

Burke CONNECTION

Suzi Fowler Neal, president of the Burke Historical Society, greeted guests at the annual Burke Historical Society Christmas party on Sunday, Dec. 10, dressed in period costume. Lynn Garvey Hodge, a chronicler of Clifton history and a member of the Burke Historical Society, attended the party with her fiancé, Robert Airaghi.

Fairfax to Richmond:
Do Us No Harm

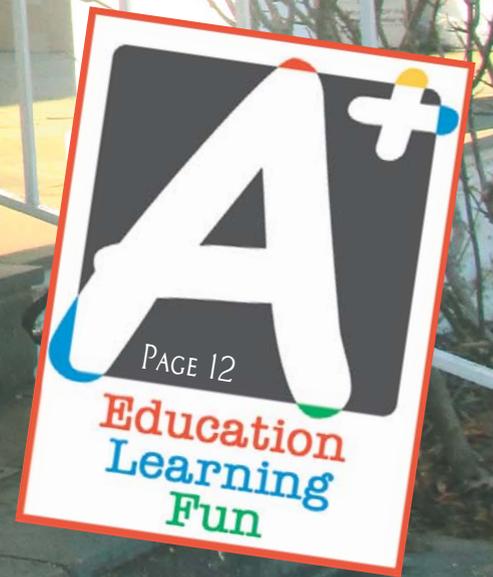
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Teeth Whitening...What You Should Know.



With the holidays around the corner, everyone seems to be coming in to whiten their teeth for their picture perfect moments. So before you start using whitening products that you may be completely unfamiliar with, you may want to read this article.

If you want to whiten your teeth, the best place to start is with a healthy mouth. Tooth decay, sensitive or cracked teeth, infections or periodontal (gum) problems should be diagnosed and treated before any teeth whitening procedure. Otherwise, you could experience discomfort. If using the right products, the whitening process is safe; however, it can aggravate existing problems.

Rather than heading to the local cosmetic counter or shopping mall in search of teeth whiteners, start with a dental check up. This way, we can diagnose the cause of discoloration—injury, stains from food or tobacco, antibiotic treatment and so on. Whitening products only work on natural tooth enamel, not on crowns, veneers, bonding materials or tooth colored fillings. Does this mean if you have any of the above mentioned conditions you are stuck with yellow teeth? Absolutely not! The diagnosis is important; from there, we can determine whether whitening will work for you and which product will suit you best; otherwise you could be wasting time and money!

Studies have shown the first thing a person notices when they meet you is your smile. Being a cosmetic dentist, I am aware of how desirable it is to have white, bright teeth and how it impacts your confidence, well being, and your entire life. By seeing a trained cosmetic dentist, you can achieve not only a whiter, more attractive smile, but one that is healthy and contributes to your overall health. For more information about whitening and to check out our holiday whitening gift ideas and specials, I encourage you to visit our website or set up a complimentary whitening consultation with our well trained and knowledgeable team. Happy Holidays!

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NEWS

State senators George Barker (D-39) and Richard Saslaw (D-35) and Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) listen as state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) addresses local officials during the meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County delegation to the General Assembly on Wed. Dec. 7 at the McConnell Public Safety Transportation and Operations Center.



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax to Richmond: Do Us No Harm

Transportation funding dominates discussion.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

The message Fairfax County Board of Supervisors delivered to legislators at its annual 2012 session was summed up in four words: Do us no harm.

“Our theme is basically ‘Leave us alone,’” said Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee), chairman of the board’s legislative committee. “We recognize it’s difficult this year, and we’re begging our legislators not to make it worse for Fairfax County. It doesn’t sound collaborative, but we know we lose in all the funding formulas, so we’re saying don’t make it any worse.”

The 2012 General Assembly Legislative Work Session, held at the McConnell Public Safety Transportation and Operations Center on Wednesday, Dec. 7, followed the Boards’ unanimous decision to support the 2012 legislative agenda at its regular meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 6.

The county’s legislative program outlines four priorities: education funding; transportation funding; restoring the decimated level of state funding; and enhancing local authority, giving the county the flexibility to “modernize” its local tax structure, particularly in areas such as taxation and land use.

“I know we’re speaking to the choir here,” Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) said to the mostly Democratic state legislators in the room. “But now is the time for the state to begin the process of rebuilding the funding partnership with local government, by providing adequate funding for core services and avoiding shifting additional state costs and responsibilities to localities.”

THE CONCEPT OF DEVOLUTION, or shifting responsibilities from the state to the county, was a heated topic during the three-hour session.

“Basically, devolution means we don’t have enough money to go around,” said Del. Ken Plum (D-36) “so we end up pushing it down to counties. We’re not living up to our end of the bargain.”

During the session, Fairfax County executives said two facts merge to make FY 2012 a difficult year



School Board member Ted Velkoff (D-At-large), Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), state Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) and Supervisor Linda Smyth (D-Providence) at the meeting.

financially: funding shortfalls exacerbated by diminishing federal stimulus dollars and the state’s declining revenue sources.

“The pie has shrunk. The money the state has been able to send us has dropped ... some of that decrease did not feel as bad because of the stimulus,” said James J. Regimbal Jr., a consultant from Fiscal Analytics who presented a fiscal forecast of state aid to Fairfax County during the session.

Regimbal said state revenues are not rebounding fast enough after the recession, which impacts core services such as education, transportation and human services. He predicted that Medicaid and Virginia Retirement System demands will continue to outstrip the state’s general fund revenue, putting pressure on state funding for other core programs.

“Without new revenues and expecting modest economic growth, the state will continue to reduce fund

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PHOTOS BY ANIVA KURASH

Students from Congregation Adat Reyim’s confirmation and post-confirmation classes helped Georgetown Cupcake package and prepare to ship 10,000 cupcakes to troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Operation Cupcake

Congregation Adat Reyim’s Confirmation Class takes part in a good deed.

BY ANDREA E. FEIGENBAUM

On Sunday, Dec. 12, 17 students from Congregation Adat Reyim’s confirmation and post-confirmation classes took part in a mitzvah (good deed). Led by Rabbi Bruce Aft and accompanied by three parent volunteers, the students were part of a team that helped Georgetown Cupcake package and prepare to ship 10,000 cupcakes to American troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is the second year that Georgetown Cupcake has done Operation Cupcake.

It was a life-changing experience for many of the students as they worked as a team in an assembly line to get these treats ready to make their trek to Andrews Air Force Base and then overseas. Katherine Kallinis, one of the sisters who co-founded Georgetown Cupcake, took time away from her baking for an inspirational talk with the students. She told them that it is hard for us to understand just how important a taste from home is to the soldiers.

Rabbi Aft first met Katherine when she was preparing to convert to Judaism prior to her recent marriage. At the time he served on the Rabbinic Court that welcomed her to the Jewish faith. He asked her how her business would be

impacted by her being Jewish. She responded by telling him about the many acts of tzedakah (act of charity) that her company did. When learning of Operation Cupcake, Rabbi Aft immediately asked if there would be an opportunity for his confirmation class students to help with this.

The students participated in a multi-step assembly line process that included everything from building the boxes to packaging the cupcakes. The students worked so efficiently that they were asked to slow down as there wasn’t any more room for the boxes. It was a win-win as Georgetown Cupcake got some help and the students got so much more out of it.

The students got to meet a successful female entrepreneur, learn about corporate giving and participate in community service, and help the troops while forming a deeper bond with each other. The special cupcake they each got for helping...that was just icing on the cake.



Lia Meinstein, with other students from Congregation Adat Reyim’s confirmation and post-confirmation classes, helped Georgetown Cupcake package and prepare to ship 10,000 cupcakes to troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.



Andrew and Cindy Bennett attended the annual Burke Historical Society Christmas party on Sunday, Dec. 10 dressed as Joshua and Huldah Coffey, relatives of Lt. Col. Silas Burke.



Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, with husband, Lou DeFalaise, at the annual Burke Historical Society Christmas party on Sunday, Dec. 10. They are standing in front of the historic Ice House, which serves as a gift shop for the Burke Historical Society.



