

# Springfield CONNECTION

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PHOTO BY ALAN GOLDSTEIN/THE CONNECTION

**A Family  
Made Whole**  
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**Four Northern  
Virginia Senators  
Targeted**

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# Volunteering to Cheer

NEWS, PAGE 8

Alana Corn, 16, a cheerleader at West Springfield High School, volunteered to mentor Northern Virginia Special Olympics members who wanted to form a cheerleading team. Their first performance was held Friday, Jan. 11, during halftime of the girls' basketball game at WSHS. Corn, front, with Samantha Cully (left) and Sarah Draznin.

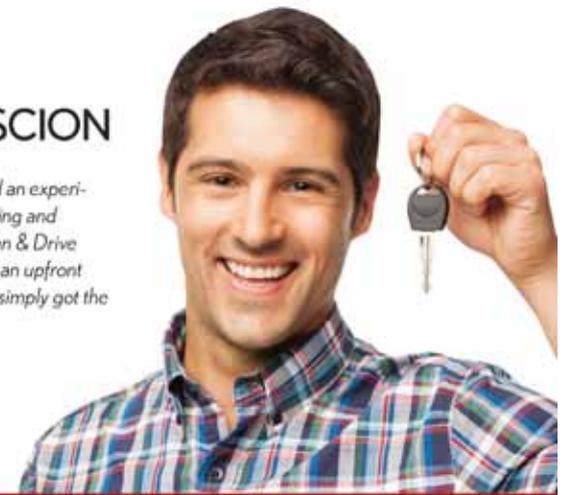
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## Four Northern Virginia Senators Targeted

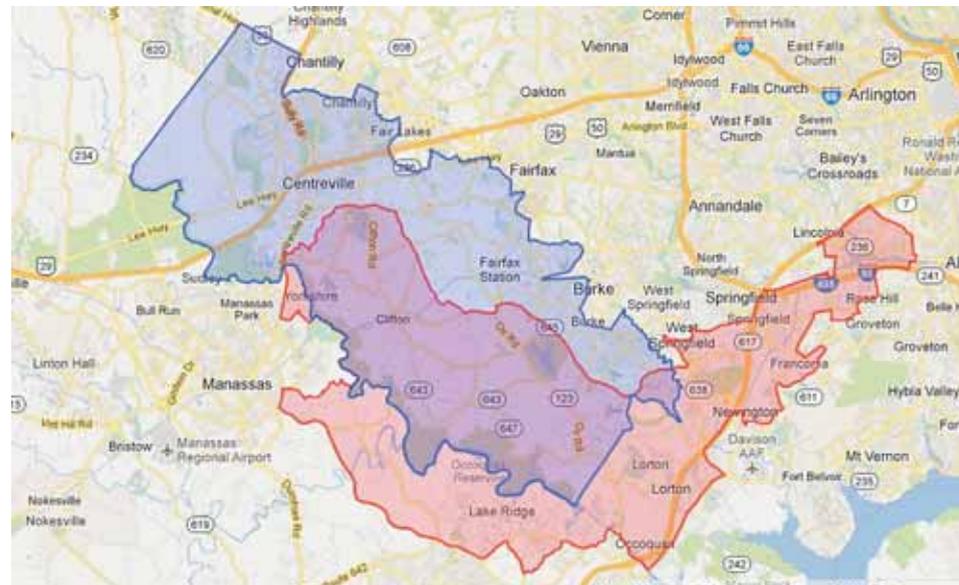
Redistricting effort puts Fairfax County seats in the spotlight.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
AND VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

**F**our Northern Virginia state Senators are targets of a Republican-led effort to draw new districts — Sen. George Barker (D-39), Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37), Sen. Toddy Puller (D-36) and Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34). Democrats say the redistricting effort is a cynical attempt to take advantage of the absence of Sen. Henry Marsh (D-16), a prominent civil rights veteran, who was in Washington, D.C. for the inauguration on Monday. But state Sen. John Watkins (R-10) of Powhatan defended the effort as a way to create a sixth majority black Senate district in Southside. It passed the Senate on a 20-to-19 vote.

“This is about political power,” said Barker, who was in one of the most competitive races of 2011. “They are trying to target the Democratic senators who represent districts that are basically swing districts.”

The drama took place Monday afternoon, when the state Senate took up a bill that would have made small changes to four Senate districts. During the debate, Republicans amended the bill in a way that would radically change districts throughout Virginia. Barker’s seat and Marsden’s seat, for example, would be about 80 percent different. And Puller’s seat would swap about 70 percent of her current precincts for new ones. Petersen, who represents sections of Fairfax City, Vienna, Dunn-Loring and Centreville, said in a call Tuesday he stands to lose nearly half of his constituents if the politically redrawn map holds up to legal challenges. He said he would lose precincts that he’s held for 12 years, including



State Sen. Toddy Puller (D-36) would lose Dumfries and gain Belle Haven.

Mantua, Mosby Woods, Fairfax Villa and some newer precincts in Centreville.

“This is outrageous, and it must be stopped,” said Del. Charniele Herring (D-46), chairwoman of the Democratic Party of Virginia. “This goes beyond partisanship. It’s downright undemocratic.”

**REDISTRICTING USUALLY** takes place once a decade, a process that’s tied to the decennial census. Lawmakers have deviated from that once-in-a-decade timetable from time to time, usually to address problems with split districts that have presented problems for registrars. The effort that passed the Senate this week, however, goes far beyond that kind of tweaking by dramatically redrawing the map for the entire commonwealth. On the Senate floor, Watkins said failing to create a sixth majority black district in Southside Virginia would invite lawsuits under the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

“I wish to avoid litigation,” Watkins said during the floor debate Monday afternoon.

Democrats countered that a court fight is imminent.

“We will fight this all the way to the Supreme Court of Virginia if necessary,” said

Senate Democratic Leader Dick Saslaw (D-35) in a written statement. “First voter suppression efforts, then the war on women, and now draconian changes to a Justice Department-approved redistricting plan. It appears that there are no boundaries to their overreaching political agenda.”

**THE TIMING** of the effort was galling to many Democrats, who accused the Republicans of taking advantage of the presidential inauguration to score political points. Because the state Senate is evenly divided between 20 Democrats and 20 Republicans, any change in the balance of power could create an imbalance. Although the Republicans have delayed the bill on several previous occasions, they waited until Monday to move on the legislation.

“To plot to do this on Martin Luther King Day, when civil rights icon Sen. Henry Marsh, left to attend the historic inauguration of our president is truly embarrassing,” said Marsden. “I am deeply disappointed that the Republicans continue to play these petty partisan games.”

Republicans pointed to a 2011 newspaper column by former Democratic Gov.

“This goes beyond partisanship. It’s downright undemocratic.”

— Del. Charniele Herring (D-46),  
chairwoman of the  
Democratic Party of Virginia

Doug Wilder, the nation’s first elected black governor, supporting a Senate redistricting plan passed when Democrats ruled the Senate. Democrats countered by accusing Republicans of “packing” the districts by using the change in Southside Virginia to free up more districts that would be friendly to Republicans.

“Obviously we went through redistricting in 2011. The constitution specifically speaks to 2011 as being the redistricting year, not 2012, not 2013,” Petersen said. “You can’t say ‘Obama was elected in 2012, but now we don’t like him in 2013, so we’ll just have another election in a year’ when the constitution doesn’t authorize elections ... That’s absurd.”

Petersen said he is confident any judge would find the bill unconstitutional, but one question still out there is whether Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, a Republican who is running for Governor in 2013, will defend the tactic.

“This is what happens when Republicans regulate other Republicans,” Petersen said. “Every layer of oversight is stacked against us.”

“I don’t know if it’s legal, but I do know it is despicable,” said Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee), who said he was in bed with the flu when he got word about the political power-play.

“To pull a purely political maneuver on Martin Luther King Day and Inauguration Day — days that promote unity — is not only wrong, it’s purely unpatriotic. I only hope this can be reversed and that the General Assembly will actually focus on the peoples work and quit playing games.”

### AREA ROUNDUPS

#### Making Children Resilient

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will host a presentation by resiliency expert Nan Henderson, “Resiliency in Action: How Families, Schools and Communities Create ‘Bounce Back’ Kids,” on Tuesday, Jan. 29, from 7-8:30 p.m., in the Robinson Secondary School cafeteria. Robinson is at 5035 Sideburn Road in Fairfax. (From the main entrance, turn left and the cafeteria is on the right.)

This free workshop is designed for parents, school staff and community members. The goal is to help students develop social competence, problem-solving skills, self-awareness, control and initiative. These are all traits that resilient individuals possess to bounce back and overcome challenges and adversity, including trauma, crises and stress. Register at

[www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/resiliency/workshop/HendersonWorkshop.shtml](http://www.fcps.edu/dss/ips/resiliency/workshop/HendersonWorkshop.shtml).

#### Improve Transportation for Elderly, Disabled

Local residents’ answers to a brief survey will help Fairfax County improve transportation services for older adults and people with disabilities in this county and the cities of Fairfax and Falls Church. The questionnaire consists of 27 mostly multiple-choice questions. It takes 5-10 minutes to complete.

