

Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia ❖ Kintown ❖ Newington

2012 Outstanding Mentor Award-winner Marcella Fulmore greets visitors in the Lee lobby with PAAMAS members (clockwise, from left) senior Thomas Watson, juniors Daniel Williams and Ahmad Adams, sophomore Darryl Gray, senior Ashwin Pitt, sophomore Jonathan Walters and seniors Demond Richeson, David Johnson and Pearson Wheatley.

Outstanding Mentor

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Helping Parents Battle Social Media Giants

NEWS, PAGE 3

Home Life Style
PAGE 10

A Positive Reflection

THE COUNTY LINE, PAGE 8

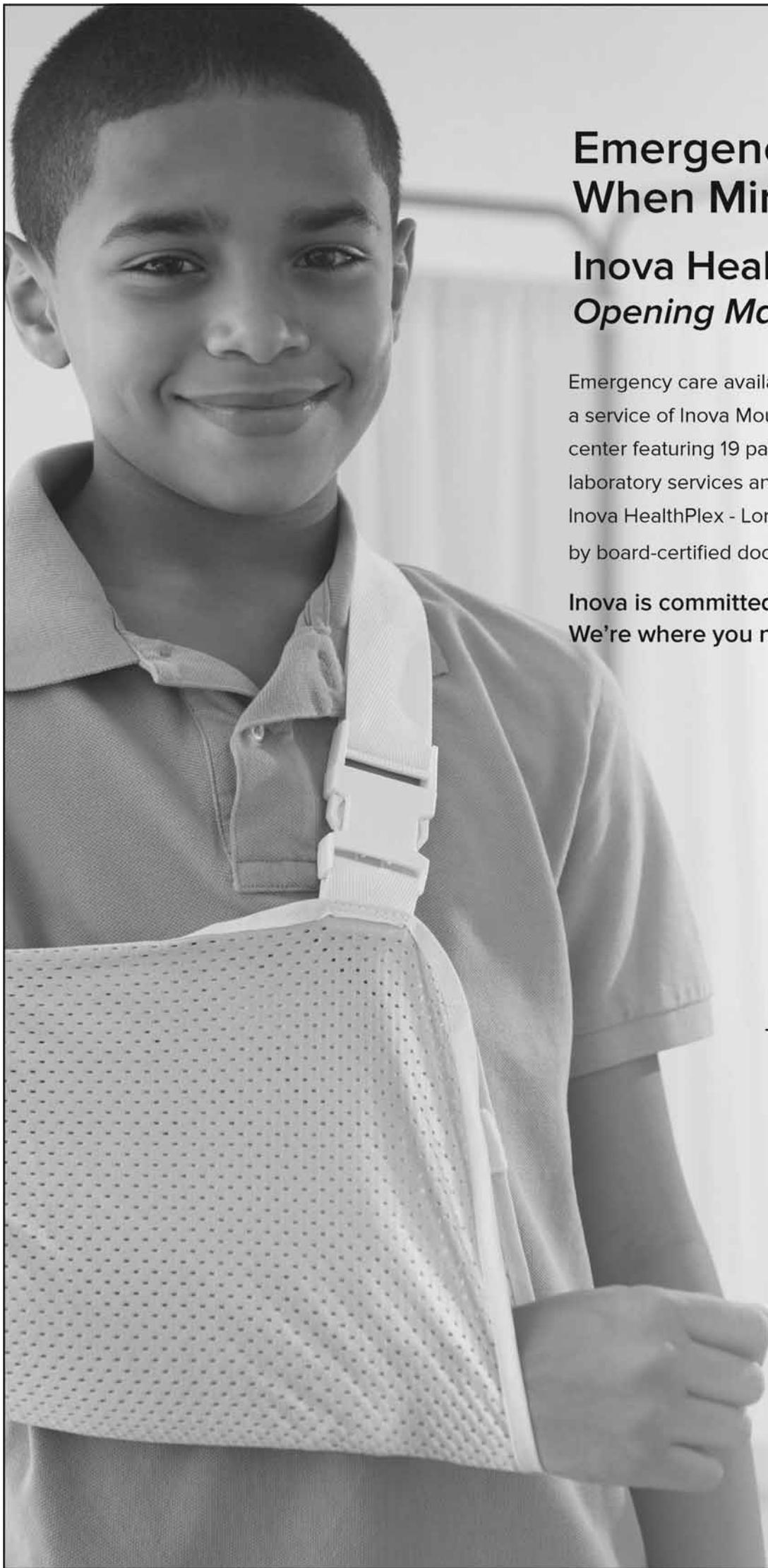
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FEBRUARY 14–20, 2013

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Virginia's tourism industry brings billions of dollars into our Commonwealth each year, and supports tens of thousands of jobs—including more than 28,000 jobs in Fairfax County.

On February 6, the Virginia House of Delegates voted on SB 767, a bill that would have imposed new taxes on tourism. The targets? Travel agents, online travel agencies, tour operators, and others who bring business and leisure visitors to Virginia.

Delegate Filler-Corn, the men and women who work hard every day to promote Virginia travel appreciate your vote against SB 767.

Thank you for doing the right thing and voting to protect Virginia tourism jobs.

Paid for by Travel Tech: The Travel Technology Association, Washington, DC

NEWS

Hats off to Democratic Women of Clifton

DWC celebrates eighth anniversary in style.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Fine millinery was on full display as the Democratic Women of Clifton gathered on Sunday, Feb. 10, to celebrate its eighth anniversary in style. The theme of this year's party was "Hats Off to Democratic Women!" and members complied by donning an assortment of colorful chapeaus—from the classic fedora, brim snapped and businesslike, to the romantic cloche and the whimsical Victorian.

Gathering in the home of member Gretchen Klimoski of Clifton, members mingled with honored guests to share appetizers, beverages and lively conversation.

DWC Membership Chair Chris Randon welcomed high-powered women from Northern Virginia: Delegate Charniele Herring (D-46), Chairman of the Democratic Party of Virginia; Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41); Fairfax County School Board members Pat Hynes

(Hunter Mill district) and Tammy Kaufax (Lee district); Kate Hanley, former chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and secretary of the commonwealth; and former Virginia State Senators Patsy Ticer and Mary Margaret Whipple. Randon talked about the early history of the DWC and recognized Hanley for having attended the first meeting of the DWC in 2005.

THE WEEK OF VALENTINE'S DAY has special significance for DWC members. In February of 2005, 100 women met in the Clifton Town Hall to organize the Democratic Women of Clifton (DWC). The group now boasts a membership of more than 400.

The DWC also recognized several women for their contributions to various Democratic causes in Northern Virginia: Ruth Miller, vice chair south of the Fairfax County Democratic Committee; and Martina Leinz, Virginia chairman of the Million Moms March. Others honored were Jane

Touchet, chairman of the Democratic Women of Lake Ridge; Pixie Bell, former secretary of the Democratic Party of Virginia; Janet Carver, a member of the 2008 and 2012 Electoral College; Becca Durr, deputy finance director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee; and Tina Hone, former Fairfax County School Board member.

"Everyone attending the celebration then removed their hats in a salute to all of these special guests," said Jane Barker, co-founder and current chair of the DWC. "It was a fun moment."

Barker addressed the members and guests and praised the accomplishments of the DWC in its dual mission of educating women about political issues and creating a forum for discussion and political action. Barker further congratulated members for their outstanding support of two service projects during the recent holiday season. The DWC was a large contributor to the toy and coat drive sponsored by Fairfax County Fire



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

From left, school board member Pat Hynes; Del. Charniele Herring; former State Senator Patsy Ticer; former Board of Supervisors Chair Kate Hanley; Del. Eileen Filler-Corn; Virginia Million Mom March Chair Martina Leinz; Fairfax County Democratic Committee Vice Chair South Ruth Miller; school board member Tammy Kaufax and former State Senator Mary Margaret Whipple.

and Rescue. In addition, members of the DWC contributed more than \$3,600 to Our Daily Bread, the local non-profit organization that provides food and other services to area families in need.

