Bethlehem Baptist Church Defies Earthquake Damage

Sanctuary is pronounced safe.

Feb. 19 was a glory day for the pastor and congregation of Bethlehem Baptist Church, a historic congregation on Fordson Road in Gum Springs dating to 1863.

On this sunny Sunday morning the congregation marched in triumph back into their 900-seat sanctuary which they’d been unable to use since the magnitude 5.8 earthquake of Aug. 23. The towering upright wood-laminate beams that hold up Bethlehem’s soaring cathedral-like ceiling had been cracked. That fateful Tuesday afternoon in August, Bethlehem joined the list of damaged significant Washington-area structures including the Washington Monument and the National Cathedral.

Not knowing if the roof was in danger of collapse was a heavy emotional weight for Rev. Dr. Darrell K. White, Bethlehem’s pastor since 1999.

“It was certainly a setback not knowing whether we’d be able to worship in the sanctuary,” he said. “If the beams had to be replaced we’d be looking at replacing the roof. This would have been a major building enterprise we would have had to embark upon.” Jeopardized were building plans to construct a large education and conference center adjoining the church.

The cracks were not long, about 16 inches in length, but one penetrated an entire beam. As a precaution, while the trustees launched an evaluation of any possible danger, the congregation worshipped across the hall in the multipurpose room. The trustees were guided by trustee secretary Joseph Bunton who’s experienced in architectural engineering.

Called in to conduct a visual inspection, the structural engineering firm Structural Engineering Solutions Inc. of Arlington recommended not using the sanctuary until a physical inspection could be made.

A second structural engineering company, Ronald R. Greene & Associates of Torrance, Calif. which specializes in seismic engineering, supported that recommendation.

The general contractor that built the church, RE Lee & Son of Charlottesville, was brought in to help. RE Lee was “very helpful,” said Bunton; they called in Dajon & Associates of Hackensack, N.J., who specialize in the repair of wood-laminate beams.

“A detailed structural analysis, the cracking was determined to not be structural,” Bunton said. At last, the sanctuary is pronounced safe.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALEXANDRIA/SEMINARY RIDGE</td>
<td>$1,150,000</td>
<td>Stately Seminary Ridge Colonial. This unique Seminary Ridge home has a two-story foyer and a curved staircase leading to four bedrooms and two remodeled baths. The great room addition off the renovated kitchen features walls of windows and skylights for plenty of light. The lower level is fully finished with a rec room, kitchenette, spa bath, and Jacuzzi tub. Sue Goodhart 703.362.2221 <a href="http://www.suegoodhart.com">www.suegoodhart.com</a> MLS ID: AX7774815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXANDRIA/DEL RAY</td>
<td>$899,000</td>
<td>Expansive Del Ray Farm House. Welcoming front porch to beautiful, large, four-bedroom, three-bath home. Hardwood floors on main and upper level. Open floor plan with extraordinary room sizes and high ceilings. Garage has upper level usable space. Landscaped flat fenced yard. Walkable to &quot;The Avenue&quot; and all Del Ray has to offer. Jen Walker 703.675.1566 <a href="http://www.jenwalker.com">www.jenwalker.com</a> MLS ID: AX7774199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA</td>
<td>$918,000</td>
<td>Waterford Perfected. Impeccable brick townhome in secluded cluster off South Union Street has three bedrooms with ensuite bath, a main level half-bath, and a family room overlooking the private landscaped garden. Four levels of hardwood floors, a fireplace on three levels, all with beautiful millwork, wainscoting, crown molding; a wall with bookcases and window seat, a kitchen with granite counters, cherry cabinets, Advantium OI equipment; all is bathed in the sophistication of fresh color and decor. Garage and off-street parking. Joanne Gunn 703.786.1586 <a href="http://www.joannegunn.com">www.joannegunn.com</a> MLS ID: AX7778339</td>
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<tr>
<td>ALEXANDRIA/DEL RAY</td>
<td>$750,000</td>
<td>Easy Living. Welcome home to this character filled Del Ray bungalow and enjoy easy entertaining, sun filled spaces, and one of the best locations in town! Wide front porch, good sized backyard with extensive landscaping, refinished hardwood floors, renovated kitchen, and baths. Elizabeth Lucchesi 703.808.5676 <a href="http://www.LizLake.com">www.LizLake.com</a> MLS ID: AX7775488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXANDRIA</td>
<td>$448,000</td>
<td>Home Sweet Home. This adorable Cape Cod is beautifully renovated and waiting for its proud new owner. The kitchen has abundant maple cabinetry and handsome Corian counters. There are wood floors throughout, a separate dining room with sliding glass doors open to an expansive private deck. Four lovely bedrooms, two full baths, all in a great location! Robin Arnold 703.966.5457 <a href="http://www.robinarnoldre.com">www.robinarnoldre.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXANDRIA</td>
<td>$339,900</td>
<td>Walk to Metro! Stylish Décor and designer touches are throughout this renovated three-level townhouse with two bedrooms and two and a half baths in South King Street. Kitchen has new cabinetry, granite counters with glass and subway tile backsplash and a pass thru to dining and living room. Custom light fixtures with dimmery and recessed lighting create atmosphere. Master bath has floating double sink vanity, tiled shower and sun tube. Private, fenced backyard with deck, and garden. Located close to Huntington Metro and I-495. Sandra Sperry 703.362.9899 Susan Craft 703.216.4561 <a href="http://www.sandrasperry.com">www.sandrasperry.com</a> MLS ID: FX7773824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALEXANDRIA/DEL RAY</td>
<td>$599,000</td>
<td>Bungalow Living in Exciting Del Ray! Came home and experience the charm this two-bedroom, one-bath home has to offer. Outdoor living on the wide front porch or backyard, finished attic level offers versatile work or yoga space. Elizabeth Lucchesi 703.808.5676 <a href="http://www.LizLake.com">www.LizLake.com</a> MLS ID: AX7770892</td>
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**Mount Vernon Gazette**

February 23-29, 2012

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An Eminent Choice

Voters to decide eminent domain as amendment passes General Assembly.

