

WELLBEING

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Springfield  
**CONNECTION**

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne  
Newington



# One Win Shy of States

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Signed, Sealed  
and Delivered

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Public Commission  
To Review  
Police Policy

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West Springfield junior guard Shelby Haynes was a first-team all-region selection by the Northern Virginia Women's Basketball Coaches Association.

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PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

MARCH 5-11, 2015

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# NEWS

## Public Commission To Review Police Policy

Over some objections, Bulova launches ad hoc commission in wake of police shooting and obfuscation.

BY KEN MOORE  
AND TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

Supervisor Michael Frey did not mince words when voicing opposition to Chairman Sharon Bulova's establishment of an ad hoc police commission Tuesday, March 3.

"This is not the time nor the right way to proceed," said Frey (R-Sully).

Bulova's commission will include law enforcement, legal experts, citizens, academics, public information officers, and media.

Fairfax County Police officer Adam D. Torres shot and killed John Geer of Springfield inside the doorway of his own home on Aug. 29, 2013. Police were called following a domestic argument, and 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. Geer 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, intervention by a U.S. senator and a court order to get the first information on the shooting, which came in January when police named Torres.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY** released more than 10,000 pages of documents about the shooting and the investigation on Jan. 30, 2015, in response to the court order. The documents revealed that four other officers on the scene disagreed with Torres, who said Geer moved his hands rapidly down from his head towards his waist prompting Torres to shoot.

"I think there will be a time to do this, but I think this is after we deal with pending outcome of the Geer case," said Frey on Tuesday.

But that could take years, Bulova said, during Tuesday's Board session.

The commission will review existing policies, practices and programs regarding police-community relations, police-involved incidents and laws regarding the public release of information.

"Our board has been taking a hard look at our policies involving the timing and manner of releasing information in the case of critical police-involved incidents," Bulova

said. "This effort can be greatly enhanced by engaging with the community in an open, transparent way."

"I think this is an excellent and right thing to do," said Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville).

"I'm real happy to see this review get underway," said Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield).

"This is a learning opportunity for our community. And I mean everybody," said Supervisor Jeffrey McKay (D-Lee).

Michael J. Hershman, founder of the Fairfax Group, is a citizen representative and will chair the commission. He is "an



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

**Demonstrators from around Virginia met Jan. 8 in front of the Fairfax County Courthouse and Police and Fire department headquarters to demand an independent investigation of the shooting death of John Geer.**

expert in government and corporate accountability and transparency," according to the Board of Supervisors.

**"This effort can be greatly enhanced by engaging with the community in an open, transparent way."**

— Sharon Bulova

**THE POLICE DEPARTMENT** celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, said Bulova.

"Fairfax County is the safest jurisdiction of its size due in no small

part to the hard work and dedication of our public safety personnel," she said. "The Board of Supervisors and the Police Department recognize the importance of maintaining that public trust and the importance of always reviewing policies and practices and seeking to improve."

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) commended Bulova for putting Fairfax County in a leadership role on a critical matter. "This is more than one case, it's part of a national discussion," he said.

"We want to take the time to get this right," said Herrity.

The board approved Cook's amendment

that a review of crisis intervention training within the police department be added to the commission's scope of work.

But Herrity and Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) also raised concerns saying that the board itself be more involved in the review.

"It's been over two years since we have had a Public Safety Committee meeting, although one has been promised for some time," said Herrity. "The board needs to have a discussion in open session on these critical issues."

"I think it is the board that should be clearing the mind of the citizens as to where we are," Hudgins said. "This is not the way I would like to do this."

Frey believes the commission will solely focus on the Geer case. "This is the latest reaction to a nasty situation in the media," he said. "I guarantee that focus will not be on process, it will be on this case."

The commission will "review all police department policies related to critical incidents including how and when information is released to the public," according to a release issued by the county. It will also review police policies related to use-of-force training policies, threat assessments and the Internal

Affairs Division.

"The commission will also review practices related to the release of information ... along with the relationship between the FCPD and the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, and the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act."

"We will be better at the end for having done this," said McKay.

**"This is not the time nor the right way to proceed."**

— Michael Frey (R-Sully)

**IN OTHER MATTERS**, the board held a 90-minute closed session.

Afterwards, Vice Chairman Penelope Gross announced that County Attorney David Bobzien will retire June 30, 2016 and will reorganize the day-to-day operations of the office.

The board will begin the search process for a county attorney by the end of this year.

### CITIZENS

Jeff Stewart, Chantilly  
Adrian Steele, McLean  
Nicholas Beltrante, Virginia Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability (with alternate)  
Tim Thompson, President, Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations  
Shirley Ginwright, Chairman, Communities of Trust Committee, President, Fairfax County NAACP COUNTY STAFF (Ex-officio members/supporting)  
David Rohrer, Deputy County Executive for Public Safety  
Tony Castrilli, Director, Office of Public Affairs

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SPRINGFIELD CONNECTION ♦ MARCH 5-11, 2015 ♦ 3



# NEWS 'Above Equal'

1965 graduates of Luther Jackson remember the county's only African American high school.

BY TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

**F**lorence King was pretty impressed with her school bus driver. The Alexandria resident grew up on Old Telegraph Road and rode the bus to both Drew Smith Elementary School in Gum Springs and Luther Jackson High School, prior to desegregation. King graduated from Luther Jackson in 1965.

"It was amazing how the driver knew where every black person lived," King said. Along the lengthy, circuitous routes to Drew Smith and Luther Jackson, King's bus would pick up students from pockets of African American communities all over Fairfax County.

White students along the route waiting for their buses were generally respectful, King said, except for a group in the Hollin Hills area, who would yell names and throw eggs as King's bus passed. "It was awful," she said. "I think they were just kind of ignorant."

