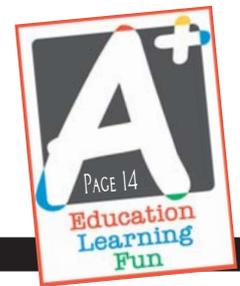


Mount Vernon Gazette



MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

FEBRUARY 16, 2012



From left: Debbie Tyler, Cluster IV director; Dr. Kim Dockery, assistant superintendent, Special Services, and Dr. Scott Brabrand, assistant superintendent, Cluster IV, and commencement speaker.

Bryant Hosts Winter Graduation

Bryant Alternative High School on Quander Road held its winter graduation on Thursday, Feb. 9. More than 70 students crossed

the stage and received diplomas. Bryant offers programs in adult education, individual teacher support through the Focused Instructional Time program in addition

to Project Opportunity, a high school completion program for pregnant or parenting young women.



Student speaker William David Salgado-Galeas addresses the graduates and guests.



Principal Larry Jones congratulates student Usman Mohammad Sikander.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Staying Focused

UCM's Cynthia Hull, stricken with cancer, provided for the poor through the recession.

BY ED SIMMONS, JR.
THE GAZETTE

Cynthia Hull, 62, advocate of the poor who successfully led United Community Ministries through recession and diminishing sources of funding, was diagnosed with cancer in early January. She is in Stage 4 of terminal lung cancer that has metastasized throughout her body. She was never a smoker.

"She is a remarkable person who devoted her life to community service. It's a tragic situation. She will continue as our executive director until she passes away," said Niki Wanner, director of UCM Development and Communications at the charity's administrative offices at 7511 Fordson Road. Named executive director in April 2007, Hull oversaw a staff of 72 at five area sites which include two community centers, a job center, the Back Porch Thrift Store and an early



Cynthia Hull, executive director of United Community Ministries.

development daycare center. "Her greatest accomplishment was that she led the agency through the most difficult economic times in our recent history so that we are able to meet the incredible rise in demand for services at a time when our funding

SEE WITH HULL, PAGE 6

New Laws Attack Poor

General Assembly's action said to compound economy's effect on those in need.

BY ED SIMMONS, JR.
THE GAZETTE

Eager to meet their state legislators and see them in action at the General Assembly, 25 people from Rising Hope Mission which serves the homeless and needy along the Route 1 corridor journeyed Feb. 2 to Richmond in a bus paid for by Del. Scott Surovell.

Many of the riders were once homeless, and some still are. The occasion was United Methodist

Day. "It's something that United Methodists have been doing for 25 years," said Rising Hope's pastor, the Rev. Keary Kincannon. "They express their concerns about where public policy crosses into issues that are important to their faith. It was helpful for us to make sure that Richmond understands that Fairfax County is not a monolithic wealthy community. We have strong pockets of poverty."

But at the capital these are dis
SEE NEW LAWS, PAGE 4

Teacher Launches TeamEsteem Program

Latest book addresses finance for youths.

BY ASHLEY SIMPSON
THE GAZETTE

Born and raised on Buchanan Street in Alexandria, West Potomac High School teacher Daryl Mackey was determined to give back to his community. In the early 1990s, he launched his DreamEsteem program as West Potomac High School's basketball coach.

"The TeamEsteem started with the camps," Mackey said. "I believed in teamwork as being a strong component to a person's self-esteem. I felt that Pat Riley, who had patented the word 'Threepeat,' had something that was his unique word."

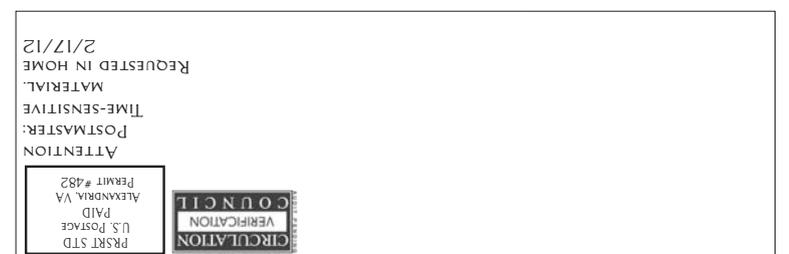
The word, TeamEsteem, he said, represents his coaching philosophy for a high school team and beyond. "TeamEsteem" has since been trademarked.

"It was 'TeamEsteem,' he continued, "meaning your team had to

be prevalent in your school, home and community, on the basketball court or any area that you went, you represented your team. You had to have a word that summarizes that."

Since launching TeamEsteem within the school's basketball team and affiliated camps, Mackey has included it in his classroom. In 2011, with the help of talents and perspectives of his students, he wrote two books. One he co-wrote with his wife, Dana R. Colbert-Mackey, it's geared toward

SEE TEACHER, PAGE 6





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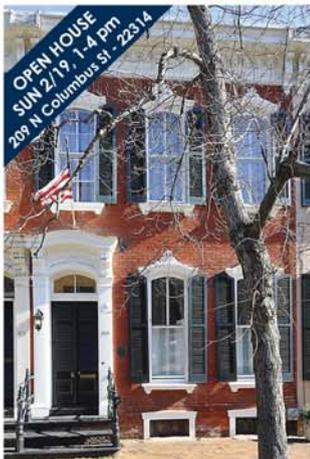
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Dana Williams checks in with a friend on arriving at the fashion show and boutique sale.



Sierra White, a student at West Potomac Academy, gathers the dresses for the next model change at Crystal Couture on Friday evening.



Maggy Francois, founder and executive runway producer of Maggy Francois, LLC produced this year's show. To her left is Angela Fox, president/CEO of Crystal City BID.

Dressed To Impress

West Potomac Academy students in the spotlight at Crystal Couture.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
THE GAZETTE

High fashion requires more than good looks. High fashion requires a complete approach that combines education and real world experience.

For those who study at the West Potomac Academy of Fashion Design, the ins and outs of the industry are taught through coursework that emphasizes creativity grounded in practicality.

"Students do a lot of fun shows, but they also learn the business side," said Maggy Francois, director of the West Potomac Academy of Fashion Design. "Students design, but they also learn fashion law, how to lobby against piracy, and how to write for fashion journals."

Classes at the academy are comprised of two levels, including level one with a focus on practice and level two that emphasizes process in action. Before students create their own collection they are required to form a collage of patterns known as a mood board, and while the majority of students are female they are all required to create male garments.

The key element of fashion design, however, is real world experience. Students at the fashion academy are given opportunities to perform on the runway, and to learn what it takes to put on a successful show.

Britanie Dantes, a senior at Jeb Stuart High School who is enrolled in the academy, helped behind the scenes at the most recent runway event at Arlington's annual Crystal Couture last week.



Friday evening at Crystal Couture, the runway was non-stop fashion all evening as guests shopped and took in all of the new designs and makeovers. It was standing room only at the runway as designers showed their new lines to the audience.

"Students do a lot of fun shows, but they also learn the business side."

— Maggy Francois, director of the West Potomac Academy of Fashion Design

"We're thrust into an environment where we see what designers do," said Dantes. "We learn to be calm under pressure, it's a fast paced learn-as-you-go kind of thing, and no one can really prepare you."

The academy's presence at Crystal Couture started four years ago when students competed in the t-shirt design contest. Since then the academy has risen in prominence, with Francois acting as the executive producer of the weeklong fashion event.

Crystal Couture organizers have been

PHOTOS BY
LOUISE KRAFFT/
THE GAZETTE



The models pose for photos and closer looks by the guests at the show on Friday, Feb. 10.

quick to recognize the importance of the academy given that the region has become known for its sense of style.

"The academy students are involved in all levels of the event, we even have former

students presenting their collections," said Angela Fox, president and CEO of the Crystal City Business Association. "It's great to have schools like that as D.C. becomes more well known for fashion."

Transportation Steps Out of the Jazz Age

Bill would increase representation for Northern Virginia on the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

For almost a century, the Commonwealth Transportation Board has been partying like it was 1922. That was the last time the board's composition was reconstituted, reflecting the 1920 Census. Since that time, the population has grown disproportionately in Northern Virginia, especially after World War II. But the Commonwealth Transportation Board did not reflect that change. The disparity has become increasingly evident in recent years, as the region's roads have become choked with traffic.

Now, 90 years later, leaders in Richmond are finally updating the composition of the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

This week, the House of Delegates approved House Bill 864 on a bipartisan vote

of 51 to 47. The bill would require membership of the board reflect the most recent census figures and Virginia congressional redistricting. As is often the case in Richmond, the opposing sides in this debate are more about region than party. Del. Scott Surovell (D-44) has unsuccessfully carried similar legislation for the last three years.

"Northern Virginia is obviously where the population growth is, so you would think that's where the power should be," said Kyle Kondik, political analyst with the Virginia Center for Politics. "On the other hand, Northern Virginia is largely represented by Democrats and Democrats don't have much power in Richmond right now."

THIS YEAR, Surovell was able to gain the support from two Republicans who have skin in the game, Del. Tom Rust (R-86) of Herndon and Del. Christopher Peace (R-97)

of the Richmond area. The bipartisan team worked together to build support for the measure, which is now on its way to the state Senate. In addition to updating the composition of the board to reflect the 2010 Census, the legislation also requires regular realignments of the board's membership with each census and congressional redistricting.

"This bill more closely links the members of the Transportation Board with the citizens they're supposed to represent," said Surovell in a written statement.

"This bill is good not just for the urban crescent of Northern Virginia, Richmond and Hampton Roads but for the whole commonwealth."

Because the bill had broad multiregional and bipartisan support, Surovell said it could lay the groundwork for future cooperation between Northern Virginia, Richmond and Hampton Roads on transportation.

"The Richmond region is a necessary partner in this effort for years to come," said Peace in a written statement. "HB864 aligns the composition of the Commonwealth

Transportation Board with what will be the high growth areas of the state from Northern Virginia to Hampton Roads."

THE COMMONWEALTH transportation board is a 17-member body appointed by the governor that establishes administrative policies for Virginia's transportation system. Board members allocate highway funding to specific projects and provide funding for airports, seaports and public transportation. Its major projects include the Virginia Mega Projects with the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

"This change is long overdue and will cause the CTB to better serve the urban areas of the state," said Del. Vivian Watts (D-39), who served as Secretary of Transportation under former Democratic Gov. Gerald Baliles. "The idea that rush hour is seven hours in Northern Virginia, four hours in Hampton Roads and two-and-a-half hours in Richmond is out of touch with reality, and this change will move the CTB toward realistic analyses."

New Laws Attack Poor

FROM PAGE 1

mal days for Virginia's poor, according to Surovell and state Sen. Toddy Puller. Both are newly reelected Democrats returning to a General Assembly now dominated by the GOP under the leadership of a Republican governor. Surovell said by phone Feb. 9 that a slew of conservative initiatives are undercutting the poor.

"Many of us would say that there has been a war on the needy," he said.

Puller concurred. "I think many of the bills are taking a slice at the poor people and I'd also say they're taking a slice at the immigrants and also to the African Americans."

Heading the list laid out by Surovell are Gov. McDonnell's proposed regulations limiting childcare subsidies to five years per family, regardless of the number of children a family might have.

"I had a bill to prohibit that," said the delegate. "It was killed in committee."

Then there are the voting bills. "I fought all of the voting bills which have a disproportionate impact on the poor," he said. Formerly if a voter lacked identification, an affidavit was signed and the person could vote. If



State Sen. Toddy Puller (seated), who visited Rising Hope Sunday, called legislation requiring drug tests for people receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families "mean-spirited."

the person lied, it was a felony.

The new law requires instead a provisional ballot counted the day after the election only after the voter has successfully presented their case as to why they're entitled to vote.

"These people are typically elderly, poor, disabled or somebody who simply lost their license or had it taken in a court proceeding," he said, noting that studies have shown that about 11 percent of the population does not have identification.

"People who do not have licenses are also not very likely to be able to afford transportation to the government center to defend their vote, assuming they're not working. That bill, I think, disproportionately attacks the poor and lower income people."

Furthermore, no one is allowed to speak on behalf of the voter unless it's a hired lawyer, he said. Formerly volunteers from the parties could help.

