

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

AUGUST 4, 2011



U.S. Park Police Officer Gillespie gives Grady Simmons a tour of the squad car.



Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Lt. Dustin Rice opens up one of the rescue vehicles for tours as part of Tuesday's National Night Out events.

National Night Out



Aimee, Hudson and Colt Spencer.



Fairfax County Police Officer Greg Kottemann hands out police stickers to Milena Benmergui at the party on Bluebill Lane.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE

Community Mourns Loss of Jeff Todd

Former Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce chairman dies in auto accident.

BY GERALD A. FILL
THE GAZETTE

Business and community leader Jeff Todd, 49, died in a car accident Sunday, July 31 en route to a family vacation at the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

Todd, a former chairman of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce, philanthropist, and Mount Vernon High School Booster, was a passenger in his automobile. The driver of his car swerved to avoid hitting another car changing lanes, left the highway and landed in a cornfield. Todd was ejected out of the car and killed. He is survived by his wife, Becky, and two daughters, Kimberly and Hannah, a sister Judi Todd Darnell, brother, Jim Todd,

and a step-mother, Bernice Moen Todd, among other family members.

News of his sudden death has shocked and dismayed the Mount Vernon community. Only last year he was named Citizen of the Year by the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber, and corporate Citizen of the Year by United Community Ministries.

Todd was the president of Todd Family Restaurants that owned and operated three Roy Rogers franchises in the area. In 2007 he was recognized as the Franchisee of the Year by the International Franchise Association. A Univer



Jeff Todd

SEE PRAISING, PAGE 6

A Widening Debate

Gum Springs community remains opposed to widening.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors may have approved Inova Mount Vernon Hospital's proposal to vastly expand the size of its facility, but the debate about how that might change neighborhood streets will continue into the future. At issue is Sherwood Hall Lane, a two-lane road that has parking spaces along the side.

Gum Springs residents are concerned that widening the road would damage their neighborhood, a traditionally black community that dates back to the 19th century.

"It's a race thing," said Queenie Cox, president of the New Gum Springs Civic Association. "They only want to widen Sherwood Hall in the black community, and that's a problem."

SEE GUM SPRINGS, PAGE 7

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Fitness Fun

Fun Run puts focus on childhood obesity.

The record-setting temperatures on July 30 didn't prevent dozens of children from teaming up with firefighters from Fire Station 409 for a one-mile early morning Fun Run at the Mount Vernon Athletic Club as part of an effort to bring awareness to childhood obesity.

"This was fun," said 7-year-old Sarahi Torrls, a Hybla Valley Elementary School student who finished second in the run through the Hometown Audubon Complex.

"I was hoping I would finish first or second."

The combination run/walk was a community effort, with plenty of healthy snacks and water provided by the Mount Vernon Plaza Shoppers Food Warehouse and Walmart donating new sneakers for all of the race participants.

"One out of four children in the United States is obese," said MVAC tennis professional Matt Krawczyk, who was on hand to teach fitness and nutrition skills to the children and families participating in the race. "By showing them exercises they can easily do, it helps give them the skills they will need to keep exercising and maintain a healthy lifestyle."

— JEANNE THEISMANN



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE

Capt. Kit Hessel of the Sherwood Hall Fire Station and his crew helped organize the event for the children on Saturday morning, July 30.



Francisco Torres Llanas, 9, celebrates with firefighter Kirill Bondaruk as the first place finisher in the July 30 Fun Run at the Mount Vernon Athletic Club.

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/THE GAZETTE



Captain Willie Bailey congratulates Sarahi Torrls, 7, on finishing second in the July 30 Fun Run.



Mount Vernon Athletic Pro Matthew Krawczyk tries to make a goal in the children's soccer game against the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue officers.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE



Runners and firefighters, along with representatives from the Mount Vernon Athletic Club and Shoppers Food Warehouse, gather after the one mile Fun Run July 30. On display are new sneakers donated to the children by Walmart.



Raffle tickets were given out to all participants, and Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Technician Ramon Estrada reads the winning numbers to the crowd that gathered.



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Things To Do Today

- 1. Breakfast w/ Mary & Bob—8:30
- 2. Tai chi group at 10
- 3. Birthday Luncheon—Noon
- 4. Pottery class—1:00
- 5. Canasta club at 3:00

Notes:
Italian Night in the dining room!

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NEWS

Sign Pollution Blooming

Complaints grow along with illegal signs on Richmond Highway.

BY HARRISON FALLON
THE GAZETTE

Advertising everything from day-care to condos to buying unused gold, signs on traffic and power poles continue to take hold on Richmond Highway — much to the disdain of many in the community.

The Virginia Department of Transportation maintains that “It is illegal to place signs on state-maintained right of way without a permit” and threatens a \$100 fine per illegal sign.

However, none of these risks seem to bother the companies that use the technique for advertising.

Since VDOT is not an enforcement agency, they only have the ability to remove the signs and then levy the fine. The responsibility of prosecution falls on Fairfax County police.

However, Fairfax County has not yet given the police the power to enforce the rules. As Supervisor Gerry Hyland said, “Although there is authorization in the state code for Fairfax to be involved in enforcing, Fairfax County has not authorized the process.”

Some citizens feel the signs are a nuisance. Mary Fletcher Jones, the owner of a marketing firm and critic of the signs, says that they are “a form of pollution.”

Moreover, she sees them as pursuing business practices that are not only illegal, but also lazy. “These are the same businesses that won’t pay for advertising,” she said, “They won’t use social media. They haven’t used any of the legal resources available to them.”

The other issue with the signs stems from their danger to drivers, for fears they could prove distracting. As Jones said, “Can you imagine even one crash because of these signs? Would that be worth it?”

Daniel Selnick, a resident of the area for 15 years, said, “There’s a reason for them being illegal. They’re an eyesore and a danger to drivers.”

For example, a neon yellow sign advertising to buy junk cars for up to \$300 currently sits on the pole of a traffic sign at the intersection of Richmond Highway and Boswell Avenue.

Those wanting less fines and steeper enforcement should look to Prince William County as a model. Several years ago, the county locked into a deal with VDOT allowing the county to take down signs.

“If we did that,” Hyland said, “I suppose the only person that’s going to complain is the company who put up the sign.”



PHOTO BY HARRISON FALLON/THE GAZETTE

One example of the placement of signs along right-of-ways on Route 1.

When a complaint comes in, inspectors are sent out in response. If the sign is in the right-of-way of drivers, it is removed. After that, they serve the offending business with a summons.

The other step Prince William County takes is education. Pat Reilly, of its Neighborhood Services Department, says the county attempts to let people know that “putting a temporary advertisement in the VDOT right of way is not only dangerous, but also illegal.”

Since the rules took effect, the number of signs has dropped: 12,500 signs were removed during the recently-ended fiscal year 2011, down from the 39,000 in fiscal year 2007.

One caveat in the Prince William County plan is the lack of fines collected. For the most part, the goal is to beautify the community by removing signs. Only about one-half of one percent of all sign removals lead to fines.

Fairfax County is currently considering a number of proposals on how to curb the signs, according to the supervisor’s office. One idea is to enter into a similar agreement to what Prince William County did, allowing them to take down signs themselves.

Another idea is to deputize individual citizens who want to take down the signs.

The issue comes down to money. Several years ago, a proposal came to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors allowing them to take down the signs, and collect 50 percent of the fines collected. This was voted down.

According to Hyland, “If there is a sight distance issue, VDOT should do something.”

As an example of the dangers of having

SEE SIGNS, PAGE 5

Open Wide

Dr. Richard Godlewski retires after 40 years.

BY MAYA HOROWITZ
THE GAZETTE



Dr. Richard Godlewski

Dr. Richard Godlewski, who practiced dentistry at 1500 Belle View Boulevard in Alexandria for 40 years, is retiring.

"It's a great profession. It has been a terrific life being a dentist. I don't regret it at all. I guess the only thing I regret is that I got a little too old to do it. Which happens," Godlewski said.

His wife, Sharon Godlewski, whom he met when she worked in his office, said, "I fell in love with him because he was so fair. That went a long way to building a very successful practice."

Marcia Ross, his dental hygienist for 15 years, said, "He will be missed. In the career that he had, he did really good dentistry. He was always fair to people and you could always trust him. He treated people like they were his family."

Godlewski was born on Nov. 10, 1943 in Brooklyn, N.Y. His father worked at Mobil Oil and his mother worked at a seafood shipping company. He dreamed of being a dentist from a young age.

"My father's youngest brother was a dentist and I admired him. I figured if it was good enough for him it was good enough for me. Plus my childhood dentist was a great guy. Him and I always got along really well," Godlewski said.

He attended Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Md. "That was the best thing I ever did in my life ... I have nothing but great things and great feelings to say about it," he said.

Godlewski went on to attend Georgetown Dental School, which he said, "had a great reputation for

good reason. It was an excellent school."

After college, he joined the Army and was sent to Vietnam where he was the preventative dentistry officer.

He came to Alexandria in August 1971 and began practicing with Dr. Morton Paret. "I was the associate, then we were partners, then he retired, then I just stayed and stayed and stayed," said Godlewski.

About choosing Alexandria, he said, "I decided this was a great spot to not only practice but to live. I think it was a great area of northern Virginia to live in. It's so close to Old Town, so close to everything. I fell in love with the place and that's where I stayed."

Godlewski has treated generations of patients. He takes pride in the fact that his practice was like a family.

For the past 13 years, he has been visiting retirement facilities like the Goodwin House and providing his services to residents.

"If you are fair and honest with people, they'll recognize it and they'll appreciate it and they'll respond in kind. If you're pretty straight with everybody they'll be pretty straight and square with you," he said.

He is retiring to Lake Anna with his wife to spend more time with his family, particularly his grandchildren. His interests include the Civil War, wine and golf. "There's quite a few battlefields in Virginia I plan on visiting and spending some time with," he said.

Signs of Complaint

FROM PAGE 4

individual citizens remove signs, Hyland notes the example of a local who tasked himself with taking down political candidate signs once elections had ended.

All was going well, until he drew the anger of a man whose sign was being taken off his private property.

Examples like these highlight why Hyland says the plan for individual citizens to remove the signs unilaterally "might be tempting to do, but I would much prefer for VDOT or county staff to do it."

Currently, only VDOT has the authority to remove the signs along Richmond Highway.

To report an illegal sign, citizens can call the agency at 1-800-367-7623.

Carjacking Suspect Sought

Police are asking residents to help identify one of the suspects from a carjacking that took place Tuesday, July 19. The suspect in the sketch is described as black, between 5 feet 10 inches and six feet tall, 220-240 pounds and in his 40s. He is not clean shaven and was last seen wearing a dark hooded sweatshirt.