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Singers from Lake Braddock High School sang a capella at the Burke Historical Society party on Sunday, Dec. 10, from left: Lauren Lee, Allie Haines, Allison Kraft, Juliana Dzura, Scott Cox, Ian Jelliffe, J. J. Vercouteren and Aaron Reynolds.



Jon Vrana, dressed as Lt. Col. Silas Burke, said Burke was once a thriving resort town that featured four hotels and a racetrack. "Believe it or not, they used to give away diamond rings as prizes at the racetrack," Vrana said. A musician, Vrana entertained guests by playing holiday songs on his guitar at the annual Burke Historical Society Christmas party on Sunday, Dec. 10.

The 'Burke' of Christmas Past

Burke Historical Society hosts annual holiday party.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Dressed in their holiday finest, Lt. Col. Silas Burke and his wife, Hilda Coffey Burke, opened the doors to their antebellum estate on Sunday, Dec. 10 for an old-fashioned Christmas party, complete with carolers, mistletoe, homemade egg nog and tours of their expansive home.

"This is a wonderful way to celebrate the holidays, and enjoy a taste of what it was like when Silas Burke lived in this historic home," said Suzi Fowler Neal, president of the Burke Historic Society, who greeted guests in period costume.

The Silas Burke House, built on a hill overlooking the valley of Pohick Creek in 1824, has been in Fowler Neal's family since the 1920s. She opens the home throughout the year for historical society meetings and special events.

Although the home is just off Burke Center Parkway, it's situated at the top of a steep hill and surrounded by acres of undeveloped property.

"When you stand here, you can just imagine what it was like to look out over this hill and see practically into D.C.," said Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, who attended the party with her husband, Lou DeFalaise. "I'm a huge believer in preserving history; it's the

story of what we used to be and where we're going."

Bulova joined more than 150 guests at the annual gathering, which also served as a fundraiser for the society. Guests donated gifts food and toys for underprivileged children in the community of Woodstock, Va.

THE BURKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, originally founded in 1978, was inactive for several years before Fowler Neal reorganized the non-profit group two years ago. The mission of the organization is to create interest in the history of Burke, and to research, collect and preserve material and sites which are a part of Burke community's history.

Preserving the History of Burke

The Burke Historical Society was first established in 1978 as an advocate for preserving Burke's heritage. The society procures and maintains the locality's historical markers, collects community artifacts for display and is raising funds to republish the book "Memories of Beautiful Burke," co-authored by Nan Netherton and Ruth Rose. The historical society also inspired artist Barbara Thelin Preston to paint and donate a painting depicting Old Burke, which the society framed and donated to the Burke post office. The society also hosts the annual Burke Historical Days event promoting an appreciation for history. The group welcomes local historians and "historians-at heart." Meetings and forums take place the last Sunday of the month at 4 p.m. at the Silas Burke House, 9595 Burke Lake Road. For more information about Burke Historical Society, go to www.burkehistoricalsociety.com. Annual membership is \$8 for students; \$10 for those 65 and older; \$25 for individuals; and \$50 for families.

The society is currently selling 2012 calendars featuring the watercolors of Robert Merchant, whose work was showcased throughout "Memories of Beautiful Burke" by local historians Nan Netherton and Ruth Preston Rose. The book is out-of-print, and Fowler Neal said the money received from the calendars will go towards republishing the book.

"We are privileged and excited to have been granted permission by Robert Merchant Jr. to use his father's work for this project," she said. "This is the first fundraiser dedicated to raising money to republish the book."

The calendar can be purchased at the Ice House Gift Shop, which also sells jams and Christmas ornaments. Located next to the Silas Burke House, the Ice House will be open on Saturday, Dec. 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For multiple copies of the calendar, contact Fowler Neal at specialteas@cox.net.



At the Burke Historical Society's annual Christmas party on Sunday, Dec. 10, members Chris Lipsey, Mary Lipsey and Christine Zinser gathered gifts donated by guests to deliver to underprivileged children.

Convicted Of Conspiracy, Tax Crimes

Fair Oaks resident secretly represented Pakistan.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

A Fair Oaks man is facing a possible eight years behind bars after pleading guilty last week in federal court to secretly conspiring to act as an agent of the Pakistani government in the U.S., without telling federal authorities about this affiliation, as the law requires. He is Syed Ghulam Nabi Fai, 62, a U.S. citizen and resident of the Penderbrook community.

He also pleaded guilty to tax violations in connection with a decades-long scheme to conceal the transfer of at least \$3.5 million from the government of Pakistan to fund his lobbying efforts in America related to Kashmir.

Fai served as the director of the Kashmiri American Council (KAC), a non-governmental organization in Washington, D.C., that purported to be run by Kashmiris, financed by Americans and dedicated to raising the level of knowledge in the U.S. about the struggle of the Kashmiri people for self-determination. But according to court documents, the Kashmiri American Council was secretly funded by officials employed by the government of Pakistan, including the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI).

"For the last 20 years, Mr. Fai secretly took millions of dollars from Pakistani intelligence and lied about it to the U.S. government," said U.S. Attorney Neil MacBride. "As a paid operative of ISI, he did the bidding of his handlers in Pakistan while he met with U.S. elected officials, funded high-profile conferences and promoted the Kashmiri cause to decision-makers in Washington."

"Mr. Fai purposefully hid financial transactions from the U.S. government, with intentions that his scheme to fund lobbying efforts by a foreign government would go unnoticed," said FBI Assistant Director in Charge James McJunkin. "[But] the FBI will detect and defeat those who attempt to surreptitiously exert foreign influence on our government by using agents who conceal their foreign affiliation."

ARRESTED JULY 19, Fai appeared last Wednesday, Dec. 7, in U.S. District Court in Alexandria and entered his guilty pleas before Judge Liam O'Grady. He could now receive as much as five years in prison for the conspiracy offense, plus a possible three years incarceration for the tax violation, when he's sentenced on March 9, 2012. As part of his plea agreement, Fai will forfeit \$142,851.32 seized from him by the government in July.

"The Tax Division is committed to prosecuting any

individual who illegally uses the tax-exempt status of charitable entities to promote or conceal federal crimes," said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General John DiCiccio.

Doing so, added IRS Special Agent in Charge Jeannine Hammett, "harms all Americans, as we all have to pay our fair share for the government services and protections that we enjoy."

Fai admitted in court that, from 1990 until about July 18 of this year, he lied to and defrauded the U.S. government. And according to court documents, Fai told FBI agents in March 2007 that he'd never met anyone who identified himself as being affiliated with the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate. Then in May 2009, he falsely denied to the IRS on a tax return for the Kashmiri American Council that the council had received any money from foreign sources in 2008.

FURTHERMORE, court documents state that, in April 2010, Fai sent a letter to the Justice Department claiming that the Pakistani government didn't fund the Kashmiri American Council. He also told the IRS that the council hadn't received any money from foreign sources in 2009. Again, in July 2011, Fai lied to the FBI that neither he nor the Kashmiri American Council received money from the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate or from Pakistan.

But in fact, U.S. authorities say he repeatedly submitted annual council strategy reports and budgetary requirements to Pakistani government officials for approval. In 2009, they say, these documents included his plans to "secure U.S. congressional support for U.S. action in support of Kashmiri self-determination."

Fai also admitted not telling the IRS that, from 1990 until July 18, he arranged for at least \$3.5 million to be transferred to the Kashmiri American Council from Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate and Pakistani government employees. Court documents explain that he did so via his co-defendant Zaheer Ahmad, 63, — a U.S. citizen living in Pakistan — plus middlemen (straw donors), whom Ahmad reimbursed with Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate and Pakistani-government funds for their alleged charitable — and therefore tax-deductible — "donations" to the Kashmiri American Council.

Conducting the investigation into this case were the Washington field offices of the FBI and the IRS criminal-investigation division. Prosecuting it are Assistant U.S. Attorneys Gordon Kromberg and Daniel Grooms; trial attorney John Gibbs of the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division; and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Allison Ickovic from the Justice Department's Tax Division.