Then there was legislation requiring drug

tests for people receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. "I think it's a mean-spirited bill," said Puller. "They just assume that if they're on welfare they must be into drugs. There's no reason to assume that."

Surovell also cited the governor's proposing "some pretty massive" cuts to Medicaid. "Medicaid is health care for the poor. Right now there is only one doctor on Route 1 that accepts Medicaid, and he has no specialists to refer anyone to within a hundred miles of his office. Cutting doctor reimbursements even further is simply going to mean fewer doctors are going to accept Medicaid."

A bill was also passed, he said, to prohibit Medicaid from paying for an abortion when a doctor certifies that the fetus will be born with a gross and incapacitating physical or mental deformity. "I think it's just absolutely cruel," said Puller.

In addition, if a woman wants an abortion she must now submit to what Surovell



Del. Scott Surovell, at Rising Hope with the Rev. Keary Kincannon on Saturday, said a slew of conservative initiatives are undercutting the poor.

called "a medically unnecessary" ultrasound which she must pay for if she doesn't have insurance. Puller said it was "designed to make it more difficult and intrusive for women who want to get a legal abortion."

"The folks in charge down here tend to favor corporations over people," said Surovell. "They tend to be of the opinion that if you're poor, go fix it yourself. That's going to be the prevailing feeling here for a while."

"They must not have any poor people in their district," said Puller, "or if they do they pay no attention to them."

At Rising Hope Mission, Kincannon, his staff, and volunteers from churches throughout the area continue caring for an ever-increasing number of people in desperate need. "We're hoping that Richmond understands that in these tough economic times the poor are the ones who suffer the most and therefore they should be the ones we try to help the most," he said.



Ulysses S. James conducts the BeethovenFound Philharmonic.

STEVEN JACOBS
PHOTOGRAPHY

Supporting Wounded Warriors

Music Director Ulysses S. James conducts benefit performances.

BY GALE CURCIO
THE GAZETTE

Ulysses S. James, music director and conductor, Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association, took center stage at the Kennedy Center once again recently as he conducted A Concert for Project Blessing and a Tribute to Wounded Warriors, a sold-out fundraiser for the Wounded Warriors at the Terrace Theater of the Kennedy Center.

"It was a full house — 500 in attendance and \$20,000 raised for our Beethovenfound Wounded Warrior Trust project," said H. David Meyers, organizer and host of the event.

James will conduct another performance by the BeethovenFound Philharmonic that is scheduled for Friday, March 16. It will be held at 7:30 p.m. at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and will feature the world premiere of the winning film of the World Music and International Film Festival True Bromance with the movie score performed live by the orchestra.

James is also scheduled to conduct the Memorial Day Tribute to Wounded Warriors on May 27 at The Great Meadow Event Center (5089-Old Tavern Road, the Plains, VA). It will feature members of the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony, and National Symphony and other pro-

fessional symphony musicians to create a 200-member orchestra with a 500-strong chorus conducted by James. More than six major bands will perform on a specially constructed stage surrounded by risers for the chorus and two Jumbotrons will show the action.

There will be more than 100 corporate tents with free barbeque and beer trucks serving 30,000 guests. A Wounded Warrior softball team will play in front of the crowd.

There will be free wine tasting from over 30 wineries and an air show will fly overhead. There will be games and fun for children of all ages in a carnival-type atmosphere, and much more.

Meyers said, "Our goal that day is to raise more than a million dollars for Wounded Warriors and their families. Our overall goal is a 'National Wounded Warriors Day' and a national telethon to raise tens of millions of dollars in a single day."

In the meantime, James is busy conducting the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association, which has the following concerts scheduled:

- ❖ Sunday, Feb. 19 at 3 p.m. — Bishop Ireton H.S. (Alexandria)
- ❖ Saturday, March 31 at 3 p.m. — Church of the Epiphany (D.C.)
- ❖ Sunday, April 1 at 3 p.m. — Bishop Ireton H.S. (Alexandria)
- ❖ Saturday, May 19 at 3 p.m. — Bishop Ireton H.S. (Alexandria)
- ❖ Saturday, May 26 at 3 p.m. — Church of the Epiphany (D.C.)

For more information about Beethovenfound, visit <http://www.beethovenfound.org/>.

For more information about Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic, visit <http://www.wmpamusic.org/>

West Potomac Academy to Host Open House

West Potomac Academy will open its classroom doors to prospective students and their parents, local business representatives, and community members for an open house on Friday, Feb. 17, between 9 a.m and 1 p.m. West Potomac Academy is one of six high school academies in Fairfax County Public Schools.

The goal of the open house is to recruit students for the 2012-13 school year, strengthen ties with the community workforce, and establish business partnerships. Students and teachers will be available to share highlights of the following academy programs: Dental Careers, Physical and Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy Tech, Medical Assisting, Criminal Justice, Dance, Professional Television Production, Fashion Design, and Music and Computer Technology. Students are prepared to demonstrate their professional skills and share examples of their work, portfolios, and resumé.

The career focus at West Potomac Academy enables students to learn about the various occupations within their fields of interest. Students take part in many hands-on activities — both inside and outside of the classroom — that provide a realistic view of and practical experience for the job. Many individuals from local businesses and organizations work with the students in the classroom as guest speakers. In addition, many community members and businesses welcome students into the workplace by offering internships, job shadowing, work opportunities, and tours of their facilities.

West Potomac Academy offers advanced career-oriented electives using industry standard equipment. Several courses offer industry certifications and college credits. Each year, more than 600 high school juniors and seniors from approximately 15 Fairfax County public schools get a jump start on their careers by taking one of the academy courses.



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Teacher Publishes Book on Finance for Teens

FROM PAGE 1

younger children entitled, "A Successful Team Has TeamEsteem," with illustrations by at the time freshman student Hiwan Adhamon.

This was part of Mackey's plan to "empower youth to define their niche and enhance their skills," an element of TeamEsteem.

"The concept of TeamEsteem is seizing veterans (adults) to build a rapport with young people to encourage them to follow their goals, refine their gifts that have been given to them on their arrival," Mackey said.

The second book, which he also wrote in 2011, "TeamEsteem is the Key to a Teen's Financial Dreams," which outlines the essence of the concepts and how it can help students achieve and pay for their post-graduate goals.

West Potomac High School student Rebecca Adams, who took Mackey's accounting class, said Mackey is "one teacher you will never forget."

"He teaches life lessons and encourages entrepreneurship," Adams said. "Three or four businesses have started out of this classroom."

Adams, a member of the yearbook staff, said she is profiling Mackey and his latest book.

"It's how to manage money better," she said. "It is about evaluating what is good and what is not necessary, and about how to evaluate your top two priorities before you go through and spend money on something."

"I had a job at Coldstone Creamery last year, and I wish I'd read it then. I would have more profits in my bank account now if I had."

The last three to four pages of the books are quotes and perspectives of Mackey's students, Adams said.

Mackey said there will be a book signing at Hooray for Books! in Alexandria on Feb. 19 from 1:30-2:30 p.m.



West Potomac High School teacher Daryl Mackey.

The signing will be "to introduce TeamEsteem to the City of Alexandria and to bring positive people together in an outstanding environment that promotes reading, which is one of our initiatives — to encourage students to be financially literate," Mackey said. "The goal of the event is to introduce positive people to young people who need role models."

WPHS Senior Evan Jenkins will be responsible for the background music during the signing. A pianist and a singer, Jenkins will be playing a variety from Ray Charles, the Beatles, Frank Sinatra and his own written music as well.

"I'm very thankful to have made contact with Mr. Mackey and have gotten this gig on the spot," Jenkins said. "[Mr. Mackey] is very inspirational and makes his speeches very personal, as though he's inviting you into conversation."

There will also be a financial summit on April 7 at the Carlyle Club to promote TeamEsteem.

Mackey owns real estate which is the foundation to D&D Enterprize, LLC, which funds the TeamEsteem Network and philanthropic efforts.

Ten sponsors are in negotiations for the DreamEsteem financial summit in April. Among the sponsors that are making the event possible include Peggy White of Long and Foster, BB&T, Burke and Herbert, Nate Wilson and the Carlyle Club is giving a generous discount.

Mackey said TeamEsteem is just at the beginning and he expects it to grow and to thrive in Alexandria and throughout Fairfax County and the rest of the East Coast.

"TeamEsteem and our network have a streamline growth drivers for 2012," Mackey said. "Our first quarter goal is to

introduce the book throughout the United States, throughout corporations and organizations such as the military and the industry."

Secondly, Mackey said he hopes to continue the networking financial seminars that would take place in the spring and the fall, which includes the launch event in April.

"We will continue throughout the year at various locations locally and throughout the East Coast," he said. "We will be utilizing outreach associates who will represent the 10 concepts that we're introducing in this second book where we'll educate teenagers and our youth about knowing the concept of TeamEsteem, financial literacy and reading. We'll also be collaborating with different programs like AVIT and various programs throughout the city of Alexandria and Fairfax County." Mackey said the final piece and his ultimate goal is to follow the global vision that's been given to many members of the network: "To help our youth understand the concept of giving and sharing and reaching to give back to someone who is absolutely in need."

"It is about evaluating what is good and what is not necessary, and about how to evaluate your top two priorities before you go through and spend money on something."

— West Potomac High School student Rebecca Adams

With Hull III, UCM's Mission Continues To Serve Needy

FROM PAGE 1

remained relatively flat," said Wanner.

Providing emergency food, emergency funds for rent and utilities, housing assistance for the struggling and homeless, employment assistance, community development for low-income families, advocacy, afterschool youth services and daycare for the working poor, she shepherded UCM through the recession serving 13,000 people last year — a jump of 6,000 more than the 7,000 needing help in 2007.

"To do that with the same amount of resources that she had before is pretty amazing," said Wanner. "We did cost-cutting measures and looked at innovative ways of saving money and making sure that we could meet the demand for services without compromising the integrity of the program."

UCM's Sarah Stone, who also works in development and communications, said

Hull's leadership was crucial in the recession. "Because of the economy, funding sources were drying up left and right," she said.

"Foundations were no longer taking applications, people were cutting back on their giving, and Cynthia plowed through making sure that people got fed as more and more people are coming to our door needing help with rent, needing help with utilities, needing help with food.

"She made sure that this organization — at a time when a lot of organizations across the nation similar to ours are buckling because there's just not enough money — she made sure we remained a stable institution."

Wanner attributed Hull's success to devotion to her work and her remarkable spirit. "She believes that each person in their life can make a difference in the lives of someone else, and she is very much a be-

liever that we all as individuals share a common humanity and that we have a responsibility — those of us in a better position — to help our neighbors who are not in such a good position.

And that really is how she lived her life and continues to live her life."

Stone described her as "a friendly, kind, giving person" who can be "stubborn and flexible at the same time," adding, "I'm inspired by her. She has dedicated her life to helping others, and that's tremendous."

"She just exemplified the life of the principles we're supposed to live in loving your neighbor," said Wanner.

Hull is also known for her devotion to her staff. "She very much cared for the welfare of her employees. She very much respected the work that we did. She saw us — and we are — very much committed individuals," said Wanner.

She also described Hull as "a very dedi-

cated mother" to her son Duncan who lives in Maine with his wife Kristen and two-year-old daughter Pierce. "She was tremendously delighted to be a grandmother," Wanner said.

UCM carries on, now with Elizabeth McNally as acting executive director.

Cynthia Hull is now living her last days in Maine with Duncan and his family.

To help Cynthia Hull and UCM carry on their work for the poor, residents can attend the Harmony Heritage Singers benefit concert this Saturday, at 3 p.m., at Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane. A love offering will be taken.

Residents can also aid UCM by enjoying a meal at the Cosmopolitan Grill from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21. Ten percent of the sale of the meal will be donated to UCM. The restaurant is located at 7700 Richmond Highway. Be sure to say: "Here for UCM."

