

'A Job Well Done'

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Police Lt. Matt Owens (left), the Sully District Station's assistant commander, presents the Officer of the Month award to APO Tony Gul.

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

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Unscheduled
Summer Play

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Approves 'Ignite'
Strategic Plan

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Meeting on Route 28 Safety Study

Residents are invited to attend a public information meeting at Centreville Elementary School, on Monday, July 20, 6:30-8:30 p.m. to learn about the results of a traffic operational and safety study to identify short-term recommendations to improve traffic operations on Route 28 (Centreville Road) from south of I-66 to Liberia Avenue. The study analyzed traffic data to identify locations where low cost improvements may be made to the corridor.

VDOT, in conjunction with the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park and the counties of Fairfax and Prince William, is undertaking the development of the study.

Project information is available at www.virginiadot.org, at the information meeting, or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Call ahead at 703-259-2381, 800-367-7623 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions.

Comments will be accepted at the meeting and also by e-mail to meeting_comments@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Submit them by Aug. 14 to Tom Fahrney, project manager at the the VDOT District Office address above. Reference "Route 28 Corridor Study" in the subject line.

Sully District Council Meeting

The Sully District Council of Citizens Associations Land-Use Committee will meet Wednesday, July 22, at 7 p.m., in the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. Call Jeff Parnes, evenings, at 703-904-0131.

On tap is an application for a commercial-recreation use inside an existing building on Park Center Road in Oak Hill. Proposed are seven sports courts to be used mainly for practices or league volleyball matches.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, July 30, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

Because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

Food Donations for WFCM

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries' food pantry needs donations of 1-2 pound bags of rice, canned fruit (all types), canned pastas, canned meats (tuna, ham, chicken), cold and hot cereals, spaghetti and sauces, peanut butter, canned vegetables (including spinach, collar greens, beets) and cooking oil.

Toiletries needed, which WFCM clients cannot purchase with food stamps, include facial tissues, toothpaste, shampoo and solid deodorant.

Bring all items to WFCM'S food pantry, weekdays, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at 13888 Metrotech Drive, near Papa John's Pizza and Kumon Learning Center, in Chantilly's Sully Place Shopping Center. A volunteer stocker/bagger is needed Wednesdays, 4-6 p.m. Contact Annette Bosley at 703-988-9656, ext. 110, or abosley@wfcmv.org.

Learn about Police Department

Throughout the year, the Fairfax County Police Department will host a series of lectures as part of its 75th anniversary.^o

♦ July 23 – The Departments growth in relation to the county's development, 11 a.m. at the Criminal Justice Academy <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-departments-growth-in-relation-to-the-countys-development-tickets-15374059225>

♦ Aug. 10 – SWAT – Tools, Tactics, and Technology, 11 a.m. at the West Springfield District community room <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/swat-tools-tactics-and-technology-tickets-15374108372>

'She Started Shoving Me'

Kathy Smith assaulted while campaigning; woman arrested.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Add political campaigning to the list of things that can be hazardous to one's health. At least that's what Fairfax County Board of Supervisors hopeful Kathy Smith found out last Saturday.

"I'm OK," she said afterward. "But it was a scary situation." So scary, in fact, that a local woman was arrested and charged with assaulting her and preventing her from making a 911 call.

Smith, the Sully District's representative on the School Board since 2002, is running to replace the district's current supervisor, Michael Frey, who plans to retire. A Democrat, she's vying against Republican John Guevara for the seat.

So Saturday afternoon, July 11, around 12:30 p.m., she was out knocking on doors on Misty Creek Lane in the Century Oaks community. She'd been talking with residents in that neighborhood for about four days and had been there some 90 minutes on Saturday when the alleged incident occurred.

"I saw a woman doing yardwork near her front porch and I didn't want to startle her, so I yelled out, 'Hi, I'm Kathy Smith, running for the Board of Supervisors,'" she said. "And as soon as she heard who I was, she got very angry and started talking about the 2008 boundary change. She was upset because she ended up with one child at Chantilly High and one child at Oakton High."

Smith wasn't surprised about the woman's feelings because, she said, it was a divisive issue and some people still tell her how angry they are about it. But words are fine, she said.

"It's OK for somebody to tell me they're upset about a decision or to slam a door in my face," she said. "You expect this when you're an elected official." But what happened Saturday was different. "It was surreal," said Smith. "This is my fifth campaign — four times for School Board and once for supervisor — and nothing like this ever happened before."

In light of the woman's attitude, Smith immedi-

ately decided to leave when the resident began walking toward her. "In my hands, I had a clipboard, pen and [candidate-information] grip cards," she said. "I was starting to walk down the driveway and, the next thing I knew, she grabbed my clipboard and threw it down on the driveway."

While doing so, said Smith, the woman continued to vent her anger at her about the boundary change. So the candidate went to pick up her clipboard, pen and cards but, she said, the woman wouldn't let her. Instead, said Smith, "She put her hands on my shoulders and started shoving me backwards. Then she started grabbing at my sunglasses, but I was able to turn my head and take them off so she couldn't get them."

"At some point, I told her, 'It's OK for you to disagree with me, but you can't touch me,'" said Smith. "There was a tree and I balanced myself up against it and said, 'Help, help me, help.' I told her, 'You need to stop touching me, or I'm going to call the police.'"

Smith was able to take out her cell phone; but, she said, the woman "grabbed it and threw it about 10 feet across the lawn. I was still yelling 'Help' and, luckily, a woman driving by stopped and asked what was happening. I told her this woman was attacking me, and she waited while I picked up my stuff."

Smith then went to her car, across the street and about five houses away, and called the police. "I was thankful the woman drove by," she said. Asked if she feared for her safety, Smith said, "I wasn't frightened until she started shoving me; I was afraid she wasn't going to stop."

Afterward, she said, her chest felt tight and her shoulder was hurting, so the police called an ambulance and the paramedics checked her vital signs before she returned home. And Sunday afternoon, undaunted, she hit the campaign trail again.

"Mostly, people are good," said Smith, before heading out. "And people who disagree with me don't usually make me feel in danger. If people don't want to engage with me, I just back away."

So far, she said, she's received a positive response from the residents she's met while campaigning. But she's not taking any chances. "One of my sons is going to walk with me today," said Smith. "I'm going to get back out and meet voters because people do appreciate it when you talk with them. I think I'll just take a companion with me from now on."



Kathy Smith

Commendation for 'Job Well Done'

APO Tony Gul is honored as Officer of the Month.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Auxiliary Police Officer Tauheed ("Tony") Gul was recently honored as the Sully District Police Station's Citizens Advisory Committee Officer of the Month. And in the letter nominating him, his supervisor, Lt. Tim Burgess, explained why.