"It's great to celebrate with women who continue to make our community, our commonwealth, and our politics better with never-ending, thoughtful, positive involvement and giving," Barker said. "Their enthusiasm and commitment continues to make a difference today with this terrific turn-out to celebrate our distinguished Democratic women. We are energized to grow and improve this year as we advocate for im-

portant issues and work for Democratic candidates and elected officials."

THE NEXT GENERAL MEETING of the DWC will focus on the environment. That meeting will be held on March 10 from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Clifton Community Hall. A candidate forum is also being planned for the spring in anticipation of the coming statewide elections.

The DWC is open to all Democratic women in Northern Virginia. Anyone interested in joining may email cliftonwomendems@aol.com or visit the website at www.democraticwomenofclifton.org.

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OPINION

On Transportation

Compromise, in the works, should include indexing the gas tax to inflation.

Virginia needs more options, not fewer, in developing revenue to pay for roads and transportation. Compromise on a plan to increase transportation revenue should not include making Virginia the only state in the nation without a gas tax. The current, ridiculously low gas tax should be indexed to inflation. The last thing the commonwealth needs is to do away with an existing, major source of money for roads.

Sen. Dick Saslaw proposed raising the tax, now 17.5 cents a gallon, by five cents each of the next two years and then indexing it to inflation. At the least, the tax should be indexed to rise with inflation from its current level.

Possible proposals to cut the tax in half along with increases in the sales tax miss the point, but are still far preferable to eliminating it.

The gas tax is a user fee. It raises money for roads from people and businesses who are using the roads, including drivers who pass

through Virginia from out of state.

We agree with Del. Scott Surovell, who says: "Funding roads exclusively with sales taxes disproportionately burdens the elderly who drive less than others and people who do not own cars."

Medicaid Expansion Progresses

The Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce said it well when it issued a statement in favor of the commonwealth embracing \$10 billion in federal money to expand the number of people eligible for health insurance under Medicaid:

"Northern Virginia businesses and taxpayers are already paying for health reform through new taxes levied by the Affordable Care Act. If we do not take advantage of Medicaid reform [and expansion], roughly \$10 billion in Virginia taxpayer dollars will go to the federal government to fund coverage extension in other states. If the General Assembly approves the reform and extension plan, nearly all those taxpayer dollars will remain in-state where they can be put to good use for the benefit of the commonwealth, its businesses and its citizens."

Call for Photos for Pet Connection

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish at the end of February, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by Feb. 21.

Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans. Please identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo and of your pet, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name). We also welcome short stories about how you got your pet, a noteworthy talent or anecdote about your pet, and drawings, paintings or other artwork of your pet by children or adults.

To see our last pet edition, visit:

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/2012/072512/Burke.pdf>

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/2012/072512/Fairfax.pdf>

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/2012/072512/Lorton.pdf>

<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/2012/072512/Springfield.pdf>

Residents from Springfield, Burke, Fairfax or Fairfax Station, should send submissions to: south@connectionnewspapers.com.

Sex Trafficking in Our Backyard

Northern Virginia is seeing increasing numbers of reported cases of sexual trafficking.

BY TIMOTHY D. HUGO
STATE DELEGATE (R-40)

A couple of years ago, I became aware that sex trafficking of children was not solely an international issue, but one that was happening in our own backyard. Unfortunately, the truth is that it is one of the fastest growing criminal industries in the world, in the United States and, yes, here in Virginia. In 2011, I began working with Shared Hope International. This organization strives to prevent sex slavery, restore victims of sex trafficking, bring justice to vulnerable women and children, and strengthen Virginia's laws.

Since that time, the fight against human trafficking has become a top priority of mine. I am committed to fight against those who would do harm to our young people by enacting harsher penalties to those convicted of these horrendous crimes and by increasing public awareness.

According to the Polaris Project, a leading organization in the global fight against human trafficking, over 100,000 children alone are victims of the sex trade in the



United States each year. It ranks Virginia seventh in the nation in the percentage of calls received reporting human trafficking. This is not a top ten category that any state seeks. Northern Virginia itself is seeing increasing numbers of reported cases of sexual trafficking occurring in massage parlors, online escort services, and gang-related activities among other avenues. Just last year, members of a Fairfax-based gang were arrested for soliciting Fairfax County high school girls for sex trafficking.

Virginia lawmakers have responded and enacted several pieces of legislation including my HB 1898, which raised the penalty for abducting any individual for the purposes of prostitution or abducting a minor for child pornography. In addition, the General Assembly currently has before it my HB 1606, which would stiffen the penalty for soliciting a minor for prostitution. I will continue to look for ways to make Virginia one of the least desirable states for those who seek to harm our young people.

I am not alone in combating this evil. I will continue to work closely with Governor McDonnell, Attorney General Cuccinelli, my colleagues in the General Assembly, Shared Hope International, the Polaris Project, the Richmond Justice Initiative, law enforcement agencies and others to increase awareness of this issue and to institute harsher punishments for those who seek to harm young people for financial gain.

Corporations are also participating in efforts to battle human trafficking. Just last year, AT&T granted the Richmond Justice Initiative \$25,000 to develop educa-

tional programs to help prevent human trafficking in the Richmond area.

I believe there is no worse crime than one committed against a child. I am dedicated to ensuring child sex traffickers remain behind bars longer for such horrific behavior, so that no child falls prey to those who seek them harm.

One child taken from his/her home, one young person falling prey to this evil, is one too many.

If you would like additional information on this issue, please contact me at 703-815-1201 or delthugo@house.virginia.gov

The writer is a majority caucus chairman at the Virginia House of Delegates.

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
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Call: 703-917-6444.
By e-mail:
south@connectionnewspapers.com

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Man Struck by Train in North Springfield Area

On Thursday, Feb. 7, police responded to a report of a 64-year-old man struck by a train west of the Backlick Road overpass. Around 7 p.m. an Amtrak train was traveling just west of the Backlick Road overpass, when it struck and killed Richard Anderson of the North Springfield area.

Detectives from the Crash Reconstruction Unit responded to investigate and do not suspect foul play, the investigation continues.

Citizens Fire and Rescue Academy

Area residents wanting to learn more about the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department may now have the chance. They may participate in a nine-week program showing them what firefighters and paramedics do every day.

Applications to the first-ever Citizens Fire and Rescue Academy will be accepted until Feb. 18 or until the class of 25 is filled. The free program is open to those at least 18 years old. The academy will begin March 28, 2013, meeting for nine consecutive weeks, from 6-9 p.m., at various locations.

Each session will cover different aspects of the organization, providing an in-depth overview of it and its uniformed and civil-

ian workforce. Program topics include fire suppression, emergency medical services, training, recruitment and special operations. Apply at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/cfa.

Lee High Library Accepting Donated Books

Cleaning out those old books? The Robert E. Lee High School Library is accepting donations of gently used books for its annual book sale through April 2013. All types of books are welcome—fiction, nonfiction, children's books, cookbooks, college textbooks and more. All proceeds will go toward new materials and computers for students. For further information or to make a delivery, please contact the library at 703-924-8370.

Recycle During Electric Sunday

Residents may recycle old TVs, computers, peripheral electronic devices—such as keyboards, speakers, printers and scanners, as well as household hazardous wastes—including fluorescent light bulbs and tubes, for free, during Fairfax County's "Electric Sunday" events.

The next one is slated for Sunday, Feb. 24, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at the I-66 Transfer Station, 4618 West Ox Road, Fairfax. For more information, call 703-324-5052.

