

PHOTO BY DEB COBB/CENTRE VIEW

Keegan, Fairfax County's accelerant detection dog, is paired with handler Terry Hall, an investigator out of the Fire Marshal's Office.

Partners, Not Pets

Canines team up with officers.

BY DEB COBB
CENTRE VIEW

Every day in Fairfax County, dozens of specially trained dogs are on the job, using their noses and, in some cases, their teeth to keep Fairfax County safe.

"We're looking for a dog that works as hard on his last hour of work as his first," said Michael Szubinski, course development instructor at the Customs and Border Protection Canine Training Center in Front Royal, June 22, as he explains the puppy selection that is underway

SEE PARTNERS NOT PETS, PAGE 8

Tong Pleads Guilty In Chantilly Murder

He shot and killed his wife.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

Before fatally shooting his wife last year inside their Chantilly home, Tony Tong called his siblings in Vietnam to say goodbye to them. That's because he planned to take his own life, as well, after killing his wife.

And he may well have done so, had not his eldest son tackled him and beat him up. Then police arrived and arrested Tong, charging him with first-degree murder and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Tong, 43, of Chantilly Green Estates, was slated to have a two-week jury trial beginning last Monday, July 18, in Fairfax County Circuit Court. Instead, he pleaded guilty that day to both offenses. The victim was Kathleen Tran, 44.

The couple lived in the 13800

block of Rembrandt Way with their two sons, John, 18, and James, 16, and the tragedy happened Oct.

22, 2010. Tong told police he killed Tran because he believed she was having an affair.

The details were revealed during Tong's preliminary hearing in January in Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. A female interpreter translated the proceedings into Vietnamese for him.

Police Crime Scene Det. Susan Sharp testified that she'd found Tran's body in an upstairs bedroom and identified photos of her in court. "I collected a gun from



Tong

SEE TONG, PAGE 4

Davidson Named Top Firefighter

Colleagues, family and friends celebrate his award.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

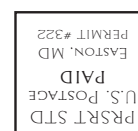
In 1985, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department established the Career Firefighter of the Year award to honor a member whose outstanding service and selfless dedication reflect the highest traditions of the department.

It's the highest commendation the department bestows upon one of its own – and for 2011, that person is Lt. Marc Davidson, an instructor/officer in the Basic Training Unit at the Fire and Rescue Academy.

"Marc is a natural leader," said Battalion Chief Jim Hedrick, during a ceremony for Davidson, last

SEE DAVIDSON, PAGE 4

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Amazing lot! Gorgeous updated home with custom heated in-ground pool and large, fenced yard backing to 16th fairway! Lots of updates. Rear deck. Garage. Gleaming hardwood floors. Full, daylight basement. 2 fireplaces. Kitchen with granite & breakfast area. Vaulted ceilings. Great location! No HOA! **FX7604499**



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Gorgeous sunlit home with lots of curb appeal! Classic brick front. Cul-de-sac street. Nicely landscaped lot backing to trees. 2 decks + private screened-in deck with hot tub. Gleaming hardwood floors. Main lvl study. Updated kitchen w/granite & stainless steel. Family room with brick FP. Recessed lighting. 4 BR's up including MBR w/3 closets & full BA. Finished walk-out basement. **FX7635046**



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ENTERTAINMENT

To have community events listed in Centre View, e-mail to centreview@connectionnewspapers.com. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412.

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS

ZUMBA Classes. 7 to 8 p.m. Latin based dance fitness class. The first class is free; afterward it's \$7-\$9 per class. At Cornerstone Montessori School, 4455 Brookfield Corporate Drive, Suite 201, Chantilly. Visit www.gozumbafun.com.

THURSDAY/JULY 28

Story Time. 9 to 10 a.m. Free. Emmie the Clown will be conducting a children's reading club called Red Nose Readers. At Chick-fil-A at Chantilly Place, 4412 Chantilly Place, Chantilly. Call 703-631-2253.

FRIDAY/JULY 29

Swing Dancing. 9 p.m. to midnight. Admission is \$15. With the band, The Nighthawks. Beginner swing lesson from 8:30 to 9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road (Route 28 near the airport), Herndon.

JULY 29 TO AUG. 7

"Hairspray." The Alliance Theatre presents the hit, Broadway musical, "Hairspray," this summer at Chantilly High. "Hairspray" has delighted audiences by sweeping them away to 1960s Baltimore where change is in the air. Lovable, plus-sized heroine, Tracy Turnblad, has a passion for dancing and wins a spot on local, TV dance program, "The Corny Collins Show." Overnight, she's transformed from outsider to teen celebrity. Can a larger-than-life teen manage to vanquish the program's reigning princess, integrate the television show and find true love while singing and dancing, without musing her hair? Performances are Friday, July 29, at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, July 30, at 4 p.m.; Sunday, July 31, at 2 p.m.; Monday, Aug. 1, at 7:30 p.m.; Thursday-Friday-Saturday, Aug. 4-5-6, at 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, Aug. 7, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$16, adults; \$14, children 12 and under; and senior citizens, \$14. Those ordering 10 or more tickets online receive a \$2/ticket discount. (Use coupon code 10PLUS when checking out).

JULY 30

Pole Dancing Classes. 2:30 to 4 p.m. Free. Drop in and experience the latest in pole fitness. Sponsored by DivaFit Studios in Chantilly. Visit www.divafitonline.com or email info.ashburn@divafitonline.com.

SUNDAY, JULY 31 TO THURSDAY, AUG. 4

Vacation Bible School. Centreville Community Bible Church invites rising K-6th grade children to join in adventures and fun at its Vacation Bible School — Inside Out & Upside Down on Main Street. Meeting at Deer Park Elementary, 15109 Carlbern Drive, Centreville. Sunday, July 31 through Thursday, Aug. 4 from 6 to 8 p.m. Contact Brooke at brookeashley29@yahoo.com; or 703-727-2009. Visit www.ccbc-va.com.

FRIDAY/AUG. 5

Swing Dancing. 9 p.m. to midnight. Admission is \$15. With JP McDermott and Western Bop. Drop-in beginner swing lesson from 8:30 to 9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

THURSDAY/AUG. 11

Story Time. 9 to 10 a.m. Free. Emmie the Clown will be conducting a children's reading club called Red Nose Readers. At Chick-fil-A at Chantilly Place, 4412 Chantilly Place, Chantilly. Call 703-631-2253.

FRIDAY/AUG. 12

Swing Dancing. 9 p.m. to midnight. Admission is \$15. With the Deja Blue Blues Band. Drop-in beginner Swing lesson from 8:30 to 9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

SATURDAY/AUG. 13

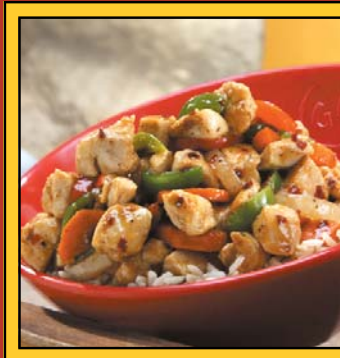
Super Science Saturdays. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Free. The theme is "Energy." Super Science Saturdays take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month, offering activities focused a different science concept. Through demonstrations and hands-on activities, visitors will become immersed in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) topics related to aviation and space exploration. At the National Air and Space Museum, Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air and Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly. Visit: <http://www.nasm.si.edu/events/superscience/>.

Sully Civil War Weekend. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Troops recreate Civil War daily life as re-enactors demonstrate the varied work of the army. House tour includes artifacts rarely on exhibit belonging to the Haight family, mid-19th century residents at Sully. \$8 adults, \$6 seniors and children. 703-708-0861.

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ROUNDUPS

Police Seek Serial Cutter

Fairfax County police are investigating reports of a man who follows young women in retail stores, cuts them and slips away. Most recently, officers responded to the Forever 21 Store in Fair Oaks Mall on Monday, July 25, around 5:30 p.m., for a report of a woman who suffered a one-and-a-half-inch wound in her buttocks.

The 18-year-old victim was shopping when she noticed clothes that had fallen off of a rack behind her and saw a man bending down to pick them up. She abruptly felt a sharp pain and believed one of the hangars had struck her. A short time later, she discovered her denim shorts had been slashed and her buttocks had been cut and were bleeding.

Store employees quickly contacted security, who summoned police. Detectives believe this attack may be linked to four others that have taken place in Fairfax County retail stores since February. The most recent one occurred in the Marshall's store in the Greenbriar Town Center, June 20, around 2:45 p.m.

