

WELLBEING

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(From left) Our Daily Bread's Lisa Whetzel and potential Naomi Project volunteer Bethany Gardner with some of the items donated for mothers in need.

'It's Such a Good Fit'

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Pancakes, Candy, Fudge, Ice Cream and More

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



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'It's Such a Good Fit'

Naomi Project joins Our Daily Bread to help struggling mothers.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

For the past 19 years, the nonprofit Naomi Project of Northern Virginia has worked with high-risk, pregnant women and new mothers to help them have healthy pregnancies and babies. It's now become a program of the nonprofit Our Daily Bread (ODB) and, on Jan. 22, the two groups celebrated their union.

"It's a natural offshoot of what we're already doing with moms," said ODB spokeswoman Heather Webb. "This is another way that we can help them build families and get on a better financial footing."

The Naomi Project is a volunteer-based program that matches its clients on a one-to-one basis in a mentoring relationship that extends throughout the pregnancy. It then continues on an as-needed basis for as long as it's appropriate or up until the child's third birthday.

THE HELP is important because these women represent a niche population that,

otherwise, would go un-served because it doesn't fit within the criteria of other area programs. And in many cases, the clients experience for the first time a caring adult focusing specifically on them.

Peggy Ferguson founded the Naomi Project in 1995. "I have a background in public-health nursing and hospital chaplaincy, but there was never enough time to be with each person," she said. "I have five children of my own, and I knew that pregnant and newly parenting women need all the help they can get."

Although its annual budget has been less than \$5,000 a year, the Naomi Project has made a big difference in its clients' lives. In 2013, its volunteers helped 30 women; some 20 mentors, eight area coordinators and 11 support staff gave more than 1,300 hours to the effort.

"We helped over 500 women in 19 years, and 28 women last year," said Ferguson. "Sometimes, we've helped 30-40 in a year. We match one person with one mentor to help them better understand their pregnancy, develop good parenting skills and



PHOTO COURTESY OF OUR DAILY BREAD

Our Daily Bread and Naomi Project leadership initially gathered together in October. (Standing, from left) are ODB Executive Director Lisa Whetzel, NP Co-Directors Betty Ann Wilkins and Mary Rank, NP volunteers Peggy Cressy, Rosamaria Rosales, ODB NP Manager Jessica Ramones, NP Co-Director Darlene Griffith and NP volunteers Pat Collins and Monica Galloway. (Seated, from left) NP former Co-Director Sarah Bock, NP Founder Peggy Ferguson and NP Training Coordinator Laura Greenspan.

make a plan for the rest of their lives. We also promote breastfeeding and the importance of parents reading to their children."

Last fall, however, she decided it was time for her to retire. But first she made sure the Naomi Project would be left in good hands. ODB provides emergency and seasonal assistance, plus financial education and mentoring to working individuals and fami-

lies in Fairfax County to help them achieve and maintain self-sufficiency.

The two organizations were able to blend together courtesy of a grant from another nonprofit, the philanthropic Giving Circle of Hope. The money allowed ODB to hire someone to work with the Naomi Project's

SEE JOINING FORCES, PAGE 7

Facets Helps People Come in from the Cold

Hypothermia program gives shelter this winter.

BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO
THE CONNECTION

People experiencing homelessness arrived in groups on Tuesday, Jan. 13 at Pender United Methodist Church in Fairfax for a hot meal and a warm place to sleep for the night. When they leave the next day, they will have their clothes cleaned and washed and a bag lunch for the day.

Every night, chairs and furniture in a large room of the church are arranged to make way for sleeping bags and mattresses. The chairs are arranged in rows, where in between them people have set up sleeping areas. "This arrangement is much nicer for maintaining some privacy," said D'Ivonne Holman of Facets of Fairfax. Many set up by the walls and line up chairs to close off their area, much like a fort.

There is a room where people can keep their belongings safe, which is guarded and locked. People can also watch television or movies, play games, or read books in another room. Volunteers also run a store which has hygiene supplies



PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO/THE CONNECTION

Volunteer Gail Michael minds the hygiene supplies made available to clients of Facets of Fairfax's hypothermia program. Toothbrushes, shaving materials, and other hygiene products are available for clients to take.

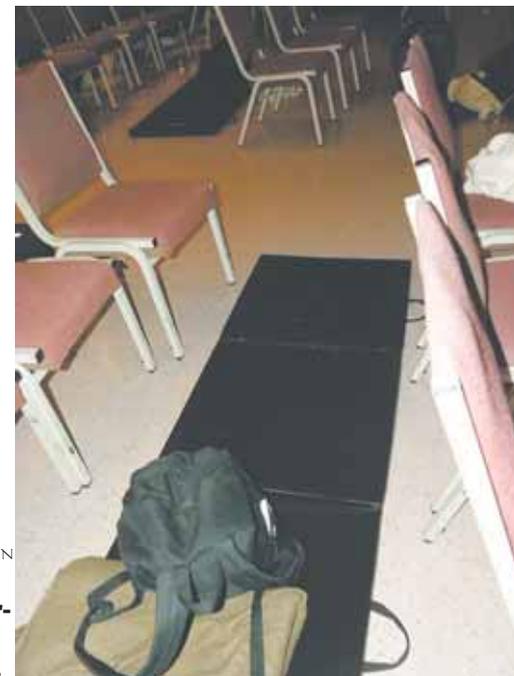
and clothes where people can take what they need. There is also a laundry service, where people can leave their dirty clothes and volunteers will wash them in time for the next day.

The church provides the space and the meals and Facets provides the service as part of its Hypothermia Prevention and Response Program, which runs from November to

March. "It's Facets' show," said Mary Ellen Flather, who volunteers on behalf of the church. But there are two people who stay the night from the church, along with one person from Facets. There is also police presence.

Because Facets does not have a shelter, it relies on churches and faith communities to help run its hypothermia program. Alisha

Matlock, Facets' assistant director of development, said that there are "1,200 individuals who are literally homeless, living in the woods or in their cars" in Fairfax County. She said that it is "impressive" what the partnership between Facets and the 34 participating faith communities have been able to do without having a hypothermia building.



People staying at Pender United Methodist Church in Fairfax as part of Facets of Fairfax's hypothermia program set up their sleeping mattresses in between chairs to create a little bit of privacy.