**OPENED IN 1954** to specifically serve African Americans in Fairfax County, Luther P. Jackson High School in Falls Church got its name from the founder of the Negro Voters League of Virginia. Dr. Jackson was also chair of the History Department at Virginia State College.

King's family was one of the only African American households in their neighborhood. Her great-great-grandfather was a freed slave from George Washington's plantation who stayed in the area; her great-grandfather was Thornton Gray. She remembers the atmosphere at Luther Jackson fondly.

"It was the camaraderie, the chance to meet people that looked like us," King said. "We never saw them. It was good to be around my people, thinking: This was fun."

Sandra McNeill's family moved in near the King's before the girls were in high school. They became close friends and enjoyed playing in the woods by their houses and picking fresh fruit. When they started going to Luther Jackson together, the same

year, McNeill remembers her parents saying the school was separate but not equal.

"We were always told Caucasian kids were more advanced," said McNeill, who currently lives in Franconia. Her grandmother was a teacher at the historic Laurel Grove Elementary School. "We got their books two years later," after students at other schools had gotten new books.

Despite having older books, McNeill and King thought they received solid instruction from dedicated and caring, all-African American teachers who also had Ph.Ds in their fields.

"It was above equal," said King, who confidently rattled off the French she still retains from language labs Luther Jackson students were encouraged to take.

In King's family, she said, regarding Caucasian students, "they didn't want to put it in our mind that we're not as good as they are."

But in general, King and McNeill said they didn't feel too threatened from racial tension in their community during high school.

Luther Jackson classmate Phyllis Ford, who grew up around Beulah Road in Franconia, said the Caucasian families in her area were pretty accepting, and that her parents otherwise sheltered her and her brother from protests and Civil Rights issues. "They didn't talk about it a lot," said Ford, "we just kind of sailed through."

Ford's great-grandfather was William Jasper, who after being freed from slavery purchased 13 acres of land in northern Virginia in 1860. Retired in theory, Ford sits on the board of the Franconia Museum, represents Lee district on the Fairfax County History Commission, is president of the Laurel Grove School Association and director of the Laurel Grove School Museum.

**FORD WOULD DO** homework together with her Caucasian neighbors across the street, students from the Gorham family who attended Edison High School.

"It didn't feel segregated, really," Ford said. "We just did it. I wasn't really thinking about it."

Their senior year, all Ford, King and McNeill had the option to attend the base school for their area, Edison, but chose to graduate from Luther Jackson.

"The most important thing was to get an education," said King. "That was your ticket."

For the 1965-66 school year with desegregation in full effect, students were required to return to their local school. Luther Jackson became an integrated middle school for grades 7 and 8.

**Sandra McNeill's older sister Ernice Evans graduated from Luther Jackson High School in 1963.**

PHOTO FROM THE  
LUTHER JACKSON  
HIGH SCHOOL  
YEARBOOK



PHOTO COURTESY OF BESSIE HARRIS ALKISSWANI

**Bessie Alkisswani (nee Harris), older sister of Florence King, graduated from Luther Jackson High School in 1963.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE FRANCONIA MUSEUM

**Phyllis Ford grew up in a house behind the Laurel Grove Baptist Church (background, right of the church) on Beulah Road in Franconia.**



**Phyllis Ford (nee Walker) grew up in Franconia and graduated from Luther Jackson High School in 1965.**



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

**Florence King (nee Harris, left) grew up on Old Telegraph Road and had the option to attend Edison High School her senior year. She graduated from Luther Jackson High School instead in 1965. When Sandra McNeill (nee Evans, right) and her family moved in close to the Harrises, they were among the only African American families in their neighborhood. McNeill also graduated from Luther Jackson with the class of 1965, completing several credits over the summer at Edison High School.**



## NEWS

# Signed, Sealed and Delivered

2015 General Assembly session draws to a close.

By TIM PETERSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he 45-day 2015 session of the Virginia General Assembly came to a close last week, one which Del. Scott Surovell (D-44) described as “pretty calm, mainly because guys on either side have stayed away from divisive social issues they’ve pushed in the past,” and Sen. Toddy Puller (D-36) assessed, “For the most part, I think they did accomplish some good things.”

Surovell was critical of the continued shortness on transportation and education funding, not expanding Medicaid and the absence of movement on congressional redistricting, attributing the election year as a reason “a lot of people on other side didn’t want to deal with big issues.”

The governing body did, however, pass amendments to a two-year budget from last year’s session, two days prior to this year’s close. “An uneven revenue stream has caused us to jump through a lot of different hoops,” said Del. Mark Sickles (R-43).

**THOUGH NO LOCAL LAWMAKER** saw all of their proposed legislation progress to Gov. Terry McAuliffe’s (D) desk for signing, each at least had numerous causes and concepts they championed take off.

When Del. Eileen Filler-Corn’s (D-41) HB2306, aka “ABLE Act,” passed from the Virginia House and Sen-

ate to Gov. McAuliffe for his signature, it was a culmination of a multi-year journey, not just for the delegate but for several of her constituents.

The bill, which would create tax-free savings accounts for individuals with disabilities, is a Virginia version of federal legislation signed into law in December 2014.

Burke resident Stephen Beck had been a passionate advocate for the Achieving a Better Life Experience federal legislation, on behalf of his daughter Natalie who has Down syndrome, as well as the Down Syndrome Society. Beck died in December, after the bill passed one congressional chamber but before it was signed into law.

Prior to the passage of the federal bill, Filler-Corn had been working on similar legislation for Virginia, though it had never progressed to the governor’s desk.

“When I started all this, I didn’t know it was a local connection,” said Filler-Corn, “that the passion was already there for it.”

When the federal ABLE Act, after Beck’s death known as the “Beck Bill,” passed, Filler-Corn knew the time was right to re-introduce her bill at the General Assembly.

Beck’s wife Catherine went down to Richmond for the last week of the session and saw the delegate’s bill move forward.