In each case, the suspect distracts his victim before cutting her. The victims have all been teenagers or women or in their early 20s. The suspect is described as Hispanic, in his late 20s, around 5 feet 6 inches and heavyset. On July 25, he was wearing white shorts and a short-sleeved shirt.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, email at <http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org> or text "TIP187" plus a message to CRIMES/274637 or call police at 703-691-2131.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, July 28, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. Residents should install the child safety seats themselves, so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed. Because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140.

Centreville Farmers' Market

The farmers' market has returned to Centreville. Every Friday from 3:30-6:30 p.m., local vendors sell their wares at the Trinity Centre office park, 5875 Trinity Parkway (off Route 29). The market features a variety of items, including fruits, vegetables, meats, baked goods, sweets and spices. The next farmers markets' are July 29 and Aug. 5. A partnership of Smart Markets Inc. and Trinity Centre, it will run through October. For more information, contact Jean Janssen at jean@smartmarkets.org.

Clarification

In the story, "Speaking Out to Prevent Tragedies," in the July 21 Centre View, in the 2009 FCPS survey, of 42,582 students total, nearly 67 percent of all high-school seniors, 8,641, had used alcohol, and 38.2 percent, 4,960, had used marijuana. Nearly 5 percent — almost 4,000 students — said they'd been raped in their lifetime.

Shelter Cat Adoptions Resume

The Fairfax County Animal Shelter has reopened for cat adoptions. In celebration, it's hosting ExtravaCATza! 2011 and will also extend summer adoptions through August. As part of the event, the first 100 cats adopted from the shelter during July and August will receive a free spay or neuter at the shelter's veterinarian. There will also be no adoption fee for cats 7 years or older.

The facility is reopening for cat adoptions after closing temporarily in June after an outbreak of suspected virulent systemic Calicivirus. After the outbreak, the shelter enacted a very strict cleaning regimen to eliminate the virus from all cat housing areas. No signs of the feline illness have been present in the shelter among its cats since the June outbreak.

The shelter will be open its normal adoption hours for cats, dogs and other animals throughout the month: Tuesdays-Fridays, noon-6:30 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The shelter is at 4500 West Ox Road in Fairfax. For more information, call 703-830-1100.

NEWS

Community's Help Needed

WFCM seeks 1,300 backpacks for local students.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

For many children, the start of a new school year is exciting because they get new outfits, pencils, notebooks, lunch boxes and backpacks. But for those whose parents can't afford to buy them these things, it can be embarrassing.

However, thanks to Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) and the local community, that doesn't have to be the case. It may be summertime outside, but the WFCM is already focused on September — hard at work collecting backpacks for the 24 elementary, middle and high schools in Centreville, Chantilly and Clifton.

School counselors tell WFCM how many backpacks are needed, and, this year, it's more than 1,300. "It's the same amount as last year," said WFCM's Terri Kelly, organizing the backpack drive. "So the need hasn't lessened any."

Centreville, Chantilly, Westfield and Mountain View high schools requested 340 total, and the four middle schools need 185. The 16 elementary schools asked for a total of 780 backpacks.

The new packs are provided at no cost to those students receiving free or reduced-cost lunches. Filling them with new school supplies is the Reston-based nonprofit, Kids R First, which services the Chantilly, Centreville and Westfield school pyramids.

But with so many students in need of backpacks, WFCM needs help from local residents to meet the demand. "We're very appreciative of all the churches, businesses, individuals and organizations that have supported and continue to support our program," said Kelly. "But the need is so great that we need the community at large and individuals to pitch in and drop off a backpack or two and help these kids start the school year right."

Especially in demand are large-sized backpacks with no wheels. "Middle- and high-school students say the smaller ones aren't big enough to hold more than two or three textbooks," said Kelly. "And in the elementary schools, fifth- and sixth-graders need the larger sizes, too."

Donations may be dropped off any time before Aug. 12. They'll be delivered directly to the schools, where school staff and PTA members will fill them with supplies. Bring backpacks to the Centreville WFCM office at 14631 Lee Highway, No. 313, Monday-Fri-



PHOTO COURTESY OF JEANETTE NAGEL

Terri Kelly holds some of the backpacks that have been donated.

day, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information or directions, call 703-825-1996.

All backpack donations are tax-deductible, and WFCM will give receipts to contributors to use for tax purposes. Besides holding a student's books, papers and other items for schools, new backpacks also serve another important function.

"It's helpful for kids to have a sense of starting fresh," said Kelly. "And for a lot of these kids, it may be the one thing they get new. They may get hand-me-down clothes and shoes; but if they have a new backpack and supplies, it gives them a good foundation for the school year."

With so many families living on the edge of a financial precipice, these days, any extra expense — an illness, car repair, Christmas presents or back-to-school costs — could push them over the edge. That's why Kelly says community support of the backpack program is so vital.

"WFCM's main ministry is to provide food for these families and to help them save money for their other expenses," she said. So in these tough, economic times, if residents can lend a hand by contributing some backpacks for children in need, said Kelly, "It helps their families keep to their budgets and puts a little money in their pockets for rent, utilities and gasoline — the basic necessities."

TIME TO HELP

WFCM Seeks Food, Volunteers

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries' (WFCM) food pantry urgently needs donations of jelly; jam; spaghetti sauce; dry spaghetti/pasta; canned meats, fruit, spaghetti and vegetables (no green beans); pancake mix and syrup; and cereal. Also needed are deodorant and toilet paper. (Toiletory items cannot be purchased with food stamps). Bring all items to WFCM's food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive (near Backyard

Grill and Bar) in Chantilly. Volunteers are also needed:

Food Pantry:

❖ Baggers are needed Mondays, Tuesdays and the first and third Thursdays, from 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

❖ Baggers/stockers are needed on the first and third Saturdays, from 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., plus a stocker on Wednesdays, from 10 a.m.-noon.

One-day volunteers:

❖ On Aug. 3 and Sept. 7 — Wednesdays from 9 a.m.-noon — four to six strong people are needed to help receive and shelve

cases of USDA food.

Thrift store:

❖ General assistance needed Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. A regular weekly volunteer is needed Thursdays, from 1-6 p.m., as well as Saturdays, from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information, contact Volunteer Manager Annette Bosley at 703-988-9656.

❖ Donations of furniture in excellent condition for resale in the thrift store are especially needed, as well as one volunteer to help move furniture to be given to clients.

Davidson Named 2011 Firefighter of the Year

FROM PAGE 1

Wednesday, July 20, at the Massey Building. “He leads by example and really enjoys his job and wants to be totally proficient at it. He also takes initiative to make things better.”

At the academy, Davidson, 46, teaches recruits the skills required to become a firefighter/EMT. He also mentors them during their 20 weeks of training. But he was recognized for more than his three years there; he was feted for the entirety of his 16 years with the Department.

Noting all the skills Davidson brings to the table, Hedrick told him, “You’ve earned this award.” Hedrick, who supervised him at the Dunn Loring Station from 2001-03, said Davidson always placed his family first. “He shows that you can take care of your family and still do an outstanding job,” said Hedrick. “He always thought of his co-workers, too, and that made him special throughout the years.”

Capt. Chester Waters, Davidson’s immediate supervisor at the academy, said he “not only rose to the level of instructor, but raised the bar. I’m blessed to have him on my team. He always seems to have his hands in a lot of projects at once and is one of the hardest-working people I’ve ever met. His work ethic and passion prompted me to nominate him for this prestigious award.”

Davidson began his career at the Tysons Corner fire station, and technician Jacques Cochran, of that station, also had high



Lt. Marc Davidson

praise for him. “Although he went out on his first call with his hat on backwards, everything in his life and career with the Fire Department has led up to this award,” said Cochran.

He said Davidson’s mother instilled his love of teaching in him, and his experience in the Marine Corps made him value organization. Also stressing Davidson’s leadership abilities and devotion to family, Cochran called him “a template for what a firefighter should be. I’m

grateful to have him as a friend and proud that he’s receiving this well-deserved honor.”

County Fire Chief Ron Mastin said there are so many excellent people in the Department, it’s a challenge to select just one for this award. But among its 1,400 members, he said, Davidson is one of the most outstanding.

Davidson and his family live in Howard County, Md., so he has quite a long drive to and from his job each day. But, said Mastin, “That’s the type of dedication he has. He comes in early and stays late to make sure everyone he’s working for and with will be successful. He has a positive influence on everyone he comes in contact with, and we appreciate all he’s done for this organization.”

Mastin then presented the Firefighter of the Year helmet to Davidson, along with a

savings bond contributed for this award each year by an anonymous donor. Afterward, Davidson stepped to the podium and addressed the crowd.

He thanked his family “because all the work I did came at a cost.” He called his mother “the biggest influence in my life, the way she cares for people. And I learned a lot about work ethic from my brother.”