Anyone with information should contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org or text "TIP187" plus a message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

A 43-year-old man suffered serious injuries when he was assaulted and had his car stolen in the 7400 block of Vernon Square Drive. The victim had been running errands around 9:45 p.m., July 19 when he parked his 2011 red Ford Taurus in a space behind the Safeway grocery store near the Vernon Square Apartment building. Two men reportedly approached the victim, repeatedly struck him and stole his car.

Police recovered the stolen vehicle at 2:30 a.m. about a mile away on Saul Street at Robert E. Lee Place.



One of the suspects from a carjacking that took place Tuesday, July 19, in the 7400 block of Vernon Square Drive.



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Praising Business and Community Leader Jeff Todd

FROM PAGE 1

sity of Connecticut graduate, he was a native of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Responding to his death, local political, business, community and school system leaders offered their tributes to his community leadership.

State Del. Scott Surovell, who only three months ago introduced a General Assembly Commending Resolution for Todd on his many contributions to the community, noted the "tremendous loss to the community."

Mount Vernon High School Principal Nardos King praised his many valuable contributions to the students of MVHS.

Cynthia Hull, executive director of United Community Ministries, said, "He coupled extraordinary generosity with being a genuine and lovely human being ... also, his wife Becky has been hand in hand with him in doing so much for others."

Services

Memorial Visitation: Thursday, Aug. 4, 2-4 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. at the Jefferson Funeral Chapel, 5755 Castlewellan Drive, Alexandria. An additional viewing will take place on Friday, Aug. 5, 10-11 a.m. at Good Shepherd Catholic Church.

Funeral Services: Friday, Aug. 5, 11 a.m., a Mass of Christian Burial will be held at Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 8710 Mount Vernon Highway, Alexandria. Burial will take place at Mount Comfort Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to Mount Vernon Majors Football Boosters, c/o Burke & Herbert Bank, 8738 Cooper Road, Alexandria, VA 22309. Cards and expressions of sympathy and condolences may be sent to the Todd Family, 9024 Patton Blvd., Alexandria, VA 22309



Jeff Todd, an active Mount Vernon High School booster, here at the microphone during the Mount Vernon vs. Wakefield varsity basketball game at MVHS on Jan. 7.

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

The tributes from these and other community leaders extolled his many years of accomplishments as a volunteer, philanthropist, business leader, and caring person willing to devote many hours and financial support to various community causes. One friend of his and a fellow member of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber, Ashley McNeff called him a "legend." McNeff wrote: "I would like to say that he was truly loved by all that knew him ... We appreciate everything he has done to make this world a better place, and I feel that my life has been brighter because Jeff was in it." Her tribute recounted his impact on virtually every aspect of Mount Vernon and Lee community life.

Todd's community involvement included: Member, Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation; volunteer booster and football coach at Mount Vernon High School; contributor, United Community Ministries; member, Mount Vernon-Lee Educational Partnership; contributor, Good Shepherd

An Extraordinary Man

Mount Vernon has lost a champion with the tragic death of Jeff Todd. Jeff was an example, as a father, as a philanthropist, as a community leader, as chairman of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Mount Vernon Visioning Task Force, to be emulated by all residents of Mount Vernon. He was an extraordinary man who loved his community and was deeply loved and admired by his family and friends. Jeff's numerous awards include a Citizen Business Award presented by the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce, Volunteer Fairfax Community Champion in 2009 and he was recognized by the Board of Supervisors for his incredible generosity by donating thousands of dollars to local schools improving the lives and education of our children. His energy, passion and humanness will never be forgotten. My deepest condolences go out to his wife, Becky and his children Kimberly and Hannah. His leadership, love and enthusiasm will be profoundly missed.

— GERRY HYLAND
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

Housing & Family Services; contributor, Koinonia Foundation; volunteer, Good Shepherd Catholic Church and Christ Church, Alexandria.

Remembering Jeff Todd

Michael Gailliot, current president of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber and among his closest friends, said, "Jeff Todd was a businessman, friend, and father who led by example with grace, humility, and enormous heart. He was an inspiration for me. He had a great sense of humor with an unparalleled zest for life. I am grateful to count Jeff as a friend."

Holly Hicks Dougherty, executive director of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber, said, "Jeff Todd was a giant with a gentle touch. He was a great example of a businessman who cared about his employees, who loved the community, and who served wherever he saw a need. Jeff had the ability to relate to the corporate executive, the wounded warriors of Fort Belvoir, and the cook laboring over a hot grill. His good nature and laugh will be missed. His death leaves a huge hole in the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce and the community."

Dan Rinzel said, "You could always count on Jeff to show up at a special event, deliver food to a needy group, and contribute generously to funding sponsorships for important causes ... a terrible loss for everyone."

Tim Sargeant, current chair of the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber, said, "There are no words to express this terrible sadness for the Todd family and our community. It goes without saying that we all lost a friend. ... Jeff will long be remembered as a business leader who set the standard for philanthropy and giving back to the community he loved."

Accident Report

According to the North Carolina State Police accident report, Jeff Todd was a passenger in a vehicle traveling southbound on North Carolina State Highway 168. At 12:32 a.m., July 31, the driver of the vehicle he was riding in slowed and swerved to avoid hitting another car that was changing lanes. Jeff Todd's vehicle then left the roadway, and landed in a cornfield. At the same time he was ejected from the vehicle. No other fatalities were related to the incident.

A Tribute to a Mount Vernon Legend: Jeff Todd

BY ASHLEY MCNEFF
FRIEND AND FELLOW MVLCC
BOARD MEMBER

Anyone who has been involved in elementary through high school in Mount Vernon-Lee knows Jeff Todd.

Anyone who has been involved in Good Shepherd Housing or UCM in Mount Vernon-Lee knows Jeff Todd.

Anyone who has been involved in youth sports leagues in Mount Vernon-Lee knows Jeff Todd.

Let's keep it simple. Repeat the above sentences and fill in the blank with just about anything that affects Mount Vernon-Lee for the area of involvement and community service. The sentence will always end with "knows Jeff Todd."

There's no way I can truly describe all of the contributions of Jeff. Jeff

Todd, owner of Roy Rogers Restaurants in the Mount Vernon area, was a remarkable leader throughout the Mount Vernon and Lee communities. Jeff has contributed countless hours, money and food to local schools, the police and fire departments, charities, businesses, non-profits, child sports leagues and many more groups over the past few decades. He is a man of character, a man who loves his family and faith, and a man who has respect and love for everyone he comes in contact with.

Jeff was extremely humble and has always downplayed the effect that he has had over the community, but that's because he constantly put the feelings of others before himself. Todd's involvement in the community was almost without boundaries, all thankless jobs that Jeff performed with no expectation of personal reward.

Jeff loved the Mount Vernon-Lee community and worked tirelessly over the years to improve it by providing the much

needed leadership that all communities need to move forward. We all agree that this community has been moving forward, and Jeff Todd is one of the main reasons why it has. Jeff's leadership within the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce over the past few years has been relentless. He put all of himself into the Chamber positions, whether it was vice president, president or chairman. Every opportunity there was to be at an event or new business ribbon cutting, Jeff was there and with a smile on his face.

During the past couple of years, Jeff has been working diligently as a volunteer assistant coach with the Mount Vernon High School Football Team. The team has come a long way these past couple years and even made it to the playoffs. Not only has the team advanced on the field, but also academically and we owe that not only to the Head Coach, but also Jeff Todd. He feeds the kids before the games, provides snacks, coaches, is a fan and

spends numerous hours assisting the team both on and off the field alongside his daughter, Kimberly.

I am sure I have left out many other areas of service where Jeff has stepped up to the plate, probably because he is always there to do what needs to be done, and many times we have taken that for granted. Jeff was a wonderful citizen, volunteer, business owner, father to two beautiful girls (who he affectionately called "his babies" — Hannah and Kimberly), husband to an amazing wife (Becky), brother, uncle, son, community leader and friend. As a proud Mount Vernon citizen, fellow Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber Board member and good friend of Jeff's — I would like to say that he was truly loved by all who knew him. We appreciate everything he has done to make this world a better place and I feel that my life has been brighter because Jeff was in it. We will miss him always.

Gum Springs Opposes Sherwood Hall Lane Widening

FROM PAGE 1

Inova's original application included a provision to widen Sherwood Hall Lane to four lanes from Richmond Highway to Parkers Lane, a proposal that was met with fierce resistance in Gum Springs. After a number of community members expressed their opposition, the part of the application that widened the road was removed from the first phase of the expansion. Yet the proposal remains part of the discussion for future phases of the plan, and some kind of transportation infrastructure improvements will be

needed to handle increased traffic from the expanded hospital facility.

"At this point, we haven't committed to any traffic improvements," said Thomas Burke, senior planner with the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. "When Inova is ready to move forward with the next phase of the plan, we'll take a look at the traffic situation at that time."

FUTURE PHASES of the Inova expansion are certain to spark the same debate. According to a process worked out by the Board of Supervisors last week, the New

Gum Springs Civic Association will have a seat at the table when the transportation plans are worked out. That means the proposal to widen Sherwood Hall may remerge when Inova is ready to move forward with the next phase of expansion, although the timeline for when that might happen remains unclear.

"I've opposed it before," said Mount Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland. "And I'll oppose it again unless the traffic is so horrendous that it's something you need to do."

Gum Springs traces its origin back to 1829, when a former

"It's a race thing. They only want to widen Sherwood Hall in the black community, and that's a problem."

— Queenie Cox, President, New Gum Springs Civic Association

Vernon "as this road is heavily traveled by the tremendous number of high-class tourists each year and the necessary for its proper maintenance is great."

"Nothing has changed since then," said Cox in reference to the Board of Supervisors acting on behalf of the "high-class tourists." "It's all about the money."

ONE THING is clear — Gum Springs will continue to oppose the widening of Sherwood Hall Lane when Inova is ready to move forward with the next phase of expansion. Until then, the community is also opposing the location of a bus transfer station in their neighborhood. Hyland said he agreed that Gum Springs would be the wrong place to locate such a facility, suggesting that it might be better on the other side of Richmond Highway in the Lee District. The supervisor was also critical of Fairfax County staffers who included the transfer station as part of a transportation plan even though it hadn't been approved.

"Talk about a quantum jump," said Hyland. "I was outraged."

Mount Vernon slave by the name of West Ford inherited a 211-acre tract of land from Bushrod Washington, the president's nephew. Ford divided the tract among his children who, in turn, subdivided it again. Employment opportunities for freedmen included jobs at Mount Vernon Estate which had a large maintenance staff.

Roads have frequently been an issue. In 1926, the Board of Supervisors requested that the state government incorporate into the highway system a section of roads from Gum Springs to Mount

Joyce and Hyland Address MVCCA

Public safety and hospital expansion among issues discussed.