"APO Gul has demonstrated strong teamwork traits, contributing significantly to community activities in the Sully District," wrote Burgess. "He volunteered 298 hours of time in 2014, including events like



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS

Police Lt. Matt Owens (left), the Sully District Station's assistant commander, presents the Officer of the Month award to APO Tony Gul.

SEE GUL HONORED, PAGE 3

Music, Laughter and a Flying Car

Alliance Theatre presents "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang."

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

When eccentric inventor Caractacus Potts rescues an old race car from a junk heap, he decides to restore it with his children's help. Little does he know then that it has the magical ability to fly and float. And once word gets out, an evil baron tries to get the car for himself.

That's the premise of the Alliance Theatre's upcoming musical, "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang." Set in early 1900s England, it's based on the children's book written by Ian Fleming and later turned into a movie. The cast and crew of 60 has been rehearsing since May, and local theater legend Elaine Wilson, the director, says things are "going beautifully."

Wilson founded Chantilly High School's theater department and taught drama there for 30 years before co-founding Alliance. And the show's music director, Glenn Cockrell, was the school's choral director for 26 years before retiring in 2012. Rounding out the production staff are choreographer Annie Ermlick, producer Maggie Swan and assistant director Barbara Carpenter.

Showtimes are Friday-Saturday, July 24-25 and July 31-Aug. 1, plus Thursday, July 30, at 7:30 p.m. Matinees are Sunday, July 26 and Aug. 2, at 2 p.m., at Chantilly High. Tickets are \$16 via www.TheAllianceTheatre.org or call 703-220-8101.

"Ian Fleming was a spy in Washington during WWII and loved creativity, inventing, technical knowledge and inspiration," said Wilson. "And every main character in the show has these attributes, too. It's a wonderful cast and they all love what they're doing and have great enthusiasm. Each person is making their role their own to make it stand out and be unique."

The scenes take place at the Grand Prix, a candy factory, a carnival, in the English countryside and in Vulgaria, a country ruled



From left: Lourdes Navarro, Mike Baker Jr. and Steven Labovitch sing a song from the show.

by the baron and his wife, the baroness. And the children in the ensemble are in eight scenes, portraying everything from puppets to clowns, trees, orphans and candy-factory employees.

It's the first time this show has been produced in the local area. In fact, said Wilson, "This play is so new for amateurs that there are only three cars available for it that we could find. Ours comes from California."

She said the audience will love the "inventiveness behind how we go to all those places on the stage. We think this show is rather more fun than the movie, and the story, itself, has a lot of love, tension and an intricate plot. The script is very well-written and exciting, and the dancing is amazing."

Rich Amada plays Caractacus Potts, a widower desperately trying to make one of his inventions a winner so he can support his two children. "He initially buys the car as a plaything for them, but then revamps it into a working automobile," said Amada. "He's forever hopeful and optimistic, despite his many setbacks. He loves his children and would do anything to make them happy."

Amada likes playing Potts because "he's so eccentric. He also has a love story, plus an adventure, when Grandpa is kidnapped to Vulgaria and they have to go rescue him in their car." His favorite song is "You Two," which he sings to the children at the beginning of the show. Said Amada; "They join

in, and it establishes our close relationship and how the three of us are a team."

He said the audience will be impressed that "we're putting on such an ambitious production. There's a large cast, with lots of children and special effects. People will also enjoy the music score, and almost everyone will be able to hum along with the title song. This show has some nice moments, with humor for both children and adults. It's a family show, but will also let adults relive parts of their childhood. And, honestly, who hasn't wanted a flying car?"

Playing Potts's son, Jeremy, is Steven Labovitch, 11, of Oak Hill. "He just wants to hang out and follow along with whatever's happening," said Steven. "He can be outgoing, but calm. He has a fun energy without being crazy-wild about everything." Steven was "thrilled to get this role; I thought I'd be cast into the ensemble. I'm enjoying playing Jeremy because he has a good personality and is sweet, kind, gentle and generous."

He especially likes the "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" theme because it's so catchy. "It makes me feel happy and it's a fun song to sing," he said. "Most of the audience has probably seen the movie, so they'll like seeing how we make the car fly. And in one number, we'll be using glow sticks, so it'll be a cool illusion to see."

McKensy Struzik portrays the wealthy Truly Scrumptious, whose father owns the

town candy factory. "She's a sweet, caring woman, but not afraid to express her opinion — even though women didn't have much of a voice then. She's more independent and doesn't let her wealth and social standing get in the way of her love for Potts. She finds him quirky, creative and different from the men she knows. But she questions his carefree parenting style and the lack of structure in his children's lives."

Struzik grew up watching this movie and singing the songs so, she said, "This is a blast for me to play this woman I loved when I saw her on film. It's going to be lots of fun and I'm super excited." Her favorite song is "Truly Scrumptious," which she and the children sing together. "It's catchy and is the only moment in the show where Truly's alone with the two kids, and it's a special bonding moment with them."

She said people will love seeing the car transform and do its wizardry. "In some scenes, it'll upstage us," said Struzik. "The music is fun and upbeat, and the audience will like seeing the story come to life. And since this show's not performed often, it'll be new and exciting."

Playing Boris, a hapless spy from Vulgaria, is veteran Alliance Theatre actor Mike Cash. "His mission is to get this magical car," said Cash. "So he and his sidekick Goran [Spencer Boyd] pretend to be English by acting English. But Boris isn't nearly as smart as he thinks. He's frequently wrong, but seldom in doubt."

Cash said it's wonderful playing this part. "I get to speak in an accent, but act English and debonair," he said. "There's a lot of physical comedy." He also loves singing and dancing with Boyd in the number, "Act English." In it, said Cash, "We have a license to be foolish."

He said the audience will enjoy the performances of both Potts children, whom he called "adorable and talented." (Lourdes Navarro plays the daughter). And, added Cash, "As the baroness, Cathy Arnold has the perfect amount of swagger and Cruella de Vil. She's a comedic genius — and what a voice! Overall, this show is loaded with two-level humor; there's silly stuff for the kids and double entendres that'll make the adults laugh."

APO Tony Gul Is Honored as Officer of the Month

FROM PAGE 2

Touch a Truck, DWI checkpoints and patrols."

Burgess also noted two, particular events that year during which Gul dedicated his personal time to assist fellow officers and the community. The first one involved a bicycle safety day where the Sully District Station collaborated with the Chantilly Walmart to promote bicycle safety. Gul obtained vehicles, attached trailers, loaded equipment and served the people who visited the police department's display.

