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PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE CONNECTION

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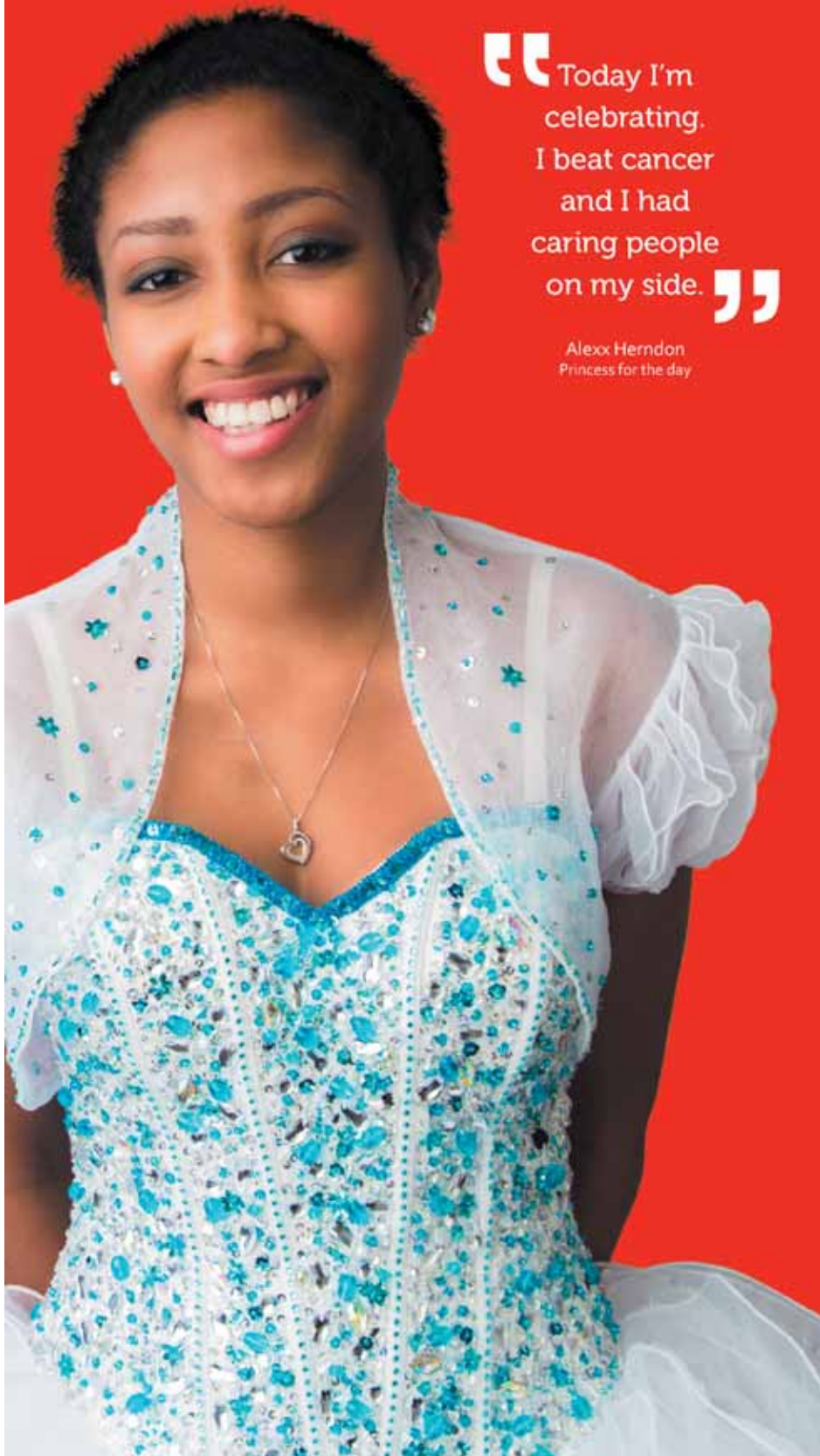
Major Changes
Coming to Interstate 95
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Paul and Jenny Ahn, residents of Lorton, recently started a Bricks 4 Kidz franchise in the area, and are hoping to soon open a location in Burke. Bricks 4 Kidz combines an educational and fun atmosphere for children using Legos.



Alexandria celebrated her 16th wearing her gown, not ours.

Alexx was diagnosed with bone cancer her first year of high school. Instead of going to an adult hospital, her family got help from a cancer treatment team focused completely on pediatric medicine. Watch how specialized care created a special day at JustRightForChildren.com/Alexx.



“Today I’m celebrating. I beat cancer and I had caring people on my side.”

Alexx Herndon
Princess for the day

NEWS

Republican Women of Clifton to Welcome U.S. Rep. Darrell Issa

The Republican Women of Clifton (RWC) welcomes U.S. Congressman Darrell Issa from California’s 49th Congressional district as guest speaker at its May meeting. Issa serves as the top Republican on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, charged with protecting the interests of U.S. taxpayers and eliminating waste, fraud and abuse. The meeting will be on Monday, May 19 at the Fairview Elementary School, 5815 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, and the social hour will begin at 7 p.m. when refreshments will be served.



U.S. Rep. Darrell Issa (Calif.)

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Issa had a successful business career prior to his 2001 election and in 1994 was named Entrepreneur of the Year by Inc. Magazine, Ernst & Young and The San Diego Tribune for leadership of his company Directed Electronics. Issa holds 37 patents and is vigilant about protecting intellectual property rights. He opposed the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) which bailed out Wall Street and he proposed a bipartisan commission to uncover the root causes of the crisis. The

idea was passed and the investigation is underway to reveal government mistakes and to protect U.S. taxpayers from future runaway government intervention.

President Alice Butler-Short will open the business meeting at 7:30 p.m., after which Rep. Issa will deliver comments and entertain questions.

“RWC is proud to host Congressman Issa who represents fiscal conservative principles. We are certain members and guests alike will benefit from his insight into how government can be smarter and more efficient,” said Butler-Short.

idea was passed and the investigation is underway to reveal government mistakes and to protect U.S. taxpayers from future runaway government intervention.

Guests will be asked for a \$5 donation at the door for TAPS - the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors of our Fallen Heroes.

The Republican Women of Clifton (RWC) holds monthly meetings with interesting speakers, participates in elections, and holds special events.

For more information, visit <http://cliftongop.com/>.

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Landfill Decision Deferred to June 17

If approved by Board of Supervisors, Lorton landfill will operate until 2034.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

Before a public hearing on May 13 in which over 99 people signed up before the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors regarding an application to extend the life of the Lorton landfill until 2034, Frank McDermott, an attorney representing EnviroSolutions, said he had never experienced such nastiness and misrepresentation in a land use case.

The EnviroSolutions application to extend operation of their construction landfill until 2034 has led to controversy in the Lorton community and beyond. Despite months of debate, the decision was deferred by the Board of Supervisors to June 17.

Although an application was approved in 2006 for the landfill to close in 2018 and build a park on the site, that has fallen through due to liability issues. In addition, the applicant says that the landfill will not reach capacity by 2018.

But homeowners and other Lorton citizens say they've had enough of the landfill, and want it to close in 2018 as previously decided. Many are also upset that EnviroSolutions is not sticking to its original approved application in which a park would be built on the landfill after it closed in 2018.