BY GERALD A. FILL
THE GAZETTE

Randy Joyce, new commander of the Mount Vernon District Police Station, briefed the Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations at its July meeting on his background and what he envisioned as the major police and police-related issues confronting his district station.

He cited pedestrian crossings on Route 1, property crime perpetrated by juveniles and an increase in alcohol-related incidents.

Supervisor Gerald Hyland discussed recent actions of the Board of Supervisors. The board approved Phase 1 of the Mount Vernon Hospital expansion and laid the groundwork for an approval process of future hospital expansions. This would provide community involvement of the Gum Springs, other communities and the MVCCA in the review and approval process of Phase 2 and Phase 3 expansions over the ensuing years.

Gum Springs representative Queenie Cox expressed satisfaction with the supervisor's effort to involve Gum Springs in the review process. Principal among her concerns is the potential impact of the quality of life on the Gum Springs community if widening the Sherwood Hall Lane should be necessitated by future expansions.

Hyland also commented on the VDOT and Fairfax County Route 1 Transit study and that the south county area pressed for the study to emphasize bus transit expansion. Hyland viewed the emphasis as wrong; the study should be about rail transit and he will be stressing it in the future.

Hyland announced that the Board of Supervisors was taking a pro-active posture to stress greater control over unauthorized use of residential parking sites by commercial vehicles. Control/enforcement will be on a case-by-case basis.

THE MVCCA passed the following resolutions:

- ❖ Approved: Environment and Recreation Resolution to Board of Supervisors requesting help in mitigating litter. No opposition

- ❖ Approved: Planning and Zoning Resolution to approve the Mount Vernon Hospital expansion. No opposition.

- ❖ Approved: Planning and Zoning Resolution to support the rezoning of the Route 1 Dairy Queen site for rezoning. No opposition.

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OPINION

Five Percent Off

Back-to-school sales tax holiday a reminder of other back-to-school rituals; buy extra supplies for needy students.

While some of us are not sure how it got to be August, never-mind time to start thinking about going back to school, the first day of school is about a month away, Tuesday after Labor Day, Sept. 5.

Virginia families can take advantage of what amounts to a three-day coupon for five percent off on many back-to-school items. Sales tax is suspended for the coming weekend, Friday through Sunday, Aug. 5, 6 and 7 (restrictions apply).

During this three-day period, school supplies selling for \$20 or less per item, and clothing and footwear selling for \$100 or less per item will be exempt from sales tax.

The tax holiday should encourage more families to spend their back-to-school dollars in local stores rather than online. This is an excellent time to support local businesses, many suffering from the recession as well as competition from online businesses that offer tax-free shopping all the time. Local businesses that

don't get their money from the federal government need support from local shoppers now more than ever.

Also, remember that many families in the area are struggling. There are many options to help.

❖ FACETS in Fairfax, which provided more than 300 students with backpacks filled with supplies last year, is collecting school supplies until Aug. 12. Drop donations between 9-5, Monday-Friday, at 10640 Page Avenue, Suite 300, Fairfax. Volunteers will gather for Back to School parties to

stuff their new backpacks with supplies. Go to <http://facetscares.org/donate/back-to-school-drive/> for a list of needed supplies or to make an online financial contribution. To help with a donation drive in your workplace or organization, contact Stacy Boden at 703-352-3268 or sboden@facetscares.org.

❖ Our Daily Bread's Back to School program will help more than 350 needy children in the Fairfax High School pyramid receive the sup-

August Sales Tax Holiday: School Supplies And Clothing

When: The 2011 holiday will take place on Aug. 5-7, 2011.

What's exempt: School supplies selling for \$20 or less per item, and clothing and footwear selling for \$100 or less per item will be exempt from sales tax. See: www.tax.virginia.gov

plies they need.

In addition to financial contributions to purchase the supplies, Our Daily Bread is seeking donations of new teen-sized backpacks and scientific calculators. ODB will accept donations through Aug. 12. Contact Jennifer Rose at 703-273-8829 or holiday@ODBFairfax.org or visit www.ODBFairfax.org.

❖ Arlington Doorways for Women and Families is collecting money, school supplies, winter coats and more for needy students. Contact Wyatt Schroeder at wshroeder@DoorwaysVA.org. www.doorwaysva.org/donate/seasonal-ways-to-give/backtoschool/

❖ United Community Ministries plans to raise \$10,000 and fill 1,000 backpacks this year. School supplies will be distributed to students in need on Aug. 25-26. Send donations to Attn: School Supplies, United Community Ministries, 7511 Fordson Rd., Alexandria, VA 22306. Contact Christine Fiske, 703-768-7106 ext. 328 or christine.fiske@ucmagency.org.

EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Heart of A Lion

To the Editor:

Since we live in the shadow of our nation's capital, we live amongst numerous ones of our country's retired military leaders who came to Washington to serve our country at the highest levels

and chose to remain here after their days of service were done. One such man passed away in July and he was one of a handful who can easily be characterized as one of the greatest of them all. Ever.

I got to know retired four star Admiral Noel Gayler and his wife Jeanne when I lived around the corner from them in Hollin Hills. I didn't know them very well, but

they were always friendly whenever I happened upon them in the neighborhood. They could often be seen tending to their garden or driving through the neighborhood in their car with the distinctive license plate "LA PAIX" (The Peace).

Behind that peaceful exterior was the heart of a lion. Admiral Gayler served our country with great distinction for 42 years. In

World War II, he was an ace combat pilot who won numerous awards, including two Legions of Merit, a Bronze Star and three Navy Crosses, each one the highest decoration for bravery short of the Congressional Medal of Honor. He was the first pilot in history to be awarded three Navy Crosses. He eventually rose to become chief of the U.S. Pacific command during the Viet Nam War, succeeding Sen. John McCain's father and supervising all combat operations in the Pacific theater. He personally greeted returning prisoners of war including the future senator and helped oversee our withdrawal from Viet Nam in 1975 as well as the subsequent transportation to freedom of thousands of refugees.

As Mrs. Gayler recounted in a letter to the editor of the Washington Post last week, perhaps his most heroic act occurred when Admiral Gayler was President Nixon's first director of the National Security Agency (NSA). In that capacity, Admiral Gayler refused President Nixon's request that the assets of the NSA be used to spy on American citizens by eavesdropping on their telephone conversations. This courage under direct fire from a President was rewarded — as Mrs. Gayler related, President Nixon's plan never got off the ground.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 20



Beating the Heat Adrienne Becker, left, and Jenna Pearson, right, both of Mount Vernon, spent the afternoon Wednesday, July 20, cooling off in make-shift pools while enjoying refreshing ice pops and watermelon.

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Steven Mauren
Editor, 703-778-9415
smauren@connectionnewspapers.com

Michael Lee Pope
Reporter, 703-615-0960
mpope@connectionnewspapers.com

Steve Hibbard
Associate Editor, 703-778-9412
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Julia O'Donoghue
Education & Politics
jodonoghue@connectionnewspapers.com

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Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Photography:
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Geovani Flores, Laurence Foong,
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Production Manager:
Jean Card

CIRCULATION: 703-778-9427
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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Peter Labovitz
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Mary Kimm
Publisher/Chief Operating Officer
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Jerry Vernon
Publisher/Executive Vice President
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Wesley DeBrosse
Controller

Debbie Funk
National Sales, 703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

Jeanne Theismann
Special Assistant to the Publisher
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OPINION

Task Force Meets over Route 1

BY LINDA T. "TODDY" PULLER
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



The first task force meeting of the Route 1 Transit Study was held in Prince William County on Monday, July 25. The Senate Joint Resolution, SJ 292, that I introduced and was passed in the 2011 General Assembly, provided for this study to be conducted. This legislation requested the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to evaluate the level of study necessary to identify and advance potential public transportation services to Fort Belvoir in Fairfax County and the Marine Corps Base at Quantico in Prince William and Stafford counties. This study has been funded for two years. With the impending BRAC impact looming and the growing congestion, this is necessary to move a step forward to continue the revitalization and redevelopment of this important transportation corridor.

Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) Thelma Drake and DRPT's Manager of Transit Planning Amy Inman led the meeting. Local and state elected officers from both Fairfax and Prince William counties, some of their staff members and a representative from Quantico Marine Base attended this meeting. On hand from Fairfax County were: Del. Mark Sickles, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Sharon Bulova; Supervisor Gerry Hyland; Del. Scott Surovell's aide; Supervisor Jeff McKay's chief of staff,

and myself. From Prince William County, Del. Luke Torian's aide, and Supervisors John Jenkins and Frank Principi attended.

The background and history of the existing conditions of the 27 miles of the Route 1 corridor from the Capital Beltway to the Prince William/Stafford County line were presented. Current transit service consists of the WMATA "REX" Service, Fairfax Connector, and PRTC OmniLink.

"Route 1 has been the subject of numerous roadway and transit-related studies and efforts" through the years.

Local transit recommendations from the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan include: implementing enhanced transit service along Richmond Highway, such as Metro, Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit; expanding transit stations at Beacon Hill Road, near Fordson Lane, Mohawk Lane, Sacramento, and near the railroad line on Fort Belvoir Base and at Telegraph Road. The Mount Vernon District Visioning Task Force in 2010 recommended implementing a peak period HOV/bus lane on Richmond Highway and encouraging the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to install traffic responsive technology on all of the traffic signals in the Mount Vernon District.

The Prince William County Comprehensive Plan recommends: identifying and developing alternative transit concepts such as bus rapid transit, light rail transit, Potomac ferry service; Metro Rail extension

SEE ROUTE 1, PAGE 20

Celebrate Bluegrass Sunday
with Christ the Saviour Anglican Church
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1600 Hancock Avenue Alexandria, VA 22301

UNDER CONTRACT



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8839 Fort Hunt Road Alexandria, VA 22308

UNDER CONTRACT



Bright & open in cul-de-sac backing to trees. Cooks kitchen w/ island & sunny breakfast room opens to tiered deck w/ landscape & exterior lighting. 4 bedrooms, library, large dining room, foyer & living room, 3.5 baths, 2 car garage - a car lovers DREAM w/ heat, flooring & built-ins. Wood floors on main & upper levels, + 2 custom staircases w/ iron railing. Recently finished rec room ~ **\$1,495,000**

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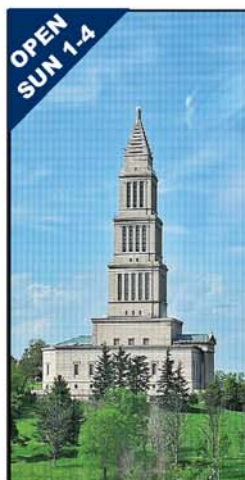
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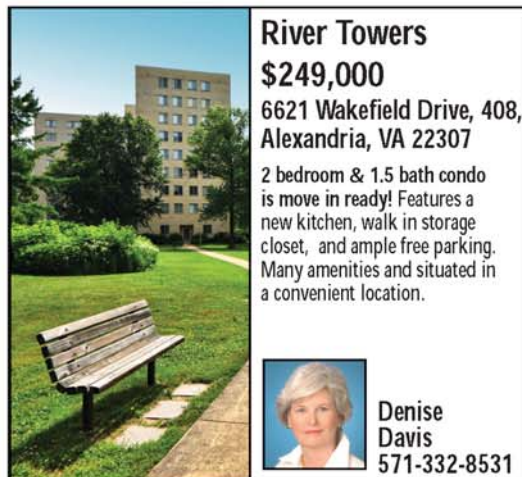
Ft. Hunt \$699,000

8601 Cotswold Court, Alexandria, VA 22308

Updated colonial on quiet cul-de-sac features backyard oasis with firepit, deck & hot tub. New kitchen opens to family room & deck. 4 bedrooms, den/BR, walkout lower level, mud room & 1 car garage with extra storage or workshop.