Take the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/mobilityoptions>. It’s sponsored by the Fairfax Area Mobility and Transportation Committee, which reports jointly to the Fairfax Area

Disability Services Board and the Fairfax Area Long Term Care Coordinating Council. For an alternate format of the survey, contact Jill Clark at 703-324-5874, TTY 703-449-1186.

#### Give Caregivers a Break

Fairfax County needs Respite Care volunteers throughout the county to give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Volunteers are matched with families in or near their own neighborhoods. Support and training is provided. Contact Kristin Martin at 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or [Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov).

## THE COUNTY LINE

# A Family Made Whole

After a tragic loss, Reston couple creates a family through adoption.

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Granvilles look like a made-for-TV family. On a bright October afternoon, Chris, a computer engineer, is teasing his teenage son Kenny about what kind of pet to adopt, while Tiffany sits on a sofa, cradling Elijah, Kenny's baby brother, who has just woken up from an afternoon nap.

"Fish? No way," Kenny, 15, says. "They just go 'round and 'round in a bowl."

Kenny is lobbying hard for a dog or—at the very least—a guinea pig or hamster.

"What I'm saying is you start with the fish, okay, and then you move up to guinea pig or something else," Chris says.

"Can you tell we've been talking about this for just a little while?" Tiffany asks a visitor, rolling her eyes in mock exasperation.

It's quickly apparent the Granvilles are a close-knit family who like spending time together.

What is not so apparent is how this family came to be, and why an ordinary Sunday afternoon laughing with two children is a minor miracle for the Granvilles.

Chris and Tiffany, both in their 30s, were married in New York City on Christmas Eve, 2007. One of three children, Chris was raised in Queens. Both were very close to their parents and grandparents, whom they credit for inspiring their Christian faith.

**IN FEBRUARY 2008**, the couple moved to Reston, where they both had demanding careers as computer engineers. They also found out that same month that Tiffany was pregnant.

"We were like 'wow.' We just got married, and now we're going to have baby. We were living the dream," Chris said.

Jamison Granville was born on Oct. 23, 2008. He was a healthy 8.6 pound baby, and the light of his parent's life. When Chris's mother was diagnosed with aggressive kidney cancer that spring, Jamison kept a smile on his grandmother's face as she went through grueling chemotherapy sessions.

"He was my mother's first grandchild. She and Jamison were tied at the hip," Chris said.

When Chris's mother died on July 4, 2009, both Chris and Tiffany were devastated by the loss, but they took comfort in Jamison's smile, their large network of friends and family and their faith.

Like many working parents, the Granvilles had carefully researched and selected a day care center for their child. It wasn't unusual to get a call from staff at the center if Jamison was sick, or if other minor issues cropped up.

But on Sept. 16, 2009, Tiffany received a call from the center's director. She said she sensed something was wrong immediately.



**A Granville family portrait, taken in February, 2012. (From left) Kenny; Tiffany holding baby brother Elijah; Chris Granville.**

"I got a phone call about 3 p.m. The director said she needed to meet us at Reston hospital. She wouldn't give me any other information," Tiffany recalled, pausing. "Jamison was 10 months and 24 days old..."

Chris said he got a message from a detective. "He said to call this doctor, and the doctor said you have to stop whatever you're doing and get here," Chris said. "I didn't know what was happening."

"I can't tell you how I got from my desk on the sixth floor to my car," Tiffany said. "When I got there, doctors were working on him, but I could tell he wasn't there anymore. . . . You feel like you're in a movie, or a dream. You get through it, but you're not there."

Tiffany said the pain of losing Jamison was almost unbearable, and even her strong faith in God could not keep her from waking up some mornings and thinking there was nothing left to live for. "I have to be honest; there were days I did not want to be here."

But it was the couple's strong faith in God kept that kept them moving forward.

"We became more involved in our church, but at that point, it's just a day-by-day existence," Chris said. Tiffany said she drew strength from her grandmother, who had also lost her firstborn son. Her grandmother went on to give birth to eight children, and adopted two more.

"I pulled from her strength. I thought to myself, this woman from Louisiana, with an eighth-grade education, through all this adversity, she was able to overcome it in a time when things were horrible for black folks," Tiffany said. "I remember what a loving and patient person she was. . . . I started to think about everybody I had here. . . . I thought we all have to leave one day, so you have to make a positive impact while you're here. We did not want what happened to us to define us."

**THE COUPLE**, who had always talked about adopting a child, had maintained friendships with other couples who were foster parents, and they decided

SEE POWER, PAGE 16



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOAN BRADY

Beverly Howard

## Fairfax Families4Kids

Fostering bonds with children.

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

**N**ationwide, more than 463,000 children live in foster care. In many states, including Virginia, the number of foster youth has tripled in the last 25 years. As of Sept. 30, 2011, nearly 5,000 youth were in foster care in Virginia, according to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), a division of the U.S. Health and Human Services Department. Physical abuse is the most common reason children enter foster care, but it's not the only reason. Often there's emotional abuse, sexual abuse and the parent or caretaker's inability to provide a safe environment due to substance abuse. The prospects for youth who age-out (or "emancipate") from foster care are bleak, according to the ACF. More than half of the children who age-out of foster care end up "couch-surfing," and essentially homeless. In a 2009 ACF report:

- ❖ Less than 3 percent go to college;
- ❖ 51 percent are unemployed;
- ❖ Emancipated females are four times more likely to receive public assistance than the general population;
- ❖ In any given year, foster children compromise less than 0.3 percent of the state's population, and yet 40 percent of persons living in homeless shelters are former foster children. A similarly disproportionate

percentage of the nation's prison population comprises former foster youth.

In 2005, Fairfax County launched a program called FairfaxFamilies4Kids, which actively seeks mentors to connect with older children in foster care, those most at-risk for homelessness. Beverly Howard, the program's coordinator, agreed to a Q&A interview. To find out more about the Fairfax Families4Kids program or becoming a volunteer or mentor, contact Beverly Howard, Ph.D., coordinator of the Fairfax Families4Kids Program at 703-324-7518.

**Q: Tell us a little bit about the background of the program? What niche does it fill?**

**A:** Fairfax Families4Kids is a mentoring program, now housed out of the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, which focuses on supporting older youth in foster care (or those youth who are at risk of re-entering foster care). The program's goal is for the youth in foster care to form and maintain healthy, positive and long-term relationships with caring adults and peers while learning essential life, leisure and social skills. It works to accomplish this through group mentoring events and individual mentoring relationships. The twice-monthly group mentoring events are outings in the community where the youth, mentors, volunteers, and prospective adoptive families come together in a safe, super

SEE JOYS, PAGE 16

# NEWS

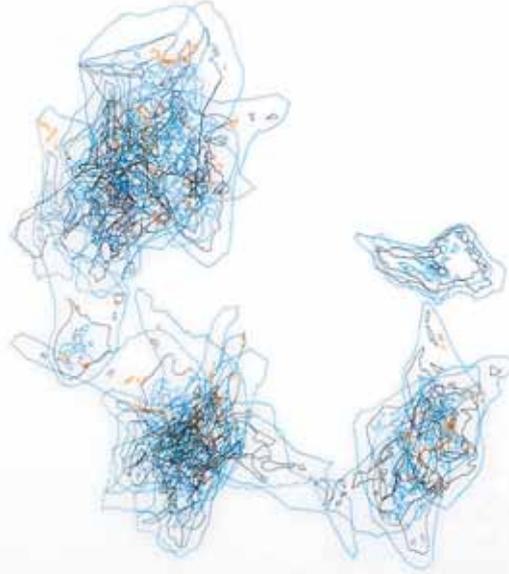
## Mason's School of Art Presents 'Draw(n) Out' Exhibit

**C**George Mason University's School of Art is presenting "Draw(n) Out," an exhibition featuring works by nationally recognized artists from across the United States, including a selection of artists represented by galleryELL in Brooklyn, N.Y. The exhibition will be on display in the Fine Art Gallery in the Art and Design Building on Mason's Fairfax Campus from Jan. 22 through Feb. 15.

An opening reception will be held on Thursday, Jan. 24, from 6-8 p.m.

According to Kariann Fuqua and Nancy Hubbard, who organized the exhibition and whose work will be on display, "Draw(n) Out" examines the work of artists who utilize drawing to explore physical manifestations and psychological perceptions of time. Notions of time—temporality, permanence, progression, flux—only add to the complexity of its definition, providing a rich framework from which artists can investigate new meaning. The exhibition will focus on pushing the boundaries of the institutional definition of drawing, whether through the integration of mark-making with sometimes unusual materials or through a different conceptual approach to the medium, while simultaneously exploring themes of process, evolution, decay and change."

Artists include: Barb Bondy, associate professor of art, Auburn University, Auburn, Ala.; Matthew



**Kariann Fuqua, Untitled ("Deep Water Horizon Oil Spill" series), Ink on mylar**

Choberka, associate professor of art and chair, Weber State University, Ogden, Utah; Kariann Fuqua, curator, George Mason University, Fairfax; Jodi Hays, artist, Nashville, Tenn.; Nancy Hubbard, artist, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Deanna Lee, artist, Brooklyn, N.Y.; Tim McDonald, associate professor of art, Framingham State University, Framingham, Mass.; Kirsten Nash, artist, New York; and John Ros, artist, Brooklyn, N.Y.