"The landfill issue is a problem, not only for my business, but all business in Lorton," said Jacquelyn Nunez of Exit Realty Associates and Lorton Station Merchants Association.

Property values are negatively affected by the landfill, opponents argue. Some mentioned the stigma Lorton has received as the home of the former DC prison, and the stigma it is currently receiving as a "gateway to trash."

"We'd like to see an image change. And we don't believe keeping that landfill would help the image change," Nunez said. "We want what the other parts of Fairfax County enjoy—property without trash."

SUPPORTERS OF THE APPLICATION

cite its green energy components, which includes the construction of wind turbines, solar panels and geo-thermal capacity.

The Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce supports the EnviroSolutions application, Holly Dougherty, president of the organization, said at the public hearing. The Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce also supports the application.

"This landfill is a component of the economic redevelopment on Richmond Highway, as well as the development of Tysons, Reston, and other commercial centers," Dougherty said, echoing supporter's con-



The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on the EnviroSolutions application to extend operations of the Lorton landfill until 2034 on May 13. The hearing lasted late into the night and ended with a deferral of the decision to June 17.



Lorton residents Martin Rizer, Nick Firth and Bill Lynch all spoke at the public hearing in opposition to the EnviroSolutions application.



A view from the top of the landfill in Lorton. If the new application is approved, the landfill will operate until 2034.

cerns that if the landfill is closed, construction debris in Fairfax County would have to be transported far away, doubling the cost.

Many Lorton citizens, including Nick Firth, president of the South County Federation, and Larry Clark of the Spring Hill Community Association, are opposed to the application because they say the green energy components that EnviroSolutions is proposing are an example of "greenwashing."

If EnviroSolutions does not build the green energy components, they must pay the county a total of \$10 million.

Instead of wind turbines and other green energy components, Lorton will be left with a landfill, says Bill Lynch, whose business park is near the landfill. Lynch says the green energy is a smoke screen for what the application actually is—the extension of a landfill—and that EnviroSolutions can easily buy their way out of the green energy

"This landfill is a component of the economic redevelopment on Richmond Highway, as well as the development of Tysons, Reston, and other commercial centers."

— Holly Dougherty, President, Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce

"George Mason would roll over in his grave if he knew what you were doing."

— Philip Hirschkop of Lorton

park.

Lynch is also concerned with the 70-foot berm that will be constructed if the application is approved.

And some residents are upset that the landfill will continue to be the gateway to Fairfax County.

"Every time you pass by one of the wealthiest counties in the nation, this is what you'll see," Firth said at the hearing.

The Mount Vernon Group of the Sierra Club recently changed positions on this issue, writing in a letter on May 8 that they are concerned with some aspects of the EnviroSolutions application.

"Given ESI's recent history, we are concerned that the County would end up with a larger landfill and no renewable energy benefits. Coupled with the fact that ESI recycles only a small portion of the construction and demolition debris (CDD) at this site and that at least half the CDD they landfill is from out of state, this casts serious doubts on the so called "green aspects" of the project or its economic benefit to Fairfax County," the letter stated.

THE PUBLIC HEARING and discussion regarding the application lasted until after midnight, with Board of Supervisors listening to a variety of views of the issue. Mount Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland, who is opposed to the application, continuously questioned supporters of the application during the public hearing. He also wanted the Board of Supervisors to make a decision on May 13, but a motion to defer decision until June 17 was passed.

The majority of Lorton residents who spoke at the meeting voiced their opposition to the application.

"George Mason would roll over in his grave if he knew what you were doing," said Philip Hirschkop of Lorton about the founding father and prominent Lorton resident.

PHOTOS BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE CONNECTION



PHOTOS COURTESY OF 95 EXPRESS LANES

The 95 Express Lanes, scheduled to open in early 2015, will require all users to purchase an E-ZPass. Shown here is construction from fall 2013 at the northern end of the project area.

Major Changes Coming To Interstate 95

All 95 Express Lane users will need an E-ZPass in 2015.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

When the 95 Express Lanes open in 2015, all drivers, whether they are driving alone, in a carpool, a slug, or in a vehicle with a clean fuel plate, will be required to purchase an E-ZPass or E-ZPass Flex to use these lanes.

“What drivers need to understand is that while they travel these HOV lanes today, and a lot of folks have been traveling these HOV lanes for years, the rules that occur in the HOV lanes are going to change when the Express Lanes open in 2015,” said Michael McGurk, a spokesperson for the 95 Express Lanes project.

Unlike the 495 Express Lanes project, which was more like building a highway within a highway, McGurk said, HOV lanes on 95 are being converted into express lanes.

“With that conversion comes a whole bunch of different rules,” McGurk said.

To raise awareness of the changes, the 95 Express Lanes project, along with the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, launched the “Make a Plan” campaign on April 14.

“We want those who use the HOV lanes to continue to vanpool, carpool, slug on the express lanes, but they’ve got to do their homework,” McGurk said.

THE EXPRESS LANES will run from Stafford County near Garrisonville Road up to 395 near Edsall Road, nearly 29 miles. Anyone using the express lanes will need to purchase an E-ZPass or E-ZPass Flex, which are available at retailers throughout the area, including Giant and Wegmans.

“The E-ZPass Flex is the special E-ZPass that was created for use on the 495 Express Lanes, and then the 95 Express Lanes as well, that gives people the option to take a toll-free trip if you have three or



Drivers are encouraged to plan ahead as the opening of the 95 Express Lanes will change the way the interstate is used. All drivers using the express lanes are required to purchase an E-ZPass. Those who travel with three or more people in their vehicle must purchase an E-ZPass Flex and switch it to the toll-free HOV mode when traveling on the express lanes.

more people in your car,” McGurk said. “That E-ZPass actually has the switch at the bottom, and the driver puts it in either toll-paying mode if they’re by themselves or with one other person in the car, or if they have three or more people they put it in HOV mode.”

The E-ZPass Flex is critical, McGurk said, because it will allow those who are traveling HOV-3 in the HOV lanes today to enjoy the same toll-free trip. Regardless of whether drivers participate in a slug, carpool or vanpool, any vehicle with three or more people needs an E-ZPass Flex to use the express lanes. “You can take advantage of that same network that you travel today with the HOV lanes,” McGurk said.

SEE EXPRESS, PAGE 5



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Police from around the nation cycled to D.C. in memory of fellow fallen officers.

Riding for the Fallen

More than 100 officers cycle through Virginia, for cause.

BY REENA SINGH
THE CONNECTION

Police officers from all over the country vowed to “ride for those who died” this week.

Police Unity Tour Chapter IV - also known as the Virginia chapter - challenged officers on a three day bicycle tour from Richmond to D.C. in memory for fallen officers.

Before the last stop at Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium, the group of 122 officers and loved ones of fallen police stopped for lunch at McConnell Public Safety and Transportation Operations Center Monday in Fairfax as a tribute to the county most the officers served. “We had a good group of people this year,” said Herndon Police Chief and Chapter IV President Maggie DeBoard. “A lot of them never knew each other, but now we’re like family.”

She said seven family members of fallen officers joined the tour this year. She also noted that some of the officers came from as far away as Las Vegas and Ohio.