In the Marines, Davidson was a member of the elite Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Co. (ANGLICO) unit, and retired Marine Warrant Officer III Dan Hazeltine – who served in ANGLICO with him – was at last week’s ceremony. Acknowledging his presence, Davidson said, “Those influences helped me step up to the next level.”

He also thanked all the speakers for the things he learned from them, as well. “This is all about working hard and providing the best services you can,” said Davidson. “Thank you very much for this award. I appreciate the honor and the opportunity to thank everyone who’s been an influence on my life.”

Afterward, his 12-year-old son, Marc Daniel, said he was happy about his father’s honor. “He definitely deserves it,” said Marc.

Agreeing, Davidson’s daughter, Victoria Marie, 14, said her dad “downplays it, but he works really hard, and I’m proud of him.”

Denise, his wife of 20 years, was overcome with emotion as she saw her husband being recognized by his colleagues and su-



Lt. Marc Davidson with his family, (from left) daughter Victoria Marie, wife Denise and son Marc Daniel.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

supervisors. “He’s quite possibly the best father in the world,” she said. “Once he’s home, he’s there 100 percent – except when his pager goes off.”

Furthermore, she added, “He’s supported my career as a physical therapist at Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland. He’s allowed me to be a mom to the best of my abilities, and he’s such a good role model for our children. He’s the love of my life; and if there’s such a thing as a soul mate, then I’ve been lucky enough to find mine. I’m so proud of him.”

Tong Pleads Guilty of Killing His Wife

FROM PAGE 1

the bedroom floor, between the victim and the bed,” she said. “It was a .45-caliber, semi-automatic pistol.”

Another crime-scene detective, Richard Buisch, identified autopsy photos he’d taken depicting Tran’s gunshot wounds. Then GMU Police Sgt.

Truong Ly took the stand. He’d interpreted for homicide Det. Brian Colligan, the day of the murder, when Colligan interviewed Tong. And Colligan told the court what Tong told him.

“He informed me that he shot and killed his wife, Kathleen Tran, in his wife’s bedroom,” said Colligan. “He said he thought she was having an affair.”

Colligan said Tran had left their home at midnight and Tong didn’t know where she was, so he called John. “John said his mother was with him and had just picked him up from a friend’s house,” said Colligan. “They both returned home after 1 a.m.”

“[Tong] said he was upset and confronted his son about his mother driving him home,” continued the detective. “[Tong] said there was another man in the car with them and he didn’t think [that] was appropriate. John

told him he was crazy, and then [Tran] got involved in the argument.

They went to the third level of the house, where James and [Tran] tried to separate Tong and John.”

Then the argument stopped and, said Colligan, “Tong said he retrieved his .45-caliber gun from the master bedroom and put it on his person.

Around 1:30 a.m., Tong went downstairs and drank a beer. He said he called his brother and sister in Vietnam to say he wouldn’t be seeing them anymore because he was going to end things.

He only talked to his sister because his brother wasn’t there. I asked him if he was saying goodbye to his sister because he was going to kill his wife and commit suicide, and he said yes.”

Colligan said Tran overheard the call and went to her bedroom — the spare bedroom, where Tong said she’d slept for several years. “He knocked on her door and said he wanted to talk with her, and she let him in,” said Colligan. “They argued over marital affairs and she said she no longer respected him.”

Then, said the detective, “With his left

hand, Tong took out the gun, pointed it at her and fired. The gun then had a slight malfunction, but he fixed it so it would fire again. She tried to leave and he fired two more rounds in her direction, and she fell to the ground.”

James then rushed into the room because his mother had yelled out for help, and Tong told him to go get his brother. “[Tong] said he put the gun into his mouth to commit suicide, but John came into the room and tackled him,” said Colligan. “The gun went off again, but the bullet missed [Tong] and went by his ear. He and John struggled for the weapon and John beat him up.”

According to Colligan, “Tong said he knew the third shot hit [Tran] because that’s when she fell to the ground. He said he believes he fired five shots — three times at his wife and two times afterward, in an attempt to kill himself.”

The grand jury indicted Tran on Jan. 18 and he entered his guilty pleas July 18 — exactly six months later. Following his conviction, Judge Lorraine Nordlund set his sentencing for Nov. 4. Since his arrest, Tong’s been held without bond in the Adult Detention Center.



LOUISE KRAFT/CENTRE VIEW

Allies in Prevention

SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now) honored Dan Fleig at its annual spring luncheon. He and his wife Norma are Fairfax County Certified Foster Parents. Dan Fleig developed the We-R-Safe child abuse prevention training program. He and his wife were named Foster Parents of the Year in 2009. Dan Fleig is also a basketball coach in the Chantilly Youth Association. Pictured with Dan Fleig are ABC 7 news anchor Leon Harris and executive director of SCAN of Northern Virginia Sonia Quinonez.

Park Authority Alters Field Access Policy

Fairfax County lowers number of athletic field walk-ons without permits from 40 to 20.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
CENTRE VIEW

By the time school begins, signs outlining permit requirements at Fairfax County's 800 athletic fields will have a sticker with the number 20 slapped over the number 40.

The reason for this is an intense yearlong lobbying effort from Fairfax County athletic groups, parents, coaches and players who want their paid permits to guarantee availability of soccer, baseball and football fields.

Their efforts led to a new permit policy adopted by the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) that requires any group having at least 20 participants, down from 40 under the former rule, to obtain a permit if they want to use a county athletic field.

"It's important that people know that the new regulations do not prevent pick-up games, and we're not targeting any specific groups. We're responding to the reality of the situation," said John Dargle, FCPA director. Along with Fairfax County Public Schools, the FCPA owns and maintains the county's athletic fields.

According to Dargle, the number 20 is supported by simple math of a full-size soccer or football game requiring 22 players on the field at a time. "Many people asked us to lower it to 10 or even eliminate the number of non-permitted players, but we felt that 20 is a reasonable number."

As Fairfax County's population has grown, so has the number of sports teams vying to use the 800 athletic fields throughout the county.

The clashes between permitted sports teams, who pay a seasonal fee for a guaranteed time and space to use a certain field, and "walk-on" players, who don't have a permit — and sometimes don't want to leave — have been escalating.

THE PROBLEM was intensified by the fact that Park Authority regulations required only those groups with 40 or more players to obtain permits. That created difficulties for the



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/CENTRE VIEW

A group of soccer players practice at Oak Marr Park in Oakton.

police and others trying to resolve disputes between permitted groups and organized groups of walk-ons with fewer than 40 players.

"These are unpermitted groups of up to 40 people who are using the fields when others need or have been given permits. The unpermitted groups many times refuse to leave or ask for more time," said Fedra Jamous, a Fairfax mother of four, who told the FCPA board she was concerned by the growing number of "walk-ons."

Jamous was one of hundreds of parents, coaches and players who lobbied the FCPA to reduce the number of players using the county's fields without permits.

"My 8-year-old son is part of a local soccer club that uses the fields consistently throughout the year, including the winter," said Shawn Fici in an e-mail to the FCPA. "It is difficult when our young boys have to contend for field space and/or contentious groups of teenagers or young adults that don't seem to follow the rules."

MelaJo Kubacki of Alexandria wrote that "these unpermitted groups are using fields when others need them and have been given the permits to use them. Many times the unpermitted groups refuse to leave when asked, which has a direct impact on the scheduled, permitted users."

The volume of complaints grew so loud that the FCPA, in concert with the county's Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS),

which schedules, monitors and issues the permits, and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA), voted at two separate meetings in the past two weeks to officially amend the policy. Now, any group of 20 or more is required to obtain a permit and pay the required fee of \$5.50 per athletic participant, which is good for the entire sport season.

ACCORDING TO Paul Gillbert, executive director of the NVRPA, the 12-member board passed the amendment at its July 21 meeting to be consistent with FCPA regulations.

"This is much more of an issue with Fairfax County facilities, however we share the same regulations and they asked us to make this change for consistency," Gilbert said.

Judy Pedersen, public information officer of the FCPA, said coordination among the various athletic groups, park authorities and county agencies was necessary to amend the policy.

"We want everyone singing from the same sheet of music when it's time for enforcement. There are many different entities involved, and we feel, honestly, that we have been true to bringing everyone together. We feel we've accomplished what everyone was asking," Pedersen said.

In April, FCPA co-hosted a public outreach meeting with the NCS and other community stakeholders. "We had about 40 people in attendance and about 30 speakers at that meet-

ing," Pedersen said. "Then we took comments from the public for a month, and we received several hundred e-mails and letters. About 95 percent encouraged us to go to 20 or lower."

