and 90 homes in the Mantua subdivision had to be purchased because they were uninhabitable due to a major underground release. More recently, on March 31, 2011, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality levied a fine of approximately \$114,000 against one of the operators at this tank farm for improper handling of a petroleum product leak from their facility.

Both bills passed the General Assembly without any opposition and are designed to bring the standard facilities at the tank farm in the City of Fairfax into substantial conformance with the same

safety regulations governing discharges that apply to numerous other tank farms in the Commonwealth. The operators are given 10 years to come into substantial compliance, a term which we feel is significant.

The amendments that you have proposed would significantly weaken the legislation to the point that it is conceivable that no aboveground storage tank in existence prior to Jan. 29, 1992, including those in the City of Fairfax, would have to be retrofitted or modified in order to come into substantial compliance with oil discharge prevention regulations applicable to other aboveground storage tanks. By expanding the legislation to apply across the Commonwealth, we believe it will be more difficult to address our local issues.

On behalf of the citizens of Fairfax County whom we repre-

sent, we respectfully request that you withdrawal your recommended amendments to HB 2103 and SB 843. We believe that the legislation as adopted by the General Assembly is the better approach to protect the health and safety of our citizens. Thank you for your consideration.

**Sharon Bulova**  
Chairman  
Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

## Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. Send to:

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1606 King St.  
Alexandria VA 22314  
Call: 703-778-9410  
By e-mail:  
springfield@connectionnewspapers.com

## News Awards

- ❖ First place, Michael Lee Pope, Obituary Portfolio, Personal Service Writing, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ First place, Michael Lee Pope, Feature Series or Continuing Story, Creating a Police Oversight Board, Mount Vernon Gazette
- ❖ First place, Michael Lee Pope, Public Safety Writing: Price of Justice; Seeking Complaints; The Buoy Druggers; Mount Vernon Gazette
- ❖ First place, Bonnie Hobbs, Public Safety Writing: Killing Yields Five Years; Child Molester Sentenced to Prison/Parents of Pedophile's Victims Speak Out; Fireworks Lead to Death, Jail, I Just Wanted Him Held Accountable, Centre View Southern Edition
- ❖ First place, Mary Kimm, Editorial Writing: Tolls and a Transportation Fix; Police Power Demands Transparency; Breast Cancer Awareness; The McLean Connection
- ❖ First place, Julia O'Donoghue, General News Writing, School Board Email Communication, Fairfax Station/Laurel Hill Connection
- ❖ First place, Louise Krafft, Picture Story or Essay, Elementary School Track Meet, Mount Gazette
- ❖ First place, Craig Sterbutzel, Sports News Photo, Spartans Repeat as Region Champions, Springfield Connection
- ❖ First place, Reed Albers, Sports Writing Portfolio, Springfield Connection
- ❖ Bonnie Hobbs, Feature Series or Continuing Story, Rachel D'Andrea, Centre View Southern Edition, second place
- ❖ LaShawn Avery-Simons, Sports Feature Photo, Inaugural Bridge Half Marathon, Alexandria Gazette Packet, second place
- ❖ Michael Lee Pope, Breaking News Writing, Snowmageddon Grips Alexandria, Crushing, Money Down the Drain; Alexandria Gazette Packet, second place
- ❖ Michael Lee Pope, General News Writing, Controversy Along The Waterfront; Alexandria Gazette Packet, second place
- ❖ Michael Lee Pope, In-depth or Investigative Reporting; Police Transparency Blackout, second place
- ❖ Craig Sterbutzel, Sports News Photo, Celebratory Splash, The Burke Connection, second place
- ❖ Michael Lee Pope, Headline Writing, Arlington Connection, second place
- ❖ Michael O'Connell, Page Design, Springfield Connection, second place
- ❖ Michael Lee Pope, Business and Financial Writing, \$7 Billion Stimulus; Fewer Services, More Taxes; Board Raises Taxes, Arlington Connection, second place
- ❖ Mary Kimm, Editorial Writing: Adding Painful Cuts; Cuccinelli Misleads on Costs, Remembering on Memorial Day, Fairfax Connection, second place
- ❖ Alex McVeigh, Public Safety Writing, Series of burglaries hits McLean, McLean Connection, second place
- ❖ Julie Ferrill, Laurence Foong, Louise Krafft, Specialty Pages or Sections, Talk of the Town, Alexandria Gazette Packet
- ❖ Jeanne Theismann, Headline Writing: For Whom the Bell Tolls; Ghost Writer; Plaid Tidings; Love on the Docks; Anchored in Alexandria, Alexandria Gazette Packet, third place
- ❖ Jeanne Theismann and Louise Krafft, Picture Story or Essay, Plaid Tidings; Alexandria Gazette Packet, third place
- ❖ Deb Cobb, Picture Story or Essay, A Day in the Life of Chantilly, Centre View Northern Edition, third place
- ❖ Michael O'Connell, Julia O'Donoghue, Jon Roetman, Rich Sanders, Deb Cobb; General Makeup, Burke Connection, third place
- ❖ Michael Lee Pope, Education Writing: Behind the Cafeteria Wall; Racial Divide; Instruction Versus Administration, Arlington Connection, third place
- ❖ Alex McVeigh, Feature Story Writing, Family, friends reconnect 20 years after teen's death, Reston Connection, third place

Our photographers, whose work is so important to community coverage and Connection style, won many awards. Louise Krafft won three awards for picture story and essay, and for her photographic contributions to Alexandria's Talk of the Town page. Craig Sterbutzel won first place for sports news. Deb Cobb won for her epic Day in the Life of Chantilly and her contributions to the Burke Connection. LaShawn Avery-Simons won first place for sports feature.

Jeanne Theismann, who joined the Gazette and Connection staff well into the contest year

in 2010, nevertheless won two awards, one for her feature photography and one for headline writing.

Nick Horrock, who covers BRAC and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors after a distinguished national career, will be inducted into the Maryland-Delaware-DC Hall of Fame on April 21, 2011.

Jon Roetman, Ken Moore, Laurence Foong and the staff of the Potomac Almanac won awards in the Maryland-Delaware-DC press association news contest; the specific awards will be announced next week.

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**James Percoco reacts as he hears the reason that the assembly has been called: He will be inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kan. in June. He was nominated for the honor by faculty and staff at West Springfield High School.**

# West Springfield High Teacher Honored

## James Percoco to be inducted into National Teachers Hall of Fame.

In a surprise ceremony at West Springfield High School on Tuesday, April 12, it was announced that West Springfield High School Social Studies teacher James Percoco will be inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kan. in June. The National Teachers Hall of fame was established in 1989 as a tribute to excellent pre-K-12 teachers. Only five teachers a year are inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame and only 95 have been enshrined there since it was established. Percoco is the

fifth teacher from Virginia to be inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame. He has been a teacher at West Springfield High School for 31 years.

In honoring Percoco, West Springfield High School principal Paul Wardinski said, "You can't help but love and get involved in history after one of his classes." One of the students' favorites is Percoco's applied history class, which includes fieldtrips to historic sites and provides interested students with internships at local historic sites.