NEWS

Bulova and Petersen Hold Town Hall in Fairfax

Over 100 constituents and community members attended the annual joint town hall meeting held Jan. 31 by Del. David Bulova (D-37) and State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34).

Presentations by both elected officials were followed by an hour-long question-and-answer session.

“The nice thing about my district is there will always be good questions,” said Bulova. “People tend to pay attention. A lot will come, having heard or seen things, and want to follow up with that.”

Both Bulova and Petersen used the opportunity to discuss the legislation they’re continuing to work on at the current General Assembly session.

In an interview following the meeting, Bulova highlighted his bills related to new parents getting the most current information on safe sleep environments, helping homeowners’ associations with best practices for declarations and creating a Virginia solar energy development authority.

Petersen also addressed his bills including data collection from license plate readers, how a small business is defined and ethics reform.

“Some people do telephone town halls, or Facebook,” said Petersen. “I find it the most useful getting real time feedback, talking face to face. People can walk in and disagree pretty vehemently. And I welcome that.”

— TIM PETERSON



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DEL. DAVID BULOVA (D-37).

State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) and Del. David Bulova (D-37) speak at their town hall meeting Jan. 31 at the City of Fairfax City Hall.



Del. David Bulova (D-37, center right) meets with constituents following the town hall meeting Jan. 31.

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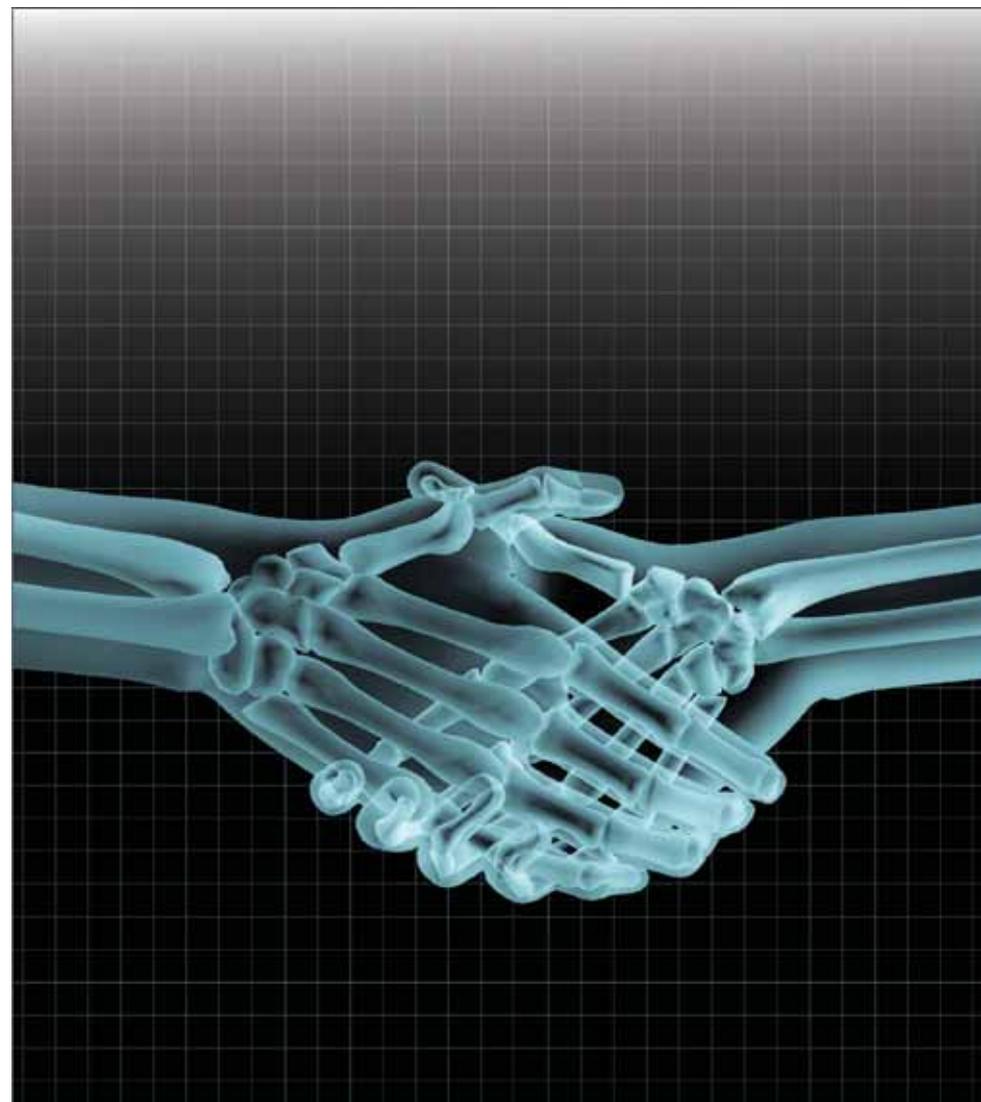
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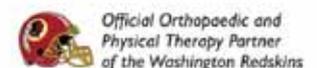
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COMMENTARY

Donate to Those Less Fortunate During National Canned Food Month

BY JOHN C. COOK
SUPERVISOR (R-BRADDOCK DISTRICT)



It seems that as the memories of the holiday season fade away, so does our urgency to give. Many of us return to our daily routines, and we seem to forget that our neighbors continue to struggle to provide meals for their families. And although many continue to be in need after the holiday season, food donations drop and our food banks face shortages.

February is National Canned Food Month, and to help respond to those in need, my office will be working with local charities to help combat these shortages. Canned foods are popular in many households because of their ability to provide quick and convenient meals, and because they have a long shelf life, making them an even more important resource for food banks providing assistance throughout the year.

This is a critical issue for Fairfax County as there are an estimated 69,000 residents who are at risk of experiencing hunger. As you are browsing the overstuffed shelves this weekend at your local grocery stores, please remember those less fortunate and consider giving to a community food bank. Throughout the month of February, please bring canned food items (along with other staples like oil, flour, sugar, and spaghetti sauce) to my office and we will disburse these much needed food items to four fan-

tastic charities right here in our community. Giving back to the community, and helping those in need, is a gift you can give regardless of the time of year.