BULLETIN BOARD

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

ONGOING

Fort Ward Museum is now registering for its annual Civil War Kids' Camp, a week of learning and fun for boys and girls ages 8 to 12. Participants explore the lives of Civil War soldiers and civilians with marching, drilling, reenactor guest appearances, games, crafts and other activities. Civil War Kids' Camp runs Monday, June 25, through Friday, June 29, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Fort Ward, 4301 West Braddock Road. Registration is limited to 24 participants. Spaces fill quickly, and applications are accepted on a first-come basis. Registration, including souvenirs and healthy snacks, costs \$200 per child, with limited scholarship assistance based on financial need. Contact Fort

Ward Museum at 703-746-4848 or visit www.fortward.org.

Scholarship applications for the 2012 Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce Education Partnership Scholarships are now available. Scholarships of \$2,000 will be awarded to graduating high school seniors in Mount Vernon and Lee Districts pursuing further education in a business related field. Applications are available at <http://www.mtvernon-leechamber.org/Education-Partnership.html>, at high school career centers, or by calling 703-360-6925. Students may apply online or download an application and return it. All applications must be received by the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce by Friday,

April 27. Those applying for the scholarships must plan to pursue further education in a business-related field, have a minimum high school GPA of 3.0, and have work or community volunteer experience. Applicants must submit an essay with the application and a copy of their high school transcript.

UCM's food pantry depends on community donations. Canned meat and fish are needed, as well as canned soups, fruits and vegetables. Help by dropping off food donations at UCM's main office, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria. UCM's food pantry accepts food donations Monday - Friday, from 9 am to 5:30 p.m. and the first Sunday of the month from 9:30 am to 1 p.m.



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Saving the Bay: A Good Investment

Cleaning up the water that runs into the Chesapeake Bay will help create jobs and economic activity in Virginia.

A plan to raise \$300 million in bonds to upgrade wastewater treatment plants around the commonwealth stalled in a House of Delegates committee last week, a setback in meeting EPA requirements to clean up the water that leads to the Bay. Money is tight, lawmakers say, although an identical plan cleared the Senate.

Let's be clear that part of what we're talking about by delay is continuing to allow raw sewage to run into Virginia's waterways every time it rains.

This is like deciding to let the toilets in the house overflow rather than spend money on the plumber. Not only is it unhealthy and unpleasant, it also makes Virginia less attractive

EDITORIAL

for tourists and eco-tourists.

Upgrading the sewage treatment plants will generate jobs, but also upgrade the quality of the water Virginians depend on for drinking, household and business use and recreation.

More than 30 years of "saving" the Chesapeake Bay has accomplished about half of what needs to be done. The bay is primary attraction for tourists in Virginia, and is the basis for many jobs. The investment in the health of the bay is a jobs bill for Virginia.

Aside from upgrading the treatment plants, states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed will need to find ways slow the pace of stormwater

runoff, do better with erosion control, change some agricultural practices to keep "fertilizer" from rushing into waterways every time it rains, and more. Efforts made upstream by other states will also benefit Virginia's waterways. There are new green and more cost effective ways to go about many of these tasks.

The mission will also need the continued involvement of individuals and organizations who are dedicated to the Chesapeake Bay.

It's an investment that will pay dividends for Virginia.

Pet Connection

Send us photos of your pets this week for inclusion in next week's Pet Connection. Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans. Please identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description of your pet, include address and phone number, and email to: gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Trust Deficit In FCPS

To the Editor:

The following open letter is addressed to the Fairfax County School Board.

Once again, I would like to thank you all for your dedication to the students, parents and teachers of Fairfax County Public Schools. It is obvious to me that often you have an all-consuming, thankless responsibility to ensure the best education policies are in place for our school system — all on a so-called "part time basis"! I am sure your families and friends chuckle often on the term "part-time"!

Generally, I am a supporter of a "Governance Policy" to streamline the workload and to reduce redundancy of tasks for a part-time School Board. Alas, we have a serious trust deficit occurring in Fairfax County Public Schools that has been building up over the last 7-10 years, or possibly even longer. This trust deficit is placing an undue burden on our School Board members and I hope with the hiring of a new Superintendent, this burden can be lightened.

In the meantime, it is your sworn duty as elected officials to ensure that the policies and guidelines that are set down on record, either by your votes, or state and federal laws, are implemented in a legal and consistent manner county-wide. When you have an uproar across the county from students, parents and teachers regarding an egregious lack of public engagement on an important

issue, then our elected School Board is obligated to take action beyond the Governance Policy. This is what occurred recently regarding the 11-1 vote on Jan 26 to add five Honors courses to our high school course of studies for the coming school year. It was right and just for our elected School Board to give credence to the strong outpouring of concern for appropriate learning options. Our county administration had been appealed to for years with no appropriate response as they disregarded important input from the community.

Since yesterday's "Retreat" is open to public observers as should be the case, I was very disheartened to hear the tone and demeanor taken by the so-called "moderators" of this "team-building" effort. In my opinion, many of the discussions and name-calling examples given, demonstrated no collaborative effort but rather took on the form of ridiculous bullying. What a sham of professional, educated communication! I think those who established the agenda and the goals of this "retreat" should be closely examined as to their purpose and abilities to lead a venue in such an unprofessional manner. I also think that any professional moderators who complied with such an unprofessional agenda should return the \$5000-plus that they charged for this lack of quality service to our county. The School Board's involvement and strong supportive vote to add the Honors courses was time and again used as an example of a School Board not doing a good

job! Ask the countless students who now have a few more appropriate learning options if that was "a bad decision"! Add up the emails, letters, articles and public statements as to the community opinion on adding those courses!

I agree that — ideally — a School Board would just have to "oversee." A great superintendent earns the general trust of the public and the more developed trust of a School Board, which creates a situation where the board can be more hands-off, as the Governance Policy alludes to.

Alas, that is not the case in FCPS. There is a "trust deficit" with top-down decisions lacking teacher and public input, lowest teacher morale on record, lack of evaluative transparency for just about every budgetary and statistical data report and a climate of intimidation fostered at the highest levels.

When a superintendent lacks transparency and cannot effectively show, when pushed, that he is operating in the best interest of the students, the School Board is obliged to step in and micromanage on some specific issues.

A superintendent needs to keep the board and the public fully apprised of decision-making and its rationale, no matter how exhausting and irritating. That's the job. If you're making good decisions, it won't be so very onerous to open them up to public view. Those ideas should sell themselves to a smart, educated county like Fairfax. In contrast, Dale & Co are making questionable decisions, in

secret, that benefit administrators most of all. Unfortunately, in this case the school board needs to step in and protect the needs of our children. That's the job.

Please don't allow the messages hammered-in at this retreat or at future venues to weaken your resolve to do your elected duty and to ensure that your votes and actions represent credible, honest leadership!

Your legacy as a School Board member can be to leave our children with a better educational future, not to allow Governance Policy to be an excuse for bad public policy.

Kate Van Dyck,
parent and teacher
for Restore Honors Courses

In Need of A Statesman

To the Editor:

Even as we examine the most iniquitous chapters of American history, even among those days and times characterized by the most reckless of evils, we find that hope has always prevailed over despair.

Those who came before us worked with great, sometimes awe-inspiring diligence to accomplish the central goal that our founding generation had envisioned for America: The raising of an efficient moral standard — one intended to work the preservation of liberty; the abolishment of slavery; the continual defense of our inherent, "self-evident," God-given

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A Connection Newspaper

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 8

rights; and the establishment of a true, republican form of government, “of, by, and for” the people.

Regrettably, in the midst of these noble endeavors, there has always existed a sad, predominately ill-favored side to our American legacy.

Since the founding of this nation, various forces have been at work, each driven by their own self-centered, self-focused, hedonistic appetite, yet sharing one common objective on the whole: To take power and control away from ordinary citizens and consolidate it into the hands of certain elite groups (the political parties being chief among them), each of them promising (and quite often delivering) special privileges and other fraudulent incentives to those individuals and coalitions working to keep them in power.

As a result, Americans have continually found themselves caught in a situation where the Constitution is ignored, and phony, liberalized political edicts are treated as if they had the legitimacy of law. The “inalienable” rights guaranteed to each and every one of us by our founding charters have essentially been taken captive under the mechanism of government

regulation — abducted and held for ransom, as it were.

Through the use of carefully laid political strategy (intended to leverage votes), we find that certain liberties have been artificially “restored” to some, redistributed back to the people, but only on an incremental basis and only in ways that best suit the elite.

No longer are these objects to be considered God-given rights. Instead we find them depicted simply as government-sponsored privileges, extended to us by the generosity and goodwill of those in power.

Yet according to the truths embodied in America’s founding principles, we know that every human being is, by the Constitution, guaranteed his natural rights and the free exercise of them, without regard to any temporal designation related to class, condition, or circumstance, or the bogus subterfuges of regulatory power. These are merely political façades, meant to undermine a document once regarded as our nation’s highest law.

In turbulent days like this, when our foremost blessings are denied, neglected, renounced, and deliberately subjected to overtures of

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 10



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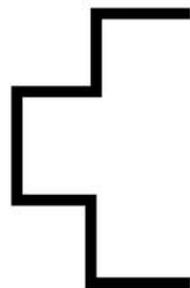
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Crossover Point in Legislature

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



Tuesday, Feb. 14, marks what is referred to as Crossover in the General Assembly. All bills, except budget bills, have to be passed by the Senate and sent to the House or by the House and sent to the Senate to have a chance for final passage into law.

Nine of the bills that I introduced have passed the Senate without any opposition and now must be passed by the House of Delegates to become law. These bills include:

RICHMOND REPORT

❖ SB 540 Real estate tax exemption for disabled veterans – Allows the inclusion of primary residences held in trust clarifying the bill passed last year.

❖ SB 657 Fraudulent train ticket; penalty – Increases the fine for boarding or riding a district transportation train without paying the posted fare. The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) requested this legislation because of the growing problems they are having with this issue.

❖ SB 136 Virginia Retirement System; retirees hired as police chief in certain towns. Enables a town such as Dumfries, which asked for this bill, to hire a retired person as police chief.

❖ SB 139 County precincts; separate precinct for certain towns. Allows the Town of Quantico to have its own separate precinct to enable voters to cast

ballots in the town. During the past election, they had travel out of the town to vote.

❖ SB 539 Forward energy pricing; public body to use mechanism for budget risk reduction. Grants a public entity such as the Potomac and Rappahannock Transit Commission (PRTC) to buy and sell diesel fuel to make operations more efficient and fiscally sound.

❖ SB 551 Counties may establish discount for real estate payments. Permits entities to give a discount if owners pay property tax in full in the first one-half of the year but with no greater than a 5 percent discount.

Another bill I introduced, SB 434 Funeral protests; penalty, would limit protests at funeral and memorial services that may lead to disruption of peace. This bill was requested by Fairfax County. I have attended a funeral in the Mount Vernon area where such a protest was held. SB 434 is expected to pass the Senate either Monday or Tuesday of this week.

Please continue to contact me on interests of concern:

Senator Linda T. "Toddy" Puller, P.O. Box 396, Richmond, Virginia 23218; Phone: 804-698-7536; Fax: 804-698-7651; Email: district36@senate.virginia.gov.

FROM PAGE 9

lawlessness, injustice, and other great moral atrocities, we are reminded that the task of defending these fundamental rights does not reside with the political parties.

It resides with the people.

"If people are obliged to support one person who doesn't represent them in order to stop another who also doesn't represent them, they end up with a government that doesn't represent them."

This opinion, which has been circulated on the national level by Dr. Alan Keyes (and others of like mind), is one that indeed seems to resonate among us.

Here in Virginia's 11th Congressional District, if history guides, it's likely that voters will once again decide to run a "token slate" of independent candidates for Congress during this year's election cycle. This practice is nothing new. What remains to be seen, however, is whether there are indeed any would-be patriots left among us, possessing the moral wherewithal to put forward a true alternative to the incumbent, Gerry Connolly. Whether there are any ready to lift up a decent, grassroots alternative, wholly independent of those sly, party-driven conditions and other politically imposed constraints, aimed

at denying voters a genuine choice at the ballot box.

