

Finding Home in Fairfax County

Focus on Immigration, Page 8

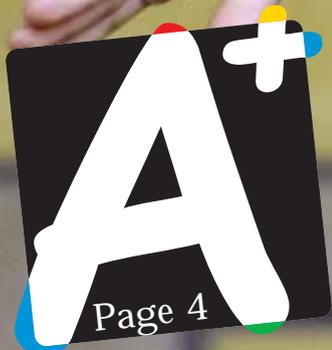
Shreyaska Dahal of Herndon performs a traditional Nepalese dance with her sister, Shritika, on the opening day of the 9th annual Asian Festival held on the campus of George Mason University in July 2012. In today's Connection, we begin an ongoing series on immigration and diversity in Fairfax County. During the next month, we explore the ways immigrants have impacted the county, with a particular emphasis on faith, politics, education and culture.

LEAP Awards \$5,000 To Homeowners

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Getting Up To Speed on Healthcare

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Holidays are HERE!

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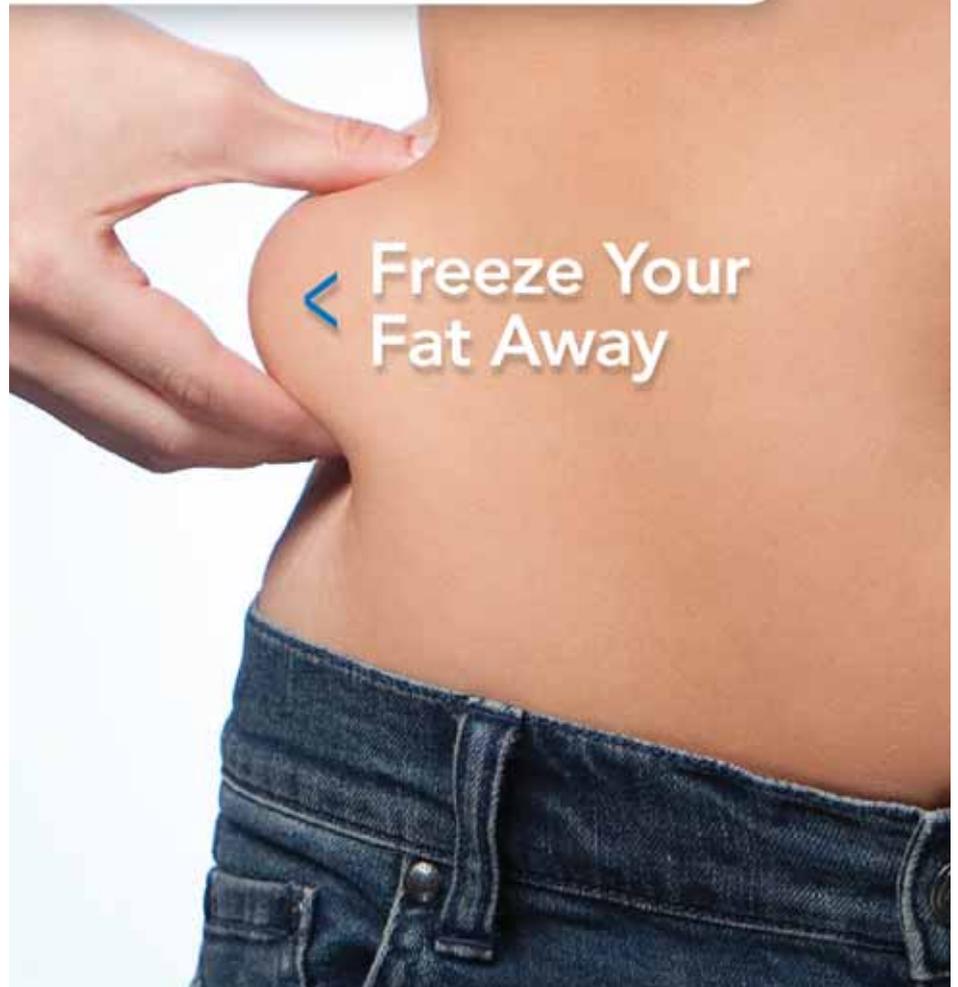
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From left, Bridget Bean, director of the U.S. Small Business Association, Joanne Corte Grossi, regional director the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and William Hazel, the Virginia secretary of health and human resources, speak during a panel discussion at the Westin Dulles Friday, Nov. 16.



Photos by
Alex McVeigh/
The Connection

Getting Up to Speed on Healthcare

Panel discussion addresses small business issues with Affordable Health Care Act.



By Alex McVeigh
The Connection

The Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce hosted a panel discussion Friday, Nov. 16 at the Dulles Westin, to examine the effects of the Affordable Health Care Act on business owners. Virginia Secretary of Health and Human Resources William Hazel joined Bridget Bean, director of the U.S. Small Business Administration and Joanne Corte Grossi, regional director for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to discuss ways that all businesses could be affected.

"In the wake of last week's election coupled with Virginia's recent decision on the health benefits exchange, businesses of all sizes remain perplexed by health care reform, its complexity and its implementation," said C. Michael Ferrero, chairman of the chamber's board. "It's clear that help is needed to understand what impacts will be."

Grossi said that health care costs are a constant concern for small businesses.

"Small businesses on average pay 18 percent more for the exact same health care, this is not ok when health care is the number one issue small businesses put forth as an area of concern," Grossi said. "In 1986, a White House conference on small business identified health care as their number one concern, and we still have this problem today."

Hazel said his department has already put out feelers into the small business community to see what people already know, and that they've found they have their work cut out for them.

"The Virginia Health Department has a task force looking at it. We've got focus groups, where we surveyed about 1,200 small business owners around the state, and the state of understanding of the act is pretty dismal," Hazel said.

Bean said her organization has already planned to make education and outreach to business owners a

From left, panelists Bridget Bean, director of the U.S. Small Business Association, Joanne Corte Grossi, regional director the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and William Hazel, the Virginia secretary of health and human resources, during a discussion hosted by the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce at the Westin Dulles Friday, Nov. 16.

top priority next year.

"At the Small Business Administration, we're going to make this a principal issue for us starting in 2013, we're going to do a series of educational seminars with small businesses, chambers like this one, health care providers, so that we can really educate small businesses on their responsibilities," she said. "In Virginia, it's time to get actively involved, because it will impact businesses. Whether it's figuring out what the state is doing or advocating on your own account, you need to be part of the process."

The U.S. currently spends the highest percentage of their gross domestic product on healthcare among any nation, and Hazel said that the numbers do not favor businesses, especially small ones.

"We spent 18.5 percent of our GDP on health care in the U.S.," he said. "The challenge for business is that the second most percentage of GDP in the world spent on health care is Switzerland, they spend about 11.5 percent on health care."

More importantly, said Grossi, the money spent doesn't seem to be adding up to.

"Not only do we spend the most out of anyone in the world, but we're not getting the health outcomes for it. We're 45th in terms of life expectancy, 29th in terms of infant mortality rate," Grossi said. "That's the whole point of the Affordable Health Care Act. Not only are we spending more, but we have 51 million people without insurance. It's about how do we save money in the system, and provide better health outcomes. It's about making true systemic changes."

Viewpoints

What are you thankful for?

—Amiee Freeman



Doris Tyler of Herndon, owner of Chesapeake Chocolates.

"My brother is returning from Ethiopia after two years. We will be celebrating Thanksgiving with the whole family for the first time in a long while. I am thankful for that."



Toya Tanis of Fairfax, owner of New Family Naturals

"I am thankful for supportive family, friends and community."