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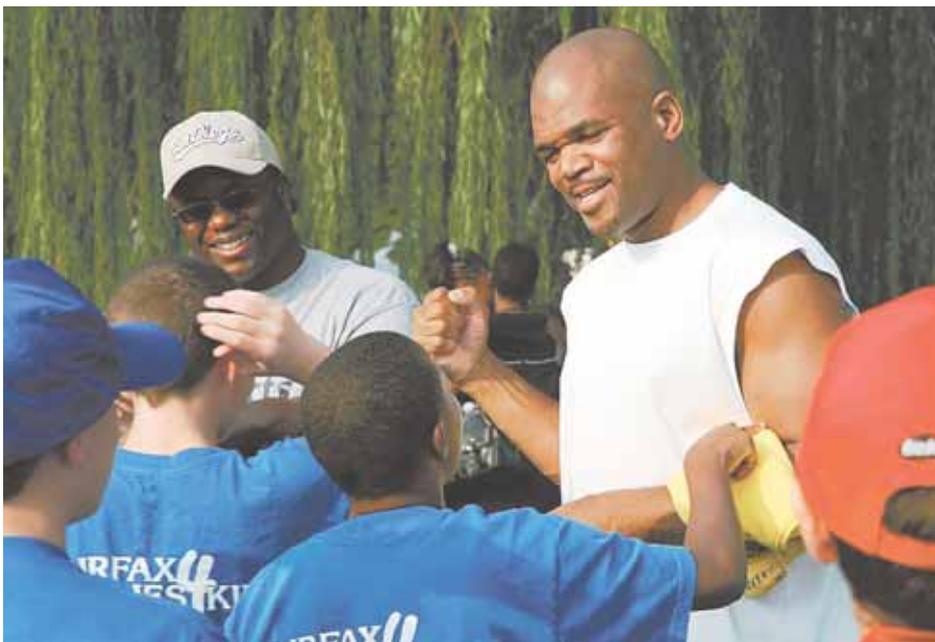
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THE COUNTY LINE

During a fundraising walk in 2006, youth in Fairfax Families4Kids were greeted by rapper Run DMC, who grew up in foster care. Pastor Dan Rhodes (left) organized the event.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JOAN BRADY

A Positive Reflection

Joan Brady gives foster children needed exposure.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

The last in a series.

On Monday, Sept. 10, 2001, Joan Brady of Great Falls had just started a three-month sabbatical from her job with an Internet company. Newly-married, Brady, who was 36 years old at the time, was exhausted from 80-hour work weeks in a rigid corporate environment. She wanted time that fall to contemplate what to do next with her life.

The next day provided answers and a sense of urgency. It was Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2001.

The terrorist attacks, and the moving stories of heroism and tragedy on 9/11, indelibly left their mark. Brady, like many Americans, was inspired to do something new, to take more chances, to change direction.

"After that tragic day, it was hard to imagine going back to a job that had seemed critically important, but now felt largely meaningless," she said.

She thought she might become a social worker or a teacher, a job where she could make a difference in other people's lives. She decided to volunteer as a homework tutor at a group home for foster children.

As she struggled to find a way to motivate her students, she began "bribing" them with her photography. "Some teachers gave kids candy in exchange for completing homework assignments. I thought I'd try taking their photos and giving them copies," Brady said.

Their reaction to having their photos taken surprised her.

"It made me realize that they didn't have pictures of themselves, other than the one snapshot for their official file," Brady said. "I came to understand the connection between their having their picture taken and self-esteem."

According to child development experts, photos say "I'm important in this family." They show a child he or she is meaningfully connected to others, and provide a visual symbol of nurturing, love and caring. Foster children, who are frequently shuffled from one home to the next, rarely have family photos.

"In those days, I actually wasn't a professional photographer, just a gal with a point and shoot digital camera, trying to get through a three-month commitment I had made," Brady said. "I took pictures of the kids in the group home, mugging for the camera, playing basketball, bike riding, playing on the playground and occasionally holding up a good report from school."

She gave her students little \$1 photo albums she purchased at Michaels so they would have a place to store their photos.

She realized just how important the photos were to her students when she showed up at school one day and learned the photo albums had caused some trouble.

"It turned out that the kids weren't allowed to take anything to bed with them and several had been caught taking their little photo albums that we were filling with pictures to bed with them," she said. "It was in that moment that I realized I was doing something more than getting through the three-month commitment that I had made to be a homework tutor. I stayed on well beyond my three-month commitment."

By 2004, she combined her love of photography with her ability to connect with children and started Joan Brady Photography. She also began photographing foster children featured on Wednesday's Child. During a shoot in 2005, she met Beverly Howard, the director of a small Fairfax County foster-mentoring program called Fairfax Families4Kids.

In Fairfax County, about 400 children are in foster care, and about 20 children, most of whom are 14 and older, are in the Fairfax Families4Kids program. According to

Howard, these children are considered more difficult to place in adoptive homes because they are typically teens who have a range of special needs. Mentors provide one-on-one support and participate in monthly group activities.

"I got involved with the program when I met Beverly Howard, the director. She is a force of nature, a person no one can say no to. I have learned so much from her and have been so inspired by both her wisdom and her spirit," Brady said.

She became the group's volunteer photographer, shooting the children during their outings with mentors. Many of the children, especially the girls, didn't like to be photographed. They thought they were ugly, unworthy of a photographer's time.

In one photo, Kenny, a 14-year-old from Reston who was recently adopted, is high in the air, all legs and arms, about to make a powerful slam dunk. In another photo, Serena, 17, flashes a warm smile, her face framed in a cascade of long brown curls.

"Serena is a really interesting story. She's a tough girl whose initial reaction of 'don't take my picture!' evolved into 'take a picture of me!' and 'How come there aren't more pictures of me in the book!' She is such a sweet and thoughtful girl," Brady said.

Howard said Brady's photos capture the children's creativity and give them a positive reflection, something most of them have never had. She said the children are empowered by getting their photos taken.

"Joan sees well beyond the labels that so



Fairfax Families4Kids hosts a number of events for foster youth and mentors. In the photo, a 14-year-old boy in the program is getting his face painted at a Fairfax festival.

Consider Mentoring

Fairfax Families4Kids is actively seeking mentors to connect with older children in foster care, those most at-risk for homelessness. To find out more about the Fairfax Families4Kids program or to become a volunteer or mentor, contact Beverly Howard, Ph.D., coordinator of the Fairfax Families4Kids program at 703-324-7518.

many of our youth have gathered along their journey in foster care," Howard said. "She can see the gifted artists, the aspiring scientists, the comedians, the athletes, and the beautiful children waiting for an opportunity to bloom."

Becoming an Advocate

Brady doesn't look like a fighter. She is petite, quick to laugh, and looks younger than her 48 years. But spend five minutes with her, and one quickly finds out how passionate and relentless she is about Fairfax Families4Kids.

"Actually, [fighting for children] started when I became a court appointed special advocate for a 9-year-old boy in foster care from DC in 2002. And yeah, I was surprised ... surprised that doing what was right by children was something that most often required a fight," she said during a recent breakfast.

"This is not just mentoring. Beverly has created a family, a family where one would not otherwise exist. It's a family where kids are loved unconditionally, which, in my experience, is very rare for children in foster care who are most often judged by their

SEE MENTORS, PAGE 13

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The fully stocked storage refrigerator at Flowers 'n' Ferns sees a constant turnover, with fresh flowers arriving daily from around the United States, Europe and South America.



Flowers 'n' Ferns employee Lisa Bellacicco of Springfield prepares orders for Valentine's Day, amidst the back room's "organized chaos."

Burke Florist Unfazed By Valentine's Day Rush

Flowers 'n' Ferns is well prepared for its 33rd rose rodeo.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION



Stargazer lilies are a colorful complement to more traditional roses as an option on Valentine's Day.

Diamonds may be a girl's best friend, but when it comes to Valentine's Day, fresh flowers are a must-have. For area florists like Karen Fountain, the second-generation manager of Flowers 'n' Ferns in Burke, the romantic holiday is often the highest grossing single day of the year.