AREA ROUNDUPS

Single Vehicle Fatal Crash

A Newington-area woman was involved in a single-vehicle, fatal crash on Saturday, Dec. 10 at approximately 2:30 p.m., Casey Noriega, 29, of 7708 Haynes Point Way, was driving a 2001 Toyota Camry. She was

driving southbound on Beulah Street approaching the intersection of Windsor Avenue, when for unknown reasons she drove off the road and struck a pole. She was transported to a local hospital where she was pronounced dead.

Neither speed nor alcohol appears to be contributing factors of the crash. The investigation con-

tinues.

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

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OPINION

Five Suggestions for the New School Board

Half of the School Board members are new.

On Monday, Dec. 19, the newly elected members of the Fairfax County School Board will be sworn in, marking the largest number of new members at one time in memory.

The change on the board comes from open seats with previous members deciding not to run. Fully half of the board will be new members, although most are also familiar faces.

But it was apparent from the election that voters were motivated by the school board races, turning out to have their say. It's a mistake to view the election as a vote of approval for all current policies or as a repudiation of particular policies. The level of interest and controversy indicates that it's a great moment for the new board to engage the public.

The fact that 70 percent of voters supported the school bond for county schools shows that county residents understand the importance of quality schools.

The school board consists of three at large members who represent the entire county, plus nine district members. Each voter had the op-

portunity to vote for four, three at large and one for their district.

Iryong Moon is the one incumbent remaining at large; Ryan McElveen and Ted Velkoff will join the board at large. District members are: Megan McLaughlin, Braddock; Janie Strauss, Dranesville; Pat Hynes, Hunter Mill; Tammy Kaufax, Lee; Sandy Evans, Mason; Dan Storck, Mount Vernon; Patty Reed, Providence; Elizabeth Schultz, Springfield, and Kathy Smith, Sully. Moon, Strauss, Evans, Storck, Reed and Smith are returning members.

It's important to respect the dedication and motivation of school board members. It's hard to understand why anyone would want these jobs. The hours are never ending. The pay is symbolic. Few decisions will come without acrimony from some quarters. These are people who really are dedicated to service.

That said, we offer a few suggestions, some very general, some very specific, for the new board as it steps up to serve.

1) On with campaign. Begin with a listening tour. Hold some full-board listening sessions around the county. Hold some regional listening sessions in schools and parents' living rooms. Listen in small groups and individually.

Invite teachers and administrators to come out on tour with you. Don't forget to listen to teachers as well as students, parents, administrators and more.

2) Fix large classes. You don't have to reduce the "average" class size. But do something about every class of 30 students or more. It's the exceptionally large classes where students don't even fit in the room that drive parents wild. It doesn't matter if it's a classroom of poor students or wealthy students or something in between, really large classes are not appropriate.

3) Are surveillance cameras really the best use of scarce dollars? No matter what the current board decides to do later this week (likely vote on Dec. 15 after Connection deadline), set the decision aside until after the listening tour.

4) Don't wait for a state law. Instruct administrators to call parents to be present if they plan to question a student about behavior that could result in serious disciplinary measures or legal action.

5) Celebrate the specific and varied successes in Fairfax County Public Schools.

- MARY KIMM.

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Burke Centre Amtrak Signs Needed

To the Editor:

On Oct. 1, 2009, the Amtrak Lynchburg Train became the first intercity passenger train to stop at Burke in 42 years. For two years, Amtrak has refused to advertise this fact in and around the station. In June, Fairfax County agreed to request VDOT to erect free Amtrak signs along nearby roads. However, seven months later, VDOT has failed to erect even a single sign. Fairfax County needs to push VDOT to begin posting signs for the following reasons:

1. Burke Centre is a great location, centrally located in a wealthy county and having ample parking and great nearby roads.

2. Travelers flying into D.C.'s three airports from other states and countries can easily connect to this train via Metro bus or rail.

3. The station allows county residents to travel the Northeast Corridor but avoid the nation's worst traffic.

4. Even without signs, Amtrak's newest Virginia station (January 2010), has become Virginia's fastest growing station over the past nine months.

5. In November, Amtrak added free Wi-Fi for riders going north to Philadelphia, New York, or Bos-

ton or going south to Charlottesville and Lynchburg and to Roanoke and Blacksburg/VA Tech via the Smart Way Amtrak Connector Bus (July 2011).

6. The signs will encourage residents to switch to the train, reducing traffic on area and intercity roads.

7. The local business community will start posting Amtrak information on their websites, encouraging travelers to stay in the county when visiting the D.C. area, thus boosting the local economy.

In short, pushing Amtrak to post the signs sooner will introduce thousands of residents and visitors to the benefits of Amtrak faster.

Daniel Peacock

Member Virginia Association of Railway Patrons
Manassas

Cruelty Issue In Deer Control

To the Editor:

Forty years ago, "the deer population was a small fraction of what it is today" as Michael Valentine wrote (Letter: Deer Hunting - Hunter's View, The Connection, Dec. 7). Eighty years ago it was a thrill just to catch sight of a deer. The number of deer has grown to

its present proportions, thanks to state game agencies' responses to hunters' demands for more deer to kill. Bear in mind that before "scientific game management" was adopted by game agencies striving for the "maximum sustained yield" of this resilient species, there were a lot fewer deer. With a relatively sparse Indian population killing only as many as they thought they needed, deer populations maintained a good balance with the habitat available to them until European immigrants killed so many that deer were in danger of extinction.

The deer's natural response to this stress was to produce more young just as humans did after World War II. Remember the "baby boomers"? Bear in mind that killing bucks enables more does to survive winter conditions and give birth in the spring. In addition, the stress of being hunted increases the number of twins, and even triplets, born in the spring. By taking advantage of this situation, game management attempts to fulfill hunters' demands without imposing too heavily on the interests of farmers, orchardists, gardeners and the even more numerous automobile drivers.

Also, donating carcasses as food for underprivileged people may not be doing them a favor because lead bullets fragment into almost undetectable particles which are more likely to have a harmful ef-

fect on undernourished people.

There is also the matter of cruelty to be considered. Slightly over half the number of deer struck by arrows are never recovered. They escape their killers to hide away and die or recover enough to exist for some time with arrows sticking out of their flanks or heads. It's uncomfortable to imagine what it must be like to pass through thick growth prying at the arrow.

I don't have the perfect answer to correct what we have done wrong, but wanted to let your readers know that there is more than just a hunter's way of viewing the problem.

Bina Robinson

Swain, NY

Keep Defense, Reduce Costs

To the Editor:

This country needs a defense that can protect you and me. If we cut too much, we risk not having the capability to keep us safe. Let's work to cut old systems we no longer need. Keep some of the older systems that still work in production at greatly reduced cycle costs.

John Nicklas

Lt. Col. USAF, Retired
Burke

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NEWS

Sunbeam Comes to Key Center

Mama Mary Sunbeam publishes 'Mama Mary's Song Stories' dedicated to Key Center.

BY MAYA HOROWITZ
BURKE CONNECTION

Mama Mary Sunbeam, a storyteller, singer and educator from the Appalachian Nation Cherokee Tribe, has written a book, "Mama Mary's Song Stories," dedicated to Key Center students, among others.

The book, which is the third of three books published by Sunbeam, contains sing-a-long songs that tell stories with nature, Native American and moral themes such as "Ladybug," "Osiyo is Hello in Cherokee" and "I am a Human Being." It is illustrated by Mycah Akili Jaha Shelton, 16.

Sunbeam has worked for the past 17 years at the Burke Nursery and Garden Center Pumpkin Playground, where she drums and sings her songs outside of a teepee.

"She's kind of like a tradition at this point," said Fred Dickinson, general manager of Burke Garden Center. "A lot of the school groups like her. They go see her before they go on the hayride. She's kind of a piece of the furniture at this point."

The Pumpkin Playground, which is open for the month of October, attracts 15,000-20,000 people annually. It includes hayrides, a 90-foot dual slide, farm animals, play tunnels, a pumpkin fort, a wooden train, airplane, pirate ship and castle and a merry-go-round.

Dickinson said when he was opening the Pumpkin Playground he wanted to have Native American elements and was looking for a storyteller. He turned to a Native American named Cletis Harper who sold Christmas wreaths. Harper recommended Sunbeam.