During the second one, he helped with the Boy Scouts Bicycle Rodeo and volunteered more than six hours of his day load-

ing an equipment trailer, setting up cones and assisting with bike cone courses.

"Gul has continued to play an invaluable role in 2015 by continuing to assist the Crime Prevention Office with presentations and events," wrote Burgess. "He's consistently been the first to respond to the needs of the Crime Prevention office, often forfeiting evenings with his family to help support the department's mission. This support includes educational talks and police-friendly activities with local Scouts and businesses."

Burgess further noted that, any time a last-minute event has been scheduled, Gul has stepped up and done what he could to

lend a hand. And in April, Gul also took the opportunity to attend Home Security Survey Training. As a result, he now has the knowledge to better understand crime prevention and to provide Fairfax County residents with security surveys for their homes.

"Much of the work that auxiliary police officers like Gul complete can be easily overlooked because [these officers] blend in with police squads to help enforce the law, complete special missions such as security or traffic control, and serve the community during special events," wrote Burgess. "An appreciation for our APO's is further realized due to the expectations placed on these officers. These expecta-

tions include: Remaining a member of the auxiliary program, completing the Fairfax County Auxiliary Police Academy, [fulfilling] continuing education requirements in order to remain sworn, qualifying at our firearms range on an annual basis, VCIN and CPR certifications, and a minimum volunteer requirement of 288 hours annually."

"APO Tony Gul's efforts are greatly appreciated," continued Burgess. "I commend him for a job well done and proudly nominate him for the Citizens Advisory Committee Award. The Fairfax County Police Department and the Sully District Station are grateful for his efforts and sacrifice in the service of our citizens."



Michael Ducharme of Decoding Dyslexia applauds the new Strategic Plan for Fairfax County Public Schools for specifically addressing challenges for students with dyslexia.



Steven L. Greenburg, president of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, voices his support for the new Strategic Plan being voted on by the School Board.



Pat Hynes accepts the gavel from Tammy Derenak Kaufax and begins her term as school board chairman.



Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Karen Garza comments on the new Strategic Plan during the school board's July 9 regular meeting.

A Beginning, Not an End

School Board approves "Ignite" Strategic Plan, new chairman and vice chairman.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Citizen Michael Ducharme has lived with dyslexia since he was a student. His two daughters both have dyslexia. The father, representing the parents' movement Decoding Dyslexia, spoke at the July 9 school board meeting in support of the proposed Fairfax County Public Schools Strategic Plan that specifically addresses challenges in the schools facing students with dyslexia.

"We're now faced with the fact tomorrow is today, the fierce urgency of now," Ducharme said. "It's time for vigorous and positive action in this plan."

The plan, which the board approved on Thursday night, is a long-term strategic document with four main objectives of student success, caring culture, premier workforce and resource stewardship. It was developed with input and feedback from over 30,000 "stakeholders," according to Fairfax County Public Schools.

"Our growing and vibrant school system is now the 10th largest district in the United States, and having a clear plan and focus is critical to meet the needs of every child and deliver our Portrait of Graduate," Superintendent Dr. Karen Garza said in a statement. "Ignite is about energy — it is about expending the time and effort on the actions necessary to close achievement gaps, support our teachers, provide resources to our schools and help our students succeed in life."

According to the release from Fairfax County Public Schools, some of the specific areas for attention and priorities highlighted in the plan include:

- ❖ Developing a more holistic approach to education by addressing students' social and emotional needs
- ❖ Eliminating achievement gaps
- ❖ Helping students develop real-world skills
- ❖ Creating a balanced assessment framework as a way to decrease instructional emphasis on test preparation
- ❖ Increasing instructional time available to prepare students for success along with more providing more equitable access to



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The school board voted unanimously to approve Pat Hynes (Hunter Mill) as the next board chairman.

resources, especially technology

- ❖ Hiring and retaining high quality teachers
- ❖ Confronting budget issues that have led to the elimination of educational programming and employee positions.

The board voted 11 to 1 in favor of the plan, with Springfield representative Elizabeth Schultz as the only dissenting opinion.

"I feel like it sort of became a Mr. Potato Head: you have all the parts, but you're not sure what it's going to look like at the end," she said. "The biggest concern I have is not specifically identifying what the known challenges are, or perceived challenges are, with changing demographics, growing student population, types of education our students are needing ... the nexus of all of these I think we just didn't get to in this document."

Dranesville representative Jane Strauss said the nature of the plan is that it's built to grow and change. "The Strategic Plan is really a beginning, it's not an end," she said, "an evolving plan, not set in stone. It lays out and solidifies our belief in the direction we need to go. It gives us a roadmap for-

ward but does not create guardrails that are so high we cannot make adjustments."

Providence representative Patty Reed supported the plan and asked there be "detailed discussions on how do we actually use the document."

"How do we use it to make budget decisions?" Reed asked. "Everything in here obviously has been well thought out ... But we all know our budget realities. How can this document help us make some tough decisions."

Garza, speaking on the plan, said, "I would urge this board: Let's adopt this plan, move forward, spend time perfecting it over time. Otherwise we'll continue to spin."

The plan calls for a quarterly status report to be filed, with a school board reassessment scheduled for June to make and updates or adjustments.

THE BOARD ALSO VOTED on a new chairman and vice chairman to replace Tammy Derenak Kaufax and Ted Velkoff, respectively, for one-year terms.

In her outgoing remarks, Derenak Kaufax used candy to sum up some of her experiences with the board and its work going

forward.

"We've had our Hot Tamales moments, a few Circus Peanuts moments," she said, "Mostly we're a group of dedicated Smarties passionate about our desire to educate the next generation. To do so effectively, we must be funded properly, so we're always on the hunt for that extra 100 Grand, or million."

Pat Hynes was nominated as the only candidate for chairman and subsequently voted through.

Board members spoke highly of Hynes' nine years as an elementary school teacher in Fairfax County Public Schools as well as her law background.

"I think the combination of your lawyerly skills and your very recent and constant view from the classroom to be very important to this board," said Strauss.

Mason representative Sandy Evans said Hynes "has been a very thoughtful member of our board as well as a very candid one."

Schultz offered her criticism that she would've liked to see more competition for the position, rather than a decision being made prior to the meeting. I think it's healthy for us as an organization," she said. But she didn't withhold her support for Hynes, saying the candidate is "going to get a cautious yes from me ... the proof will be in the pudding."

After receiving the gavel from now former-chairman Derenak Kaufax, Hynes said, "The job of the chairman and vice chairman is to protect the process for everyone. Collaboration is an important skill and I will be relearning it this year and looking forward to it."

Velkoff nominated Sandy Evans for the vice chairman position. Evans also ran unopposed and also carried the vote.