By Michael Lee Pope
The Gazette

This fall, voters across Virginia will be confronted with a hotly debated amendment to the Virginia Constitution that seeks to limit the ability of local governments to use the power of eminent domain. According to various sides of the debate, the measure would either be a disastrous move that would drastically increase the price of transportation projects, an empty measure that’s intended to appeal to voters or a bold way to prevent local governments from abusing the power of eminent domain.

“Voters tend to view eminent domain negatively,” said Jeff Skelley, political analyst with the Virginia Center for Politics. “So delegates and senators who voted for it probably just gave themselves a little more cover.”

The lopsided nature of support for the effort in the General Assembly certainly speaks to the political popularity of being seen as tough on eminent domain. The state Senate approved the amendment 23 to 17, and the House of Delegates passed the measure with an 80 to 18 vote. Essentially, the amendment would allow business owners to seek damages from local governments if they could prove that property taken under eminent domain resulted in a loss of profits or loss of access, the definitions of which are laid out in a separate bill now working its way through the General Assembly. Although many feared that the implementation could allow lawsuits for something as simple as removing a left turn lane, the legislation outlining how it would work is crafted very narrowly to focus on actual land being taken. Nevertheless, some say the final version would create a hardship for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

“It’s not as bad as it was, but it is still a very troublesome piece of legislation and should not have passed,” said state Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31), who voted against the amendment and the implementing legislation. “I think it’s going to be very challenging for VDOT to be able to acquire private right-of-way to put into public use without paying an incredibly disproportionate amount of money.”

The debate about eminent domain snapped into the public conscious back in 2005 when the U.S. Supreme Court issued a 5-4 decision in Kelo versus City of New London. The majority in that case ruled that the government taking of property from one private owner to give to another for economic development constitutes a permissible public use under the Fifth Amendment. That ruling created a massive backlash, including 2007 legislation in the Virginia General Assembly that defined “public use” in a way that narrowed how eminent domain could be used in the commonwealth.

“This is legislation that closed the Kelo loophole, but every year people come to Richmond and try to weaken it,” said John Taylor, president of the Virginia Institute for Public Policy. “That’s why a constitutional amendment is necessary.”

Taylor and other supporters began working years ago to set the pieces in place for a constitutional amendment to Virginia’s Constitution. Last year, the effort was given preliminary approval by the House and Senate. But because the way the amendment process works in Virginia, the text of the amendment had to be approved again the next year with an intervening election. Now that identical text of the amendment has been approved for a second time, the amendment is

See Domain, Page 7
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. 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. UCM’s Back Porch Thrift Store is in need of donations of furniture. UCM will pick up furniture, as well as other larger donations, or they can be dropped off at the back of the store Monday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. To arrange for pick-ups, call 703-746-4848, ext. 320. Located at the Mt. Vernon Crossroads Shopping Center at 7838 Richmond Highway, Alexandria.

BULLETIN BOARD

The folks who make cheap, vinyl windows clearly don’t consider temperature changes. Those window frames are only fastened with plastic, staples and glue...which are no match for our seasons. Those materials expand and contract, the glass seals break, the insulating argon gas escapes, and your comfort and money go right out the window.

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In Sterling,
45449 East Severn Way
Unit 149

If this doesn’t belong in your living room, neither do cheap windows.

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

Satuday/March 24
Fairfax County Mega Job Fair. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. This year’s event includes a training vouchers program for veterans to enhance their job skills, a section for youth employment services plus recruiters from a wide variety of employers and government agencies. Co-hosted by U.S. Gerry Connolly, the Fairfax County Skillsure Centers and Business Development Assistance Group. Participating employers, business resources partners, and program agenda at www.fairfaxmegajobfair.com.
**CRIME**

Activities reported by the Mt. Vernon police department through Feb. 17.

**ASSAULT**

5900 block of North Kings Highway
Feb. 2, 2:30 p.m. Officers responded to a report of an assault involving several drunk individuals. A man was being placed under arrest for drunk in public when he allegedly kicked an officer. A 19-year-old male of Woodbridge was additionally charged with assault on a police officer. The officer was not seriously injured.

North Kings Highway/James Drive
Feb. 8, 9:20 p.m. A 50-year-old victim reported an unknown person threw an egg at her. The egg struck her in the back and broke, but she was not injured. There is no suspect information.

1961 Chain Bridge Road, Feb. 11, 10:25 p.m. The driver of a Fairfax Connector bus called for police for a disorderly passenger. When officers responded another victim recounted an alleged assault by the same suspect. A 44-year-old male was arrested and charged with simple assault and disorderly conduct.

3400 Great Lakes St., Feb. 13, 5:10 p.m. The 19-year-old victim was walking home when she was approached by another young girl. The suspect began to fight and several other young girls joined in assaulting the victim. Minor injuries were sustained and did not require medical attention.

**ROBBERY**

8200 block of Richmond Highway
Feb. 3, 2:30 a.m. A man armed with a handgun robbed a pharmacy of oxycodone. Later in the evening, an off-duty officer saw the suspect's vehicle. Prince William County officers detained him. A 24-year-old male of Triangle was charged with robbery in Fairfax County.

5800 block of North Kings Highway
Feb. 6, 9 p.m. A woman was walking home when two men grabbed her. They took her back pack and fled on foot. There is no suspect description. The victim received minor injuries but did not require medical attention.

8300 block of Brockham Drive,
Feb. 12, 9 p.m. A man walking home reported a robbery. The suspect appeared, display a handgun and demanded money. The suspect left with the victim's wallet. The male suspect was described as black, 5 feet 6 inches tall and 150 pounds.

Fort Drive/Williamson Road,
Feb. 15, 9-40 p.m. A 24-year-old woman was walking along the road when she was approached by three men. They forced her to purse and left the area. The victim was not injured and there is no suspect description.

**BURLGARY**

2500 Jamaica Drive,
Feb. 7, 9-30 a.m. Victim reported her apartment in her home, and discovered a laptop was taken from a bedroom.

8200 block of Cooper St.,
Feb. 8, 3:10 p.m. A 45-year-old male of Alexandria was arrested and charged with burglary and drunk in public. He allegedly entered a home while the victim and her young son were watching television. Nothing was stolen and no injuries were sustained.

6000 block of Park Place,
between 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. The victim reported that someone entered the home and stole several items including candles, cash and clothing.