SEE ASSEMBLY, PAGE 7

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# OPINION

## Good, Bad and Ugly

**T**he 2015 session of the Virginia General Assembly came to an end last week, and some of the biggest news was about what it did not do.

By far the ugliest debacle rests in the Assembly's ongoing refusal to expand Medicaid to cover as many as 400,000 uninsured people in Virginia, even though it would come at no cost to Virginia (Federal government pays 100 percent for the next two years and 90 percent after that) and would be a massive boost to Virginia's economy. The local and state economy is suffering from the loss of federal spending in other areas, and it's just plain crazy and mean-spirited to deny medical care for people who can't afford it otherwise, and at the same time, turn away an economic stimulus equal to 20,000 or more jobs and a direct infusion of nearly \$2 billion a year.

**GOOD:** The Assembly nixed a bill which "empowers the Director of the Department of Corrections to make and enter into contracts ... to compound the drugs necessary to carry out execution by lethal injection. ... Information relating to the identity of the persons or entities compounding such drugs, the identities of persons or entities engaged to manufacture or supply the materials used to compound the drug products, and the name of the materials or components used to compound drug products for use in an execution are confidential,

### EDITORIAL

exempt from the Freedom of Information Act, and not subject to discovery or introduction as evidence in a civil proceeding ..."

The House of Delegates nixed executing people with secret potions. Passed in the Senate, blocked in the House of Delegates. Be sure to thank those local legislators who voted against this craven proposal: Senators: Adam Ebbin, Barbara Favola, Janet Howell, Dave Marsden and Chap Petersen. Delegates: David Bulova, Eileen Filler-Corn, Charniele Herring, Patrick Hope, Mark Keam, Kay Kory, Rob Krupicka, Jim LeMunyon, Alfonso Lopez, Ken Plum, Tom Rust, Mark Sickles, Marcus Simon, Scott Surovell and Vivian Watts.

And ask these local legislators who voted to carry out executions with secret drugs and secret methods what they were thinking: Senators George Barker and Dick Saslaw. Delegates: Dave Albo and Tim Hugo.

No good comes from conducting the people's business in secret, all the more true when the business is brutal. Killing people is wrong, two wrongs don't make a right, killing people and keeping the brutal details secret is wrong.

**BAD:** State Sen. Barbara Favola's bill to extend foster care services and support, including foster care maintenance payments, to qualifying individuals age 18 to 21 years who were formerly in the custody of a local board of social services passed unanimously in Senate, and

## A look at recently ended session of the Virginia General Assembly.

died in the House of Delegates. The money spent would have been matched by Federal dollars, and every dollar spent helping former foster children become independent, self-supporting adults saves a bundle in other costs down the line.

**UGLY:** "Ethics reform" put a \$100 cap on each individual gift from lobbyists to members of the Assembly, with no enforcement mechanism, and no changes in campaign finance. Former Gov. Bob McDonnell and his wife were convicted of corruption for taking more than \$170,000 worth of gifts and favors from Star Scientific and related individuals; this was the catalyst for the so-called reform. It is apparently fine, however, that Star Scientific also gave \$108,000 to McDonnell's campaign. More than 40 other entities gave more, including Dominion (\$383,720), Altria (\$361,556), Smithfield Foods (\$267,738), Walmart (\$121,250), just as examples. (Source: vpap.org). No good comes from having our legislative body awash in this kind of cash. You can visit the Virginia Public Access Project at vpap.org and look up who has been giving how much to the people who represent you. It's fascinating.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Martyr to Police Accountability

To the Editor:

I am writing to commend the Connection Newspapers for the excellent coverage of the John Geer case. Your reporting and editorial position show that your staff is right on top of this controversial issue.

The manner in which Fairfax County officials from top to bottom have handled this case has been dismaying. In my opinion, this is the most disgraceful and embarrassing episode in the history of Fairfax County. The continual cover ups and obfuscation and stonewalling are reprehensible. As a 54-year-old lifelong Northern Virginian this is the worst I have seen.

But there is a long and sordid history of this type of behavior. Consider the case involving Sal Culosi and David Masters and most recently Natasha McKenna.

But let me take this opportunity to give credit to the Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability and its executive director Nicholas Beltrante. For several years now, they have been working tirelessly

to raise public awareness of these matters. It is a shame that it takes a tragedy like the Geer shooting to wake everybody up from their complacency.

I understand that John Geer was a graduate of J.E.B. Stuart High School in the Falls Church area of Fairfax County. His alma mater was, of course, named after the dashing Confederate general who commanded the Army of Northern Virginia's cavalry during the Civil War. Stuart was mortally wounded on May 11, 1864 in a fierce battle fought at Yellow Tavern, north of Richmond. His death was a great blow to the Confederacy. He went down in history as a martyr for his cause.

John Geer has become a martyr for the cause of government and police accountability and transparency.

**Gregory G. Paspatis**  
Alexandria

## An Inspiring Story

To the Editor:

The article "Fairfax County Animal Shelter Gets Creative to Save Lives," (Connection, February 26-March 4, 2015) inspired me by

how dedicated the volunteers are to provide the best care for the animals they take in and find them a new home as soon as possible. They would not be able to place 2,500 animals in loving homes this past year if it was not for their teamwork.

Thanks to the dedication of 300 shelter volunteers, foster caregivers, social media sharers, and donations to this organization, thousands of animals were given a chance to live a more fulfilling life. This shelter has even taken the burden upon themselves to help other overcrowded shelters by taking their animals and finding homes for them as well.

After reading this article I immediately filled out a volunteer application for this shelter so I, too, can help more animals find the loving home that they deserve.