During the Feast of Saint Valentine, Fountain generally sells between three and 500 arrangements for delivery and pickup orders, as well as walk-ins. It's no small feat. "My feet get tired, I'm not going to lie," said a still enthusiastic Fountain. "But we have a lot of fun with our customers. We call it 'fun and romance.'"

For over 33 years, the family-run Flowers 'n' Ferns florist shop in Burke has provided customers—from last-minute Valentine's desperates to blushing brides and high school homecomers—with fresh stems and a personal touch. Fountain's parents Larry and Fern (hence the name) Denholm opened the shop after their Springfield Florist's establishment was torn down to make way for the Mixing Bowl.

AFTER DECADES of rose peddling, Fountain and her stalwart crew of five employees (plus three part-timers and two extra drivers to cover busy holidays) have had their fair share of rush orders and high-volume Valentine's traffic. "We know how to be prepared," said Fountain. "When that gentleman comes in on Thursday at 5 p.m., we'll still have roses for him."

Not much fazes her, not even Franken-storms and shotgun weddings. Last fall, Fountain received a phone call from longtime customer Rabbi Amy Perlin. Perlin's son was supposed to be married the coming weekend, but the New Jersey venue was flooded from Hurricane Sandy.

"After I hung up and took a big breath, I called my wholesalers, got a feeling for what was out there in the color scheme," said Fountain. "I went straight

into business mode: what can I get tomorrow, etc. It was a few extra hours, but we were able to get it done.

"They've been longtime friends of ours," Fountain added. "So it was a little emotional as well, but I had to do it. And I would do that for anyone who walks in the door."

CONSISTENTLY FRESH flowers and a neighbor's personal attention are the root of the shop's longevity. Blooms arrive fresh daily from local wholesalers and abroad: tulips from Virginia and the Netherlands, Gerbera Daisies from Florida and roses from Ecuador and Colombia.

Despite the shop's highly functional website and three-month-old smartphone app, Fountain still encourages Valentine's Day shoppers and anyone else to call direct and buy in person. She claims the live interaction can save her customers money on service charges and allows her to give each order an appropriately unique flair.

"I can design anything for any style," said Fountain, "whimsical, elegant, or more traditional romantic." And as far as choosing the perfect petals for Valentine's Day, the florista advises roses aren't the be all-end all. "Just think of their favorite color," she said. "Gerbera Daisies, tulips, mixed baskets can be just as romantic."

And though roses will still be available at 5 p.m., don't underestimate the romance of punctuality.

Flowers 'n' Ferns is located at Burke Town Plaza, 9562 Old Keene Mill Road. Visit their website for more information at www.flowersnferns.com.

Home Life Style

Home Remodeling Projects Continue to Rise

Updating kitchens and bathrooms are homeowners' priorities.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Home remodeling projects continue to rebound, and kitchens and bathrooms are at the top of the project list, according to a new report from the National Association of the Remodeling Industry.

"I was personally surprised [by] the number of really high-end projects, like those over \$150,000," said Nikki Golden, NARI spokeswoman.

When the owners of a Fairfax Station home decided to turn their outdated master bathroom into a modern spa retreat, they added a black granite vanity, matching shower bench and custom glass shower doors. "This master bathroom has been completely transformed into an oasis," said Fairfax-based contractor Robert Kalmin of RJK Construction. "Immediately as you walk in, you are greeted by a large double vanity. The cabinetry door style is Centennial from Bertch Bath. Two mirrors with matching trim are hung above each sink and add continuity."

Kalmin, who is also a board member of the Washington-region's National Association of the Remodeling Industry chapter, said that a creative use of lighting helped set a relaxing, spa-like tone. "Three sconce lights add direct lighting and flare to this bathroom," he said. "The Key West soaking tub... would make anyone jealous. A unique feature in this bathroom is the extra cabinet that is adjacent to the bathtub. It adds extra storage space and creates more countertop space for decorative items like candles."

When it comes to kitchens, NARI says homeowners are expressing a desire to expand. For example, when the owners of a Reston home decided to remodel their kitchen, they removed a wall that separated the kitchen from the living area and created an open, free-flowing space that allowed for casual entertaining.

"Removing a partition wall allowed us to bring out a peninsula into the living area, expanding the kitchen and providing the opportunity for additional cabinetry, countertop space and a bar top," said Suzanne Kalmin of RJK Construction. "The [cabinetry] creates a contrast in the kitchen. The door style is a full overlay, called Pembroke and the finish is 'Raven' on cherry wood."

The homeowners wanted a durable counter surface so they chose quartz. In addition, "a section of butcher block next to the cook-top serves as a convenient prep space for cutting vegetables or bread," Suzanne Kalmin added. "This kitchen is

packed with professional grade appliances, [including] a Viking professional cooktop and oven-microwave combination."

The homeowners chose stainless steel appliances to strike an earthy but luxurious tone, she continued. "[They] are complemented by the stainless steel backsplash ...

behind the range and between the countertop and bar of the peninsula. A staggered glass natural stone combination tile is featured in the backsplash. The front of the bar is covered with a staggered natural stacked stone."

To complete the project, the wood flooring the adjacent living room was refinished to match the flooring in the remodeled kitchen to create a seamless finish.



The owners of this Reston kitchen chose stainless steel appliances to create an earthy but luxurious atmosphere.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RJK CONSTRUCTION

Last Minute Valentine's Day Ideas

Subtle accents for the most romantic holiday of the year.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Still looking for Valentine's Day home accents? Local design experts say it is not too late to add touches of romance in time for Cupid's big day.

Laura Smith of the Dandelion Patch in Vienna and Reston, suggests chocolate-scented candles, soaps and shea butter. "They are very pretty and you could put them in a guest bathroom and the candles in the living room," she said. "They smell delicious — almost edible."

Next on her list is a napkin box with cupcake napkins and paperweights. "They are perfect for entertaining, but also beautiful enough to leave out all year round," said Smith. "Napkins and weights can be changed out to make this perfect for any event or



Chocolate-scented soaps and candles are a delicious way to celebrate Valentine's Day, says Laura Smith of the Dandelion Patch in Vienna and Reston.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DANDELION PATCH

time of year."

Judy Philactos of Periwinkle Gifts recommends miniature glass hearts displayed on a tiny serving tray. "Feather heart wreaths also make nice displays," she said.

When it comes to Valentine's Day bouquets and centerpieces, floral designer Evelyn Kinville of Behnkes

Florist in Potomac, Md., says there are plenty of options. "While Valentine's Day is almost exclusively rose-based, it doesn't have to be," she said. "There are French tulips, which are larger and longer-stemmed than traditional tulips. You can use hyacinths, fragrant hybrid lilies and freesia."



Heart wreaths are a simple and stylish way to make one's home reflect the most romantic day of the year.

PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/THE CONNECTION

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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 and click on the "This Week in Real Estate" link. Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times

Burke

6308 Swan Landing Ct. \$609,000..Sun 1-4.....John Hilton.....Century 21..703-599-1351

Centreville

13849 Wakley Ct.....\$349,900..Sat 1-4.....John Hilton.....Century 21..703-599-1351

Fairfax Station

6321 Barsky Ct.....\$729,900..Sun 2-4.....Pat Fales.....RE/MAX..703-503-4365

Kingstowne/Alexandria

7619 Kingsbury Rd.....\$499,990..Sun 1-4.....Emmett Dingley.....Fairfax..703-915-9301

7572 Cross Gate Ln.....\$469,950..Sun 1-4..Tom & Cindy & Assoc..Long & Foster..703-822-0207

Lorton

9269 Blu Steel Way.....\$992,500..Sun 1-4.....Bob Lovett.....RE/MAX..703-690-0037

6830 Tiddle Way.....\$699,000..Sun 1-4.....Beckie Owen..Long & Foster..703-328-4129

7203 Lyndam Hill Cir.....\$639,950..Sun 1-4..Tom & Cindy & Assoc..Long & Foster..703-822-0207

Manassas

14916 Yolanda Ln.....\$375,000..Sun 1-4....The Applegate Team..Long & Foster..703-451-5818

Springfield

6421 Wainfleet Ct.....\$529,000..Sun 1-4.....Joe Frangipane..Long & Foster..703-628-4430

7262 Linden Tree Ln.....\$449,950..Sun 1-4.....Kathleen Quintarelli.....Weichert..703-862-8808

8469 Canyon Oak Dr.....\$334,900..Sun 1-4.....Melissa Vahdati.....Exit..571-437-9770

8665 Maple Glen Ct.....\$325,000..Sun 1-4.....Monique Craft.....Weichert..703-451-7253

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
All listings due by Tuesday at 3 P.M.