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## Expanding Medicaid Good for Virginia

**Real health coverage for an additional 400,000 people is in reach.**

Virginia has an opportunity to expand Medicaid in a way that could extend health coverage to more than 400,000 residents who currently have no health insurance while the Federal government picks up the tab; Virginia would pay 10 percent of the additional cost after 2020.

The Medicaid expansion would give medical insurance to 25,000-30,000 Fairfax County residents, where more than 132,000 have none.

More than 12 percent of the slightly more than 1 million people who live in the wealthiest county in the nation are without health insurance. Household income in Fairfax County averages more than \$122,000 a year.

In Arlington, 17 percent of adults under age 65 lack health insurance.

Under the health care reform act, many of Virginia's uninsured residents could be covered

by an expansion of Medicaid to cover residents who earn up to 133 percent of the poverty line, and that expansion would be paid for almost entirely by federal funds. But while the reform act itself was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, the court also opened a door for states to opt out of the expansion of Medicaid.

Virginia's current eligibility requirements for Medicaid are so strict that although it is the 11th largest state in terms of population and 7th in per capita personal income, Virginia ranked 43rd in Medicaid enrollment as a proportion of the state's population and 47th in per capita Medicaid spending, according to a 2013 Fairfax County report.

### EDITORIAL

The report says that new coverage would extend to individuals earning less than \$15,302 per year or families earning less than \$31,155 per year, low income children who lose Medicaid when they turn 19, and adults with disabilities not currently eligible.

It isn't as if there were no health care costs for these currently uncovered residents. Right now, they access health care when they are very sick by going to an emergency room, where the hospital spreads the cost of care around.

But this is inefficient, expensive and unhealthy. Expanding Medicaid coverage would allow far less expensive preventative care and lead to better health outcomes.

A new analysis by the Commonwealth Institute shows that expanding Medicaid to 133 percent of the poverty level would generate state general fund savings and new revenues that would total \$2.08 billion and more than offset the state's share of expansion costs over the next eight years, plus provide significant numbers of new jobs and economic growth. Expanding health care will add tens of thousands of new jobs. People with access to preventative and early health care use fewer sick days and are more productive on the job as well.

From a practical perspective, declining federal money to provide healthcare to uninsured Virginians makes no more sense than declining federal funds for transportation because you don't like the feds telling you to wear your seatbelt.

From a human perspective, passing up the chance to offer health coverage to 400,000 Virginians is inconceivable.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## Searching for 'The New Virginia Way'

**Need to change the way Virginia supports people with disabilities.**

BY RIKKI EPSTEIN AND  
KYMBERLY DELOATCHE

In light of Virginia's settlement with the Department of Justice over Virginia's state institutions for people with disabilities, also known as training centers, it is time for us to enter "The New Virginia Way." We must focus on building community supports and capacity for those leaving the training centers and for the 7,500 families on waiting lists for state Medicaid waivers.

"The New Virginia Way" means changing the way Virginia supports people with disabilities from an under-funded, complicated system to a comprehensive community support structure. Right now, there are not enough supports available for every individual in the community. In fact, this lack of community options was a large part of the reason the DOJ investigated Virginia and found it violates the civil rights of people with disabilities.

The DOJ settlement and "The New Virginia Way" will ensure community supports are done correctly. The settlement is a legally enforceable agreement that holds Virginia responsible for making sure every person transitioning to

community-based care has the supports they need lined up before they move. If the Independent Reviewer overseeing implementation feels that Virginia is falling short, the case goes back to court. Judge John Gibney, who is overseeing the settlement, has made clear his commitment to protecting the rights of everyone involved and ensuring all requirements are met.

It is worth noting that since the settlement, the General Assembly has funded more waivers than the minimum mandated by the settlement. The governor's current budget proposal includes rate differentials for individuals who have intense behavioral and nursing needs, and the state is hiring a consultant to redesign the waivers to provide more comprehensive services with adequate reimbursement rates. This demonstrates a step forward.

Increasingly, service providers have dedicated themselves to supporting individuals with significant needs. Some specialize in helping individuals with a history of significant behavioral challenges and others have nurses on staff to support individuals with complex medical concerns. Several have begun to expand since



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARC OF VIRGINIA

**An individual with a disability and his caregiver wearing "I Support The New Virginia Way" stickers at the Martin Luther King Day Rally in Richmond.**

the settlement to help individuals transition.

The settlement encourages creativity and smaller, customized supports. We need to consider sponsored placements and apartments with 24-hour staffing. These housing models are already working in Virginia and can be established affordably and quickly.

Over a dozen states have no institutions and most have closed at least one. We have great role models for institutional closure, an Independent Reviewer with decades of experience in making transitions a reality, a settlement

that mandates safe and appropriate supports, and thousands of advocates dedicated to making sure we support everyone the right way.

This settlement is a landmark opportunity to ensure Virginia is changed for the better forever. That will happen when we all put our energy towards making "The New Virginia Way" reality.

*Rikki Epstein is executive director at The Arc of Northern Virginia. Kimberly DeLoatche is executive director at the Autism Society of Northern Virginia*

# NEWS

**The Junior League of Northern Virginia took part in the National Day of Service by assisting volunteers in making cards for homeless and hospitalized children. Clockwise from left: Gretchen Johnson of Springfield; Jennifer Bornhofen of Arlington; Junior League of Northern Virginia member Holly Dalferes of Vienna; Kailynn Bray, Brittany Carr and Bradley Smith of Arizona.**



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

# National Day of Service Launches Inauguration

**Local residents give back to their communities and pledge ongoing service.**

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

The 57th Presidential Inauguration began Saturday, Jan. 19, with hundreds of Americans rolling up their sleeves and serving their communities. More than 13,000 people attended the day's marquee event, the Service Summit on the National Mall, according to the Presidential Inaugural Committee.

The all-day event honors the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by promoting community service. President Barack Obama launched the National Day of Service as part of the inauguration festivities four years ago, along with Vice President Joseph R. Biden and his wife, Dr. Jill Biden. In 2009, he visited injured soldiers and lent a hand on a homeless shelter renovation.

On Saturday, President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama kicked off the day with daughters Malia and Sasha at Burrville Elementary School in Northeast D.C. With the help of 500 volunteers, they gave the school a makeover as part of an event orga-

nized by City Year.

The Bidens spent part of Saturday at the D.C. Armory for the Unite America in Service event, where volunteers packed 100,000 care kits for U.S. service members, wounded warriors, veterans and first responders. The kits include lint rollers, dental floss, toothbrush and toothpaste, wipes, Band-Aids and sanitizer.

A variety of service events were held on the mall and in Fairfax County. The Junior League of Northern Virginia assisted volunteers on the mall in making cards for homeless and hospitalized children. Gretchen Johnson of Springfield said the event was a "great start to the inauguration," and "a wonderful way to be a part of the inaugural weekend and give back to the community."

In Fairfax County, volunteers joined Our Daily Bread, a Fairfax nonprofit, delivering food to low-income families.

"Our volunteers packaged food at our Vienna Pantry and delivered it to 30 clients throughout the Fairfax County area who receive supplemental food from us every two weeks for approximately four months," said ODB Executive Director Lisa Whetzel.

The signature event included speakers Chelsea Clinton and actress Eva Longoria, as well as booths where participants could learn more about local and national service organizations.

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### TUESDAY/JAN. 29

**Info Session: Identifying Services and Resources for Older Adults.** 7-8:30 p.m., at Inova Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), 4027 B Olley Lane, Fairfax. Learn about day programs for older adults involving senior centers, senior plus, adult day health care, PACE, chronic disease self-management programs and independent living programs. 703-324-3453 or [NCSInterfaith@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:NCSInterfaith@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### WEDNESDAY/JAN. 30

**Park Authority Annual Public Comment Meeting.** 7 p.m., Room 106 in the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Pkwy., Fairfax. Find information on proposed fee changes and give input—to make a statement at the meeting, call in advance; obtain a desk copy of the fee proposal at the Park Authority office or online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/feemeeting.htm>. 703-324-8662 or [Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov).

### ONGOING

**Senior Fall Prevention Classes.** 1:30-2:30 p.m., at the Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest

Hill Dr., Fairfax. Tuesday and/or Thursday classes in a heated pool designed to work on balance and core muscles for injury prevention. \$10. 703-667-9800.

**American Red Cross CPR, First Aid and AED.** Various times, at 2720 State Route 699, Suite 200, Fairfax. One-year certification, digital or print materials and continued education on Mondays through Thursday and Saturday. \$70-110. [www.redcrossna.org](http://www.redcrossna.org).

**Hats, Gloves and Scarves for Children.** 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday, FCFT Offices, 7011 Calamo Street, Suite 101, Springfield. The Fairfax County Federation of Teachers collects new children's hats, scarves and gloves for needy County children. 703-451-6840.

## Seeking Singers for Anton Bruckner's "Te Deum" at Messiah United Methodist Church

Community members are invited to sing! Required rehearsals are Sundays, February 3, 10, & 17 and Friday, February 22 from 7:30-9:30 pm. You must attend at least 3 of the 4 rehearsals. Mandatory rehearsal with the orchestra on Saturday, February 23 from 9:30 am - noon.