The task is one that would likely require time, hard work, and innovative thinking. Government "of, by and for" the people is not about being idle, passive, or timid; or taking cues from the party bosses, the money people, or the media outlets; or settling for those aspiring politicians who claim independence from the parties while in fact advocating the exact same brand of neo-confederate, pseudo-constitutional nonsense. It's about taking the time to recognize and study what is truly needed for this country, and then finding, reaching for, lifting up, and actively sustaining the kind of leadership that corresponds to that need.

Such an endeavor would hardly be worth the effort if it were to merely inundate the field, as it so often seems, with a stagnant array of political hacks, beholden to the very same vestiges of party elitism and other pro-establishment "legislative themes" that Connolly and his political colleagues (on both sides of the aisle) so earnestly represent.

But I think we would do well, as a community, to raise at least one candidate of our own design, with the necessary character, vision, understanding, and moral courage to ensure that our founding charters work as they were intended to work. Someone who is able,

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Springfield
6430 MELIA ST
4BR/2.5BA/3lvl center hall colonial w/2-car garage on flat, wooded .5 acre lot. Gazebo & shed in rear w/ electricity. Remodeled kit w/granite & hrdwd. 2-story first fl FR w/brick frpl. No HOA fees. DIR: from Bldg; Van Don Exit S, R on Franconia, L on Elder (becomes Media) to home on L.

Sheryl Lambson@inf.com
Sheryl Lambson 703.217.7012

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4!
\$ 529,888
Lake Braddock
5220 SPALDING CT
• Incredible space
• 5BR / 3.5BA
• 2,555 sqft of living sp
• Formal LR/DR
• Eat-in kit w/fam rm

• Enclosed cedar deck off family rm
• Garage / 13,00 sqft lot

Martine Imer & Alexander Imer
703.346.7283 or 703.403.2465

8355 Justin Rd
\$870,000
PERFECTION!
Owner has spared no expense updating this spectacular, spacious Colonial on quiet cul-de-sac in the heart of Mt. Vernon. Fabulous features include: open floor plan, high ceilings, expansive glass window walls, recently updated gourmet kitchen, 2 levels of hardwood floors, stunning master suite and the list goes on. Truly a remarkable home!

NEW HOME!

4009 Colonial Ave
\$749,500
New Home- Gorgeous Site!
Pre-construction opportunity-fabulous home by Wakefield Homes on gorgeous half acre level lot on quiet street in the heart of Mt. Vernon. Popular Belle View model with open floor plan, fabulous amenities and quality construction that have made Wakefield Mt. Vernon's leading builder for generations. Exceptional value priced significantly lower than other new home on street. (Pre-construction picture is of similar house)

UPDATED!

4502 Phylliss St
\$525,000
SUPER VALUE!
Exceptionally spacious home - Featuring the most size and largest room dimensions for the price in the area! This property has everything! Brand new gourmet kitchen with custom wood cabinets, stainless appliances, and gorgeous granite countertops. Other features include: Spacious family room, five bedrooms, including luxury master suite, home office on main level, and oversized two-car garage. Prime location on quiet cul-de-sac. Convenient to Everything!

JUST LISTED!
\$ 365,000
Jefferson Manor
"WALK TO METRO- NO HOA!"
Lovely duplex on corner lot w/expansive front porch, fenced yard, extensive landscaping. 2 BR/2FBA, granite/stainless kitchen, open kit/dining. Finished attic w/pull-down stairs for extra storage. Off-street parking. Easy walk to Huntington Metro.

Susan Batchelder 703.919.8359

\$ 409,000
Alexandria South
"NEW PRICE"
Newly Refinished Floors * New Paint complete this expanded 3BR/2BA Cape plus newer kit, HVAC, HWH & landscaping West Potomac school district. Convenient to Ft Belvoir, Old Town and Reagan National Airport.

Louise Devers 703.795.9944
Glenn Witucki 703.518.8708

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4!
\$ 559,900
Waynover
8506 CONOVER PL
Renovated & expanded home around the corner from WWES, park & pool. MstrSuite w/new FBA, fin bsmt rec rm, sunrm/BR add, mudrm, storage, new open kit/DR/FR flrplan. Large fenced lot, patio. Must See!

www.WaynoverRealtors.com
Anita D'Antonio 202.460.1809
Elke Kohler 703.967.7633

4200 Kimblee Ct
\$949,000
Updated Custom Home!

Majestic brick colonial on quiet cul-de-sac in prestigious Oxford on the

CONTRACT!

8826 Cooper Rd
\$395,000
Country Club Views!
You won't believe this large updated rambler is available for under \$400K! Numerous features include: large 1/2 A + lot, updated kitchen w/granite countertops & SS appli, fully updated baths, thermal windows, large family room w/high ceilings, spacious living and dining rooms, garage & oversized deck. Prime location minutes from Ft. Belvoir.

JUST LISTED!

8528 Monticello Ave
\$559,000

Updated Colonial/Classic Colonial in pristine condition & updated throughout! Features

CONTRACT!

\$ 679,900
Waynover
"NEW PRICE"
5 lvls, 1-of-a-kind totally renovated home. Brand New appls, systems, roof, windows, & siding! 2 lvl Mstr suite w/FBA, walk-in closet on 4th/5th lvls. Lg bsmt w/rec/mud/storage rms, FBA, open kit/DR w/brkfst bar, granite & SS.

www.WaynoverRealtors.com
Anita D'Antonio 202.460.1809
Elke Kohler 703.967.7633

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4!
\$ 475,000
South Arlington
3046 S GLEBE RD
4 levels - 2,340sqft of open contemporary living space w/ hdwds thru-out; large LR/ DR open to sunlit kit; LL fam rm has wood-burning frpl; 3 large BRs ea w/en-suite BAs. Entire 4th fl is MstrBR Suite w/cathedral ceilings + 2 car gar.

Sharon Edwards 703.408.8144

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4!
McLean
6011 CLAIBORNE DR
All-brick 6BR/4.5BA Colonial in a cul-de-sac of stately homes features a neutral palette & gleaming hdwd flrs. It is renewed, refinished & revitalized inside & out, with 2 family rms, 3 wood-burning FP, oversized side-load 2 car gar, gorgeous screened sunporch, & professional landscaping. One light to DC.

Wendy Shelley 703.919.6045

2300 Candlewood
\$569,000
Expanded Tri-

Level! Builder's own!

SOLD!

Exceptionally large well maintained

8890 McNair Dr
\$699,000
Pristine Custom Colonial!
Custom colonial in enclave of 17 homes on quiet cul-de-sac surrounded by grounds of Mt Vernon Country Club. Many fabulous features include: large room sizes, stained hardwood floors, updated kitchen & baths, open kitchen-family room, upgraded trim detail and custom built-ins. Spacious master suite! Two car garage. Pristine condition!

4002 Belle Rive Terr
\$839,900
Classic Colonial/ River View!
HUGE PRICE DROP!
Classic brick colonial, custom built in prestigious Belle Rive. A neighborhood of many \$1 million properties. Truly special home with many features including: elegant trim detail, updated 'state of the art' kitchen, 5 bedrooms & finished lower level. Gorgeous setting on half acre grounds with view of river. Uniquely attractive home in premier location.

\$ 579,000
Alexandria / Old Town
"GW'S STYLE"
Modern updates in this colonial brick end TH in popular Nethergate. 1,700 sqft 4 lvls, 3 wood-burning fireplaces, patio, parking, walk to Metro. Huge amount of space, great Old Town value. Call Renee!

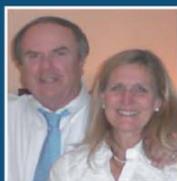
nethergatehomes.com
Renee Raymond 703.507.5330

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY WAREHOUSE FOR LEASE!
Alexandria North
408 E Glebe Rd & 3006 Jeff. Davis Hwy
Prime location - Potomac Yards residential/commercial area. 2 sep. bays consisting of 2100+ sqft each. Open space consisting of approx. 16,000sqft of fenced area. Heated space w/restroom facilities on each side. Auto uses will require special use permit.

Katherine Ward 703.627.8782

\$ 440,000
Alexandria House
"2 GARAGE SPACES"
Best Priced 2BR/2BA condo w/tons of light, private wrap around balcony w/access from every room. Floor to ceiling windows, eco-friendly cork flrs, upgraded kit w/corain ctrs. MstrBR is ensuite + walk-in closet. 2nd BR has wall-to-wall closets. 24hr service, rooftop pool, party rm, sauna & sundeck w/river views.

Norma Stratton 703.966.0756



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Making the Grade

School officials offer strategies for improving study habits.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

When Jackie Jackson's son brought home his report card recently, the Centreville mother of three was shocked.

"His grades had fallen to an unacceptable level," said Jackson. "Getting my son to do his homework has always been a battle, but during the winter break when there was no school, we got out of our routine and haven't been able to get back on track."

Children with low grades and poor study habits can be a source of stress for some parents. Educational experts say that there are effective techniques that can improve learning practices.

Starting a dialogue is a good first step. "In terms of academic success, it is key that there is open communication between parents, students and teachers," said Lizabeth Borra, School Counselor at Potomac Elementary School in Potomac, Md. "We want to work as a team to teach students the tools to be lifelong learners. In order to do so, we must set expectations and work together."

Experts say that one of the best ways to improve academic performance and decrease battles over completing homework assignments is to develop a daily schedule that includes time for studying and relaxation. "Set up a regular time to do homework; routines develop into habits," said Borra. "Establish a regular procedure; study for a length of time, have a short break, and return to studying."

Once the schedule is in place, work to maintain it and hold children accountable. "Consistency helps establish a pattern. When it is done on a regular basis it becomes second nature," said Valerie Garcia, principal, Blessed Sacrament School in Alexandria. "When a student is personally responsible they understand accountability and they understand the consequences if they don't follow through. Those consequences can end up being a less than desirable report card."

Create a study environment with minimal distractions. "The best way to help children is to have a quiet place in the home for homework," said Dr. Marjorie Myers, principal, Key Elementary School.

Support children, but avoid over involvement. "If parents help too much, children become dependent on them and don't develop their own sense of responsibility for getting their homework and studying done," said Myers. "Let them get a 'C' or a 'D' on a test and show them that if they ... study ... and pay attention in class, they can change those grades to 'A's' and 'B's.' It's their responsibility to learn and the intrinsic reward of earning that grade on their own is extremely valuable for future academic success."

There might be times when a child needs extra help. "If parents are concerned that their child may



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Francis Scott Key Elementary School teacher Briana Tavernier leads first grade students in a morning discussion. Experts say helping children succeed academically requires an open dialogue between parents, students and teachers.

have difficulty learning they should contact the teacher," said Borra. "Teachers are well trained in working with students that have many different learning styles."

Organization is critical, particularly for older students. "Plan ahead," said Leila Sidawy of Georgetown Learning Centers in Great Falls and McLean. "A great way to do that is to get a planner. This is important especially for students who have multiple activities that they are juggling like sports or clubs. Having a planner can help them stay on top of their assignments and avoid procrastination. The planner should include test dates, project due dates and after school activities. Getting organized will help a student feel more in control."

"Note taking is a crucial, but often overlooked aspect of academic success," said Sidawy. "Make sure students take good notes and keep them organized by date or subject, and include headings on the notes as well as relevant chapters or page numbers. After class, students should review the notes to help solidify the material."

Educators encourage parents to stay optimistic. "Maintain a positive attitude regardless of how challenging an assignment may appear," said Borra. "Prioritize studying and homework. Help your child understand the purpose of learning and that they will do it throughout their lives."



Students at Arlington's Francis Scott Key Elementary School practice counting with blocks. School officials encourage parents to develop a daily schedule that includes time for academics and recreation.

THEATER

Reasonable Doubt

Spellbinding “Really Really” debuts at Signature Theatre in Arlington.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

Did he or didn't he? It was the college party of the year and ambitious young co-ed Leigh finally gets her man, the All-American rugby captain Davis. But all is not what it seems as events unfold in the spellbinding production of “Really Really,” now playing at Signature Theatre.

The debut play by 26-year-old playwright Paul Downs Colaizzo, “Really Really” follows a group of college seniors on the verge of graduation. In the aftermath of a hook up gone wrong, friendships unravel in the face of accusations of rape at an elite unnamed university.