"We share the desire to ensure that families and young neighborhood kids out for an afternoon of enjoyable pickup play are not impacted," said NCS Director Chris Leonard, in a Dec. 2, 2010, letter to FCPA Chair William Boule. "As NCS has reported ... the number of annual walk-on violations cited by monitors and officers has ranged from 156 to 235. ... The volume of complaints and the stories we have all heard about walk-on use have demonstrated the problem is much more prevalent, but because the current policy does not consider most of these incidents to be violations, they are not reported as such and they are not able to be effectively dealt with"

WHILE REVENUE enhancement was not a primary motivation for the change, the increased revenue will help with field maintenance.

"We're glad that we've moved forward," Pedersen said. "We took a lot of time to deliberate. The Park Authority did not want to set up roadblocks. The majority felt we had to respond to a well-studied and requested change from the athletic community."

She added that monitoring the fields is going to be the most critical component in making the policy change successful.

"It doesn't end here. NCS has gone ahead and is reorganizing its field monitor program, breaking it up into smaller groups and districts, so players will know field monitors. We will be looking at this again in another six months, to see if we've accomplished what the community wants," Pedersen said.

The ultimate penalty for not obtaining a permit is a Class IV misdemeanor, which could result in a \$250 fine.

Although that number has been well publicized, Pedersen said she does not ever recall anyone getting cited.

"This change is all about safety, security, playability and providing access to everyone in a healthy, meaningful way. We are in no way shape or form trying to stop people from using parks as they always have," Pedersen said.

For more information on reserving a field, field locations and obtaining permits, contact NCS at 703-324-4600.

For after-hours To contact a field monitors after regular business hours to assist permit holders, resolve conflicts and enforce facility use rules, call 703-324-5515.

GOP Candidate Calls Foul on Incumbent's Campaign Signs

BY VICTORIA ROSS
CENTRE VIEW

With less than one month before the Aug. 23 primary, campaign signs are popping up everywhere and so are complaints about political shenanigans.

Jason Flanary, the candidate running against Steve Hunt in the 37th State Senate District Republican primary, showed he had his eye on the general-election prize.

On Friday, July 22, Flanary issued a news release complaining that incumbent Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) was violating Fairfax County zoning laws by posting campaign signs too early without a permit.

Marsden and his campaign issued its rebuttal news release Saturday morning, July 23.

"After being notified by Fairfax County Zoning Enforcement Inspector Bruce Miller of the signs, Marsden staff took immediate action to remove the signs. Our campaign

never instructed supporters to place signs anywhere but in legal locations. Sen. Marsden did not place a single sign.

"We will take all necessary actions to right this situation," according to Marsden's news release.

WHEN CONTACTED about the issue, Keil Brunner, Marsden's campaign manager, said "it seems a little petty at this point in the race. We went and picked up the signs."

In an interview after Marsden issued the news release, he said he was more concerned about the issues than the signs.

"Yard signs are part of campaigns, but I'm more focused on the issues affecting families and business in Northern Virginia. I am running for re-election to build a better future for Fairfax County by investing in education, improving our transportation infrastructure and protecting our quality of life," Marsden said.

OPINION

What's Your Advice?

Be part of the Centre View Insiders edition.

The Centre View staff and interns are already preparing the annual newcomers and community guide. We invite our readers to help with providing insiders' advice and information.

Below are several suggested questions, but we encourage you **EDITOR!** to participate in any way.

We'll print selections from the answers along with your name. Answer one question or all of them; give as many answers as you'd like to each question.

What "insider's tip" about your town would you share with a friend? Places to go, things to do, can't-miss events, ideas on what it means to live here.

What advice would you give new residents on how to make themselves at home and get involved here?

What tips do you have for someone new to your town? What interesting, almost secret places would you like to have learned about earlier when you moved in?

We invite you to share the expertise you've gained in living in your hometown with your

neighbors and with people new to the area.

Send us a short letter: what do you love about your community? Tell us about one special place you've discovered. Does your family have different favorites in different seasons? How did you get involved in your town? Share your favorite park. Tell us about your favorite annual event. Send us a photo of your family at one of your favorite spots or engaged in a favorite activity.

We also ask for input from local arts organi-

zations, civic organizations, houses of worship, clubs, schools, businesses and other community institutions. Send us information on dates and details for major events for the upcoming year, information on how to get involved in nonprofits and charities, details about your club or other organization.

The Insiders Guide will publish the last week in August. Send in your tips and answers by Aug. 17 to smauren@connectionnewspapers.com.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Goodbye, Friend

To the Editor:

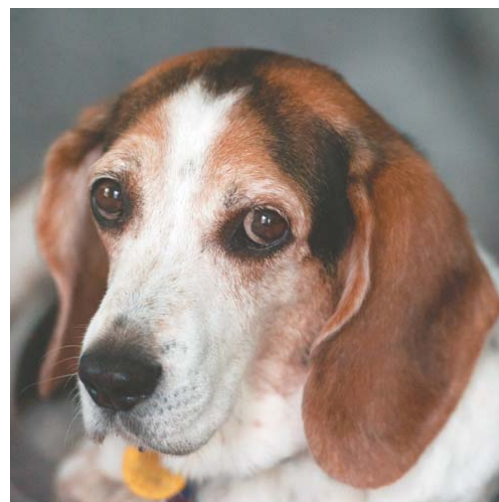
Xeno, you were my dog long before you came into my life on that chilly November day in 2000, a childhood wish long harbored. The reality of you, as opposed to my inner 10-year-old's vision of Charles M. Schulz's iconic Snoopy, became crystal clear the moment you howled so loudly and insistently I leaped out of my chair, phone in hand, ready to call the emergency veterinary hotline because you must have been grievously injured ... to discover a neighbor walking their dog.

Your time with us encouraged me to develop an extensive knowledge of carpet cleaning and odor suppression and removal products, skills at operating steam cleaners, and a knowledge of carpet cleaning companies in the area that were most responsive.

You were an explorer, an opportunistic escape artist who took every slightly opened door or gap in the gate that was presented to follow your nose and the interesting scents. This got you into trouble a few times — most notably when you were sideswiped by a car (you didn't yield).

Your 'walkabouts' brought us out into the community; there's nothing that'll bring a few neighbors together better than a missing dog. You also brought us some good Samaritans, some wonderful people who found you wandering, invited you into their cars, and brought you home.

You brought out a gentle, playful part of my husband that was a pleasure to watch. You tolerated the addition of our children to the household — particularly when the kids started



Xeno

dropping food on the floor.

You taught us that old dogs can learn new tricks. You'd been with us for eight years when you realized you didn't have to wait for the food to drop on the floor; you could just stretch up and snatch it off the table when no one was

looking.

You lived with us for almost 11 years, and your howl at full force continued to be as shocking as the first time I heard it — it resonated within a square mile radius and could be mistaken for a civil defense siren. At 3 p.m. your bark solicited a smile and a shake of the head, "Wow! That's a loud dog." The 11 p.m. potty break was always attended with trepidation ... would you do your business quickly and get back in the house? Or would you explore every blade of grass in the backyard, increasing the likelihood that you'd find something to howl at and subsequently earn a noise violation from the police department and wake up the neighbor's baby they had just spent five hours trying to get it to fall asleep?

Xeno Cobb, a long-time resident of Chantilly (in dog years), died on July 22 at approximately 12:17 p.m. after a brief illness. Xeno provided his family with companionship, laughter and ear-splitting howls day and night. You will be missed.

— DEB COBB

Write Us

Centre View welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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A Connection Newspaper

PEOPLE

Author Shares Her Work

Judy Link Cuddehe reads her books at Barnes & Noble.

By MAYA HOROWITZ
CENTRE VIEW

About two dozen children listened to Judy Link Cuddehe, an author and illustrator from Oak Hill, read her books "Forgive me?" and "Mom Says I am Just Plain Squirrely" at Barnes & Noble in Fairfax on Friday, July 22. Afterward, the children colored how-to illustrations from one of Cuddehe's books.

"She's such a talented woman. I'm happy she could be here today so everyone could see her new books and get to know her," said Laurie Durnell, who does marketing and sales for Cuddehe.

Terri Allworth of Oak Hill agreed that it was a "great morning. ... I think [her books are] right on par for elementary school age kids."

"I love the artwork. I was truly impressed to find that we had such



Author Judy Link Cuddehe reads her book "Forgive Me?" to children at Barnes & Noble.

a talented illustrator and author living on our street," said Lauren Brownstein, one of Cuddehe's neighbors in Oak Hill.

Cuddehe has written and illustrated four books and has a fifth, "The Wondrous Autobiography of Leaf, Erik's Son" on the way.