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OPEN SUN

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Total Renovation- Price to Sell!
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\$549,900
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JUST LISTED

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\$719,000
Riverwood Opportunity!
Spacious 5 bedroom home on quiet cul-de-sac in prestigious waterfront community. Fabulous home features, updated kitchen, baths and gorgeous hardwood floors. Bright open floor plan with open kitchen-family room. Private fenced rear yard. Community river access. Great Value!

JUST LISTED

3703 Carriage House Ct
\$695,000
Riverwood Colonial- Backs to Park
One of Riverwood's most desirable and hard to find properties! Classic three level colonial on quiet cul-de-sac backing to large area of private parkland. Home has many features including: 3 finished levels, hardwood floors, masonry fireplaces, 4 bedrooms and oversized 2 car garage. Exceptionally private ground. Huge potential priced to make it a tremendous value!

NEW PRICE

4503 Ferry Landing Rd
\$599,000
One Level Luxury!
Rare opportunity- Spacious one lvl home in premier Yacht Haven location! This home has been updated & offers many features: open floor plan, updated kit and baths, stunning MBR suite w/cath. ceiling and luxury bath, sunroom and 2 car gar. Looking to eliminate stairs & not sacrifice size and amenities- this is it!

Anita Vida D'Antonio & Elke Kohler
202.460.1809

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WayneWood
"PRICED TO SELL"
Rarely available "Amberly" center hall colonial. 3 levels, 4BR, renovated kitchen, finished walk-out basement, large screened porch off LR, garage & huge, fenced private backyard. Walk to pool, park & school.

Betty Quirk 703.851.3447
Suzanne Backus 703.338.3594

HUGE PRICE REDUCTION!
\$1,150,000
Alexandria South
"WONDERFUL"
Waterfront property w/ elevator, 2-car garage, in-ground pool on 1/2 acre lot. 6BR/4.5BA + 5,501 sq ft of beautifully updated living space. Call...

Suzanne Backus owner/agent
703.338.3594

\$1,149,900
Belle Haven
"PARKLAND!"
4 finished levels, 2 fireplaces, refinished hardwoods, 5 year old total renovation - new gas furnace, CAC, natural stone baths, kitchen open to family room w/table space, screened porch. Walk out lower level leads to huge brick patio.

Suzanne Backus 703.338.3594

JUST LISTED

1906 Joliette Ct
\$698,500
Stately Colonial Remarkable
You will not believe this property is available for under \$700,000! Size, location, & Price!

CONTRACT!

JUST LISTED

8320 Felton Ln
\$615,000
Collingwood Stunner!
Spacious home just renovated. All major components

CONTRACT!

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4002 Belle Rive Terr.
\$879,900
Stately Colonial- Near River
Classic Brick Colonial, custom built in prestigious Belle Rive neighborhood of many \$1,000,000+ properties. Truly special home with many features inc large room sizes, elegant trim detail, updated, "state of the art" kitchen, 5BRs, and, finished lower level. Gorgeous setting on 1/2 acre grounds w/views of the river. Uniquely attractive property in premiere location. Priced to make a TRULY GREAT VALUE!

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"MOVE-IN READY"
End unit TH meticulously maintained by original owner. LR w/ wood-burning FP, fenced backyard, unfinished basement & plenty of storage. 2 BR/1.5BA, 2 assigned parking. Community pool, tennis & tot lot. Just minutes from Ft Belvoir, I-95, Springfield Metro, Kingstowne + more.

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Bob Skinner 703.598.7279

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Catherine Foltz@longandfoster.com
Catherine Foltz 703.626.6914

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Fabulous Home-
Great Location! A few blocks and GW from River Parkway, this fabulous home has been updated and

CONTRACT!

1203 Falster Rd
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Spacious 5 bedroom home on truly magnificent, private 19,000 sq ft

SOLD!

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Call for more information:
Deborah Alea 703.447.1315

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Call for more information:
Katherine Ward 703.627.8782
Stephen Kindrick 703.518.8709

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\$899,000
Arlington
6136 35th STREET N
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www.OldTownAlexandria.com



ENTERTAINMENT

Shake it Up, Baby!

LTA cast celebrates opening night.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

The beehives and bobby socks were out in full force as cast members celebrated following the opening night performance of "Hairspray" at The Little Theatre of Alexandria.

"I am very relieved," said Director Sue Pinkman at the opening night after-party July 23. "The kids are fabulous, the crew, the orchestra — all the elements came together to make for a fabulous opening night."

With a cast of more than 30 performers, LTA is tackling one of the most ambitious projects in musical theater.

"It's been very challenging but gratifying," Pinkman said. "With this large of a cast, there were always scheduling conflicts. And for the last eight weeks, we rehearsed six days a week. It's by far the biggest show I've ever done."

More than 160 people from throughout the region auditioned for the Tony-award winning musical, with Shannon Kingett winning the coveted role of Tracy Turnblad and T.C. Williams rising senior Sam Jones cast as teen heartthrob Link Larkin.

"This show has been a blast," said Jones as he relaxed with his



JEANNE THEISMANN/THE GAZETTE

T.C. Williams 2010 graduate Maria Simpkins and rising T.C. senior Sam Jones celebrate at the opening night reception for 'Hairspray.'

parents, Maria and Patrick Jones, and girlfriend Ellen Broetzmann following the show. "I wasn't a dancer coming into this but [choreographer] Ivan Davila brought out the best in all of us."

For Kingett, playing Tracy is the role of a lifetime.

"I am very overwhelmed right now," Kingett said. "I have always wanted to play this role. But it's a lot of work. I have never done so much dancing in my life!"



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/THE GAZETTE

Director Sue Pinkman, third from right, celebrates with cast members Brenda Parker, Sam Jones, Shannon Kingett, Christopher Harris, Adrian Cabbage and Jaclyn Young on opening night of 'Hairspray' at The Little Theatre of Alexandria.

Christopher Harris is a standout in the role of Tracy's mother Edna.

"I knew that with my height and build there really was only one role for me in this show," said Harris of the role originated by Harvey Fierstein on Broadway and John Travolta in the subsequent movie.

"This is such a great story to tell and I channeled a lot of my mother for the part."

After weeks of rehearsals, Pinkman and the cast were able to savor the opening night experience.

"We all worked hard and had a great opening night audience,"

Pinkman said. "But it is the actors who really made magic tonight."

"Hairspray" runs through Aug. 13 at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria. Call 703-683-0496 or visit www.thelittletheatre.com.

LOCAL THEATER

AUG. 23 TO OCT. 16

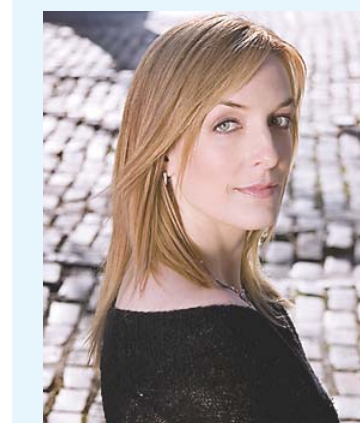
"The Hollow." Based on the Book *Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving. (Book by Hunter Foster; music and lyrics by Matt Conner), to be directed by Signature Theatre's Associate Artistic Director Matthew Gardiner. At The Signature Theatre. At Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington. Visit www.signature-theatre.org or call 703-573-SEAT (7328).

AUG. 25 TO OCT. 16

"The Boy Detective Fails." Book by Joe Meno (based on his best-selling book); Music and Lyrics by Adam Gwon; Directed by Joe Calarco. At Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington. Visit www.signature-theatre.org or call 703-573-SEAT (7328).

NOW THROUGH AUG. 13

"Hairspray." Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 3 p.m. Directed by Sue Pinkman; Music Direction by Chris Tomasino; and Choreography by Ivan Davila. CAST: Shannon Kingett as Tracy Turnblad, Sam Jones as Link Larkin, Christopher Harris as Edna, Larry Grey as Wilbur, Brenda Parker as Motormouth Maybelle, Adrian Cabbage as Seaweed, Jaclyn Young as Penny, Christina Kidd as Amber, Janette Moman as Velma, Gardner Reed as Corny, Gina Tomkus as Prudy, Marissa Moody as Lil Inez,



Julia Murney



Marc Kudisch

NOW THROUGH AUG. 6

Signature's Sizzlin' Summer Cabaret. Cabarets will include "Let Me Sing" and "I'm Happy" ("The Music of Irving Berlin"), a collection of Berlin favorites featuring Sherri L. Edelen, James Gardiner, Matt Pearson and Bayla Whitten. Solo cabarets include Erin Driscoll ("[title of show]"), "Sweeney Todd", and last year's Sizzlin' Summer artists Bob McDonald and Sandy Bainum ("Sunset Boulevard"). Tickets for all cabarets are \$20/\$25 each. Signature offers a special All-Access Pass for \$125. Call 703-820-9771 or visit www.signature-theatre.org.

Scott Strasbaugh as Mr. Pinky, Mark Williams as Mr. Spritzer. Members of the ensemble include Andrea Berting, Amanda Corbett, Maureen Eul, Jonathan Faircloth, Meg Glassco, Blake Hopkins, Caitlin Jackson, Derek Marsh, Jody Parker, Chris

Rios, Maria Simpkins, Zaria Stott, Ryan Walker, Samantha Williams, Jacob Wittenauer and Roger Yawson. At the Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com or call 703-683-0496.



The Lounge Restaurant Opens

The Lounge Restaurant has opened in Washington Suites Alexandria Hotel in the West End of Alexandria at 100 S. Reynolds St. near Landmark Mall. Hours are 11 a.m. until 10 p.m. daily.