"I would say she played a critical role in a couple of the signature accomplishments of this board," said Velkoff, including "reform of discipline process, later high school start times."

"The key trait," Velkoff added, "is willingness to compromise."

For more information on the "Ignite" Strategic Plan, visit the Fairfax County Public Schools website www.fcps.edu/news/strategic.shtml.

Scholarships

Mountain View High School Foundation awarded nearly \$50,000 in scholarships to the school's June graduates. Above are foundation donors and student fellows.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARK SMITH

SCHOOL NOTES

Email announcements to chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos are welcome.

Ryan Branch has been honored a gold star by The Citadel (Charleston, S.C.).

Westfield High School students, **John Pace** and **Rachel Dougherty** won the Northern Virginia Electric Co-operative (NOVEC) High School Scholarship.

Emily Elizabeth Hargreaves has earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from St. Mary's College of Maryland (St. Mary's City, Md.).

BUSINESS NOTES

Email announcements to chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com.

The Long & Foster Companies, based in Chantilly, was ranked among the top brokerages in the nation based on total closed sales volume in 2014. The ranking was published in the latest REAL Trends 500, an annual ranking of top real estate brokerages, distributed by REAL Trends, Inc., a leading source of statistical analysis for the residential real estate industry.

Sheehy Auto Stores has announced the acquisition and opening of Sheehy Infiniti of Chantilly at 4145 Auto Park Circle. The 26,220 square-foot facility is located in the Chantilly Auto Park and has 14 service bays and a large customer waiting area. Sheehy plans to

retain the 60 employees from the previous ownership group, and is looking to hire additional personnel.

Fair Oaks Mall is welcoming new shopping and dining options, and has completed construction on larger locations for several popular stores. In April clothing-retailer **Hanna Andersson**, and **BRIO Tuscan Grille** opened. **Bebe**, **Helzberg Diamonds** and **Johnston & Murphy** will open expanded locations.

HomeAid Northern Virginia, which works to find living options for homeless people in Northern Virginia, has announced the launch of **Women Giving Back**, a 501(c)3 nonprofit charity, focusing on distributing clothing to women and children in crisis.



Renovations

The Chantilly National Golf and Country Club's newly renovated spaces features a resort-style Olympic pool with cabanas and bar seating, new tennis courts and decks, new golf tee amenities and re-leveled and sodded courses, outdoor patio overlooking the golf course, as well as a new bar and lounge, and private event space.

Opening December 2015

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The Crossings at Chantilly is the area's newest state-of-the-art Senior Living Community with priority access to skilled care on site. The Crossings offers a full continuum of care on one campus. Other amenities include farm-to-table cuisine, social and wellness support, recreational programs, a chapel, concierge service, beautiful outdoor living areas and more.

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Cannot be combined with any other offer. Limit one per order per visit. Expires 07/31/15

www.PotomacPastriesVA.com

Backpacks for All

Thousands of students will begin school this fall at a disadvantage; help now so they have the basics.

The first day of school each year is fraught with anticipation and anxiety. Many local students will be concerned about what they wear, who they will see, what it will be like. They've already had multiple shopping trips, online and otherwise, to be sure they have the supplies and extras they need.

We live in an area where many if not most families have the means and desire to do almost whatever it takes to give their children the best chances for success.

But for thousands of students, families lack the financial resources to equip them for success on the first day of school and beyond.

In our affluent area, there are many poor families.

In Fairfax County Public Schools, more than 27 percent of more than 184,000 students are poor enough to qualify for subsidized meals. That's more than 50,000 children in Fairfax County who are going through the summer without their usual access to breakfast and lunch. For many of those children, having a fully equipped backpack on the first day of school is out of reach.

In the City of Alexandria, about 60 percent of the Alexandria Public Schools students are poor enough to qualify for subsidized meals. That's more than 8,000 of the city's 13,000-plus students.

In Arlington, more than 32 percent of the county's 23,000-plus students are poor enough to receive subsidized meals; more than 7,000 students.

EDITORIAL Help these students get started on the right foot by contributing to one of the many local backpack drives.

Virginia sales tax holiday for school supplies and clothing is Aug. 7-9. Purchases of certain school supplies, clothing and footwear are exempt from the Virginia sales tax. Each eligible school supply item must be priced at \$20 or less, and each eligible article of clothing and footwear must be priced at \$100 or less. See <http://www.tax.virginia.gov/content/school-supplies-and-clothing-holiday>.

This is a good place to start, but these students need more than backpacks. In this area, we need to address the impacts of income inequality in the schools. If we succeed in effectively educating these students, the savings overall will be enormous. These students need protection from budget cuts in their classrooms. They need help addressing inequality in the face of "bring your own device policies," and other technology needs.

Here are a few ways to give:

❖ **Fairfax County Collect for Kids** is a public private partnership that provides local children from economically challenged fami-

lies with the school supplies they need to begin the school year, and has provided 90,000 supply kits and backpacks in its first three years. They seek donations of cash, backpacks donated by citizens and calculators donated by businesses. Contact Jay Garant in Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Business and Community Partnerships at 571-423-1225 jay.garant@fcps.edu or Sherry Noud SMNoud@fcps.edu 571-423-4300, Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Social Work Services.

Visit collectforkids.org/resources/

❖ **OUR DAILY BREAD** Collect for Kids Back to School program runs each summer in partnership with with Collect for Kids in a county-wide effort to ensure that the neediest children in our community receive the supplies they need to succeed in school. The program is made possible through a partnership with Kids R First, Fairfax County Public Schools, the Fairfax County Office of Public and Private Partnerships, Apple Federal Credit Union and numerous community-based organizations and businesses in the Fairfax County area who are working together to provide supplies in a more cost-effective and efficient way.

Contact Dawn Sykes at 703-273-8829.

— MARY KIMM.

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Redistricting Matters

To the Editor:

Thank you for your insightful editorial headlining support for nonpartisan redistricting ("Yes to Nonpartisan Redistricting," July 9). The League of Women Voters of Virginia has been advocating for a nonpartisan redistricting commission for at least ten years, ever since the last round in 2011 of slicing and dicing up the voting districts so that legislators can choose their voters.

It is difficult to get voters energized enough about this to urge their legislators to give up any power. It is also a fairly complicated concept that comes up only every 10 years.

However, we feel the current process is a serious challenge to our democracy. As you pointed out, a huge number of Virginians are not being fairly represented, especially in northern urban areas. Communities have been cut into multiple pieces with little in common with Virginians miles away. Voters have become disengaged and don't bother to vote.