"Her storytelling she kind of brings into more on a child's level," said Dickinson. "Things that teach



Mama Mary Sunbeam at the Burke Nursery & Garden Center Pumpkin Playground.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Mama Mary Sunbeam with Key Center students at the Burke Nursery & Garden Center Pumpkin Playground.

them things like responsibility and honesty. I respected Cletis's opinion and what he thought would be a good person."

"When you start something you never know how it's going to go but Fred and I have always had respect for each other," said Sunbeam.

Dickinson said Burke is a great community. "We've had very good experiences with the community," said Dickinson. "We get to know a lot of the customers on a first name basis."

"Burke Center is a very strong

community where parents, teachers, children and seniors come together one month out of the year and enjoy life," said Sunbeam.

THE KEY CENTER is a 120-student school in Fairfax County for students with disabilities. Students range in age from 5 to 22. During the month of October, the Key Center makes four visits to the Pumpkin Patch with their elementary school-aged children.

"To make a long story short, Mama Mary has always been so

SEE MEETING, PAGE 15

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

THURSDAY/DEC. 15

"A Christmas Carol." Lazy Susan Dinner Theatre, 10712 Richmond Hwy, Lorton. Doors open 6 p.m., performance at 8 p.m. 703-550-7384 or www.lazysusan.com.

FRIDAY/DEC. 16

"A Christmas Carol." Lazy Susan Dinner Theatre, 10712 Richmond Hwy, Lorton. Doors open 6 p.m., performance at 8 p.m. 703-550-7384 or www.lazysusan.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 17

Breakfast With Santa. 8-11 a.m. Workhouse Art Center, Bldg. W-3, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Gingerbread pancakes, hot chocolate, coffee and juices. Includes a performance of Studio 3's "Schoolhouse Rock Live!" \$17-\$24. Reservations recommended. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

"A Christmas Carol." Lazy Susan Dinner Theatre, 10712 Richmond Hwy, Lorton. Doors open 6 p.m., performance at 8:30 p.m. 703-550-7384 or www.lazysusan.com.

Christmas in Cape Breton. 8 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Cape Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster performs traditional and contemporary Celtic melodies and Christmas carols. \$25-\$50. www.gmu.edu.

United States Army Chorus Holiday Concert. 5 p.m. Westwood Baptist Church, 8200 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Free. 703-451-5120.

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Santa Runs will start at approximately 6:30-7 p.m. and continue until 9-9:30 p.m. and will occur in assigned areas each night.



Santa Returns on Fire Truck Sleigh

Burke Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department gives a special treat to area children.

BY JENN FEDOR
THE CONNECTION

Again this December, Burke area children and their families can view Santa riding atop a special kind of sleigh. Along with a crew of volunteers from the Burke Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department, St. Nick (and sometimes Mrs. Claus) will cruise the streets on Engine 414B.

Fire departments across the country host "Santa Runs" but as far as Capt. Tony Moritz knows, Burke Volunteer Fire and Rescue is the only station in Fairfax County that conducts runs almost every day in December (weather permitting) covering 99 percent of their First Due Area. After ten years at the station, he's graduated to "sleigh driver" when he participates but continues to note the importance of this annual event. "It shows the community that we care," he said.

Community members start calling the station in November to ask about the fire truck Santa schedule.

Once the runs start up in December, Moritz is amazed by the response. "There are streets that have a lot of kids on them. They literally

"It's funny to see little kids and older senior citizens running out of their house both equally excited to see Santa Claus."

— Crystal Eden, a volunteer EMT

ally follow us for blocks," he said. Special elf volunteers from the station ride on the backside of the engine to keep an eye on the children.

Even if Santa isn't scheduled to drive through a specific neighbor-

hood, area residents check out his schedule and follow him as if tracking a celebrity. "We have people sitting along the road waiting for us to come by so they can see Santa," Moritz says. The station uses its reserve engine 14, which is identical to its active engine, aside from the color of its coupler at the fire hose connection.

Crystal Eden, a volunteer EMT who will graduate from fire school on Dec. 21, started helping with Santa Runs last year. "It's funny to see little kids and older senior citizens running out of their house both equally excited to see Santa Claus," she said. She recalls a holiday party on Christmas Eve in one neighborhood; a special chair had been set up for the fire truck Santa in a garage decorated like his toy workshop. The fire engine made a special trip to visit Eden's sick neighbor and Santa got off the truck and gave her a hug. "She was talking about that for weeks," Eden said.

Santa Runs will start at approximately 6:30-7 p.m. and continue until 9-9:30 p.m. and will occur in assigned areas each night. Visit www.bvfrd.org.

CALENDAR

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

THURSDAY/DEC. 15

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

Buon Natale Featuring Natalie York & Friends in a benefit for Food for Others. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Jason Linett Comedy Hypnosis Show. 7 p.m. West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. Proceeds benefit UNICEF. adamc.bloom@gmail.com.

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice English and improve English-speaking skills. Adults. 703-249-1520.

Preschool Storytime. 10:30 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Stories, songs, fingerplays and more. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-293-6227.

Tiny Tots. 10:30 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Very short stories and activities. Age 13-17 months with adult. 703-644-7333.

Computer Basics Training. 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. One-hour session with a technology volunteer for help with basic computer skills and navigating the Internet. Adults. 703-644-7333.

Small Oneders. 11:15 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Stories and activities. Age 18-23 months with adult. 703-644-7333.

FRIDAY/DEC. 16

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

Bill Kirchen's Honkey Tonk Holiday Show. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Toot & Puddle's Friendship. 11 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Holly Hobby's stories about two little piglets who are best friends. Ages 3-5 years with adult. 703-249-1520.

English Conversation Group. 10

a.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Practice your English conversation skills. Adults. 703-978-5600.

SATURDAY/DEC. 17

Christmas in Cape Breton. 8 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Cape Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster performs traditional and contemporary Celtic melodies and Christmas carols. \$25-\$50. www.gmu.edu.

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

5th Annual Rocknoeros Holiday Singalong and Happy Family Hour at 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 18

Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano: Fiesta Navidad. 4 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Fiesta Navidad mixes traditional Mexican and American holiday songs with dancing, authentic, costumes and an audience sing-along. \$23-\$46. www.gmu.edu.

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

Christmas Cantata. 8:45 a.m. and 11 a.m. Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. The Music Department will perform the Christmas Cantata, "Joy to the World." 703-383-1170 or www.jccag.org.

MONDAY/DEC. 19

Paws to Read. 4 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Practice reading with a trained therapy dog. Call or sign up online for a 15-minute session. Age 6-10 with adult. 703-978-5600.

Chess Club. 3:30 p.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Learn the rules and strategy by playing the game. Age 6-14. 703-644-7333.

TUESDAY/DEC. 20

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m.

City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-293-6227.

Evening Book Discussion Group. 7 p.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Call for title. Adults. 703-644-7333.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 21

Student Volunteer Training Session. 7 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Students receive training from library staff and sign up for volunteer hours. Age 12-15. 703-293-6227.

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

THURSDAY/DEC. 22

Jammin Java Presents Todd Wright's 9th Annual Christmas Spectacular. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice English and improve English-speaking skills. Adults. 703-249-1520.

Mother Goose. 10:30 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Stories, songs and fingerplays. Birth to 23 months with adult. 703-293-6227.

Computer Basics Training. 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. One-hour session with a technology volunteer for help with basic computer skills and navigating the Internet. Adults. 703-644-7333.

FRIDAY/DEC. 23

Jammin Java Presents Todd Wright's 9th Annual Christmas Spectacular. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 24

Good For The Jews: Putting The Ha! In Hanukkah Tour featuring Rob Tannenbaum and David Fagin. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

MONDAY/DEC. 26

FunkMnkyz and Do It With Malice. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

TUESDAY/DEC. 27

"Nutcracker." 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Northern Virginia Community College Annandale, Ernst Community Cultural

Center Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Performed by the Virginia Ballet Company and School. \$30 adults, \$20 children, students and seniors. www.virginiaballetcompany.org or 703-249-8227.

Dinobabies. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-293-6227.

Kings Park Library Friends Meeting. 6:30 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Kings Park Library Friends Meeting. Adults. 703-978-5600.