Performance is Sunday, February 24 at 3 pm. Cost is \$10 to purchase the vocal score. Please register by January 27 to ensure a score by the first rehearsal. Call Fran Underwood at 703-569-9862, ext. 107, or email [funderwood@messiahumc.org](mailto:funderwood@messiahumc.org), or look for "te deum singer signup" under worship at our website.



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The Northern Virginia Special Olympics cheerleading team performed for the first time on Friday, Jan. 11, during halftime of the girls' basketball game at WSHS. The crowd cheered and clapped along with the team. (Front row, from left) Jill Arnott, Ginger Fischer and Jacquelyn Hoffmeier; Back Row: Heather Savage, David Vonack, assistant coach Keiko Vonack, Brian Vonack and Samantha Cully.



PHOTO BY ALAN GOLDSTEIN/ THE CONNECTION

## Volunteering to Cheer

Special Olympics "Cheer Team" wows crowd with high-energy performance.

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

Like many girls, Jacquelyn Hoffmeier of Burke always wanted to be a cheerleader. The 25-year-old, born with Down Syndrome, finally got her chance to perform on Friday, Jan. 11.

Hoffmeier, along with seven of her Special Olympics teammates, cheered and danced before a crowd of nearly 200 parents and students during halftime at the West Springfield High School girls' basketball game.

"My daughter was so into cheerleading. She practices two hours a day with her Wii, and as soon as I mentioned creating an informal cheer team, she was ready to go," said Jay Hoffmeier, Jacqueline's father and head coach of the Northern Virginia Special Olympics Gymnastics (Area 26) group. "This is so much fun for them. They are pure athletes because they don't care about anything but the sport."

Although Hoffmeier had been coaching with Special Olympics for 22 years, his expertise was in gymnastics, not cheerleading, so he started scouting around for someone who had the skills and the patience to coach his team of aspiring cheerleaders. The team members, who range in age from 18 to 36, all have some form of intellectual disability.

"Many people assume that because they are non-verbal, they can't learn or don't want to exercise, and that could not be further from the truth," Hoffmeier said. "They are all so excited about this, and they love their coaches."

West Springfield High School cheerleaders Alana

Corn and Kelsey Kirkman, both 16, volunteered to coach the team, and they have been practicing with them every Sunday night since school began in September. As WSHS juniors, they volunteer purely for the fun of it. They don't receive school credit.

"We wanted to give them an opportunity to do something we take for granted," Corn said. "They work incredibly hard, and they have so much fun with it. I love to see the joy on their faces when they learn a new move."

Kirkman said she loves being welcomed by the team. "They get really excited when they see us, because they love cheering," she said.

"The Olympians and their families are all so excited about the performance," said Del. Eileen Filler-Corn, Alana's mother. "We're proud of her for volunteering."

When it was time for the halftime performance, the coaches were nervous, but the team was cool under pressure, and seemed thrilled to be in the spotlight. Holding pompoms high, they spread out on the court and began two 40-second dance and cheering routines as if they had been performing every Friday night.

During the second routine, a technical glitch caused the music to begin repeating. But the team was unfazed, and the crowd began clapping to the beat, cheering the team on with their enthusiasm.

"I am so happy for her. This was an exciting opportunity," said Rebecca Drazmin, Sarah's mother. "She loves to practice, and she's getting the experience of being on a team."

"Look at them. It's wonderful to hear the crowd cheering for them," said Keiko Vonack of Springfield, one of Hoffmeier's assistant coaches, and the mother of Brian and David, twins who are autistic. "You have no idea how excited they are to participate in something like this."

After the performance, the team received a well-deserved standing ovation.

"This went so well... My daughter can't wait to perform again," Hoffmeier said.



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Jay H. Hoffmeier, of Burke, head coach of the Northern Virginia Special Olympics Gymnastics group, with volunteer assistant coach, Keiko Vonack, whose sons, both of whom are autistic, cheer on the team. Their first performance was held Friday, Jan. 11, during halftime of the girls' basketball game at WSHS.**

## CALENDAR

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

### FRIDAY/JAN. 25

**Public Opening Reception: Collectors Showcase 2013.** 6-8 p.m., at the Workhouse in the McGuireWoods Gallery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The fifth annual showcase features work from each artist member of the Workhouse from Saturday, Jan. 26 to Saturday, Feb. 23; see what links artists together and witness the awarding of Best in Show by juror Joann Moser, senior curator of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 26

**Collectors Showcase 2013.** 6-8 p.m., at the McGuireWoods Gallery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A reception with painting, fiber arts, photography, ceramics, blown and fused glass and more from 100 studio and associate artists with "best in show" awarded by Joann Moser, deputy chief curator of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. www.workhousearts.org.

**en Route!** 7:30 p.m., at the Workhouse in Building W-3, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Next Reflex Dance Collective in collaboration with Furia Flamenco Dance Company, Janaki Rangarajan, Terra Dance Project and Starr Foster Dance Project present a touring dance project bringing professional dance artists together to share their work with new dance audiences. \$25 general; \$20 for seniors/military; \$10 for youth/students. 703-584-2900 or http://Reservations.workhousearts.org.

### SATURDAY/FEB. 2

**Coin Show.** 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Holiday Inn Express, intersection of Old Keene Mill Road and Hwy 95, Springfield. The Alexandria Coin Club sponsors a coin show with 50 tables holding a wide variety of coins, currency and numismatic collectables; prizes given to the first 500 guests to arrive. www.alexandriacoinclub.com.

**Cabaret Night: Notorious!** 8 p.m., at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A journey through the dark side of town filled with songs and laughter led by the cast, a group of notorious characters created for the stage: villains, criminals and femmes fatales; planche campagnarde included. \$25. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

**Sleeping Beauty.** 1 p.m., at the W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Sleeping Beauty keeps falling asleep so her parents find magical the famous magician who comes to the rescue with Edgar, his talkingcat; concessions available prior to show and during intermission. \$12 for adults; \$8 for children 12-and-under. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

### TUESDAY/FEB. 5

**Wakefield Chorale.** 7:30-9:30 p.m., at the North Springfield Elementary School, 7602 Herring Court, Springfield. Join the local group of men and women who love to sing; no audition required, meet in school cafeteria. 703-255-3489 or susanp@repole.com.

### FRIDAY/FEB. 8

**Dinner & a Movie Nights: Carmen Jones.** 8 p.m., at the W-3 Theatre, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Combine culinary and cinema arts in an evening featuring the 1954 film directed by Otto Preminger (his spin on Carmen) and a three-course dinner designed to complement the film's theme. Reservations (small parties



Like a Tree, 84x53, oil on panel, Kristen Calcaterra.

## Kristen Calcaterra Exhibit Explores Deteriorated Decor

Kristen Calcaterra uses lines, paint pours and contemporary oil-painting to allude to the deterioration of decorated homes; her work is inspired by travels through Charleston, S.C., Savannah, Ga., and Louisiana, where she saw local historic structures and, in Louisiana, devastation. An opening reception is on Saturday, Feb. 9 from 6-9 p.m., in Building W-8 at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

may share tables). \$45 per person. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

### SATURDAY/FEB. 9

**2nd Saturday Art Walk.** 6-9 p.m. Workhouse Art Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Meet each building's featured artist, a reception in W-16 from 6-7 p.m. and more. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

**Have a Heart Project.** 6-9 p.m., in Studio 4 at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. An art installation with a mission to help Food for Others displays empty lunch bags featuring original art works created by John Gascoit, Mary Gallagher-Stout and Denise Philipbar as well as by guest artists; all proceeds from each work featured in the exhibit up from Wednesday, Feb. 6 to the end of the month benefit Food for Others. As the artists replace each sold piece of art with food, the installation evolves. \$10 donation suggested per piece. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

**For Money or Love.** 8 p.m., in the W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Mestey Films Productions screens the film about Patrick, a wealthy man that finds himself wondering whether his fiance is with him for love or money, and his brother Sean, who, known for being a playboy, changes his ways when he falls in love with a woman who has an 8-year-old girl named Ashley. \$10. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

### SATURDAY/FEB. 10

**Live Onstage: The Amazing Gospel Souls.** 11:30 a.m., in the W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The gospel band conceived inside the notorious Lorton prison system in the early 1980s is comprised of ex-offenders from the Washington, D.C., area who have collectively served 200-plus years in



Dancers from the en Route! touring dance project.

## Diverse Professional Dance Companies 'en Route!'

en Route! is a touring dance project bringing professional dance artists together to share their work with new dance audiences presented by Next Reflex Dance Collective in collaboration with Furia Flamenco Dance Company, Janaki Rangarajan, Terra Dance Project and Starr Foster Dance Project. A 7:30 p.m. performance on Saturday, Jan. 26 will be at the Workhouse in Building W-3, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$25 general; \$20 for seniors/military; \$10 for youth/students. 703-584-2900 or http://Reservations.workhousearts.org.

correctional facilities. \$15. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 13

**Springfield Christian Women's Connection Women of Excellence Luncheon.** 11:30 a.m.-

1:30 p.m., at the Springfield Golf & Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Luncheon with complimentary childcare accompany Thirty-One products to help keep life organized and an inspirational speech from Faye Parson on how to stay on top. \$17. SpringWmConn@yahoo.com.