Yes, gerrymandering has gone on for centuries and apparently was even invented in Virginia, in spite of its name. But the latest line-drawing technology has taken the process to new "lows." Look at a map of the congressional and legislative districts to see what has been done to your voting rights.

The League has many resources for becoming informed and for advocating with your legislators, plus copies of the maps mentioned above, on our website. Go to <http://lwv-va.org/redistricting.html>.

Another good source of information is a coalition called OneVirginia2021

(onevirginia2021.org) that is gathering support across the state.

It may take a constitutional amendment to effect change. Action must begin now or we will be stuck with the same lopsided, polarized representation through 2030. We urge concerned citizens to join us in this effort.

Lois Page and Dianne Blais

Co-presidents, League of Women Voters of Virginia
president@lwv-va.org

Costs of Not Expanding Medicaid

To the Editor:

The concern expressed in the letter regarding Medicaid Expansion in Virginia ("How to Pay for Medicaid Expansion?," Connection, June 24-30) focused on the question of "how to pay for it" and that those favoring expansion "do not discuss cost specifics."

The writer would have readers believe that we in Virginia have not already paid for Medicaid expansion with our tax dollars, Virginia tax dollars that are now going to other states, states that have expanded Medicaid; and some of those states are led by Republican governors that have favored Medicaid expansion because they saw it as a good deal financially as well as a reasonable way of making healthcare accessible to so many of their working poor — 400,000 in Virginia would benefit from the expansion.

With respect to the writer's fiscal concerns, that issue has been addressed multiple times by The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

and The Commonwealth Institute. The conclusion, which is documented by the numbers cited in the various reports, is this: "Medicaid Expansion is Producing Large Gains in Health Care and Saving States Money."

The letter-writer's fiscal concerns have already been essentially addressed, but opponents have apparently already made up their minds and have manifested little interest in the documentation provided. This documentation has been cited numerous times, and it is not reasonable to assume that Del. Ken Plum, a delegate re-elected multiple times that takes seriously his fiduciary responsibilities, and other legislators in solidarity with him have not looked at the numbers before advocating for the expansion of Medicaid.

Dr. Paul Krugman, an economics professor at Princeton and the winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2008, recently asked this question: "But why would any state choose to exercise that option (not expand Medicaid)? After all, states were being offered a federally-funded program (a program already paid for by taxpayers) that would provide major benefits to millions of their citizens, pour billions into their economies, and help support their health-care providers. Who would turn down such an offer?"

It is the same question many of us in Virginia have been asking and have not received any satisfying answers from the Republican legislators that dominate the Virginia House and Senate.

John Horejsi (and SALT's 1,200 advocates)
SALT Coordinator
Vienna

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Enforce Rules On Deadly Force

To the Editor:

How long will Fairfax County residents put up with death-dealing cops in their midst? How many unarmed law-abiding citizens must die at the hands of a police force that is supposed to be protecting them? When are the residents of Fairfax County going to take the necessary steps to protect themselves?

Not all the police officers in Fairfax County are bad. Many, perhaps most, join the force out of a genuine desire to serve their community. But the number who are ready to shoot first and ask questions later is shocking. The propensity of officers in Fairfax County to draw their weapon in any and all circumstances, and to use them, speaks to extremely poor training and a belief, based on precedent, that their superiors will protect them no matter what they do. In the 75-year history of Fairfax County, no police officer has ever been prosecuted for causing a wrongful death.

If you don't keep up with the news, you may not have noticed the terrible record of Fairfax County. It is not just in Baltimore or Ferguson that unarmed people are being killed, it is right here in Fairfax County. Fatal police shootings have averaged 3 per year since 1995 for a total of 60 unjustified deaths in 20 years. None of them necessary.

And not all the deaths have been shootings. Earlier this year, Natasha McKenna, a black woman in the custody of the Fairfax County's Sheriff, was Tasered to death while restrained with handcuffs and leg shackles. The corrections officer responsible for this heinous act has yet to be called to account and probably never will be. Is this the justice we want?

The roll-call of recent unjustified police shootings in Fairfax County is formidable. All of them have been reported on multiple times: Dr. Salvatore Culosi, 2006; Randall Rollins, 2007; Hailu Brook, 2008; David Masters, my son, 2009; Nicholas Kaebler, 2012; John Geer, 2013; James Bryant, 2013. None of these citizens was involved in an unlawful activity. All were unarmed. Why were they killed?

The General Order that now exists in the Fairfax County Police Department is unambiguously clear on the use of deadly force: "Any use of deadly force which is not reasonably necessary in view of the circumstances is prohibited," and "The use of deadly force shall be based on the officer's belief that a threat of death or serious injury to a person exists."

Clearly the police-involved deaths cited previously were in violation of the Police Department's General Order. None of the victims were armed. None threatened an officer. The problem is that the County Attorney has never enforced the order. The closest he has come in the past five years, was to fire the police officer who shot my son in the back while he was sitting in his car at a stop sign. Meanwhile, Fairfax County officials continue to protect their police officers from prosecution or any other form of liability, and there are no indications they are going to change.

For years, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has steadfastly refused to take any actions that would reasonably mitigate the problem. Numerous individuals and organizations have spent thousands of hours advocating the appointment of an independent Citizens Police Review Board to examine police conduct in Fairfax County. These efforts have been ignored for over five years. Now, the chairman of the County Board of Supervisors, Sharon Bulova, has retreated into the last refuge of the bureaucrat; she has appointed a committee to study the problem. There are some 30 people or so on this so-called public commission, heavily weighted with representatives of law enforcement, not independent citizens. I predict they will meet occasionally and get nothing done as their last meeting has indicated.

The Virginia Freedom of Information Act (VFOIA) is used by Fairfax County to suppress access to any information about police conduct. The VFOIA requires reasonable and prompt access to all the records of public bodies including police records. Para. 2.2-3706 B of the Act clearly states: "Law-enforcement agencies shall make available on request criminal incident information relating to felony offenses [unless] such release is likely to jeopardize an ongoing investigation or prosecution, cause a suspect to flee, or result in the destruction of evidence. However, there is another subparagraph in the VFOIA that provides a loophole for law enforcement agencies determined to withhold information from the public. Para .2.2-3706 F covers exceptions, and states: "Criminal investigative files, as defined in subsection A, are excluded from the provisions of this chapter, but may be disclosed by the custodian, in his discretion, except where the disclosure is prohibited by law." This has been interpreted by Fairfax County to authorize refusal to release the information they don't want to release.