— DEB COBB

**West Springfield High School teacher James Percoco will be inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kan. in June.**



PHOTOS BY DEB COBB/  
THE CONNECTION

**Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Jack Dale congratulates West Springfield High School Social Studies teacher James Percoco on the announcement that Percoco is to be inducted into the National Teachers Hall of Fame.**



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\* By readers of the Virginia Gazette 2007-2009

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## ENTERTAINMENT

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

### THURSDAY/APRIL 14

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus.** 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$7-\$15. [www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com) or 202-683-3238.

**Paws for Reading.** 4 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice reading skills with a trained therapy dog. Age 6-12. Register at 703-249-1520.

**Practice Your English.** 7 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-339-4610

**National Poem in Your Pocket Day.** 1 p.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Write out a poem you enjoy and bring it to Lorton Library for the Poem in Your Pocket Day bulletin board. 703-339-7385.

### FRIDAY/APRIL 15

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.** 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$7-\$15. [www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com) or 202-683-3238.

**"Honk!"** 7:30 p.m. Robert E. Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. The musical story of the Ugly Duckling. Tickets \$10 adults, \$5 students and children. [akberting@fcps.edu](mailto:akberting@fcps.edu).

### SATURDAY/APRIL 16

**Funatical: Taking Comedy to the Extreme!** 7:30 p.m. Northern Virginia Community College Ernst Cultural Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. An intercultural, interfaith comedy tour that breaks stereotypes and bridges gaps between Muslims, Jews, Christians and other faiths. Proceeds benefit the Nooristan Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit that provides support for charitable and educational projects in Afghanistan. \$25-\$40. [www.funaticalcomedy.com](http://www.funaticalcomedy.com).

**Gallery After Hours: Ballroom Social Dance.** 7:30 p.m. Gallery W-16, Second Floor, Workhouse Art Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Ballroom dancing, complimentary refreshments and cash bar. 7 p.m. Ballroom mini-lesson, with a focus on Foxtrot, \$5. Dance tickets \$18-\$20 per couple. [www.WorkhouseArts.org](http://www.WorkhouseArts.org).

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum &**

**Bailey circus.** 11:30 a.m., 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$7-\$15. [www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com) or 202-683-3238.

**"Honk!"** 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Robert E. Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. The musical story of the Ugly Duckling. Tickets \$10 adults, \$5 students and children. [akberting@fcps.edu](mailto:akberting@fcps.edu).

**VITA Tax Assistance.** 10 a.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. IRS-certified volunteers help taxpayers who earned up to \$49,000. Adults. 703-451-8055.

**Paws to Read.** 11 a.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Practice reading aloud to a trained therapy dog. Age 6-12. Register at 703-339-7385.

**Poems to Pictures: A Poetry Workshop in Honor of National Poetry Month.** 2 p.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Join author and poet Ruth Baja Williams in a poetry reading and writing workshop. Adults. 703-339-7385.

### SUNDAY/APRIL 17

**Northern Virginia NTrak Display.** 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Operating display of N-gauge model trains. \$3 adults, \$1 children. 703-425-9225 or [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org).

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.** 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$7-\$15. [www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com) or 202-683-3238.

### MONDAY/APRIL 18

**Washington National Opera: Children's Workshop.** 2 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. "Hänsel und Gretel", an opera by 19th century composer Engelbert Humperdinck, based on the Grimm brothers' fairy tale. Age 4-10. 703-249-1520.

**It's Raining Cats and Dogs.** 10:30 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Furry stories. Age 13-23 months with adult. 703-339-4610.

**Read to the Dog.** 4:30 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Read to a reading therapy dog. Age 6-12 with adult. Register at 703-339-4610.

### TUESDAY/APRIL 19

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.** 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Drive, Fairfax. Tickets

\$7-\$15. [www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com) or 202-683-3238.

**I Can Do It! 7 p.m.** Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stories and activities. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-249-1520.

**English Conversation Group.** 7 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Practice and improve your English. Adults. 703-451-8055.

**Lullaby Stories.** 7 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Evening stories and activities. Pajamas and stuffed animals welcome. Age 1-5 with adult. 703-339-4610.

### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 20

**Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus.** 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$7-\$15. [www.ringling.com](http://www.ringling.com) or 202-683-3238.

**Applause Unlimited Puppets.** 11 a.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Travelin' Jack & Company with classic American folktales. All ages. Register at 703-451-8055.

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

**It's Hot, It's Cold.** 10:30 a.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Stories, songs, and fingerplays. Age 2-4 with adult. 703-339-7385.

**Fun with Science.** 4 p.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Easy science with everyday materials. Age 6-12. 703-339-7385.

### THURSDAY/APRIL 21

**Paws for Reading.** 4 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice reading skills with a trained therapy dog. Age 6-12. Register at 703-249-1520.

**Springfield Writers' Group.** 7 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Share your work, give and receive feedback in a supportive setting. Adults. 703-451-8055.

**Book Discussion Group.** 7:15 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Call for title. Adults. 703-971-0010.

**Practice Your English.** 7 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-339-4610.

**Lorton Library Book Club.** 7 p.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The Help by Kathryn Stockett. Adults. 703-339-7385.

## BULLETIN BOARD

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

### SATURDAY/APRIL 16

**CASA Information Session.** 11 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) is hosting an information session for those who would like to learn more about advocating for abused or neglected children. 703-273-3526, x22 or [ekosarin@casafairfax.org](mailto:ekosarin@casafairfax.org).

### MONDAY/APRIL 25

**Republican Women of Clifton**

**Meeting.** 7 p.m. Clifton Elementary School, Clifton. Va. 39th District candidates question and answer session, with Republicans Miller Baker and Scott Martin. [susan@sliderassociates.com](mailto:susan@sliderassociates.com).

### WEDNESDAY/APRIL 27

**Foster Parent Information Session.** 6 p.m. United Methodist Foster Services (UMFS), 6335 Little River Turnpike, Alexandria. Agency representatives will answer questions and explain the requirements to foster or adopt. Free. 703-941-9008 or [www.umfs.org](http://www.umfs.org).

### SATURDAY/APRIL 30

**American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology Nationwide Asthma Screening Program.** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Shoppers

Food Warehouse, Lorton Marketplace, 9409 Lorton Market St., Lorton. Allergists will offer free screenings for people who are experiencing breathing problems, such as chronic coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath. [www.AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org](http://www.AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org).

### WEDNESDAY/MAY 11

**NARFE Springfield Chapter Meeting.** 1:30 p.m. American Legion Post 176, 6520 Amherst Ave, Springfield. A discussion of benefits (including SS and Medicare) by David Snell, Director of the NARFE Retirement Benefits Service Department and former chief of the Retirements Benefits Branch of OPM. [jkdadelg@yahoo.com](mailto:jkdadelg@yahoo.com) or 703 313-9387.

## SCHOOLS

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

**Northern Virginia's Fellowship of Christian Athletes Power Camp** runs June 27-July, at Key Middle School. Local High School, 6402 Franconia Road, Springfield. Christian coaches and athletes provide instruction to youths, ages 8-12, in the following sports: boys-baseball, football, basketball, soccer, lacrosse, tennis and wrestling; and girls-basketball, cheerleading, soccer, lacrosse and tennis. Registration \$200 for week. Go to [www.novafca.org](http://www.novafca.org) or call 703-225-0070 for information on all FCA camps.