**Kelsey Yaglou**  
Fairfax

## Excessive and Hurtful

To the Editor:

In the "Editorial: Managing Mental Illness In Jails" by Mary Kimm (Connection, February 26-March 4, 2015), I believe that

many valid concerns were raised. I was shocked to discover how poorly the transport of Ms. McKenna was given her mental illness. If her severe mental illness caused her to have a constant fight or flight reaction, it's likely that she only knew how to react in that way. How then would taking her out of one environment into a new one by threatening people with weapons be effective? A combative, mentally ill inmate should be handled differently than a combative one in general. I also find it interesting that Ms. McKenna's ethnicity was not mentioned in this editorial. The only descriptive information given was that she was a small woman. I researched the case and found out that Ms. McKenna was African American. I believe this could be an important factor to how she was treated in an effort to restrain her. While jails are meant to serve as a place for those who have been convicted of crimes, there are situations where the force used to maintain order is excessive and hurtful. In Ms. McKenna's case, it meant her life.

**Erin Sullivan**  
Freshman/James Madison University

## Springfield CONNECTION

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# News



PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVE ALBO

**Del. Dave Albo (R-42), left, holds a mock vote in Richmond with Collin Summers, in kindergarten at Laurel Hill Elementary School (right) and other students visiting from Sangster and Newington Forest Elementary Schools.**



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK SICKLES

**Del. Mark Sickles (R-43) speaks at the 2015 Virginia General Assembly. (Left) Del. David Bulova (D-37), (right) Del. Vivian Watts (D-39).**

## Assembly Session Draws to a Close

FROM PAGE 5

“It was great, I’m so proud of Eileen,” said Beck. “I’m so happy that she was so proactive in bringing this bill up to everyone’s attention and getting it moved through all the channels.”

Filler-Corn said the bill is about “parity,” assisting individuals with disabilities to have the same savings opportunities — post-secondary education, housing and job-training — as those kids without.

Traci and Steve LaGanke took up Stephen Beck’s mantle on behalf of the National Down Syndrome Society, Traci testifying in Richmond each time Filler-Corn’s bill came up. Their son Nicholas also has Down syndrome.

“Traci was invaluable,” said Filler-Corn, “her story was so moving. And Beck was an icon, certainly a trailblazer, with the Down Syndrome Society, in creating these accounts. There was just a lot of outpouring of support.”

With Traci and Catherine standing in the gallery, Filler-Corn was able to have that session adjourn in memory of Stephen Beck.

While the Virginia ABLE Act is waiting to be signed by Gov. McAuliffe, Catherine Beck is already thinking about the next challenge of getting the word out to the public, for citizens to take advantage of the saving opportunity.

“I would love to see, and help in any way, this get implemented in the state of Virginia,” said Beck. “This gives state to go-ahead. OK, now for real, how do we do this.”

Filler-Corn said the structure and resources for the accounts are already in place with the existing Virginia College Savings Plan office. “They can and are willing to do the same for these able accounts,” she said, “with no general fund fiscal impact.”

For more information on Filler-Corn’s legislation and the work of the National Down Syndrome Society, visit [www.eileenfillercorn.com](http://www.eileenfillercorn.com) and [www.ndss.org](http://www.ndss.org).

## Bills That Made It to Governor’s Desk

**Del. David Bulova (D-37)** brought forward HB1515, requiring hospitals to provide information to new parents about safe sleep environments for their baby.

“I think back to when I was a brand new parent — I’m the father of 3 kids,” Bulova said. “We were never given info on that. It really struck me how many babies die needlessly every year. 95 percent of these were preventable.”

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PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE BARKER

**Sen. George Barker (D-39) center meets with Centreville High School students who helped work on legislation he proposed.**

**Del. Dave Albo’s (R-42)** successful HB1445 helps decriminalize medicine extracted from marijuana plants. A bill with potentially wider impact is HB1635, which gives victims of Internet defamation a more “reasonable” amount of time once they file action to find out the identity of the person who posted against them.

“Anybody can be the victim of an Internet defamation,” said Albo. “[The Internet] has given crazy people and people with bad motives the ability to get their message out without having to buy a postage stamp, people who don’t want to put their names by their posts. It’s not gentlemanly to trash people anonymously.”

**Del. Mark Sickles (R-43)** was responsible for HB2372, which creates an electronic asset verification system for medical assistance applications.

“Prior to this,” Sickles said, “The Department of Medical Assistance Services based applications on what you attested to, trusting your honesty. If you forgot you have another \$40 thousand, \$200 thousand, this will give a chance to find it within seconds. It’s expected to save the state a few hundred-thousand dollars.”

**Del. Scott Surovell’s (D-44)** HB1684, that would have allowed students with a strong score on Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exams to waive the related Virginia Standards of Learning test, was folded into other legislation awaiting McAuliffe’s signature that gives localities more

SEE ASSEMBLY, PAGE 15

**March 7th**  
(Snow Date: March 14th  
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# WELLBEING

## Shedding Pounds, Keeping Them Off

### Suggestions for maintaining a healthy weight.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

For Toni Williams, effective weight loss and maintenance have been a struggle her entire adult life. Her introduction to unhealthy food came in college.

"Instead of the 'freshman five,' I did the freshman 20," she said. "I ate cheeseburgers and fried chicken every day."

Williams, now 60, identified here by a pseudonym, counts herself among the estimated 97 million Americans who the National Institutes of Health identifies as overweight or obese and at risk for health problems such as diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Approximately 90 percent of people who have lost weight, including Williams, have regained weight after a weight loss.

"There are a lot of different ways to lose weight, and I know how to lose weight," said Williams. "The problem is keeping it off."

Williams is a patient at the Washington Center for Weight Management & Research, Inc., in Arlington, and says that through her work at the center, she has discovered her

own personal formula for losing weight.

"Weight is a constant work in progress," she said. "There is no one way to do it. What works for some people won't work for others. You have to figure out what works for you."