From its rich dark wood paneled walls and porcelain-tiled floors, to the solid Russian pine dining tables, The Lounge evokes the feel of an upscale neighborhood bar/restaurant. Chef Alan Curry, a 23-year

veteran and graduate of New England Culinary Institute, has created several familiar dishes, as well as new favorites such as meat ball sliders, fried pickle spears, a trio of hummus, and homemade spinach dip. The Lounge is run by Jeff Beaudoin, with a career that includes executive positions with Capitol City Brewing, Lucky Strike Lanes, Johnny Rockets, and Washington's Capital City Brewing Co.

FINE ARTS



Happy Hour, metallic ink photograph, 8x10

THURSDAY/AUG. 4

"Breeze By." 6 to 9 p.m. Opening reception for artwork by Bonnie Ferguson Butler. At the Firebricks and Frames Exhibition Series at Red Rocks Pizzeria Napoletana on King Street in Old Town Alexandria.

NOW THROUGH AUG. 28

Asian Tea Bowls. Presented by the Washington Ceramic Guild clay artisans. Hours are Monday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and Thursdays until 9 p.m. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center's Scope Gallery, 105 North Union Street, Ground Floor Studio 19, Alexandria. Call Scope Gallery at 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope.

NOW THROUGH AUG. 28

Drawing Analogies. Features seven artists who are united in that they are trying to explore and understand aspects of their worlds through the creation of drawings. At the Athenaeum Gallery, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Visit www.nvfaa.org.

AUG. 2 TO OCT. 3

"Forgotton" and "Off Season." Works by photographers Sandy LeBrun-Evans and Eric Jonson. Opening Reception is Aug. 7 from 3 to 5 p.m. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Suite 312, Torpedo Factory Art Center. Call 703-683-2205.

AUG. 2 TO SEPT. 11

"Satellite Images." Free. Jewelry, sculpture, clothing and wall pieces will be exhibited. At Studio 18 in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Old Town Alexandria.

AUG. 3 TO SEPT. 4

The Power of Color III. Artist's reception is Saturday, Aug. 13 from 5 to 8 p.m. At Gallery West, 1213 King Street, Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.gallery-west.com or call 703-549-6006.

AUG. 5 TO 28

States of Mind Exhibit. 7 to 10 p.m.

Join Kimberley Bush, Ellyn Ferguson, Lesley Hall, Fransi Kaye, Katherine Rand, Gloria Vestal, and Tracy Wilkerson as they showcase encaustics, abstract art, figurative works, stained glass, and mixed media artwork. Opening Aug. 5 from 7 to 10 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

THURSDAY/AUG. 11

Sultry Summer Nights. 6 to 9 p.m. Free. Part of Thursday Art Night; browse open studios, interact with artists. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Visit www.torpedofactory.org; 703-838-4565

AUG. 11 TO 28

Synergy: An exhibition of artwork by the 2011 Visiting Artists. Reception on Aug. 11 from 6 to 9 p.m. This year's selected artists are: Mark Thomas Anderson (Arlington); M. Chava Evans (Baltimore); Allison Long Hardy (Woodbridge); Katie Latona (Champaign, IL); Heather McCaw (Washington, D.C.); Emily Moorhead (Cincinnati, OH); Linda Morrell (Castleton, NY); Liza Myers (Brandon, VT); Drew Parris (Stevensville, MD); Fierce Sonia (Alexandria); Kazaan Viveiros (Alexandria). At Site 2 and Site 3 Galleries, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 n. Union St., Alexandria.

SEPT. 7 TO OCT. 2

"Suburbia." A collection of impressionistic oil paintings by Parisa Tirnaz. Artist's Reception is Saturday, Sept. 10 from 5 to 8 p.m. At Gallery West, 1213 King St., Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.gallery-west.com or call 703-549-6006.

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ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THROUGH OCT. 31

Alexandria Arts and Crafts

Fair. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. every Sunday. Features some of the areas' best artists and artisans and includes jewelry, glass works, ceramics and pottery, hand woven products, and other crafts. At St. George Gallery, 105 North Alfred Street, in the heart of Old Town Alexandria.

NOW THROUGH OCT. 30

Civil War Walking Tour.

Saturdays and Sundays 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Covers the changing role of African Americans on the estate, views on George Washington from the perspective of Union and Confederate supporters, and the Washington-Robert E. Lee connection. At Historic Mount Vernon. These tours are limited in capacity and cost \$5 in addition to Estate admission: \$15 adults; \$7 children (6-11); free for children 5 & under. Visit www.MountVernon.org or call 703-780-2000.

NOW THROUGH AUG. 6

Signature's Sizzlin' Summer

Cabaret. Cabarets will include "Let Me Sing" and "I'm Happy" ("The Music of Irving Berlin"), a collection of Berlin favorites featuring Sherri L. Edelen, James Gardiner, Matt Pearson and Bayla Whitten. Solo cabarets include Erin Driscoll ("[title of show]," "Sweeney Todd"), and last year's Sizzlin' Summer artists Bob McDonald and Sandy Bainum ("Sunset Boulevard"). Tickets for all cabarets are \$25 each. Signature offers a special All-Access Pass for \$125. At Signature Theater, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington. Call 703-820-9771.

NOW THROUGH AUG. 13

"Hairspray." Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 3 p.m. Directed by Sue Pinkman; Music Direction by Chris Tommasino; and Choreography by Ivan Davila. CAST: Shannon Kingett as Tracy Turnblad, Sam Jones as Link Larkin, Christopher Harris as Edna, Larry Grey as Wilbur, Brenda Parker as Motormouth Maybelle, Adrian Cabbage as Seaweed, Jaclyn Young as Penny, Christina Kidd as Amber, Janette Moman as Velma, Gardner Reed as Corny, Gina Tomkus as Prudy, Marissa Moody as L'il Inez, Scott Strasbaugh as Mr. Pinky, Mark Williams as Mr. Spritzer. Members of the ensemble include Andrea Berting, Amanda Corbett, Maureen Eul, Jonathan Faircloth, Meg Glassco, Blake Hopkins, Caitlin Jackson, Derek Marsh, Jody Parker, Chris Rios, Maria Simpkins, Zaria Stott, Ryan Walker, Samantha Williams, Jacob Wittenauer and Roger Yawson. At the Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com or call 703-683-0496.

THURSDAY/AUG. 4

First Thursday Art Walk. 6 to 9 p.m. Art Walk will feature an Art Market where artists will be selling their art, kids activities where parents can discover just how much talent their kids have and performing artists. On Mt. Vernon Avenue in Del Ray. Artists contact Pat Miller at pmiller1806@comcast.net to participate.

18th Century Dance Classes. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Cost is \$30/series or \$12/class. Learn the dances of Jane Austen's time. Dance master Corky Palmer will lead the series in preparation for the annual Jane Austen Ball on Aug. 13. Reservations at 703-746-4242 or www.gadsbystavern.org.

Summer Concert. 6 to 8 p.m. Featuring the music of Charm City



WEDNESDAY/AUG. 17

John Jorgenson in Concert. 8 p.m. At the Birchmere Music Hall in Alexandria.

Baroque. Concessions such as water, chips and cookies will be available for purchase. Alcohol is not permitted on the property. At the lawn at Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Call 703-549-2997 or visit www.carlylehouse.org.

FRIDAY, AUG. 5

Wee Ones Storytime. 10:30 to 11 a.m. Explore the exciting world with some of favorite stories and songs. For ages 2 and under. Free. At Hooray for Books!, 1555 King St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-4092 or visit www.hooray4books.com.

Hooray for Storytime. 7 to 8 p.m. Grab a spot in the storytime corner and listen to some favorite tales of all time! For ages 3 and up. Free. At Hooray for Books!, 1555 King St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-4092 or visit www.hooray4books.com.

"The Real Dirt on Farmer John." 7 p.m. PBS documentary to be shown at Hollin Hall House at the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-721-0595.

"Hairspray" Cast Holds Talkback. Mink Stole, from the original John Waters' film, "Hairspray," will lead a Q&A discussion after the performance. The cast will also be available for questions. Find out what it's like to stage a musical on the LTA stage, ask about auditions, choreography, or character development. At the Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com or 703-683-0496.

Alexandria Citizens Band Concert. 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. The City's Oldest Performing Arts Organization. At Market Square, 301 King St., Alexandria. Contact Special Events, maureen.sturgill@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-5592.

SATURDAY/AUG. 6

Friendship Firehouse Festival. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friendship Firehouse celebrates its 237th birthday. Free. The event will feature a collection of antique fire equipment and, courtesy of the Alexandria Fire Department, a display of modern fire apparatus. The Alexandria Red Cross and the Community Emergency Response Team will also be on hand. Other attractions include craft booths, food vendors and free birthday cake. Children will receive free fire helmets and balloons. At the 100 block of South Alfred Street, between Prince and King Streets. Visit



FRIDAY/AUG. 5

The Band POCO. 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$35. At The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria.



SATURDAY/AUG. 6

Suzy Bogguss in Concert. 8 p.m. At the Birchmere Music Hall in Alexandria.

www.friendshipfirehouse.net.

Living History. Noon to 4 p.m. This free, family-friendly program will feature living history interpreters portraying the Carlyles, John Carlyle and his wife, Sarah Fairfax Carlyle. At Carlyle House, 121 North Fairfax Street, Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.nvrpa.org.

Wee Ones Story Time. 10:30 to 11 a.m. Explore the exciting world with some of favorite stories and songs. For ages 2 and under. Free. At Hooray for Books!, 1555 King St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-4092 or visit www.hooray4books.com.

Alexandria Art Market. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The market boasts amazing artwork from local artists, music from multicultural musicians and great food from local restaurants. At Colasanto Park in the heart of Del Ray. Free and open to public. www.TheDelRayArtisans.org or DR.AlexandriaArtMarket@gmail.com to apply.

Tavern Day. 1 to 5 p.m. Free Open House. Tavern Day will feature continuous tours of the historic site by costumed guides, the opportunity to learn to dance like George and Martha Washington, and much more. At Gadsby's Tavern, 134 North Royal Street, Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-746-4242 or visit www.gadsbystavern.org.

SUNDAY/AUG. 7

New Arrivals Party. Noon to 5 p.m. Donna and Carla have gone to Las Vegas' JCK Jewelry Show and are showing their finds at Today's Cargo, 1102 King Street, Alexandria.

Virginia Ballet Company. 4:30 p.m. Performs "Precedence," contemporary dance styles with classical ballet technique, including ballet, flamenco, modern and jazz. At the Ernst Community Cultural Center, NVCC Annandale campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Tickets are \$15 and may

be purchased at www.virginiaballetcompany.org. Call 703-249-8227.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 10

DJ Dance Party. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$6. With DJ Dabe Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

Lunch Bunch Concert. 12 to 1 p.m. Tolumi DE (Afropop, Soul & Gospel). At Canal Center Plaza, 44 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria. Contact: Special Events, maureen.sturgill@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-5592.