In case you are looking for a food bank in our area, here are some options:

ACCA - A church-related voluntary organization providing day care, food, rental assistance, furniture, and other services to low-income families in the Annandale/Bailey's Crossroads area. Learn more at <http://accacares.org>

Food for Others - Northern Virginia's primary safety net for those needing food when an emergency strikes, and for the growing number of working poor who are unable to make ends meet. Learn more at <http://www.foodforothers.org>

ECHO - The purpose of Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), Inc. is to help people in need in our community by assisting those who suffer the effects of long-term poverty as well as people who are experiencing an emergency need. Learn more at www.echo-inc.org

Our Daily Bread - provides our Fairfax County area neighbors with short-term safety-net services and empowers them to work toward long-term self-sufficiency. Learn more at <https://www.odbfairfax.org>

unteer and career personnel train at the Training Academy continuously. He also supports and advises Explorer Post 1949.

Chief Colbert will complete his bachelor's degree in Fire Service Administration, from the University of Maryland, University College, in the spring of 2015. He is also a graduate of the Paramedic Program, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. He is a member of the Fairfax County Professional Firefighters and Paramedics, Local 2068, Progressive Firefighters of Fairfax County, Inc., and the Fairfax County Professional Fire & Rescue Officers Association.

'Saturday Night in the Suburbs'

The Woodson High PTSO will present an evening of dialogue with a panel of high-school seniors about drugs and alcohol use, teen parties, parent supervision and enabling, social media and communication with parents. It's set for Wednesday, Feb. 11, at 7 p.m., in the school's Cavalier Hall. Facilitating will be Jennifer Lewis-Cooper of the Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County. This event is open to the community, but is for parents only.

WEEK IN FAIRFAX

Rodney V. Colbert Named Deputy Fire Chief

Fire Chief Richie Bowers has selected Battalion Chief Rodney V. Colbert for promotion to deputy fire chief, effective Jan. 24. Chief Colbert will be assigned as the Chief Training Officer. Since July of 2011 he has been assigned as a field battalion chief in the Operations Bureau.

Chief Colbert started his career as a recruit firefighter in April 1990, and was initially assigned to Fire and Rescue Station 19, Lorton. Career promotion and subsequent assignments include:

*Technician, November 1993; Fire and Rescue Station 5, Franconia; Lieutenant, November 1995; Fire and Rescue Station 9, Mount Vernon; Captain I, May 2003; Fire and Rescue Station 37, Kingstowne; Captain II, Fire and Rescue Station 34, Oakton; Battalion Chief, September 2008; Resource Management, Support Services Division, Business Services Bureau.

As Chief Training Officer, he will be responsible for basic training, field training, emergency medical services training, and all volunteer training. More than 1,700 vol-

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Meet David Leadbetter on Sunday

OPINION

No Justification for Secrecy, Delay on Geer Shooting

Everything about this case erodes public trust and demonstrates police departments should not be allowed to apply “blanket” exemptions to release of information.

After waiting 17 months for any information about the investigation into the shooting death of John Geer, the information released last week is deeply troubling.

Fairfax County Police officer Adam D. Torres shot and killed John Geer of Springfield inside the doorway of his own home in Springfield on Aug. 29, 2013. Police were called to Geer's home following Geer's argument with his longtime partner. Police spoke with him for more than half an hour while he stood in his doorway, unarmed, with his hands raised and resting on the frame. As he began to lower his hands, by all accounts still at shoulder level, he was shot in the chest and died in his house without receiving medical attention.

It took more than 16 months, a \$12 million civil suit by Geer's family and a court order to get the first tiny bit of information on the shooting, which came earlier this month when police named the officer who fired the shot that killed Geer.

On Friday, Jan. 30, 2015, in response to a court order, Fairfax County released more than 10,000 pages of documents about the shooting and the investigation.

We now know that investigators learned on

the same day Geer died, Aug. 29, 2013, that at least five witnesses including the police officer actually talking to Geer at the instant he was shot, disputed Torres's version of events. Torres said Geer suddenly dropped his hands to his waist; none of the other witnesses saw Geer's hands move below his head.

EDITORIAL

On the day of the shooting, investigators and prosecutors had compelling information to take to a grand jury. Instead, after a long period of silence, obstruction and obfuscation, the investigation was turned over to the Justice Department, where there is no timetable for resolution (and no adequate explanation for punting the investigation to the feds).

Without the Geer family lawsuit and the court order to turn over documents as part of discovery, the public might never know what really happened that day.

The question of accountability for what happened remains.

As we have said many times, the problem goes beyond Fairfax County, and beyond police shootings.



520 days

It took a court order and 520 days after Fairfax County police officer Adam D. Torres shot and killed John Geer of Springfield for basic information about what happened that day to be released. The public now knows what investigators learned on the same day Geer died, Aug. 29, 2013, that at least five witnesses including the police officer actually talking to Geer at the instant he was shot, disputed Torres's version of events. Torres said Geer suddenly dropped his hands to his waist; none of the other witnesses saw Geer's hands move below his head.

Police officials in Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria have adopted what they call a “blanket” approach to using their exemption. That means they have decided to withhold any document they can without any analysis of whether they should.

It's past time for change.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

An Open Letter to Virginia Delegates

Dear Delegate:

Many of you know our story well. We are the parents of Morgan Harrington. Morgan, a student at Virginia Tech, went to a rock concert in Charlottesville in 2009 and never came home. Her remains were found 100 days later.

We've made it our life's work in honor of Morgan to support victims of sexual assaults and to make sure that all students are safe on our college campuses – even if they're just visiting.

That's why we're asking for your support of HB 1343, a bipartisan bill by Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn and Chief Co-Patron Dave Albo.

Once a victim reports a sexual assault to campus and/or local law enforcement, HB 1343 calls for the local Commonwealth's Attorney to be notified within 48 hours of the reported incident.

We agree with Del. Filler-Corn who said: “By passing this bill, we can show victims that we will not

tolerate sexual assault on campus. We can show them they can have faith in our justice system.”

Chairman Albo has said that this “bill ensures that allegations of sexual assaults on college campuses will receive the same level of attention by police and prosecutors that off campus sexual assaults receive. This bill strengthens our justice system and encourages collaboration between victims, college staff, police and prosecutors.”

The reality is that too often sexual assaults aren't reported to the police.

A December report by the U.S. Justice Department found that 80% of students do not report rape and sexual assaults to the police.

That same report also found that fewer than one in five female student victims received assistance from a victim services agency.

This is where HB 1343 can make a difference.

HB 1343 works to restore victims' faith in the justice system and to show that they will be heard and supported. The bill expedites investigation of the case once reported to campus law enforcement, while ensuring the proper course of action, due process and any necessary legal filings are completed.