## FAITH NOTES

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

**St. Leo the Great Church** in Fairfax offers a program for Catholics who are away from the church, struggling with church teachings or who would like to more fully practice their faith by returning to the Sacraments; in the program, Welcome Home, is offered on Sundays, Feb. 3, 10, 17 and 24 and March 3 and 10 at 7 p.m. in the St. John Room, 3770 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. csmith@stleofairfax.com.

**Fairfax Baptist Temple**, at the

corner of Fairfax County Parkway and Burke Lake Roads, holds a Bible Study Fellowship at 9 a.m. Sundays followed by a 10 a.m. worship service. Nursery care and Children's Church also provided. 6401 Missionary Lane, Fairfax Station, 703-3-2323-8100, www.ftministries.org

**Lord of Life Lutheran** offers services at two locations, in Fairfax at 5114 Twinbrook Road and in Clifton at 13421 Twin Lakes Drive. Services in Fairfax are held on Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. and Sundays at 8:15, 9:45 and 11:15 a.m. Services in Clifton are held on Sundays at 8:15 and 10:30 a.m. 703-323-9500 or www.Lordoflifeva.org.

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Meredith Solomon of INOVA Health Systems assists Brownie Grace Torgerson of Reston to tie a bow on a toiletry kit she assembled as part of Volunteer Fairfax's Give Together Day at the Herndon Senior Center on Monday, Jan. 21.

## Hundreds Gather to Give

### Volunteer Fairfax holds Give Together Day.

On Monday, Jan. 21, over 300 volunteers spent their day at the Herndon Community Center to support several nonprofit organizations from the area by making holiday crafts

for the infirm, toiletry kits for the homeless, and fleece toys for homeless dogs. The event was one of several taking place in Fairfax County as part of Volunteer Fairfax's Give Together day.



Michelle Kranzberg of Herndon helps her children Josh and Danielle make fleece tug toys for homeless dogs at the Volunteer Fairfax Give Together Day at the Herndon Senior Center on Monday, Jan. 21. The Crazy for K9s 4-H Dog Training Club organized and ran the fleece toy activity and will distribute the over 350 toys made to local animal rescue groups.

Kat Clifford of Herndon assists her daughter Kenzie (far right) and Alexa Costa as they make fleece tug toys for homeless dogs at Volunteer Fairfax's Give Together Day on Monday, Jan. 21, at the Herndon Senior Center. Kenzie Clifford and Costa are members of Daisy troop 1698 from Herndon and are earning their light green public service petal by volunteering at the event.



PHOTOS BY DEB COBB/THE CONNECTION

Samantha Burgess of Brownie Troop 5696 in Herndon assembles a toiletry kit with a comb, soap, hand sanitizer, moisturizer, toothbrush and toothpaste in recycled blue wrap for distribution by INOVA Health Systems to local homeless residents as part of Volunteer Fairfax's Give Together Day on Monday, Jan. 21.



LaShawna Smith, leader of Daisy Troop 6747 of Herndon, helps her daughter Nicole make an art piece at the Volunteer Fairfax Give Together Day at the Herndon Senior Center on Monday, Jan. 21.

# Jail Tours Provide Wake-up Call for At-risk Teens

## The Sheriff's Office runs the Teen Awareness Program (TAP).

“At-risk kids are able to see and hear firsthand the effects of making a right decision versus a wrong decision,” says Deputy Sheriff Lieutenant Steve Elbert, about the tours and presentations he leads at the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center. The Sheriff's Office initiated the Teen Awareness Program (TAP) a year ago, in partnership with the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, to become part of the court's diversion program for first-time, non-violent juvenile offenders. Juvenile Intake Services provides a variety of diversion programs in lieu of the formal court process.

Tours are scheduled 5-10 times per year, during summer and other school breaks. The Sheriff's Office limits each tour to 15 teenagers and strongly recommends to the court that a parent accompany each teen.

“When parents share this experience with their teenager,” explains Elbert, who developed the TAP initiative, “they have something to discuss on the ride home from the jail. If the parents see new signs of poor decision-making weeks or months later, they can return to the same discussion.”

The day starts with a presentation about the demographics of the jail population, the range of criminal charges, the different levels of security, the role of a deputy sheriff and the daily schedule for inmates.

After the introduction, Elbert takes the group on a tour through the intake process, the crowded holding cells and the different housing areas. The emphasis is on the lack of privacy, loss of freedom and privileges, and the monotony of daily life.

**FOLLOWING THE TOUR**, Elbert and a pre-selected inmate talk about their parallel situations, the choices each made, and the radically different outcomes.

“Early in high school, I occasionally ran with some bad crowds,” says Elbert. “Twice I found myself in a situation where I could commit a felony with my friends or walk away. Both times I made the right decision. Today, I am a law enforcement officer, working in a great community for a highly regarded Sheriff's Office. Had I chosen differently 30 years ago, I would not have been afforded this career opportunity.”

An inmate who has shared the stage with Elbert on a few of the tours faced similar situations as a teenager, but he made different decisions. “Now,” explains Elbert, “instead of finishing his four-year degree at George Mason University, this young man is a convicted felon living in a jail cell.”

“When he gets out,” said Elbert, “he will be an ex-



Deputy Sheriff Lieutenant Steve Elbert

con, which means he will have a tough time finding a job, he will have to work three times as hard to prove himself, and he will be at risk for repeating the same poor choices that landed him in jail in the first place.”

The teenagers have the opportunity to direct their questions to the inmate after he speaks. The most frequently asked questions concern whether the inmate can contact family and friends and how often he can have visitors. Parents often ask the inmate if his path to jail was related to, or influenced by, the use of illegal drugs.

Colleen Cramer, a hearing officer in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, was impressed when she accompanied Elbert on the first tour. “Your tone of professionalism and respect and your recognition of the fact that many inmates are good people who make poor choices help our diversion program participants realize that someday it may be just one decision separating them from the people they will be seeing behind bars,” said Cramer.

A parent reported to Cramer that on the way home from the tour, her son said he would not have done what he did had he seen the jail beforehand. “The Sheriff's Office should continue to provide young adults with this wake-up call,” the parent wrote.

**THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE** is preparing to expand the program to include referrals from School Resource Officers. The SROs are assigned to middle and high schools throughout Fairfax County during the school year, with the goal of creating and maintaining a safe and orderly learning environment for students, teachers and staff.

For more information about the Adult Detention Center, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/sheriff/adc-main.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/sheriff/adc-main.htm), email [sheriff@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:sheriff@fairfaxcounty.gov) or call the public information office at 703-246-3251.

### SCHOOL NOTES

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

**Allison M. Willner** of Springfield has been named to the deans list for the fall 2012 semester at East Tennessee State University.

High school senior **Nnamdi Enechionya**, of Springfield, was named to the Saint James School Honors List for Trimester 1.

Saint James School, founded in 1842, is a co-educational boarding school serving students in grades 8-12 dedicated to the development of mind, body and spirit. The school is located south of Hagerstown, Md.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left—bassist/bandleader Stan Hamrick of Springfield; drummer Web Grant of Falls Church; pianist Tim Ford of Manassas.

## Springfield-based Band Returns to Chantilly Festival

Potomac Jazz Project, based in Springfield, is participating for a third straight year at the Sugarloaf Crafts Festival in Chantilly, performing four jazz shows daily for visitors and exhibitors. Bandleader Stan Hamrick, a Springfield resident, says: “It has been a lot of fun for us and the customers and exhibitors love shop and sell while listening to our mix of jazz and older standards like Fly Me To The Moon and Girl From Ipanema. The craftspeople are always asking if we will be back next year.”

Potomac Jazz Project is one

of the D.C. area's most popular jazz groups, averaging over 150 dates a year. They have headlined or appeared at many of the area's best known music venues, including The Kennedy Center, The Corcoran Gallery of Art, The Smithsonian, The Phillips Collection, Twins Jazz, and Cafe Nema. They are regulars at jazz clubs Extra Virgin, Laporta's, The Ice House Cafe and Sala Thai.

The band will be working in its trio format at The Crafts Festival this year. Stan Hamrick on upright bass, will be joined by Steve Wolfe on sax and Tim Ford on piano.

## Greenspring Welcomes Eric Whitson as Director of Sales

Eric Whitson recently joined Greenspring, an Erickson Living retirement community in Springfield, as the new director of sales. “Eric's extensive experience in sales, marketing, and hospitality will help tremendously in providing an exceptional experience for current and future residents, and we all look forward to his contributions to our community,” said Greenspring's Executive Director Robin Gliboff. Whitson has nearly 30 years of experience working as a sales and marketing leader in the hospitality industry. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the Uni-



Eric Whitson

versity of Minnesota and has completed several training and development programs related to leadership and sales management.

# SPORTS

## Woodson Boys' Basketball Extends Win Streak to 12

Cavaliers adapt to TC's physicality in second half.

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION (OR GAZETTE PACKET)

**T**he Woodson boys' basketball team's collection of tall sharpshooters is a primary reason the Cavaliers entered Tuesday night's contest against the T.C. Williams Titans riding an 11-game winning streak.