Last year, the event raised \$1.7 million towards the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. To ride, each bicyclist must raise at least \$1,700, she said.

Many of the police - most dressed in official Police Unity Tour uniforms - showed slight signs of pain after the three day cycle event despite the rigorous training many go through on the job.

“This is the most difficult chapters to ride because of the hills,” said DeBoard.

THE COURSE’S FIRST STOP after departing Richmond is Charlottesville. The cyclists then head through the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains to Warrington and Fairfax before finishing in Washington, D.C.

HPD officer Steven Monahan said the weather during prime training season kept many officers from practicing properly.

“Because the winter was so harsh, it was hard to train outdoors,” he said. “At the end of the day, though, it’s not about the pain we feel. It’s about who we’re riding for. That’s what keeps me going.”

Deputy Chief Tammy Hooper rode the tour for the first time this year to honor Charlie Hill, an officer who died 25 years ago.

“It’s also my 25th year on the police department, so I thought it would be a good tribute,” she said, showing the blue metal bracelet on her wrist with Hill’s name on it.

According to odmp.org, Hill was killed in March 1989 after opening fire on a drug dealer who held a gun to a hostage’s head, demanding that his debt get paid. The suspect had enough time to open fire before he was killed, mortally wounding Hill and injuring a second officer.

Hooper said she met Hill during police academy on the shooting range, where he was an instructor.

Lucas County Sheriff’s Department Deputy Rob Sehermerhorn came down from Ohio to ride with the Virginia chapter.

“My friend, Keith Dressel, died in the line of duty,” he said. “He interrupted a drug bust.”

NEWS

Express Lanes Require E-ZPass

FROM PAGE 4

The only passengers receiving a toll-free trip on the express lanes will be those with a total of three or more people in their car, transit riders, or motorcycle riders.

"Today on the HOV lanes, if you have a special clean fuel license plate that was issued before July 2006, you can use the HOV lanes without meeting the HOV-3 occupancy requirement," McGurk said. "That will change as well on the 95 Express Lanes. The only way to get that toll free ride is with three or more or riding a bus or motorcycle." Under the current HOV system, drivers with less than three people are not able to use the lanes during restricted peak times. However, under the new express lanes system, those drivers can pay a toll to access the lanes at any time, McGurk said.

"So during peak morning rush hour, 7:30 and 8 in the morning, normally they aren't allowed in the HOV lane network, but they're going to have the opportunity to be able to pay a toll to get in the express lanes network," McGurk said. Once the 95 Express Lanes end at Edsall Road in Springfield, those with three or more people in their vehicles can continue north onto the I-395 HOV lanes. However, during times when the I-395 HOV rules are in effect, those who do not meet the HOV requirement will have to exit the express lanes and travel on the main parts of I-395 when the express lanes end at Edsall Road. "While using the 95 Express Lanes will be easy, it's important that all travelers make a plan for the changes the 95 Express Lanes will bring to I-95," said Kevin Ginnerty, Director of Project Delivery, Transurban, in an April 14 press release. "Many travelers use the HOV lanes today - whether for commuting, weekend or vacation trips - and it's important that they familiarize themselves with new rules of the road for the 95 Express Lanes."

IN APRIL, Governor Terry McAuliffe announced that the 95 Express Lanes project is more than 70 percent complete and will open in early 2015.

"The progress on the 95 Express Lanes project is a visible reminder of the congestion relief and new travel choices that Virginians will have available to them in less than a year," McAuliffe stated in an April 29 press release.

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Virginia Proves Elections Matter

Health and economic issues are entwined.

Some people continue to assert, either with their words or by simply abstaining, that voting just doesn't matter. Here in Virginia, nearly every day we prove that is incorrect.

All of Virginia's elected representatives who are elected by the entire state are of the same political party. They are all Democrats: Gov. Terry McAuliffe, Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam, Attorney General Mark Herring and Virginia's two U.S. Senators, Mark Warner and Tim Kaine.

None were elected by a landslide but the trend is undeniable; the results are tangible.

Herring won his race over Mark D. Obenshain (R) by fewer than 200 votes out of more than 2.2 million votes cast. But that slimmest of margins has cleared the way for a new approach on many issues, especially after the previous four years of Gov. Bob McDonnell and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli.

In January, Herring announced his office would support legal arguments that Virginia's

ban on same sex marriage is unconstitutional. Judge Arenda Wright Allen on Valentine's Day overturned that ban, and on Tuesday, May 13, the U.S. 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond begins the process that should result in same sex couples being able to marry in Virginia.

In April, Herring advised that Virginia students who are lawfully present in the United States under the Federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program qualify for in-state tuition, provided they meet Virginia's domicile requirements.

EDITORIAL

This week, Gov. McAuliffe began administrative processes to blunt the effects of restrictive regulations placed on women's health centers that provide abortion, that would essentially have forced most to close by applying onerous standards intended for hospitals.

"I am concerned that the extreme and punitive regulations adopted last year jeopardize the ability of most women's health centers to keep their doors open and place in jeopardy the health and reproductive rights of Virginia women," McAuliffe said. He also began the process of changing the makeup of the Board of Health via appointments, including return-

ing James Edmondson of McLean to the board.

In the meantime, the gerrymandering of district lines for members of the General Assembly maintains the conservative, Republican super majority there.

Those members of the House of Delegates in particular seem prepared to cut off their noses to spite their faces, to do almost anything to deny health care to more than 200,000 very poor Virginians who could be covered by expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act. Not only would this be fully covered by Federal funds for the first years and covered 90 percent thereafter, but it would bring enormous economic benefits to Virginia. McAuliffe is correct to look for ways to expand Medicaid administratively, bypassing the General Assembly. It has been done elsewhere.

"This is not just a health issue — it's an economic issue," McAuliffe said yesterday in announcing review of the regulations on women's health clinics, but the statement applies also to expanding health care in Virginia. "In order to grow and diversify our economy, Virginia needs to be open and welcoming to all."

— MARY KIMM,
MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

No, I'm Not a Parent; I Just Act Like One

BY JOAN BRADY

I'm not a biological mother, an adoptive mother, a stepmother or a foster mother. But I have experienced some of the joys and heartbreaks of motherhood.

More than 12 years ago, I began as a homework tutor at a group home for foster kids. It was there that I met 7-year-old Dontae.

He would tell you that he tricked me into spending more time with him by pretending that he didn't know his letters. I would tell you that I was drawn to him in ways that I think mothers are drawn to their children. He needed someone. Maybe he needed me.

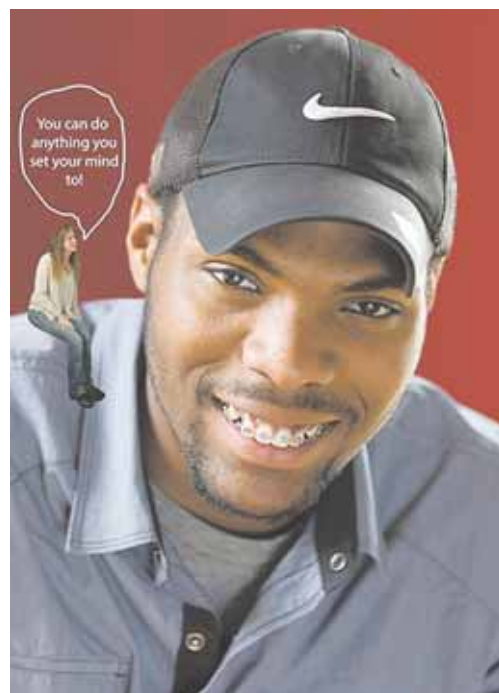
Within months, I began training to become Dontae's Court Appointed Special Advocate or CASA. A CASA is a volunteer who becomes the advocate for a foster child, representing a vulnerable child against the competing priorities of rotating social workers, lawyers and caregivers.