It also lets each Commonwealth's Attorney's Office Victim/Witness program get involved early on in the investigation, which helps provide counseling and can help educate a victim about her or his options going forward with a criminal prosecution.

Supporters of the bill include: Michael R. Doucette, Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Lynchburg; Mary Gavin, City of Falls Church Chief of Police; Stacey Kincaid, Fairfax County Sheriff; Denise Lunsford, Commonwealth's Attorney for

Albemarle County

Trina Murphy, Aunt of Alexis Murphy, Help Save the Next Girl supporters

Ray Morrogh, Commonwealth's Attorney for Fairfax County

Virginia Sheriffs Association, representing 95 sheriffs

Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

We know this bill isn't a silver bullet when it comes to the complex problem of solving campus sexual assaults. But it is a good first step and that's what is needed.

Passing this bill can help us make sure that all students are safe on our college campuses.

We urge you to join us and support passage of HB 1343.

Gil and Dan Harrington

Parents of Morgan Harrington
Founders of Help Save the Next Girl

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NEWS

Joining Forces

FROM PAGE 3

volunteers – who'll continue on with the program – to ensure a smooth transition and ongoing coordination between the two groups. And both Ferguson and ODB Executive Director Lisa Whetzel are delighted. "I just felt such good energy when we met with ODB," said Ferguson. "It's such a good fit." "The mission and values of our organizations mesh well, and we're very excited," said Whetzel. "We think there's a lot of opportunity to work together and bring more services to both sets of clients."

"We provide emergency services, but we found we have the most impact when we have a deeper relationship with the clients," continued Whetzel. "And as a result, they're more motivated to make long-term changes in their lives."

For example, she said ODB's Project Bridge program lasts one year and enrolls 12 clients for financial and food assistance, plus a \$500 workforce-development stipend. Providing a bridge from need to empowerment, it allows them to obtain skills training so they may get better-paying jobs, while eliminating the financial barriers blocking their way.

AT THE JAN. 22 "We Are One" reception to celebrate the new partnership, attendees brought baby clothes, children's books and diapers to ODB's Fairfax office to be given to the clients. And staff and volunteers from both organizations got to meet each other socially.

How to Help

There are many ways that members of the community can help support the Naomi Project:

- * Become a mentor (Spanish speakers are especially needed). The next training session is this Saturday, Feb. 7, from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., in the Rowland Conference Center at Kelly Square, 10777 Main St., 3rd Floor, in Fairfax. Cost is \$35; lunch is provided. Complete the application at <https://www.odbfairfax.org/NPTraining>.

- * Email Jessica Ramones at NaomiProject@ODBFairfax.org or call her at 703-860-2633 to become a volunteer mentor.

- * Donate funds via ODB's secure Web page. Or mail a check to The Naomi Project at: Our Daily Bread, 4080 Chain Bridge Road, 2nd Floor; Fairfax, VA 22030. Write "Naomi Project" on the memo line.

- * Help a mother provide a safe place to put her child by donating Pack-N-Plays, swings, bouncers, strollers and other baby equipment. Visit ODB'S "Donate" page to learn more.

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WELLBEING

Mental Health First Aid

County offers program to offer insight into mental illness and teach strategies for intervention.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Leslie Roberts recalls hearing a mother talk about getting her stepson admitted to a psychiatric hospital.

"Her stepson was angry and acting out," said Roberts. "She didn't understand what her stepson was doing."

The woman had completed a mental health first aid class that Roberts teaches. Mental Health First Aid is offered by the staff of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Wellness and Health Promotion. The goal of the class is to offer insight into mental illness and teach strategies for intervention.

"She was grateful that the class had taught her what those signs and symptoms were," said Leslie. "Before the class she thought he was being a problem teenager. After the class she understood that he was suffering from depression, and his behavior had a lot more meaning."

That is the goal of the eight-hour certification class, which is taught in both English and Spanish. Stu-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Jamie MacDonald and Leslie Roberts of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Wellness and Health Promotion teach a Mental Health First Aid class.

dents learn the warning signs of such mental illnesses as depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis, substance use disorders and self-injury. They also get a five-step action plan to help the individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional care.

"Students learn specific behaviors or comments that individuals

will make," said Roberts, who is a Wellness and Health Promotions Supervisor. "Such as, 'Things are never going to get better. I feel like I'll always be sad. What's the point?'"

"They get background and statistics on these illnesses, as well as a basic understanding of risk factors, signs and symptoms," added Jamie

MacDonald, wellness health promotion and prevention manager.

There is a standard curriculum and class instructors must be certified to teach it. The class is typically taught on two separate days. "We offer an open enrollment class for adults once each month," said MacDonald. "It's a 'come one, come all.' Anyone from Fairfax County can sign up." Students learn to assess for suicide or harm, listen non-judgmentally, give information and assurance, encourage appropriate professional help and self-help, and other strategies.

"We use the acronym ALGEE, which is the first letter of each skill the students learn," said MacDonald. "Then they get skills around how to approach someone who might be showing early signs of a mental illness or how to recognize when someone is in a mental health crisis."

After the class, students take a test. If they pass, they are certified for three years.

"There is a lot of repetition and practice. There are live simulations and scenarios where small groups will practice what they learn," said MacDonald. "We try to gear their

minds toward, 'What will I do when I'm experiencing a mental health crisis? How will I support someone like a colleague, friend and even a stranger?'"

The re-enactment scenarios also help set limits. "We make their role clear," said MacDonald. "You're a mental health first aider when you get your certification, you're not a mental health crusader. You're not trained to provide treatment, counseling, or make a diagnosis. That is pounded into their heads."

Safety is another aspect of the training. "Students are taught to decide if a situation is safe for them to enter and whether or not they have time. If they start providing assistance, do they have time to finish it," asked MacDonald. "Being clear, careful and thinking through what steps they want to take is important. In a crisis, they have to decide: 'Do I want to step in or will I be in over my head? Do I need to grab my phone and call someone else? Your first and best action might be a call to 911.'"

For information on schedule of classes, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/events/mental-health-first-aid.htm.

Free and Low-Cost Dental Care for Children

Special programs available as part of National Children's Dental Health Month.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Dental hygiene should start even before a baby's first tooth emerges. That is one of the messages that dental professionals are hoping to convey this month.