7200 Harrison Lane, Feb. 9, 6-30 a.m. A woman reported her iPad was stolen from her apartment.

**UNLAWFUL ENTRY**

6400 block of The Parkway,
Feb. 9, 2:30 a.m. A woman was alerted by voices in her home. She went down stairs and two people quickly left the home. They were later identified as a 20-year-old female and a 24-year-old female, both of Alexandria. Both were charged with unlawful entry and the 20-year-old was also charged with illegal possession of alcohol.

**PEEPING**

7700 block of Thrush Court,
Feb. 9, 2:50 a.m. A man was seen following the victim. He attempted to enter her home and stood watching her through a window. An 18-year-old male of Lorton was identified and arrested. He was charged with attempted unlawful entry and peeping.

**LARCENIES**

7900 block of Audubon Ave.
Credit card stolen from business.

8800 block of Badger Drive.
Purse stolen from business.

1700 block of Brent St.
Purse stolen from business.

8400 block of Fort Hunt Road.
Cell phone stolen from business.

8400 block of Frye Road.
Beef stew stolen from business.

6100 block of Houston Court.
Tools stolen from vehicle.

9100 block of Richmond Highway.
Basketball Alien Card stolen from vehicle.

8600 block of Richmond Highway.
Purse stolen from business.

6300 block of Richmond Highway.
Video game stolen from business.

6100 block of Richmond Highway.
Tools stolen from vehicle.

6500 block of Tower Drive.
Ipad stolen from residence.

8600 block of Village Square.
Light bulbs stolen from residence.

1900 block of Wakefield St.
Wall safe stolen from residence.

3900 block of Woodbine Place.
Generator and tools stolen from vehicle.

7900 block of Audubon Ave.
Tools stolen from vehicle.

3600 block of Buckman Road.
Steak from residence.

7600 block of Buckman Road.
Tools stolen from vehicle.

6500 block of Fort Hunt Drive.
Beer from business.

7100 block of Groveton Gardens Road.
Cash from residence.

7200 block of Harrison Lane.
Variety electronics from residence.

3800 block of Havenwood Place.
Generator from vehicle.

6200 block of North Kings Highway.
Gift bags with merchandise from business.

8500 block of Old Mount Vernon Road.
Generator from residence.

8400 block of Richmond Highway.
Highdown from business.

7700 block of Richmond Highway.
Generator stolen from residence.

7400 block of Richmond Highway.
Merchandise from business.

8000 block of Russell Road.
Wallet from vehicle.

8100 block of Tis Well Drive.
Operator's license from business.

8600 block of Village Way.
Cell phone from business.

**SIMPLE ASSAULTS**

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**ASSAULT**

2022 Quiet Pond Terrace
Stunning 3 floor townhouse, updated from top to bottom. Beautifully refinished cabinets, granite & ceramic tile. 3.5 refinished baths LEOGR offer beautiful refinished hardwood floors, stone countertops & fully wrap around deck perfect for entertaining. New carpet in BRs. Lower level offers 4th BR and Family Rm, 3rd full bath, SGD to ground level deck. Could be an in-law suite or perfect for a teenager. Close to schools, shopping & library. This is a gem!!

2007 Clark Place
Lovelyy and meticulously maintained home w/ its own fenced yard. Built in 1984 this home features 4 big bdrms, 3 full baths, 2.5 car garage. This home exudes charm & class! Private & serene setting backs to woods. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir, 10 mins to Old Town, 30/35 to Pentagon & D.C. Great Value!!

2001 Spring Terrace
Spectacular 2 level 1000sq ft addition to lovely wrap around deck perfect for BBQ. Lg one car garage. Walk to elementary & high schools. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir, 15 mins to Old Town, 30/35 to Pentagon & D.C. You've got to see this home!!

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7200 Harrison Lane, Feb. 9, 6-30 a.m. A woman reported her iPad was stolen from her apartment.
Best friends Rudy and Caspar (aka the Friendly Ghost — shy to others but bossy to his owner) loved to play together. Alas, Caspar vanished a week or so after this picture was taken. I fear that the coyote seen roaming our neighborhood may have finished him off. Rudy and I are both disconsolate.
— Mary Tracy, Alexandria

Maggie at 15 enjoying her backyard.
— Nina Lockhart, Alexandria

Duchess relaxes in the front yard ...
— Wayne Hulehan, Alexandria

... And at the river house with Evan.
— Wayne Hulehan, Alexandria

Cindy Mitchell and Baron enjoying the sunshine at Woodlawn Stables.
News

Eminent Domain Goes to Voters

From Page 3

on the way to Republican Gov. Bob McDonnell.

“The right to own property was codified by our founding fathers and is a part of what makes up the fabric of our nation,” said Jeff Caldwell, press secretary to the governor in an email response to questions. “Ensuring that individual property rights are protected, maintained and not threatened by government use for non-core services was part of the governor’s agenda this year, along with Republicans from the General Assembly.”

Supporters say the effort is aimed at ensuring that property owners are compensated if they are subjected to eminent domain. Opponents say the amendment could cost the state an extra $100 million each year by making transportation projects more expensive. It’s a debate that has created difficulty by some lawmakers. Sen. George Barker (D-39), for example, voted for the amendment last year in an effort to strip out language adding the ability of property owners to seek interest on top of the loss of profits and loss of access. This year, he voted against the bill, which he says he opposed all along.

“It’s nowhere near as bad as the proposal that came out of committee last year,” said Barker. “But it still has very significant negative consequences in terms of cost, and it’s also something that would be very difficult to change.”

THE IMPLEMENTING legislation may have undercut at least some of the opposition. Now that the ability of businesses to collect for an action not involving land acquisition, the thrust of the amendment is now aimed squarely at cases that involve actual condemnation. Because existing law is already clear on how that works, some have interpreted the implementing legislation unveiling the effort as a naked attempt to capitalize on a politically popular issue.

“If this determination is being made, it seems to me that it somewhat negates the need for a constitutional amendment,” said Alexandria Vice Mayor Kerry Donley. “Is the constitutional amendment intended to be a politician’s brochure?”

“I’m shocked that anyone would even raise the fact that we might pass a political measure,” responded state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), who voted in favor of the amendment. “Frankly, I think the impact will be minimal.”