Directed by Signature's Associate Artistic Director Matthew Gardiner, the contemporary drama showcases a brilliant young cast that includes Paul James, Kim Rosen, Bethany Anne Lind, Danny Gavigan, Lauren Culpepper, Evan Casey and Jake Odmark.

As the play opens, Leigh (Bethany Anne Lind) and her roommate Grace (Lauren Culpepper) are arriving home in a drunken stupor following a party at the apartment of Davis (Jake Odmark) and his fellow teammates. It becomes clear that Leigh, a have-not in a school of privileged students, has an agenda of her own following her ill-timed sexual encounter with Davis while her wealthy fiancé Jimmy (Danny Gavigan) is out of

town.

Or was it ill-timed after all? The morning after finds Leigh, who has led Jimmy to believe she is pregnant with his child, accusing Davis of rape after Davis' roommate Cooper (Evan Casey) lets it slip to Jimmy what took place in his absence.

The he said/she said play, which coincidentally makes its debut as University of Virginia student George Huguely is being tried for the murder of Yeardley Love, divides the friends and roommates as each takes sides and struggles to protect themselves and their futures in the face of the scandal.

Complicating the situation is the fact that Davis can't actually remember his alleged encounter with Leigh, a point the accuser and her sister Haley (Kim Rosen) uses to their advantage.

Lind and Odmark are riveting in the lead roles of Leigh and Davis. As the story unfolds, the character of each becomes more complex and the truth about the night in question becomes clouded with doubt.

The scenic design by Misha Kachman consists of a stage cleverly split between the well-kept apartment of Leigh and Grace and the more traditional man-cave digs of the rugby roommates. Gardiner skillfully uses the lighting by Colin K. Bills to direct the attention of the audience to the unraveling details of the ill-fated night now under investigation.

With a recurring theme of “Generation Me,” Colaizzo has crafted



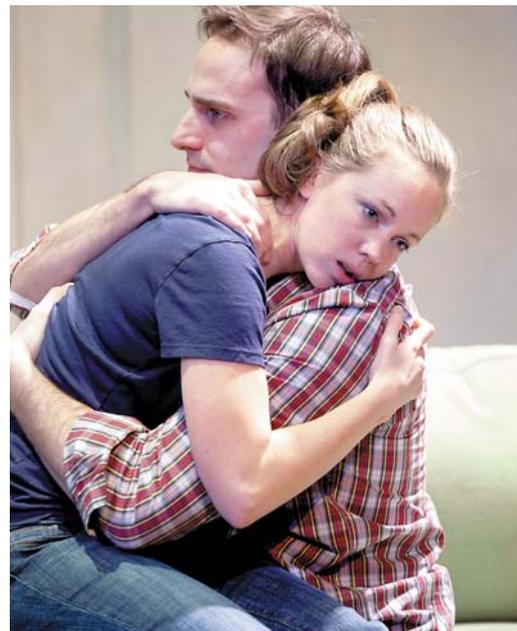
PHOTOS BY SCOTT SUCHMAN

From left: Danny Gavigan (as Jimmy), Paul James (as Johnson) and Evan Casey (as Cooper) talking about last night's big party in “Really Really” at Virginia's Signature Theatre through March 25.

characters that epitomize today's pampered generation of students that will stop at nothing to avoid accountability for their actions.

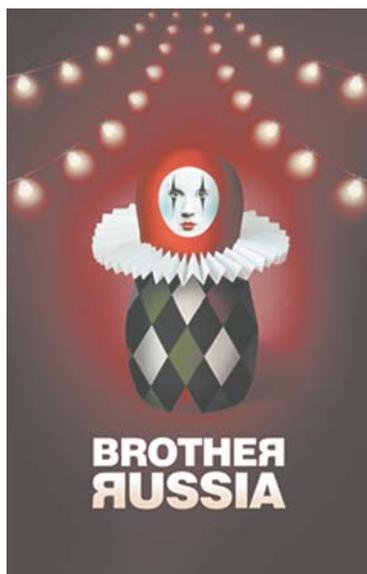
Despite what to some may be a disturbing subject matter, “Really Really,” is mesmerizing and thought-provoking with a brilliant ensemble cast. It will keep you guessing long after the final curtain call and is a production not to be missed.

“Really Really” is playing now through March 25 at Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington. The production contains strong language and explicit situations and is for mature audiences only. For tickets or more information, call 703-820-9771 or visit www.signature-theatre.org.



Danny Gavigan (as Jimmy) gives Bethany Anne Lind (as Leigh) a comforting embrace. “Really Really” plays at Virginia's Signature Theatre through March 25.

THEATER



Know of something missing from our Local Theater listings? Send it to arlington@connectionnewspapers.com or gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is 2 p.m. the Thursday before publication. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412.

MARCH 6 THROUGH APRIL 15

“**Brother Russia.**” Performances are Tuesday through Sunday evenings, with matinees on Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets are now on sale starting at \$63. Single tickets are available in person at the Signature Box Office or by calling Ticketmaster at 703-573-SEAT. Student discount tickets are \$30 and must be purchased the week of the performance. At Signature Theater, 4200 Campbell Ave. in Shirlington.

NOW THROUGH FEB. 11

Jules Feiffer's “Little Murders.” Show times are Thursday through Saturday 8 p.m.; Saturday/Sunday

matinee at 2:30 P.M. Post-show talk-back on Jan. 19. At Gunston Theatre II, 2700 South Lang St., Arlington. Order tickets online at americancentury.org or 703-998-4555.

FEB. 24 TO MARCH 10

“**The Dixie Swim Club.**” Port City Playhouse presents a delightful comedy about five women who were on their college swim team and get together for a “girls only” weekend at a cottage on the Outer Banks every summer. Fri.-Sat., Feb. 24-25, March 2-3 and 9-10; Tues., March 6 at 8 p.m.; Sat. matinees March 3 and 10 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$18 general admission, \$16 seniors & students, \$14 groups of 10+. At The LAB at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-838-2880 or www.portcityplayhouse.org.

APRIL 20 TO MAY 6

“**Someone Who'll Watch Over Me.**” Port City Playhouse presents a play

focused on the trials and tribulations of an Irishman, Englishman and an American who are kidnapped and held hostage by unseen Arabs in Lebanon. Tickets are \$18 general admission, \$16 seniors & students, \$14 groups of 10+. At The LAB at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-838-2880 or www.portcityplayhouse.org.

FEB. 3 TO 17

“**Laughter on the 23rd Floor.**” Show times are Feb. 3, 4, 5 (m), 10, 11, 12 (m), 16, 17. Evenings at 8 p.m., Matinees (m) at 2:30 p.m. Presented by the Arlington Players. At Gunston Theatre One, 2700 South Lang St., Arlington.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 25

“**Really Really.**” Showtimes are Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$56 - \$80 and are available by

calling Ticketmaster at 703-573-SEAT (7328) or visiting www.signature-theatre.org. Signature is offering a special “20 Seats for \$20” ticket deal for every performance. At Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington.

FEB. 9 TO MARCH 3

“**Genesis Reboot.**” Tickets are \$30. Presented by Synetic Theater. Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. At Crystal City Theater, 1800 South Bell St.

JUNE 1 TO 17

“**A Little Night Music.**” Presented by TAP. Auditions will take place in March. The director will cast 14 singing actors (five male, nine female), age ranging 14-70. Singing actors of diverse backgrounds are encouraged to audition. At the Mead Center for American Theater. Visit www.thearlingtonplayers.org.

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THROUGH FEB. 26

Love, Politics & Scrabble. The Games People Play, juried art exhibit at Del Ray Artisans, inspired by the games people play throughout life. This juried show explores the numerous games people play in life, whether power, Monopoly, manipulation, poker, Angry Birds, baseball, or gossip. The community is invited to 'get their game on' at Art Games on Feb. 10 and Game Talks on Feb. 25. The exhibit and Marketplace, with artful Valentine Cards, closes Feb 26. www.TheDelRayArtisans.org or 703-838-4827.

FEB. 11 THRU 19

Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Speckled Band. Feb. 11, 17 and 18 at 7:30 p.m. Feb. 12, 19 at 3 p.m. Presented by the Mount Vernon Community Children's Theater. At Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Tickets: \$10 available at the door only. Visit www.MVCCT.org.

THURSDAY/FEB. 16

Beverly Hills Garden Club. 10 a.m. to noon. Meets in the Fellowship Hall of Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2701 Cameron Mills Road, Alexandria. The program will be "Garden Therapy" and members will be creating small floral designs to donate to Goodwin House. Supplies will be provided and a light lunch will be served. Beverly Hills Garden Club meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at 10 a.m. at Westminster Presbyterian. All are welcome.

Plants and Pollinators: A Perfect Partnership. 7:30 p.m. Laura Beaty, VNPS Potowmack Chapter propagation chair will present a slide lecture that will feature the bloom sequence of local natives and highlight their

importance to local pollinators. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Call 703-642-5173.

FRIDAY/FEB. 17

Open House. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Visit West Potomac Academy's career and technical education classes; meet with instructors; talk with students; become a business partner. At West Potomac Academy, 6500 Quander Road, Alexandria. Call 703-718-2750.

Artist Trading Card Night. 7 to 9 p.m. Make and swap artist trading cards from playing cards. Led by Theresa Kulstald. Refreshments. Free. Adults 18-plus. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue. www.TheDelRayArtisans.org

A Celebration of Charles Dickens with Stephen Mead.

7 p.m. Acted from memory and brought to life, the scenes to be performed are: The hilarious "Mr. Bob Sawyer's Party" - from The Pickwick Papers; The gruesome "Murder of Nancy" - from Oliver Twist; and the heart-warming "Nicholas and Smike at the Yorkshire School" - from Nicholas Nickleby. At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-0035 or visit nvfaa.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 18

Colonial Tea. 2 to 4 p.m. The tea will be followed by a Living History program featuring a Fashion Show of 18th Century Clothing and a Presentation on Deportment. Presented by the Historic Pohick Church Docent Guild. Tickets are \$25/adults; \$10/children. At Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton.

Mardi Gras Fundraiser. 7:30 to 10 p.m. The Mount Vernon District Democratic Committee sponsors this event to raise funds to elect Democrats



SUNDAY/FEB. 19

Singer-songwriter Bob Franke. 7 p.m. Tickets are \$18/general; \$15/advance. The workshop (\$60 general, discounts are available) will be held Saturday, Feb. 18, from 1:30 to 4 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 19, from 2 to 4:30 p.m. At Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria. Visit www.focusmusic.org or 703-501-6061.

in the Mount Vernon District. At Don Beyer Volvo, 7416 Richmond Highway, Alexandria.

George Washington Birthnight

Banquet and Ball. 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. The evening includes a three-course 18th-century banquet by Gadsby's Tavern Restaurant, English country dancing, toasts, a special 18th-

century style dessert collation, and character re-enactors - including General and Mrs. Washington. "After-five" attire is encouraged; period costumes are optional. Tickets are \$100/person; \$50/ball only. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street in Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-746-4242.

The Marsh in Winter. 1 to 3 p.m. Free. A nature walk at the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, led by Martin Ogle, Chief Naturalist at Potomac Overlook Regional Park. Will discuss winter tree and plant identification, look for ducks, geese and eagles, and examine winter marsh ecology. Meet at 1 p.m. at the entrance to the Haul Road (the walking path into DMWP), just south of the Belle Haven parking lot. Call 703-329-1748 or visit www.fodm.org.

Virginia Grand Military Band. 8 p.m. A Salute to Karl L. King and Leonard B. Smith. Admission is \$20. At the Rebecca S. Wilburn auditorium at Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. Call 703-426-4777 or visit www.vgmb.com.

FEB. 18 AND 19

Meet the Critters. 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Petco Store's National Adoption Weekend featuring dog, cat and rabbit events at the Petco Store in Alexandria at 6612 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Call 703-660-1300. Visit www.petco.com.

Musician Nils Lofgren. At the Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., in Alexandria.