Dontae had 23 placements in just under three years during his time in foster care. With a lack of stability and security, it was no wonder that his behavior was out of control. His anger was often frightening and sometimes put us both in danger.

I quickly learned that he needed consistency and boundaries, but most of all, he needed unconditional, unwavering support.

My friends' kids were much younger than Dontae and social services and court appointed therapists didn't offer any meaningful insights or strategies. I operated on instinct, which sometimes served me well, but often did not.

I told Dontae over and over again what my parents had told me from the time I can remember: "You can do anything you set your mind to." While I might have gotten that per-



Joan Brady to Dontae: "You can do anything you set your mind to!"

sistent and caring motivational support right, there was so much I was getting wrong.

Fortunately, in my second year with Dontae. I met a talented therapist with a young child. In exchange for photographs of her daughter, she promised to meet with me weekly, the day after I saw Dontae.

Each week, I reported on our most recent visit. She would carefully explain where and why my instincts had betrayed me and sent me back out to do better the next time. Her insights were invaluable over the years.

Dontae returned to his mother's home after three years in foster care and she supported

my continuing to be part of their lives. I helped to navigate the frustratingly complex educational system and was there to encourage Dontae. But at 14, Dontae was not really much different than he had been when I met him at 7. He was often filled with rage. The slightest thing could set him off. And one day after battering me with harsh and menacing words, he attempted to jump out of my car as I drove down the highway.

I remember my parents threatening to leave us, four kids at the side of the road, during a particularly bad road trip. I knew just how they felt. But I didn't leave Dontae at the side of the road. And three years later, he started to change.

In the past five years I have gotten to experience some of the joys of parenthood; first job, raises, good grades, school dances, wonderful trips and meals enhanced by interesting conversations. I have also struggled with the frustrating dilemma of trying to keep a kid on track, alternating between nagging, bribing, screaming, negotiating and supporting.

Dontae stayed in school well beyond what should have been his graduation date, cramming 12 years of education into just two. And next month he will graduate.

If you had asked me if I thought this was possible 12 years ago, I would have quietly shaken my head. But come June, I will be loudly cheering Dontae on at his high school graduation and embarrassing him by taking too many pictures.

No, I'm not a parent. I just act like one.

Joan Brady is a professional photographer; mentor and advocate for current and former foster children; volunteer with paws4People, Fairfax Families4Kids, and others; and a resident of Great Falls. Reach her at joan@joanbradyphotography.com



LETTERS

A Better Way to Teach Children

To the Editor:

It seems like every time you read an article regarding education there is talk of standardized high-stakes testing. Teachers spend hours planning and preparing lessons that ensure their students will select the correct question on a lengthy multiple choice test. Students regurgitate this information one day late in the spring, when the only thing anyone can focus on is the looming summer months. When you think about what we want our students to be able to do when they exit high school, is being really good at test taking the first thing that comes to mind?

The end goal does not seem to fit the means by which schools are aiming to obtain success. This has left many educators, researchers, and parents wondering, is there a better way to teach our children? One school in Fairfax County is attempting to step outside the box and

implement a Project-Based Learning (PBL) model in a few of their classrooms. PBL was developed by the Buck Institute for Education in Novato, Calif., though many of the inquiry based methods can be traced back to education pioneer John Dewey.

Through PBL students are highly engaged in problem solving, collaboration, and critical thinking activities. Teachers must carefully select which cross-curricular

standards they want a project to cover. Then, they introduce students to their problem and propose a driving question. Students research collaboratively online and with print resources. They create a final product that demonstrates their newly gained learning to their community. Finally, students reflect on their learning and performance.

Research has shown that students who learn through PBL perform at the same level, if not higher than students in a traditional classroom. In addition, they make gains in 21st Century Skills. PBL provides students the opportunity to take ownership of their learning, demonstrate higher order thinking skills, and communicate respectfully with their peers.

This is what we are looking for in our high school grads. Maybe PBL will be the ticket to get us there.

Sarah Privateer
Fairfax

Senator Who Cares

To the Editor:

It's been more than frustrating to watch such a dysfunctional Congress. Looking toward the coming election, I'm voting for candidates that can cross party aisles and put the welfare of the citizens first. This is why I am supporting Sen. Mark Warner's re-election. Examining his past work in the Senate has given me hope that with more representatives like him, our legislature can emerge from the inoperative era.

I'm a mother of two small children, so I'm passionate about his work to support the health of our children. Just recently, Sen. Warner joined with House Majority Leader Eric Cantor and other Republicans from across the country to put our tax dollars to better use. Rather than continuing to fund political party conventions, Warner lead the support in the Senate

for the Gabriella Miller Kids First Research bill, a piece of legislation that would divert former political money to the NIH for research for pediatric diseases. His track record in putting health issues first is impressive. After being personally affected by his mother's own struggle with Alzheimer's, Sen. Warner created the bipartisan Congressional Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease which aims to invest in Alzheimer's research and stamp out the disease by 2020. I believe that Mark Warner has his priorities in the right order. I support his willingness to work with Republicans in the House and Senate whenever it means putting children, seniors and the American people first.

Olivia Hinebaugh
Burke

Questionable Presumption

To the Editor:

The Fairfax County School Board has proposed four options for public discussion on changing school start times. None of the options includes the current school schedule. We are not in Russia, we must be given a fair choice, including the no change option. The presumption that if children start school later, they will get more sleep is questionable. They may simply go to bed later. The \$3M to \$7M cost to change the school schedule is a waste. Teachers are being laid off due

to budget issues, we should not spend millions of dollars on transportation at the expense of the teachers. Starting an hour later adds as much as two hour of commute time for the parents who live in the western end of the county and work in Washington, D.C. After school activities will start and end at later times, just in time for rush hour traffic and therefore may have to be curtailed. The current school schedule must be maintained.