Twilight Tales. 7 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Come in pajamas to listen to stories before bedtime. Age 3-6 with adult. 703-978-5600.

Pleeze and Squeeze. 10:30 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Come pet a reptile, as well as learn about these creatures from Critter Caravans. All ages. 703-644-7333.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 28

"Nutcracker." 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Northern Virginia Community College Annandale, Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Performed by the Virginia Ballet Company and School. \$30 adults, \$20 children, students and seniors. www.virginiaballetcompany.org or 703-249-8227.

DJ Aetgy, Atom Christie, DJ M.A.F. and Konstellation. 9 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Wintertime Fun with Kaydee Puppets. 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. "The Three Pigs" and "Rapunzel." 703-293-6227.

THURSDAY/DEC. 29

"Nutcracker." 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Northern Virginia Community College Annandale, Ernst Community Cultural Center Theater, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Performed by the Virginia Ballet Company and School. \$30 adults, \$20 children, students and seniors. www.virginiaballetcompany.org or 703-249-8227.

West Goes East CD Release, Taylor Carson and Breaking Borders. 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice English and improve English-speaking skills. Adults. 703-249-1520.



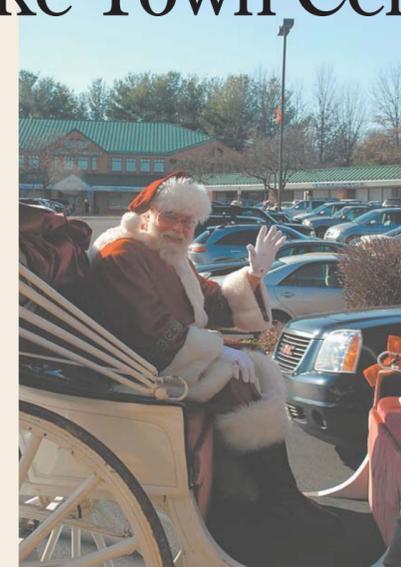
Santa Sleigh Ride attracted more than 200 guests.

Sleigh Delivers Santa To Burke Town Centre

More than 200 guests arrived between 12-3 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 11, for the Santa Sleigh Ride thru Burke Town Centre. The line formed at the W Salon where salon staff dressed up as Santa's elves to provide guests with hot chocolate and salon goodie bags.

Souny West, owner of the W Salon, made the hot chocolate along with her staff of elves who helped to hand out 200 cups. She enjoyed the looks on children's faces as she repeated that she was an elf from the north pole and there to help collect letters with Santa and jot down their wishes.

The crowd cheered and the children were all smiles when Santa arrived.



Santa at the Burke Town Centre event on Dec. 11.

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City of Fairfax

Getting into 'Right Fit' Private School

Experts explain how to navigate admissions process for area's most elite schools.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Each year, parents who opt out of their neighborhood public school in favor of an independent school must sift through the long list of the Washington area's independent schools to find one that meets the needs of their child.

They must then navigate the lengthy application required by most schools, and hope that their efforts are deft enough to gain acceptance in a competitive environment. Some schools report receiving as many as nine applications for each available slot.

Even for prospective pre-kindergarten students, the independent school admissions process often includes a written application, admissions tests, parent statements, student interviews, parent interviews, playdates, school visits, transcripts and teacher recommendations.

"What we're trying to do is get a whole picture of a child and look at information from a variety of different sources," said Christina Tait, director of admission and financial aid at The Langley School in McLean.

THE APPLICATION PACKETS provide insight for both the school and the applicants. "We have a fairly detailed process so that we get to know the girls and they get to know us," said Pilar Cabeza de Vaca, head of the Madeira School in McLean. "Our goal is to find girls who are the right fit for our school and for whom our school is the right fit."

The role of each component of the application varies depending on the age of the applicant. "The admission [process] for young children is especially complex and difficult because we have to use both explicit and intuitive measures because we have less data," said Diane Dunning, director of admission and financial aid at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School in Alexandria. "If you were looking at a ninth grade [admissions] folder, you would have eight years of report cards and maybe four years of standardized testing. You are also able to interview [older applicants] in a different way than when you are interacting with the young children."

Why is so much probing necessary?

"Schools are looking for consis-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MADEIRA SCHOOL

The Madeira volleyball team recently won the Independent Student League title.

tency in grades, attitude, testing and recommendations," said Lindsay White, educational consultant with the School Counseling Group in Washington, D.C. "[For example] If there is a huge difference between a [teacher] recommendation and what they are seeing on the grades, that is going to be a red flag."

Most schools want prospective applicants to spend time on campus. "The [school] visit is important to us. It gives the boy and his family a chance to experience the Heights first hand," said Richard Moss, director of admission at the Heights School in Potomac, Md. "On the flip side, it gives us a chance to really get to know the boy. How is he interacting with his peers? Is he friendly? Is he courteous? Does he have a good, firm handshake? Does he look the teachers in the eye when he greets them in the morning?"

Most applications ask parents to answer questions describing their children. Here are two questions from the Langley School's application: What do you believe is your role as a parent in your child's education? What qualities do you consider to be most

"Our goal is to find girls who are the right fit for our school and for whom our school is the right fit."

— Pilar Cabeza de Vaca, head of the Madeira School in McLean

important for your child's education?

Consultants say schools look at the way parents answer questions. "There are a lot of parents who regurgitate the school's mission statement and all the language that is used on the school's website. Schools can see right through that," said educational consultant Clare Anderson, of Chevy Chase, Md. "They want to know that the family is in line with how [the school] works with students and [their] approach to education."

Schools also pay attention to a parent's evaluation of their child. "Red flags go up when everything is just perfect and they've never encountered a setback or difficulty," said Anderson. "[Schools] are looking for honest, candid responses. Obviously parents are going to frame it in a positive light, as they should."

Most schools require admissions tests. Depending on the age and grade of the child, these tests include the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI-III), Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) and the Secondary School Admission Test for (SSAT).

"Testing often creates the most anxiety," said Dunning, of St. Stephen's & St. Agnes.

THE TESTS are used differently depending on the age of the applicant. "Tests for [young children] are used as standardized tools to give an overall picture of a child's learning profile. These are not predictors for academic

success. They give broad overviews of how a child learns," said Anderson. Tests given to middle and high school applicants are more meaningful. "Those tests measure how well your child has done with the information he or she has learned in school. If they see an eighth grader who has only average grades, but remarkable SSATs, they are going to ask, 'Is this an underachiever? Why is this child not excelling in the classroom?'"

Should children prepare for tests? When it comes to young children, most consultants say no. "It is unethical and makes your test scores invalid," said Anderson. "You are going to shoot yourself in the foot [if you prep your young child]. Your child will be the first to announce it either in the tester's office or at the school on the playdate. Then the scores are invalid."

The scenario is different for those applying for slots in middle and upper school. "I've had students who've taken [admissions tests] without prep, and then I worked with them and their scores [went] up considerably," said Christa Abbott, an Arlington-based independent test prep tutor.

Anderson agrees. "Just like you preheat your oven, you've got to get your child ready for the test. Just knowing the format of the test can really help," said Anderson. "But I caution parents about [taking expensive test prep classes]. There has to be a primary concern that something is going to get in the way of your child being able to show what he or she knows."

Some parents hire educational consultants like White or Anderson, hoping to get a competitive advantage. Consultants say their role is to guide families through the process. "The number one mistake that I think parents make is thinking that hiring an educational consultant is going to give them an advantage at a very competitive school," said Mark Sklarow, executive director of the Independent Educational Consultants Association in Fairfax. "That is just not the way the system works. Consultants don't have a secret handshake that they can use with an admissions director to help get a student in. The reason you hire an educational consultant is to find a good fit between a student's needs and a school's strengths. A consultant's role is to [identify] a school where a child is going to thrive."

So what can parents do to make sure their child's application shines in a pool overflowing with many attractive applicants?

"It is always nice to think about what is special about your child," said White. "What is the one special strength or talent your child might have, whether it be academics or an extracurricular interest? What is the potential for your child to contribute to the school?"