Krizta Major of Reston, student at South Lakes

"I'm thankful for my family and all they do for me. I am also thankful for my friends."



Sophia Latchinian of Reston, student at South Lakes

"I am thankful for my family and friends and for music too."



Connie Knott of Sterling, store clerk at Baby Blossom

"I'm thankful for my family. I am also really thankful for old and new friends. They keep me young. My old and new friends have really touched my heart."



Connie Knott of Sterling, store clerk at Baby Blossom

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Interviews and Recommendations

Admissions officers at private schools offer insight into application process.

By Marilyn Campbell
The Connection

Mark Fischer sat with his parents in the plush reception area of one of the region's elite independent schools, biting his fingernails and tapping his left foot while waiting to speak with an admissions officer for the interview portion of his application.

"Yeah, I'm a little nervous," he said.

Admissions directors say the interview is a chance for both students and their parents to get to know the schools and for the school to become familiar with the applicants. But what do admissions teams want to learn from interviews with applicants and their families?

"We really just want to get to know you better and hear what you have to say about your school year and thoughts for next year," said Ann Richardson Miller, director of admission and financial aid at The Madeira School in McLean.

"We like to see that the student is curious about life, what he or she is interested in and what they are passionate about," said Diane Dunning, director of admission and financial aid at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School in Alexandria.

Tim Simpson, director of admission and financial



Courtesy of St. Andrew's Episcopal School

Instructor Laura Hoffman teaches a science class at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Md. Independent school officials say interviews with applicants and their families help identify students who fit "the personality of the school."

aid for Bullis School in Potomac, Md., adds that schools value sincerity. "Does the student talk about things that are important to them? Do they go into detail so that I don't have to dig? If I ask about a physics class, does the student go into detail about their own personal experience? It is always exciting for me to hear different layers of a student's experiences," he said.

COMPETITION TO GET INTO independent schools can be fierce — some school admissions teams accept only one out of every 10 applicants — so parents may wonder if they should hire education consultants or coaches to help their children prepare for interviews.

Mark Sklarow, executive director of the Independent Educational Consultants Association, says it's not worth it: "A school is trying to get ... an understanding of who that student really is," he said. "They'll try to get past any planned or scripted answers."

Richard Moss of The Heights School in Potomac agrees. "It is often easy to tell when a student is not interested based on their knowledge of the school and the reasons for wanting to attend," he said. "The interview with the parents is important because you get a sense of the kinds of people you're going to be working with. We want to make sure our parents are on board with what our instructors are trying to do."

Admissions directors say parents often ask how their families should prepare for interviews. "This is an opportunity to soul search about why they are interested in the school," said Moss, adding he notices a lot about a prospective student during an interview. "Does a student present well? Does he look sharp? Does he have a firm handshake? Does he thank you for having him? Does he look alive and engaged? Does he mumble?"

Sklarow says that while students should not over-prepare, they

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Private Schools

From Page 4

should know what to expect. "Every school is not looking for the same kind of student. Every school is not looking for the same answer. They are trying to figure out whether that student fits the personality of the school. They want to know if this is a student who will find friendships within the school and fit into the school community."

WHAT ROLE do the teacher recommendations play in admissions decisions? "Teacher recommendations give us a broader perspective on student effort and attitude, and often provide us with a different perspective than what the application alone might show," Michael Cresson, director of admissions, Bishop O'Connell High School in Arlington.

"Families would be surprised by the thoughtful and insightful comments most teachers make on the recommendations," Miller said. "Trust the teachers. They have your child's best interest at heart."

Charlotte Nelsen, director of admission for the Potomac School in McLean said, "Potomac School takes a particular interest in the current teacher's recommendation for the applicant. We recognize a teacher has known the student far longer than we have."

Some experts say that reports from a student's current instructors can raise red flags as well. "Teacher recommendations can shed light on the difficult aspects of a student's personality that you don't see on a report card," said Moss. "Report cards don't necessarily tell you how hard a student is working, how generous he is or what his true abilities are."

"We realize that teacher recommendations are subjective, but they are important," Moss continued. "If a student is required, for example, to get a recommendation from a current English teacher and they have a terrible relationship with that teacher ... they should ... ask the previous year's English teacher to write a supplementary recommendation, just so they can balance out the negative one. The one thing you don't want to do is get a bad recommendation and say, 'Well this is a horrible teacher who doesn't like my son.'"

Julie Jameson, director of admission and financial aid at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, concludes: "The interviews and teacher recommendations offer multiple perspectives and wonderful opportunities to learn more about each applicant as part of the whole admission process."

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Opinion

Diversity Growing

Tune in to our series on immigration.

This week, the Connection kicks off a series about immigration, diversity and the growing population of foreign-born residents in Fairfax County. County reporter Victoria Ross opens with a story that captures vignettes and statistics of the changing population.

It is a topic consistent with the original Thanksgiving story.

More than 28 percent of Fairfax County's population is foreign born; that's 317,000 residents.

Consider Yesuf Beshir from Ethiopia, who two years ago settled in Springfield and now works for a government contractor. In May, he became an American citizen. "The main thing here is democracy, the right to vote," Beshir said.

These residents include nearly 20,000 who are self-employed business owners, truly job creators, large and small. One of these is Shami Walia who emigrated from India in 1982, and now owns Burke Cigar Shop, a popular cigar lounge that's become a neighborhood fixture. One part of our series will look at the business impacts of the foreign-born population.

Fairfax County Public Schools are harbingers of change: 38,760 Fairfax County elementary school students, that is 44 percent of all elementary school students in public schools here, spoke a language other than English at home as of May 2009. And between them, they speak more than 100 different languages. Another part of our series will look at the challenges and opportunities in Fairfax County Public Schools.

Consider Hutchison Elementary in Herndon, where 63 percent of students have limited English. And Crestwood Elementary in Springfield, where 68 percent of students have lim-

ited English. At Lynbrook Elementary, also in Springfield, 74 percent of students have limited English. At Mount Vernon Woods, in Mount Vernon, 52 percent of students have limited English. At Dogwood Elementary in Reston, 56 percent of students have limited English.

Tune in and let us know what you think.

You can submit a letter to the editor at connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/

— Mary Kimm,

mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com

Be Part of Children's Connection

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide the submissions by Monday, Dec. 3.

Some suggestions:

Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite activity. These should be photographed or

scanned and submitted in jpeg format.

Short answers (50 to 100 words) to some of the following questions: If you could give your parents any gift that didn't cost money what would that gift be? What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming year? What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What is your favorite toy? What makes a good parent? What makes a good friend? What is the best or worst thing that ever happened to you? What is the best gift you've ever given? Ever received?

Your opinion (50 to 100 words) about traffic, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, etc.

Poetry or other creative writing.

Opinion pieces about family, friends, movies, traffic, sports, food, video games, toys, trends, etc.

News stories from school newspapers.

We welcome contributions from families, public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers.

Email submissions for the Vienna/Oakton, McLean, Great Falls, Reston and Oak Hill/Herndon Children's Connections to kemal@connectionnewspapers.com.

Email submissions for Springfield, Burke, Fairfax, Fairfax Station/Clifton/Lorton Connections to South@Connectionnewspapers.com.

To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail the CD to Children's Connection, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Please send all submissions by Dec. 3. The Children's Connection will publish the week of Dec. 27, 2012.

Focus on Immigration

Embracing Our Diversity

By U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11)

Special to the Connection Newspapers

If you can ever find the time to attend a federal naturalization ceremony in Fairfax County for new citizens, do it. It reinvigorates one's patriotism and reminds us all how lucky we are to be Americans.