Clearly some changes must be made: the General Order on the use of deadly force must be enforced by the County Attorney and violators punished; County Chairman Sharon Bulova's time-wasting 30-person Study Commission must be disbanded and an independent Citizens Police Review Board of five to six members must be appointed (we understand the problems, we need solutions); and Fairfax County must follow the VFOIA requirements for the re-

lease of information except in certain well-defined and limited circumstances. If these changes are not made promptly, the next step must be to elect new people to replace the principal miscreants: County Chairman Sharon Bulova, and Commonwealth Attorney Raymond Morrogh.

Barrie P. Masters, Col. USA, Ret.

A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

To the Editor:

A few weeks ago the House passed HR 2042, the Ratepayer Protection Act. Sounds great, right? Wrong. The Ratepayer Protection Act is a wolf in sheep's clothing and attacks EPA's ability to curb climate change. Specifically, the Act goes after the Clean Power Plan, set to be finalized this summer, which would require states submit carbon reduction plans to the EPA.

Carbon pollution is a serious health threat to all Americans, but especially to those with chronic lung disease like asthma. Carbon emissions fuel climate change, and as temperatures rise so does the risk of experiencing unsafe levels of ozone pollution in the air we breathe. Ozone kills and as someone who has had asthma since childhood I am concerned for the nearly 24,000 children with asthma who live in the county.

Exposure to unhealthy levels of ozone is linked to worsened asthma, increased risk of hospitalization and even premature death. Have you ever seen a child have an asthma attack? Have you ever been forced to watch as their lips tinge blue and panic sets in as they fight to get in a full breath of air but can't? It's something I've experienced firsthand; no child should have to suffer in that way.

That's why I'm disappointed that U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock voted in support of the Ratepayer Protection Act. Fairfax County received an F for ozone pollution according to the American Lung Association's 2015 State of the Air Report. Is the representative OK with that? Her vote sure implies as much.

Jennifer Kaufer

The American Lung Association in
Virginia
Fairfax

Troop Honors New Eagle Scouts

Troop 30 of Centreville honored Devlin McDonnell and Colton Sorrells who achieved the rank of Eagle Scout in an awards ceremony on June 28. Devlin, who just graduated from Westfield High School, and Colton, a rising senior at Westfield, were both recognized for their achievements and leadership in the ceremony at the troop's chartered organization, Centreville Presbyterian Church.

Devlin earned 24 merit badges and for his Eagle Scout Service Project led a team of 14 workers through 125 hours of effort building 40 linear feet of elevated shelves for the Westfield High School band room to display their trophies that were accumulating on the floor. His project also fixed 20

instrument storage lockers and shelves so personal and county musical instruments could be securely stored.

Devlin's Eagle award was pinned on by his father Eric who is the Troop 30 Scoutmaster. Colton also earned 24 merit badges and for his Eagle Scout Service Project led a team of 27 workers through 120 hours of effort restoring a 100-yard long nature trail at Fairfax County's Cub Run RECenter in Chantilly which was prone to flooding and being washed out, making it nearly impassable. His leadership resulted in a new drainage system that redirected damaging water runoff and his team raised and mulched the trail. His efforts were applauded by RECenter officials and those who use this recreational trail.

CRIME REPORT

The following incidents were reported by the Fair Oaks District Police Station.

BURGLARY, 3000 block of Saint Regents Drive, July 2. A resident reported someone entered the residence and took property.

PEEPING, 13000 block of Autumn Woods Way, June 29, around 3 a.m. The victim was asleep and awoke to a man looking into the window of the apartment. The suspect fled prior to police arrival.

BURGLARY WITH APPREHENSION, 11000 block of Cortez Court, June 27. A resident reported someone entered the residence and took property. Officers were able to locate the suspect and arrested him. A 46-year-old Reston man was charged with burglary and grand larceny.

UNLAWFUL ENTRY, 13100 block of New Parkland Drive, June 25, 9:31 p.m. An employee reported an unknown person entered the community pool. Nothing was taken.

ROBBERY, Saintsbury Drive/Five Oaks Road, June 25 around 11:30 p.m. The victim was walking and was approached by two men. The suspect assaulted the victim, took property and fled. The victim did not require medical attention.

BURGLARY, 11000 block of Cortez Court, June 24. A resident reported someone entered the residence and took property.

LARCENIES
9600 block of Courthouse Road, license plates from vehicle.

11700 block of Fair Oaks Shopping Center, merchandise from business.

10100 block of Oakwood Chase Court, laptop computer from vehicle

3000 block of Sugar Lane, property from vehicle

4700 block of West Ox Road, merchandise from business.

13800 block of Metrotech Drive, merchandise from business.

3300 block of Willow Crescent Drive, equipment from vehicle.

11700 block of Fair Oaks Shopping Center, merchandise from business.

13800 block of Jefferson Park Drive, phone from business.

3600 block of Joseph Siewick Drive, cash from residence.

13000 block of Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, beverage from business.

11200 block of Waples Mill Road, property from residence.

13500 block of Hollinger Avenue, phone from school.

11400 block of South Lakes Drive, phone from school.

11900 block of Fair Oaks Shopping Center, merchandise from business.

13800 block of Metrotech Drive, tools from vehicle.

2600 block of Centreville Road, property from residence.

13000 block of Fair Lakes Shopping Center, purse from business.

4500 block of Market Commons Drive, merchandise from business.

13900 block of Metrotech Drive, beverage from business.



New Eagle Scouts Devlin McDonnell (left) and Colton Sorrells

Colton's Eagle award was pinned on by his father Michael who is a merit badge counselor for the troop. Troop 30 pulls Scouts primarily from Centreville and Chantilly.

SPORTS

Centreville Grad Newell To Play Lacrosse at JMU

Reagan Newell received the 6A North region's top offensive honor in 2015. In her fourth season as a member of the Centreville girls' varsity lacrosse team, Newell totaled 96 goals and 51 assists, earning region Offensive Player of the Year honors along the way.

Newell, who was also a US Lacrosse All-American, teamed with her cousin, Under Armour All-American Caroline Wakefield, to lead Centreville to a 15-4 record and a trip to the state semifinals.

Newell, a 2015 Centreville High School graduate, will continue her lacrosse career at James Madison University.

The Dukes compete at the Division I level in the Colonial Athletic Association.

Newell recently participated in a Q&A via email.

Q: You'll be playing lacrosse at James Madison University next season. What made JMU the right choice for you?

Newell: I chose JMU because it felt like the perfect fit. JMU has great academics, along with a top-notch lacrosse program. The campus is awesome and it's not too far away from home so my family can watch me play.

Q: What position(s) will you play?



FILE PHOTO

Newell: I will play attack.

Q: What are you most looking forward to about going to college?

Newell: I'm looking forward to competing with a lot of talented girls and I'm also looking forward to being challenged.