Yoram Carmi and Margo Rowles
Great Falls

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lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known

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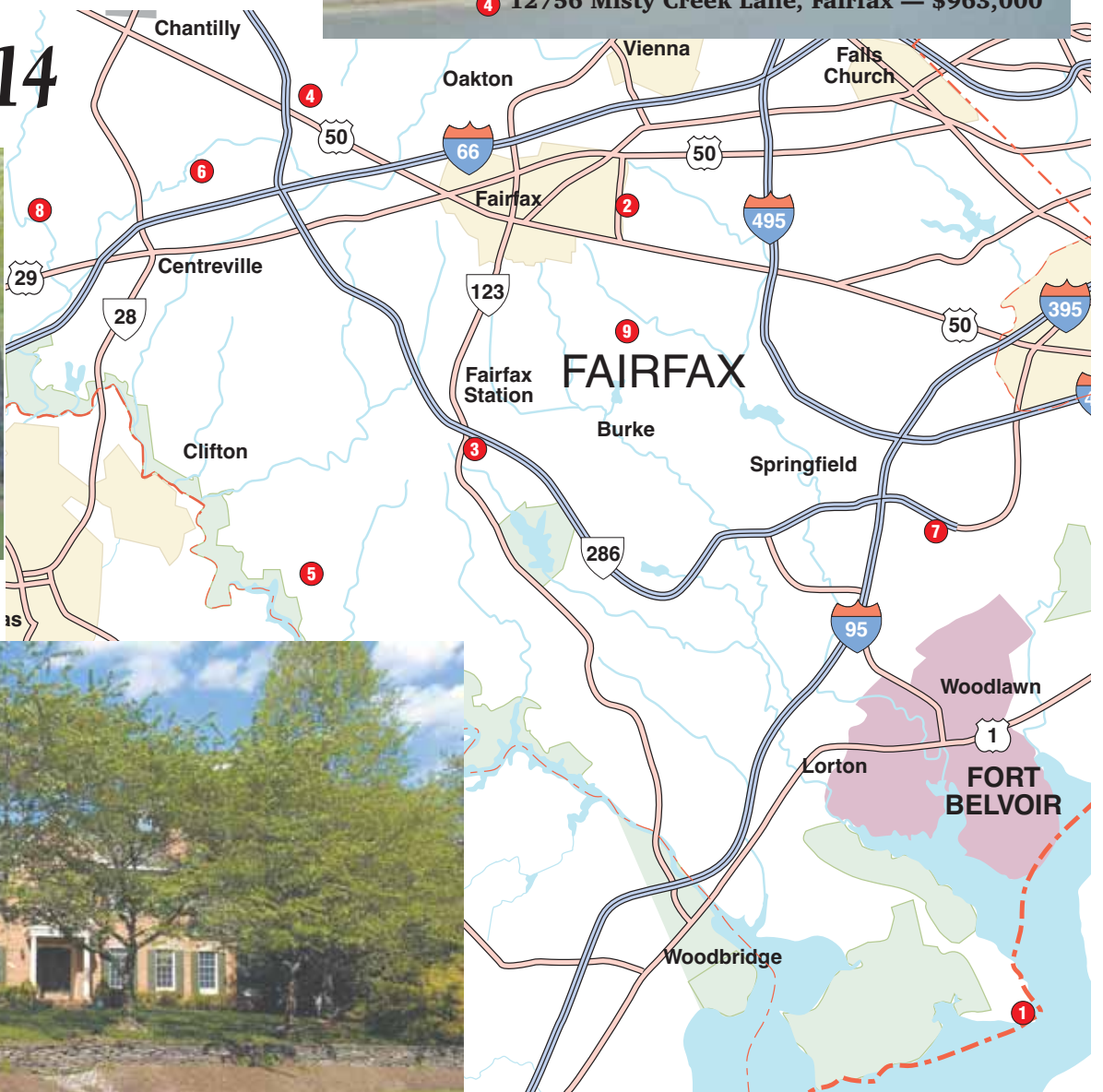
4 12756 Misty Creek Lane, Fairfax — \$963,000



Top Sales in March, 2014



5 12403 Clifton Hunt Drive, Clifton — \$925,000



3 6207 Halley Commons Court,
Fairfax Station — \$1,165,000



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Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 5813 RIVER DR	4	2	1	LORTON	\$1,340,000	Detached	0.86	22079	HALLOWING POINT RIVER	03/25/14
2 9505 SHELLY KRASNOW LN	5	5	1	FAIRFAX	\$1,180,000	Detached	0.26	22031	PICKETT'S RESERVE	03/06/14
3 6207 HALLEY COMMONS CT	5	4	1	FAIRFAX STATION	\$1,059,000	Detached	0.83	22039	HUNT AT FAIRFAX STATION	03/17/14
4 12756 MISTY CREEK LN	5	4	1	FAIRFAX	\$963,000	Detached	0.21	22033	CENTURY OAK	03/25/14
5 12403 CLIFTON HUNT DR	5	3	1	CLIFTON	\$925,000	Detached	5.14	20124	CLIFTON HUNT	03/17/14
6 4752 SUN ORCHARD DR	5	4	1	CHANTILLY	\$850,000	Detached	0.41	20151	PARKSIDE MANOR	03/21/14
7 6477 WINDHAM AVE	5	4	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$850,000	Detached	0.57	22315	WINDSOR ESTATES	03/19/14
8 5824 RIDINGS MANOR PL	4	5	1	CENTREVILLE	\$800,000	Detached	1.01	20120	THE RIDINGS AT VIRGN RUN	03/25/14
9 9485 HARROWHILL LN	5	5	1	BURKE	\$792,000	Detached	0.30	22015	WESTON HILLS	03/14/14

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Outdoor Entertaining

Local style gurus offer tips for alfresco soirees.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The mild temperatures that usher in late spring and early summer beckon many outdoors for alfresco parties. Whether held on a patio, deck or veranda, the necessary logistics for coordinating even a simple gathering can be daunting.

Local tastemakers have unveiled the latest in elegant accessories, colorful furnishings and creative strategies for transforming a simple outdoor party into a chic and elegant endeavor. From serveware and centerpieces to lighting and cushions, style gurus explain how you can keep your cool while hosting a warm weather event.

"We love using our indoor-outdoor rugs as the starting point for decorating outdoor spaces," said Ann O'Shields of The Nest Egg in Fairfax. "We have a huge selection of patterns and colors from Dash & Albert that are perfect for grounding your space and creating an area to entertain."

Marrying comfort and style in outdoor seating can transform virtually any space into a festive oasis, say designers. Sunbrella fabrics are the ideal textile for upholstered furniture and throw pillows, says O'Shields.

Outdoor pillows by Elaine Smith are the top choice of interior designer and home furnishings boutique owner Victoria Sanchez of Victoria at Home in Old Town Alexandria. She says that the cushions are polished enough to adorn a home's interior, but hefty enough to withstand exterior elements. "The pillows have grommets and embellishments, but are machine washable and can sit outside," said Sanchez. "Something like that can do a lot to spiff up the same old furniture and set a tone for a festive environment."

When it comes to place settings and serveware, resist the urge to bring indoor dinnerware outside, eschew the disposable varieties, and instead opt for dinnerware made of melamine. "It is perfect for outdoor entertaining because it's durable and won't break if dropped," said Courtney Thomas of The Picket Fence in Burke. "A bright serving tray or bowl adds some fun to outdoor dining."

Whether from one's own garden or a favorite florist, no smartly dressed table is complete without fresh foliage. "Flowers go without saying," said Sanchez. "They add



When guests arrive and see fresh flowers, it signals to them that the event is special and festive, says Victoria Sanchez of Victoria at Home in Old Town Alexandria.

color, and when your guests walk in and see fresh flowers, it signals to them that the event is special and festive."

To create bouquets with bursts of vibrant summer colors, Evelyn Kinville of The Behnke Florist Shop in Potomac, Md. recommends graceful blossoms like lisianthus, iris, hydrangea and godetia. "These can all be used together. Godetia is very pretty and comes in cherry red, salmon and fuchsia," said Kinville.