Local REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

December 2012 Top Sales

1 3722 Highland Place,
Fairfax — \$1,925,000



3 3435 Fawn
Wood Lane,
Fairfax —
\$1,175,000

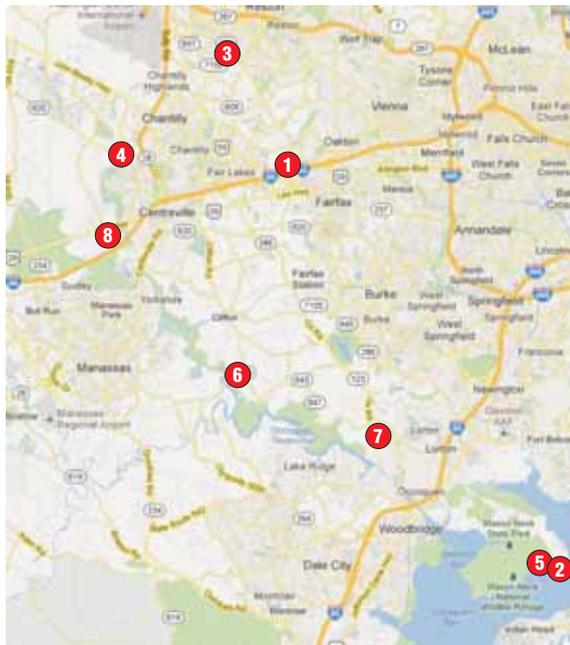


4 15039
Braddock Road,
Centreville —
\$960,000

8 6728 Cedar
Spring Road,
Centreville —
\$870,000



6 12500 Old Yates Ford Road,
Clifton — \$960,000



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1 3722 HIGHLAND PL	5	..	5	..	3	FAIRFAX	\$1,925,000	Detached	2.03	22033	FAIRFAX FARMS	12/16/12
2 5933 RIVER DR	3	..	3	..	3	LORTON	\$1,700,000	Detached	0.65	22079	HALLOWING POINT RIVER	12/21/12
3 3435 FAWN WOOD LN	4	..	4	..	1	FAIRFAX	\$1,175,000	Detached	0.83	22033	OAK HILL ESTATES	12/28/12
4 15039 BRADDOCK RD	9	..	6	..	0	CENTREVILLE	\$960,000	Detached	7.22	20120	CUB RUN	12/03/12
5 6103 CHAPMAN RD	4	..	3	..	1	LORTON	\$899,000	Detached	0.66	22079	HALLOWING POINT RIVER	12/20/12
6 12500 OLD YATES FORD RD	5	..	5	..	3	CLIFTON	\$886,000	Detached	1.00	20124	BULL RUN	12/07/12
7 9043 JOHN SUTHERLAND LN	4	..	4	..	1	LORTON	\$879,780	Detached	0.83	22079	OCCOQUAN OVERLOOK	12/14/12
8 6728 CEDAR SPRING RD	5	..	4	..	2	CENTREVILLE	\$870,000	Detached	5.01	20121	THE WOODS AT BULL RUN	12/21/12

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PHOTO BY EULEN ZANGLA

Joan Brady is an award-winning photographer whose images have appeared in many publications.

Mentors Seen as 'Family'

FROM PAGE 8

worst behaviors with a blind eye turned toward their attributes."

Sully District Supervisor Michael Frey, a champion of the program, was quick to praise Brady's role in the program.

"While the mentors and volunteers are definitely the heart of FF4Kids, Joan Brady is definitely its soul," Frey said. "I can't imagine where the program would be without her."

Neither can anyone else connected to the program.

In 2009, when the program was in danger of being eliminated because of across-the-board cuts in the county budget, Brady marshaled an army of supporters, launched a "save the program" blog, and cajoled, begged and nagged officials to keep the program. (In 2010, the program, fueled primarily by the work of the mentors and volunteers, cost about \$133,000 in a social services budget of more than \$200 million.)

Brady appeared before the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors during the budget hearings. Her plan was to let the program's youth speak directly to the supervisors.

County staff said no. That answer was not acceptable to Brady.

"That's when we began fighting. I may have led the effort, but it was very much of a group commitment," Brady said. "We knew that these kids were virtually invisible to the community. We knew that they could not stand up for themselves. We wrote letters and emails and met individually with members of the Board of Supervisors. We went directly to the Human Services Council, writing to them as well."

Supporters scheduled their testimony so that they had a block of time, and they coordinated their speeches so that each of them covered a different aspect of the program.

And Brady made sure supervisors heard from the children, by having supporters read comments from their audio testimony.

Molly Pell of Fairfax spoke about adopting one of the children in the program, and included the comments of a youth she mentored

"None of us in this room can fully understand what Families4Kids means to the youth involved, but I believe one of our youth stated it best, when she

told us:

"[If I didn't have FF4Kids], I would lose my mind ... I would lose my sanity. I wouldn't be able to function much. Cause even now I don't have very much. I get teased on at school. I get teased at the place where I'm supposed to call home. If I lost here ... it would be like there was no reason to do anything anymore."

In their short lives, so much has been taken from these youth. Please don't take away Fairfax Families4Kids," Pell said during the hearings.

"We stood together as unified members of the community," Brady said. "We achieved a stay of execution during those budget hearings in 2010."

Being Part of the "Family"

Brady is an award-winning photographer whose images have appeared in many publications, including "The Washington Post," "NYTimes.com," "Washingtonian" magazine, "Children's Voice" (the magazine of the Welfare League of America) and "O Magazine."

She is justifiably proud of her work, and will talk about it when prompted.

But she quickly steers the conversation back to the children, and how much difference mentors make in the lives of foster children. What she is not always quick to talk about is that the children in the program consider her an important part of their "family," too.

During a celebration for mentors last month, Jorge, 17, stood up to address the group: "I don't have a mentor, but Joan is always there for me ... I check in with her and she checks in with me, nagging me about school and work," he said. "I know she cares."

"Honestly, I probably am in touch with him every week-and-a-half, and I think he usually checks in and when I respond, I do totally nag," she said, laughing. "Ok, I do follow the kids on Facebook, so occasionally I check in to admonish, but it's not much."

"But see. Just that tiny bit of interaction he has with me—something that I hadn't even noted—makes a big difference for him. It just takes a tiny bit of attention to make a difference," Brady said. "That's why I want the story to be about what's really important: the children, definitely not me ..."

AREA ROUNDUPS

Man Struck by Train in North Springfield Area

On Thursday, Feb. 7, police responded to a report of a 64-year-old man struck by a train west of the Backlick Road overpass. Around 7 p.m. an Amtrak train was traveling just west of the Backlick Road overpass, when it struck and killed Richard Anderson of the North Springfield area.

Detectives from the Crash Reconstruction Unit responded to investigate and do not suspect foul play. The investigation continues.

Lee High Library Accepting Donated Books

Cleaning out those old bookshelves? The Robert E. Lee High School Library is accepting donations of gently used books for its annual book sale through April 2013. All types of books are welcome—fiction, nonfiction, children's books, cookbooks, college textbooks and more. All proceeds will go toward new materials and computers for students. For further information or to make a delivery, please contact the library at 703-924-8370.