SUNDAY/FEB. 19

Marty Nau Quartet. 10:55 a.m. Part of Worshipful Jazz Sunday at Heritage

Presbyterian Church. Always held prior to Lent, this is a community favorite that features non-traditional worship with jazz and gospel music. Heritage Presbyterian is located at 8503 Ft. Hunt Road, 703-360-9546, www.heritagechurchva.org.

Barbershop Harmony Concert. 3 p.m. Free, offering taken for United Community Ministries. In classic barbershop style, the 40-member Harmony Heritage Singers do favorite songs from days gone by such as "Delta Dawn" and the Beach Boys hit, "Barbara Ann." In honor of Presidents Day, there will be patriotic music, including "America" and "Battle Hymn of the Republic." The men's chorus, also known as the Mount Vernon Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, presents over 25 performances a year in the Washington area. At Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria 22307. Call 703-765-4779. Email brandtron@verizon.net.

Baroque to Jazz. 4 p.m. Virginia Chamber Orchestra's Winter Concert. Featuring Grieg's Holberg Suite, selections from Handel to Ellington. Tickets are \$20/adults; \$18/seniors. At the Ernst Community Cultural Center, NVCC Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Call 703-758-0179.

"Hail to the Chief." 2 p.m. Presented by the U.S. Marine Band. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, Northern Virginia Community College, 3001 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria. Call 703-845-6156 or www.schlesingercenter.com.

Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic. 3 p.m. Admission is \$20. Conducted by U.S. James, presenting Cesar Franck's Symphony SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 17



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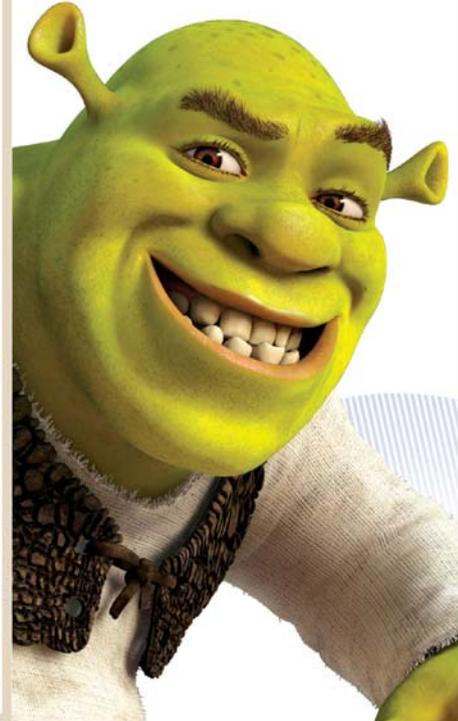
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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 16

in D minor, The Washington Saxophone Quartet in Bob Mintzer's Rhythm of the Americas, Composition Competition Finalist Johathan Blumhofer's Diversions, and Haskell Small's Scraps. At Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Rd., Alexandria. Call 703-799-8229 or visit www.wmpamusic.org.

Singer-songwriter Bob Franke. 7 p.m. Tickets are \$18/general; \$15/advance. The workshop (\$60 general, discounts are available) will be held Saturday, Feb. 18, from 1:30 to 4 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 19, from 2 to 4:30 p.m. At Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beaugard St., Alexandria. Visit www.focusmusic.org or 703-501-6061.

Blood for Blackie Blood Drive. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. In memory of Blackie Davis. At Crowne Plaza in Old Town.

MONDAY/FEB. 20

Tour Christ Church. Between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Docents will be on hand to answer questions and to provide tours of the church which was completed in 1773. George Washington was the first president to worship at Christ Church. The pew that belonged to his family is in its original condition and is still in use. At 118 N. Washington St. in Alexandria. Contact Linda Dienno at ldienno@ccalex.org or 703-778-4928.

Free Foreclosure Prevention Clinics. Housing Counseling Services will host Foreclosure Prevention Clinics during the month of February. Clinics are at 12 p.m. in Conference Room 3 of the City of Alexandria Office of Housing, 421 King Street, Suite 200, Alexandria. To register, call 202-667-7006.

Free Tour of Carlyle House. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission. Celebrate George Washington's 280th birthday in Old Town Alexandria. Enjoy the annual George Washington parade and tour the Carlyle House. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-549-2997 or e-mail: carlyle@nvrpa.org

TUESDAY/FEB. 21

History of Big Band Music and its Practitioners. 7:30 p.m. Free. The NOVA Alexandria Music Department will be hosting the Bohemian Caverns Jazz Orchestra. At NVCC, Alexandria campus, Schlesinger Concert Hall, 3001 N. Beaugard St., Alexandria. Visit www.bohemiancavernsjazzorchestra.com

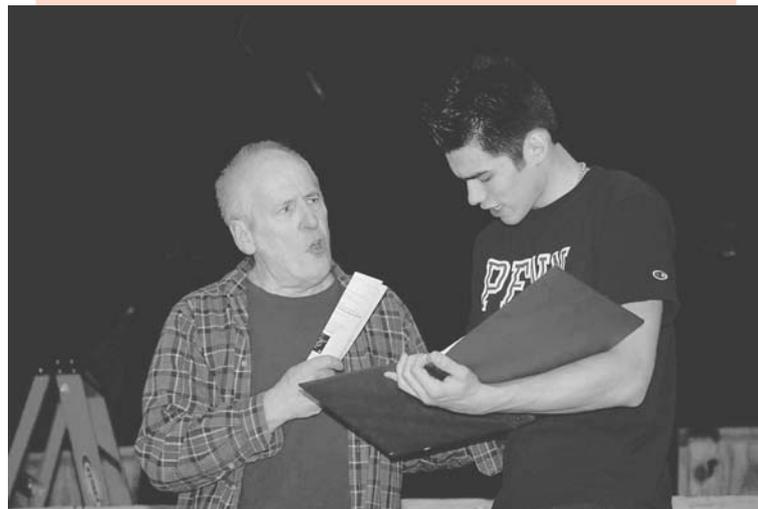
Mount Vernon Genealogical Society. 1 p.m. Speaker Charles Mason will discuss, "Mapping the Neighborhoods to Understand Our Ancestors' Lives." At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Call Phyllis Kelley at 703-660-6969 or publicity@mvgenealogy.org.

BPAC Meeting. 7 to 9 p.m. The Alexandria Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) will meet at the Durant Center, 1605 Cameron St., Alexandria. Agenda includes the election of BPAC officers, Beaugard Small Area Plan, community bicycle rides, Bicycle-Friendly Community Project, Bike to School Day (May 9), Bike to Work Day (May 18), and more.

Unknown No Longer Workshop. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Free. Attend a workshop to learn how to use Unknown No Longer: A Virginia Slave Name Database. This free database is the latest step by the Virginia Historical Society to increase access to its varied collections relating to Virginians of African descent. Dr. Lauranett Lee, curator of African American History, and Paige Newman, assistant archivist, will highlight some of their research findings and provide tips on how to navigate the database. Reservations are required. At the Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum. Call 804-340-2280, or email pnewman@vahistorical.org.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 22

DJ Dance Party. 9 to 11 p.m. Cost is \$6. www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



The Nurse with Romeo (Dave Adler and Alex Wong).

MARCH 2 TO 18

"Romeo and Juliet." Sponsored by Aldersgate Church Community Theater. Performances are March 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17 Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; also matinees on March 4, 11, 18 at 2 p.m. Discount tickets purchased online at www.acctonline.org are adults \$14 and youth/senior \$11. Tickets purchased at the door are adults \$15 and youth/senior \$12. All shows take place in Wesley Hall at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 1301 Collingwood Rd. Alexandria. Visit www.acctonline.org or 703-660-2611. Taking on the role of Romeo is Alex Wong, 18, of West Potomac High School. Accompanying him are his fellow WPHS Theatre Arts classmates Joe Quinn and Eddie Perez. Other West Potomac students involved off stage are Eliza Lore (Assistant Director), Morgan Peasley (videography), Margie Woods (videography), Jessica Moreno (costumes) and Hannah Lau (lights). Rounding out the West Potomac contingency is the school's English Department Head, and Shakespeare Studies teacher, Colin O'Grady, who plays the role of Prince Escalus at selected performances.

With DJ Dabe Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

Ash Wednesday Services. 7:30 a.m., noon, 5 p.m., and with choir at 7:30 p.m. At St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 South Pitt St., Old Town Alexandria. Contact St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Grant Hellmers, Organist-Choirmaster, at 703-549-3312, grant@stpaulsalexandria.com.

Alexandria PTA Council Summer Camp Fair. 5:30 to 8 p.m. Some 50 exhibitors will represent a wide range of campus, including day and overnight campus. At the cafeteria of TC Williams Minnie Howard Campus, 3801 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria. Contact Marianne Hetzer at alexptaccamp@comcast.net.

Author Discussion. 7 p.m. Kenneth T. Walsh discusses his book, *Family of Freedom: Presidents and African-Americans in the White House*. At Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-1702.

"Ask the Expert" Lecture. 6:30 p.m. Free. Join Nitin Goyal, MD, on "Osteoarthritis and the Latest Techniques in Joint Replacement". At Inova Mount Vernon Hospital. Call 1-855-My-Inova (694-6682) or visit inova.org/asktheexpert to register.

THURSDAY/FEB. 23

Life Line Screening. Get screened to reduce your risk of having a stroke or bone fracture. Packages start at \$149. At the YMCA of Alexandria, 420 East Monroe Ave., Alexandria. Call 1-877-237-1287 or visit www.lifelinescreening.com. Pre-registration is required.

AAUW Lecture. 7 p.m. Speaker Holly Kearn, who works as a program manager for AAUW in the Legal Advocacy Fund department, will talk about sexual harassment at school and on the streets. At the Mt. Vernon Government Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Alexandria.

Colonial Republican Women's Club. 6:30 to 9 p.m. Meets at the Virginia Hills Administration Center (Old Virginia Hills School), 6520 Diana Lane, Alexandria. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., the meeting 7 - 9 p.m. Contact Debbie at 703-768-1934 or dbodlander@hotmail.com.

Brain Health and Memory Tips.

Noon. Susan Wrantik, MS, will present

"Save Your Memory and Your Mind, 7 Steps to Better Brain Health." A luncheon is open to the public with advance reservations. Attendance is free and seating is limited. For information or reservations, call 1-877-254-9840. At The Fountains at Washington House, 5100 Fillmore Ave., Alexandria.

FRIDAY/FEB. 24

Variety Show. 6 to 9 p.m. Free. The show will feature The Arya International Dance Academy, Batala DC, Capoeira Candeias and Salsa Vive. There will also be a food-tasting extravaganza. At Carl Sandburg Middle School.

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Civil War Recruiting Day. From 1 to 4 p.m. Soldiers and civilians of the 3rd U.S. Regular Infantry, Company K, will talk about a soldier's uniform and equipment, demonstrate drills and explain the roles of military and civilian reenactors. At Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, 4301 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Visit www.fortward.org or call 703-746-4848.

"Lincoln's War at Washington's Boyhood Home." 10 a.m. Archaeologist Paul Nasca presents a free Java Jolt lecture co-sponsored by Friends of Alexandria. Reservations are requested, and can be made by emailing archaeology@alexandriava.gov or calling 703-746-4399. At the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 North Union St., #327, Alexandria.

A Cappella Contest. 7:30 p.m. 28th Mid-Atlantic Regional Harmony Sweeps "A Cappella" Festival and Competition. Groups specializing in Pop, Rock, Jazz, Gospel, Beat Box, Doo Wop, Barbershop and Comic. Visit www.harmony-sweepstakes.com/dc.html. At The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave.,

Book Lovers Love Music and Food. 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Friends of the Beatley Central Library will hold a "Book Lovers Love Music and Food" CD and Cook Book Sale at the Charles E. Beatley, Jr., Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Call 703-746-1742 or www.alexandria.lib.va.us.

Scholarship applications for 2012 graduating high school seniors in Lee and Mount Vernon Districts, pursuing further education in a business related field, are now available. Scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$2,000 each.

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MUSIC

7 A Cappella Groups to Compete



Loose Interpretations: Jen Kipley, Erin Byram, Stacia Woodcock, Willa Cochran, Heather Glotzer, Reynetta Sampson, Laura Campbell, Jenn Wexler.