With four players listed at six-foot-four or taller capable of stroking 3-pointers, Woodson provides a tough matchup for any opponent. TC, on the other hand, compensates for offensive shortcomings with a physical brand of basketball and a group of bruisers strong enough to make an impact in the paint.

With a chance to pull within one game of first-place Woodson, TC, the defending Patriot District champion, pounded the ball inside and tested whether the Cavaliers were as interested in defending the paint as they were launching shots from the perimeter. The Titans succeeded with their physical attack into the third quarter, but it was the Cavaliers who left The Garden with their win streak intact.

**WOODSON DEFEATED TC** 64-54 on Jan. 22 at T.C. Williams High School. The Cavaliers improved to 15 to two overall, nine to zero in the district and extended their win streak to 12 games. The Titans dropped to nine to seven overall, six to three in the district and into a third-place tie with West Potomac. Lake Braddock is in second place with a seven to two district record.

A post-up bucket by TC's Landon Moss gave the Titans a 34-28 lead with six minutes 14 seconds remaining in the third quarter. Woodson battled back and took a one-point lead into the fourth quarter before outscoring the Titans 23-14 in the final period.

"We felt we had a quicker first step than they did," said Moss, who finished with six points. "They've got strong guys, but we felt like we could overpower them, maybe, if we got the ball inside ..."

Of the Titans' first 34 points, 28 came near the rim or from the free-throw line. Of TC's final 20 points, only five came near the rim or at the free-throw line.

"You've got to be kind of physical with us and that's what they did the first time we played them — they really pounded us down low," Woodson head coach Doug Craig said. "They got the ball inside. They've got a lot of guys near the basket that make shots. ... I think in the first half we didn't really respond very well to the physical nature of the game. Especially on the defensive end on the backboards, we were a little soft. I think that was kind of our challenge to them at halftime was we wanted to get after them and do that."

How did the Cavaliers respond in the second half? "I thought we were fine in the second half," Craig said. "Once we strung together a couple stops, I felt like I could kind of see our confidence growing. We're going to score the ball against most teams. We're blessed with a lot of guys that can put the ball in the hole. For us, it's about the defensive end and the consistency at the defensive end of the floor."

Woodson received a late boost from senior Alex Boock, who sat on the bench for most of the first



Woodson's Peter Murray scored 11 points against T.C. Williams on Tuesday night.

half after being whistled for his second foul less than three minutes into the game. After not scoring a point for the first three quarters, Boock tallied 12 in the fourth, including eight points during an 11-3 Cavalier run to open the period.

**A THREE-POINT PLAY** by Woodson senior center Peter Murray gave the Cavaliers a 52-43 lead with 4:05 remaining in the fourth. With TC trailing by six late in the game, Murray came up with a tip-in to extend the Woodson lead to 59-51 with 1:02 to play.

"It's always a challenge. T.C. Williams, they're known for being physical," Murray said. "They came out real hyped and were pushing us around at the beginning, but as the game went on we got a little chip on our shoulders and decided in order to be in this game and to win this game, we've got to push back. I thought we were able to do that very well and eventually we started controlling the boards better and not letting them get all those offensive rebounds."

Each of the Cavaliers' vertically-gifted shooters scored at least eight points. Six-foot-six Tommy Stepka led Woodson with 15 points and made a trio of three-pointers. Six-foot-four Boock scored 12 points, including a pair of three-pointers. Six-foot-four Murray had 11 points and six-foot-four Andy Stynchula knocked down two three-pointers and finished with eight points.

Sophomore point guard Eric Bowles, who is listed at five feet 11, finished with 13 points. Bowles' jumper in the closing seconds of the third quarter gave Woodson a 41-40 lead. The Cavaliers led for the remainder of the contest.

Woodson will travel to face Lake Braddock at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 25. TC will travel to face Lee at 7:45 p.m. on Friday.



Lee's Meghan Cox dribbles against Lake Braddock on Jan. 22.

### SPORTS BRIEFS

## Lake Braddock Girls' Basketball Beats Lee

The Lake Braddock girls' basketball team defeated the Lee Lancers 65-54 on Tuesday for its seventh win in its last eight games. The Bruins improved to 10 to five overall and six to three in the Patriot District.

According to stats from the Washington Post's website, Lake Braddock senior Natalie Butler, who will play for Georgetown next season, scored 34 points and grabbed 18 rebounds against Lee. The six foot four center is averaging 26.5 points and 18.1 rebounds per contest. In the Bruins' last five games, Butler has scored at least 30 points four times and reached the 40-point mark twice. Against T.C. Williams on Jan. 11, Butler scored 40 points and grabbed 31 rebounds.

Lake Braddock's Christine McGrath scored 12 points against Lee and Marcia Altman added eight.

Lee's Adeli Block finished with 17 points, Meghan Cox scored 16 and Amber Bryson added nine.

The Bruins will travel to face Woodson at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 25. The Lancers will host T.C. Williams at 7:45 p.m. on Friday.

## West Springfield Girls' Basketball Wins Fifth Straight

The West Springfield girls' basketball team remained in sole possession of first place in the Patriot District with a 55-34 win against Annandale on Jan. 22. The Spartans improved to 15 to two overall and eight to one in the Patriot District by collecting their fifth consecutive victory.

According to stats on the Washington Post's Web site, Amy Berglund led West Springfield with 16 points against Annandale and Jasmine Taylor scored 14.

West Springfield will travel to face South County at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 25 and will host T.C. Williams, which beat the Spartans earlier this season, on Monday, Jan. 28.

## West Springfield Boys' Basketball Snaps Losing Streak

The West Springfield boys' basketball team beat Annandale 53-44 on Jan. 22, snapping a five-game losing streak.

Chris Saulino led the Spartans with 16 points.

West Springfield will host South County at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 25.

## Robinson Hall of Fame

The Robinson Secondary School athletic department announced the first induction class of the newly established "Robinson Athletic Hall of Fame." The first induction class includes athletes that have been graduated for 15 years and retired coaches as well as certain state championship teams. There will be three induction ceremonies during 2013 with times and locations to be announced. For additional information, please visit [robinsonathletics.com](http://robinsonathletics.com) or the Robinson Athletic Hall of Fame Facebook page.

# HOME SALES

In December 2012, 125 Springfield homes sold between \$799,900-\$1,748,888. This week's list represents those homes sold in the \$799,900-\$356,500 range. For the complete list, visit [www.ConnectionNewspapers.com](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com)