Recycle During Electric Sunday

Residents may recycle old TVs, computers, peripheral electronic devices—such as keyboards, speakers, printers and scanners, as well as household hazardous wastes—including fluorescent light bulbs and tubes, for free, during Fairfax County's "Electric Sunday" events.

The next one is slated for Sunday, Feb. 24, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at the I-66 Transfer Station, 4618 West Ox Road, Fairfax. For more information, call 703-324-5052.

Book Drive Benefits Area Youth

The Community Affairs Committee of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Children's Book Drive through Friday, April 12, 2013. Area businesses will serve as collection points for children's books appropriate for young readers through grade six. Books can also be donated at chamber events. Residents and businesses are encouraged to participate by dropping books off at designated collection points. "Every child should have books they call their own," reminds Karen Brown, co-coordinator of the Chamber's Book Drive. "I know our business community is ready to help."

This annual book drive has provided many books for children in the Fairfax County Public School system who otherwise may not have had their own to enjoy. "Reading research has proven that children who have access to books and read on a consistent basis fare better in school and are better readers overall," said Tina Simons, reading specialist at Saratoga elementary. "That's really hard to do when books are scarce."

The children's book drive continues to grow. In 2011, 19 chamber member businesses volunteered as collection points. In 2012, that number rose to 24, and

this year, there are 31 participating businesses. New and gently used children's books may be dropped off at participating locations through April 12. Chamber volunteers will pick up collected books as donation boxes fill and prepare them for distribution to young residents in the Greater Springfield community. Book drive hosts include:

- ❖ Accelerated Physical Therapy
- ❖ Brain Injury Services
- ❖ BTW images
- ❖ CALIBRE
- ❖ Colonial Animal Hospital
- ❖ Courtyard Springfield
- ❖ Douglas Crab Cakes
- ❖ FCPS ACE—Plum Center
- ❖ Hard Times Cafe
- ❖ Liberty Tax Service—Burke & Springfield offices
- ❖ NOVA Pediatrics
- ❖ NVCC Medical Education Campus
- ❖ Office of Braddock District Supervisor
- ❖ RE/MAX Allegiance—Burke & Franconia offices
- ❖ SERVPRO of Springfield/Mt. Vernon
- ❖ The Swiss Bakery—Springfield
- ❖ The Villages at Belvoir
- ❖ TITLE Boxing Club Springfield
- ❖ TownePlace Suites Springfield
- ❖ Transurban
- ❖ Union First Market Bank
- ❖ VFW Post 7327 Ladies Aux Bingo Nights
- ❖ Walker's Grille

Visit springfieldchamber.org or contact Nancy-jo Manney, executive director, at 703-866-3500 for more information.

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/FEB. 15

Combat Paper: One Night Exhibition. 8-10 p.m., at the Workhouse, Building W-4, Studios 407 and 408, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Workhouse hosts a culminating exhibition after a one week intensive workshop of art making, beginning with veterans cutting their uniforms to make paper at Ft. Belvoir and ending with art on the walls. www.workhousearts.org.

Totally Laughable: Risque Not Raunchy. 8:30-10:30 p.m., at Kilroy's Sports Bar and Restaurant, 5250 Port Royal Road, Springfield. Comedian Jim Pate headlines, with six other comedians performing as well in a 21-and-up comedy night produced by Timothy Hill and Wes Martens. www.kilroys.com.

MONDAY/FEB. 18

George Washington's Birthday Service. 8 a.m., at Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The colonial church of George Washington holds a commemorative service to mark the national observance of the first president's birthday; the service will use the same Order for Morning Prayer from the 1662 English Book of Common Prayer as the guide for the service as Washington and other founders did. \$10 per person; \$25 per family. 703-339-6572 or www.Pohick.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 17

Display and N Gauge Trains. 1-4 p.m., at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRACK members will have a display and N gauge trains running. \$3 for adults; \$1 for children. 703-425-9225 or www.fairfax-station.org.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 20

Marduk. 5-11:30 p.m., at Empire, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. Marduk plays on their "Voices From the Dark" tour with Moonspell, Inquisition, The Foreshadowing, Deathwolf and Helgardh. \$20. www.empire-nova.com.

SATURDAY/FEB. 23

Speed Stacking Tournament. 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at North Springfield Elementary School, 7602 Heming Court, Springfield. Single and double (parent and child) cup stacking competitions held concurrently with prizes; food for sale to benefit the school \$4. 703-658-5563 or semetz@fcps.edu.

SUNDAY/FEBRUARY 24

Purim Fest. 5-8 p.m., at Ohev Yisrael Messianic Jewish Congregation, 8196 Terminal Road, Suite 0, Lorton. Celebrate Esther's obedience to the Lord resulting in the salvation of the Jewish people; games, prizes, story, food, and cake walk. 703-550-0888 or www.ohveyisrael.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 2

The Broken Spell. 1 p.m., at the Workhouse in the W-3 Theatre, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A children's theatre performance that tells the story of the princess that keeps falling asleep until her parents try to fix it by spell. However, it doesn't work and true love must be found. \$12 for adults; \$8 for children. www.workhousearts.org.

Springfield Art Guild Opening Reception. 7-9 p.m., at Northern

Virginia Community College, Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center—Building CE 2, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The Springfield Art Guild, in collaboration with the Annandale Campus of the Northern Virginia Community Colleges, presents a month long exhibit and sale in the Ernst Auditorium lobbies.

FRIDAY/MARCH 8

Josh DeWeese Ceramics. 7-9 p.m., at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Josh DeWeese, assistant professor of art at Montana State University, Bozeman, and former resident director of the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts in Helena, Mont., exhibits ceramic piece that have been thrown then altered, using pottery as an expressive art form in a contemporary context. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

Saawariya: Dinner and a Movie Night. 8 p.m., at the W-3 Theatre in the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Film, dinner and soft drinks make it an arts experience to savor; the Bollywood masterpiece directed by Sanjay Leela, inspired by Dostoyevsky's White Nights, shows. Reservations (indicate dietary needs). \$39 per person. www.workhousearts.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 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.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: Masterworks V. 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Conductor Christopher Zimmerman performs J. Strauss' Emperor Waltz and Tick Tack, Pizzicato, Trisch-Tratsch Polkas and Overture to Die Fledermaus; R. Strauss' Suite from Der Rosenkavalier, Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks and Salomé's Dance. \$25-\$55. 703-563-1990 or www.fairfaxsymphony.org.

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

2013 Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards. 8 a.m.-10 p.m., at Waterford, 6715 Commerce St., Springfield. The Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards serve as a community-wide celebration of volunteerism and the awards honor individuals, groups and organizations that have given outstanding volunteer service. Nominations/online application are due: Feb. 4 by 4 p.m. 703-246-3825 or www.volunteerfairfax.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 11

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: Masterworks VI. 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Conductor Christopher Zimmerman, tenor Brennen Guillory and soprano Joni Henson perform Wagner's "Prelude and Liebestod," Tristan und Isolde and Prelude to Act 3, Lohengrin; Verdi's Overture to La Forza del Destino, Overture to I vespri siciliani, Love Duet Finale Act I Otello, "Dio ti giocondi, O Sposo" Otello, "Dio mi potevi, scagliar" Otello, Willow Song Otello and "Libiamo," La Traviata. \$25-\$55. 703-563-1990 or www.fairfaxsymphony.org.

Performing as the Von Trapp children are (from left) Grace Shields, Marc Manaloto, Dimitri Gann, Aubrey Cervarich, Maya Tischler and Robinson student Carys Meyer, holding Dorothy Cervarich.



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/ THE CONNECTION

'These Are a Few of My Favorite Things'

Springfield man is starring in "The Sound of Music."

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

The hills may not be alive with "The Sound of Music," but Centreville Presbyterian Church sure will be when its community theater presents this classic Rodgers and Hammerstein musical.