TBD: Thomas Kraus, Noah Van Gilder, Scipio Garling, Chris Clark, Terry Reynolds, Jeremy Richardson, Josh Roots and Ken Rub.



Keystone: Joe Gooch, Amy Howe, Tom West, Jennifer Steinberg, Josh Schragger and Jamie Howe.



De Capo: Ryan Griffith, Tony Colosimo, Wayne Adams and Joe Sawyer.



Glorious: Eugene Glato, Barry Fleming, John Elliott, Wilson Cleary and Michael Lemon.



GQ: Katie Gillis, Katie Macdonald, Amanda McNutt and Ali Hauger.



Epic: Christina Lewellen, Anne Albright, Shana Oshiro and Kristina Adams.

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Harmony Sweeps "A Cappella" competition. 5 p.m. doors open; 7:30 p.m. At The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave, Alexandria. Visit www.harmony-sweepstakes.com/dc.html

Seven A Cappella groups, three of them local to the area, will compete at the Birchmere on Saturday, Feb 25, at the region's premier A Cappella event: the Mid-Atlantic Regional Harmony Sweeps A Cappella Festival Competition.

Groups competing this year will be: Epic, Faithful, Glorious, GQ, Keystone, Loose Interpretations, and TBD. They come from a variety of backgrounds but all share one common bond — a love of A Cappella music. They include music teachers, jazz singers, government workers, a farmer, church musicians, scientists and engineers, New Yorkers, former members of college A Cappella groups, and a former Miss Maryland.

Three of the competing groups are local:

- ❖ Epic — Four fun-loving young ladies with backgrounds ranging from barbershop, jazz and opera, who love harmony. They are members of Harmony, Inc, an international organization of women barbershop harmony singers;

- ❖ Faithful — A composite of richly talented musicians coming together from Richmond and D.C., from diverse churches and spiritual persuasions. They sing gospel music with a jazz influence; and

- ❖ TBD — A contemporary A Cappella group styled after professional A Cappella groups such as Rockapella and Da Vinci's Notebook. They are members of Alexandria's award-winning barbershop chorus, The Harmonizers, but as TBD perform a wide array of genres from traditional A Cappella standards to current radio hits.

This year's show will be hosted by last year's regional and national champions, Da Capo — a men's Quartet from the D.C. area that got together to help their lead singer propose to his girlfriend, and have been winning awards ever since including the national Harmony Sweepstakes title last year. They have over 50 years of singing experience between them. In addition to introducing the competitors, Da Capo will give a showcase performance.

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SCHOOLS



The West Potomac Varsity Dance Team at Kings Dominion competition in 2011.

Community Supports 'Road to Nationals'

Additional support critical as team works to raise final \$6,000.

Thanks to an outpouring of support from the Fort Hunt Community, the West Potomac Varsity Dance Team has raised almost 75 percent of their fundraising goal to pay for the team's trip to the National Dance Alliance (NDA) National Championship in Orlando, Fla. next month.

The team needs \$6,000 more to fund the trip to NDA, where it will compete in two dance categories against 88 teams from across the country.

"We are so fortunate to have such broad support from the community," said West Potomac Varsity Dance Team Coach Gennifer Difilippo. "From the individual donations, to the Fort Hunt basketball players and their families who have bought donuts from us on Saturday mornings, to our generous business sponsors, we are very

grateful."

To date, business sponsors include: Outback Steak House; Body and Sol; Rorer's Produce; Hollin Hall Automotive; Primos; Skopps Chiropractic; Hughes Orthodontics; Merkli, Inc.; Ft. Hunt Animal Hospital; Aitcheson Real Estate; Occasionally Cakes; Heritage Presbyterian Church; Four Sales Ltd.; Zenergy Yoga, and Fort Hunt Sportsman Club.

The team will hold a community-wide pep rally in the West Potomac Gym on Sunday, Feb. 26 at 5:30 p.m. The Varsity Dance Team will perform its two competition dances, the JV Team will perform its first place kick and pom numbers, and the Sandburg Middle School Dance Team will also perform. The dance team invites all sponsors to attend and be recognized for their support. The event is open to the entire community.

All donations are welcome and checks can be made payable to West Potomac Athletic Boosters "WABC." In the memo section write "Road to Nationals" and mail to: Laura Bavaria, President Dance Team Boosters, 3419 Ramsgate Terrace, Alexandria VA 22309.

Browne Wins First Place in State Competition

The Browne Academy eighth grade placed first in the Middle School "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" state competition on Saturday, Feb. 11.

The competition took place in the 4th District Courthouse in Richmond.

Browne Academy competed against 11 other teams representing each congressional district from across the state. Coached by their history teacher, William Marshall Stribling, the team participated in mock congressional hearings testing their working knowledge of the U.S. Constitution.

On Jan. 12, Browne Academy won the 8th District "We the People" competition, mak-

ing them eligible to compete in the state competition.

"We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" is a competition in which high school and middle school students take part in a mock congressional hearings that include four minutes of prepared testimony and six minutes of questions and answers. Subjects include historical, political, and Constitutional issues.

This is the third year that Browne Academy has finished in the top five. Browne Academy earned second place in 2010 and fifth place in 2011.

Browne Academy is a co-ed preschool through eighth grade independent school located in Alexandria.

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-Dean Acheson

21 Announcements **21 Announcements**



Barbara Jean Parkinson, age 67
of Sterling, VA, died February 7, 2012 at her residence. Born on September 17, 1944 in New York she was the daughter of the late Charles and Elizabeth Lundy. Ms. Parkinson was a member of Cornerstone Chapel in Leesburg, VA. Barbara attended Michigan State University where she received her Bachelor's Degree in Music. During her high school years she was a member of the singing group known as The Jill's. She worked for Connection Newspapers for many years. Barbara enjoyed and loved spending time with her grandchildren and doing crafts with them.

She is survived by her son Mark(Rachel) Parkinson of Purcellville, VA; daughter Jennifer(Jay) Daughtry of Sterling, VA; brother Wayne Lundy of Loveland, OH; and five grandchildren.

A graveside service was held on Friday, February 10, 2012 at 11:00 a.m. Ebenezer Cemetery, Round Hill, VA with Pastor Mike Emerson officiating.

Memorial contributions can be sent to the Cornerstone Chapel at www.cornerstone-chapel.net.

Please visit www.hallfh.com to express online condolences to the family.

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Mount Vernon's Floyd Captures Second Region Title

Majors finish fourth at region wrestling championships.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

Last season, Dusty Floyd did what was necessary to earn the distinction of being the top 171-pound wrestler in the Northern Region. He worked hard to reach the tournament finals at Fairfax High School for his shot at being No. 1. But when it came time for the Mount Vernon grappler to test his skills in a pressure-packed matchup for the title, Floyd received a free pass to a championship as his opponent was unable to compete due to injury.

Now a senior, Floyd entered the 2012 Northern Region championships with an undefeated record and the drive to win a second title. Except this time, Centreville's Ryan Sepulveda, the Concorde District champion and owner of a 36-1 record, was there to greet him in the 170-pound final.

Sepulveda challenged Floyd and held a 1-0 lead midway through the third period. But Floyd would not be denied as he tied the score with an escape and produced the winning points with a takedown in the final minute. Fans on both sides of the gym at Hayfield Secondary School chanted "Let's go Dusty!" as Floyd won a 3-1 decision on Feb. 11.

SPORTS BRIEFS

WP Boys End Season in Districts

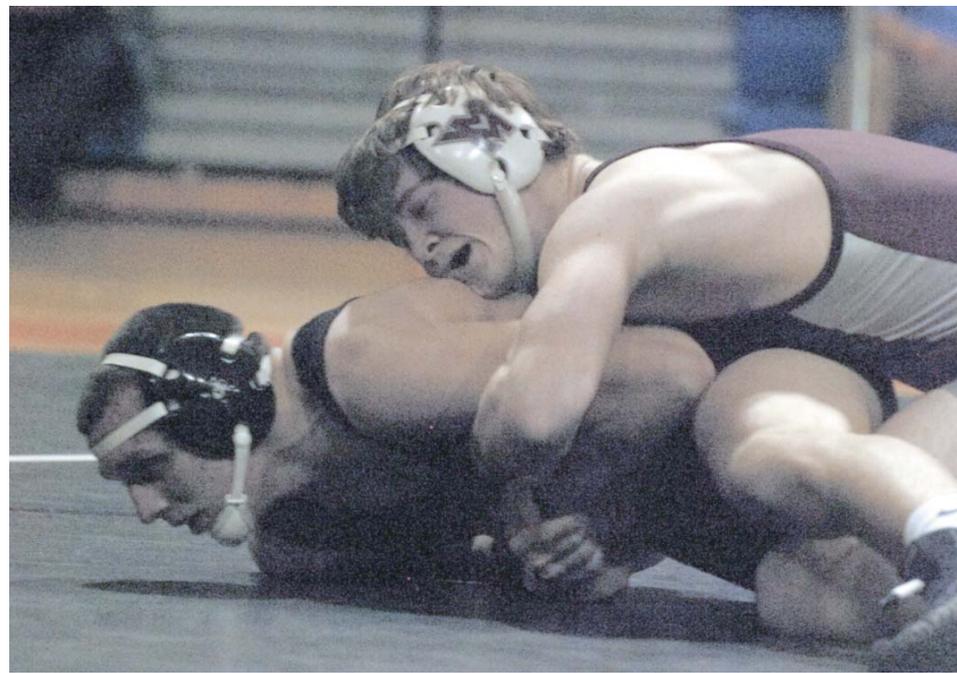
The West Potomac boys' basketball team lost to T.C. Williams 57-42 in the opening round of the Patriot District tournament on Feb. 14 at The Garden, ending its season.

West Potomac knocked off TC on its home floor on Dec. 13, when a buzzer-beating tip-in by Bryant Fultz gave the Wolverines a 51-50 victory. West Potomac led 10-7 at the end of Tuesday's first quarter, but there would be no late-game heroics to save the Wolverines.

Fultz led West Potomac with 12 points and 10 rebounds. Randall Brobby scored 11 points for the Wolverines and Demornay Pierson-El added seven.

Led by head coach David Houston, West Potomac finished with 14 victories, including a 55-50 home win against Lake Braddock on Jan. 17 when the Bruins were undefeated in the Patriot District. West Potomac became only the second Northern Region team since 2005 to win on T.C. Williams' home floor and the Wolverines won their second consecutive George Long Holiday Tournament title.

West Potomac will lose seniors Fultz, Brobby, Tamaric Wilson, Todd Ferri and Joseph Marinelli.



Mount Vernon senior Dusty Floyd, top, captured the 170-pound Northern Region wrestling championship on Feb. 11 at Hayfield Secondary School.

Victory in the championship match certainly didn't come as easily for Floyd as it did the previous year — which is exactly why the Majors' all-time leader in wins enjoyed this one even more.

"It means a lot," Floyd said. "It was really cool to be able to [compete] and win. It feels better than last year. Last year, I had a good match in the semis against a tough kid, but it was great to do it in the finals here."

Three of Floyd's four victories at regionals came against opponents from the Concorde

"Last year, I had a good match in the semis against a tough kid, but it was great to do it in the finals here."

— Mount Vernon wrestler Dusty Floyd

District, arguably the toughest in the region. The Concorde produced three of the top eight teams at the tournament, including

103-12 on Jan. 12 and 69-21 on Feb. 7.

The top-seeded Majors faced No. 4 Washington-Lee in the semifinals on Feb. 14. Results of the game were not available prior to the Gazette's deadline. The district championship game is scheduled for Feb. 17.

West Potomac Girls Lose to TC

The West Potomac girls' basketball team ended its season with a 60-25 loss at T.C. Williams on Feb. 14 during the opening round of the Patriot District tournament.

Sophomore Rasheika Gregory led the Wolverines with 10 points. Senior Caroline Kelly grabbed nine rebounds.

The Wolverines will lose seniors Kelly, Melanie Boykin, Georgia McBride, Sofie McMullen and Kenyatta Toviessi.