**Maria Ali, Kyle Belfort, David Harris and Adrianna McQuillen**, seniors at Lake Braddock Secondary School, were named semifinalists in the 2011 National Merit Scholarship Program.

**Kazumi Ashton-Hughes and Nshira Turkson**, seniors at West Springfield High School, were named semifinalists in the 2011 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Two students in **Leann Kniller's** sixth-grade AAP class at Springfield Estates Elementary School were named finalists in the 2010 National Veterans Day Poster and Essay Contest. **Grace Mika** and **Brendan Macbeth** were among 10 fifth and sixth-grade finalists out of more than 800 entries. The contest, which was sponsored by the Paralyzed Veterans of America, required students to explore the theme of "Veteran's Day: A Time to Honor a Veteran in Your Family or Community."

**Threshold**, the literary magazine of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology received a Best of Show Award in the Literary Magazine category for staff, editors and Emily Orser, adviser. The awards were presented at the Journalism Education Association-National Scholastic Press Association fall convention in Kansas City, Mo.

The following students from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology received the recognitions during the Write-Off Contest held in conjunction with the recent Journalism Education Association-National Scholastic Press Association fall convention in Kansas City, Mo.: **Arya Dahl**, Excellent award in Advertising; **Bart Bachman**, Honorable Mention in Editorial Writing; **Akshay Seth**, Honorable Mention in Newswriting; and **Mallika Patkar**, Honorable Mention in News Editing-Headline Writing.



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**How Do I Prepare for My Laser Session?**  
Before Laser:  
1) Stay out of the sun, including tanning beds or you will have to wait until your tan fades, since it may cause burning of the skin.  
2) Avoid sugaring, waxing, and electrolysis for at least 2 weeks before treatment, as it disturbs the hair follicle and growth stages. Shaving is good, recommended and improves the results.  
3) Please do not wear any creams, perfumes, makeup, or deodorant before all sessions.

**What Can I Expect During Treatment?**  
Before starting:  
1) You will be given goggles for eye protection  
2) You will be asked to remove any and all metal jewelry  
3) The area being treated will be wiped to ensure no oils remain on your skin  
4) Numbing cream may also be applied before procedure.

The technician holds a laser instrument (which you will already have seen in your consultation); the laser beam will pass through your skin into the hair follicle and

burn the follicle where it originates. You may feel a short stinging sensation. The smaller the area being treated, underarms (big favorite) or upper lip, may take only a few minutes; the back, chest, or legs may take an hour or more.

**What May I Expect After Treatment?**  
The hair you wanted gone will be gone! Some people may notice redness or swelling for the first few hours. A slight stinging sensation may linger for as long as 2 days, and the skin being treated may become crusty in some places. The lasered areas should be washed gently with soap and water. Avoid scrubbing or picking the treated area. Avoid sun and tanning beds for 2 weeks after treatment and use sun block when exposed to the sun. You will find the sun or tanning beds will burn you easier.

Results vary greatly from person to person. You will find multiple sessions prolong the duration of hair loss, but regrowth is still possible. You may need maintenance 6-12 months afterwards, one to two sessions again depending on the density and color of the hair. But mostly, you will notice a sense of well being by having unwanted hair gone!

**The Kindest Cut SpaSalon** hopes this helps you on your way to becoming hair free. We would love to be your SpaSalon of choice! Please call **703-451-1311** and book your consultation appointment with Robin today.

**About ROBIN**  
Robin, our Master Aesthetician has been doing skincare for 18 Years. Robin holds her Virginia Master Aesthetician License and National Certification License as a Laser Specialist. While most laser training is given by the manufacturer and is about 8 hours, **The Kindest Cut SpaSalon** and Robin have always felt the minimum State Board requirements are not enough - especially when it comes to laser work - so we have gone far above industry norms in terms of training and certification, and are confident we provide a higher level of expertise in both skincare and laser work.

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# Home Life Style

## Kitchen Makeover Comes Just in Time

No new square-footage in re-designed, re-integrated kitchen in Fairfax Station.

BY JOHN BYRD  
THE CONNECTION

**S**eventeen years may seem like a long time to wait for your dream kitchen, but Denise Auer says the timing is “just about perfect.”

“I knew when we were raising our children that the original plan had a lot of shortcomings,” Auer says, speaking of the kitchen in the two-level Fairfax Station colonial she has occupied with husband Ken since the early 1990s. “We were just too busy to make changing it a priority.”

Today, however, with children, grandchildren and a list of dinner guests that often exceeds 30, Auer sees the re-designed, re-integrated kitchen as an ideal complement to this phase of her life.

The new interior design reconciles the front of the house with the family room, sun room and deck in the rear, Auer said. “It’s all very cohesive and welcoming.”

Still, the improvement has come without an inch of new floor space.

“I find it astonishing that this is the same footprint as the earlier kitchen. Before, there was never enough space for cooking, serving, clean-up, or storage. The room was dark. And there was a lot of wasted space.”

“Now, the ceiling seems higher; the room is much lighter; the floor space is expansive.”

Dawn Parker, who headed the Auer kitchen makeover on behalf of Sun Design Remodeling of Burke, is pleased she could accommodate so many requirements without moving walls. But she’s not surprised that the owner is finding the new plan a radical improvement.

“I’m pretty familiar with the problems in some older production house kitchens,” Parker said. “A space plan can make a favorable impression, yet lack thoughtful work triangles, or any serious consideration to circulation—so a cook with hosting duties has to work hard to compensate.”

In re-working the Auer kitchen, Parker concentrated on increased storage, strategically located surfaces and a more sensible traffic and circulation plan. Parker designed several built-ins, which were custom milled to her specifications.

A floor-to-ceiling French-style hutch provides a clandestine way to re-route plumbing and eliminates an unnecessary wing wall, and it’s also a custom storage solution that presents an eye-pleasing focal point to those entering from the front foyer.

A bow-front cabinet on the opposite wall, likewise, offers storage and a step-saving serving area, while a mid-room food preparation island/dining counter completes a triangle that supports the cook with a dozen conveniences.



To make the ceilings seem higher, Parker narrowed the soffits.

Embossed cabinet facings, crown moulding, granite surfaces and a stainless steel

refrigerator converge in a light and airy color scheme accented by recessed lights.

“This is a kitchen that has been planned for my needs specifically,” Auer said. “There

are no dead ends; everything is in the appropriate place.”

For information, contact Sun Design, 703-425-5588 [www.sundesigninc.com](http://www.sundesigninc.com).