February is designated National Children's Dental Health Month, organized by the American Dental Association, along with the ADA Foundation, to raise awareness about the benefits of good oral health for children. Dental professionals stress children should brush for two minutes twice per day, floss and rinse daily, eat healthy meals, limit snacks and visit the dentist regularly.

"To get babies comfortable with oral hygiene, begin cleaning the baby's mouth with wiping the gums and tongue with a moist washcloth or gauze shortly after birth until teeth erupt into the mouth," said Jeanne Yang, DDS, a public health dentist at the Joseph Willard Health Center's dental clinic in the City of Fairfax. "It is recommended that parents bring children to their first dentist appointment preferably within 6 months

of when the first tooth appears, but no later than their first birthday. And, always, always use a soft toothbrush, whether you are 1 or 100. A soft toothbrush should be used by all ages."

Local health departments want the public to know that a child's dental care need not depend on a family's ability to afford such services. Many Northern Virginia dental clinics offer free or low-cost dental examinations, cleanings, fluoride applications, restorative services including fillings and even limited oral surgeries.

"We have three children's dental clinics in Fairfax County," said Tina Dale of the Fairfax County Health Department. The county's clinics are in Mount Vernon, Fairfax and Reston. "Our dental program is just for children. Their family's income has to be at a level where they meet Medicaid criteria."

The Northern Virginia Dental Society is also hosting a "Give a Kids a Smile Project" on Saturday, Feb. 6 at the Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Medical Education Campus in Springfield. The project will join dentists and dental hygiene students from NOVA with other community vol-



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Dr. Howard Ngo works on a young patient at Northern Virginia Community College's Medical Education Campus in Springfield, as part of the Give Kids a Smile Program.

unteers to offer dental services to underserved children, including preschool students in Arlington County's Head Start

Dental Service Programs

Fairfax County Health Department
♦ Joseph Willard Health Center: 3750 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax; 703-246-7100.
♦ Herndon/Reston Office: 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Suite 100, Reston; 703-481-4242.
♦ Mount Vernon Office: 8350 Richmond Highway, Suite 233, Alexandria; 703-704-6181.

program.

"A huge number of children have dental disease earlier and earlier," said Kathy A. Thompson of Northern Virginia Community College. "This is an opportunity to get them excited about dental care and give them information on how to take care of their teeth, and introduce them to what it's like to go the dentist."

The slogan for the 2015 campaign is "Defeat Monster Mouth." It's plastered on posters that depict dental superheroes fighting to defeat "Plaqster the Monster" for good oral health. Dental providers are hoping to teach children and parents about the timing of a first dental visit, how to brush and floss properly, the effect of thumb sucking on teeth and the importance of regular dental examinations. Although the observance is a month long, health department officials keep up the effort year-round.

"We work with Arlington families on the importance of dental care from day one," said Kurt Larrick of the Arlington County Health Department. "We're working with parents from the times the kids are born to talk about the importance of hygiene, nutrition, tooth brushing."



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Fairfax's Chocolate Lovers Festival is Feb. 7-8.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Get your sweet tooth ready – the 23rd annual City of Fairfax Chocolate Lovers Festival is this weekend, Feb. 7-8.

Featuring delicious, chocolate fun for both children and adults, the event includes a Taste of Chocolate, a Chocolate Challenge, musical performances, a chocolate movie – “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” – fairy tales, a fire-safety puppet show, face-painting, a Chocolate Caper mock trial, cupcake-decorating, magic, juggling and open houses in historic buildings.

A Chocolate Express will provide free, shuttle service between event locations. It'll run Saturday, Feb. 7, from 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 8, from 11:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The fun begins Saturday at Fire Station 3, at 4081 University Drive, with the annual, Kiwanis Club Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feast on regular or chocolate-chip pancakes, plus sausage, coffee, juice and milk. Cost is \$7, adults; \$4, children ages 4-10. Children 3 and under eat free with a paying adult (limit two children per adult). Face-painting will be available.

The Taste of Chocolate will be held Saturday, Feb. 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 8, from noon-4 p.m., on both floors of the Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive (corner of Main Street and University Drive).

Attendees may feast on a vast array of chocolate cakes, chocolate candies and bars, chocolate-covered strawberries, fudge and ice cream. There'll even be chocolate fountains into which people may dip fruit, cream-filled doughnut holes or marshmallows. Admission is free; visitors buy pogs for \$1 each and then browse around the vendors' tables to check out the wide array of chocolate treats being offered. When something catches their fancy, they pay for it in pogs.

There's also the Chocolate Challenge com-

Allie Moss, 7, is about to eat a chocolate-covered marshmallow.



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Where to Park

Free parking is available at the following locations, with handicapped parking offered at all sites, except for Sager Avenue:

- ❖ **Bank of America**, 10440 Main St. (accessible from Route 236 and North Street).
- ❖ **City Hall**, 10455 Armstrong St. (accessible from Route 123/Chain Bridge Road and George Mason Boulevard).
- ❖ **City of Fairfax Regional Library**, 10360 North St. (accessible from University Drive and Old Lee Highway).
- ❖ **East Street parking lot** (accessible from Route 236/Main Street and East Street).
- ❖ **Fairfax County Courthouse Garage B**, 4400 Chain Bridge Road (accessible from Page Avenue).
- ❖ **Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center**, 10209 Main St.
- ❖ **Fire Station 3**, 4081 University Drive.
- ❖ **Old Town Plaza**, 3955 Chain Bridge Road (accessible from Route 123/Chain Bridge Road and University Drive).
- ❖ **Old Town Village** (behind Pacer's, 10427 North St.) Open at noon Saturday and all day Sunday; (accessible from University Drive).
- ❖ **Sager Avenue parking lot** (accessible from Sager Avenue and University Drive).

petition to see who can make the most beautiful and creative chocolate sculptures, cakes and cupcakes. It's held at the Nutrition Kitchen, 3950 University Drive, and runs Feb. 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Feb. 8, from noon-4 p.m.

Both professionals and amateurs participate, and judges and visitors judge them in various categories. Donated cakes and other items will be open for silent-auction bidding through Feb. 8 at 2:30 p.m. Admission is \$1/adult; children under 18 are free.

For a complete list of events, plus their times and addresses, go to www.chocolatefestival.net.