Anderson says she encourages parents to view admissions procedures as multi-pronged. "My hope is to help parents understand the process and see that there really is a method and [schools] are looking to get the best from your child."



St. Stephen's & St. Agnes Upper School students Isabella Norton, Leah Joseph, and Ulises Giacomani with Upper School Science Teacher Julie Krane.

County Sends 'Hands Off' Message to General Assembly

FROM PAGE 3

ing for locally-administered, but required programs in the 2012-14 budget. The Governor is going to have to balance the budget. Think about what he might do," Regimbal said.

County Executive Anthony Griffin said Fairfax County's budgetary shortfall is expected to be about \$114 million in Fiscal Year 2013, and the county is taking several steps — including looking at fee increases and analyzing agency cuts of up to 5 percent — to bridge the financial gap.

"Quite frankly, we're running out of places to make reductions. This is a struggle now, and it's going to continue to be a struggle for my successor," Griffin said, alluding to his retirement in April 2012.

Griffin said there was some good news. Job growth in Northern Virginia has continued to grow each month since April 2010, and Fairfax County's unemployment rate remains stable at 4.6 percent (which is about 28,000 unemployed residents), compared to 6.4 percent across the state and 9 percent in the nation.

ALTHOUGH GOVERNOR Robert McDonnell (R) has not yet proposed specific road devolution legislation, House Republicans have been looking at ways to shift spiraling road-maintenance responsibilities back to localities for several years.

Fairfax County leaders have been unequivocal in their opposition to any prospect of road devolution, saying it's tantamount to an unfunded mandate that would force the County to increase property taxes.

"It's a major concern for anyone who cares about transportation, but frankly anyone who cares about anything else localities have to keep up because all those elements would be affected," said McKay. "My greatest fear is that [with road devolution] we would be pitting roads against schools and public safety."

Tom Biesiadny, director of Fairfax County's Department of Transportation, estimated that Fairfax County would have to make a one-time investment of up to \$208 million to take local control of local roads, which would mean a property tax increase of about \$479 for the average household.

He said that localities that maintain their own roads typically spend about 25 percent more than what the state allocates. For example, he noted that in Fiscal Year 2010, Arlington spent \$18 million, while the state spent \$15 million.

"Counties in Northern Virginia already spend millions of dollars a year to mitigate the effects of state underfunding of road construction, which has created some of the worst traffic in the nation," Biesiadny said.

Bulova added that if counties are required to maintain their secondary roads, the resulting disparity in road conditions will affect Virginia's ability to attract business.

During the roundtable discussion, Del. Mark Sickles (D-43) agreed the county's roads are in terrible shape.

"At some point we have to act," he said, suggesting a referendum asking voters to decide whether to increase certain taxes, similar to a 2002 failed referendum on the sales tax, in order to pay for transportation costs.

State Sen. Richard Saslaw (D-35) told the elected officials not to "punt the damn ball."

"I can tell you this: It ain't gonna happen with my vote ... I will not ever, ever, ever, if I have anything to say about it, allow taxes to be put to a referendum. That's what the voters elected you to do. If they don't like what you did, they will show you the door the next election. We have no business putting revenue-raising measures to a referendum. Plain and simple."

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) said he thought road devolution was viable if done correctly.

"It's not going to be pain-free, but there are ways to do it," Cook said. "If we're going to have the responsibility, we ought to own the streets. And if we're going to own them ... we ought to have the mechanisms to raise the money we need to raise," Cook said.

"Would you be supportive of raising taxes to do it?" Bulova asked. Cook did not respond.

ON THURSDAY, DEC. 8, the Governor outlined his transportation policy and funding plans for the upcoming 2012 General Assembly session. Speaking to more than 700 industry and transportation agency professionals during the 2011 Governor's Transportation Conference in Norfolk, McDonnell called for changes in laws governing the allocation of future surpluses to transportation, dedicating portions of revenue growth attributable to transportation infrastructure projects to transportation and increasing the portion of sales tax dedicated to transportation.

Several legislators, including state Senators Chap Petersen (D-34), Dave Marsden (D-37), Janet Howell (D-32) and Del. Ken Plum said they will hold Governor McDonnell to his promise of a dedicated source of revenue for a transportation bond package passed last session.

"There's a fundamental disconnect," Marsden said. "Any transportation solution is not acceptable if it doesn't come with money ... What we were promised was a funding stream and not the transfer of responsibility to localities. I think we need to let the governor know this is not acceptable."

HOW TO GET YOUR ORGANIZATION'S SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE CONNECTION

Calendar Listings

The Connection Newspapers contain a Calendar of Upcoming Events every week. While we cannot guarantee that every event we receive information about will be listed, here is the information we need for your upcoming event to be considered for the Calendar. We welcome photographs of similar events held previously, which sometimes appear with Calendar items.

Name of Event:

Day of the Week, Date and Time:

Name of the Place Event will Be Held:

Address of the Place Event Will Be Held:

Name and Phone Number for More Information:

Three Sentences Describing the Event:

Please submit your calendar information at least two weeks before your event. Clear photographs from similar previous events are always welcome.

All events should be open to the public. We give first priority to free events. E-mail listings to:

burke@connectionnewspapers.com

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Calendar, Connection Newspapers

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For more information, call 703-778-9410.

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On his 3rd tour in Iraq in 2008, Spc. Josh Schictl was driving a Humvee which was hit by two IED's. He suffered life-threatening injuries to his face and head. Despite the quick work of medics, Spc. Schictl lost his right eye and nine teeth. Nearly all of the bones in his face were broken but were stabilized before transport to Walter Reed Medical Center. He also suffered a TBI.

Wounded warriors and their families struggle for years to recover physically, emotionally and financially from the sacrifices they make in wartime. Operation Homefront seeks to walk with them on their journey and ease the hardships they face. The DC Metro Chapter assisted Josh and Emily with transitional housing, household furnishings, holiday gifts and grocery gift cards during these difficult times.

There are many ways you can work with the DC Metro Chapter to assist local military families like Josh and Emily.

People ask us everyday how they can show their appreciation and gratitude for the sacrifices made by military families. One way you can do this is to let the DC Metro Chapter fill the gap for military families as they adjust to the 'new normal' after being deployed or wounded in combat. Send your tax deductible donation before Dec. 31st to help us meet next year's needs.

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Lake Braddock Outlasts Robinson in OT Thriller

Snow scores 28 for Bruins, Pillow tallies 25 for Rams.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

When the Lake Braddock boys basketball team embarked on an 11-0 run late in the third quarter, Robinson senior Robert Pillow shot the Rams back into the game.

When the Bruins held a 66-63 lead in the closing seconds of regulation, Pillow was there to knock down a clutch 3-pointer and force overtime.

But when Pillow fouled out with 1:17 remaining in the extra period, there was nobody left to save the Rams.

With three Robinson starters fouled out, the Bruins held on for a 77-75 overtime victory on Dec. 9 at Lake Braddock Secondary School. With rival student sections creating an electric atmosphere, the Bruins overcame a six-point fourth quarter deficit to earn their second win of the young season.

"Lake Braddock and Robinson share the same kind of kid. It was just a great game between two rivals that really should be in the same district with each other," Lake Braddock head coach Brian Metress said. "Our guys know all the [Robinson] guys. I would say 'Who's got No. 21? Who's got 23?' They call them by name. They're calling them by their first name and I'm calling them by their number and their hair and stuff like that.

"Our guys, they didn't want to lose to them."

LAKE BRADDOCK SENIOR Tyler Snow led all scorers with 28 points. The 6-foot-5 forward scored four of the Bruins' final five points in overtime.

After the game, Lake Braddock fans rushed the court in celebration.

"I was at the bottom of that thing, getting my body broken up," Snow said with a laugh. "It felt good."

While Snow led Lake Braddock to victory, Pillow kept Robinson alive until fouling out. The Rams guard scored a team-high 25 points and knocked down seven 3-pointers. With Lake Braddock leading 47-42 — thanks to an 11-0 run — late in the third quarter, Pillow buried a 3-pointer in the final seconds of the period and another from behind the arc to open the fourth quarter. With Robinson down three in the closing seconds of regulation, Pillow knocked down a 3-pointer off a designed play to force overtime.