Congregation Returns to Its Sanctuary

From Page 1

after nearly six long worrisome months, it was determined that the roof was not in danger of collapse.

“That was a weight lifted that the beams were not compromised,” said White. For last Sunday’s triumphant “Reentry Service” which packed the 900-seat sanctuary, he preached on 2 Chronicles 7:14 – “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

The passage, said White, was taken from when Solomon rededicated the Temple. For Bethlehem Baptist, he said, “This dedication that I want to lift up is a call for us to reidentify our lives to our relationship with God, to God’s will and God’s mission of saving lives.”

For a remembrance, everyone attending received a white pebble inscribed on one side “8-23-2011” and on the other “2-19-2012.” “I don’t want the congregation to forget the whole experience of having to move out of the familiar and step into the unfamiliar for worship,” White said.

“I believe it brings a deeper appreciation for God’s presence in the sanctuary itself. Sometimes we can forget that it is a sanctuary and sometimes we carry on so casually that we lose the essence that this is the presence of the Lord. This is His house.”

White also spoke of his and the congregation’s excitement about returning to the sanctuary for worship. “Worship was charged with emotion feeling the spirit of the Lord here and His welcoming us back into the worshipping sanctuary.”

The Rev. Dr. Darrell K. White felt a “weight lifted” when he learned that the sanctuary’s upright beams were not structurally compromised.
On the Way to $85 Billion Budget

By Linda T. "Toddy" Puller
State Senator (D-36)

Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling broke a tie in the evenly divided Senate chamber at the beginning of the Session. This provided Republican organizational control of the Senate even though a lawsuit is still pending on whether the power should be shared. In taking this step, many bills have been passed that were voted down by a more moderate Senate in past years.

The latest tie vote came last Friday to allow tax credits for corporations that contribute to scholarships for low and middle-income students to attend private schools. Another of the controversial issues would require voters without certain forms of identification to cast a provisional ballot that would not be counted unless the voter provided further identification. This is seen by many as a way to suppress the vote among minorities, the elderly, and students.

Other “hot button” issues such as requiring a woman to have an ultrasound before having an abortion, not allowing funding for an abortion for a poor pregnant woman whose fetus is severely deformed, requiring drug testing for welfare recipients, and allowing more than one handgun a month to be purchased have cleared the Senate. The “personhood” bill (defining life at conception) has passed the House of Delegates and will be considered by the Senate.

Democrats were able, with two Republicans not voting, to kill Governor Bob McDonnell’s proposal to make it easier to fire public school teachers. And, now, the Democrats’ plan to stick together on the budget seems to be steering some of the Republicans to try to win us over with accommodations on education and transportation. Passage of the budget requires 21 votes. The Lieutenant Governor cannot break the tie on a budget vote.

I have much more to report on the budget next week as it is released on Sunday, Feb. 19, and briefings are to occur on the following Monday and Tuesday, perhaps with a vote on the $85 billion spending plan on Thursday. I am pleased that one of the budget items I have fought for is in the proposed budget. It would bring $50,000 a year for each of the two years to help fund the Special Olympics.

Besides fighting for committee changes to share power in a 20-20 Senate, we have proposed savings for local governments to help them pay an additional $600 million over two years for retirement and other after-employment benefits. Some of this could be accomplished by restoring proposed cuts in state aid to local school districts for K-12 education and to free health clinics and other safety net health programs.

A new poll taken this month in Virginia shows a majority do not support the repeal of the one gun a month, further restrictions on abortion, increasing state employees’ contributions toward their retirement, and want to retain the power to ban guns on a college campus.

Most of the legislation I introduced this Session has passed the Senate with no opposition. Please continue to contact me on matters of concern:

Senator Linda T. “Toddy” Puller, P.O. Box 396, Richmond, VA 23218; phone: 804-698-7536; fax: 804-698-7651; email: district36@senate.virginia.gov.

National Controversy and Budget Process Begins

By Scott A. Surovell
State Delegate (D-44)

Crossover Week at the General Assembly found us in the national media spotlight of Saturday Night Live, CNN and the Rachel Maddow Show. Over 1,000 demonstrators appeared at the State Capitol this week.

On Monday and Tuesday, the House of Delegates passed legislation redefining a “person” for purposes of the Code of Virginia as beginning at conception. This has been called the “personhood” bill. Given that the word “person” is used 25,000 times in the Code of Virginia, this would have far-reaching consequences. This would include taxes, child support, life insurance, health insurance, the practice of medicine, criminal statutes, civil liability, or even High Occupancy Vehicles (e.g. HOV2).

My caucus attempted to add an amendment to the bill to clearly exclude FDA-approved contraception from this legislation. That amendment failed on a 64-34 vote.

We also passed legislation requiring an ultrasound within 24 hours of having an abortion. Given that many abortions occur in the first trimester and a fetus cannot be properly visualized in the first trimester with an external sonogram, this would require a medically-unnecessary transvaginal or what some are calling as vaginally penetrating ultrasound.

We offered an amendment to clarify that the invasive ultrasound procedure could only be performed with the consent of the woman. That amendment failed on a 64-34 vote.

I supported the amendments and voted against both bills. While I recognize that these issues invoke strong emotions on both sides, I have consistently felt that a woman’s right to make a decision is best left between the woman, her doctor, and her conscience. Our existing laws as interpreted by the Courts are adequate and I believe that granting a fertilized egg the status of a person would have far-reaching unpredictable consequences.

Banning contraception is archaic. While the ultrasound supporters have consistently decried “big government” programs and “nanny state” rules such as federal health insurance reform, the same delegates are now proposing that the Government mandate a medically unnecessary probe inside a woman’s body for purposes of exercising her constitutional right.

Mandating ultrasounds is hypocritical and just see Budget, Page 12.

Check Up on Legislators

To the Editor:

The Virginia General Assembly’s web site Lias.virginia.gov is very valuable for determining what your state delegate and senator is doing to represent you because it has information readily available on legislation introduced (patron) and signed on other bills (co-patron) by each state delegate and senator, committee assignments, bills considered by committees and votes cast by each General Assembly member in committees, during house and senate floor sessions and whether to pass or reject bills. The patron of a bill has the responsibility of providing data to committees for consideration to pass or reject a bill. When a person co-patrons a bill it shows support for the bill’s content.