I've participated in several of the large swearing in ceremonies that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service holds each year in Fairfax. After leading the Pledge of Allegiance for the hundreds of newly-minted citizens and their proud families, I have the honor of addressing them about what it means to be an American.

I tell them that America, a country of immigrants, is a place of opportunity where you can pursue

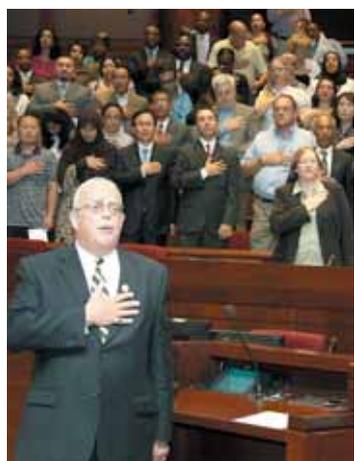


Photo contributed

Connolly leads Pledge of Allegiance for new citizens.

your dreams and raise your families without fearing that somebody's government is going to tell you what to think, how to express yourself, what to believe, or how to worship. Too often, we take these rights for granted, but

many of our new neighbors do not.

These new citizens come to Fairfax from all over the world. Many come from places where they experienced violence or suppression of thought, or the suppression of their right to participate in their government. Many are professionals skilled in medicine, technology, and engineering, or entrepreneurs and small business owners who have worked hard and contributed to Northern Virginia's robust economy.

And when their day finally comes and they recite their Oath of Allegiance to earn the title "American citizen," their pride is palpable, the mood is festive, and the respect they show for their new flag and their new nation is inspiring.

The overall ceremony is an emotional and inspiring experience for everyone in the room, as small

children clutch American flags, spouses hug, and tears well in the eyes of many of the family members in attendance.

These new Americans have helped change the face of Fairfax County and the Northern Virginia region in many ways over the last three decades. The diversity of our residents has enriched the fabric of our society and their efforts have helped our economy grow. Today, Fairfax County has the second highest median family income in the nation, some of the best public schools in the nation, a quality of life second to none, and we continue to create jobs in the county at a rate that outpaces most other communities across the nation.

Here in Fairfax County we have embraced the benefits that diversity brings to our community, and we are better for it.

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Commentary

Taking a Toll on Virginians

By Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum
State Delegate (D-36)

Governor Bob McDonnell came to Tysons Corner last week to participate in a ceremonial ribbon cutting for the opening of the 495 Express Lanes that took place on Nov. 17. More than 500 people turned out to celebrate the opening of the first in Virginia high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes with demand pricing. The level of the tolls will be indicated on digital signs when you enter the lanes, but the amount of the toll will depend on the number of people on the road that can continue their speed at 55 miles per hour. Persons with three or more in the car will not be assessed a toll as long as they have an EZ-Pass Flex that they can turn off. All users of the road must have an EZ-Pass or EZ-Pass Flex. For more details on how this technology-rich system works, go to 495expresslanes.com.

Waiting for the governor on his way from the hotel was a small group of demonstrators carrying placards protesting tolls the governor has proposed to put in place on I95 south of Richmond. The protestors brought a trailer truck that they had parked in the street with a billboard-size message on the trailer protesting the tolls. The realities of Virginia's transportation funding crisis were evident that day. Funding projects like the public-private project improvements to the Beltway are only possible when tolls are collected to pay back the private sector costs with a return on investments. As unpopular as tolls are, as the demonstrators expressed, the unfortunate truth is that tolling will increase in the future.

Tolls are not new to the residents of this area. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority that is building the Silver Line extension of Metrorail just voted last week to raise the tolls on the Dulles Toll Road to \$2.75 total to help pay for the project. Improvements to traffic-congested I95 in Northern Virginia will be financed through a HOT lanes arrangement just like the Beltway. Tunnel improvements in Hampton Roads as well as roadway expansion are being paid for with tolls. Putting

See Plum, Page 11

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Be a Part of CHILDREN'S (& TEENS') CONNECTION

Every year between Christmas and New Year's, The Reston Connection turns its pages over to the contributions of local students. We are seeking artwork, photography, poetry, opinions, short stories and reflections. We welcome contributions from public schools, private schools and students who are home schooled.

E-mail to: ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com, or mail (.jpg and text files on disc only) by Dec. 5, to 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Please be sure to include the student's name, age, grade, school and town of residence along with each submission. For information, call 703-778-9410.

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Focus on Immigration

Finding Home in Fairfax County

Fairfax County has become an immigrant gateway—a place immigrants choose as their destination.

By Victoria Ross
The Connection

Part one of an ongoing series.

Y esuf Beshir spent nearly three years gathering the mountain of paperwork he needed to leave Ethiopia and emigrate to America. Two years ago, he settled in Springfield and now works as a government contractor. In May, he became an American citizen.

"The main thing here is democracy, the right to vote," Beshir said. "You can be what you want in America. You can be president. If you want to be a doctor, you can be a doctor. I tell my daughter that the possibilities in America are endless."

Shahinaz Hassan of Fairfax, originally from Egypt, also became an American citizen in May. "I am happy for today. Everything gets easier here," she said.

In 1982, Shami Walia emigrated from India. He was 18 years old, and worked in "every job you can think of" all over Northern Virginia. "I didn't have anything when I came here, but I worked hard." He now owns Burke Cigar Shop, a popular cigar lounge that's become a neighborhood fixture.

Rosemary Osei came to Centreville in 2000 from Ghana. The 22-year-old voted in her first presidential election this month, and works as a special needs teacher in Vienna.

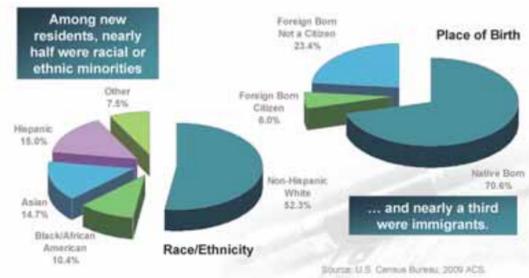
Srikanth Ramachandran came to America 14 years ago from India. In 2002, he founded the Fairfax-based Multivision IT company; by 2007 the company employed 200 people and had \$32 million in sales.

Andy Ton came from Vietnam. He now owns Andy's Barbershop in Vienna, where customers line up out the door on the weekends. Del. Mark Keam (D-35), the first Korean American and the first Asian-born immigrant to serve in the Virginia General Assembly, is one of his regular customers.

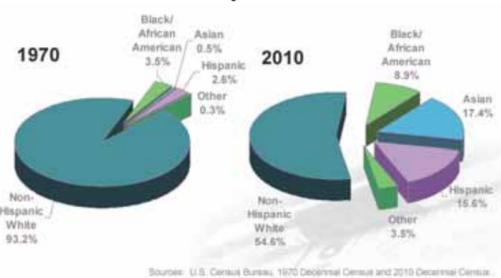
Individually, immigrants bring their own talents, culture, hopes, fears, sorrows, skills and needs. Collectively, they have permanently altered the fabric of Fairfax County.

In the span of one generation, Fairfax County has seen an explo-

Residents Who Moved to Fairfax County During 2009



Population by Race/Ethnicity Fairfax County, 1970 and 2010



sion in its immigrant population. In 1970, more than 93 percent of Fairfax County's population was white and middle-class. In the fall of 1970, a white 6-year-old child beginning elementary school in one of the county's developing towns—Chantilly, McLean, Vienna, Herndon and Centreville (which did not yet have one major grocery store or drug store)—could look to his left, or look to his right, and see a classroom full of children who, at least 90 percent of the time, looked like him and who spoke English.