When choosing a color scheme, try going back to the basics. "It goes back to color theory — stay with a color wheel," said Sanchez. "Opposite sides of the color wheel are always safe, like orange and blue."

Use lighting to create ambience. "Candles make great outdoor accessories, especially if you are entertaining at night," said Thomas. "Hang a few votive lanterns from nearby trees or use a row of smaller lanterns as a centerpiece on the table. Even placing a few tea lights on the table creates a warm glow."

Cold libations and melodies wafting through the air are summer soiree essentials. "For entertaining, it's always fun to have great music and refreshments which are fun to serve in buckets

filled with ice and drinks," said O'Shields.

When in doubt, opt for understated décor. "Keep it simple and colorful," says Sanchez. "No one knows what you forgot. They only see what is there."

"Flowers go without saying. They add color, and when your guests walk in and see fresh flowers, it signals to them that the event is special and festive.

— Victoria Sanchez, Victoria at Home



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

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'Disguised Learning' with Bricks 4 Kidz

Lorton residents use Legos to reinforce education, fun.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

It's no secret that kids love building with Legos. But the fun can also be educational, as Lorton residents Jenny and Paul Ahn have recently discovered. The Ahns have been integrating the fun of Legos with educational concepts since starting a Bricks 4 Kidz franchise in the area in March.

The couple decided on Bricks 4 Kidz, a national franchise that teaches children to be curious and creative through building with Legos, because they knew that children love Legos, but that there's more to it than just a fun time.

"All of our programs are kind of like disguised learning," Paul said.

Paul and Jenny, 33, also have two young children, and wanted to pick something that would allow them to spend more time together as a family.

"We really fell in love with the program and saw that it had a lot to offer," Jenny said.

BRICKS 4 KIDZ offers after-school programs, summer camps, birthday parties, family nights out, and more throughout the Fairfax and Springfield area. The programs are built around proprietary model plans created by engineers and architects.

This summer, camps will be available throughout the area, including at Burke Presbyterian Church.

"We're very excited to work with them," Paul said.

The camps will have several different themes, including theme parks, space, construction and stop-motion animation.

Bricks 4 Kids is more than just a Lego club, Paul says.

"There's a curriculum behind it, there's a lesson behind it," he said. "Once it actually powers on and they see it working, it really reinforces the learning behind the play."

Paul and Jenny even test out the programs with their 4-year-old son, who has learned the names to all of the parts, including the pulleys, levels and gears.

"A lot of these parts are things you are going to see in your every-day objects. For a 4-year-old child to know what these things do is great," Paul said.

The Ahn house is Lego-central, Jenny says, but their son loves it.

In a time full with budget cuts in the schools, the couple says that Fairfax County parents are constantly seeking out additional educational enrichment opportunities for their children.

"This is more active learning, as opposed to a classroom setting. They get to use their hands when they are building," Jenny said.

In addition to learning about STEM components, students who participate in Bricks 4 Kidz also learn important social skills.

"They work together and learn team-building.



PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE CONNECTION

Lorton residents Paul and Jenny Ahn are spreading the Bricks 4 Kidz franchise throughout the Fairfax and Springfield area through summer camps, birthday parties, after-school programs and more, and plan to open a physical location in Burke.

There's a lot of great things about building, learning and playing with Legos," Jenny said. "It's also a confidence builder-after they turn it on, it's great for them to see what they built."

EVEN PARENTS join in on the fun and learning during family fun nights and birthday parties.

"Paul doesn't let the parents just sit back-he makes them get involved with the fun," Jenny said.

While events such as birthday parties and after-school programs can be brought to locations throughout the area, the couple is searching for a physical location in order to be able to run more summer camps. They are looking in Burke, and hope to secure a place by this summer.

"It's a very family-oriented community," Paul said. "I think we would have a lot to offer."

Bricks 4 Kidz was recently awarded Entrepreneur Magazine's Best of the Best Award. Summer camps, such as the one offered in Burke, can

also help prevent what is known as the summer brain drain, which studies have found results from a lack of activity during summer months.

The summer camps are sure to be a fun and educational time, the couple says. Even though starting the franchise has had its difficult moments, they both enjoy teaching and working with children.

"The kids have definitely been the best part," Paul said.

Birthday parties and events can be brought to locations throughout the area. For more information, visit <http://www.bricks4kidz.com/virginia-fairfax-springfield/>.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BUFFY GRANDE

Participants from last year's first Fragile X walk gather at Burke Lake Park. This year, the Fragile X Families of Northern Virginia hope to raise \$50,000 for Fragile X research and education.

Raising Awareness, Funds for Fragile X

Second Annual Fragile X Walk is May 17 at Burke Lake Park.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

Throughout the United States, over 1,000,000 individuals are at risk of developing or already have a Fragile X disorder. Despite the numbers, many people still remain uneducated about Fragile X.

The Fragile X Families of Northern Virginia are working to raise awareness and money for research and education on this syndrome with their second annual Fragile X walk, coming this Saturday, May 17 to Burke Lake Park in Fairfax Station.

Fairfax Station Resident Buffy Grande and her husband started the Fragile X Families of Northern Virginia after attending an international conference on the syndrome. Their son, who is now eight, has Fragile X. They were the only people from Virginia at the conference, and they decided they needed to do something, so they started the group.

"We decided we needed some help and support, and we wanted to also provide help and support for the area," Grande said.

The group has about 12 to 16 families that participate, and provides support and resources to help individuals with Fragile X and their families. They've hosted a couple of local conferences and have held various educational and social events for families.

FRAGILE X is the most common cause of inherited intellectual disability, and occurs in

approximately 1 in 3600 males and 1 in 4000 females. It is also the most common known genetic cause of autism.

"Our number one goal for the walk is research, and the second is awareness," Grande said.

According to the National Fragile X Foundation, the severity of learning and behavioral challenges caused by Fragile X varies from moderate to severe.

Andrea Creighton, a member of the Fragile X Families group, has three children who inherited Fragile X. They have all been affected differently, she says.

"Physically, there are no barriers that we deal with, but one of my children is non-verbal," Creighton said.

The behavior and learning challenges can make raising a child with Fragile X difficult. It's also important to educate and train those in the school system who are working with children with Fragile X.

That's another area where the support of the Fragile X Families group comes in. "You have all the issues of autism that you're dealing with, as well as the intellectual disability," Grande said. "My son, for example, is non-verbal, so he talks through an iPad."

THE ONE-MILE FUN WALK, followed by a music performance and train ride, is May 17 at Burke Lake Park. Adults are \$35 and children 4+ are \$15. Proceeds go towards research and education. Participants receive a t-shirt and should arrive by 8:30 a.m. Visit <http://www.fragilexnorthernvirginia.com>.

ENTERTAINMENT

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/MAY 15-TUESDAY/MAY 27

Bodzin Art Gallery: On Deaf Ears. Jewish Community Center of NoVA, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Commemorate Yom Ha'Shoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, with images of three local photographers. 703-323-0880. Jccnavarts.org

FRIDAY/MAY 16-SUNDAY/JUNE 1

The Fantasticks. Fridays & Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 1 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. The Fantasticks is a funny and romantic musical about a boy, a girl, two fathers and a wall. Tickets : \$15.