Q: At what age did you start playing lacrosse?

Newell: I started playing lacrosse when I was 7.

Q: When did you realize playing college lacrosse was an option for you?

Newell: In about sixth grade I realized I wanted to play in college.

Q: What is your favorite memory of playing lacrosse at Centreville?

Newell: My favorite memory would be

beating Oakton my freshman year by one goal playing three men down. Also, getting to play with my cousin for all four years.

Q: Your cousin Caroline Wakefield was also a standout on the Centreville varsity. How would you describe your chemistry on the field?

Newell: Well, I've actually never been on a sports team without her, so our chemistry has been building forever. She knows all of my moves and I know all of hers. If I make a cut I know she is going to get me the ball no matter what. It's kinda scary how well we know each other.

Q: Do you have a specific game day routine?

Newell: Yes, every game day I take a nap

right after school and eat Subway before the game. I also drink my "special" drink right before the game.

Q: What is in your "special" drink?

Newell: It's powder you put in water that has vitamins. It helps me get focused and hydrated.

Q: Looking back, if you could change one thing about your high school lacrosse career, what would it be?

Newell: If I could change one thing, it would be to have won a championship.

Q: You're sitting around playing a board game with family/friends. Do you play to have fun or play to win?

Newell: I play to win. I'm very competitive and like to win at anything I do.

Q: What do you like to do when you're not playing a sport?

Newell: I like to be with my friends/family and go to our lake house at Lake Anna.

Q: Are you a pro sports fan? Which team(s) do you root for?

Newell: I'm a huge Washington sports fan, so the Redskins, Caps, Nats, and Wizards.

Q: What location is the farthest you've traveled from the Washington, D.C metro area?

Newell: Cozumel, Mexico.

Q: What's your favorite food?

Newell: My favorite food is filet.

SWIM NOTES



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Pictured is the Virginia Run 11-12 boys' medley relay team (Jack Liskey, Andrew Boyle, Owen Thomas, Jason Cheifetz).

Riptide Swims By the Tsunami

The Virginia Run Riptide traveled to Riverside Gardens in the far southeastern corner of Fairfax County and neutralized the Tsunami, winning the meet 242-178.

The freestyle events were highly competitive with Charis Roundtree (8U), Charles Beamon (9-10), Caitlin Kelliher (9-10), Jacquelyn Hart (13-14) and Chloe Hicks (15-18) taking first place in their respective events. Megan Marco (8U), Conner Gary (9-10), Jason Cheifetz (11-12), Chelsea Nguyen (11-12), Charlie Gunn (13-14), and Nick McGrath (15-18) captured second place, while Ryder Hicks (8U), Maddie Whitton (11-12) and Brooke Guidash (15-18) swam for third.

The Tide led, 46-44 as the backstrokers pushed off. Rising to the challenge with first-place swims were Davis Collinsworth (8U), Cheris Roundtree (8U), Owen Thomas (11-12), Chelsea Nguyen (11-12), Anthony Arcomona (13-14), and Chloe Hicks (15-18). Victoria Davila (9-10), Catie Gun (11-12) and Nick McGrath (15-18) took seconds and those all-important third-place points were won by Ryder Hicks (8U), Ginny Fitch (8U), Jackson Blansett (9-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Run's Katie Conway, Catie Gunn, and Maddie Whitton swept the 11-12 girl's fly last weekend.

10), Isabella Cogan (9-10), Andrew Boyle (11-12), Charlie Gunn (13-14), Chanel Cogan (15-18) and Geoffrey Eisenhart (15-18).

With the lead expanded to 93-87, the breaststrokers moved to the starting blocks. First-place finishes were achieved by Lanny Zimmerman (8U), Isabella Cogan (9-10), Anthony Arcomona (13-14), Olivia Masterson (13-14), Leo Wang (15-18), and Mia Newkirk (15-18). Seven swimmers swam for second place including Andrew Newkirk (8U), Payton Kuhlman (8U), Nora Collinsworth (9-10), Jack Liskey (11-12), Gabriella Borsato (11-12), Jacquelyn Hart (13-14), and Patrick Kearney (15-18). Griffin Osterhout (9-10) and Alana Turflinger (11-12) won third place points.

As the butterfly competition began, the Riptide won eight of 10 races with Davis Collinsworth (8U), Megan Marco (8U), Sean Gunn (9-10), Caitlin Kelliher (9-10), Maddie Whitton (11-12), Olivia Masterson (13-14), Joey Castro (15-18) and Mia Newkirk (15-18) swimming to victories. Jack Liskey (11-12), Catie Gunn (11-12), William Beamon (13-14) and Patrick Kearney (15-18) placed second, while Laney Zimmerman (8U), Katie Conway (11-12), Harry Schlatter (13-14) and Alexa McAnally (15-18) placed third.

Moving into the relays, the Riptide had established a wider lead and victories by both the girls'

and boys' 8U free relays helped the team to close in on a win. With the crowd going hoarse from cheering, the 9-10 boys' medley relay of William Whitton, Griffin Osterhout, Sean Gunn and Charles Beamon won their race by .41 seconds and the 11-12 boys' medley relay of Owen Thomas, Jack Liskey, Andrew Boyle, and Jason Cheifetz won their race by a mere .03 seconds and the meet victory was assured. The medley relays for the 11-12 girls, 15-18 boys and 15-18 girls and the mixed age girls' free relay also claimed wins to finish a celebratory day.

Piranhas Split Relay Carnival Title

Over a stormy two days in Alexandria, the Sully Station II Piranhas waited patiently for their chance to earn the title of Division 9 Relay Carnival Champions. It was a frenzied finish as SS2 tied with Great Falls for first place and Fox Mill Estates finished in third only two points behind. The camaraderie inspired blazing fast swims and two team records in the mixed age relay (Angela Cai, Faith Alston, Karena Hall, and Caitlin Campbell) and the 9-10 girls' freestyle relay (Caroline Li, Callie Ver Planck, Hayley Norris, and Angela Cai). The squads both earned spots in the All-Star Relays on Wednesday, July 18.

The excitement carried over to the team's first home A meet of the season on July 11 against Highland Park. Spirits were high as the minions came to town and families enjoyed the senior skit in the diving well. Many races were remarkably close throughout the meet, but despite all valiant efforts in the pool SS2 ultimately fell 234-185.

Four Piranhas captured two individual victories each, including powerhouses Angela Cai and Caroline Li in the 9-10 girls' events, Madison Stalfort in 11-12 girls' freestyle and breaststroke, and Kellen Campbell in 13-14 boys' backstroke and butterfly. Joining them in victory were freestylers Emerson Saint Germain (20.34), Hannah Kang (20.96), Karena Hall (31.71), and Scott Baxter (26.38, out-touching his opponent by .02).