I reviewed the information published on this site for Delegate Surovell to get familiar with what bills he introduced (patron) because he stated in a commentary published in the Mount Vernon Gazette recently that “Route 1 will not improve until we get a fair share of construction funding.” None of the 28 bills he patroned included a bill to change the state allocation formula for transportation construction funding. His bills include a myriad of subjects including increasing the number of transportation board members, allowing localities to decide when the school year begins and ends, solar energy and increasing transparency for certain government actions. He also introduced 6 resolutions that generally commend or celebrate someone or thing. Of the 77 bills he co-patroned, some deal with raising taxes, civil rights, court matters, tax credits and medical matters.

I encourage you to go to the General Assembly’s web site Lias.virginia.gov and review your delegate’s and state senator’s record while the General Assembly is in session. By becoming involved you can increase accountability of the elected officials by letting them know your sugges- tions and comments. The more we become involved in the process, representation and results should help benefit all of us.

Frank Medico
Mount Vernon
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- 3 level custom brick colonial sited on .75 acre waterfront lot
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- Renovated Top to Bottom
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- Custom Built Homes by Bobo
- 2 models available or design your own
- 4 bedroom, 1.5 bath, 1 car garage
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New Price and New Fence!

- Pristine colonial in cul-de-sac with his and her master baths
- 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, hardwood floors on main level
- $675,000

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- Stuning Split foyer in Waynewood Elementary School
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- Fabulous cape cod style home in sought after Stratford on the Potomac
- 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, all within 1 mile of Woodbridge
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- Your Dreams are Waiting!
- Build your dream home on one of the largest lots in the City of Alexandria!
- Located on the corner of Broadhock Road and Oakton Terrace
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The Market is Moving... Are You?
Home Sales

In January 2012, 71 homes sold between $1,051,782-$85,500 in the Mount Vernon area. This week’s list represents those homes sold in the $1,051,782-$260,000 range. For the complete list, visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

Budget Process

From Page 5

Many pregnancies are terminated due to complications. Requiring a mother who has been previously diagnosed with anencephalic baby (forming without a brain), deformed, or medically dead (without a heartbeat) to undergo a repeat imaging procedure to again show her a malformed fetus is the equivalent of state sponsored torture. I will continue to fight these bills as they continue to work through the legislature.

The House and Senate money committees released their competing budgets over the weekend. The Governor’s budget cut $54 million of special money for Northern Virginia called “cost to compete” funding to help us pay our teachers salaries to compete with other D.C. Metropolitan area jurisdictions. The House Budget refused to reinstate this money. The Senate now under downstate control due to the party change only reinstated two-thirds of it.

The House Budget also diverts over $100 million of funding for schools, public safety, health care, and safety net programs to transportation projects by dedicating part of existing sales tax revenue to the Transportation Trust Fund. I will oppose this for several reasons.

First, the General Fund is starved. Adding roads into the competition for funds with schools, public safety, health care and safety net programs is bad policy. Second, thirty-percent of gas taxes are paid by out-of-state users and nearly 100 percent of sales taxes are paid by Virginians. All road users contribute, not just Virginians. Also, under the proposed distributions, the Governor is proposing that Northern Virginia receive about half as much for roads if this sales tax revenue was run through the Transportation Trust Fund. We are shortchanged enough already by the state and need new revenue in the system.

This battle will continue to percolate and some fear that we are headed for a stalemate given the 20-20 situation in the Virginia Senate.

Please continue your feedback on legislation this session. I have written about twenty articles in the last 60 days about this session on my blog – The Dixie Pig – at scottsurovell.blogspot.com. You can also visit my website (www.scattsurovell.org), or send me email at scottsurovell@gmail.com.

It is an honor to serve as your state delegate.
Jazzercise Instructor Celebrates 25 Years of Fitness

On March 3, Jazzercise instructor Mindy LaBruno will celebrate her 25th anniversary of teaching Jazzercise.

She started her Jazzercise career at Mount Vernon Square Apartments. She met her husband Roger during a class at Mount Vernon Square. After 7 years she moved locations to Hollin Hall Senior Center where she is presently offering 13 classes each week with a teaching staff of six instructors. Three of her associate instructors live in the Waynewood area: Jennifer Farrar, Anne Nuttal and Peggy Frydenlund. Other instructors are Harmony Allen, Kim LaForest and Dawn Patillo.

LaBruno is well known for her personal training sessions, which is a Jazzercise alternative format. She also oversees Jazzercise Lite classes offered to the senior population throughout Fairfax County in various county facilities.

Her students will enjoy an instructor team-taught class on March 3 followed by a party at 11 a.m. at the Hollin Hall Senior Center. Standard class fees apply on March 3.

Jazzercise combines elements of dance, resistance training, Pilates, yoga, kickboxing and more to create programs for people of every age and fitness level. Alternative formats include Jazzercise Lite, Jazzercise Body Sculpting, Jazzercise Step, Jazzercise Plus, Jazzercise Circuit Training, Jazzercise Personal Touch, and Junior Jazzercise.

Lamond Park Renamed to Honor Gil McCutcheon

The Fairfax County Park Authority Board voted to rename Lamond Community Park to Gilbert S. McCutcheon Park, an action taken to honor the former Park Authority board member who represented the Mount Vernon District from 1992 to 2010. McCutcheon was instrumental in the acquisition of this 18-acre park located at 7509 Fort Hunt Road. McCutcheon died on Dec. 28, 2011. He was 95 years old.

The action, taken at the Park Board’s Jan. 25 meeting, conforms to Policy 106 which states that the name of a park can be named to honor an individual. The board voted unanimously to approve the change citing McCutcheon’s long tenure on the Park Board, numerous accomplishments and appreciation and dedication to public service.

McCutcheon was a member of the Founders, Benefactors, Supervisors and Friends of Frying Pan Farm Park for more than a decade, serving as president of the Board of Directors of the Frying Pan Farm Park and Youth Center Supervisory Board. He also served as a Resource Management Division volunteer and was a well-known figure at Mount Vernon Farmers Market where he served as the Market Master for 26 years.
Great Lakes Brewery expands to N. Virginia.