THURSDAY/AUG. 11

18th Century Dance Classes. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Cost is \$30/series or \$12/class. Learn the dances of Jane Austen's time. Dance master Corky Palmer will lead the series in preparation for the annual Jane Austen Ball on Aug. 13. Reservations at 703-746-4242 or www.gadsbystavern.org.

Music at Twilight Concerts. 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Bay Jazz Project (Jazz). At Fort Ward Park Amphitheater, 4301 W. Braddock Rd., Alexandria. Contact: Special Events, maureen.sturgill@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-5592.

Bill Mulroney & Second Wind Bandits. 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Part of the Second Thursday Music. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Call 703-548-0035 or visit nvfaa.org.

FRIDAY/AUG. 12

U.S. Air Force Concert Band. 8 p.m. Free. Presents "Disney and Pixar Favorites." At the U.S. Air Force Memorial, One Air Force Memorial Drive, Arlington. Call 202-767-5658 or www.usafband.af.mil.

Buck Owens Birthday Party. 7 to 10 p.m. Telegraph Station is hosting a Buck Owens Birthday Party with two live acts: banjo player Banjer Dan and Washington, D.C. country band The Highballers. Country music legend Buck Owens is the much-revered and influential father of the "Bakersfield Sound." Telegraph Station will be playing Buck Owens music, and the live acts will perform original music along with some versions of Owens's songs. At 5735 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. Call 703-373-3376.

Alexandria Harmonizers Concert. 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Barbershop Chorus. At Market Square, 301 King St., Alexandria. Contact: maureen.sturgill@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-5592

SATURDAY/AUG. 13

Tommy and the High Pilots. 9 p.m. Admission is \$12. Performing with

Heypenny. At Iota, 2832 Wilson Blvd., Arlington.

Alexandria Scottish Rite

Performance. Dinner at 6 p.m.; Show at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20. A performance by the Hexagon troupe, the Hexagoners. At the Alexandria Scottish Rite Temple, 1430 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Call 703-998-9044.

Fort Ward Civil War Camp Day.

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is \$5/adult; \$10/families. Highlights include Union and Confederate drills and camp life with costumed interpreters, and a focus on uniforms and equipment from the early war. Free parking available along West Braddock Road. At 4301 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Visit www.forward.org or call 703-746-4848.

Summer Sidewalk Sale. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Participating merchants from the river to the Metro, on King Street and the side streets, will be showcasing their products in the Second Annual Old Town-wide Summer Sidewalk Sale. Each participating retailer will host a unique event or promotion — some retailers will be offering deeply-discounted summer merchandise, some will be holding demonstrations of their product lines, and others will have special events. Clothing, accessory, children's, book, jewelry and home decor and furnishings boutiques, as well as galleries, will be part of the event. Visit www.alexandriasidewalksale.com.

AUG. 14 TO 15

Auditions for "Twelve Angry Men." 7 to 9 p.m. Auditions for Aldersgate Church Community Theater (ACCT) production of "Twelve Angry Men" will be held at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. For character profiles, and further information, visit acconline.org

TUESDAY/AUG. 16

Mount Vernon Genealogical Society. 1 p.m. Free. Stephen Morse presents a program entitled "One-Step Webpages: A Potpourri of Genealogical Search Tools." Meets at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Room 112, in Alexandria. Any questions about the program should be directed to Phyllis Kelley at 703-660-6969 or phylliskelley@msn.com.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 17

Swing Dancing. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$10. With the Soul Tones of Swing. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

FRIDAY/AUG. 19

Swing Dancing. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Admission is \$4. With the a live band led by conductor Owen Hammett. Open to all. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Call 703-765-4573.

AUG. 19-28

Alexandria Summer Restaurant Week. 62 restaurants offer a \$35 prix-fixe three-course dinner or \$35 dinner for two. Savor the flavors of Alexandria's distinctive collection of eateries, from fine dining establishments to casual neighborhood favorites. Participating restaurants include Bastille, La Bergerie, the Grille at Morrison House, Cheesetique, A la Lucia, Tempo. 703-746-3301. Menus and online reservations on VisitAlexandriaVA.com

SATURDAY/AUG. 20

Justin Townes Earle. 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$25. At The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Visit www.birchmere.com.

PEOPLE



PHOTO BY MAYA HOROWITZ/THE GAZETTE

Customers shop for vegetables at the Mount Vernon Farmers Market.

Market Yields Sense of Community

Farmers donate extra food to the needy.

BY MAYA HOROWITZ
THE GAZETTE

Baked goods, meats and fresh fruit and vegetables draw local residents to the Mount Vernon Farmers Market, held Wednesdays from 8 a.m. to noon in the parking lot of the Sherwood Library. About a dozen vendors sell their goods in the summer heat.

"I like the idea of getting fresh fruit and vegetables rather than going to a grocery store," said Alex Butler, a Mount Vernon resident attending the market for the first time.

Since the market is held weekly, it allows for repeat customers and creates a community feel. Laura Sonnenmark, from Mount Vernon, said, "I'm pretty much a regular. I like to support local farmers ... It's nice to feel like you're in a small town." She noted that she often sees people she knows at the market, such as members of her church.

The market attracts locals but it appeals to people who work in the area as well. Kristin Marge, of Arlington, works at the hospital across the street from Sherwood Library. She came to check it out on her lunch break.

Some residents brought their children, who seemed particularly pleased with the free samples and baked goods.

Sonya Richard, a teen from Mount Vernon, said, "I like how many choices there are and everything is

Vendors

- ❖ Grace's Pastries breads, pastries, cakes and cookies
- ❖ Granny's Garden flowers and potted plants
- ❖ Laurel Grove Farms fruits and vegetables
- ❖ Natural Design cut and dried flower arrangements
- ❖ Salsa las Glorias salsa
- ❖ Sharkawi Farms herbs, potted plants, spices and tea
- ❖ SnowBear Farm vegetables
- ❖ Sunset View Farm plants, fruit and vegetables
- ❖ Threeway Farms fruit and vegetables
- ❖ Twin Springs Fruit Farm fruit and vegetables
- ❖ Valentines Country Bakery and Meats eggs, baked goods and all-natural, grass-fed pork, lamb, beef and rabbit
- ❖ Westmoreland Berry Farm berries, fruit and vegetables

really good." Her favorite booth is Grace's Pastries, which has a variety of breads, such as cinnamon, pumpkin, focaccia, banana, raspberry and sourdough.

Others brought husbands.

Mark Miller, who lives walking distance from the market, said, "When you've been married for over 35 years and your wife says, 'Let's go to the Farmers Market.' You say, 'Yes, dear.'" He noted that his favorite booth was Westmoreland Berry Farm because berries go well with vanilla ice cream.

WHEN THE MARKET ends at noon, much of the food is at risk of going to waste. Two organizations have stepped in to put that food to good use. St. Aidan's Outreach and Mount Vernon Kiwanis Club collect the extra food and donate it to the needy.

The Kiwanis Club donates to the United Community Ministries. Its website is <http://www.ucmagency.org/>

Rich Keil, a volunteer for the Kiwanis Club, said, "The farmers here, most of them, are just so generous." He said on a good day they collect about 18 baskets of food.

St. Aidans Outreach donates to a local homeless shelter and a center for abused women and children run by Rising Hope. Its website is <http://www.risinghopeumc.org/>

On the topic of donating food, Wallace Withers of Threeway Farms said, "If somebody can use it, it's better than us keeping it. A lot of this stuff goes to waste. Plus everybody is good to us up here so maybe we can help somebody less fortunate." Threeway Farms sells an assortment of fruit and vegetables including tomatoes, green beans, zucchini, onions and peppers.

Jim Dunlap of SnowBear Farms said, "Everybody's got to help everybody." He compared farmers' economic station to that of the poor. He said that makes it easier for farmers to understand and help the needy. SnowBear Farms is a vegetable vendor, with lettuce, eggplant, squash and tomatoes.

To learn more about the Mount Vernon Farmers Market, call 703-642-0128 or go to <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/FarmersMarkets/mtnvernonmkt.htm>

It's Not Magic, It's Stuntology

Library hosts author and showman Sam Bartlett.

BY ORRIN KONHEIM
THE GAZETTE

Roughly 150 people gathered at the Sherwood Regional Library Friday, July 29 to watch Sam Bartlett make a fork levitate behind a towel. Rather than allow the children to leave the room wondering how he did it, he revealed the trick two minutes later.

"Everything looks easy once you know how to do it. If you don't know, it's impossible," he said.

Bartlett visited the library as part of one of his regularly scheduled tours around the country to put on shows and promote his book "Stuntology." "Stuntology" is a term coined by Bartlett to describe his brand of showmanship that he insists is different from magic.

"Magic is hard to do and stunts are easy. You can learn a stunt in 10 seconds or less," said Bartlett. "I always say magic is like learning the violin, especially sleight of hand."

Bartlett opened the show by telling the children he has spent a lifetime collecting stunts. After performing his first trick, involving blowing into a cup of water and shooting a stream out of the side, he explains that he saw someone doing a similar trick 25 years ago and came to the conclusion that "this is a stunt the world needs to know."

"We didn't have email, we didn't have YouTube," Bartlett said, "So I decided I wanted to write them all down."

Bartlett tells the origin of many of his stunts and delves into his childhood in Vermont with three older sisters and a mother who shared his love of stunts.

He credited his mother for teaching him the illusion of having a toothpick stuck through his finger. He also showed a couple stunts involving a ping pong ball that he described as a family se-

BULLETIN BOARD

To have a notice listed, e-mail gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

Chess Comes to Hollin Hall Senior Center. Hollin Hall Senior Center is now a member of the U.S. Chess Federation (USCF). The first club interest meeting will be in the fall. Cost to join the chess affiliate is \$34, which will entitle you to a monthly online copy of Chess Life and an opportunity to meet chess lovers and play at your skill level and learn new moves! Meets at 1500

cret "that no other kids in the neighborhood could do."

When Bartlett performs a trick where he levitates a ping pong ball through a stream of air, he teaches the audience about the Bernoulli Principle. For the most part his act does not involve much scientific explanation. Nevertheless, Bartlett feels that he's popular with both children and parents because of his act's educational value.

"It's completely educational. Kids think it's silly but it's all about being persistent. It's a problem they want to solve and it's not being forced upon them by teachers," said Bartlett.

Though he has invented his own brand of magic and has even copyrighted the term "stuntology," he insists he is not unique. "I don't do anything original. Stuntology is like folklore," he said.

Writing and publishing the book took Bartlett 10 years. He credits his publisher, Workman Publishing Company, for his success. In particular, it translated his book into many different languages, which allowed him to gain an international audience.

In the interest of expanding his audiences, he also caters his show to all ages.