"Pillow is a really good player," Metress said. "Every shot he hit, we were on him."

ROBINSON HEAD COACH Brian Nelson said he wasn't pleased with the Rams' effort.

"We didn't play well. We didn't play Robinson bas-



Lake Braddock's Tyler Snow, left, jumps against Robinson's Robert Pillow during the Bruins' overtime win on Dec. 9 at Lake Braddock.

ketball," Nelson said. "We were way too frantic, we lost our composure, we turned the ball over too much, we missed a lot of defensive assignments [and] we gave them a lot of easy baskets. All due credit to their kids, they did a great job, they made the plays they needed to make to win that game, but we didn't do our job on our end. If not for Rob Pillow hitting some huge shots in the fourth quarter, that game never goes to overtime.

"As a team, collectively, we didn't do our jobs tonight."

Senior guard/forward Tristian Crenshaw scored 19 points for Robinson and junior guard Nate Hackett finished with 15. Crenshaw, Hackett and Pillow each fouled out.

"It hurts," Pillow said. "It's devastating because we gave that game away."

Senior guard Brendan McHale, Lake Braddock's only returning starter, scored 16 points. Senior center Christian McKenrick scored 14 points for the Bruins and senior guard Dylan

O'Connor added 12.

"I thought we could have [given up] at the end of the third, I thought we could have [given up] at the end of the half, I thought we could have [given up] at the end of regulation," Metress said. "We're a pretty gritty group. We play pretty hard."



Edison sophomore Brock Jacobson, right, placed second in the 132-pound bracket at the Northern Region Classic on Dec. 10 at Fairfax High School.

Jacobson Fighting Uphill Battle

Edison sophomore facing stiff competition.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

As a 119-pound freshman last season, Edison's Brock Jacobson had the talent and work ethic to win a National District championship and finish runner-up at the Northern Region tournament. He was a skilled youngster on a veteran Eagles squad that won its fourth team district title in five tries.

Ten months later, Jacobson and the Edison wrestling team are in a season of transition. Jacobson is a 132-pound sophomore trying to take his ability to the next level by facing stiff competition, while the Eagles lost nine seniors and now have a lineup that includes nine sophomores and one freshman. Jacobson and his teammates figure to take their lumps this season, hoping the experience will help in the future.

EDISON COMPETED in the Northern Region Classic on Dec. 9-10 at Fairfax High School. On Saturday, Jacobson finished runner-up in the 132-pound bracket, losing to Wakefield senior Henry Majano in the championship match. Majano, the defending state runner-up, won 3-2.

"Majano is an experienced wrestler who has won at the highest levels," Edison head coach Scott Racek said. "We were just trying to keep it close and hopefully try to get some-

thing in the third period. His defense was just too tough. That last minute, he fought off every attempt we had."

The loss dropped Jacobson's record to 7-4, but competing against a grappler who is two years older and finished 43-1 last season is part of Jacobson's plan for improvement.

"It's tough to lose," he said, "but then again, you're facing the better wrestlers and that's just going to help you."

Racek said Jacobson can handle the lumps he'll take this season.

"He's had enough success that his ego doesn't need to be satisfied by winning all the time," Racek said. "... He would rather come in sixth at a really tough tournament than come in first at a weak tournament. His maturity level is way beyond of that of just a sophomore in high school."

EDISON FINISHED 15th with a score of 81 at the Northern Region Classic. The Eagles were second among National District teams, ahead of Yorktown (23rd) and Wakefield (28th) and behind Washington-Lee (14th). Fauquier won the tournament with a score of 226, followed by Annandale (177.5), Lake Braddock (156) and South County (149).

Baden James was the only other Edison grappler to finish in the top eight of his respective weight class, placing seventh in the 160-pound bracket.

FAITH

Meeting 'Earth Angels' in Burke

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

Church of the Apostles, 3500 Pickett Road in Fairfax, will offer "Facing Life's Losses" on Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. This two-part seminar is designed to be a safe environment to help people learn how to process grief in a healthy way. Free and open to the public. Register at Info@ChurchoftheApostles.org or 703-591-1974.

Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road in Alexandria, will celebrate Advent on Dec. 18 at the 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday Services. Sunday School for all ages is at 9:45, and childcare is available 8:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. The church is handicapped accessible, and assisted listening devices are available. 703-971-5151 or www.franconiaumc.org.

*Christmas Eve Services. 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. Prepare for the birth of Jesus Christ.

*Christmas Day Service. 11 a.m. Celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

*New Year's Eve Watch Night. 11 p.m. Give thanks for the blessings of the outgoing year and praying for divine favor during the upcoming year.

Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway in Lorton, will have a Service of Lessons and Carols on Sunday, Dec. 18 at 10 a.m., with a series of readings, Advent and Christmas carols, hymns and a choral anthem. At 11 a.m. the Pohick Church Docent Guild will give guided tours of the historic colonial church, which has been restored back to the days when George Washington and George Mason were parishioners. 703-339-6572 or www.pohick.org.

Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road in Fairfax, will hold a Christmas Eve Service on Saturday, Dec. 24 at 8 p.m. On Christmas Day, Dec. 25, there will be only an 11 a.m. 703-383-1170 or www.jccag.org.

The **Immanuel Bible Church MOPS** group meets on Mondays from 7 to 9 p.m., at Immanuel Bible Church, 6911 Braddock Road, Springfield. MOPS is for pregnant or parenting mothers of children from infancy to kindergarten. 703-922-4295 or www.MOPS.org.

The following is a list of events at **Mount Calvary Baptist Church**, 4325 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax:

- ❖ Bible study and Prayer Service every Tuesday starting at 7 p.m.
- ❖ Sunday School at 9:30 a.m., except for the fourth Sunday of the month, when Sunday School is at 9 a.m.
- ❖ Sunday morning service at 11 a.m.
- ❖ Commonwealth Care Center ministry every first and third Thursday night. Call 703-273-1455.

Beth El Hebrew Congregation has services on Fridays, 6:30 p.m. and on Saturdays, 10:30 a.m. The temple is located at 3830 Seminary Road, Alexandria. Religious school is on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. Adult learning opportunities take place throughout the year. Tot Shabbat is on the first and third Saturdays. Kolot Shabbat, a musical service, is the first Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m., but is not available during the summer. 703-370-9400 or www.bethelhebrew.org.

Clifton Presbyterian Church, located at 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton, offers Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery care is provided. Christian education for all ages is at 9:45 a.m. 703-830-3175.

FROM PAGE 8

wonderful to us," said Debbie Cully, resource and community coordinator for the Key Center. "During the month of October, that place is packed. It's really crowded. She could have a gazillion people crowding her and she'll look up and say, 'Oh Key Center is here.' She's always opened her heart to us."

Many of the students from the Key Center are wheelchair-bound so Dickinson made the hayride wheelchair accessible. Mama Mary made special drumsticks that are longer to accommodate drummers in wheelchairs.

"She is just very kind," said Cully. "She is always trying to think of things that our students at the Key Center could participate in. She's just a great lady. Her main thing is she always gives you a sticker that says, 'You are Important.' She is a very positive person."

In addition to dedicating her book to Key Center students and staff, among others, Sunbeam included a song she wrote about the school called "Key Center" in the book.

"It has quite a nice rhythm to it," said Cully. "She always sings it to



Mama Mary Sunbeam in front of her teepee at the Burke Nursery & Garden Center Pumpkin Playground.

us when we go there."

The song describes "earth angels," the staff of the Key Center who look after the students.

"When they came, I saw immediately what I call earth angels," said Sunbeam.

Sunbeam appreciates that her songs bring people together.

"At first people would leave them alone, now people come and drum with them," said Sunbeam.

"Special needs children are not to be feared. We should appreciate the love that they naturally have."

She uses her song stories to teach lessons about life.

"I've learned that lecturing doesn't work, but telling stories

and singing, these things stay with you," said Sunbeam.

She also uses the songs as morale boosters.

"You can't help but smile when you finish the songs, they just lift you up," said Sunbeam.

She said she writes the songs in bursts of inspiration, "one time only," usually when she is in nature.