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision
8020 POHICK RD	5	5	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$799,900	Detached	2.06	22153	POHICK STATION
7100 JUDITH AVE	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$760,000	Detached	0.58	22315	WINDSOR EST
6324 STILL SPRING PL	4	4	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$752,000	Detached	0.09	22315	KINGSTOWNE
7230 RITA GRAY LOOP	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$725,000	Detached	0.16	22315	WINDSOR KNOLL
6317 STILL SPRING PL	4	4	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$718,000	Patio Home	0.09	22315	KINGSTOWNE / NORTHAMPTON
8124 GREELEY BLVD	5	3	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$592,500	Detached	0.25	22152	WEST SPRINGFIELD
6713 SCOTTSWOOD ST	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$550,000	Townhouse	0.06	22315	KINGSTOWNE
5503 EYLER DR	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$540,000	Townhouse	0.05	22315	KINGSTOWNE
6926 SPUR RD	4	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$535,000	Detached	0.36	22153	ORANGE HUNT
7104 FRESHFAIRE DR	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$535,000	Detached	0.25	22153	ROLLING VALLEY
9238 ROCKEFELLER LN	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$529,500	Detached	0.23	22153	LAKEWOOD HILLS
6900 RASPBERRY PLAIN PL	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$524,900	Detached	0.47	22153	LAKEWOOD HILLS
7419 ELGAR ST	4	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$515,000	Detached	0.00	22151	NORTH SPRINGFIELD
6626 HUNTER CREEK LN	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$515,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	ISLAND CREEK
7720 RIDGEPARK CT	5	4	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$514,100	Detached	0.14	22153	POHICK WOODS
6502 TRASK TER	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$513,000	Townhouse	0.05	22315	KINGSTOWNE
6608 DUNWICH WAY	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$510,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	KINGSTOWNE
5305 SANDYFORD ST	3	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$499,950	Townhouse	0.04	22315	KINGSTOWNE
5945 NORHAM DR	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$495,000	Townhouse	0.06	22315	KINGSTOWNE
7822 BOLD LION LN	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$495,000	Detached	0.13	22315	LANDSDOWNE
8200 CREEDEMOR DR	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$476,000	Detached	0.20	22153	TERRA GRANDE
7402 GILLINGHAM ROW	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$475,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	KINGSTOWNE
7431 GILLINGHAM ROW	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$471,500	Townhouse	0.04	22315	KINGSTOWNE
5506 KINGS PARK DR	4	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$465,000	Detached	0.27	22151	KINGS PARK
6554 PARISH GLEBE LN	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$463,500	Townhouse	0.04	22315	ISLAND CREEK
7103 DANFORD PL	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$460,000	Detached	0.24	22152	ROLLING VALLEY
8850 CREEKSIDE WAY	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$455,000	Detached	0.51	22153	NEWINGTON FOREST
5615 GLENWOOD MEWS DR	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$454,900	Townhouse	0.07	22315	GLENWOOD MEWS
7037 ASHLEIGH MANOR CT	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$452,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	KINGSTOWNE
8703 CLYDESDALE RD	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$450,000	Detached	0.35	22151	KINGS PARK
7776 TULLOCK RD	4	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$450,000	Detached	0.19	22153	SARATOGA
5954 KEDRON ST	4	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$445,000	Detached	0.31	22150	SPRINGFIELD
8916 VICTORIA RD	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$445,000	Detached	0.29	22151	KINGS PARK
7529 MURILLO ST	4	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$442,000	Detached	0.27	22151	NORTH SPRINGFIELD
5405 SOUTHAMPTON DR	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$442,000	Detached	0.30	22151	KINGS PARK
7804 BALLSTON CT	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$442,000	Detached	0.22	22153	SARATOGA
6312 BRIDGETON CT	5	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$441,100	Detached	0.28	22152	CARDINAL FOREST
6372 DAKINE CIR	3	2	2	SPRINGFIELD	\$440,000	Townhouse	0.03	22150	GREENWOOD
7807 SUFFOLK CT	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$440,000	Detached	0.19	22315	HAYFIELD FARM
6269 WALKERS CROFT WAY	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$436,650	Townhouse	0.06	22315	KINGSTOWNE
6155 ROXBURY AVE	5	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$435,000	Detached	0.25	22152	CARDINAL FOREST
8452 MILLWOOD DR	3	2	2	SPRINGFIELD	\$435,000	Townhouse	0.08	22152	MILLWOOD ESTATES
6612 HUNTER CREEK LN	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$435,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	ISLAND CREEK
7812 ODELL ST	3	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$432,000	Detached	0.37	22153	ROLLING GREEN
8902 VICTORIA RD	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$430,000	Detached	0.28	22151	KINGS PARK
5402 WEYMOUTH DR	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$429,000	Detached	0.25	22151	KINGS PARK
7914 HILL STREAM CT	4	3	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$425,000	Detached	0.20	22153	NEWINGTON FOREST
5520 QUEENSBERRY AVE	4	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$419,000	Detached	0.24	22151	RAVENSWORTH
6212 DUNTLEY PL	4	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$415,000	Detached	0.26	22152	KEENE MILL MANOR
7501 DIGBY GRN	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$415,000	Townhouse	0.06	22315	KINGSTOWNE
7188 LAKE COVE DR	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$414,000	Townhouse	0.05	22315	LAKE D'EVEREUX
6213 ABBOTTSBURY ROW	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$413,000	Townhouse	0.03	22315	KINGSTOWNE
6917 GILLINGS RD	4	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$412,000	Detached	0.21	22152	ROLLING VALLEY
6113 SUMMER PARK LN	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$412,000	Townhouse	0.03	22315	KINGSTOWNE
5624 GLENWOOD MEWS DR	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$410,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	SMALL PROPERTY
7205 BONA VISTA CT	5	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$408,000	Detached	0.14	22150	BEN FRANKLIN PARK
5742 HEMING AVE	3	2	2	SPRINGFIELD	\$405,000	Detached	0.23	22151	NORTH SPRINGFIELD PARK
6908 EDGEBROOK DR	5	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$400,000	Detached	0.26	22150	LYNBROOK
6725 LAKE VILLAGE DR	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$400,000	Detached	1.00	22315	KINGSTOWNE
7525 AMESBURY CT	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$397,500	Townhouse	0.04	22315	HAYFIELD VIEW
8602 KENTFORD DR	4	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$395,000	Detached	0.27	22152	ROLLING VALLEY
9053 GILTINAN CT	3	2	2	SPRINGFIELD	\$395,000	Townhouse	0.03	22153	GLENWOOD MANOR
5230 RAVENSWORTH RD	3	1	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$389,888	Detached	0.25	22151	NORTH SPRINGFIELD
5805 ACCOMAC ST	4	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$385,000	Detached	0.27	22150	SPRINGFIELD
5810 HEMING AVE	4	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$383,000	Detached	0.21	22151	NORTH SPRINGFIELD PARK
5905 IANS WAY	2	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$380,000	Townhouse	0.03	22315	KINGSTOWNE
6514 NEVITT WAY	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$380,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	ISLAND CREEK
5222 PERTH CT	4	2	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$375,432	Detached	0.54	22151	KINGS PARK
6042 KESTNER CIR	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$375,000	Townhouse	0.04	22315	MANCHESTER LAKES
6394 STAGG CT	4	3	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$374,900	Townhouse	0.03	22150	JAPONICA
8324 GARFIELD CT	3	2	2	SPRINGFIELD	\$374,900	Townhouse	0.03	22152	CHARLESTOWN
7068 SOLOMON SEAL CT	4	3	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$370,000	Townhouse	0.04	22152	HUNTER VILLAGE
8625 BURLING WOOD DR	4	2	2	SPRINGFIELD	\$367,000	Townhouse	0.04	22152	WEST SPRINGFIELD TERRACE
5904 ERVING ST	3	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$365,000	Detached	0.21	22150	SPRINGFIELD
8388 UXBRIDGE CT	3	3	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$365,000	Townhouse	0.05	22151	DANBURY FOREST
7702 JERVIS ST	3	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$363,000	Detached	0.26	22151	NORTH SPRINGFIELD
5412 IVES PL	3	1	1	SPRINGFIELD	\$361,000	Detached	0.29	22151	NORTH SPRINGFIELD
7411 GARY ST	5	2	0	SPRINGFIELD	\$356,500	Detached	0.34	22150	SPRINGFIELD

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## OPEN HOUSES SATURDAY/SUNDAY, JANUARY 26 & 27

When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in this Connection Newspaper. For more real estate listings and open houses, visit [www.ConnectionNewspapers.com](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com) and click on the "This Week in Real Estate" link. Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times

### Burke

9610 Deep Lake Way.....\$754,495...Sat/Sun 12-5.....Clark Massie.....Tetra Corp..703-391-6245  
9626 Deep Lake Way.....\$748,995...Sat/Sun 12-5.....Clark Massie.....Tetra Corp..703-391-6245  
9618 Deep Lake Way.....\$738,995...Sat/Sun 12-5.....Clark Massie.....Tetra Corp..703-391-6245  
6308 Swan Landing Ct.....\$609,000.....Sun 1-4.....Suzanne Burch.....Century 21..703-328-5606  
9515 Vandola Ct.....\$575,000.....Sun 1-4.....Helen Grozbean.....Keller Williams..571-233-4287  
6200 Fushimi Ct.....\$475,000..Sun 1:30-3:30.....James Nellis.....RE/MAX..703-930-0655  
10523 Reeds Landing Cir.....\$369,900.....Sun 1-4.....Doris Crockett.....Weichert..703-615-8411  
12213 Wye Oak Commons Cir..\$364,900.....Sat 1-3.....Kimberly Neff.....Avery-Hess..703-237-6779  
10310 Rein Commons Ct #2C..\$129,000.....Sun 1-4.....David Ingram.....Weichert..703-250-8500

### Centreville

6487 Trillium House Ln.....\$999,900.....Sun 10-4.....Jean Marotta.....Birch Haven..703-402-9471

### Clifton

6324 Deepwood Farm Dr.....\$579,000.....Sun 1-4.....Ed Duggan.....Century 21..703-989-7735

### Fairfax

3876 University Dr.....\$445,000.....Sun 1-4.....Carol Hermandorfer..Long & Foster..703-503-1812

### Fairfax Station

11107 Hampton Rd.....\$1,295,000.....Sun 1-4.....Trina Ocasio.....Weichert..703-594-1744  
11156 DeV Vaughn Ct.....\$722,900.....Sun 1-4:30.....Ned Malik.....MLSNOW..571-313-1821

### Falls Church

3804 Munson Rd.....\$829,000.....Sun 1-4.....Patrick Kessler.....Keller Williams..703-405-6540  
3324 Stonybrae Dr.....\$699,500.....Sun 1-4.....Dana LaFever.....Weichert..703-609-3479

### Kingstowne/Alexandria

7459 Gillingham Row.....\$499,000.....Sun 1-4.....Jonathan DeHart.....Long & Foster..703-790-1990

### Lorton

8960 Fascination Ct #314.....\$349,990.....Sat 12-3.....Shawn Evans.....Long & Foster..703-795-3973  
8960 Fascination Ct #111.....\$265,990.....Sat 12-3.....Shawn Evans.....Long & Foster..703-795-3973

### McLean

919 Swinks Mill Rd.....\$1,339,000.....Sun 1-4.....Debbie Mesen.....Weichert..703-201-7723

### Springfield

8603 Langport Dr.....\$520,000.....Sun 1-3.....Mary Ruelh..Coldwell Banker..703-451-2500  
7262 Linden Tree Ln.....\$459,950.....Sun 1-4.....Kathleen Quintarelli.....Weichert..703-862-8808  
7840 Doane Ct.....\$449,000.....Sun 1-4.....Patsy Harrington.....Fairfax..703-963-8515  
7205 Layton Dr.....\$399,900.....Sun 1-4.....Trong Trinh.....TMT..703-237-6779

To add your Realtor-represented Open House to these weekly listings, please call Erin Peck at 703-778-9449 or E-mail the info to [epeck@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:epeck@connectionnewspapers.com)  
All listings due by Tuesday at 3 P.M.