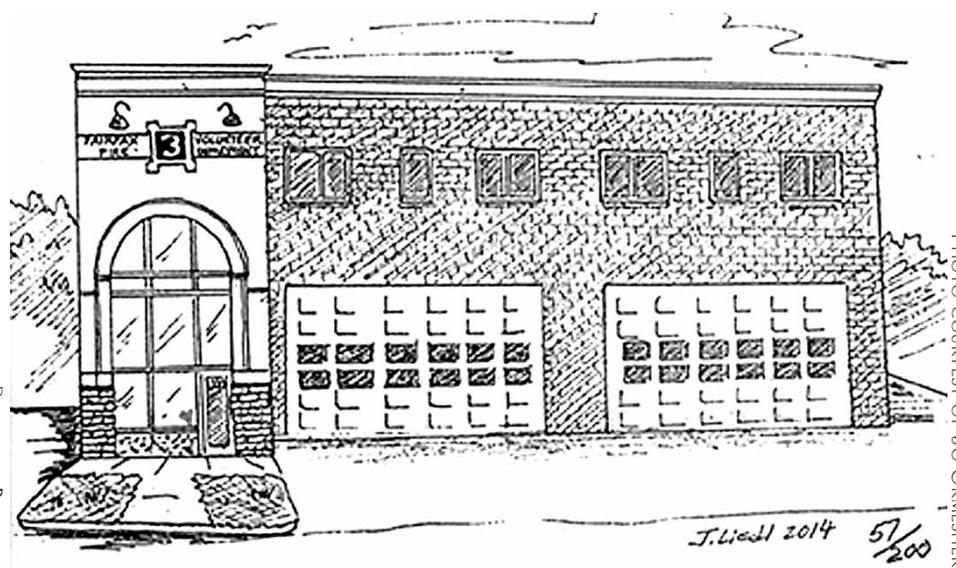


PHOTO COURTESY OF JO ORMESHER

The 2015 Valentine features Fire Station 3 in Fairfax.

Chocolate Cookbook and Valentine

It's always fun to bring home souvenirs from the Chocolate Festival, and two of them are the official, Chocolate Lovers Festival Cookbook and the annual, commemorative Valentine.

❖ The cookbook features recipes with chocolate as an ingredient and includes snacks, appetizers, main courses, soups, salads and, of course, desserts. Recipes were submitted by chocolate fans from around the nation.

The newest edition of the cookbook may be purchased during the festival, Feb. 7, at the Pancake Breakfast, Taste of Chocolate, Ford House and Chocolate Challenge. On Feb. 8, it'll be available at both the Taste of Chocolate and the Chocolate Challenge.

Current-edition cookbooks are \$10 each and may be bought at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St. (703-

385-8414). Make checks payable to the Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee.

Mail orders are accepted; there's a \$4 charge per book for postage and handling. Submit requests to the Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee, City Hall, Room 123, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax, VA 22030.

❖ The valentine for the 2015 Chocolate Lovers Festival features Fire Station 3, drawn by local artist Jackie Liedl. These limited-edition valentines cost \$5, and each one includes a coupon for five, \$1 pogs for use at the Taste of Chocolate. Valentines may be purchased at: City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., Room 123 (Parks and Recreation Department), weekdays, from 8:30 a.m.- 5 p.m.; Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St., daily, from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.; or from any member of the Independence Day Celebration Committee.

Meals for Young Minds

The Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee is again supporting the Fairfax Kiwanis Meals for Young Minds Program with multiple, food drop-off locations during the festival. This program provides meals to local, elementary-school students who don't have food to eat on the weekends.

Each child receives a gallon-size bag filled with child-friendly, nonperishable, nutritious food items to last over the weekend. Since its inception in 2010, the program has expanded to support students at three local elementary schools.

Each bag contains two breakfasts: oatmeal, small cereal box, granola bars and other breakfast foods; two lunches: cheese and crackers, cup of soup and similar items; two dinners: easy-cook macaroni and cheese, beef ravioli, tuna and similar foods;

plus two or three snacks: applesauce, pudding, fruit cup, fruit roll-ups and other snacks. These and similar child-friendly, nonperishable food items will be collected as follows:

Saturday, Feb. 7:

8 a.m.-1 p.m. - Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive (during the Pancake Breakfast); 9 a.m.-5 p.m. - Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St.; 10 a.m.-3 p.m. - Historic Fairfax Courthouse, 4000 Chain Bridge Road; 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Nutrition Kitchen, 3950 University Drive; and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. - City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St.

Sunday, Feb. 8:

9 a.m.-5 p.m. - Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center; noon-4 p.m. - Nutrition Kitchen; and noon-4 p.m., City of Fairfax Regional Library.

A Chat with the Event Chairman

Leslie Herman is this year's Chocolate Festival committee chairman, and she and her committee of more than a dozen people have been hard at work on the event since the fall.

They represent several of the organizations involved in the festival events, including the Fairfax Bar Association, Fairfax City Regional Library, Friends of

Fairfax, GMU Department of Nutrition and Food Studies, Independence Day Celebration Committee, Kiwanis Club of Fairfax, Fairfax County Retired Educators, Patriot Harley Owners Group, Woman's Club of Fairfax and the City of Fairfax.

"There are many things I enjoy about being chairman," said Herman. "I enjoy working with a great group of people who draw

upon the volunteers from their organizations and resources to provide a fabulous chocolate event. It's wonderful to rely on so many others to make the Chocolate Lovers Festival happen.

"I also love the new and creative events the committee suggests to add to the festival to continue to keep it fresh and exciting," she continued. "Last year we added

Chocolate and a Movie, and this year we've added the Sweet History Walking Tour. And with the [completion] of Old Town Square, we're excited to start brainstorming on what we can add next year." Herman says the variety of chocolate activities for all ages that touch all five senses makes the Chocolate Lovers Festival so special."

CALENDAR

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.

THROUGH SUNDAY/FEB. 8

Dressing for the Occasion: An Exhibition of Costumes and Textiles Representing Fairfax Personalities and Events.

Exhibition, Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center, 10209 Main Street, Fairfax. Open daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m. 703-385-8414.

THROUGH MONDAY/FEB. 9

"Synesthetic Landscapes." Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Andy Ilachinski describes his colorful, powerful and magically manipulated images as "Synesthetic Landscapes," referencing the psychological, creative – even mystical – experience of synesthesia, a joining of the senses (smelling sounds, hearing colors, feeling shape) to communicate a point of view to another through his photographs. Showcase artists: Marcia Gordon, "Gems by Meg;" Piper Strong, Metal Works/Judaica; and Joyce Zipperer, metal sculptor/mixed media/metal shoes and jewelry. www.jccnvarts.org.