By Montie Martin
The Gazette

The Great Lakes Brewery of Cleveland, Ohio, is set to enter the Northern Virginia market with an ambitious agenda of tap takeovers and samplings across the region. With a suite of gold medal awards in the lager, porter and ale categories, area beer aficionados can hardly wait for a chance to fill their glass.

Rustico will host a tap takeover of Great Lakes beer at both the Arlington and Alexandria branches on Feb. 27. The Monday evening event will feature all five of the top standards including Commodore Perry IPA, Burning River Pale Ale, Edmund Fitzgerald Porter, Eliot Ness Amber Lager and Dortmunder Gold Lager.

“Demand persuaded the company to make significant investments in the Cleveland-based brewery, which recently completed a series of expansions that has allowed for a doubling of capacity. With a wide area of coverage, however, including markets in 13 states, Great Lakes had to choose strategically where to best develop. At least one reason for selecting Northern Virginia was the sheer number of area residents from Ohio who want a taste of home.”

“There’s a lot of hype surrounding the launch,” said Boveington, a spokesman for Great Lakes Brewery. “We’ve always had plans to continue growing in the area, people have been begging us to cross the river.”

— Lauren Boveington, a spokesman for Great Lakes Brewery

Tapping into the Beer Market

Great Lakes Rollout Events

The Ohio-based Great Lakes Brewery will roll into the Northern Virginia market with a week of special events that include samplings at area beverage shops and tap takeovers at local bars. Rustico in Arlington and Alexandria will hold a dual event on Feb. 27 with all five award-winning brews on tap. For a complete list of area events visit greatlakesbrewing.com

Seven A Cappella Groups to Compete At the Harmony Sweeps Festival

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.

The St. Patrick’s Day Parade will be Saturday, March 3 at 12:30 p.m.

The 31st Annual Alexandria St. Patrick’s Day Parade will take place on Saturday, March 3 at 12:30 p.m. in the heart of Old Town Alexandria. The parade will start at the corner of King St. and Alfred St., and proceed East down King St. to the corner of King St. and Lee St.

“Our Alexandria St. Patrick’s Day Parade falls very early in March this year, and we know it will be a wonderful way for the thousands of spectators who view the parade every year to kick off their celebrations of Irish American Heritage Month,” said Pat Troy, Ballyshaneers Chairman and Parade Master of Ceremonies.

This year’s parade will be lead by co-Grand Marshals Tom and Melinda Mooney, who are the proprietors of the Murphy’s Grand Irish Pubs in Alexandria, Washington, D.C., and Virginia Beach. The Mooneys are long-time supporters of Irish-American activities in the Northern Virginia area.

As always, the parade will feature more than 100 units, including groups celebrating their Irish heritage, marchers from the military services, Irish dancing schools, bagpipe bands and other Alexandria community groups.

In addition to the parade, festivities will include a Classic Car Show, held on Pitt St. between King and Cameron Streets beginning at 10 a.m., and a Fun Dog Show held in Market Square, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

All events are free to the public. Parade organizers suggest using Metrorail to the King Street Metro stop, and walking 10 minutes East on King Street to the Parade Route.

All events are sponsored by the Ballyshaneers – Gaelic for “Old Towners.” A not-for-profit group, the Ballyshaneer’s goal is to promote and preserve Irish heritage through sponsorship of the Alexandria St. Patrick’s Day Parade and the Alexandria Irish Festival, held every summer.

Entertainment

5th Annual Alexandria St. Patrick’s Day Parade

The 5th Annual Alexandria St. Patrick’s Day Parade will be Saturday, March 3 at 12:30 p.m.

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FINE ARTS

NOW THROUGH MARCH 4

NOW THROUGH MARCH 22
“An Affair to Remember.” Embrace artisan handmade creations made with a little love in February at Scope Gallery in the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Kim Club show will display portraits of people, animals, as well as landscape and cityscape collages.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 25
Cuba Revisited, 2011. Karen Keating, member of Multiple Exposure Gallery, will be exhibiting new images from her most recent trip to Cuba. April 2011. Reception is Sunday, March 4 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.; Artist’s Talk is Thursday March 15 from 7 to 8 p.m. At Multiple Exposure Gallery, Studio #312.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 4
“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.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 11
“FEB. 24 TO MARCH 10
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NOW THROUGH MARCH 18
“City Limits.” Featuring acrylic paintings on canvas by Eric Garner of McLean. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery at the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 18
“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., Arlington.

JUNE 1 TO 17
ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THROUGH FEB. 26

Love, Politics & Scrabble. The Games People Play, interactive game exhibit at Del Ray Artisans, inspired by the games people play throughout life. This jumbled 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 artist Valentine Cards, closes Feb. 26. 1705 Mt Pleasant St., Alexandria. www.thedelrayartisans.org or 703-838-4827.

THURSDAY/FEB. 23

Life Line Screening. Screen your heart for the chance to lower your risk of having a stroke or bone fracture. Packages start at $19. 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 Keaf, 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 Dania Lane, Alexandria. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. Speaker will be Neva’s Secret: A Civil War Memoir by Neva Canton. Address is 703-764-1934 or dbloodander@hotmail.com.

Brain Health and Memory Tips. Noon. Susan Wnuk, 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 1-877-254-9849. At The Fountain at Washington House, 5100 Fillmore Ave., Alexandria.

FRIDAY/FEB. 24

Multinational Food and Performance. 6 to 9 p.m. Free. Featuring The Asian Cultural Dance Academy, Batala DC, Capoeira Candeias, Salsa Vive, Born to Dance Studio, Hip-Hop Youth Company, Carl Sandburg’s Jazz Ensemble, Dance Team, Drama Club, Step Crew, Cheer Team, and the Sinsbury Singers. There will also be a food-tasting extravaganza with a Dinner Theater podium event. At Carl Sandburg Middle School.

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Sock Hop. 6 to 10 p.m. At Mount Vernon Recreation Center Gym. Tickets are $15/16 singles, $40/couples, $50 entire family. Proceeds benefit the Miracle Field to honor Ryan Bailey. Visit www.miraclefields.org.

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, 4300 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Visit www.fortward.org or call 703-746-4848.

Multicultural Fair. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event will include an exhibit hall (cafeteria) filled with opportunities to see, hear, taste, learn and enjoy food, clothing, music, photos, collections, games and much more. At Hollin Meadows Elementary, 2410 Nordok Place, Alexandria.