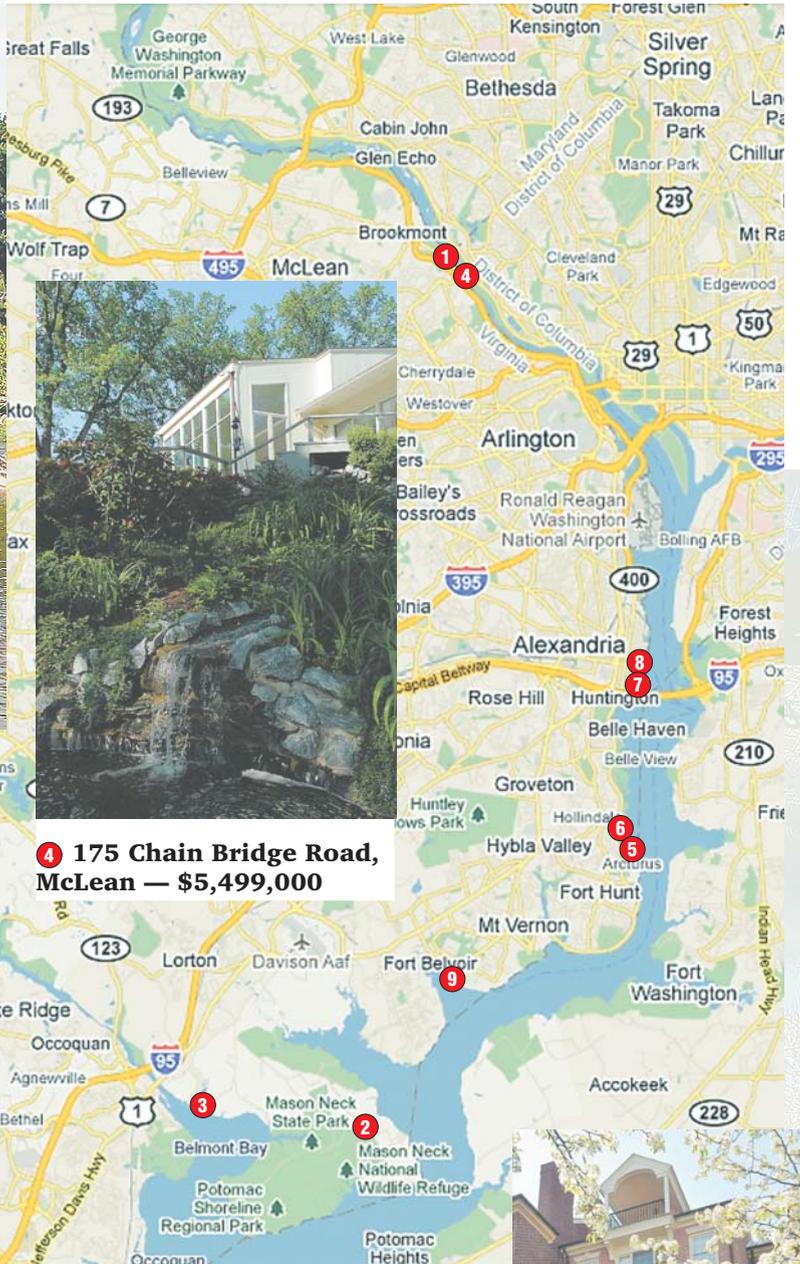
# Northern Virginia REAL ESTATE

## Potomac River View Properties on the Market

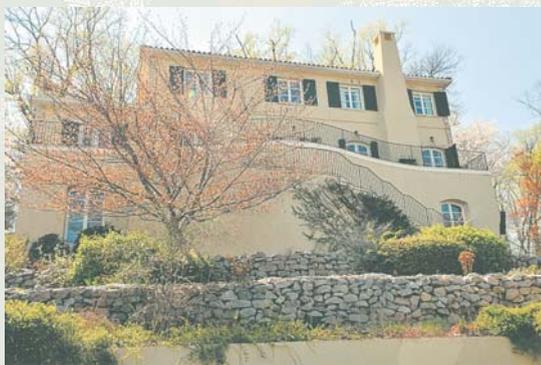
PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE CONNECTION



**1** 636 Chain Bridge Road, McLean — \$10,995,000



**4** 175 Chain Bridge Road, McLean — \$5,499,000



**6** 7608 Southdown Road, Alexandria — \$2,750,000



**5** 7808 Southdown Road, Alexandria — \$3,555,000



**8** 6 Wolfe Street #22, Alexandria — \$2,550,000

Address	MLS#	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Price	Type	Lot AC	Subdivision	Listed by	Agent
<b>1</b> 636 CHAIN BRIDGE RD	FX7544964	10	8	1	MCLEAN	\$10,995,000	Detached	6.52	MCLEAN'S GOLD COAST	Washington Fine Properties LLC	William F. X. Moody
<b>2</b> 11201 GUNSTON RD	FX7324475	6	8	2	MASON NECK	\$7,995,000	Detached	5.131	STONE MANOR ON THE POTOMAC	McEneamey Associates	Sue Goodhart
<b>3</b> 10606 BELMONT BLVD	FX7469424	4	3	1	LORTON	\$7,000,000	Detached	7.735	BELMONT BAY	Long & Foster	Pascale Karam
<b>4</b> 175 CHAIN BRIDGE RD	AR7568928	4	3	1	MCLEAN	\$5,499,000	Detached	2.299	ARLINGWOOD	Long & Foster	Jack Spahr
<b>5</b> 7808 SOUTHDOWN RD	FX7260580	6	6	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$3,555,000	Detached	0.645	WELLINGTON	Coldwell Banker	Wil Roberts
<b>6</b> 7608 SOUTHDOWN RD	FX7523353	3	4	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$2,750,000	Detached	0.416	ARCTURUS ON THE POTOMAC	Keller Williams Realty	Bob Kuletz
<b>7</b> 12 WOLFE ST #52	AX7549012	3	3	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$2,695,000	Townhouse	-	HARBORSIDE	TTR Sotheby's	Michael Rankin
<b>8</b> 6 WOLFE ST #22	AX7557493	4	4	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$2,550,000	Townhouse	-	HARBORSIDE	McEneamey Associates	Babs Beckwith
<b>9</b> 8516 MOUNT VERNON LNDG	FX7022897	6	5	-	ALEXANDRIA	\$2,900,000	Detached	0.535	MT VERNON ON THE POTOMAC	Long & Foster	Chris White

SOURCE: WWW.HOMESDATABASE.COM

# Octagon House, Long-Awaited Dream

Design explores rare 19<sup>th</sup> century architectural style.

BY JOHN BYRD  
THE CONNECTION

Good things come to those who wait—sometimes in memorable shapes.

It was almost 30 years ago, in fact, that Susan Cooper first got a glimpse of her future dream house and another 20 years before she discussed the vision with someone who could properly interpret it. Cooper contends that the result — one of the few octagon houses in the United States — was worth the wait.

“An old boyfriend’s family had an octagon-shaped country house,” Cooper recalls. “I was fascinated with the irregular lines and the creative interior design the shape allows. So smitten, I immediately began to plan an octagon house of my own.”

Cooper indulged in a recurrent labor of love, sketches, floor plans, design details and several scale models. Still, it wasn’t until 1986 that Cooper had a chance to review the project’s feasibilities with a real architect, Joe Burton, principal of JA Bur-

ton Architects in Vienna.

Burton was designing commercial interiors for Rucker Realty Group where Cooper was employed. The two shared a love for the Romantic-revival period architecture (1850 to 1910), the octagon house being a favorite, and by the late 1980s, Cooper had commissioned Burton to convert her concepts into working drawings.

The Northern Virginia native even put Burton’s plans out for bid, only to conclude the interviewed builders weren’t right for her special assignment.