Viewing obesity as a medical condition is the first step to solving it, said Dr. Domenica M. Rubino, director of the Washington Center.

"Obesity is a serious and complex disease that affects each individual differently," she said. "It is significantly influenced by risk factors including genetic, environmental, economic, psychological and social determinants, as with most chronic diseases."

Rubino recommends a research-based, comprehensive, mind-body approach to weight loss and maintenance that includes medical, nutritional, behavioral and psychological factors, and includes physicians, dietitians and psychotherapists.

"I try to help my patients explore the triggers [such as sadness, anger, and anxiety] that lead them to turn to food as a way to cope," said Mougeh Yasai, a clinical psychologist at the Washington Center. "Mindfulness can help patients become more at-

tuned to their feeling states, and also how to deal with these feelings when they come up. Once triggers are identified, we explore various coping skills that can be helpful during times of distress. The emphasis on mindful observation of eating behaviors is to practice the skill of observing with a nonjudgmental stance."

**HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS** at Weight Loss Services at Inova Fair Oaks Hospital in Fairfax, also assist patients in a weight loss program that includes a variety of bariatric (or weight loss) surgeries, generally reserved for those with a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or more.

"We also might use pharmacological methods to jump start weight loss," said Carmen Spencer, a registered nurse. She is the clinical program coordinator at the clinic.

"Medical weight loss is pretty much open to anyone with a BMI of 27 or higher," she said. "We offer a 12-week program that uses meal replacements."

"Maintaining weight can be difficult for several reasons," said Yasai. "There are physiologic signals of appetite, satiety and hunger that increase after we lose weight. These are normal responses after weight loss."

Some strategies are helpful in increasing



PHOTO COURTESY OF WASHINGTON CENTER FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH, INC.

**Domenica M. Rubino, M.D., far right, pictured with Mougeh Yasai, PhD, clinical psychologist and Amy Allnutt, MS, ACSM/HFS, exercise physiologist. Rubino, director Washington Center for Weight Management & Research, Inc., recommends a research-based, comprehensive mind-body approach to weight loss and maintenance that includes medical, nutritional, behavioral and psychological factors and includes physicians, dietitians and psychotherapists.**

one's chances of keeping excess weight at bay. "The environment is filled with opportunities to eat high-calorie foods and not

move much," said Yasai. "So in addition to continuing the lifestyle changes that helped you lose weight, it is important to have strengthened coping skills for

"Weight is a constant work in progress," she said. "There is no one way to do it. What works for some people won't work for others. You have to figure out what works for you."

— Toni Williams

managing stress as well as being mindful of potential emotional triggers to eating."

Setting unrealistic goals, losing too much weight at one time and following fad diets can lead to rapid weight regain or failure to lose weight in the first place.

"There is no magic, no special potion or diet," said Rubino. "In fact, no one person or thing holds the key for the treatment of obesity."

Maintaining a healthy weight takes work and dedication. Adherence to healthy eating and physical activity are two of the most important aspects of keeping weight off. Williams builds both into her daily routine.

"I go to the gym three times a week at 6 a.m.," said Williams. "If I don't do it then, something will come up later during the day. I use a trainer because I find that it's a luxury that I can't afford not to have. My trainer keeps me motivated and from making the gym my favorite charity."

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### HEALTH NOTES

## Presentation on Healing Chronic Pain

Nancy Shaw, myofascial pain therapist and author of "Simple Changes to End Chronic Pain" will talk about "Healing Chronic Pain by Changing Muscle Memory" at Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St. in Springfield on April 9 at 7 p.m. She will show some examples from her 32 years of clinical and personal experience learning from Janet Trevell, M.D., who developed the technique and treated President John F. Kennedy for his back pain. An interactive presentation will allow for audience questions and participation. A book signing period will follow the presentation.

Bring your own book or purchase one when you arrive. Call 703-452-3831 to register for this free presentation. <http://nancyshawpainclinicandinstitute.com>.

## Caregiver Bootcamp

Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax, will host a Caregiver Bootcamp, a special day-long training event. The bootcamp will include presentations from experts in the fields of financial planning, medical issues, legal needs, and caregiver support. There will be a small fee for this session and lunch is provided. Call 703-204-4664 to RSVP and for more information.

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## SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

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3/18/2015 ..... A+ Camps & Schools  
3/25/2015 .. Spring Fun, Food, Arts & Entertainment  
FCPS Spring Break 3/30-4/3

### APRIL

4/1/2015 ..... Wellbeing – Senior Living Pullout  
Easter Sunday is April 5  
4/8/2015 ..... HomeLifeStyle  
4/15/2015 ..... A+ Camps & Schools  
4/22/2015 ..... Real Estate Pullout – New Homes  
4/29/2015 ..... A+ Camps & Schools Pullout  
4/29/2015 ..... Mother's Day Celebrations, Dining & Gifts I

### MAY

5/6/2015 ..... McLean Day Pullout  
5/6/2015 ..... Mother's Day Dining & Gifts II  
5/6/2015 ..... Wellbeing  
Mother's Day is May 10  
5/13/2015 ..... HomeLifeStyle

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- Springfield Connection
- Vienna/Oakton Connection



The full cast of "Oliver!" the musical, opening at the Church of the Good Shepherd, spans ages 5 to 75.



## 'Oliver!' To Open at Church of the Good Shepherd

Springfield resident Nancy Lavallee is an attorney by day, but has done theater all her life. And for the last three years, in her free time, she's traded the courtroom for the director's chair, leading the Good Shepherd Players in productions of "The Sound of Music" and "Godspell."

The dramatic organization at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Burke has been performing for 34 years. A show in 2016 will mark its 35th.

This spring, the players spanning ages 5 to 75 will present "Oliver!"—Lionel Hart's musical adaptation of the classic Charles Dickens novel "Oliver Twist."