The Bravura Ensemble - Chamber Music Classics.

8 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. The Bravura Ensemble is a Washington D.C.-based chamber group devoted to performing chamber music repertoire ranging from 18th-century works to modern-day music. Clarinetist Albert Hunt earned a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from The Juilliard School and has performed around the world as a soloist and chamber musician. He has also played in orchestras such as the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. Violinist Rachel Betancourt is a member of the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra in Germany and is an international competition winner. She frequently performs solo and chamber music recitals in the Americas and in Europe. Come join us for an evening of chamber music featuring clarinet, piano and

strings.

FRIDAY/FEB. 6

Friday Night Film Series: Ivory Tower. 7-9:30 p.m. Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10215 Lakehaven Drive, Burke. As tuition rates spiral beyond reach and student loan debt passes \$1 trillion (more than credit card debt), IVORY TOWER asks: Is college worth the cost? From the halls of Harvard, to public colleges in financial crisis, to Silicon Valley, filmmaker Andrew Rossi assembles an urgent portrait of a great American institution at the breaking point. This is a non-religious event open to the public. www.accotinkuuc.org, administrator@acctinkuuc.org

SATURDAY/ FEB. 7

Cool Cow Comedy Presents: Robert Mac. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. 7p.m and 9 p.m. Ages 16 & up. CLEAN SHOW. The 9 p.m. performance is a fundraiser benefiting Girls Scouts Service Unit 5208. \$20. Come to Cool Cow Comedy's for entertainment! Each month headliners and featured performers take the stage in the W-3 Theatre. Host and Comedian Rahmein Mostafavi has performed outstanding stand-ups in the DC Improv, "Richmond Funny Bone" and "Caroline's on Broadway."

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/FEB 7-8

Chocolate Lovers Festival. 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. City of Fairfax. The scrumptious and fun-filled weekend features everything from a competition to see who can make the most beautiful and creative chocolate sculptures, cakes and cupcakes to a chocolate-themed movie and a luscious sampling of chocolate

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15

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- Send letter, resume, three clips or examples of work to resumes@connectionnewspapers.com

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Hayfield's Overstreet Wins C6 Bars Title Despite Back Trouble

Fairfax's Barborek qualifies for regionals, wins beam title.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Hayfield gymnast Molly Overstreet is a two-time state champion, but her junior year has been marred by lower-back pain.

Years of competing has taken a toll on Overstreet's body. On a scale of 1-10, Overstreet said her back pain is a 6 during meets, and a constant 3 or 4 during everyday life.

Overstreet captured a three-way share of the state vault championship as a freshman in 2013. The following year, she won the state bars title with a VHSL-record score of 9.925. Due to back pain, however, she spent most of the 2014-15 season unable to give her best effort.

"I've definitely watered down most of my routines for the preseason," she said.

On Feb. 2, Overstreet competed at the Conference 6 championship meet at McLean High School. The result was a conference bars title and a berth in the 6A North region meet as an all-around competitor.

Overstreet won the bars event with a score of 9.5. She tied for seventh on floor



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Hayfield's Molly Overstreet earned a berth in the 6A North region meet as an all-around competitor.

(8.8), finished 13th on vault (8.85) and came in 16th on beam (8.525).

She finished eighth in the all-around with a total of 35.675.

The top four all-around finishers qualify for regionals, along with any gymnast who totals a score of 35 or better. The top eight advance in each event, along with any gymnast who scores a 9.0 or better.

Overstreet said she'd like to add to her bar routine for the 6A North region meet, scheduled for Feb. 11 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

After last year's state-record performance on bars, does Overstreet feel pressure to perform at a high level?

"Definitely, yes," Overstreet said. "I just try to do my best and have fun, but there

always will be that pressure because I was the state champ."

Joining Overstreet as an all-around gymnast at regionals will be Fairfax senior Rachel Barborek, who placed fourth at the Conference 6 meet with a total of 36.25. She won the conference beam championship (9.425), placed second on floor (9.5), finished 11th on vault (9.025) and tied for 12th on bars (8.3).

Washington-Lee senior Sophie Hatcher won the all-around title with a score of 37.625.

"It feels so good because at all my other meets, I didn't ever hit all four [events] — I always had some mistake — but today I hit all four and I'm really happy," she said. "This is the best meet I've ever had in all my four years of high school."



Fairfax senior Rachel Barborek won the Conference 6 beam championship on Feb. 2 at McLean High School.

McLean's Jacqueline Green finished runner-up (36.625) and Lizzy Brown-Kaiser was third (36.425).

McLean won its fourth consecutive Liberty District/Conference 6 championship with a score of 143. Washington-Lee finished runner-up (142.225), earning the conference's other regional team berth.

Yorktown was third (141), Fairfax (125.275), Hayfield (121.1), South Lakes (115.125), Madison (108.7) and Langley (81.3).

"It's a really great feeling because this is our senior year and there was a lot of pressure to keep our conference championship title [streak]," Highlanders senior Lizzy Brown-Kaiser said, "so it feels great to fulfill that."

South Lakes Wins Conference Championship

Both boys and girls win indoor track and field Liberty Conference championship.

Multiple event victories by sophomore Devyn Jones and domination of the relays, led the South Lakes High School indoor track teams to Liberty Conference championships in both the boys and girls divisions Thursday, Jan. 30 at the Prince George's County Sports and Learning Complex Landover, Md.

SLHS girls team scored 147 points for its fourth consecutive title. James Madison was second with 86 while Langley and McLean tied for third with 54.50 points each. The Seahawks boys team won its seventh consecutive title, massing 195 points with McLean second (68) and James Madison and Washington-Lee tied at third (48).

Jones teamed with fellow sophomore Jessica Lister, junior Golden Kumi-Darfour and senior Claire Nieuwsma in winning the girls 4x400 relay in 4:09.63.

Jones finished fourth in the triple jump (33-07.00) and sixth in the 500 meters (1:23.64). On Day 1 of the championship (Jan. 22), she led a SLHS sweep of the girls 55 meter hurdles, winning the event in 8.85. Seniors Maya Rodriguez (9.44) and Nieuwsma (9.88) finished second and third, respectively, Jones also won the long jump (16-08.50).