Eventually, Cooper hired Burton to build a more conventional house for herself and her husband. But when her husband died a few years ago, Cooper knew it was time to commence work on the long-forested dream home.

“An octagon house is essentially a radiant pattern — like a spider web — that proceeds from a central core and links eight horizontal beams to eight equidistant vertical shafts,” Burton explains. “This structure, in turn, directs the search for symmetry into a continually compelling convergence of the functional and the decorative.”

**WHILE THERE HAVE BEEN SPORADIC EXPERIMENTS** with the octagon’s demanding geometry, the style’s pioneer was American architect Orson Fowler, who authored a seminal work on the topic.

Fowler was persuaded that the design greatly improves on traditional shapes by augmenting both natural light availability and outdoor visual continuum. While some Fowler-influenced homes were built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the design never enjoyed wide spread popularity; today there are fewer than 500 authentic octagon houses in the country.

“Certainly the shape mainly appeals to owners with a particular sensibility,” Burton said. “When you’re looking to create personalized spaces, this is a fascinating configuration.”

Structurally, Burton designed a 6,400 square-foot three-level home around a belvedere-topped central atrium that features a glass-encased elevator.

“I had the belvedere fabricated off-site, then craned into place,” Burton said.

The main level consists of an entryway with a living room off to the right and the kitchen and informal dining to the left. One can walk through the atrium to the formal dining room, then circle back in either direction. Cooper finds the plan confers each room with privacy while simultaneously encouraging strollers to roam about freely.

“There cannot be a better plan for entertaining,” Cooper said. “I’ve had up to 60 guests and found I had plenty of space to add tables where needed.”

Cooper selected Mexican Saltillo tiles for



PHOTO BY GREG HADLEY

the first level flooring. Burton introduced brick-hued variants in a pattern to emulate the home’s web of structural supports.

The second level provides three bedrooms, each with a private bath. The lower level incorporates a spacious family room and an additional guest room.

As one would expect of a Romantic-revival style home, the transition from inside to outside is a critical piece of the architectural statement. A generous veranda completely circumscribes the home’s main block. A spacious breezeway, crowned with a 16x16-foot skylight, links the house to a two-story outbuilding.

Burton notes that an essential consideration was sighting the structure with an eye towards focal points. On this score, Burton positioned the living room fireplace and built-ins to obstruct a view of the only close neighbor. Other windows present inviting portraits of surrounding woodland, a vista Cooper has begun enhancing with a series of landscaping projects.

Joe Burton periodically holds workshops on residential architecture. Contact 703-321-0021 or jburton@burtonarch.com for information.

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# The Family Foyer: Essential Space

BY JOSH BAKER  
FOUNDER, BOWA

**T**he front entryway. The mudroom. The all purpose room for shoes, backpacks, mail, mobile phones, keys and gym equipment.

Whatever your name for it, this space is essential for every homeowner. At BOWA, we call this important room the "Family Foyer" as it often includes spaces to help organize the way today's modern family lives. Here are four tips to help your family optimize (or create) a useful Family Foyer.

## 1.) Transforming a Space into a Family Foyer:

If there is no space currently allocated as a Family Foyer, the first step is to understand what the space is currently being used for and if those functions can be moved elsewhere or incorporated into the new family foyer space. For example, at BOWA, we are seeing more people repurpose their back halls and laundry spaces into family foyers. Many families are doing home renovations to move their laundry facilities to the upper level since that is where the majority of laundry is generated.

## 2.) Protect from Wear and Tear:

The family foyer is the first line of defense from the outdoors—meaning it sees a lot of traffic, dirt and other debris. To protect floors from wear and tear, utilize tile or stone flooring. These materials are much easier to clean and protect than carpet or wood flooring. Stone materials used to create adjacent patios or walks can be incorporated to create a cohe-



BOB NAROD PHOTOGRAPHY

**This family entrance features a custom bench and cubbies.**



Josh Baker

sive flow between the indoor and outdoor spaces. For walls, we recommend a quality grade of paint with a more durable finish like eggshell or satin, which makes clean up easier. For aesthetic reasons, we also see a lot of wainscoting used in family foyer renovations. This material also has the added benefit of being a more durable surface to protect walls from the scuffing of kids' backpacks and the dog's scratching.

## 3.) A Space for Everything:

From a space for mail organization, to mobile phone charging stations, to shelves for storing children's backpacks and shoes. We have also seen dog showers and storage for Fido's leash, toys and food. In some cases the family foyer blends into the home more seamlessly by remodeling areas for crafts or laundry centers (if that doesn't get moved upstairs). There are a lot of tools out there to help economize and tuck storage into every spare space. Small space storage organizers

used to be seen only in the design of boats and RVs but are now being used to help fit a lot of function into residential small spaces. At BOWA, we particularly see this in our condo remodeling and row house projects, where space is often at a premium.

## 4.) Provide Personalized Spaces:

If you provide it, maybe they'll use it? Consider designating individualized spaces for family members to help ensure their personal items are actually put away. For children, consider creating individual lockers or cubbies with their names on them and designed to meet the needs of the particular child. For example, the ballerina needs space for her dance bag while the budding baseball player might need a taller cubby for his bat bag and cleats. For smaller spaces, you can still provide children opportunities to customize. That may mean a different color or decal on their cubbies, or adjustable hooks for the youngest child to be able to hang his or her coat without assistance.

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**All listings due by Tuesday at 3 P.M.**

## 78th Anniversary Historic Garden Tour

The Garden Club of Fairfax will host five homes on the 2011 tour in Arlington and McLean on Tuesday, April 19.

Featured homes include a cross between a ranch and a "Cape Cod on steroids," designed and constructed by Marvin T. Broyhill for his son, Joel Thomas Broyhill; a modified Craftsman house by BOWA Builders; a brick cottage-rambler, a Tudor Revival Arts and Craft remodeled 1938 home and a French Country home.

This year's co-chairs Sandra Hunt and Cheryl Freeman of Vienna are working up last minute details on the docent's notes and coordinating the multiple committee assignments.

The Fairfax Tour will be held on Tuesday, April 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$20 prior to the tour and \$25 day of tour; they may be purchased online at [www.VAgardenweek.org](http://www.VAgardenweek.org) or locally at participating retailers: Anita Perlut Interiors in Oakton, Burke Florists in the University Mall, Calico Corners on Williamsburg Boulevard, Color Wheel in McLean, Company Flowers in Arlington, Damon Galleries in Vienna, Executive Press in

Fairfax, Express Jewelers in the Ballston Mall, Heart in Hand in Clifton, Judy Ryan of Fairfax, Katie's Coffee House in Great Falls, Lemon Twist in Arlington, McLean Cleaners in McLean, Mesmeraldas in McLean, Millie's Dry Cleaning in Arlington, Needlewoman East in Falls Church and the Old Brogue Irish Pub in Great Falls.

On the day of the tour, tickets may be purchased at the Memorial Baptist Church and at any of the properties open for the tour.

Garden Week in Virginia hosted by the Garden Club of Virginia, the oldest and largest statewide tour in the country. This year 36 tours feature 250 homes, gardens, and historic landmarks during the week of April 16-23.