Show times are Thursday-Saturday, Feb. 21, 22 and 23, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 24, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 at www.centrevillepres.com, at the church office at 15450 Lee Highway in Centreville or at the door.

The cast and crew of 70 have been rehearsing since September, and Director Zoe Dillard is proud of them all. "We have great actors, very talented, with wonderful voices," she said. "And the music is absolutely stunning and beautiful, as is the integrity of the story."

Noting that Rachel Harrington portrays Mother Abbess, Dillard said, "I feel it's a role she was born to play. The first time she sang, 'Climb Every Mountain,' I got goosebumps. And it's been lovely watching the cast grow through rehearsals. I think everyone who comes to this show will enjoy it and will walk out humming the songs."

Nancy Smith is conducting the 18-person pit orchestra. The cast includes both adults and students from a variety of schools, including Robinson Secondary School and GMU.

The story's set in 1938 Austria, prior to the German invasion. It's based on the true story of a widower with seven children and their governess who intends to become a nun, but falls in love with him. Scenes take place in the Austrian Alps, the Von Trapp home and the abbey.

Portraying Capt. Von Trapp is Springfield's Brian Johnson, an active-duty Air Force colonel in real life. He describes his character as a retired Navy captain and a strong person who's known great love. "But he's also known great loss and he's passionate about that," said Johnson. "So it's about his rediscovering love again and the love he has



Erin Cooper and Springfield's Brian Johnson portray Maria and Capt. Von Trapp in "The Sound of Music" at Centreville Presbyterian Church.

for his children."

Calling this role one of the favorites he's done, he said, "It's a challenge because Von Trapp has great depth and emotion, but it's shown in subtle ways. So I have to show how he changes in a more-subdued way." Johnson especially likes the song, "The Sound of Music Reprise" when the captain first hears his children singing and it opens up his heart again.

He said the audience will love this musical because "it's a well-known, uplifting, family show with a great story of a family overcoming great obstacles and persevering."

Chantilly's Erin Cooper plays Maria. Cooper says she relates to Maria because they both have a passion for children and music. Her favorite song is "Do-Re-Mi" because she has "so much fun singing it with the children. It's where I interact most with them, and they're all so cute and fun to work with."

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NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200

21 Announcements

NOTICE OF ADOPTION
DONALD YOUNG, PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on September 14, 2012, a PETITION FOR ADOPTION was filed in the office of the Cabell County, West Virginia Circuit Court. PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that a HEARING on this Petition is scheduled for March 8, 2013, at 9:15am, at the Cabell County Courthouse, located at 750 Fifth Avenue, Huntington, West Virginia 25701. Said hearing will be before Honorable David M. Pancake, Cabell County Circuit Court Judge.
Please be advised that your parental rights may be terminated in the proceeding. Also, you may appear and may any objections known or to otherwise protect your interest. You shall have thirty(30) days upon being served with this notice to respond to this notice and if you fail to respond within the required time you may not appear in or receive further notice of the adoption proceedings. A copy of the Petition, Case No.: 12-A-34, can be obtained at the Cabell County Circuit Clerk's office at the Cabell County Courthouse, located at 750 Fifth Avenue, Huntington, West Virginia, 25701, phone number 304-526-8622.
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Lee Social Worker Wins Outstanding Mentor Award

Marcella Fulmore connects African American high school students with Springfield Elementary mentees.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

When she started college at Norfolk State University in Virginia, Marcella Fulmore was an engineering major. She loved the math, but impersonal labs and the prospect of a cold, money-driven career forced her to make a decision. When considering her transition, she remembered how in high school, people would come to her with their problems. “I just thought, ‘I could help people,’” Fulmore said. “That’s it.”

She chose to radically change her path and earned both a bachelors and masters degree in social work from NSU. Over a decade later, the sole Robert E. Lee High School social worker not only carries out that job description, but has also created a literacy program and hugely popular mentoring group called Powerful African American Males About Success (PAAMAS), for which she is being honored next month in Richmond with the Virginia Mentoring Partnership’s 2012 Outstanding Mentor Award.

FOR FULMORE and her students, PAAMAS is all about transitions: do you have the information, the encouragement from role models and the self-confidence to make smart plans and good decisions? For too many of her students, the answers were invariably “No.”

After joining the staff at both Lee and Springfield Estates Elementary School in 2003, Fulmore’s first two years were filled with underachieving students—students lacking structure and support at home, who were often limited only by their lack of direction. “We would talk about transitioning out of high school, some of their goals and plans,” she said. “A lot of times it was going to college, but they hadn’t prepared themselves to make that transition.”

In some cases, students had competitive GPAs, but simply didn’t apply anywhere. Or they expected to be snatched up to play sports at the collegiate level, yet they weren’t on a school sports team. Fulmore was confused that the pieces didn’t add up. “Most of the time I figured it was because they didn’t know how to plan.”

Then one Sunday in 2006, Fulmore read a story from the “Being a Black Man” series in The Washington Post. The protagonist was an African American man who was stranded on the side of the road, then wrongfully arrested in a case of mistaken identity. The story highlighted how highly populated Prince George’s County jail system was with African American males. The tale struck a nerve with Fulmore: “That day, I said: I have to do something more. The next day I came into school and started talking with different people about helping African American males, so that wouldn’t be



Lee social worker Marcella Fulmore is joined by PAAMAS members (bottom, from left) seniors Thomas Watson, Ashwin Pitt, Demond Richeson, sophomore Darryl Gray, (top, from left) seniors Pearson Wheatley and David Johnson, junior Daniel Williams and sophomore Jonathan Walters.

them sitting in the PG jail because they failed to plan their transition appropriately.” With this specific population, Fulmore explained, “I saw the suspension rates were high, the academic rates were low and they had no transition plans.”

THE FIRST YEAR of the program, Fulmore worked with 17 young men—essentially an extracurricular class that meets during pseudo-study hall period “Lancer Time”—only from the high school level, focusing on building social skills, academic skills and leadership skills. But while PAAMAS was finding its feet, Fulmore saw another opportunity at Springfield Estates.

She connected with one African American student who had chronic discipline problems and discovered not only had his mother just recently been released from prison, but his father had been locked away since the boy was a baby. The student had bounced around from schools in Washington, D.C., and Prince George’s County before landing—insecure and rough around the edges—in Springfield. “I came back to the high school thinking: What can I do for kids at this level?” said Fulmore.

She hatched the idea of getting her PAAMAS students to mentor African American students at Springfield Estates. “They all said OK!” Fulmore enthused. “They were excited right away.” The original plan was to match PAAMAS members each up with a mentee, with weekly one-hour sessions devoted entirely to social skills: respect, listening, communication, etc.

The program later added an academic focus, and now alternates between that and its social component. As soon as Fulmore and her high school students cover a topic,

PAAMAS. “You get on the same level with them.”

The operation, which currently includes 11 Lee mentors and nine Springfield Estates mentees, has expanded with school-week meetings bleeding into social excursions into the community on the weekends. Basketball games and ice skating, among other activities, allow the whole group to practice their skills in the open.

AS AN INDEPENDENT VENTURE, students receive no credit for the activity and funding must come from a variety of outside sources. The group holds its own car wash and bake sale fundraisers, but also receives donations of both money and volunteer time from organizations in the community including Alfred Street Baptist Church Discipleship Group 20 in Alexandria and Omega Psi Phi and Kappa Alpha Psi fraternities.

For Lee senior Thomas Watson, the whole opportunity couldn’t be more fulfilling. “It makes me feel good as a person,” he said, “to know that the kids look up to us, appreciate us as role models. Growing up, no one really talked to me like that, saying ‘You can do the right thing, there’s someone to look out for you.’”

Fellow senior Demond Richeson echoed the sentiment, adding the impact they can have on their mentees’ lives: “We’re getting to them before they start making bad decisions. We talk about how they view other African American males, that it’s not just about what’s negative on the news.”