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### Software Engineer

Participate in all phases of the software development life cycle. Analyze software requirements to determine feasibility of the system design within time & cost constraints. Req's Supervision of team members. Exp's must include utilizing: Java, J2EE, JDBC, JSP, Javascript, XML, AJAX, Spring, Web Services, SQL Server, DB2, WSAD, Visio, VSS, VS.Net, WebSphere, Log4J. Job locations in Fairfax, VA and travel to various unanticipated locations throughout the U.S. for different short & long term assignments. Mail resume to: ICSA, Inc. 3930 Walnut Street, Suite 220, Fairfax, VA, 22030. Attn: HRM-DU

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Keep productivity high and commuting low while working close to home. After a short training period, travel to our Old Town Alexandria headquarters and production facility required only once or twice a week during off-peak traffic hours. Call 703-778-9431 for details.



### Receptionist

Busy real estate office in Burke has immediate opening for a front desk receptionist. Part time - 4 hours a day, five days a week.

Call Mary Ann at 703-503-1898.

### ST. STEPHEN'S & ST. AGNES SCHOOL

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### Bookkeeper

Connection Newspapers in Old Town Alexandria has an immediate opening for a Full Charge Bookkeeper. Duties include payroll, tax filings, accounts receivable and payable, invoicing, general ledger and financial statements. Applicant must be an expert in Quickbooks and proficient Microsoft Excel. Applicant must possess a strong work ethic, people skills, team attitude and be able to multi-task. Near King Street Metro. Free parking. Flexible hours, 24-30 hours/week. Email cover letter, resume to [resumes@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:resumes@connectionnewspapers.com)



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# Feeling Power of Love

FROM PAGE 4

to explore that option.

“God works in mysterious ways. We actually used to go on outings with this couple and their foster children before Tiff and I were married,” he said. “We still had a lot of love to give.”

“That was the core of it, the love we had for each other,” Tiffany said. “You know, a lot of people say that when you lose a child, it tears a couple apart. Well, nothing could tear me away from him. He is my rock. His mental strength is astounding.”

## FAIRFAX FAMILIES4KIDS

They connected with a small agency in Fairfax County called Fairfax Families4Kids, a unique foster-mentoring program run by the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. Created in 2005, the program’s mission is to build bonds between volunteers and foster children, a majority of whom are 14 years old or older.

According to Beverly Howard, Ph.D., coordinator of the program, every year in Fairfax County, as many as 20 teens in foster care leave the system without a family and are unable to return safely to their parents or relatives.

The children who wait are typically African-American, and are age 9 or older when they enter foster care. They have emotional, medical and educational needs. Many have lived in a series of foster homes or residential facilities.

Kenny was one of the children in the program when the Granvilles decided to become mentors.

Howard said volunteers who become mentors have a lot of flexibility, and there’s no specific amount of time mentors must spend with children. Some are assigned a particular child while others work with several children. Every month there are group activities for the participants and their mentors.

“We want people to know they can get involved without feeling too much pressure,” Howard said.

Mentors can attend as many group outings as they want, depending on their schedule.

Outings have included a Christmas Cruise on the Potomac; the DC Kite Festival; fundraising events for the homeless and a variety of sports events and clinics, from basketball to handball. Farm Day, held twice a year in Ashburn, is a favorite event for the children. Donated by a benefactor of the program, the event is held twice a year in Ashburn, and includes horseback riding, bike-riding, games and a picnic.

Howard said all the activities are structured to allow “natural matches” to develop over time as the youth interact with the volunteers and actively help select their mentors. “Mentors see the value, the strengths and possibilities in the youth and the youth begin to form trusting relationships with the mentors,” she said.

Kenny met the Granvilles during Farm Day. He had just turned 13, and had been in a series of foster homes since he was 9 years old.

Before formal foster care, he was living sporadically with his biological mother from the time he was 3 years old.

Born in Dumfries, Kenny’s mother had substance abuse problems. When she could not care for him, he would stay with her friends for weekends—or weeks at a time. When he was placed in foster care full-time, he had no more contact with his biological mother.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOAN BRADY

## Kenny Granville

Sitting on a sofa at home, Kenny shows a visitor a book of photos from several outings. When asked if he remembers the first time he met Chris and Tiffany, he smiles broadly, and mentions that he left his coat in their car so they would have a reason to seek him out again.

The Granvilles said they felt an immediate connection to Kenny, and they would have come back to see him, even if he hadn’t left his coat in their car.

“Oh yes, I definitely remember Farm Day,” Tiffany said.

“We had been going to different events as mentors, and then Farm Day came along,” she said, shaking her head and wiping away tears. “It was weird. There was this big gush of wind and this kid came out of nowhere. Literally, leaves are flying around, and I saw Kenny playing... I said to Chris ‘I feel like he’s going to be our child.’ I mean, we thought we would adopt a younger child, but we just jelled with him.”

“As soon as they walked in, I went up to talk to them,” Kenny said.

“There was just something about him. His smile, his sense of humor, something that tugged at our hearts,” Chris said.

Kenny began spending weekends with the couple, playing basketball with Chris, watching football games, and just being a “regular” kid with a family.

“Everything just fit,” Chris said, “It felt like it was meant to be.”

Tiffany and Chris said there’s no one “aha” moment they can point to when they decided to adopt Kenny. “It just seemed like the natural next step,” Chris said.

As the Granvilles spent more and more time with Kenny, they became determined to adopt him. And then the couple got a surprise that some might consider a “game-changer.”

She learned she was pregnant with Elijah.

“And no, we never thought about not adopting Kenny,” she said, laughing.

Kenny was formally adopted by the Granvilles when he turned 14. Elijah was just weeks old, but “we wanted him there to be with his big brother,” Chris said.

During the adoption proceeding, the judge asked Kenny if there was any reason not to go forward, and why he wanted to be adopted.

“Because I love them. And they love me,” Kenny said.

“There wasn’t a dry eye in that courtroom,” Tiffany said.

*NEXT WEEK : Interviews with mentors and child who aged-out and is now homeless.*

## Joys and Challenges

FROM PAGE 4

vised and supportive group environment to participate in enjoyable activities together. (Events have included chess tournaments, basketball clinics, kite festivals, a Broadway show, exercise classes, horseback riding, Internet and web design classes, and community service projects.)

### Q: What does FFX4Kids offer foster children, and the parents who foster them?

**A:** FFX4Kids provides a social network where youth in foster care can interact with mentors, prospective adoptive families, dedicated volunteers and other children in foster care.

The dedicated FFX4Kids mentors are at the core of the “relationship-building” that keeps the youth coming back. Every participating youth experiences group mentoring for several months prior to being assigned a one-on-one mentor who agrees to mentor for at least two years. Many of these caring adults commit to being life-long supports for the youth they mentor. Some have even adopted their mentee. Other mentors have been consistently and actively involved in the program for five, six, and seven years, and have mentored a number of different youth during that time.

### Q: What are some FFX4Kids “success stories?”

**A:** We have many success stories. We have participated in 10 adoptions of youth ages 11 to 18 (most have been between ages 14-16 at the time of the adoption) and 10 permanent connections for youth ages 18 to 21. A “permanent connection” means that these young adults leave foster care with a caring, adult connection who can provide guidance and emotional support as they embark upon adulthood. Most of us know that just because you turn 18 or 21 years old, you don’t automatically have all the answers, and it is always good to have an adult to help answer some of the questions that come with being an adult.

Success Stories: “Mason” was adopted by his mentors when he was 15 years old. He had already spent six years in foster care, and lived in numerous

adoptive homes and residential facilities. He is a charming, likeable, athletic young fellow who is now a freshman in college and working part-time. He regularly returns to the FFX4Kids events to encourage and motivate the other kids, and just to share in the fun. His parents also continue to be active mentors for other youth in FFX4Kids and a strong supporter of the program.

“Mason” is good friends with “Paul.” “Paul” has been in foster care for almost 10 years. “Paul” has also had numerous placements. He is still in foster care, participating in the Independent Living program, and enjoying his freshman year in college also. As he participates in the twice-monthly FFX4Kids activities, he finds continuous support and encouragement from the group mentors, who genuinely admire his strength and his tenacity. He is a role model and “Jr. Mentor” for the younger kids in the group.

### Q: Knowing all of the obstacles, all of the challenges for foster children, what motivates you to keep working with foster children?

**A:** I love what I do. The youth that I have been blessed to know, are wonderful and all of them have enriched my life immeasurably. The adoptive families and mentors never cease to amaze me—by their commitment to the youth, their dedication, their energy and creativity, and their ability to see well beyond the labels that so many of our youth have gathered along their journey in foster care. They see the gifted artists, the aspiring scientists, the comedians, the athletes, and the beautiful children waiting for an opportunity to bloom.

I also have been blessed to have my own family expanded through the adoption of two older youth (ages 8 and 9). I know firsthand the joys and challenges this brings. I also know that love is not enough. The decision to adopt an older youth must come from both the head and the heart. It is critical that the adoptive family make an informed decision cognizant of all of the challenges before them, with realistic expectations, and knowledge of resources available to support the family. It is hard work, and not for the faint of heart.