"Lincoln’s War at Washington’s Boyhood Home." 10 a.m. Archaeologist Paul Naslo presents a free Java Jolt lecture co-sponsored by Friends of Alexandria. Reservations are requested, and can be made by emailing archaelogy@alexandriava.gov or calling 703-746-4399. At the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 North Union St., #227, Alexandria.

Book Lovers Love Music and Food. 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The Friends of the Alexandria Public Library will hold a “Book Lovers Love Music and Food” CD and Cook Book Sale at the Charles E. Brassey Library, 5055 Duke Street, Alexandria. Single CDs, $1.00, CD Packaged Sets (5 +), $5; Hardcover Books, $3; Paperback Books, $1. Call 703-746-1742 or www.alexandria-va.us/Library.

Game Talks. 3 to 5 p.m. Local experts will present several short talks on some of the common games people play throughout life. Following the talks will be an interactive game experience and light refreshments. This event is part of the "Love, Politics & Scrabble" exhibit which runs through Feb. 26. Suggested for adults 18 and older. Free. www.FredericksburgArtisans.org.

Woodcocks at Huntley Meadows. 5-7 p.m. This is the time when male Woodcocks are doing their amazing courtship displays. Join Rich Berger at Huntley Meadows, hopefully to witness this display. Meet at the South Kings’ Highway Telegraph Rd. parking lot (the backside of Huntley Meadows Park). Bring a flashlight. In case of heavy rain, the walk will take place Sunday, Feb. 26, 5:15 p.m. Free.

Silver Anniversary Ball. 6 p.m. to midnight. Dinner, dancing silent and live auctions and honorary guest Patsy Ticer. Sponsored by the Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria. Tickets are $200 each or $350 for first-timers. To benefit the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. At the Westin Hotel, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria. Call 703-548-7454 or email patsy.ticer@me.com. Tickets also available at www.alexandria.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 26

The French Connection.* 2 p.m. Presented by the U.S. Marine Band. At the Mt. Vernon Community College, Northern Virginia Community College, 3001 North Braggurad Street, Alexandria. Call 703-845-6156 or www.marinemusic.marines.mil.

Hot Tuna in Concert. 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $35. At the Birchmere, 3045 Prince St., Springbank Auditorium, 6500 Quander Road, Alexandria. Call 703-549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com.

MONDAY/FEB. 27

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.

TUESDAY/FEB. 28

Quilt Presentation. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. At the Mt. Vernon Museum and Educational Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Speaker will be Quilt Magazine’s Editor-in Chief, Patsy Ticer. Sponsored by Friends of Alexandria. Reservations are required, and can be made by emailing mkozlak@ArtsOnTheHorizon.org or visit www.ArtsOnTheHorizon.org.

The Games People Play, juried art exhibit at Del Ray Artisans. Features people play throughout life. Following the talks will be an interactive game experience and light refreshments. This event is part of the “Love, Politics & Scrabble” exhibit which runs through Feb. 26. Suggested for adults 18 and older. Free. www.FredericksburgArtisans.org.

THURSDAY/MARCH 1

Frank Lloyd Wright Lecture. 7 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. Two homeowners discuss the experience of living in Wright-designed houses. Presented by Woodlawn/Pope-Leighey, Historic Sites of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Ticket information: poplehig@yahoo.com.

Gala Benefit. 7 to 11 p.m. Tickets are $125. Featuring “Mad Men” theme celebrating the style and sophistication of the 1960s. With a Silent Auction, a Mini Raffle, “Be A Star” station where patrons can buy gifts that benefit the Center, and a Cocktail Buffet. Hosted by the Center for Alexandria’s Children, a child-friendly facility that protects children and strengthens families by coordinating investigation, prosecution, treatment and prevention of child abuse and neglect. At Virus Food and Grain, 106 South Union Street, Alexandria. Call 703-765-4573 or visit www.savethechildrenvirginia.org.

MARCH 1 TO 18

“Out of the Box.” This Spring Arts on the Horizon presents the world premiere of “Out of the Box,” an engaging 30-minute interactive, nonverbal theatrical production geared toward theater ages 12 months through 5. Out of the Box was created by the husband and wife team of Thr Sneath and Matt Basset. March 1, 2, 3, 9, 15 at 10:30 a.m.; March 3, 10, 17 at 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.; March 4, 11, 18 at 11 a.m. Tickets are $8/adults and $6/children. At Landmark Mall, 5811 Duke St., Alexandria. The performance venue is located on the second level next to Macy’s. For more information, contact Melissa Koulik at 703-967-8437 or mkozlak@ArtsOnTheHorizon.org or visit www.ArtsOnTheHorizon.org.

Join us at your local IHOP for a free short stack of buttermilk pancakes!* *Dine in only. Not valid w/ any other discounts/offers. Limit one per customer.

February 28, 2012

In lieu of paying for your delicious IHOP pancake on this special day, please consider making a donation to support the fight against blood cancers.

LMS Mission: cure leukemia, lymphoma and myeloma and improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

The Best in Family Dining

An Alexandria community fixture for more than 100 years, the Royal Restaurant offers the best in Greek, Italian and American cuisine. Enjoy burgers, steaks, prime rib, chicken, seafood, pasta and full salad bar complete with special children’s menu items.

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www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

Food fit for a king on a family budget

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SPORTS

Sharp-Shooting Loftus Lifts Majors Over Centreville

Junior ties 3-pointer career high with five in regional opener.

By Jon Roetman
The Gazette

As Mount Vernon guard Kelly Loftus’ perimeter potency became evident to those in the visiting crowd in Skinner Field House on Feb. 20, Centreville fans began shouting words of warning, pleading with the Wildcats to keep Loftus from getting open.

“She looked like she just wanted it that much more than anybody else on the floor. She played a great game tonight.”

— Mount Vernon girls’ basketball coach Courtney Coffer about Kelly Loftus

“She’s got going early. She found a nice little rhythm in the first quarter. The biggest thing with Kelly is when she gets going for us defensively, it just fuels her offense. … I thought she did a great job of knowing when to pick and choose her shots. … She looked like she just wanted it that much more than anybody else on the floor. She played a great game tonight.”

Loftus, a first-team all-National District selection, also grabbed 10 rebounds and finished with four steals.