Lavallee tends to choose performances that allow for a diversity of ages and genders in a family-friendly context. In picking "Oliver!" Lavallee said another goal was to bring attention to the themes of hunger and poverty. The players and church are encouraging people to bring canned or non-perishable food items to the shows to donate to local families in need.

One of the biggest challenges for Lavallee in putting together a show like this has been working around the schedules of a multi-generational cast. But even though the entire cast won't rehearse together until a few nights before the opening, members can watch filmed rehearsals at home online and catch up on what they've missed.

"Rehearsal is going great," said Lavallee. "You always kind of bite your fingernails, but it always comes together. We're fighting weather battle now, but it never fails."

"Oliver!" runs March 13, 20 and 21 at 7:30 p.m. and March 14 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students, available at [www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1269312](http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/1269312). Church of the Good Shepherd is located at 9350 Braddock Road in Burke. For more information, call 703-323-5400 or visit [www.good-shepherd.net](http://www.good-shepherd.net) or [www.goodshepherdplayers.com](http://www.goodshepherdplayers.com).

—TIM PETERSON

Tricia Tyrell of Burke (center) plays "Nancy" in the Good Shepherd Players production of "Oliver!" She's joined onstage by Sarah (left) and Hannah Thomas (right) of Annandale.



PHOTOS BY LINDA BILOTTI



Good Shepherd Players director Nancy Lavallee (left) and her daughter Elizabeth (right) of Springfield mix family, faith and performance as they rehearse for the musical "Oliver!"



PHOTO BY CHIP GERTZOG/COURTESY OF PROVIDENCE PLAYERS OF FAIRFAX

From left - cast of the Providence Players of Fairfax "Other Desert Cities" in an early rehearsal: Andra Whitt (Brooke Wyeth), Bobby Welsh (Trip Wyeth), Tina Thronson (Polly Wyeth), Barbara Gertzog (Silda Grauman) and John Coscia (Lyman Wyeth).

## Family Ties Face the Unexpected

Providence Players of Fairfax to present 'Other Desert Cities.'

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

### Where and When

Does a daughter have the right to write a family "tell-all" memoir that will upset her orderly, well-to-do family? The Providence Players of Fairfax County invite you to reflect on that question and more with its next production, "Other Desert Cities."

The drama-comedy was nominated for multiple 2012 Tony Awards including Best Play and was a finalist for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize. Written by Jon Robin Baitz, the show focuses on the well-connected Wyeth family as daughter Brooke returns home to celebrate Christmas. Soon enough family life unravels as political views clash and family differences and secrets are brought to the light of day.

"This play has plenty of comedy, has a great plot and wonderfully, clearly drawn characters. They are clever people. The audience will care about them even if they don't agree with their points of view," said Tina Thronson, director of "Other Desert Cities."

"The Wyeth family is obsessed with privacy. There is a sense of betrayal when the parents learn one of their two daughters wants to write about family secrets," added Thronson. What is unique about this Providence Players

Providence Players of Fairfax County present "Other Desert Cities" at the James Lee Community Center Theater, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Performances: March 13-28. Thursday, Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m. Matinees at 2 p.m. March 15 & 22. Tickets: \$17-\$20. Call 703-425-6782 or visit [www.providenceplayers.org](http://www.providenceplayers.org).

production; Thronson will also play Polly Wyeth, one of the two sisters as well as directing the five member cast.

Brooke Wyeth is portrayed by Andra Whitt. "My character is so needy; yet so feverishly independent in her attitude. She is a collection of opposites; loving and selfish, incredibly uncertain yet thinks she knows who she is," said Whitt in a recent interview.

"This is a wonderfully absorbing show with great storytelling and characters that are not clichés," said cast member Barbara Gertzog as she described "Other Desert Cities."

John Coscia plays the father, Lyman. "This is an actor's dream of a well-written play," noted Coscia. "The role is so different from who I am. And it's great to have an opportunity to expand upon what I have done in the past."

As they have rehearsed over the weeks, they have become their own family giving their stage characters a real sense of family for the audience.



# CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto: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/APRIL 5

**Reference.** W-16 - Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Reference is a multi-media exploration of the various modes of influence that inform visual artists in both content and process. In Reference, participating artists incorporate performance, sound, process, and imagery to address the strong influence of other artists, visual and otherwise, upon their creative output as well as their deepest philosophical and spiritual understandings. No ticket required. [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org). 703-584-2900.

## THROUGH SUNDAY/MARCH 8

**Julia Galloway.** Building W-8, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Julia Galloway is a utilitarian potter and professor. She is currently the Director of the School of Art and Professor at the University of Montana, Missoula. Julia makes useful pottery working at a mid-range firing at c6 in a soda kiln and re-firing her pottery at low temperatures to develop rich glaze surfaces. She combines wheel throwing and hand building techniques to make her pottery. No ticket required. 703-584-2900.



**Frozen Potomac on Sunrise by artist Glen Cook. View more of his work at the Workhouse Arts Center exhibit "Landscapes, Dancers & Other Things I See." Cook will be on hand to talk about his work at the opening reception on March 14, from 6-9 p.m. in Gallery 9 at The Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton.**

## FRIDAY/MARCH 6

**Cool Cow Comedy Presents: Tony Deyo.** Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. 8 p.m. 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 performed outstanding stand-ups in the DC Improv, Richmond Funny Bone and Caroline's on Broadway.

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 7-8 SPRINGPEX '15 Stamp Exhibition.** Saturday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Sunday,

11 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Robert E. Lee High School Cafeteria, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. 45th Annual Philatelic Stamp Show hosted by the Springfield Stamp Club. Features free kids stamp activities, show covers, 26+ dealers, U.S. Postal Service Station and club tables. Free. [www.springfieldstampclub.com](http://www.springfieldstampclub.com).