SUNBEAM IS THE PRESIDENT of Positive Education, Inc. and welcomes any opportunity to present in schools, about her culture or valuing diversity.

According to the Appalachian Nation Cherokee Tribe, she has

been a member of the tribe for at least 20 years and started a college fund for children of the tribe.

She said she got her spiritual education from elders rather than being raised on a reservation.

"I sought elders through the years to continue that momentum," said Sunbeam. "Of course now I'm an elder."

The name Mama, she said, came naturally from working with children. She got the last name Sunbeam at an honoring ceremony. The lodge was dark but when she came in, a sunbeam hit her on the forehead. The tribal elder said, "You make people happy."

"I see children as spirits to be nurtured for their potential success, health and contribution to mankind," said Sunbeam. "I see each child as a responsibility for us adults to be an excellent model. We are all spirits in physical form. We all have feelings and thoughts. We are all delicate."

She has eight more books that she would like to publish and is looking for funding. "That would be my greatest dream," said Sunbeam. "I've taken loans to get these books out."

Sunbeam can be reached at positive@hers.com or 540-843-3828.

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FAITH

Robert Rudolph, Messiah Methodist's music director, conducts the Messiah Orchestra during one of the church's recent concerts. The orchestra plays hymns, solo orchestral works and accompanies choir anthems.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Robert Rudolph, Messiah Methodist's music director, conducts the Messiah Orchestra at Messiah United Methodist Church in Springfield.

Making Beautiful Music

Messiah United Methodist home to largest digital organ in North America.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

More than a year ago, Robert Rudolph, music director of Messiah United Methodist Church in Springfield, began the search for a custom-built organ that would reinvigorate the music program at the 2,500-member church.

Built in 1965, the church had a solid but dated music program when Rudolph became the music director two years ago.

"The physical instruments had aged," Rudolph said, "and we needed to make the music relevant to this diverse congregation. More than two-thirds of our congregation could not hear our old organ, which doesn't encourage singing during our services."

Passionate about music, Rudolph had doubled the size of the music ministry, from 200 to 400 people, by encouraging "anyone and everyone to participate," and including a vast array of Christian music, from traditional hymns to Christian rock. He currently oversees 15 active choirs for parishioners of all ages – from the Messiah Orchestra Project to Joyful Noise and the Cherub Choir for three and four-year-olds.

"We wanted to make the music ministry relevant for older folks, young families, teens and children. Once that happened, and we got people involved, we realized we didn't have the instrument for the sanctuary," he said.

AFTER TOURING several companies in the United States, Rudolph visited The Johannus Company in Amsterdam, and found exactly what he was looking for. Located in a soaring neo-classical building, Johannus employs a team of designers, musicians and audio-technical specialists who create custom-designed organs that can be found in churches, cathedrals and concert halls all over the world.

Although the price was steep – about \$425,000 – church members wanted something that would support the thriving music ministry and last for years. The 5,000-pound organ is the largest Monarke in North America, Rudolph said.

"Our new organ is an important investment in our music ministry both to enhance our worship and as the foundation instrument for our vocal and instrumental choirs," said Rev. Ralph Rowley, Messiah's senior pastor. "Messiah has long had a reputation for excellence in our music ministry as evidenced by our recent presentation of Handel's Messiah, which featured four soloists from the Washington National Opera, a professional orchestra, and a festival choir of 100 voices drawn from our church and the greater Springfield community."

"It's amazing to hear the sound now," said parishioner Steve Severt. "The sound is so full and robust compared to what it used to be. There's an incredible energy in here now when everyone is singing."

The new organ can provide accompaniment for a soloist or a choir of 100, and the variety of sounds include such instruments as flute, gospel organ, tuba and trumpet.

"It's also capable of meditative music or a large, brassy heralding sound which announces the resurrection of Jesus on Easter morning," Rudolph said. "The singing of this instrument radiates throughout the entire sanctuary. It doesn't matter where you sit now, you will hear it," Rudolph said. "This is way beyond our expectations. It's a tremendous joy for us."

The organ has 78 channels that play through the 225 speakers located all over the sanctuary. In the overhead cases above the altar are the great, swell, orchestral and pedal divisions. In the faux pipe case work beside the pulpit is the choir division. In the cupola, high in the ceiling, is the ethereal division. In the back of the room are two faux pipe cases that are the solo division.

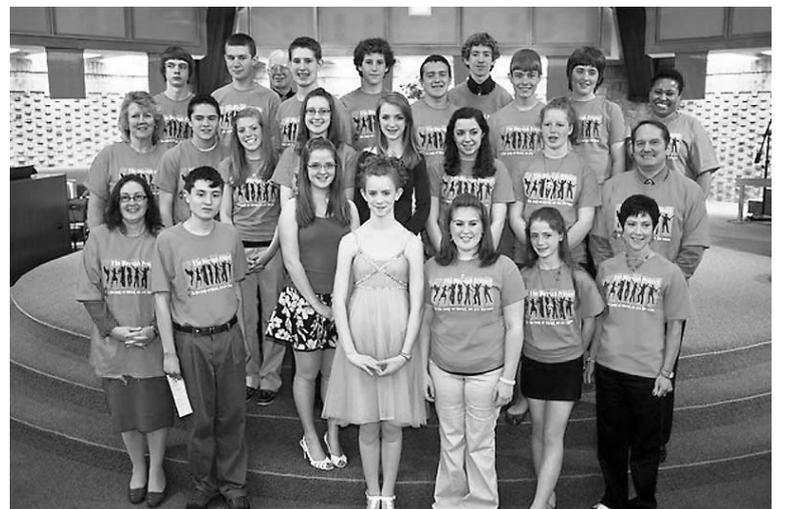
"In the pit, located to the right of the pulpit, live the brains of the organ and two 850-watt sub-woofers that you will most certainly feel, especially when we play the Cathedral music."

"I am definitely looking forward to weddings," Rudolph said, smiling.

MESSIAH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH is located at 6215 Rolling Road in Springfield. For more information on upcoming concerts and services at the church, go to www.messiahumc.org. To donate to the organ fund, which is funded entirely through private contributions, contact Rudolph at 703.569.9862 or email him at rudolph@messiahumc.org.



Workers from The Johannus Company in Amsterdam install the 5,000-pound Monarke organ last summer at Messiah United Methodist Church in Springfield.



Members of the Messiah Project, a multi-faceted music program for vocalists, instrumentalists, dancers and stage crews. Directed by Robert Rudolph, they will lead the 7 p.m. Christmas Eve service.

The custom-designed 5,000-pound Monarke organ features 96 pipe voices and 112 "stops" that create various sounds from a flute to harpsichord and piano.

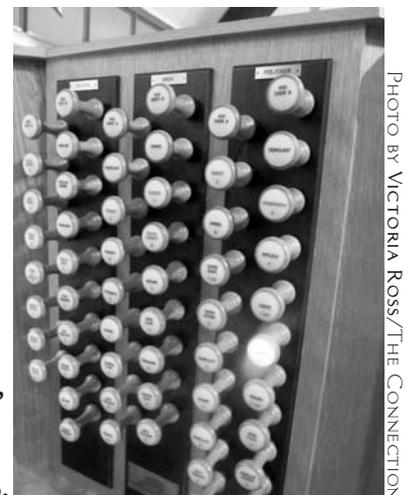


PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

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21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Pizzaroli, Inc trading as Angelicos La Pizzeria, 10869 Fairfax Blvd, Fairfax, VA 22030. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL for a Wine and Beer on/off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Damla Mehtap Kamis, owner - president
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

34 Pets

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ABC LICENSE
Snookah, LLC trading as Snookah, 7104 Brookfield Plaza, Springfield, VA 22150. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL for a Wine and Beer on Premises, Mixed Beverage on Premise license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Qamar U. Zaman President
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to the Board no later than 30 days from the date of the first of two required newspaper publications. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200

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-Thomas A. Edison

21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

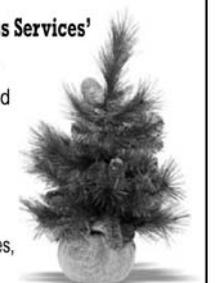
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