At the Ceckowski-Christie home, a transformation of the grounds got underway six years ago. And now it boasts an Edgeworthis chrsantha, a Pyrus communis Moonglow - Pear, a Mexican buckeye, a Continus grace Smoke tree, a Parsley-leaf Hawthorn, Chinese Fringe, a Japanese Snowbell and Cusa dogwoods, Cornell dogwoods, and a walking stick tree.

# Rain, Rain Go Away

Local high school teams do all they can to get practices, games in.

BY RICH SANDERS  
THE CONNECTION

Dealing with poor springtime weather is a yearly ordeal high school sports teams have got to deal with and properly navigate in order to get the most out of their seasons. The cranky spring seasons in Northern Virginia often consist of cold, blustery weather and lots of rain. Such elements are not conducive to outdoor sports and create havoc with the re-scheduling of games, difficult field conditions and team continuity. Usually, the poor weather is worse over the first six weeks of the spring season, a carryover from the winter, before turning for the better over the final six weeks or so of the school year.

"It seems as if weather has always been an issue during baseball season," said second year Herndon High baseball coach Greg Miller, a former player for the Hornets as well. "Dealing with the rain is never fun. I always tell our team that we need to control what we are capable of controlling and the weather isn't one of those things."

Along with games being affected by the weather, practice sessions are affected as well and teams often have to move indoors and practice in the school gymnasium. But then you have a bunch of spring sports teams - from baseball to softball to soccer to lacrosse - vying for gym space.

At South County Secondary, the girls' softball team had not seen any of its games postponed until this past weekend when two of its scheduled games at the Hayfield Spring Break Tournament were not played due to the rain. The Stallions, according to coach Gary Dillow, have had a lot of practices switched to indoors because of weather factors this season.

"We have been lucky so far," said Dillow, pleased his team has played most of its scheduled games. "We have not had any games postponed until this past Saturday. Where it has affected us the most is with practice time outside, on the field. We have had very few 'normal' practice days, where we hit outside, and then get to work on defensive skills on the actual field. Many days, we have only been able to hit, but we really need to work on our defense, and we just haven't been able to do that as much as I would like. Hopefully, things will turn around soon."

**IT IS PRETTY MUCH** expected that several games during the spring will be hindered by poor weather, resulting in temporary stoppage of play during a game or postponement. Early season non-district games are often not re-scheduled. District games usually are re-scheduled. For passionate athletes who love competing, the haphazardness of the spring schedule with its quirky weather issues make it difficult to get into a steady playing routine. And emotionally, there is nothing worse for an athlete than to get geared up for a contest on a particular day only to see it ultimately postponed.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Baseball and softball diamonds are more prone to becoming water drenched and being unplayable, as opposed to soccer and lacrosse turf fields which drain water more readily.**

Teams, when this occurs, usually practice instead.

During the week, coaches often cannot spend so much time preparing a wet field for play like they could on a Saturday because of teaching duties at school or a job that keeps them away from the school.

"Some coaches have the flexibility to spend a lot of time getting their fields ready for games," said Madison High softball coach John Schneeberger, whose Warhawks have seen just one game postponed thus far. "It can take as much as six to eight hours to get a field ready after a lot of rain. Each field drains differently."

Longtime athletic personnel in the Northern Region, such as Tim Gordon, the Fairfax High director of student activities, goes into the spring season expecting poor weather to cause havoc. This spring has been relatively easy in comparison to some spring seasons.

"I think I have been doing this so long as either a DSA (director of student activities) or a baseball coach, that I get used to it," said Gordon, the former head baseball coach at Chantilly High. "Honestly, I have memories of a lot worse times, like last year's blizzards and springs where we had to just cancel the second half of the season."

The relatively recent addition of turf playing fields on high school athletic campuses throughout Fairfax County has made it easier to combat rainy conditions. Many of the football stadiums use turf, meaning springtime girls' and boys' soccer and lacrosse games can often take place even when it is raining, as long as lightening, sleet, or high winds are not prevalent. The turf fields, which do not get ripped to shreds like grass fields, drain splendidly, allowing conditions to remain playable for longer.

"Turf fields have certainly made a difference for lax and soccer," said Gordon. "There are enough of them now to keep

turf fields take grass and dirt out of the picture.

"Our team has an interesting twist on the bad weather," said Craig Lunde, the South Lakes High boys' lacrosse coach. "We love it."

Lunde, whose Seahawks last year qualified for the region playoffs for the first time in the program's history, recalled a 2010 spring game in which South Lakes thrived as rain intensified.

"Last year we played our best lacrosse quarter in the rain," he said. "We were down 4-2 at halftime. In the third quarter the rain got worse and the guys ran off nine straight goals to seal the victory."

The Langley High girls' lacrosse team has had one game shortened - a 10-4 Liberty District home win over Marshall - due to worsening weather conditions, and another - a scheduled district home game last Friday night versus Jefferson - that was not started because of poor conditions.

"We had the Marshall game shortened with us leading," said Langley coach Richard DeSomma. "Enough time had been played to make it a legally played game. We had the TJ (Jefferson) game called by the officials. When they arrived at the field they ruled it unplayable."

While just two of Langley's games have been affected by poor weather, numerous practices have been changed up.

"We haven't had use of our fields about nine times this year," said DeSomma, who led the Saxons to their first ever state playoff appearance last year. "We are used to adjusting for that."

In the event that the Saxons cannot practice on their field, DeSomma said there are other options - the Saxons can practice in the gym, on the outdoor basketball court, or even on the outdoor track. And there is always the option of a chalk talk session inside. Whatever, the Langley girls take things in stride when it comes to juggling weather problems with practices or games.

"The girls aren't affected in any way," said DeSomma. "They and coaches are used to making adjustments. Any coach or player involved in a spring sport for any length of time knows what to expect - that it's not really warmer until the end of the season and that fall [season] sports are warmer for a longer period than spring sports."

Lee High baseball coach Brett McColley said if you've grown up playing a sport such as baseball, you get used to scheduling changes due to weather.

"I think when you play baseball long enough you get used to not playing all games as scheduled and you become very flexible on the rescheduling of games," said McColley. "You can't let it affect you very much. It's kind of parallel to actually playing the game of baseball. You must stay on an even keel throughout the game no matter how good or bad it's going. I think my players and my coaches have the same approach when our games get postponed - it doesn't affect us very much mentally."

**"Honestly, I have memories of a lot worse times, like last year's blizzards and springs where we had to just cancel the second half of the season."**

— Tim Gordon, Fairfax High director of student activities

many games on track. We feel bad for parents sitting in the rain and watching, but at least we don't lose games to weather, some of which may never get made up. Baseball and softball are the hardest because you might have beautiful weather the day of the game but the fields are wet from a downpour the previous two days."

Schneeberger, the Madison softball coach who led the Warhawks to both the Liberty District and Northern Region titles last year, said dealing with poor weather is simply a part of the spring sports equation.

"Rain is just a part of spring sports and impact softball and baseball the most," he said. "At Madison we plan for it and do what we can to play. The school is very supportive to make sure we have the resources available to get the field ready. We practice outside every opportunity we can even if it is cold, wet or raining. This allows us to play in poor conditions if we need to."