## SATURDAY/MARCH 7

**Workhouse Cabaret Series: Heroines of the Stage and Screen!** Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. 8 p.m. Some of Broadway's most beloved characters and some of the most memorable music are written for the

leading ladies.

**Garden Under Glass: Terrarium Workshop.** 9:30-11:30 a.m. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Shake off the winter chill by creating a garden under glass. Miniature plants, lush mosses, stones and whimsical figures will bring a smile and remind you of warmer days. Care instructions included. \$38/person plus \$25 supply fee. Register at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring) using code 290 185 8201 for the program and code 290 185 8202 for the supply fee or call 703-642-5173.

**Garden Sprouts: Hot and Cold.** 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. While it's winter in Virginia, it's summer in the Southern Hemisphere. Learn why seasons differ around the globe. Sample chocolate treats, both icy and hot. Enjoy a story about chocolate, then scout the gardens for signs of winter and spring. \$6 per child. Register online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring) using code 290 102 8901 or call 703-642-5173.

**Winter Lecture: Hellstrip Gardening.** 1:30-2:30 p.m. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Improve that patch of old turf on the streetside of the sidewalk by growing a hellstrip garden. Evelyn Hadden offers guidance on turning languishing, neighborhood parking strips into thriving, curbside gardens. Hadden addresses street trees, plants, poor soil, laws and covenants, and pedestrian traffic. A book signing follows the lecture. \$10 per person for advance registration, \$12 for out-of-county registrants or at the door.

Register at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring) using code 290 185 6501 or call 703-642-5173.

## THURSDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 5-8

**"Doubt: A Parable."** 7:30 p.m. Old Town Village, 3950 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets are \$17 in advance. Remaining seats, if available, will be \$20 at the door, one hour prior to performance times. Free parking is available. The production runs approximately 90 minutes, and a brief, talk-back session with the actors and directors will follow each performance. Buy tickets at: <http://fairfaxcitytheatre.ticketleap.com/doubt-a-parable/>.

<cal1>Sunday/March 8  
**Workhouse Cabaret Series: Heroines of the Stage and Screen!** Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Matinee 1 p.m. Some of Broadway's most beloved characters and some of the most memorable music are written for the leading ladies.  
**Film: An Ordinary Hero: The True Story of Joan Mulholland.** 2 p.m. Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. You'll hear firsthand from the Freedom Riders that took part in this movement including: Joan Mulholland, Reverend Reginald Green; Dion Diamond; Joan's son, Loki Mulholland producer of the film; and Michael O'Brien, author of *We Shall Not Be Moved*. Dessert reception will follow the film. All are welcome. \$15 in advance/ \$18 at the door/ Students Free. Contact [Carla.Rosenfeld@jccnv.org](mailto:Carla.Rosenfeld@jccnv.org), 703-537-3060.

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Photo by Gordon Beall





# SPORTS

## West Springfield Girls Fall One Win Shy of States

**Spartans lose to Oakton in region semifinals.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**E**mily Reba scored early in the second quarter, giving West Springfield the lead, but it wouldn't last. Maura D'Anna scored six straight Spartan points in the fourth quarter, helping keep the game close, but West Springfield couldn't get over the hump.

And junior guard Haley Blankinship showed off her shooting range, burying a pair of 3-pointers in the final 30 seconds, but it was too little, too late.

The West Springfield girls' basketball team hung around with a talented Oakton squad, but the Cougars proved to be too much, ending the Spartans' season with a 61-55 victory during the 6A North region semifinals on Tuesday night at Robinson Secondary School.

Both teams entered the contest undefeated against in-state opponents, but Oakton led the battle of No. 1 seeds for most of the final three quarters. Reba's second-quarter bucket gave West Springfield an 18-16 advantage, but Oakton responded with a 13-3 run and led for the remainder of the contest.

Despite the graduation of its top scorer and perimeter shooter, Amy Berglund, following the 2013-14 season, West Springfield made another deep postseason run, but this one ended one win shy of a berth in the state tournament. The Spartans finished the year with a 24-3 record and repeated as Conference 7 champions.

"People underestimated us this year," D'Anna said. "They thought that since we lost one of our best players that we would not [play] as well as we played this year."

D'Anna, a 6-foot junior forward, received second-team all-region honors from the



**West Springfield junior forward Maura D'Anna scored 11 points against Oakton in the 6A North region semifinals on March 3 at Robinson Secondary School.**

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Northern Virginia Women's Basketball Coaches Association. Facing Oakton's sophomore 6-foot duo of Maddie Royle and Delaney Connolly, D'Anna finished with 11 points.

"We hate the feeling of losing this close [to states]," D'Anna said. "You can basically see the [trophy] sitting on the table and it sucks not to get it."

Blankinship led West Springfield with 18 points. The left-handed sharpshooter knocked down a trio of 3-pointers, including one from well behind the arc in the closing seconds.

"If I had known she could shoot the ball from the blue line, I would have had her bring the ball past halfcourt and just shoot it," West Springfield head coach Bill Gibson joked. "We would have done that more all night."

Junior guard Shelby Haynes, a first-team all-region selection by the NVWBCA, fin-

ished with nine points for the Spartans. Reba, a senior forward, scored seven points and senior guard Sadie Shroeder added six.

After beating South County in the Conference 7 championship game on Feb. 24, the Spartans beat Centreville in the opening round of the regional tournament on Feb. 27 and defeated Langley in the quarterfinals on Feb. 28.

West Springfield went undefeated against conference opponents.