The success of Fulmore’s work with PAAMAS is readily apparent. The group has a 100 percent retention rate from year to year (students may apply to join their sophomore year) and most students see their GPAs rise over the course of their membership. She enjoys seeing everyone grow and blossom, fulfilling her simple goal for them: “To have self confidence, that they can be leaders, that they’re born leaders. They can do many great things in this life if they just aren’t afraid to step out on a limb and try.”

And though Fulmore’s aim with PAAMAS, or any of her work at the high school or elementary school levels, was not recognition, she said she couldn’t be happier about the award. “It’s a wonderful, wonderful feeling,” she said. “And that’s what makes this bittersweet; I just want to help the students.” Regardless, she acknowledges her award is important on several levels.

“With all this press now, I think it’s wonderful for the school,” Fulmore said. “The media quickly picks up on the problems in the school system—low testing performance, this student brought a knife. ... The media doesn’t take time to look at positive programs going on. And for other African Americans to see [these students] not getting arrested, not hanging on the corner, they’re learning the gifts of giving back at a young age.”

And they’re learning how to help others plan their own transition.

PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION



Marcella Fulmore and members of PAAMAS take the stairs at Robert E. Lee High School. (Clockwise, from left) senior Thomas Watson, junior Daniel Williams, sophomore Darryl Gray, senior Ashwin Pitt, sophomore Jonathan Walters, seniors Demond Richeson, David Johnson and Pearson Wheatley and (center) junior Ahmad Adams.

the mentors turn around and discuss it with their younger counterparts, developing crucial leadership skills. “At first it’s strange, but as time goes, we connect,” said Ashwin Pitt, a Lee senior and third-year member of

SPORTS

Woodson Girls' Basketball Secures Regional Berth

Cavaliers defeat Lee in Patriot District tournament.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Woodson senior guard Keara Finnerty, a first-team All-Patriot District selection, hasn't played in a Northern Region tournament since her freshman season. Senior guard Anna Walker, a member of the all-district second team who played two seasons at Falls Church before transferring to Woodson, has never experienced regionals.

The Woodson girls' basketball team started the season 0-6, not exactly a strong indicator of future success. But the Cavaliers responded by winning nine of their next 10 games and earning a top-four seed in the Patriot District tournament. On Tuesday, Woodson's season of resurgence went a step further as the No. 4 Cavaliers defeated No. 5 Lee 45-32 in the first round of the district tournament at Woodson High School. With the victory, the Cavaliers advanced to the semifinals and secured a berth in the Northern Region tournament for the first time since the 2009-10 season.

According to stats from the Washington Post's website, Finnerty averages a team-high 18.7 points per contest. The Cavaliers' second-leading scorer, Walker, averages 9.1 and senior Katie Hayes, third on the team in scoring, averages 4.7. Against Lee on Tuesday, Finnerty finished with 11 points, but didn't score until knocking down a 3-pointer with less than 4 minutes remaining in the second quarter. Thanks to sophomore Emma Kirschner, Woodson was able to jump out to an early lead without a major contribution from its primary offensive threat.

Kirschner knocked down a trio of jumpers in the first quarter, helping the Cavaliers to an 8-2 advantage. She finished with nine points and nine rebounds.

"Anna Walker has always been a decent scorer for us, but we've been searching for other scorers," Woodson head coach Patrick Neri said. "Emma Kirschner came out strong and gave us a boost."

Walker led Woodson with 15 points.

The victory improved Woodson's record to 12-11.



Woodson senior Anna Walker, who played for Falls Church her freshman and sophomore seasons, will make her first trip to the Northern Region tournament after the Cavaliers defeated Lee in the first round of the Patriot District tournament on Feb. 12.



Woodson sophomore point guard Eric Bowles was named Patriot District Player of the Year.

Woodson Boys Punch Regional Ticket

The top-seed Woodson boys' basketball team took care of business on Tuesday, beating No. 8 Annandale 69-51 during the opening round of the Patriot District tournament at Woodson High School. The Cavaliers advanced to the semifinals and secured a berth in the Northern Region tournament.

With the victory, Woodson reached 20 wins for the second consecutive season, including back-to-back 13-1 regular-season district records. The Cavaliers have won five in a row and 17 of their last 18 games. However, Woodson had won 12 straight at this point last season before losing to T.C. Williams in

the district semifinals and Fairfax in the opening round of the regional tournament.

What is it about this year's team that will help Woodson avoid another late-season collapse?

Multiple Cavaliers answered with a certain 'E' word.

"I feel like this team, we have more experience, more players that have already played on varsity and in situations like this," said sophomore point guard Eric Bowles, who started for Woodson as a freshman. "We just come out and play our game and just have to do what we do to get the win."

— JON ROETMAN

The Cavaliers faced No. 1 West Springfield in the district semifinals on Wednesday, after The Connection's deadline. The district championship game is at 7 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 15 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Woodson senior Simone Freidman won the all-around title at the Northern Region gymnastics meet on Feb. 6 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.



PHOTO BY
LOUISE KRAFFT/
THE CONNECTION

Freidman Wins Region Title

Cavaliers finish fourth at Northern Region meet.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

When Simone Freidman was a freshman at Woodson, she watched Herndon senior Maria Hayden shine at the 2010 Northern Region gymnastics meet, winning the all-around title. Freidman hoped to one day experience similar success.

Three years later, Freidman had her chance to excel on the Northern Region stage. She didn't compete in high school gymnastics during her sophomore and junior seasons due to club commitments, but Freidman re-joined the Cavaliers as a senior. She had already won the Patriot District all-around title when she competed at regionals on Feb. 6 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

At the end of the night, Freidman added another championship to her resume.

Freidman captured the Northern Region all-around title, posting a score of 38.350. She placed first on beam (9.85), second on floor (9.55), tied for third on vault (9.6) and finished fifth on bars (9.35).

"It's unbelievable," Freidman said. "I really wanted this. I really wanted to be able to say I have the district title, I have the regional title ... [and] it means a lot as a senior [to be] leaving and making my mark with the title."

"As a freshman, there was one girl named Maria Hayden who won everything. I just remem-

ber looking at her and being like, wow, she's a senior, she made her mark, this is so great. I'm glad to finally be, four years later, [following] in her footsteps."

Woodson finished fourth as a team, posing a score of 141.45. Washington-Lee won its second consecutive region championship, finishing with a score of 147.15. McLean finished runner-up for the second straight year, earning a state berth with a score of 143. Chantilly placed third (142.45).

The top eight individual finishers in each event, the top four all-around competitors and the top two teams advance to the state meet.

Stone Bridge placed fifth (136.275), Yorktown was sixth (132.175), Oakton finished seventh (131.75) and Lake Braddock was eighth (119).

Centreville's Ciara Hoernke and Hayfield's Molly Overstreet tied for second in the all-around at 38.05. Marshall's Morgan Stahl was fourth (37.575). Stahl won floor (9.725) and vault (9.7) and Hoernke won bars (9.9).

Lake Braddock's Whitney King finished fifth in the all-around with a score of 37.55. She finished in the top eight on beam (third, 9.7) and vault (tied for third, 9.6).

The VHSL state meet will be held this weekend at Centreville High School. Team competition will begin at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 15, and individual competition will start at 12:20 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 16.

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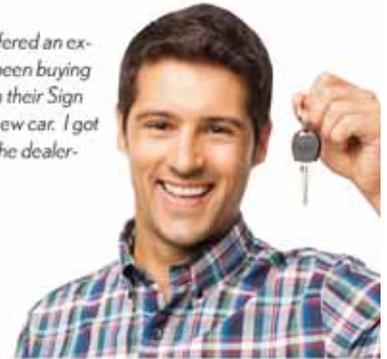
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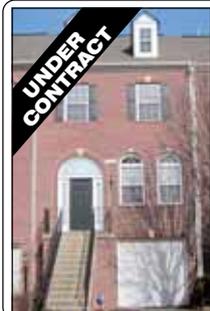
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