Her latest book, which she described as "probably my favorite" has a more mature theme about life

cycles and growing old. "Big Al Has a Foul Attitude" deals with a short, vegetarian owl "with a chip on his wing," who learns you can't judge a book by his cover. "Forgive me?" is about Cuddehe's dog's misdeeds and her plea for forgiveness.

"Everything inspires me," she said. "I have 20 new ideas for drawings and stories every day."

SEE CUDDEHE, PAGE 11



Patrick from France, 17 yrs. Loves the outdoors and playing soccer. Patrick's dream has been to spend time in America learning about our customs and attending American high school.



Elisa from Italy, 16 yrs. Likes to play tennis, swim, loves to dance. Elisa hopes to play American softball and learn American 'slang' while in the USA.

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PET CONNECTION

Partners, Not Pets: Working Dogs in Fairfax County

FROM PAGE 1

on this day at the facility. Over the course of five hours, instructors will run six to eight 1-year-old dogs brought by breeders contracted with CBP through a series of tests to see if the dogs have the aptitude to become narcotics detection dogs.

The instructors are playing a basic game of fetch with these dogs. They have several “toys” of different materials: rubber, wood, aluminum, all about 12 inches long. First, they bring the leashed dog into a fenced-in area, talk to it, try and get it excited about the toy, and then they toss the toy into tall grass. They let the dog see where the toy

FIRST IN A SERIES

lands, and then release the dog’s leash and let it seek the toy. Each throw, they make the game a little more challenging, not letting the dog see where it lands, and maybe adding some distractions.

What are the instructors looking for? How does the dog search; does the dog use its eyes or its nose to search; do the tall grass or other environmental factors bother or distract the dog; how long does it take the dog to find the toy; does the dog maintain interest in the game; what is the dog’s level of confidence in this new environment and situation?

If the dog passes these initial tests, more follow. Instructors will throw a toy past a bowl of water and then past dog food and see if the dog stays focused on the toy. If the dog passes these tests, there are environmental tests they’ll do: conveyor belts, cars with running engines, wet cement floors — all tests to see if the dog has the interest in the game despite environmental



“The great thing about these dogs is their ‘life-switch’ ability. When I put these pants on and he hears the jingling of the buckle he gets ready for work. Everything about this job is a game for him, he does everything for his reward,” said Fairfax County K-9 Officer Jason Herbert of his partner Thunder. They are pictured at a July 18 training session at the Fairfax County Police Facility in Chantilly and are working on building searches for narcotics.



PHOTOS BY DEB COBB/CENTRE VIEW

Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Officer Cpl. Jeff Richards and his dog Rex work through a training exercise at the MWAA Canine Facility at Dulles Airport on June 7. Rex is an explosives detection dog. Richards points to the areas along the suitcase where scent is likely to leak — in this case, the zipper — and Rex is trained to follow with his nose. The teams train regularly to search vehicles, luggage, cargo, freight, the airport terminals (Dulles and National), wide-body and narrow body aircraft. When Rex finds and raises an alert to explosives in the suitcases in this training exercise, he is rewarded with his favorite toy, a rubber ball — and a lot of praise.



“This dog has such a play drive he’d chase and fetch the ball until the sun set,” said Fairfax County Detective DJ Kline of his CBP-trained narcotics dog Stuart. The 9-year-old Lab and his handler Kline work in the Organized Crime and Narcotics Division of the Fairfax County Police Department.

changes. “That translates into the dog’s ability to stay focused on the job,” Szubinski said. To weed out aggressive dogs, they’ll crowd a dog, shoot blanks out of a gun and open an umbrella to see how it reacts.

If the dog passes all of the preliminary tests and the health review, it is purchased by CBP and begins training.

THESE WORKING DOG TEAMS are trained in a variety of specialties — narcotics detection, explosives detection, accelerant detection, tracking, bedbug detection, termite detection, and contraband agricultural product detection. The dogs received extensive scent training. They were generally exposed to desired scents and trained to respond certain ways when they smelled them, such as with a passive response, like pointing the nose at the source of the scent or an aggressive response like scratching at the scent. When dogs successfully find the scent, they are rewarded with praise and either their toy and a game with their handler or some kibble. Whether the dogs are rewarded with play or food depends on their occupation, breed and, to some degree, the choice of the organization that trained them. All of these dogs work with a singular focus to get their reward.

“You train, train, train, train. 10-hour days of training every other Monday, 20 hours a month,” Officer Damien Austin of the Herndon Police Department said. His partner is Smokey, a bi-colored German shepherd. They have been on the street since January 2009. Austin said he became a police officer so that he could work with a police dog. Austin and Smokey trained with the Fairfax County Police Canine Unit, and regularly train with Fairfax County K-9 teams.

“The calls we go on are usually the worst of the worst — you have to have courage. We go into dark places. We have to trust the dog,” Austin said.

KEEGAN is the Fairfax County Fire Marshal’s newest accelerant detection dog. He is the fourth such dog the County has had, in the longest-running program of its kind in Virginia.

“My training exercise starts at 4 a.m. and goes through a 24-hour day,” said Investigator Terry Hall, Keegan’s handler. Keegan is food-rewarded, which means every time he finds a scent he’s trained on — one of 21 ignitable liquids (products that contain hydrocarbons) — he gets a food reward. It also means that Hall must schedule train-

ing exercises at least twice a day for 15-20 minutes, so that Keegan gets his two cups of food.

“Through the month, fire debris from accidental fires of all characteristics that are negative for liquid accelerants is collected,” Hall said. “All different articles: clothing, shoes, things from the Salvation Army that they can’t use, is what I use to train Keegan every day.”

He sets out 20 items, burned down to 20 percent, and then adds a pin drop of a partially evaporated solution of a liquid accelerant.

Fire investigators use a number of investigative techniques to determine the cause of fires in Fairfax County. When a structure has been destroyed, and there are no physical indicators of the nature of the fire left — such as burn patterns — Keegan can find chemical residues under heaps of ash and debris. He alerts when he finds the odor of an ignitable liquid.

On the scene, Keegan pinpoints where to collect the evidence so the lab can identify the accelerants. The investigators may see burn patterns that indicate flammable liquids, but because of the nature of fire, it is very labor- and resource-intensive to col-

SEE CANINES TEAM UP, PAGE 9

PET CONNECTION

Canines Team Up with Officers

FROM PAGE 8

lect and process samples from a fire scene to locate the residual accelerant. Keegan can pinpoint it in moments, reducing the time it takes to collect evidence. If Keegan doesn't find anything, it makes investigators more comfortable ruling out incendiary liquids as the cause of the fire.

IN 2010, the Fairfax County Police Department had 13 Patrol K-9 teams on active status. They were called to service 3,549 times. Of those calls, the dogs were deployed on 1,473 calls, 450 of which were "tracks," where a dog team was sent to look for someone or something — like a cast-off article relating to a crime; 246 were searches for people; 605 drug searches were conducted; 60 were tactical deployments, when K-9 teams were deployed with SWAT teams, all of which resulted in 140 felony charges being placed and 185 misdemeanor charges being placed.

"They provide an added layer of safety because dogs can quickly locate a perp and take away his advantage — they take away the ambush advantage," said Lieutenant Shawn Martin, a Fairfax County K-9 officer and supervisor of the Canine Unit. "A dog is also a force multiplier.

A dog will clear and search faster and more effectively. Dogs are more efficient, particularly when clearing buildings, tracking individuals and doing narcotics searches."

Martin and canine partner Nero received a Silver Medal of Valor and a Meritorious Award, respectively, in 2008, after they subdued an armed and violent man who had stolen and crashed a Prince William County police cruiser. "The biggest reward is finding the bad guy," Martin said. "We have made arrests that never would have happened without dogs."

WHAT IS THE HANDLER'S role? "You've got to know how to walk and chew gum at the same time,"



PHOTO BY DEB COBB/CENTRE VIEW

"The best part of this job is that you get to work with your best friend," said Cpl. John Creager of partner Radja, a 7-year-old German shepherd. **"This is not a job for everyone. If you're not a dog person, you're going to have a big issue. She's at my side all the time. It's the ultimate retirement reward — when the dog retires, you get to keep them."** Creager and Radja work for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority at Dulles Airport.

joked Officer Jennifer Jones about the skills a canine handler must have. She is a GBP agriculture detection dog handler at Dulles Airport — once known as the Beagle Brigade. She and her partner, Hudson, inspect incoming international passengers at Dulles to ensure that fruits, plants and meats do not enter the United States, bringing harmful animal, pests, or plant diseases.

She watches him work, looks for alerts, making sure he doesn't eat things off the floor, watches passengers, and ensures that he remains safe in the busy airport environment.