WP's Ian Thompson Qualifies for States

West Potomac's Ian Thompson qualified for states with a fourth-place finish in the 113-pound bracket at the Northern Region wrestling championships on Feb. 11 at Hayfield Secondary School.

Thompson was one of seven Wolverines

champion Westfield and runner-up Robinson.

"He wanted an exclamation point on his career in the regionals," Mount Vernon head coach Anthony McDuffie said about Floyd. "He wrestled a really good kid [Sepulveda], too. We're really glad that it came to that."

Floyd's performance helped Mount Vernon finish fourth in the team standings with a score of 126.5, three points behind third-place Annandale. Westfield totaled 193 points, followed by Robinson's 174.5. The Majors finished more than 90 points ahead of the nearest National District competitors, Edison and Yorktown, which finished tied for 18th with a score of 36.

Mount Vernon's Cody Marino placed second in the 126-pound bracket, falling to Annandale's Dane Harlowe in the final. Nathan Haro finished runner-up to Annandale's Ali Ali Musa in the 220-pound division, and 182-pounder Xavier Craig qualified for states with a fourth-place finish.

The state championships will be held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18 at Robinson Secondary School. Floyd finished fifth last season and said he enters states this year with a different outlook.

"Last year I was unranked going into states. I felt like I was underrated and I was going there with something to prove," Floyd said. "I feel like now people know who I am more and people are going to be going hard after me. ... Last year I was hoping to place. This year I'm planning to win."

Mount Vernon Boys End Season

The Mount Vernon boys' basketball team lost to Wakefield 52-49 on Feb. 13 in the opening round of the National District tournament, ending its season.

The Majors will be losing seniors William Dotson, Jordan Harris, Johnnie Jackson, Shaye Michael Murrell, Justin Tasby and A.J. Tracey.

Mount Vernon Girls Secure Regional Berth

The Mount Vernon girls' basketball team defeated Stuart 108-13 on Feb. 13 in the opening round of the National District tournament, securing a berth in the Northern Region tournament.

Sophomore Samantha Porter scored 19 of her 25 points in the first quarter. Lafatima Gray scored 15 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, Kelly Loftus scored 14 points, and Elizabeth Owusuwaa and Tiffany Webster each added 13.

Mount Vernon defeated winless Stuart



West Potomac senior Randall Brobby scored 11 points against T.C. Williams on Feb. 14 during the opening round of the Patriot District tournament.

to compete at regionals. Andrew Sutherland placed fifth at 152 pounds and Nick Africano finished sixth at 170.

Last season, West Potomac sent four wrestlers to regionals and Thompson qualified for states.

The state championships will be held Friday and Saturday, Feb. 17-18 at Robinson Secondary School.

Bipartisan Transportation Progress and a Week of Controversy

BY SCOTT A. SUROVELL
STATE DELEGATE (D-44)



This week brings the midpoint of the General Assembly Session and “Cross-over Day” – the day that the House and Senate must finish all work on bills originating from their own chambers.

After three years of work, my legislation to “redistricting” the Commonwealth Transportation Board (“CTB”) passed the House of Delegates. The CTB decides where transportation dollars are spent. There are nine commissioners representing districts derived from the congressional districts in 1930. Today, Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads and Richmond have 64.95 percent of Virginia’s population and three of nine regional votes. The other six districts represent 35.05 percent of the state and have six of nine regional votes. My bill requires representation based on current congressional districts.

This year, my bill was introduced by several Republican delegates and two state senators. On Monday, Del. Tom Rust’s ver-

sion of which I was Chief Co-Sponsor passed the House of Delegates on a 51-47 vote including 27 Republicans and 24 Democrats. The bill will move on to the Senate where a similar version was tabled for studying. I will be lobbying members over the next two weeks to see if we can move it through.

Historically, Virginia Northern Virginia worked with Southside and Southwest on transportation. That alliance is dead. This was the first time that Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Richmond stood together on transportation and it lays the groundwork for future cooperation. My Republican colleagues Del. Tom Rust from Herndon and Del. Chris Peace of Hanover were critical partners in the effort.

The rest of our week was spent on extremely divisive legislation. The House passed legislation mandating ultrasounds within 24 hours of an abortion, including invasive vaginal ultrasounds that are required in early pregnancies. We passed legislation defining human life as beginning at conception. Our caucus attempted to add a contraception exception, but this was re-

jected by the majority on a 64-34 vote. I voted against all of this legislation.

The House passed legislation expanding the death penalty, requiring police officers to inquire into someone’s place of birth upon arrest, prohibit public access to concealed weapon applications, and expand Virginia’s Castle Doctrine to allow someone to kill a person “unlawfully” in a “dwelling” if they feared any injury. For 400 years, Virginia Law has required one to fear death before being able to repel a person with deadly force. I gave a floor speech describing my concerns about the expansion of the Castle Doctrine you can watch on my website and I voted against all of this legislation.

The House passed the “Tim Tebow” Law allowing homeschooled children to play high school sports. I voted against this bill for several reasons. First, Fairfax County has grading and disciplinary policies that do not apply to homeschooled kids. A double standard would not be fair. Second, I do not view public schools as an a la carte system. Allowing people to pick and choose government services plays chaos with planning and extra-curricular activities are about a lot more than simply sports.

We passed legislation giving corporations tax credits for contributions to organiza-

tions that provide private school scholarships to children eligible for free and reduced lunches. I believe this violates the Constitution of Virginia’s prohibition on state support of private schools, contributions to charities, and support of religious education. I also do not see why existing charitable tax deductions are not sufficient to incentivize contributions today or why the Government should specifically preference contributions to private schools for turbo-charged tax status over other worthy causes. I am sure if asked, every charity on Route 1 could make the case that they deserve a tax credit as well.

The coming weeks will shift the focus to bills from the Senate and the State Budget. We are still facing a \$1 billion budget shortfall and there is little agreement about what to cut, plus the Lieutenant Governor cannot vote to break a tie on the budget.

I have now received over 500 responses to my survey. Please keep them coming and please continue the feedback on legislation this session. I have written over 280 articles like this on my blog – The Dixie Pig – at scotturovell.blogspot.com, you can keep up on my website, or send me email at scotturovell@gmail.com.

It is an honor to serve as your state delegate.

RICHMOND REPORT

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 10

without compromise, to articulate and exemplify the kind of complete respect for principled conservatism to which bona fide American statesmanship rightly and justly corresponds.

Joseph A. Glean

Former candidate for the Virginia House of Delegates

Unfulfilled Master Plan

To the Editor:

Susan Palmer [“Valued Local Park,” The Gazette, Feb. 9-15, 2012] responded to my suggestion that the Lamond Park, now named after former Mount Vernon Park Commissioner Gil McCutcheon be sold and the proceeds be used to fund creation of the proposed Park at North Hill. Ms. Palmer stated that she walks through McCutcheon Park “almost everyday” and encounters others doing so as well. Based upon those assertions, she disagrees with my suggestion and states that the McCutcheon Park is, in fact, being used “by the community it was meant to serve.” I beg to differ. Ms. Palmer is entitled to her opinion, and I am fully aware it is unlikely the Park Authority will sell the McCutcheon Park. However, at the same time, the facts are enlightening.

The former Lamond property, 17.9 acres in size, was acquired by the Park Authority on Feb. 4, 2000. The land wasn’t donated to the Park Authority. Rather, the Park Authority paid \$4.6 million for it. After this acquisition, the master plan was approved on July 31, 2002, almost 10 years ago. Since that approval, virtually nothing has been

done to enact the master plan for this park. According to the master plan which is accessible at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gmp/lamondGMP.pdf>, the former Lamond residence was supposed to be restored and renovated with facilities provided to create an upscale private and corporate event venue. The gravel entrance road off Fort Hunt Road was supposed to be paved and widened and a second entrance road was supposed to be established at Burtonwood Drive. A paved parking area in front of and to the north of the residence is supposed to be created to accommodate 25 to 30 parking spaces. The design of the parking is supposed to allow a split to serve both entrances to the park. Additionally, 50 more spaces are supposed to be provided for periods of peak public use.

On the western edge of the property, a pedestrian/bicycle trail (8’ wide asphalt) is supposed to be provided along Fort Hunt Road. A picnic area with a small shelter structure is supposed to be provided. Additional features include a playground area, a stand-alone restroom structure, and a tennis court. I visited this beautiful property this week — the only improvements I observed are a nice playground and a couple of picnic tables. The only entrance on Fort Hunt Road has a sign forbidding motorized vehicles, requiring visitors to walk or bike up an extremely long driveway. There is little if any nearby parking, making access difficult since the on site parking specified in the master plan hasn’t been developed.

The park is intended to serve community members within a one and one-half mile aerial radius from the center of the park. That area includes almost 23,000 residents, about 1/5 the population of the entire

Mount Vernon District.

Given the above excerpts from the master plan, it is clear that McCutcheon Park is falling well short of satisfying the objectives for which taxpayers invested \$4.6 million. Wouldn’t it be great if every subdivision like Villamay had an 18-acre park nearby, paid for by the taxpayers for them to use as a de facto private enclave? The County should either fulfill its obligation to the taxpayers who purchased McCutcheon Park at great expense or find a way to use that money elsewhere.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

Elections for Family And Community

To the Editor:

We need effective, sustainable solutions. When more than 100 million Americans are living in poverty, struggling to keep their homes, when millions of Americans are unemployed and others have given up, we need jobs.

Many establishment politicians have made themselves icons for insularity, arrogance and corruption offering nothing or little to help us move forward in overcoming the challenges confronting our community and our nation.

Apparently, all three Democratic candidates for Virginia’s 8th congressional district agree Jim Moran’s insider trading was unethical. The difference: I supported Louise Slaughter’s proposal six years ago when she first proposed the STOCK Act. Moran took no action until he was exposed on 60 Minutes.

Moran’s legacy remains the record of an elitist. He voted against the Progressive Caucus to limit bankruptcy remedies for people in 2005, then to bail out Wall Street banks in 2008. He obviously is in favor of Wall Street as opposed to ordinary Americans.

I am an ordinary American, a concerned neighbor who cares, listens and takes responsible action. For over 20 years I have served on state, regional and local public committees as well as nonprofit boards. I want great things for our community and our nation. That’s why I seek to serve in Congress.

This election is about you, your family and our community. Do you want universal health care with embedded choice and competition positioning patients and doctors as the central relationship in medicine? A back-up plan if the Supreme Court goes the wrong way in reviewing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act?

Do you want greater job creation and quicker economic growth? Do you want to instill confidence in our nation’s future to engage investors and consumers in expanding opportunity? Do you want to double our GDP in the next 10 years?

In 2010 I wrote a plan for positive action. It remains the only comprehensive economic and fiscal plan Moran sent to the Congressional Budget Office for analysis in his time, over 20 years, on Capitol Hill.

The plan summary is available along with Moran’s cover letter at www.VA8.com for your review.

A. Will Radle, Jr.
Democratic VA-8 Candidate

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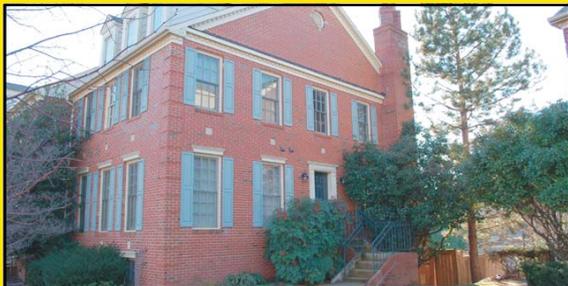
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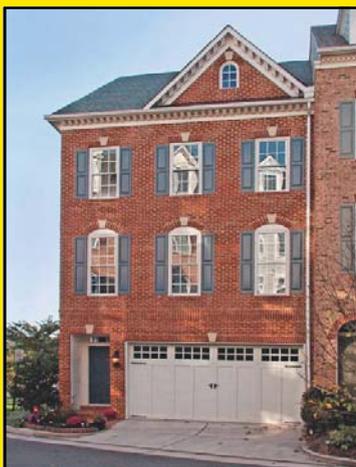
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