"It's stuff parents don't want you to know. Things that the kids could take home with them to do," said Alexandria restaurant Stacy el Shami who came with her children and their grandmother and enjoyed the show.

Bartlett resides in Bloomington, Ind., and his day job is a musician.

Bartlett's appearance was part of the Fairfax County Libraries' Summer Reading Program. The program rewards children for reading and also gives them reasons to visit the library.

"We do these programs partly to entertain them and partly if they're in the building, they might check out a book," librarian Sarah Southern said.

Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Contact Julie Ellis Director at 703-765-4573, TTY 711.

Crafters are needed for the 18th annual St. Luke's Episcopal Craft and Family Fun Fair to be held Sept. 10 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. outside the church at 8009 Fort Hunt Road. This will be a fun-filled event in a highly visible location with baked goods, music, games, face-painting and hundreds of shoppers starting their holiday gift buying. Contact Anne Hargrove at annehargrove@cox.net for an application.

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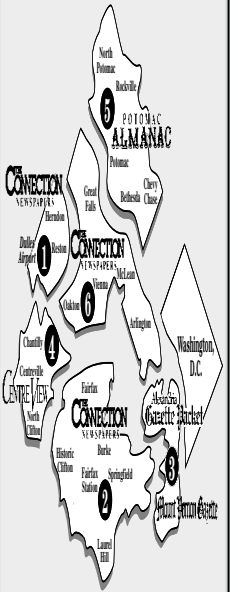
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OBITUARY
Darl Dwane Alt, age 73 of Dorcas, WV died Thursday, July 28, 2011 at the home of his son, Darren and Joyce Alt. He was born on February 13, 1938 in Landes, WV and was a son of the late Louie B. Alt and Della (Ratcliff) Alt. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by an infant son; a grandson, Devin Lee Alt; two brothers, Darwood "Johnny" Alt and Delmar H. Alt. Mr. Alt attended Johnson Run Elementary School and Petersburg High School. He received his GED in the U. S. Armed Forces Institute. He graduated from Strayer College and Columbia Tech. He was employed by the American Security Bank and Washington Gas Light Company and A. M. Corporation. He was vice president of Mechtronic Corporation in Washington, D.C. He founded Embossing and Repair Services with main contracts in the Pentagon. This company is presently owned and operated by his son, Daniel Alt in Dorcas, WV. He was Co-Founder of Sheltered Enterprises of Alexandria, VA (a workshop for the mentally retarded). He was Scout Master of BSA in National Capital Area Council and Potomac Council. He was also a Vigil member of the O. A. He was a member of Dorcas Baptist Church and had held several offices in the Church and Association. He also had served as President of the Dorcas PTA. He was a United States Army Veteran having served in New Jersey, Texas, Louisiana and Tokyo, Japan.

SURVIVING: The Mother of his children, Delores Alt Propst of Dorcas, WV, Two sons, Darren Alt and wife Joyce of Dorcas, WV, Daniel Alt of Dorcas, WV, One daughter, Regina Marie Alt of Boise, Idaho, 6 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren. Several nieces and nephews, Sister-In-Law: Alma Jean Alt of Spotsylvania, VA, Two half brothers, Bobby Alt and wife Debbie of York, SC, Billy Alt and wife Elaine of Youngstown, OH. One half sister, Mary Kay Alt of Riverton, WV.

Funeral services were held on Monday at 11 a.m. (August 1st) at the Schaeffer Funeral Home in Petersburg, WV with Pastor Delores Alt Propst officiating. Interment was in the North Mill Creek Cemetery, Dorcas, WV with military honors by the Petersburg VFW Post 6454 and West Virginia Army Honor Guard. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Cub Pack 63 B.S.A. HC 33, Box 3540, Dorcas, WV 26847.

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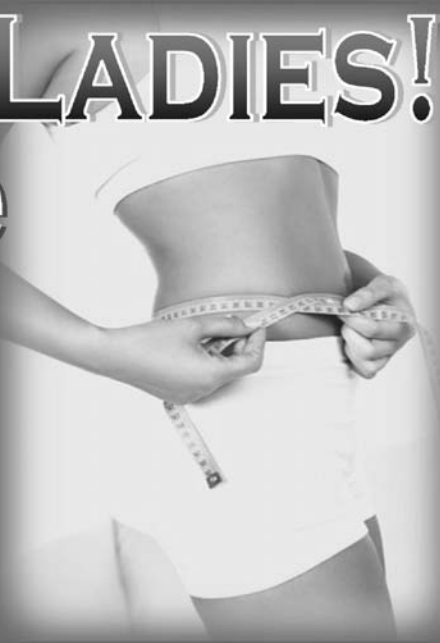
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LETTERS

Route 1 Transit Study

FROM PAGE 9

(Blue Line) to Potomac Mills; establishing a transit center on Belvoir Road at Pence Gate; and extending PRTC's Route 1 OmniLink Route from Prince William County to Fort Belvoir's South Post entrance; improving connections to existing transit centers by extending the Metro Bus REX line to Lorton VRE and improving local bus connections to the Franconia-Springfield Station.

A report on the VDOT Centerline Study of Route 1 was released in 2009. The Route 1 Transit Study is necessary before funding sources and final plans can be put in place.

Task force members will look at the potential "next steps" for transit in the Route 1 corridor. In the near-term, consideration will be given to improve conditions for transit operations and riders by

conducting necessary study and analysis to implement BRT, pedestrian facility and shelter assessment and developing a funding strategy to improve existing conditions with a focus on redevelopment to the corridor.

For the long-term, we will be looking to conduct land use analysis and develop a vision for economic development/redevelopment in the corridor and a feasibility analysis to determine potential for extending metro or implementing light rail.

More federal funding may now be somewhat problematic.

I'm encouraged by the Route 1 Study now in process and believe the task force is working seriously to relieve some of the continuing problems of congestion and the need for redevelopment and revitalization of this important Route 1 transportation corridor.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 8

Thank you Admiral Gayler for your service to our country and may you rest in peace. My condolences to Mrs. Gayler and their family.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

Fulfill The Vision

To the Editor:

Fulfilling the vision created by the people of Mount Vernon will cost \$900 million. As a candidate for Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman, I accept personal responsibility to help our community realize this plan.

If I am elected, voters will hold me accountable. We will regularly discuss our progress during monthly televised town hall meetings hosted by local journalists and bloggers.

As Jessica Taylor wrote in "Transforming Route 1," [Mount Vernon Gazette, July 28-August 3, 2011], the project includes extending the Yellow Line and developing Route 1 as a walkable, pedestrian-friendly area with local businesses, shops, restaurants and all ranges of housing developments sensibly planned with parks and green spaces to beautify the area.

We are raising expectations and the level of accountability. I am the only candidate for chairman who has made the fulfillment of Mount Vernon's Vision a measurable ob-

jective for political service.

In her commentary titled, "Millions Already Spent on Route 1," Chairman Bulova argues that southern Fairfax County is ready to accommodate tens of thousands of new commuters.

We will know on Sept. 15 whether she is correct. Announced in May 2005, she has had six years to help the region prepare for BRAC. While most people remain concerned, Bulova says now is not the time for additional investment in Route 1.

In Jerry Fill's recent interview of all three candidates for chairman, Sharon said she wants to wait to finance the widening of Route 1 and the extension of the Yellow Line until Fairfax County voters pass a referendum increasing taxes or the state provides funding. Having waited since 1967, Bulova wants us to continue waiting.

Chairman Bulova fails to advocate the best interests of Fairfax County and our people. While the General Assembly drives our real estate taxes up by over 31.5 percent, costing over \$501 million annually, to subsidize other taxpayers in meeting a state mandate, Bulova remains silent.

Working together we will create effective, sustainable solutions to the challenges confronting our community. We will fulfill the vision.

Will Radle

Candidate for chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors - FairfaxAdvocates@gmail.com

Second Season One of Uncertainty for MV's Wells

Majors head coach concerned about lack of offseason commitment.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

In his first season as a head coach, Barry Wells helped guide the Mount Vernon football program from an 0-10 record in 2009 to a second-place finish in the National District and a playoff berth during the 2010 campaign.

Entering his second season with the Majors, Wells has a better understanding of what to expect from certain aspects of his job. What he doesn't know is whether he'll have the athletes to continue improving.

One year after posting a doughnut in the win column, Mount Vernon finished the 2010 regular season with a 5-5 record, including a 5-2 district mark, before losing to South Lakes, 39-0, in the regional playoffs. However, the graduation of key players such as linebacker Julien Randolph, running back Emmanuel Tackie and lineman Logan Beougher, and a drop in offseason commitment has Wells uncertain of what to expect with two-a-day practices starting on Aug. 8. Wells said the lack of offseason work will likely "haunt" the Majors at some point during the season, but he hopes the team can find a way to be resilient.



Rising junior Robert Nelson, seen last season, will compete for the starting quarterback position in 2011.

"The excitement is certainly the same. I'm eager to get back at it," Wells said, comparing how he feels now to how he felt prior to his first season as a head coach. "I'm familiar with, at least, how things will unfold in the grand scheme of things: the program, the coaches and getting things up off the ground. I am not as sure about the talent base this year as I was last year. ... Almost sight unseen, I said .500 or bust [last season]. This year, what I'm telling the underclassmen is the bar's been set. Julien and

Emmanuel and Logan and all those guys bought into the program last year [and] they worked their butts off. They were 0-10 as juniors, 5-5 as seniors, 5-2 in the district [and earned a] playoff berth. They set the bar, and with that comes the expectations of everyone around us. ...

"It remains to be seen if we're going to get the kind of commitment and production from this next crew that we need to continue the success pattern."

Wells mentioned two ways in which he

wants to alter his coaching approach. The first is making sure practice tempo translates to game tempo, and the second is being relentless in developing a winning attitude.

"Quite frankly," Wells said, "when we got to the playoffs, I don't feel like the kids felt like they were prepared to go and give South Lakes a run for their money."

There have also been changes to the coaching staff. Wells will call plays on offense for a second straight year, but he will also coach the quarterbacks in an attempt to help improve production from the position. Rising junior Robert Nelson, who split playing time last season, or rising sophomore Brendon Maturey will likely land the starting job.

"They bring different things to the table," Wells said. "Robert is athletic, he's got a live arm, but Brendon is the technician: very smart, understands his role as a quarterback [and] understands defensive schemes."

Lloyd Jackson moves from assistant to defensive coordinator, taking over for the retired Walter DeHoust. Blair Maginnis will coach the offensive and defensive lines, Jarvis Davis will be the assistant defensive coordinator and Jamie Langley will be the assistant offensive coordinator. Jamaar Hicks will be the head coach of the freshman team and Herbert Holmes will be assistant head coach of the freshman team.