By 2010, a child entering elementary school in Fairfax County would almost certainly encounter a classmate who did not speak English as a primary language, and whose parents or grandparents immigrated from places such as Vietnam, India, Korea or a country in Africa.

According to the 2010 U.S. Decennial Census, more than 46 percent of the county's population are of a racial or ethnic minority, and nearly a third are immigrants.

"I think the migrant population

is creating a richness and diversity and really enhancing our culture," said Frederic Bemak, PhD, director of the Diversity Research and Action Center at George Mason University. He said residents notice changes in obvious ways and subtle ones.

"There's a language change; there's a cultural change; there's a change as you walk down the street in the communities, there are changes in signs on the storefront because some of them are in different languages... or in churches, religious institutions. I hear it all day. It's not like it used to be." Well, it's not, and that's positive," Bemak said.

In comparison—from 1990 to 2010—the United States doubled the number of migrants settling in America.

"By 2020—and this is astounding—the children and adolescents of migrants will comprise one third of the U.S. population... one-third," Bemak said. "People don't know that, if we're talking about children... that's our future. And if that's only 2020, imagine what

2040 be like."

Bemak argues that a healthy process of acculturation and adjustment—when existing cultural features are combined, and new features are generated—is possible, but only when the non-immigrant culture reaches out.

"We know racism and discrimination have an impact on people's mental health. We say 'you've got to figure out how to be here.' [The work] is simultaneously with the larger communities. . . . Those issues have to be attended to at the same time we help people adjust, adapt, acculturate," Bemak said.

Bemak said he disliked the word "tolerance," because it suggests that we're just "tolerating" immigrants. "We need to respect and celebrate immigrants," Bemak said.

Parents often notice the increasing inflow of diverse cultures at their children's schools. Robert E. Lee High School in Springfield, for example, reflects the increasing diversity of the community in its student body. The school, which opened in 1958 with nearly all white students, now has students from 42 countries who speak more than 34 languages.

In the 2009-2010 school year, according to FCPS, Lee High School's student body was slightly more than 30 percent white, 26 percent Asian, 24 percent Hispanic and about 16 percent black.

"Go to a high school graduation and listen to the names being read. It's not just Smith and Jones anymore," said Lee High School parent Paula Montero, who came with her parents from El Salvador when she was 6 years old.

Statistics show the breathtaking breadth of change in diversity and immigration in Northern Virginia:

- ◆ From 2000 until 2010, Fairfax County gained 91,165 immigrants. In 2000, Fairfax County had 237,677 foreign-born residents; in 2010, the number of foreign-born spiked to 328,842, according to the American Community Survey and the U.S. Census Bureau's 2000 Decennial Census.

- ◆ Forty-four percent of Fairfax County elementary school students currently speak a language other than English at home. That's nearly 40,000 students who go home to households that speak one of more than 100 languages.

- ◆ Among new residents who



Khatira Alvarez (left) of Springfield, and Laura Simon-Salzer of McLean, took the Oath of Allegiance and became naturalized American citizens at a ceremony on July 10, held in the Hayfield Secondary School auditorium.

Photo by Deb Cobb/The Connection

In Upcoming Weeks

During the next month, *The Connection* Newspapers will feature stories, viewpoints and columns about the significant impact immigrants have in Fairfax County.

- ◆ Part II focuses on immigration and Fairfax

County Public Schools;

- ◆ Part III examines politics of immigration;
- ◆ Part IV explores the religious and cultural diversity immigrants bring to Fairfax County.

We encourage your letters and thoughts as we explore this topic.

moved to the county in 2009, nearly half were racial or ethnic minorities, and nearly one-third were immigrants.

- ◆ In the decade from 1990 to 2000, the increase in the number of foreign born in Fairfax County communities included: Centreville, 323 percent; Herndon, 168 percent; City of Fairfax, 88 percent; Springfield, 78 percent; Burke, 63 percent; and McLean, 10 percent.

- ◆ 19,301 (6.4 percent) immigrants in Fairfax County are self-employed business owners. This is higher than the 4.1 percent of self-employed business owners who are U.S.-born Americans.

Between 1990 and 2000, Fairfax County became an immigrant gateway—a place immigrants choose as their destination upon entering the United States, according to a 2006 Fairfax County demographic report. The trend continues. In 2010, Kiplinger called Fairfax County one of the nation's top eight gateways for immigrants.

"Immigrants to this region come from nearly every country in the world, and some localities are home to people from more than 100 countries," said Audrey Singer, a senior fellow in metropolitan policy at the Brookings Institution.

"It's no secret that our community continues to diversify," Silverthorne said during his swearing-in ceremony. "When former Mayor Rob Lederer graduated high school, our minority population was just over 2 percent. When I graduated high school 10 years later, the minority population was 10 percent. Today, it's 40 percent," Silverthorne said, noting that in the Fairfax County school system, more than 100 languages are spoken. "I believe we have turned a blind eye to this trend."

Sharon Bulova, Fairfax County's Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, has emphasized and celebrated Fairfax County's diverse

opportunities and challenges. According to scholars at the Brookings Institute, localities and

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

A Way Out of No Way

Two women—one African-American and one from Africa—learn to see America through each other's eyes.



Photo by Victoria Ross

By Victoria Ross
The Connection

Lillie Reynolds and Rosemary Osei in Reston Town Center in November.

Rosemary Osei, 22, and Lillie Reynolds, 61, have been good friends for four years. The two women, who help teach special needs students at a Vienna elementary school, are sometimes mistaken for mother and daughter.

They bonded over their faith — both are devout Christians — and family values.

Recently, they attended a rally for President Obama at George Mason University. The 2012 presidential election was the first time Osei was exercising her right to vote as an American citizen, and Reynolds was proud of her.

"Voting is a powerful feeling," Reynolds said. "It's one of the best things about being an American." Although they have much in common, both women said they've learned important lessons from their differences.

"We both experience being Americans in different ways. Rosemary came here because she wanted to come here," Reynolds said. "My family was brought here in chains. . . . We've both found a way out of no way."

Osei spent the first 12 years of her life in Ghana. In 2003, she and her younger brother, Reuben, reunited with her family in Centreville. She became an American citizen on Aug. 25, 2012.

"In over nine years of living in the U.S., my proudest moment was on Nov. 6, 2012, when I waited in line for over an hour to help re-elect the president of the United States. I am now proud to say I am an American citizen."

LIKE MANY IMMIGRANTS. Osei said she grew up seeing America as a land of wealth and opportunity. She said there was always a celebration when family friends would come back from America, because they brought armfuls of clothes, candy and toys. "It was something special and magical to me," Osei said.

"Although I lived a comfortable life in Ghana, I believed that America would be a better place to live. To me America represents freedom and justice. Since the money is higher in America, I believed my family and I would become rich and have more money than we had in Ghana," Osei said.

She said she was disheartened when — as a 7th grader at Liberty Elementary School — she did not receive the welcome she anticipated.

"In my country, when we saw white people, we welcomed them. We wanted them to think well of us and come back. I thought everyone would welcome me when I came here," Osei said. Instead, Osei said she felt out of place "as though I didn't belong because of the complexion of my skin color." She said she often cried, and ate lunch in the school's bathroom. Within a month, the 12-year-old yearned to return to Ghana.