"It is important to understand his viewpoint. The dogs will work until they fall down, so you have to see whether he's hot, tired, sleepy. He's not just a tool. For me, I have a job to do. For him, it's his life," she said.

A handler needs to be empathetic, patient, enthusiastic — "You have to be a partner," Jones said. And, working with a beagle, you must have a sense of humor.

Jones and Hudson work during the peak times that international passengers arrive at Dulles. He alerts around 20 times a day and his accuracy is about 90 percent. Every time he alerts, he gets some kibble.

How do passengers react when he alerts to their bags? "You never know what the trigger will be or who will get upset," said Jones.

Beagles are ideally suited for this work, Jones said. They are friendly, cute, and they have the drive and the ability to deal with the chaos of the airport; they are perfect for this job, and there is always an abundance of them to be adopted and trained for the work.

This is the first part of a series of photo essays that Deb Cobb is doing about working dogs. Subsequent articles will explore assistance dogs, medical detection dogs, and search and rescue dogs. If you have a dog in any of these fields, or work for an organization that trains dogs for these jobs, send an email to Cobb at: dcobb@connectionnewspapers.com

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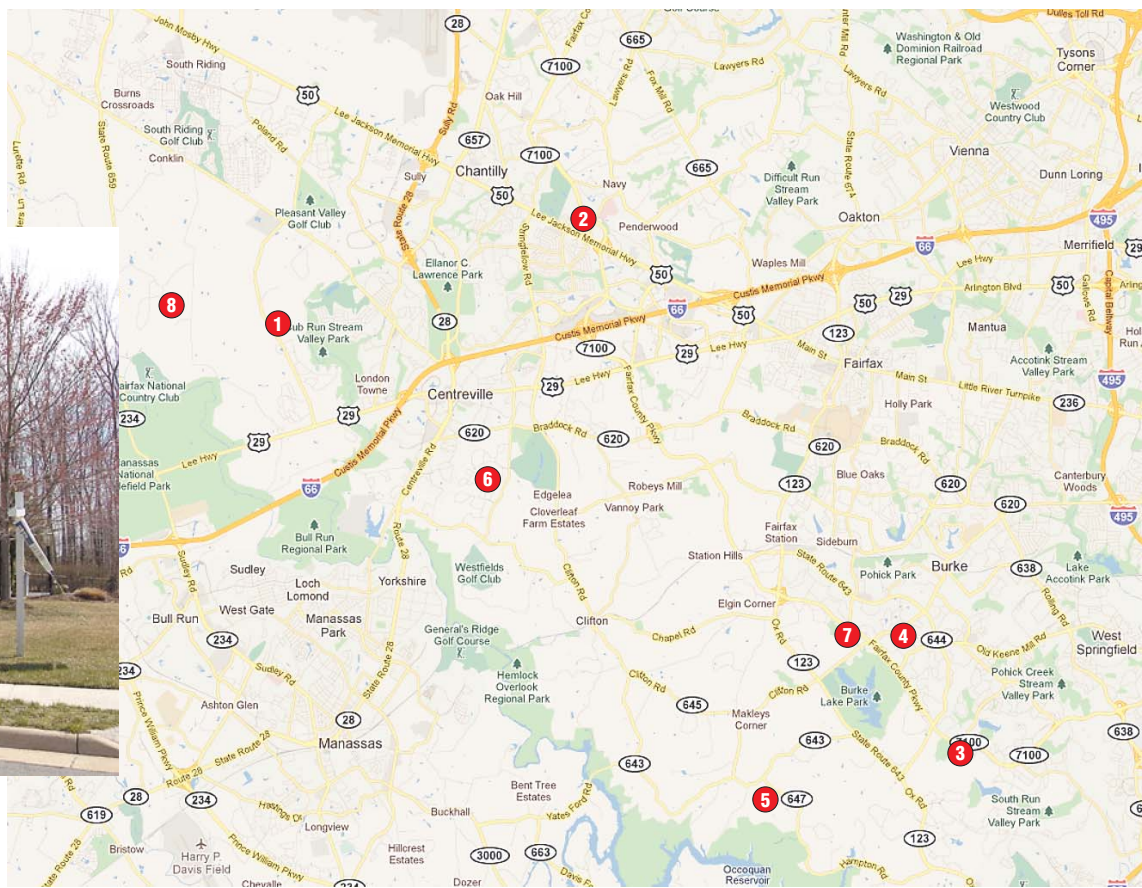
4 6490 Lake Meadow Drive, Burke — \$945,000



3 7708 Huntsman Blvd., Springfield — \$950,000



1 5877 Iron Stone Court, Centreville — \$955,000



8 6309 Fairfax National Way, Centreville — \$850,000

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1 5877 IRON STONE CT	5	5	1		CENTREVILLE	\$955,000	Detached	0.84	VIRGINIA RUN (THE RIDINGS)	06/01/11
2 3963 WOODBERRY MEADOW DR	4	1			FAIRFAX	\$950,019	Detached	0.24	KENSINGTON MANOR	06/24/11
3 7708 HUNTSMAN BLVD	6	6	1		SPRINGFIELD	\$950,000	Detached	0.26	LAKEWOOD HILLS	06/28/11
4 6490 LAKE MEADOW DR	5	4	1		BURKE	\$945,000	Detached	0.58	EDGEWATER	06/30/11
5 8138 RONDELAY LN	5	4	1		FAIRFAX STATION	\$875,000	Detached	5.00	RONDELAY	06/23/11
6 6417 DEEPWOOD FARM DR	5	4	2		CLIFTON	\$870,000	Detached	0.24	LITTLE ROCKY RUN	06/17/11
7 10328 REGENCY STATION DR	4	3	1		FAIRFAX STATION	\$860,000	Detached	0.60	REGENCY STATION	06/30/11
8 6309 FAIRFAX NATIONAL WAY	4	3	1		CENTREVILLE	\$850,000	Detached	5.66	FAIRFAX NATIONAL ESTATES	06/30/11

SOURCE: MRIS, INC. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MRIS, VISIT WWW.MRIS.COM

PEOPLE

Giving Extra Help

Students volunteer as tutors.

BY ARYA DAHAL

Growth and Inspiration through Volunteering and Education (GIVE) is a local organization started and run entirely by a few students from around the county. It has held multiple tutoring sessions at the Fairfax County Police Center in Annandale and at the Nur Center in Falls Church. The peer tutoring sessions are directed toward elementary school students and are conducted entirely by high school students from different schools. Parents are able to bring their children in for tutoring in reading, writing or math for one hour and 30 minutes almost every week. The number of students and tutors attending fluctuates every week because the sessions aren't mandatory.

Along with the two centers from last school year, GIVE will be opening a few more centers in differ-

ent locations. The GIVE team includes Kevin Cao from Fairfax, Kartik Gupta from Langley, Samyu Jothishankar from Chantilly, Saniya Suri from Langley, Avinash Ramesh from McLean and Abrar Omeish. Omeish is from Robinson Secondary School, and the others are from Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. The GIVE team answered a few questions about the organization and its mission.

Q: What was the inspiration behind the start of GIVE?

A: GIVE was inspired by the need for civic engagement and the desire to improve our local community. We could see that many of the kids were in obvious need of help, but we knew many of their families would not be able to afford private tutoring. Thus, with the goal of serving the less fortunate, the idea for GIVE was started.

Q: What is the ongoing goal of GIVE?

A: We seek to invest in the next generation by striving to provide opportunities to students and youth who seek them in the fields of education, empowerment and leadership. We especially emphasize the importance of



A group of students tutoring and being tutored through GIVE.

learning and promote an enthusiastic attitude towards it.

Q: What types of activities or events do you guys hold?

A: Our three main projects are free tutoring, the publication of a children's book and a test-prep book drive. We also participate in events to gather community awareness and fundraise.

Q: What is the hardest part about having an organization?

A: Being entirely student-run, GIVE team members are forced to juggle school, extracurriculars and sports, as well as time for the organization.

Q: What are the future goals of GIVE?

A: GIVE has big plans for the upcoming year. We aim to expand our tutoring program and our AP/SAT book drive across Fairfax County to further the impact of our program.

For more information, visit www.giveyouth.org or contact GIVE at directors@giveyouth.org.

Cuddehe

FROM PAGE 7

She did not always know she wanted to be an author. She got her undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from the Community College of the Air Force and her master's in information systems engineering from Strayer University. She worked for the Air Force for four years then worked for the State Department, then the Department of Commerce. She took off time to have kids and then started her own construction business called Cuddehe Services.

On becoming an author, she said, "It just happened. I didn't set out to do it, but it's America, and you can do what you want."