FRIDAY/MAY 16-SUNDAY/MAY 18

"Failure, A Love Story" Play. Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays 2 p.m. & 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. John Swayze Theatre at the New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. Tickets: \$20-\$30. Call 1-800-494-8497 or www.thehubtheatre.org. Note: For ages 10 and up.

FRIDAY/MAY 16

"On the Corner Of" A Dance Tribute to New York City. 7:30 p.m. Fairfax Academy, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Fairfax Academy presents their annual dance showcase. Tickets: \$10-\$15. fxdance.ticketleap.com

SATURDAY/ MAY 17

Spring Garden Day. 9 a.m.-3p.m., Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. More than 40 vendors of rare and unusual plants descend on Green Spring Gardens to fill your spring gardening needs.

2014 Spring Carnival. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. 6720 Union Mill Road, Clifton. Hosted by St. Andrew's The Apostle School. Spring fun for all in the community.

Ballroom Social Dance Featuring Cha-Cha. 7:30 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. \$5-\$10.

http://www.workhousearts.org/events/performing-arts/ballroom-social-dance-12

Yard Sale. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Lee High School Parking Lot, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. Register for a small space now prices: are \$10 or 2 for \$15. Register by email at Leeyardsalemay17@gmail.com.

Springtime Pops. 8 p.m. WT Woodson High School, 9525 Main



Don't miss Fairfax Academy's annual dance showcase playing this weekend, May 16 and 17 at Fairfax Academy, 3501 Rebel Run Road, Fairfax.

Street, Fairfax. CFB's season closer is a celebration of spring in full swing, with an "Evening at Pops" inspired program featuring light classics, marches, show tunes and movie music. The program also features the winter of the 2014 Young Artist Competition in solo performance.

Hope & Health Festival. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Lorton Park, 9518 Richmond Highway. Free health/nutrition info, access to health screening, and free food and games for South County region families. Rain or shine.

Art of Wellness: Health & Healing Fair. Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Rd, Oakton. Explore allopathic and complimentary healing systems through lectures, book signings, concerts, yoga classes, massages, personal coaching, and food samples. Bring family and pets. \$10. 571-359-7144. Unityoffairfax.org.

Spring Garden Day: Big Plant Sale. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 4603 Green Spring Rd, Alexandria. Forty vendors of rare and unusual plants. FROGS members receive 10% off plants in shop.

John Jacobs Next Generation Power Force. Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. A strength team with a message of hope to lift the world. www.jccag.org.

"On the Corner Of" A Dance Tribute to New York City. 3 p.m. Fairfax Academy, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Fairfax Academy presents their annual dance showcase. Shortened version for youngsters. Tickets: \$10-\$15. fxdance.ticketleap.com

SUNDAY/MAY 18

Display and N Gauge Trains. 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Museum members, free; adults 16 and over, \$4; children 5-15, \$2; under 4, free. www.fairfax-station.org.

Keys...Dementia & Driving. 1:30 p.m. at Insight Memory Care Center, formerly Alzheimer's Family Day Center, 2812 Old Lee Highway, Suite 210, Fairfax. Come for a discussion on the many hard decisions involved with dementia and driving, and learn more about caregiver approaches for dealing with this difficult and emotional topic. Call 703-204-4664 to RSVP and for more information.

SATURDAY/MAY 24

Dog Adoption Event. 12-3 p.m. PETCO, Greenbriar Towncenter, 13053 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. 703-817-9444. hart90.org

ONGOING

Singers Wanted for the Celebration Singers. The women's

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 4:30 p.m. Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, 6304 Lee Chapel Road, Burke. This month, Brian Slawski will complete his series on intellectual property, with a look at copyright and residents of Burke who have obtained it. What were the products of these creative minds?

2014 Israel Street Festival. Mosaic District, 2910 District Avenue, Fairfax. The festival celebrates the sights, sounds and flavors of Israel by featuring performances, exhibits and activities throughout the afternoon. www.jccnv.org.

MONDAY/ MAY 19

Veterans Golf Benefit. 8 a.m., Medal of Honor Golf Course, Quantico, 3313 Fuller Heights Rd, Quantico. This 7th Annual event is open to all & honors Medal of Honor Recipients as well as those looking to raise funds for the Veteran Relief Fund. www.VeteransGolfClassic.com or davidBmeyers21@gmail.com

"Protecting Against the Realities on Substance Abuse." 7:30 p.m. Fairfax American Legion, 3939 Oak Street, Fairfax.

TUESDAY/ MAY 20

Oak Hill Estate Tour. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Oak Hill & Outlands, Loudon County. Tour former home and garden of Pres. James Monroe. \$107 includes motor coach, driver tip, lunch, and admissions. Register online www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring. 703-642-5173.

THURSDAY/ MAY 22

Garden Stroll & Tea Program. 1-3 p.m. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Rd, Alexandria. Garden tour and traditional English tea at 1784 historic house. \$29. RSVP 703-941-7987.

show choir is interested in new talent to perform at various Northern Virginia community sites. Practices are Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. in Burke. Contact Gayle Parsons, 703-644-4485 or email gparsons3@cox.net.

Online Scavenger Hunt. Visit Fairfax tasks those interested in becoming "citizen ambassadors" to the county (those informed on fun, creative weekend outings in the area) to find two Fairfax County Ambassador icons hidden throughout the fxva.com website in order to join the ambassador team; those who find all five hidden pins will receive a complimentary gift. www.fxva.com/online-ambassador.

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SATURDAY/MAY 17

Dog Adoption. 12 - 3 p.m. PETCO, Greenbriar Towncenter, 13053 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. 703-817-9444.

MONDAY/MAY 19

Rising Kindergarten Orientation. 2 - 3:30 p.m. Rolling Valley Elementary School, 6703 Barnack Drive, Springfield.

WEDNESDAY/MAY 21

How Do I Take Away the

SPORTS

West Springfield Sits Atop Conference 7 Standings

Spartans motivated by season-ending loss to Lee in 2013.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

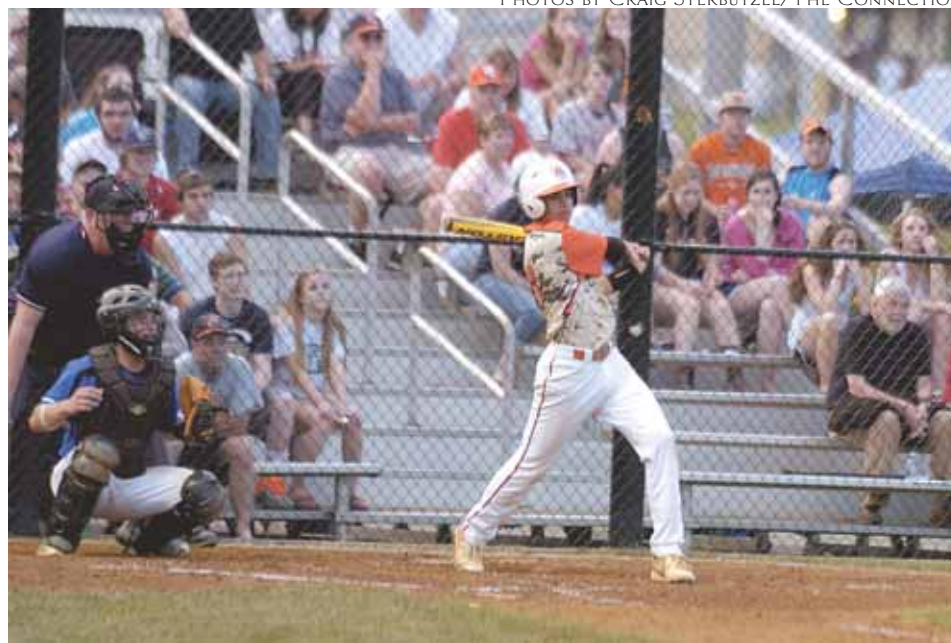
The motivation behind the success of the West Springfield baseball team comes from a disappointing end to the 2013 season.