"I wanted to go back 'home' to my friends. I was very unhappy because I wasn't being welcomed and accepted for who I am as a person," she said.

Reynolds said she understands that feeling all too well. She grew up in Mobile, Ala. in the 1950s and '60s, during state-sponsored segregation, a time when laws forced blacks and whites to use different drinking fountains, public parks, pools and transportation.

"I have a lot of friends from Africa. They didn't understand why I was so excited to be voting for President Obama the first time. I had to explain to them that we didn't always have the right to vote, and I didn't think I'd live to see the day I could vote for a black man," Reynolds said.

Reynolds said she remembers when she and her sister would walk to go shopping in downtown Mobile. "You could buy the clothes, but you couldn't try them on because white people didn't want to touch anything a black person wore," she said.

Osei said it was eye opening to learn about the United States' recent history of racial discrimination. "When Lillie tells me stories about growing up in America as a black girl in the '60s, it breaks my heart," Osei said.

"It's one thing to watch a movie on TV about how horrible African Americans were treated in the past, but it's another thing to know someone who lived through those experience.

"I was in my 40s, my 40s," Reynolds said, pausing, "before I stopped hating myself for being black."

"My daddy was a smart man," she said. "He was a lumber-checker, and he was really good at math. He did everybody's taxes in our part of town. But he couldn't ride in the front seat of a car with a white person or he'd get arrested. He was talked down to by white people, called 'boy.' . . . I always felt hurt and angry for him."

Reynolds said her grandmother had a saying that stuck with her "She would say nobody is better than you and you're no better than anybody else. My family was smart. I grew up strong in one way and beat down in another."

"It took me to become an adult and to witness a black man become president of the United States of America before I could really feel proud about being an American," said Reynolds. "And make no mistake about it, I am proud to be an American, and proud to live here."

BOTH REYNOLDS AND OSEI said they like living in Fairfax County, where they get to experience the benefits of such a vibrant, diverse culture.

"I am proud of so many things now. It makes me proud of America for how far we, as people, have changed for the better," Osei said. "Most of all I am proud of Lillie for not allowing her past experience turns her into a bitter person—an angry black woman—but instead she is a stronger, independent black woman, who treats everyone with respect."

See Fairfax, Page 12

Entertainment

Send announcements to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com.

THURSDAY/NOV. 22

Pre-Feast Bike Ride. 9:30-11 a.m., at Fountain Square, Reston Town Center. Join a leisurely six-mile Thanksgiving morning bike ride touring North Reston neighborhoods using lower-speed roads and paths. burtoncq@yahoo.com.

FRIDAY/NOV. 23

Gingerbread Man Mile. 8 a.m., at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. A fun-run and race for children and toddlers through high school aged teens to benefit charity and needy children. Register. www.prraces.com.

Reston Holiday Parade. 11 a.m., at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. Macy's-style balloons, musicians, dancers, antique cars and the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse-drawn carriage make a one-of-a-kind one hour parade, rain or shine. Santa stay for photos until 4:30 p.m. and then lights up the huge Christmas tree at 6 p.m. as 5,000-plus spectators watch on Fountain Square and sing carols. www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

SATURDAY/NOV. 24

Turkey Trail. 11 a.m.-noon, at Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Ages 5-12 welcome. \$4/child RA members; \$6/child non-members.



Photo Contributed

The opening of Classical Ballet Theatre's production of The Nutcracker

The Nutcracker

Classical Ballet Theatre's high-caliber dance performances and nonprofit outreach and education provide affordable shows with original choreography. Their rendition of The Nutcracker opens on Saturday, Nov. 24 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. and continues on Sunday, Nov. 25 at 2 p.m. at the Ernst Community Cultural Center Theatre, NVCC Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. \$18-25. 703-471-0750. pmccabe@cbtnva.org or www.cbtnva.org/nuttea.

Reservations by Nov. 20. 703-476-9689 or naturecenter@reston.org.

Thanksgiving Food Drive. 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston, and the Reston Interfaith Food Storage Facility. Meet at RCC Hunters Woods

and sort non-perishable food donations; register in advance, 200 volunteer slots only. www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

See Entertainment, Page 11

Old-Fashioned Holiday Celebration

**Saturday, December 1
11am – 5pm
at Frying Pan Farm Park**

- **Children's Holiday Shopping**
- **Farm Animal Fun**
- **Photos with Santa** (fees apply)
- **Wagon Rides** (fees apply)
- **Strolling Carolers**
- **Warming Fires and Storytelling**
- **Blacksmith Demo**
- **Equestrian Demonstrations**

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11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II
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2013 Assessment

RA Board to Consider 2013 Assessment Rate

The Reston Association Board of Directors will be considering the 2013 Annual Assessment rate during its next meeting on **Nov. 29 at 7 p.m.** at RA headquarters, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive. The current 2012 annual rate for members is \$565.

Entertainment

From Page 10

TUESDAY/NOV. 27

Inova Blood Drive. Noon-7:30 p.m., at the Pavilion in Reston Town Center (near Williams-Sonoma), 11900 Market Street, Reston. Schedule an appointment at 866-256-6372 or www.inova.org/donateblood. On site registration.

THURSDAY/NOV. 29

The Early History of Reston—Translating the Dream to Reality. 7-9 p.m., at the Jo Ann Rose Gallery at the Reston Community Center, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. A panel of early Reston-marketing experts present a program on the origins of Reston, the nation's first large-scale planned community. 703-709-7700, restonmuseum@gmail.com or www.restonmuseum.org.

FRIDAY/NOV. 30

Artist-led Creativity Challenge. 7-10 p.m., at GRACE, 12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston. Work in teams with limited materials to design unique, nature-based creations inspired by artworks in the current CAIRNS: Works by Pam Rogers exhibit; beverages and light snack included. \$10 per person for members and residents of Small District 5; \$20, non-members/non-residents. www.restonarts.org/AdultPrograms.htm.

Towne Square Singers' Holiday Concert: Decembers Past. 7:30 p.m., at Elden Street Players' Industrial Strength Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Encores of favorite musical numbers from holiday shows of the past 30 years, sung loud and clear for all to hear. \$12. 703-787-7300 or www.herndon-va.gov.

SATURDAY/DEC. 1

Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at various homes in Reston. Tour Herndon homes in high holiday fashion—tickets available at Herndon Florist, ArtSpace, and Herndon Community Center. \$15 in advance; \$20 day of. 703-435-6800 ext. 2222 or facebook.com/holidayhomestour.

Winter Open House. 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center Street, Herndon. Glass harpist Jamey Turner plays while shoppers look for crafts from the Council for the Arts of Herndon; refreshments courtesy of the Fortnightly Club and Friends of the Herndon Library. 703-437-8855 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

Amadeus Concerts: Gloria. 4 p.m., at the Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Sacred and secular holiday seasonal favorites make a varied, festive concert. \$30. www.amadeusconcerts.com.

Global Campfire 2012. 4-6 p.m., at the Walker Center Fire Ring on Soapstone Road between Glade and Lawyers Roads, Reston. An awareness event featuring group sing-along, camp games, marshmallow roasting, a campfire, music from Ashleigh Cavalier and welcome from Global Camps Africa Founder Phil Lilienthal; bring chairs, blankets and flashlights for your group. www.GlobalCampsAfrica.org.

Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides. 4-9 p.m., at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. Enjoy carriage rides through Reston Town Center with pick up location on Market Street next to Talbots and all proceeds benefitting local non-profit organization. \$5; children under 5 free.