Her favorite book is P.D. Eastman's classic "Are You My Mother?"

She said she reads all the time. "In my spare moments, I always have my Nook in my hand."

Her genre of choice is adventure and espionage. "I tend to like the stuff that's a lot of shooting and spies. Stuff that's different from my own life."

Cuddehe's family has been very supportive of her career. Her son Mike, 19, attends VCU, and her son Johnny, 16, attends Chantilly High School.

"My husband (John) and kids treat me like a queen, and if you treat that enough you start believing it," she said.

Look for Cuddehe's author/illustrator page on Facebook.com.



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3518 Schuerman House.....\$1,299,999...Sun 1-4.....Kathy Shea.....Weichert..703-795-3946
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All listings due by Tuesday at 3 P.M.

Clothes to a Decision



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

To say that I have a tired wardrobe is an affront to all wardrobes, tired or otherwise. To say that my clothes could use a bit of an update is a bit like saying Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie were undermanned at The Alamo. My lack of initiative with respect to such purchases has been a problem my entire life, beginning with my involvement in the "Husky" department at a very young age. It was primarily my mother's problem until I left home to attend college. College presented its own unique set of circumstances which prevented any significant clothing evolution (maturation?) – on my part. Marriage, a few years later, further complicated these clothing indecisions. Though I held fast and firm to my lack-of-clothing instincts – and deferred my purchases as much as possible, eventually, there were fissures and newer clothes occasionally were purchased, against my worse judgment. However, my wardrobe was never one to be proud of; it was – simply put, one that couldn't be avoided, by my wife, Dina, which of course presented all kinds of discussions.

Time passed. Heck, decades passed; there were some good clothing purchases and some not so good. Generally speaking, it wasn't pretty. After so many years, it became apparent – even to my wife, that perhaps she didn't have the proper training to deal with my preference for "casual attire," shall we say. Juxtaposing the fact that she always dressed nicely and appropriately for the situation, my clothing appearance left a lot to be desired, to put it kindly. To put it succinctly: it was atrocious. But I didn't care too much. I always rationalized that "It's what's inside that counts." I was never a clothes-make-the-man kind of person. I was more of a clothes-cover-the-man kind of person.

Then two-and-a-half years ago, I was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer, "a terminal disease," according to my oncologist, if there ever was one; rather convincingly when he suggested that perhaps I should take that trip I've always dreamed of taking. "WHAT!" At that point, normal had left the building, and whatever "normal" life I thought I had – good or bad, was over and subject to major re-evaluation. There was a new sheriff in town and his name was cancer. Everything changed, especially priorities. And new clothing was hardly a priority, and unlikely to move up the list of things I now cared about, given the seriousness of my diagnosis/prognosis. And when I stopped working and began chemotherapy the next week, followed soon thereafter by a deteriorating physical condition, my house-bound status didn't seem to necessitate much of a clothing upgrade.

Eventually I got off the couch and out of the house and tried to resume/re-start a semi normal life (the new "normal," diagnosed-with-cancer normal). I happily wore what clothes I had and didn't concern myself – too much, with my outward appearance, other than always wearing a ball cap to cover my bald head. More time passed and I lived (survived seems so negative) beyond the back-end of my oncologist's original prediction: "two years." Accordingly, Dina has started suggesting that since I'm still alive, perhaps I should buy some new clothes. After all, if I've lived this long, maybe I'm going to live a little bit longer, and dressing like I have a future might help me in the present. A present which I'm grateful to have and a future I always hoped to see.

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

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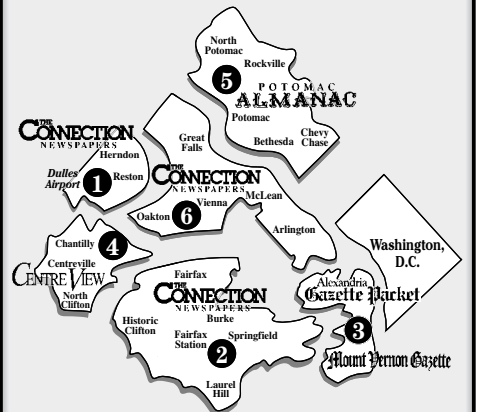
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Breakers Wrap Up Season

The Brookfield Breakers tried to keep their cool in record heat as they hosted Great Falls Rapids on July 23. The Rapids brought another challenging meet for the Breakers, getting a strong start and leading in points in the individual freestyle and backstroke events. Brookfield fought back, gaining more points for their team through the breaststroke and butterfly events, but it wasn't enough to earn a lead. After winning five of the 12 relays, the Breakers declared a loss to the Rapids, 226-176.

The team came on top with sweeps in the following events: 13-14 girls 50-meters free (Claire Kenna, Ava Saylor and Paige Shervanick); 15-18 boys 50-breaststroke (Michael Donatello, Kieran Nelson, Christopher Donatello); 9-10 boys 25-fly (Benjamin Condemi, Franky Doyle, Ryan Brault); 15-18 boys 50-fly (William Schulte, Casey Trahan, Ben Borneman).

Brookfield also saw another long-standing pool record get broken in the girls 13-14, 100-medley relay. The previous record of 1:06.47 had been held since 1995, but the team of Emily Harris, Claire Kenna, Monica Labine, and Ava Saylor defeated Great Falls by 15 seconds on Saturday in a new record time of 1:06:14.

First place individual winners for the Breakers this week were: Grace Boland (breaststroke), Benjamin Condemi (breaststroke), Alexa Conti (back), Cara Conti (breaststroke), Andrew Denner (free), Kayla George (breaststroke), Claire Kenna (breaststroke), Joseph Kenna (free), and Monica Labine (back and fly). Second place finishes came from: Carl Bauman (breaststroke and fly); Grace Boland, Anne Ettare, Kelly Guerrero, and Anna Kenna (free and fly); Christopher Laing (breaststroke and fly); and David Laing, William Schulte, Paige Shervanick, Shannon Silsby, and Sebastian Whittle. Bringing in third place finishes were: Ryan Brault, Alexa Conti, Cara Conti, Martina Conti, Michael Donatello, Sydney Greenlee, Kelly Guerrero, Sam Hilburger, RJ Kenna, James Laing, Amalia Mack, Cara McFerren, Brandon Morris (breaststroke and fly), Caitlin Mowry, Piper Read, David Schulte, Shannon Silsby, and Jack Trahan.

The last NVSL meet of the season was one of bittersweet moments as the Breakers bid farewell to several swimmers who were marking their last year of swim-



PHOTO BY L. HILBURGER

A Brookfield Breaker farewell to swimmers, from left, Alaina Whitaker, Shannon Silsby, David Laing, Patrick Kenna, Colleen McCarthy, and Adam Thoburn who all swam in their last meet for the team on July 23.



PHOTO BY K. KENNA

The Brookfield 13-14 girls medley relay team of, left to right, Ava Saylor, Emily Harris, Monica Labine, and Claire Kenna broke a 16-year-old pool record last week.



PHOTO BY J. MITCHELL

A Breaker farewell to, from left, Adam Thoburn, Patrick Kenna, David Laing, Alaina Whitaker, Colleen McCarthy, and Shannon Silsby who swam in their last meet for the team on July 23.

ming with the team: Patrick Kenna, David Laing, Shannon Silsby, Colleen McCarthy, Adam Thoburn, Alaina Whitaker, and James Wiltshire.

Each of these swimmers have been part of the team for many years.

The team would like to thank its hard-working team reps - Kathy Richter, Patty Laing, Sue Proctor,

and Paula Shervanick - as well as its devoted coaches - Austin Caslavka, Mary Kate Kenna, and Shannon Silsby - for their time and energy this summer.

The Breakers end their 2011 season with a win-loss record of 2-3. Select swimmers will be participating in the Divisional Championship at Arlington Forest this Saturday, July 30.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK HALL

Poplar Tree's record-breaking boys' 15-18 relay team of, from left: Sean Davidson, David Stewart, Frankie Marrero, and Preston Rhodes.

Poplar Tree Defeats Mantua Marlins

Poplar Tree's final dual meet of the 2011 Northern Virginia Swimming League (NVSL) season ended on a high note last Saturday, July 23 as the Pirates, swimming at their own Poplar Tree Pool in Chantilly, broke two records and honored three graduating seniors.

The team of Frankie Marrero, David Stewart, Preston Rhodes and Sean Davidson broke the 15-18 boys' medley relay record with a time of 1:59.95. In addition, the mixed age boys relay of Steven Longino, Nick David, Evan Baker and Sean Davidson broke the team record set this season with a time of 1:58.10.