**SOME OF THE LOCAL** teams thrive playing in rainy, sloppy conditions.

In soccer and lacrosse, playing games in wet field conditions has been a common theme for years at the pro, college, and high school levels. The only things missing in today's sports world of soccer and lacrosse are higher laundry bills due to the fact that

# NEWS

## BRAC Choke Points To Add to Delays

### More cars, few fixes.

BY NICHOLAS HORROCK  
THE CONNECTION

As the summer months begin, motorists on U.S. Routes 95, 395 and Route 1 will begin to face the delays at major choke points caused by Defense Department personnel transfers ordered under the Base Closure and Realignment Commission, according to Tom Fahrney, the Virginia Department of Transportation's BRAC coordinator.

Fahrney has been grappling for nearly three years with the shifting of some 20,000 defense employees from Washington, Maryland and Arlington County to new facilities in Fairfax County and Alexandria.

Three troubled stretches of highway have stood in the way of a smooth completion of the BRAC changes mandated in 2005. There is no construction funding available at this time to fix these difficulties and highway officials estimate it could be 2016 before real relief would come.

Indeed there is no clear appropriation of construction funds in the offing, according to Fahrney and congressional officials.

"There is going to be pain, painful delays for people heading to these new jobs and delays for commuters going north to Washington and the Pentagon," he said.

**CHOKER POINT ONE** is the exit ramp on the northbound side of I-95 to the new portions of the Fairfax Parkway. This is Exit 166 A and B. A takes a motorist east to Ft. Belvoir and B leads west to Fullerton. B allows motorists after several thousand feet to connect to Fairfax Parkway and the entrance to the new headquarters of the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.

Over the next six months, the bulk of some 8,500 employees at National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA) will be reporting to work at this new headquarters.

Money was provided for widening the southbound ramp connection from I-95 to the Fairfax County Parkway and it was com-

pleted in January, but there were no funds to widen and realign the northbound ramp.

Fahrney said there is a study underway for a "flyover ramp" from northbound I-95 to northbound Fairfax County Parkway. The study is expected to be complete by the spring of 2013, but there is no construction money as yet.

Fahrney said that when the attendance at NGA is near the 8,500 capacity, there will be significant traffic delays in the morning at the northbound exit which is both narrow and winding.

NGA has taken some steps to relieve this burden. It has encouraged employees from northern lo-

**"There is going to be pain, painful delays for people heading to these new jobs and delays for commuters going north to Washington and the Pentagon."**

— Tom Fahrney,  
VDOT's BRAC Coordinator

cations to use public transportation to Springfield Metro station and will run shuttle buses from there to its headquarters. Many of the transferees currently live in Maryland and Washington and will be coming south to work, but a "significant number" live south of NGA in Prince William and Stafford counties where housing is less expensive, said Travis Edwards, BRAC outreach chief at Ft. Belvoir.

**CHOKER POINT TWO** is the exit ramp from northbound I-95 to Seminary Road in Alexandria.

The Mark Center is a new defense department building on Seminary Road and I-395. Some 6,400 defense employees from Reston, Crystal City, the Pentagon and Washington will begin moving into this facility in July. There has been much controversy over its location which has no easy entrance or exit from 395 and is some six miles from the nearest Metro Station.

The Defense Department is only providing parking places for 60 percent of the employees and will

run shuttle buses from the King Street and Van Dorn Street Metro stations and from the Pentagon.

Nevertheless, as Edwards points out, many of the employees already live south of the Mark Center in Fairfax, Prince William and Stafford Counties.

This is what makes choke point two for cars coming north to Mark Center so crucial.

On Feb. 11, Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton advised area leaders including Mayor William Euille of Alexandria that Virginia will move forward on access ramps from the under construction HOV lanes to several points along I-95 and I-395.

A direct ramp from HOV lanes on I-395 to Seminary Road will be part of this effort. The Connaughton letter said that it could only be delayed by an Arlington county lawsuit.

Fahrney said that the funds for the ramp, some \$8 or \$9 million, would be included in a legislative package on June 1 and if work started promptly it could be completed by 2014. But last week, the Federal Highway Administration ruled that Virginia will have to do a complete environment evaluation which could take as much as 18 months more, so earliest relief might be 2016.

In addition work would have to be done to allow a left turn from Seminary Road into Mark Center property. As it stands now, a car exiting from north or south 395, has to go to Beauregard Street to make a left turn to enter the western driveway of Mark Center. During rush hour it has been estimated this would 18 minutes each way.

Perhaps the most crucial aspect of delays on I-95 and I-395 is that they will slow commuters going to the Pentagon and Washington beyond.

**CHOKER POINT THREE** is on Route 1 by the gates to Ft. Belvoir.

New traffic demands on Route 1 to expand facilities at Ft. Belvoir began last year and will increase in number as the new Army Hospital and the Museum of the U.S. Army become fully operational. Estimated visits to the Ft. Belvoir hospital and later the museum have been estimated in the hundreds of thousands annually.

As it stands now this narrow area of Route 1, not widened for several decades, is often clogged with traffic.

Virginia and the Army are sharing the estimated \$100 million cost of widening Route 1 to six lanes from the intersection of Mt. Vernon Parkway some six miles to Telegraph Road.



## PHOTO GALLERY!

### "Me and My Mom"

To honor Mom on Mother's Day, send us your favorite snapshots of you with your Mom and The Connection will publish them in our Mother's Day issue. Be sure to include some information about what's going on in the photo, plus your name and phone number and town of residence. To e-mail digital photos, send to:

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Or to mail photo prints, send to:  
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# Keeping Lines of Communication Open

Substance abuse counselors discuss drug use at Irving Middle, Lake Braddock Secondary.

BY SALMA CHADHA  
THE CONNECTION

Mary T. has two children at Lake Braddock Secondary school. One is 13 and the other is 17. She knows they've been offered drugs because they told her about it. She also suspects that her 17-year old has tried marijuana. He denies it, but she says she's not naïve.

Mary T., whose last name is not being used to protect the identities of her children, attended the March 24 drug awareness program for parents at Lake Braddock Secondary School to learn about what services and support are available from the schools for teen users and parents of teen users. The program was a combined effort by the school and the PTSA and drew about 70 parents.

Sam Wagner of Fairfax County Public Schools' student assistance program gave a presentation, showed examples of paraphernalia and answered questions. Wagner is one of 10 counselors for FCPS. His office is at Robinson Secondary School, but he is at Lake Braddock one day a week.

Officer Dave Baucom of the Fairfax County Police narcotics division was also on hand to answer questions. He brought along seized drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine and others.

Cindy Hogue who has a son at Irving Middle School said she attended the program because she doesn't have a lot of knowledge about drug use among teens. "I wanted to know what signs to look out for," she said.

**"Drugs and alcohol are in every FCPS high school and the community to some degree."**

— Paul Wardinski, West Springfield High School principal

**THE SAME PROGRAM** took place on March 22 at Irving Middle School.

Substance abuse counselor Pat Lawton, Wagner's counterpart, and Officer Joe Pittman presented. Lawton's office is at West Springfield High School. The program at Irving had 20 in attendance.