Senior Comfort Reed, who finished third in the long jump (16-03.50) won the triple jump with a leap of 34-11.25. Reed and seniors Ozioma Chinaka, Samantha Webb and sophomore Nikayla Hoyte finished third in the girls 4x200 meter relay (1:48.83). Chinaka also finished third in the pole vault (8-03.00).

Senior Delaney Wickman finished second in both the 300 meters (41.96) and 500 meters (1:18.52). Kumi-Darfour was third in the 1,000 meters (3:07.82).

SLHS juniors, led by Eric Kirlew, domi-

nated the boys triple jump. Kirlew won the event with a jump of 44-06.50. Skander Ballard was second (41-08.75), Anas Fain finished third (41-06.00) and Alex Rudison took fourth (39-10.00). Kirlew also led the SLHS boys' long jumpers on Day 1 with a winning distance of 19-10.00. Ballard was second (19-06.00) and Fain finished third (19-05.00).

Fain also contributed to the boys' championship finishing tied for second in the high jump (5-11) and winning the 55 meter hurdles in 7.94 on Day 1.

Kirlew, third in the 55 meters (6.84), sophomore Timiebi Ogobri, who was second (6.68) on the first day of competition, teamed with Ballard and Rudison on Day 2 to win the boys 4x200 relay in 1:35.66.

The 4x400 team of senior Sam Arpee, juniors John LeBerre, Nikolai Waithe and Ballard won the event in 3:35.59. Arpee also won the 500 meters in 1:08.81 and Waithe was second 1:09.58 in that event. In the 300 meters, Ballard finished second (36.73), Arpee was third (37.21) and Waithe finished fourth (38.21).

Highlights from Day 1 of the competition include:

*Senior Nathan Stone, second in the 55 meter hurdles (8.01).

*Senior Jordan Lozama won the 55 meters (7.45) and finished fourth in the shot (27-01.50).

*Senior Ozioma Chinaka won the shot put with a throw of 28-04.50. Senior Natalie Schauer was second (28-01.50).

*In the boys 3,200 meters, senior Andrew McCool ran a 10:04.65 for second and teammate Sean Miller, also a senior, took third (10:11.99).

*Sophomores John Swecker, Ashton Reinhold, juniors Connor Smith and LeBerre finished second in the 4x800 meter relay (8:33.16).

*Freshman Olivia Beckner, Kumi-Darfour, junior Monica Lannen and senior Augusta Durham were third in that event with a 10:00.09.

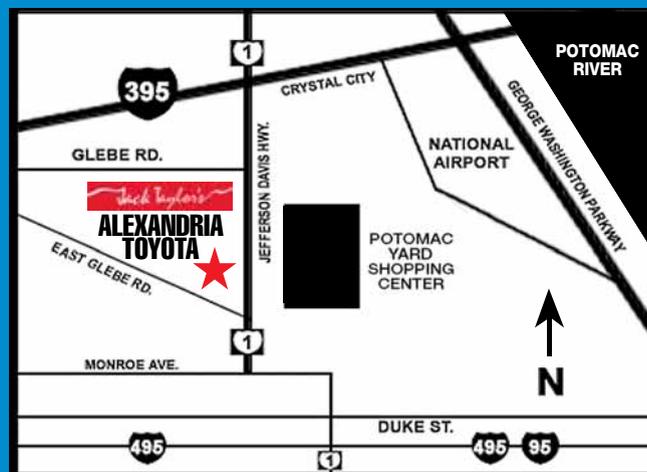
The top six finishers in each event and the top three relays advance to the Northern 6A Regional Championship Feb. 19 at the Prince George's County Sports and Learning Complex in Landover, Md.

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

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ENTERTAINMENT

PHOTO BY HELEN PAFUMI/COURTESY OF THE HUB THEATRE

From left — Maggie Erwin, Tia Shearer and Carolyn Kashner in Hub Theatre's "Failure: A Love Story." Picture credit to Helen Pafumi

Hub Theatre Receives Helen Hayes Nominations

The Hub Theatre was nominated for seven Helen Hayes Awards presented by theatreWashington for outstanding achievement in professional theatre in the Washington metropolitan area. The awards are named for Helen Hayes, the legendary First Lady of the American Theatre. Nominated artists and companies exemplify the excellence found on Washington area professional stages.

"It is wonderful for these talented artists to receive the recognition their terrific work deserves," said Helen Pafumi, artistic director, Hub Theatre. "It is a joy to know that so many of our full productions were first seen as staged readings at the Hub PlayFest where we can learn how a play might be received by an audience."

The Hub is a professional, non-profit theater company making its home in Fairfax County. It is in residence at the John Swayze Theatre, the New School of Northern Virginia, 9431 Silver King Court, Fairfax. For further information visit <http://www.thehubtheatre.org/>

For over thirty years, the Helen Hayes Awards have celebrated outstanding achievement. There are over 80 professional theatres throughout the Washington met-

ropolitan area. The Hub was one of only 31 theatres to receive Helen Hayes Awards nominations in the various categories. The Helen Hayes Awards will be presented at a gala event on April 6.

Hub Theatre's nominations were for:
Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Play-
Maggie Erwin - "Failure: A Love Story"
Carolyn Kashner - "Failure: A Love Story"

Outstanding Support Actor in a Play
Michael Kevin Darnall - "Failure: A Love Story"

Outstanding Sound Design:
Matthew M. Nielson - "Abominable"

Outstanding Director of a Play
Matt Bassett - "Failure: A Love Story"

Outstanding Ensemble in a Play:
"Failure: A Love Story"

Outstanding Play:
"Failure: A Love Story"

— DAVID SIEGEL

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 11

treats from area vendors. It's also a chance to buy mouthwatering presents for Valentine's Day. <http://www.chocolatefestival.net/>

SUNDAY/FEB. 8

T-TRAK Model Train Show. 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. Information on the museum and shows is at www.fairfax-station.org phone 703-425-9225.

National Concert Band. 3 p.m. Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run Road, Fairfax. In celebration of its 40th anniversary season, the National Concert Band, founded by retired members of the D.C. Services Bands, will perform Gustav Holst's The Planets Op. 32. Here's an opportunity to hear the complete

seven-movement suite, each named after a planet of the solar system and its corresponding astrological character, in live performance. Tickets are \$10 General Admission, \$5 Senior/Military. Students/Children are free with a paying adult. For more information, visit www.nationalconcertband.org.

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