The Spartans finished with a 9-12 record and failed to qualify for the region tournament after losing to Lee, a long-struggling program, 5-4 in the opening round of the Patriot District tournament. It was a tough pill to swallow for a program that won a state championship in 2010 and a Northern Region title in 2012.

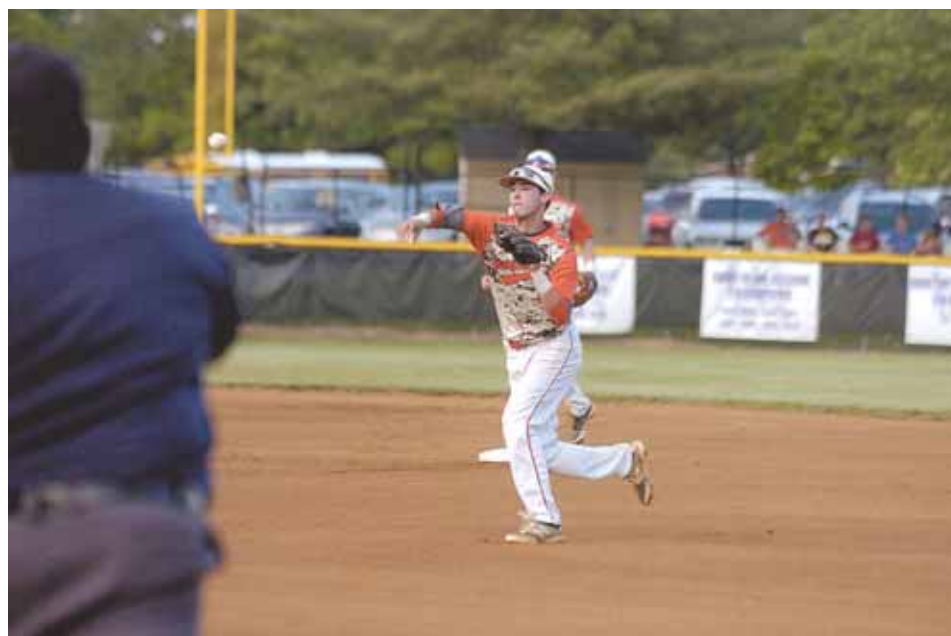
This year, the Spartans have responded with a 13-5 record, including 8-2 against Conference 7 opponents. West Springfield would clinch the top seed in the conference tournament, which comes with a first-round bye and an automatic region berth, by winning one of its final two regular-season games. The Spartans held a 6-3 lead over second-place West Potomac in the fourth inning on Tuesday when the game was suspended due to lightning.

"The seniors really came together this year and they've all stepped up and matured a lot," West Springfield head coach Jason Olms said. "It's their team. ... The way the season ended last year was frustrating for everyone. They took it upon themselves to make sure it didn't happen again this year. I think we're on the right track [but] we still have a long way to go."

Olms said the Spartans' pitching has been strong this season, led by seniors Brandon Padgett, Blake Bird, Tim Yonkers and Joey Basse. Yonkers, a left-hander, started on the mound Tuesday night. He surrendered a two-run homer to West Potomac sophomore Jamie Sara in the first inning, and West Springfield allowed a run to score on a botched squeeze play in the second, but the Spartans' lineup battled back to give Yon-



West Springfield senior Tim Yonkers started on the mound for the Spartans against West Potomac on Tuesday. West Springfield led 6-3 when the game was suspended due to lightning in the fourth inning.



Brandon Padgett and the West Springfield baseball team have a chance to enter the Conference 7 tournament as the No. 1 seed.

kers a 6-3 lead before lightning suspended the game after one pitch in the fourth inning.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Olms said junior left fielder Louis Perez, Bird and sophomore third baseman Matt Stallings have been some of West Springfield's top hitters, along with senior catcher Matt Meinhofer.

Stallings led off the bottom of the second with a triple on Tuesday, and delivered a double in the third. Bird drove in a run with a sacrifice fly in the second, Perez delivered an RBI single in the third and Basse came through with a two-out, two-run single on a 0-2 pitch in the third.

"The way the season ended last year was frustrating for everyone. They took it upon themselves to make sure it didn't happen again this year. I think we're on the right track [but] we still have a long way to go."

— West Springfield baseball coach Jason Olms

The Spartans and Wolverines hoped to finish the contest on Wednesday, after The Connection's deadline. West Springfield will conclude the regular season with a road game against Woodson at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, May 16. The conference tournament begins Monday, May 19, but the Spartans wouldn't play until the semifinals on May 21 if they secure the No. 1 seed.

How far are the Spartans capable of advancing this season?

"When we play team baseball with an unselfish approach, like we've been all year long [while] having confidence in each other and everybody just does their job," Olms said, "... the sky's the limit."

Lake Braddock Softball Beats South County

The Lake Braddock softball team avenged its only loss of the season, defeating South County 4-0 on May 12.

South County defeated Lake Braddock 1-0 in 13 innings on April 24.

The Bruins defeated Annandale 12-0 on Tuesday, improving their record to 19-1. Lake Braddock will conclude the regular season with a road game against T.C. Williams at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, May 16.

The Conference 7 tournament begins Monday, May 19.

Lee's Kolonich Named VHSL 5A Female Athlete of the Year

Lee distance runner Bailey Kolonich was named Group 5A VHSL Female Athlete of the Year.

The senior earned 14 varsity letters in cross country, indoor track, outdoor track and soccer. She won Conference 13 and 5A North championships in cross country in the fall of 2013.

Kolonich will attend George Mason University.



Lake Braddock pitcher Ashley Flesch did not allow a run against South County on May 12.

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

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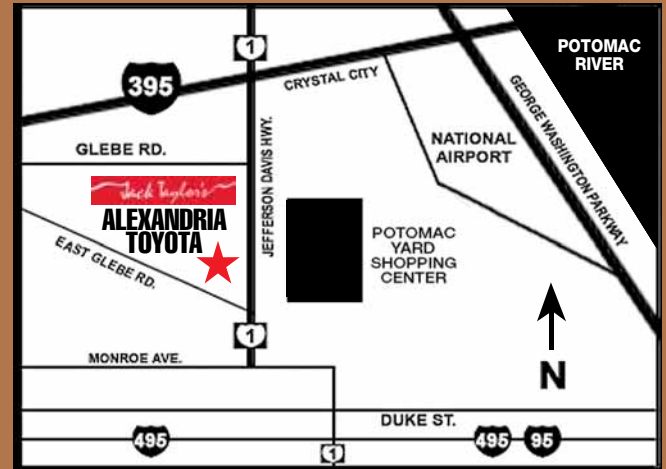
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