Some parents in attendance at the programs were surprised at the statistics of drug users specific to the Fairfax County area. Children as young as 12 had smoked a cigarette and or had a drink according to the data presented by Wagner and Lawton.

The program was about alcohol, marijuana, over the counter and prescription drugs and inhalants.

"I attended the program to learn what was available to kids and was most surprised about the use of inhalants," said Santosh Shah, who has a daughter at Lake Braddock and a son at West Springfield High School.

Binge drinking and marijuana were the most used drugs by teenagers in the Irving and the Lake Braddock areas said the offic-



Fairfax County Police put a selection of confiscated drugs on display during the March 24 meeting at Lake Braddock Secondary.

PHOTO BY SALMA CHADHA/THE CONNECTION

ers. They discussed the drug problem throughout the county and the police department's efforts in combating it.

They explained that the marijuana sold today is sometimes upwards of 30 percent more potent than the marijuana some of these parents might have tried in their youth. This means the damage is greater.

The officers also discussed synthetic marijuana — dried herbs sprayed with chemicals — that had been sold at gas stations and quick marts. Baucom and Pittman explained that these are popular with teens for their easy access and low cost. On March 23, Gov. Bob McDonnell (R) signed a bill into law banning synthetic marijuana, (K2 and Spice).

"I'm not too concerned about my children being involved in drugs, because I've had the talk with them," said Amy Goodman, who has a daughter at West Springfield.

"Drugs and alcohol are in every FCPS high school and the community to some degree," said Paul Wardinski, West Springfield High School principal. "The only way we are going to attack the problem is working together — school staff, the police department, community groups, parents and certainly the students. Consistent and constant communications and information are key."

He went on to say that he and other principals keep parents informed by offering information nights and that sometimes, depending on the situation, send out information via Keep in Touch e-mails or the PTSA newsletter.

Wagner and Lawton told parents to know their teen's friends are and their friends' parents. They advised being involved in their teen's life and to stay abreast of any changes in their mood or behavior.

"I'm not worried about my daughter, because I know all her friends and their parents," said Gena Bos, who has a daughter at Irving and a son at West Springfield. "I try to know my son's friends and their parents as well."

Wagner and Lawton recommended the hug test as the best way to detect for drugs on teens and say it can become a preventive measure too.

"Hug your kid when they return home from a night out," said the counselors. Look at their eyes for large pupils, smell their hair and clothes because marijuana has a distinctive scent and smell their breath for alcohol.

Gene Peters has three children at Lake Braddock and said it was "a great outreach effort and clearly lots of people for whom it is a new experience."

**THE ALCOHOL AND DRUG** Youth Services (ADYS) Student Assistance Program is a partnership between Fairfax County Public Schools' Safe and Drug-Free Youth Office and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Alcohol and Drug Youth Services. The primary goal is to help at-risk students succeed academically and socially by addressing any concerns related to drug and/or alcohol use. The team provides substance abuse prevention, intervention, education, consultation and treatment referral services for students and their families. Parents were encouraged to read a survey of teen drug use done by Fairfax County every year at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/youthpdf.htm>.

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Ron Kowalski & Susan Borrelli

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### Fairfax Station \$759,900

4 bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths. All new kitchen, updated baths, new deck, new carpet, refinished hardwood floors. 9 ft ceilings in living room & library. 2 story foyer.



### Lake Ridge/Occoquan \$625,000

Big and Beautiful!  
4/5 bedrooms, 4.5 bath home on large lot close to historic Occoquan. HUGE gourmet kitchen, large master suite, finished space in basement, 3-car side load garage, and so much more.  
Call Ron at 1-888-495-6207 for more info.

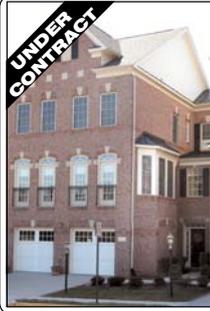


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**Burke \$625,000**  
Gorgeous, Luxury, former model dream home! Bright, Open & Cheerful! Loaded with Bells & Whistles! Hardwood Floors on First & Second levels - 3 BR, 3.5 BA + Study/Library - 2 Fireplaces - Large, Gourmet Kitchen w/ Butler's Pantry & Adjacent Fam Rm - Deck & much, much more.



### Fairfax \$509,900

Lovely Kings Park beauty featuring 4 BR's, 2 1/2 Baths, Kitchen has been redesigned with new Maple kitchen cabinets, & granite counters, Updated half bath, 1st floor family room, Finished lower level, New carpeting on main & lower level. This home has the perfect back yard, come & see!! Super Location.



## PAM BOE, CRS

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### Springfield \$834,900

Superb design lets you live on just one level or enjoy all three finished levels! Grand foyer, two story family room w/fireplace, gourmet kitchen with tons of granite countertops, breakfast room, large formal dining room and living room PLUS spacious master suite with luxury bath on main level. Upper level features 3 bedrooms and 2 baths and lower level is finished with huge recreation room, large den/office and full bath plus tons of storage! Two car side load garage plus beautifully landscaped lot with trees! Just minutes to I95, metro, Ft Belvoir and shopping.



### Gainesville \$279,999

Heritage Hunt 55+ Light-filled 2BR, 2BA 1-level Duplex. No more stairs! MBR w/huge WIC, BR 2/Den, Ctry Kit & B/fast area, Din rm, Liv rm w/vault.ceil, 9'+ ceilings, laundry, patio w/tree view, 2 car Gge, visit/pkg, nr Clubs, Gated comm.  
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ANNANDALE-1 Bedroom, 1 Bath Condo. Move in ready! \$190,000



Recorded message about this property at 877-202-0571 ext.37

GAINESVILLE-3 Bedroom, 2.5 Bath Condo. Great investment! \$165,000



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ALEXANDRIA -2 Bedroom, 1 Bath, 3 level townhouse. \$319,000



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### Kings Park West \$585,000

Beautiful 4BR/3.5BA Colonial featuring updated granite kitchen & baths, family room with fireplace and walkout to expansive deck, extra bonus room, fully finished walkout lower level - situated at end of cul-de-sac in Kings Park West. PLUS, sought after schools & minutes to Metrobus, VRE, GMU & shopping!



### Clifton \$889,000

Main Level Master  
Stunning home on 5 private acres just outside historic town of Clifton! Sought after main level master suite w/cozy fireplace!  
Beautiful kitchen renovation with granite and stainless appliances! Gleaming hardwood floors! Walk out lower level w/rec room, poss media room, more! 4BR, 3.5 Baths, 3 car garage! Move in ready, truly a turnkey property! 7429 Kincheloe Rd.  
Virtual tour at www.seetheproperty.com/75599



Carol Hermandorfer  
703-216-4949

## Hermandorfer Associates



John Astorino  
703-898-5148



Clifton - 5 acres - \$700,000



Clifton - 1 acre - \$743,000

To see our current portfolio of properties, go to www.hermandorfer.com or call John at 703-898-5148.



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Happy Spring!  
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## ELLIE WESTER

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### Fairfax \$319,900

1.5 acre building lot located just minutes from charming Clifton and while convenient this gently rolling lot is located in a lovely, private wooded setting with a small stream. Ancient black walnut trees dot the property and there are several excellent choices for siting a home

# 703-425-8000