Holiday Tree Lighting and Sing-Along. 5-6 p.m., at the corner of Lynn and Elden Streets, Herndon. Come for carols, a tree lighting and a visit from Santa. 571-323-5301 or www.dullesregionalchamber.org.

Reston Holiday Parade Set for Nov. 23

Reston Town Center presents the 22nd annual Reston Holiday Parade on Friday, Nov. 23 at 11 a.m. to launch the festive season with Macy's-style balloons, musicians, dancers, antique cars, and more. This one-of-a-kind, one-hour parade along Market Street will also welcome the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse-drawn carriage. The Reston Holiday Parade is held rain or shine, and since 1991 it has been an annual tradition on the day after Thanksgiving. The full day's schedule is listed below, and more information is available at www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

"Come Out to Play!" is the parade theme for 2012 with huge balloons, floats, and costumes inspired by all kinds of fun games, sports, and music. The Reston Holiday Parade attracts approximately 10,000 spectators from near and far to see at least seventy groups, amounting to approximately 500 participants in the procession.

Special guest emcees will announce the procession from two VIP grandstand lo-

cations on Market Street. Grand Marshal for the 2012 Reston Holiday Parade is Bruce Butler, who retired from his post as principal at South Lakes High School in June. VIPs and dignitaries will also take part in leading the parade, including Reston founder, Robert E. Simon, Jr. Continuing another tradition, prior to the 11 a.m. start, thousands of Reston Town Center jingle bell lanyards will be handed out to children along the route as they wait for the parade to begin.

After the parade, Santa and Mrs. Claus will stay for visits and photos until 4:30 p.m. and will return to light up the huge Christmas tree at 6 p.m. The tree lighting will be emceed by DC-region radio personality icon, Cerphe, and attracts a gathering of approximately 5,000 people to Fountain Square for a half hour Sing Along of traditional Christmas songs. Horse-drawn carriage rides begin at 6:30 p.m.

Full information about Holidays are Here at Reston Town Center is available at www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

Plum

From Page 7

tolls on the interstate that brought out the protestors is viewed as a way to finance highway improvements.

The General Assembly has shown no willingness to raise the gas tax or other sources of revenue to fix highway congestion that in Northern Virginia has been found to be the worst in the nation. The current gas tax

rate is the lowest in the country and continues to produce less revenue as cars become more fuel efficient. Other sources of revenue are ear-marked for other government services. But the problem must be addressed! I am totally open to working with the governor and other legislators in resolving this issue. Otherwise, the current direction is going to take an increasing toll on Virginians.

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Focus on Immigration

Fairfax Becomes Immigrants' Gateway

From Page 9

integration, assimilation and social welfare of immigrants has caused frustration and some resentment.

In Fairfax County, slightly more than half of those who are classified as "foreign born" live below the poverty line. Minority students, according to FCPS records, are less likely to graduate from high school on time. The on-time graduation rate for the class of 2010 was 95.6 percent for white students, 94.5 percent for Asian students, 87.5 percent for black students and 75.3 percent for Hispanic or Latino students. On the flip side, Asian students make up more than 60 percent of students admitted through a rigorous admissions process to Fairfax County's elite magnet school, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology.

Immigrants are less likely to have health care coverage. Although immigrants comprise about 30 percent of the county's total population, they comprise 63.5 percent of the county's uninsured residents.

Immigrants are also more likely to experience housing discrimination. According to Fairfax County's Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs, the agency that enforces fair housing laws in the county, discrimination cases have been on the rise in Fairfax County in the past six years.

"Sadly, housing discrimination is alive and well and we've seen an uptick in complaints during the past six years," said Ken Saunders, executive director of Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs.

Although discrimination based on race remains an issue, Saunders reports that in recent years complaints received by his office are related to national origin or involve disability-related issues.

In contrast to national trends, discrimination based on nationality made up 25.6 percent of complaints from 2008 to 2010. In comparison, about 9 percent of complaints to HUD fall under this category. Discrimination complaints, Saunders said, are not filed by one particular group.

"It runs the gamut. We have complaints from Latin Americans, Asians and Pacific Islanders, individuals from the Continent of Africa," Saunders said. Saunders said Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs does a significant amount of education and outreach to communities with limited English proficiency, by hosting seminars aimed at various ethnic groups and by publishing and disseminating information in a number of languages.

VIBRANT CULTURE THROUGH IMMIGRATION

Most community leaders and residents in Fairfax County agree the benefits of diversity and immigration outweigh the challenges.

"Fairfax County is proud to be a community in which companies of all descriptions can and do succeed to a greater extent than in the rest of the region, the state or the country," said Gerald L. Gordon, president and CEO of the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority.

In September, the county was recognized as a successful market for minority-owned businesses in several national business publication rankings. Businesses owned by Hispanics, African-Americans and women generated nearly \$1 billion in revenue and



Frederic Bemak

Photo by Victoria Ross/The Connection

provided more than 1,000 jobs, according to the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority.

Eleven Fairfax County-based companies were among the 500 largest Hispanic-owned businesses in the nation based on revenue—more than the total in 40 states, according to HispanicBusiness.com.

The Fairfax County companies comprise 22 from Virginia on the 2012 Hispanic Business 500 list. In the Washington area, eight companies are from Maryland and two are from the District of Columbia.

Together these companies generated \$655 million in revenue and employed more than 3,000 workers in 2011, according to Hispanic Business.

CELEBRATING OTHER CULTURES

There are numerous ways to experience the cultural diversity of Fairfax County, but perhaps one of the most accessible is by attending one of the county's Naturalization Ceremonies.

"Immigrants bring talent and culture to our community in many ways, and make us who we are," said Bulova. "Every time I attend one of our Naturalization Ceremonies, I'm reminded of how important diversity is to Fairfax County."

On May 25, 2012, Bulova presented the Certificates of Naturalization to 75 new Americans in the Fairfax County Government Center. The board room was packed with immigrants and their families from every corner of the globe—Afghanistan, The Congo, Costa Rica, Burma, India, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

"Some of you have endured hardships to arrive at this time and place," Bulova said in her remarks. "All of you have invested your time, money and efforts to become citizens. Many of you came here to escape war or endless poverty. . . . You who are here today now officially have a seat at that table."

Samuel DeVera, a captain with the county's Fire and Rescue Department and a member of the Fairfax County Asian American Firefighters' Association, gave the keynote address, telling the audience his personal story of coming to America from the Philippines when he was 14 years old in 1983. After becoming a paramedic in 1994, he received a Valor award and, in 2010, scored first on the test to become a captain with the Fire and Rescue Department.

"Look at me. The one thing I can say is work hard to make you and your families better," DeVera said. "If you're vice president of the company, aim to be president. I'm not here to encourage you; I want to challenge you."

The room was quiet when U.S. Rep Gerry Connolly (D-11) stepped to the podium.

"My fellow Americans," Connolly said with gravitas, pausing to let the meaning sink in. And when it did, 75 immigrants, who had just raised their right hand and taken the Oath of Allegiance to become American citizens, erupted with applause and tears, waving American flags and hugging family members.

"You now join us. . . . Every new wave of immigrants refreshes us, makes us stronger," Connolly said, leading the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.



By Alex McVeigh/The Connection

Ellen Graves leads newly naturalized citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance Saturday, Sept. 22 at Lake Anne.

Viewpoints

Immigrants' Experiences: Becoming Americans

On Sept. 22 at the Multicultural Festival on Lake Anne Plaza in Reston, 25 people participated in a naturalization ceremony that made them American citizens. Some of them talk about how they came to the U.S. and why they chose to become citizens.