“That was incredible,” Mount Vernon head coach Courtney Coffer said. “She got going early. She found a nice little rhythm in the first quarter. The biggest thing with Kelly is when she gets going for us defensively, it just fuels her offense. … I thought she did a great job of knowing when to pick and choose her shots. … She looked like she just wanted it that much more than anybody else on the floor. She played a great game tonight.”

Sophomore forward Samantha Porter scored 15 points, grabbed 10 rebounds and tied a career high with five 3-pointers against Centreville on Feb. 20.

West Potomac Girls Win State Relay Championship

West Potomac’s Reanna Dona, Hellen Moffitt, Sara Bertram, and Maxine Clifford won the state championship in the 200-yard freestyle relay at the 2012 Virginia State AAA High School Swim & Dive Championship meet Feb. 17-18 at George Mason University Aquatic Center. The girls swam away from the field by more than 1.5 seconds and achieved an automatic All-American time of 1 minute, 36.58 seconds.

The same four girls teamed up for the 200-yard medley relay and placed third in that event with another automatic All-American time. Bertram, Clifford, Dona, and Moffitt broke the Patriot District and Northern Region records in the 200-yard medley relay earlier in the season.

All-American recognition is awarded to high school swimmers across the nation who have the top 100 fastest times recorded each year in each event. West Potomac was the only girls’ team at the Virginia state meet to achieve automatic All-American time standards in two relay events. Close to 600 student athletes representing 66 Virginia schools competed at the state swim and dive championship meet.

The two West Potomac girls’ relays contributed 72 points toward the team’s total of 162 points and helped West Potomac earn the third-place trophy at the state competition. Moffitt contributed 32 points by placing second in the 100 butterfly (55.08) and fourth in the 100-yard backstroke (55.79), with automatic All-American times in both events. Moffitt was one of only three girls at the state meet to achieve automatic All-American times in two individual events. The other two double points, grabbed 10 rebounds and snagged three steals for Mount Vernon. Porter received second-team all-district honors, but Coffer said she deserved better.

“The kid, to me, is the most underrated kid in this region,” Coffer said. “I was really [angry] that the other coaches in our district did not feel that she was first team. If there’s another kid in our district better than her, something is wrong. That kid is incredible, she gives it 180 percent every time out, she does everything you ask. There are times on the floor she’ll guard all five people on one possession. She’s everywhere.”

First-team point guard Taylor Dunham finished with 12 points for Mount Vernon.

The victory improved the Majors’ record to 24-1 and extended their winning streak to 22 games. Mount Vernon’s lone loss came against undefeated Oakton on Dec. 6, a 71-41 blemish on an otherwise perfect season.

Mount Vernon beat Yorktown 66-47 on Feb. 17 to capture the program’s second consecutive district championship. After 25 games, Mount Vernon was ranked No. 14 in the Washington Post’s top 20, giving the Majors the third-
**Career High with Five 3-Pointers**

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The Belvoir swim team.

Best ranking among Northern Region teams (Oakton is No. 4, West Springfield is No. 5).

“We worked hard for it, so I believe we all deserve it,” Loftus said of notoriety received by the Majors. “We normally don’t get much respect being Mount Vernon, but this year we really tried hard to gain respect and I think we got it.”

Mount Vernon hosted Annadale in the regional quarterfinals on Feb. 22. The result was not available prior to The Gazette’s deadline. The semifinals are scheduled for Friday, Feb. 24 at Robinson Secondary School.

“We’re really enjoying it,” Coffer said of the Majors’ season. “At this point of the game, we just don’t want it to end. That’s what we’re playing for. We’re just trying to keep it going. No one wants to not have practice. No one wants to not be around each other anymore.”

**WP Girls Win Relay Championship**

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All-American swimmers were Janet Hu from Oakton (100 butterfly and 100 backstroke) and Madison Hahn (200 individual medley and 100 backstroke) from Maury High School in the Eastern Region. All three girls are 2012 Olympic Trials qualifiers in the 100-meter backstroke.

Donna finished fifth in the 50-yard freestyle (24.40) and in the 100-yard backstroke (57.67) and scored 28 points for the Wolverines. Bertram finished eighth in the 100-yard butterfly (57.55) and 16th in the 200-yard individual medley (2:10.56), earning 12 points, while Clifford added 18 points with her eighth-place finish in the 100-yard freestyle (24.69) and 10th-place finish in the 100-yard freestyle (57.94). Junior Maddy Bolger, sophomore Carolyn Murphy and Kristine Pinter, and freshman Torie Bolger competed for West Potomac in the 400-yard freestyle relay and placed 23rd overall in the preliminaries.

West Potomac’s third-place finish at the state swim meet and second-place finish at the Northern Region meet this year were the best in school history. Last year, the West Potomac girls’ team placed fifth at the state championship meet and fourth at regions. West Potomac head coach Bob Lombardi is a psychology teacher at Falls Church High School and has coached the Wolverines swim team for the past 26 years. Coach Lombardi is assisted by Sam Burgi, who coaches for the Fort Belvoir swim team.

**Mount Vernon’s Floyd Places 6th at States**

Mount Vernon senior Dusty Floyd placed sixth in the 171-pound division at the 2012 state wrestling championships on Feb. 18 at Robinson Secondary School.

Floyd, who won National District and Northern Region championships this season, reached the state semifinals before suffering his first loss of the season — a 7-4 decision against First Colonial’s Rylland O’Brien. Floyd then lost to Colonial Forge’s Zach Martinez, 7-0, and Centreville’s Ryan Sepulveda, 2-1, to finish sixth.

“I said after districts when it comes to states, it’s whoever has the best day,” Floyd said, “and I didn’t have a good day today.”

Floyd defeated Matt Hommell of Kings Fork 7-3 in the opening round and Patriot’s Anthony Olsen, 15-0, in the quarterfinals. Floyd finished the season with a record of 57-3.

“It was a good season,” Floyd said. “I definitely got better from last year, even though I placed lower (fifth last year), I definitely improved a lot.”

Floyd ends his high school career as Mount Vernon’s all-time leader in victories. He said he will have fond memories of working with head coach Anthony McDuffie.

“He was like my best friend,” Floyd said. “We have a great relationship.”