The Majors will scrimmage Freedom High on Aug. 18 and La Plata on Aug. 25 before opening the season at West Potomac on Sept. 1.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Fort Hunt Coaches Needed

The Fort Hunt Football and Cheerleading Program is looking for coaches for football, flag football and cheerleading. No experience necessary as training will be provided.

Becoming a volunteer coach is an excellent opportunity to give back to the community, be a positive role model to many young kids and do something for the greater good.

If you are interested, contact Tina McCammon, assistant commissioner at tina.mccammon@yahoo.com.

Fort Hunt Flag Football Program

The Fort Hunt Youth Athletic Association will field a flag football program for boys and girls ages 5 and 6 (as of Aug. 1, 2011) this year. Registration is open until goals of 64 players and 10 on a waiting list are met (waiting list players if not selected to teams will receive full refunds). Practices begin on Aug. 8 and will run from 5-6 p.m. Regular season games will start Sept. 17 and run through

Oct. 8. Playoff games will be held Oct. 15 and the championship game is Oct. 22.

Cost is \$100 per player. Visit the FHYAA Website, fhyaa.org, to register.

American Legion Baseball Players Wanted

The Montgomery College Rockville baseball team is looking for American Legion or showcase-quality players for the fall 2011 and spring 2012 seasons. The Rockville Express of the Cal Ripken League plays their home games at MC Rockville. Contact coach Rick Price at 240-447-6948 for more information.

Summer Baseball Camps

The StrikeZone Academy, an indoor baseball training facility located in Alexandria, is offering week-long summer baseball camps for the weeks of Aug. 15 and Aug. 29. Camps run from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Monday-Friday. The target age group is from 7-11 years old. Extended hours from 1-4 p.m. are available as well. Cost is \$160 per week for the morning

session and \$160 per week for extended hours. All camps are held indoors in a climate-controlled facility, so parents have no need to worry about security, excessive heat, bugs, or lack of cold water and restroom facilities. Interested parents can register online at www.thestrikezoneacademy.com/clinics, via telephone at 703-823-0061, or stop by in person at 826 South Pickett Street, near the intersections of South Pickett and South Van Dorn Streets.

Sports Updates On Twitter

Follow sports editor Jon Roetman on Twitter at @jonroetman for sports updates around Northern Virginia and Montgomery County, Md.

Registration Open For Senior Olympics

Registration is open for the 2011 Northern Virginia Senior Olympics, which will take place Sept. 17-28. Participants can register online by going to nvso.us.

More than 25 indoor and outdoor events from track and field to scrabble and chess are offered. Senior adults 50 years of age

and older, who live in a sponsoring jurisdiction, are eligible to participate. Registration information is available at local senior centers, community centers, senior residences or by calling 703-228-4721. Details and registration forms are also available online at www.nvso.us. Deadline to register is Sept. 1. The fee is \$10 plus \$1 per event. There are additional charges for golf, miniature golf, bowling and fencing.

Seniors may compete in more than one event. Each event is divided into age categories and some by gender. Winners will be awarded gold, silver and bronze medals after each event. The events will take place at various locations throughout Northern Virginia.

New events in 2011 are badminton, volleyball, cycling and a 1,600-meter run has been added to the track events. Events are track and field, swimming, diving, tennis, table tennis, golf, miniature golf, 10-pin bowling, Wii bowling, pickleball, racquetball, scrabble, bocce, cribbage, fencing, chess, duplicate bridge, backgammon, buncos, horseshoes, men's 3-on-3 basketball, men's and women's basketball free throw, team line dancing, yo-yo tricks, eight-ball pool, Frisbee throw and softball hit and throw.

Looking for Improved Fitness — How About Tennis?

Sport combines fun, good exercise, and social interaction.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE GAZETTE

Like the perfect service point that produces an ace and a match victory, the sport of tennis, while its overall popularity over the years has gone through its highs and lows in the United States, is an absolute winner when it comes to its fitness and enjoyment benefits.

For those, from youngsters to young adults to the middle-aged and beyond, looking to improve their physical conditioning as well as taking up a fulfilling sport, recreation or competitive tennis is almost a perfect solution. The enjoyment of successfully volleying the ball back and forth with a partner is a sort of athletic exhilaration, an instant gratification that if learned to achieve consistently can grow towards passion and perhaps a deep love for the sport.

"I think one of the things that draws people to tennis is that one can get a real good workout in an hour playing a game of singles with one other person," said Hank Harris, director of the Hank Harris Tennis Academy, a summer program for youngsters ages 7 to 18 at Episcopal High School in Alexandria, where Harris serves as the head boys' tennis coach during the school year. "It's a sport that's all you — you can out-think your opponent [in a match] or [simply] work on your game."

Harris, a former University of Virginia men's tennis standout who went on to coach former women's professional star Pam Shriver, said the fitness benefits of the game are a natural byproduct of tennis if one is taught how to play the game the right way.

Harris explained that a good tennis player is constantly moving his or her feet and body during a volley, anticipating where an opponent might hit the ball, getting into position to put forth a fluent swing on the ball, and always being prepared to move forward or backward, left or right in readiness to how an opponent might react and where the ball might be headed. For beginners, recreation players, or competitive players, the sound principle of constantly being in position to move and go after the ball is a key principle for any tennis player.

"If you're playing good tennis, you're always moving," said Harris. "At no point should you not be moving. It's a game of movement, stopping and starting."

PEOPLE LOVE TENNIS for the physical conditioning benefits, the social aspect of going out and hitting the ball around with a friend, the whole idea of improving one's game, and the opportunity of competing against another person in a match.

"Tennis keeps you moving and engaged and having a good time," said John Kratzke, tennis director of the Highlands Swim and



A young girl works on a shot during tennis at the Hank Harris Academy.

Tennis Club in McLean. "It doesn't matter if you're 5 or a 55-year-old."

Kratzke, a former player at William & Mary College, has been a full-time tennis instructor throughout Northern Virginia for the past 12 years. At Highlands, he oversees a tennis program of which 175 youth and 100 adults are participants.

"People enjoy competing and that side of it, and others love learning something new and adding to their skill set," he said, of the different mindsets his students have in regards to the sport.

He said he does not have one set teaching formula for all of his players or students, but instead tries to help individuals learn strategies and playing techniques best suited for their temperament, skill level, and goals in the sport.

"Having it being fun and fast-paced is what gets people interested in tennis," said Kratzke.

Most seasoned tennis professionals or teachers believe it is imperative that individuals desiring to take up the game take lessons from a tennis professional at a local club or tennis academy.

"I would highly recommend taking a few lessons," said Doug Kegerreis, president of Chantilly International Tennis (CIT), a tennis management service that helps create and provide tennis programs for clubs, youth organizations, and neighborhood associations.

Kegerreis, a physical education teacher at Oakton Elementary School in Fairfax County and the head tennis coach, along with his wife Karen, of both the Chantilly High boys' and girls' spring season teams, gives a tennis lesson through a media venue on YouTube. Individuals, after getting an idea for his teaching methods upon viewing the YouTube program, will sometimes call Kegerreis for personal tennis instruction.

"Tennis is a skilled sport but can be very difficult if you don't have guidance," said Kegerreis, who said the primary goal of CIT is to give students a desire to play the sport throughout their lives. "If you go out and spend most of your time chasing balls two

PHOTOS COURTESY OF HANK HARRIS ACADEMY



Youngsters at the Hank Harris tennis camp gather for a group picture on one of the tennis courts at Episcopal High School.

courts over, it's frustrating. I feel like you need some basic guidance. For some people that's all they need and want. They don't want to be tournament players."

He said one of the first elements he teaches newcomers to the sport, both younger and older students, is to learn how to successfully volley or rally — hitting the tennis ball back and forth over the net with a partner. He said a key to good rallying back and forth is for players to execute easy, fluent swings and not try to hit the ball too hard.

"I don't care how much power you have, you have to learn to control your swing speed," said Kegerreis, who believes consistent seven or eight hit rallies can develop good physical workouts for players.

He recommends that someone new to the sport purchase a mass merchandise tennis racquet at a place such as Wal-Mart for between \$19 and \$40. A more experienced player, or someone who plays 10 or more times a year, should look for performance rackets which, at close-out sales, can be as inexpensive as between \$70 and \$90.

GLENN ADAMS, the boys' tennis coach at Madison High for the past 10 years, tries to create in all of his team members — whether they are standout players on the Warhawks' squad or backup team members — a will to play tennis for years to come.

He said he often, when talking to prospective Madison players coming out of junior high schools, notices a lack of true love for the sport. Adams believes youngsters who are taught tennis at a young age develop a lifetime love for the sport. For those youngsters who take it up during, say, their teen years, there is not that immediate passion.

"It just doesn't develop on its own or spontaneously," said Adams, of rising ninth graders developing a bond with tennis. "When I talk to rising freshmen from [Madison feeder schools] Thoreau or Kilmer I don't sense tennis has become a passion in their lives. They have to be afforded a few lessons to develop a passion."

Adams keeps a large Madison team roster during the spring season in hopes that his players will catch tennis fever for life. The benefits, he said, are so rewarding. A runner/jogger of 40 years, Adams said he much prefers the fitness routine of tennis to that of running, which to him is quite grueling.

"Tennis is a great cardio activity," said Adams. "In tennis you get to exercise without the pain and torture of running. I always tell the guys to stick with the sport through the [beginner] frustration level."

"Tennis only requires one hour for a good workout for a singles game and, if you're playing doubles, and hour-and-a-half," he said. "You can play a tennis game during a work break or in the middle of a work day."

Adams said the first 6 months of playing tennis could be frustrating as one learns how to consistently hit the ball over the net.

"But get that first six months in and you'll definitely start to land those shots, whether they are lucky shots or not," he said, with a laugh.

Harris, the Alexandria area tennis pro, is trying to spread the word about the sport he loves in Alexandria. He had two daughters who were a part of the T.C. Williams High girls' tennis team this past spring. While thrilled to have had his daughters a part of the Titans' program, he and others are disappointed that the school, despite massive upgrades and renovations to the campus in recent years, did not include outdoor tennis courts on the campus. As a result, the Titans play their home matches at Wakefield Park in Arlington or elsewhere.

Harris, at his summer camps and over the course of the year when he is teaching and working with young people and adults in the sport, makes it a priority to emphasize that first and foremost, tennis should be a fun endeavor.

"If it isn't fun, you shouldn't play," said Harris. "We try to make it fun. You try to be encouraging to kids whether they make contact with the ball or not. You can't be disappointed with them but positive."

Harris, like his colleagues, stresses lessons for newcomers to tennis. Some early success can breed confidence and the sky is the limit from there.

"Like anything in life, if you can do something on a pretty good level it improves your self confidence," he said. "And the more steady and consistent you get, the more exercise you get playing."

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