—Amiee Freeman



Photos by Amiee Freeman

Xiomara Artola, currently living in Woodbridge, originally from El Salvador

"Since I was 18 I had thought about becoming a citizen. But I was young then. I have lived here since kindergarten and I went to school here. Now that I am 23 I felt that it was time to complete the naturalization process."



Jose Zalles, currently living in Woodbridge, originally from Bolivia

"I came here as a very young person. My parents came here first and then I followed. I grew up here. My parents already spoke English. I never really felt the need to become a citizen until recently. During college I saw opportunities that were only available to citizens, so I thought it was time for me to become one."



Seung Il Kim, currently living in Falls Church, originally from South Korea

"This is really a very special event. I have been a member of the community for a long time, but not really. Until now I never had the rights or responsibilities of a citizen."



Bassam Ghazi, currently living in Ashburn, originally from Lebanon

"I came here on a visit 25 years ago and decided I would like to stay here. So, I got my green card. Now I will have time to travel and see more of the country."



Saaeddine Zaghbani, currently living in Burke, originally from Tunisia

"From today I can say I am an American citizen. It is a big honor. For me it is a great opportunity. I can live my dream. My first step as a citizen will be to vote freely. I have visited 47 countries, lived in five of them. Here is where I want to stay."



Photos by Craig Sterbutzel/The Connection

South Lakes junior guard Caitlin Jensen is receiving interest from Division I colleges, Head Coach Christy Winters Scott said.

South Lakes Girls' Basketball Enters Season With Experience

Seahawks return all but one player from last year's district runner-up team.

By Jon Roetman
The Connection

Six-foot-4 South Lakes center Abby Rendle ran the floor during a recent scrimmage against Yorktown, received a pass from guard Caitlin Jensen and attacked the basket. Rendle scored and was fouled on the drive, and would complete the three-point play by making her ensuing free-throw attempt. Later, she blocked a Yorktown shot attempt at the other end of the floor.

What is it like having an athletic 6-foot-4 playmaker on the court?

"It has its advantages," Jensen said.

The South Lakes girls' basketball team returns all but one player from last year's group that went 16-9 and finished runner-up in the Liberty District. Despite their regular season success, the Seahawks lost to Annandale in the opening round of the Northern Region Tournament, an area in which Head Coach Christy Winters Scott wants the team to improve.

"I've told [the Seahawks] that I just want our team to get better," she said. "Every day, every possession of every game, every possession of every practice, I just want us to improve. . . . I think all of them are on the same page in terms of that hunger. They didn't like the taste in their mouth after that [loss] to Annandale last year."

Rendle and Jensen were the team's top scorers as sophomores last season. Winters Scott said each player is receiving interest from Division I schools. Senior guard/forward Mary Severin is getting attention from Division III schools.



South Lakes junior center Abby Rendle is an impact player at both ends of the floor.

Six-foot-2 sophomore Princess Aghayere should provide depth inside, Winters Scott said, which will allow 5-foot-9 Severin and 5-foot-10 guard/forward Gabrielle Schultz to play near the perimeter.

Rendle said losing to Madison by 31 points is a motivator for this season.

"It wasn't just losing," she said. "It was kind of embarrassing for us."

South Lakes will open the 2012-13 season at home against Westfield at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 27. After competing in the West Springfield Tip Off Tournament, the Seahawks will open Liberty District play at Stone Bridge on Dec. 7.



Photo by Craig Sterbutzel/The Connection

Oakton quarterback Kyle Downer, seen against Lake Braddock on Nov. 9, led the Cougars to a victory against Centreville on Nov. 16 in the semifinal round of the Division 6 Northern Region football playoffs.

Oakton Advances To Division 6 Final

The Cougars will face Westfield in the region championship on Saturday, Nov. 24.

Oakton quarterback Kyle Downer's touchdown tied the score with no time remaining on the clock. Moments later, he stared into the crowd as the game was decided on the field behind him.

Brian Burns' extra point gave the Oakton football team a 14-13 victory against Centreville on Nov. 16 in the Division 6 Northern Region football semifinals at Centreville High School. The Cougars will travel to face Westfield for the region championship at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 24.

Trailing 13-7 in the closing seconds with the ball near the Centreville 5-yard line, Downer said he ran for the tying touchdown after Centreville defended well against the pass. Downer credited right tackle Joe Cellini with throwing a key block on the play.

"I looked in the stands [during the extra point]," Downer said in a phone interview. "[I] saw their reaction and saw everyone storming the field."

Oakton lost to Centreville, 49-28, two weeks prior in the

regular season finale. Downer credited the Cougar defense for stepping up in the rematch.

Oakton will travel to face the Westfield Bulldogs in the region final. Westfield won the regular season matchup, 28-14, on Oct. 19. Downer said the Cougars defense needs to eliminate big plays and the offense needs to capitalize on its scoring opportunities.

"We didn't finish," Downer said about the Cougars' regular season loss to Westfield. "We've learned how to finish, we've learned how to control the ball and we've done a pretty good job getting the ball in the end zone when we've needed to."

Oakton won its first six games but closed the regular season on a four-game losing streak. The Cougars entered the postseason as the Northern Region's No. 7 seed. Oakton beat No. 2 Lake Braddock, 20-13, in the quarterfinals on Nov. 9, thanks to three rushing touchdowns from Downer. After beating No. 3 Centreville, the Cougars will have to knock off No. 1 Westfield to reach the state playoffs.

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Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF WATER RATE Public Hearing

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 13, 2012, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2013, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$3,700 to \$3,850.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$9,000 to \$9,500.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,000 to \$1,050.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from \$33 to \$35.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$8.35 to \$9.20.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.16 to \$2.29 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.20 to \$3.45 per 1,000 gallons of water.
8. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$46 to \$50.
9. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
10. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$41 to \$44.
11. An increase in the Returned Payment Charge from \$16 to \$17.

A copy of the proposed changes can be viewed on our Web site at <http://www.fairfaxwater.org/rates/index.htm>. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017. Interested parties also may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 12, 2012 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

*Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED 2013 BUDGET

Fairfax County Water Authority (Fairfax Water) is proposing a \$143.4 million budget for calendar year 2013.

On Thursday, December 13, 2012, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed 2013 Budget in its offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax. The public hearing will begin at 6:30 p.m.

A copy of the proposed budget can be viewed on our Web site at <http://www.fairfaxwater.org/>. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed budget should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017.

Revenues are expected to be \$143.4 million in 2013. Water sales are expected to provide \$124.6 million. Approximately \$18.8 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2012	2013
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$46,473	\$48,367
Power and Utilities	11,345	11,686
Chemicals	6,694	7,968
Fuel	916	960
Postage	547	460
Insurance	1,300	1,107
Supplies and Materials	3,976	4,233
Contractual Services	8,749	8,657
Professional Services	1,656	1,902
Other	2,005	2,285
Sub-Total	83,661	87,625
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,559)	(9,613)
Total	74,102	78,012

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$39,374,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$14,068,000

* Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

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By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Meaning: If I'm terminal, why deprive myself because of cost? If, in fact, I'm only living once – as the old saying goes, and somewhat less of a life than I had anticipated, shouldn't I, at the very least, "Pull my pants down and slide on the ice," as prescribed by Dr. Sidney Freedman in an episode of M*A*S*H, way back when? I mean, what am I waiting for? Godot? It seems fairly clear, after having received the diagnosis: stage IV non-small cell lung cancer, and the prognosis: "13 months to two years" back in late February, 2009, that time was not exactly on my side. Nevertheless, I've tried to live my life like I wasn't dying (to bastardize Chris Allen's debut single). However, doing so is sort of like serving two masters. I can't live today like there's no tomorrow if a part of me is living as normally as I can today as a strategy for there being a tomorrow. It's somewhere between taking one step forward and then two steps backward and/or doing the Hokey Pokey. You're getting nowhere fast, but at least you're getting somewhere. Huh?