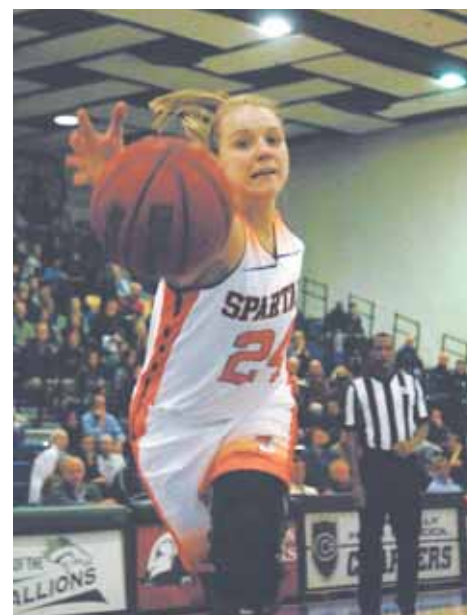
"We definitely feel good about this season," Blankinship said. "We worked hard and we've grown together as a team. It was kind of rough at the beginning and we just grew stronger."

Prior to this year, West Springfield had reached the state tournament four of the last five seasons. The Spartans will attempt to return next year, led by Haynes, D'Anna and Blankinship.

"Obviously, there are things they need to



**West Springfield junior guard Shelby Haynes was a first-team all-region selection by the Northern Virginia Women's Basketball Coaches Association.**



**West Springfield senior guard Alanna Backus reaches for the ball during the region semifinals on March 3.**

improve on," Gibson said. "Some of us have got to get better on defense, some have to work on offense. There are things everyone that leaves the court here coming back needs to improve on to get past [the region semifinals]."

## NoVa Ice Dogs Win Championship

**The top-seed NoVa Ice Dogs U12-A girls' ice hockey team defeated the Montgomery (MD) Blue Devils 4-3 to win the Chesapeake Bay Hockey League U12 girls' championship on Feb. 22 in Frederick, Md. The Ice Dogs, coached by Mike Donovan of Falls Church, are composed of 19 11-year-olds from around Northern Virginia. The roster includes: Katherine Donovan, Sarah Ettinger, Kaia Jefferson, Jillian Kendrick, and Bryana Nace of Falls Church City; Kelly DeMatties and Mira Majure of Falls Church Fairfax County; Alexandra Friedman and Ana Evans of Alexandria; Rachel Clarke and Emily Rotter of Arlington; Gwenyth Holloway and Braylee Weets of Springfield; Lexi Lewis of Nokesville; Elizabeth Mueller of Fairfax Station; Caley Duchak of Vienna; Mia Boris and Macie McGraw of Washington, D.C.; and Sara ten Broecke of Columbia, Md. Tryouts for next year's girls teams will be held April 30-May 7 in Alexandria. Please contact Peter Townsend at [peterwtownsend@comcast.net](mailto:peterwtownsend@comcast.net) for more information.**



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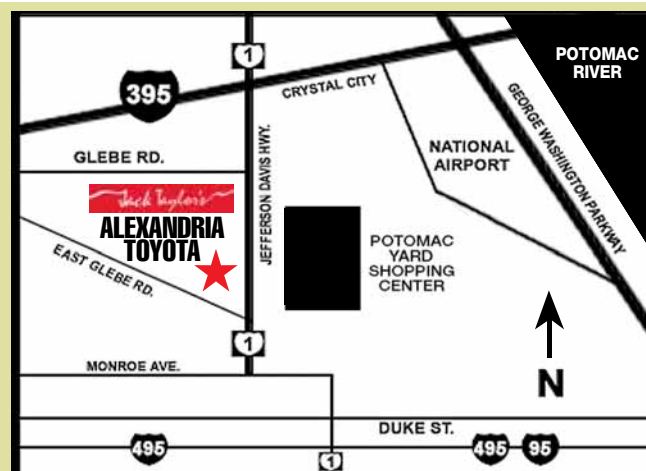


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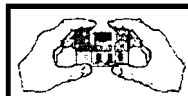
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## NEWS

# Assembly

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discretion for the waivers.

"This will save students a lot of unnecessary testing so they can focus on other matters other than memorizing material for an SOL," said Surovell.

**Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34)** drafted SB965 with ambitious intent to limit law enforcement's ability to collect data on citizens — specifically through license plate-reading technology — without proven just cause, an investigation or a warrant. "We've effectively outlawed that," said Petersen. "Law enforcement saw it as a tool to help solve crime, that they should collect information that may be relevant at a later time. But there has to be limits on it. Government really can't scrutinize or follow individuals without some kind of basis."

**Sen. George Barker (D-39)** and Del. James M LeMunyon (R-67) had identical legislation (SB1122 and HB1715, respectively) pass both bodies that requires Virginia colleges to immediately notify parents and proactively handle suicide risks on campus with a coordinated support network involving the student, friends, health or counseling centers on campus, and parents. Barker has worked on similar bills for the last several years, spurred by the suicide of Virginia Tech student and Fairfax County resident Daniel Kim. Virginia Tech created its own policy for reporting suicide risks to parents, but not all Virginia universities followed suit.

"Universities resisted for several weeks on things," said Barker. "They acknowledged it was an issue, but said we want to think about it for awhile and talk about it later. We've been talking about this for a couple years and haven't gotten anywhere yet. Rather than putting it off, let's move it. We finally proposed some language to help it move forward."

**Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37)** saw McAuliffe sign his SB1235 along with Dave Albo's HB1445: Both effectively decriminalize the possession and use of marijuana plant extracts as medicine. "It was a powerful experience for all of us," said Marsden. "Before I could walk into the bill signing room, I had to get my emotions under control, just to realize you're doing something that's going to impact thousands of kids. Virginia being conservative case that it is, the legalization of marijuana is something people didn't want to talk about. Finally science won out over fear."

**Sen. Toddy Puller (D-36)** was disappointed to see the House of Delegates kill her veterans special docket bill SB903, however SB675 and SB676 were successful, facilitating creation of two veterans care and assisted living facilities with over \$60 million in federal funding.

"Veterans, they're not getting any younger," said Puller. "This will be a way to take care of them the rest of their lives. It's very important that it be available."





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