Single individual event winners for the Pirates included: freestylers Matthew Rickard and Lauren Erickson (8 and under), and Lauren Hensley (13-14); backstrokers Hannah Warnick (13-14) and Katie Dingman (15-18); breaststrokers Fletcher Madsen (11-12) and David Stewart (15-18); and butterflyers Ted Ellis (9-10) and Jonathan Wen (11-12).

Double individual event winners for the Pirates included Nick David (9-10 free and back), Julia Young (9-10 free and back), Haley Alderman (11-12 free, 9-10 fly), Evan Baker (13-14 free and fly) and Nicole Baker (13-14 breaststroke and fly). The Pirates are looking forward to participating in the NVSL Divisional Championships this Saturday, July 30 at the Mantua pool in Fairfax.

The Poplar Tree Pirates were on a roll at both the Div. 6 Relay Carnival on July 13 and the All Star Relay Carnival on July 20.

At the Div. 6 relay carnival, the Pirates won five of the 22 relay carnival events while also breaking five team records in the process. The 9-10 girls relay team of Julia Young, Mary Kominski, Lauren Young and Haley Alderman won both the 100-



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK HALL

Poplar Tree's record-breaking girls' 9-10 relay team of, left to right: Mary Kominski, Haley Alderman, Lauren Young and Julia Young.

medley and 100-freestyle relays and broke both team records in those events. The 13-14 girls team of Nicole Baker, Maddie Williams, Hannah Warnick and Lauren Hensley swam to victories in both the 200-medley and 200-free relays. The boys mixed age relay of Fletcher Madsen, Nick David, Evan Baker and Sean Davidson also won their event and broke the team record. The 15-18 boys medley relay team of David Stewart, Frankie Marrero, Will Bashaw and Sean Davidson, and the freestyle relay team of David Stewart, Preston Rhodes, Sean Davidson and Frankie Marrero completed the record-breaking mania by swimming to new team records in both of their relays.

The Pirates also sent four teams to the All Star Relay Carnival on July 20 at Hayfield Farms in Alexandria. The 9-10 girls relay team of Mary Kominski, Haley Alderman, Lauren Young and Julia Young placed second in the 100-meter medley relay and third in the 100-freestyle relay, with a team record-breaking time of 1:04.17.

The boys' 11-12 medley relay of Jonathan Wen, Fletcher Madsen, Marcelo Coray and Steven Longino placed 10th and the mixed age boys relay of Fletcher Madsen, Nick David, Evan Baker and Sean Davidson placed 13th.


PET CONNECTION

Summer Days in the Dog Park

Dog owners make use of dog parks in No. Va.

BY RICH SANDERS
 CENTRE VIEW



PHOTO BY RICH SANDERS/CENTRE VIEW

Coco, 4, enjoyed his surroundings Saturday at the dog park at Quinn Farm in Chantilly.

Just like people, dogs look forward to recreation time. That's why owners often utilize the local dog parks to give their pets the exercise, fresh air, and socialization with other dogs that they are craving for.

Throughout Northern Virginia, dog parks — spacious areas of grass or dirt, often next to or part of local parks run by the Fairfax County Park Authority — are a popular attraction for dog owners who wish to see their canines release some of their energy. Dog parks are often equipped with sitting benches for a dog's owner, as well as doggie toys (rubber or plastic balls, tough plastic or nylon tug-of-war grippers), baby-sized plastic swim pools for the hot days, water bowls to quench doggies' thirst, and hard plastic tunnels of 10-12 feet that dogs can squirm their way through.

Dog park visits are a way to get dogs to mingle and play with other dogs. Often, a group of dog owners will make it a point to visit dog parks at set times throughout a week in order that both people and dogs can enjoy their respective acquaintances.

Last week throughout Fairfax County, dog owners and their canine friends battled the hot weather and enjoyed a half hour or so of fun times at dog parks. Owners came prepared with lots of water for themselves and their dogs to offset the high 90's-plus temperatures.

Sarah Yusko of Reston spent some of her mid-morning Thursday, July 21, with her two Weimaraner's — four-year old twins Hector and Rupert — at the dog park on the grounds of Baron Cameron Park in Reston.

Yusko and her husband, Chris, recently moved to Reston from

Nashville. Sarah said she used to have to drive 30 minutes to get to a dog park at her former residence in Tennessee. Now, she walks a half mile from the couple's Reston apartment complex to the dog park at Baron Cameron Park. There, across from a softball diamond, are large areas for both big dogs and little dogs. Sarah's dogs were in the big dogs' park, running, jumping and having a good time despite the fact that, at that time, there were no other dogs there, most likely due to the heat.

"We're here every day," said Yusko. "I think they enjoy it. They hang out with each other."

"Hector likes to meet other dogs, Rupert is the body guard," said Yusko, with a chuckle. "Hector is the ambassador."

The couple has had the dogs since they were puppies.

"It's been a challenge at times but we love them," said Yusko.

LATER THAT SAME MORNING, about 10 miles westward, several individuals and their dogs were enjoying their time at the Vienna Dog Park, run by the Town of Vienna and located off of Courthouse Road, next door to Nottoway Park.

Louis Ventre, Gary McDermott

and daughter Corlyn, and Zara Pyatt were all on hand with their dogs at the shaded facility.

Ventre, an Oakton resident, had his 17-month-old black lab, Buddy, with him.

"We call him Big Buddy," laughed Ventre, who said Buddy has grown from 35 pounds when he first got him to his current 125 pounds.

ON SATURDAY, July 23, area weather was still hot, although perhaps not quite as stifling. At Quinn Farm in Chantilly, several individuals, throughout the morning, brought their dogs around to enjoy the company and happenings at the dog park.

Meade Pimsler, on weekends, comes to Quinn Farm all the way from Manassas Park because he loves the surroundings and atmosphere of the dog park.

"This is nice here because there are almost always other dogs around," said Pimsler, who had his two dogs with him — 1-year-old Cash, a boxer, shepherd mix whom Pimsler attained from a local animal rescue; and 4-year-old Coco, a black furred dog whom the owner got from the Prince William County dog pound three years ago.

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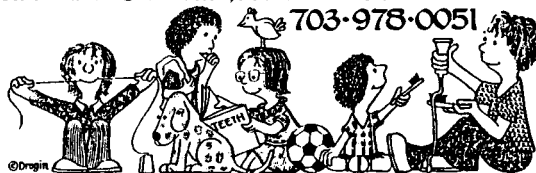
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TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS

ESL Classes. 7 to 9 p.m. Basic, Intermediate and Advanced levels. Cost is \$10 registration fee, \$25/book fee. Starts Sept. 13 through Nov. 17.

Registration is Tuesday, Sept. 8 from 7 to 9 p.m. At Lord of Life Lutheran Church in both Fairfax and Clifton locations: At 5114 Twinbook Road, Fairfax, and 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton. Call 703-323-9500 or visit www.lordoflifelutheranva.org

JULY 31 TO AUG. 4

Vacation Bible School. 6 to 8 p.m. Centreville Community Bible Church invites rising K to sixth-grade children to join in adventures and fun at Vacation Bible School — Inside Out & Upside Down on Main Street. Meeting at Deer Park Elementary, 15109 Carlbarn Drive, Centreville. Sunday, July 31 through Thursday, Aug. 4. Contact info: Brooke-brookeashley29@yahoo.com or 703-727-2009. Visit www.ccbc-va.com.

AUG. 8 TO 12

Music Camp. 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Centreville United Methodist Church is sponsoring its 2011 Music Camp. Children who will be in grades 2 through 6 (in the 2011-2012 school year) are invited to participate in a week of fun music activities. During the week, campers will learn the musical, "Daniel Chapter Six," the story of Daniel in the lion's den, and present it at Friday afternoon's closing program. Daily activities will include singing, handbell ringing, crafts, movement, and snacks. There will also be guests demonstrating a variety of instruments. The cost per camper is \$20 with a \$50 family maximum. Registrations will be accepted through July 29. Download Music Camp registration forms on the church website, www.centreville-umc.org, or stop by the church office between 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Centreville UMC is located at 6400 Old

Centreville Road at the corner of Centreville Road and New Braddock Road. Call 703-830-2684.

NOW THROUGH AUG. 22.

Divorce Care Class. 7-9 p.m. Centreville UMC, Room 215. Cost is \$12 for workbook. The class meets weekly for 14 weeks and walk-ins at any time during these 14 weeks are welcomed. Call 703-830-2684, ext. 1878.

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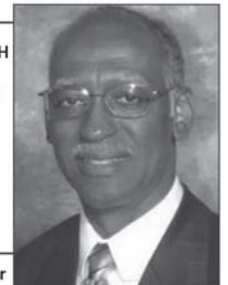
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