I can't tell you, although I attempt to every week in these cancer columns, how confusing the uncertainty of being a terminal cancer patient can be. I want to believe the means that I'm employing to survive is not simply a fool's errand/alternative to the same fate that awaits us all. Moreover, I want to act responsibly and prudently in the face of this killer disease. But sacrificing today for tomorrow, a tomorrow that 44 months ago lost its guarantee, seems counter-productive, almost counter-intuitive anymore. There are certain consequences to actions – or inactions quite frankly, that perhaps I don't need to consider as I did when I was p.c. (pre-cancer). If I'm living on borrowed time, so to speak, I don't need to pay the "vig" (vigorish). What's the point of paying interest, metaphorically speaking? What interest I should be paying is for any and all things that bring me happiness now – while I'm alive and still kicking. Later, apparently, is being taken care of, or so I've been told by my oncologist – if you know what I mean? (One of his suggestions to me at the initial Team Lourie meeting was to: "Take that vacation I've always dreamed of," as in: since you're dying sooner rather than later, there's no time like the present, literally).

But I was always put off by that notion and the bucket with the lists. I never wanted to check off any lists. I simply wanted to live like I always had, hoping that the normalcy and familiarity of what I was doing would help sustain me through the inevitable dark days to follow. (Generally speaking, a cancer diagnosis doesn't exactly spread joy in its wake.) I didn't want to live like I was dying. I wanted to live like I was/had been living. ("Denial," as they say, "is more than just a river in Egypt.")

The only problem: being diagnosed with a terminal disease is a hell of a thing. Change is coming: mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually and everything in between and all around, too; and control of any and all of it becomes increasingly more difficult. I know what I want to do, but sometimes the cancer has other ideas. And even though some of these ideas are not mine, occasionally, they just might be for the best. Who knew? Live and learn. Thank God!

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

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From left, Michael Sanio of the Reston Association Board of Directors, Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill), homeowner Marti Fucile, Cynthia Adams of the Local Energy Alliance Program, and homeowner Eric Shor. Fucile and Shor were awarded \$5,000 to make their Lake Audubon townhouse more energy efficient.

Photo by
Alex McVeigh/
The Connection



LEAP Awards \$5,000 to Homeowners

Marti Fucile and Eric Shor receive award to make home more energy efficient.

By Alex McVeigh
The Connection

Living on Lake Audubon, Marti Fucile and her fiancé Eric Shor have learned to love their view of the lake. But as environmentally-friendly homeowners, they also know the reality that comes with the high ceilings and large windows in their townhouse.

Thanks to the Local Energy Alliance Program, a nonprofit that advocates and coordinates energy savings for homeowners, Fucile and Shor will get some assistance in their quest to become greener. Fucile was one of the winners of LEAP's Home Energy Makeover Contest, winning \$5,000 to use to make their home more energy efficient.

"We were formed to promote energy savings, which leads to sustainability, which is directly tied to economic prosperity," said Cynthia Adams, director of LEAP, which opened an office in Fairfax this year. "When you save money on energy, you have it to put to use elsewhere. And there's a lot more to it than just turning off your lights and lowering your thermostat."

Contractors performed an energy audit when Fucile was named a finalist, and they examined the house for signs of energy waste.

"In this house, we wanted to stop the air movement, to stop what we call the stack effect," said Michael Hogan, a contractor with LEAP. "That's where air comes in through the bottom of the house, is conditioned, then it rises and goes out through the top. This house has perfect pathways for the air to move upstairs, and we want to stop that, which will definitely change the weather in this house."

LEAP HAS A PROCESS by which they approve contractors who meet their standards when it comes to home repairs and procedures that use environmentally-friendly techniques and the correct materials in their work.

"Once we do our work, we're not just saying 'this

house is better,' we take exact measurements on what is happening. This is building science, not building voodoo," said John Wolfe, a combustion safety analyst with Energy Masters of Virginia. "We can back up everything we're doing with hard data, and the person who comes behind us will get that same data."

Fucile said she heard about the contest after seeing an ad in the Reston Association newsletter. She filled out the online assessment tool that compares energy use and other factors against similar houses in the area to determine inefficiencies.

"I knew this house was drafty, and that it wasn't as efficient as it could be," she said. "We're definitely anxious to make our footprint smaller and make this place more efficient."

The work will be done on the townhouse sometime between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

LOCAL OFFICIALS joined LEAP staff and several contractors for a tour of the townhouse Thursday, Nov. 8, to get a firsthand look at ways to save energy.

"The County has a clear sustainable energy goal, and conservation is a major part of that," said Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill). "A program like this allows us all to walk away and think about our own home, and what the everyday citizens can do."

Michael Sanio, member of the Reston Association Board of Directors, says he is intrigued with the possibilities of such a program.

"Within the RA, the LEAP program has initiated a lot of discussions about what a program like this can do for our community," said Sanio, who has a professional background in international sustainability. "We're trying to make Reston a model for sustainability, and to not only protect our environment, but start to repair the damage we've done."

More information on LEAP, including their assessment tool for homeowners, can be found at www.leap-va.org.



Photos courtesy of Greater Reston Arts Center

2012 Thanksgiving Card Challenge winners (from left): second place—Estelle Kim, Dranesville ES, first place—Patrick Nappi, Westbriar ES, third place—Jenna Vigneault, Dranesville ES.

Westbriar Student Wins Thanksgiving Card Challenge

Greater Reston Arts Center (GRACE) teamed up with K3 Construction Group to sponsor a Thanksgiving Card Challenge among the schools participating in the GRACE Art program (formerly known as the Art in the Schools). This is the seventh year that K3 has sponsored this program to select artwork that will be featured on their annual Thanksgiving card, and the sixth year that schools participating in GRACE Art program have been invited to participate.



Patrick Nappi, Westbriar Elementary, winner of 2012 Thanksgiving Card Challenge with his winning artwork.

Twenty nine students from seven elementary schools, including: Academy of Christian Education, Dranesville Elementary, Forestville Elementary, Green Hedges School, Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic School, Terraset Elementary, and Westbriar Elementary, submitted entries for this year's Challenge. The school art teachers selected a maximum of five entries from their school to be entered in the challenge. All submissions were reviewed by a committee of K3 employees, GRACE employees and GRACE Board of Directors to select the most imaginative interpretation of the Thanksgiving theme.

On Thursday, Nov. 15, an awards reception was held at GRACE to announce the winner and acknowledge all of the participants. First place was awarded to Patrick Nappi, a second grader at Westbriar El-

ementary. Patrick's artwork is featured on the K3 Thanksgiving card and will be mailed to over 1,300 of the area's leading businesses and associations. In addition, he received a gift card, and 100 cards for him to send to friends and families. In addition, Westbriar Elementary received \$250.

Second place was awarded to Estelle Kim, a sixth grader at Dranesville Elementary. Third place was awarded to Jenna Vigneault, a sixth grader at Dranesville Elementary. All participants were recognized and received a certificate of participation and ribbon.

Kathy McCormick, principal and vice president of Business Development for K3 Construction Group, presented a check for \$1,000 to Jeanne Loveland, education director of Greater Reston Arts Center.