Anthony Kang handily won 11-12 boys' back-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Sully Station II Piranhas were crowned co-Division 9 Relay Carnival champions on July 9.

stroke in 39.84, followed by Brody Campbell's excellent personal best in 13-14 boys breaststroke (38.95). Rounding out the list of individual winners were fly specialists Delaney Kennedy (34.84, in a fingertip finish by .01) and Austen Bundy (28.54). Second- and third-place finishes were also turned in by Ehma Stalfort, Collin West, Carson Saint Germain, Dorothy Cervarich, Max Morris, Jack Jiang, Madisyn Gahan, Elijah Post, Caden Seng, Ethan Wilson, Callie Ver Planck, Jessica Han, Brantley Cervarich, Daeun Lee, Kelly Elson, Michael Jiang, Caitlin Campbell, Jason Li, Charles Tai, Harrison Saint Germain, and Georgia Stamper. Jacob Susko claimed third place in 11-12 boys' butterfly, but even more impressive was his 4.04 second time drop in the breaststroke event. Teammate Gabriel Quitagua dropped an incredible 6.06 seconds in backstroke and 14.59 seconds in butterfly. Other notable personal bests included 8&U freestylers AJ Sexton (-2.30) and Mark McLendon (-2.59), backstroker Caden Seng (-1.79), Elijah Post in both backstroke (-2.07) and butterfly (-1.98), and 10-year old Ethan Wilson in breaststroke (-2.10).

SS2 will host Great Falls in the last A meet of the season on July 18.

Uncheduling Summer Play

Experts praise the benefits of free play for children.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

What was once a time for catching fire flies, swimming and exploring has evolved into a period of elite day camps, academic enrichment classes and top-dollar sports clinics.

For many children, summer is packed with so many activities that it can hardly be called a break, say local educators, reminding parents of the benefits of unregulated play.

"Camps and activities are fine in moderation because children need structure," said Andrew Clarke, Ph.D., an Arlington-based child psychologist. "But allowing children to have free time during the summer is important for their self-confidence and overall well-being. ... Children can become enriched simply by being allowed to explore their own environments."

NOT ALL CHILDREN are naturally self-directed, but parents can provide minimal structure through which children can gain the benefits of unstructured free time.

For example, help children develop a list of potential activities that might interest them. This could assist children who have difficulty thinking of things to do on their own or who might be prone to saying "I'm bored" when faced with free time and no planned activities.

"I recommend giving kids suggestions of various activities and having them choose, said Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D., a child psychologist based in Bethesda, Md. "Sometimes it is helpful to make a list together with them and post it on the refrigerator or other prominent place."

Isenberg suggests including activities such as playing board games, reading books, hula hooping, kicking around a ball, blowing bubbles, doing mazes, puzzles or painting. "When it's time for a new activity, have them check out the list," she said.

It's especially beneficial if the activity won't require constant supervision. "Provide safe spaces for them to play in," said Joan L. Ehrlich, Ph.D., a coordinator in the Interpreter Services Office at Northern Virginia Community College. "If you know the space is safe, you can give them more leeway to play on their



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Art supplies and games that allow for creative play can be an important part of unstructured free time.

"Provide safe spaces for [children] to play in. If you know the space is safe, you can give them more leeway to play on their own."

— Joan L. Ehrlich, Ph.D., Northern Virginia Community College

own, and can pull back on the direct supervision."

PARENTS SHOULD ALSO SET boundaries and standards regarding acceptable and unacceptable activities, she continued. "When my kids were small, we had designated 'no screen' time. It was wonderful to hang back and watch them engage in a board game or card game. You would be amazed at what kids will choose to do when televisions, computers [and other electronics] are not an option. Nothing against those devices, but, let's face it, they can be addictive which makes it hard to compete with other healthy, educational options."

"All you need to do to facilitate unstructured downtime is to not over schedule them ... and provide an open-ended learning environment," added Gail Multop, an early childhood education professor at Northern Virginia Community College. She believes the tools for such play are simple: "Puzzles, books, an art table with supplies and time outdoors in nature."

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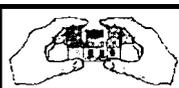
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"Scant" Know For Sure Anymore



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After six years, four months and two weeks since being diagnosed with stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer (the "terminal" kind), I can say with certainty that I have no sense of what my next CT scan, scheduled for July 15th, will indicate. Previously (multiple scans over multiple years), I've felt something in my upper chest/lungs where the largest tumors are located and the subsequent scan showed nothing of consequence. On other scan occasions, I've felt nothing of consequence in my chest and the scan showed tumor growth, enough to change my medication. On still other scan occasions, I have felt something in my chest (where the tumors are located), and sure enough the CT scan showed some growth. Finally, and conversely, on still other CT scans, I've felt nothing of consequence and there was no tumor activity of concern. As a result of these four contradictory indicators of possible growth/no growth, for the weeks, then days, leading up to my every-three-month CT scan, I never know what to think I feel any more than I know what to feel I think. Thirty or so scans into my cancer-controlled life, I'm still teetering emotionally before, during and after the computerized tomography. And though the actual scan itself takes less than a minute, the damage is done and can only be undone after we learn the results.

Which oddly enough presents another similarly juxtaposed problem. In the early years, during our post-scan "scanzxiety," waiting the week or so until our next face-to-face appointment with my oncologist to learn the results was unbearable, so usually I would call a day or two later and get a message to him or my oncology nurse, attempting to speed up a response. Typically, I would hear back sooner rather than later. Eventually, e-mail communication became part of the process, and after my scan was completed, I started e-mailing my oncologist directly, advising him of my status and asking for results.

Usually, the news was good. Occasionally the news was not. And though my oncologist would rather have delivered bad news in person, he certainly could appreciate how difficult it was for me/patients to wait, so he continued to e-mail. One time however, the post-scan e-mail he sent us was discouraging and said he would discuss it further at our next appointment, scheduled as usual within the week. When he saw us in person, he was surprisingly upbeat and immediately told us/apologized for having e-mailed us some incomplete information concerning my scan, and told us instead that the "results were good," not bad, something about the radiologist comparing the wrong scan (he had me at "results were good"), the exact kind of potential miscommunication waiting and discussing results in person eliminates. As a result, we have, with experience gained over the last few years, begun to be able to wait for the appointment to discuss the scan and not stress too much in the interim, generally.

Since we stopped e-mailing and requesting scan results, my oncologist oddly enough has, on his own initiative, e-mailed us good news, not e-mailed us bad news and not e-mailed us good news. This inconsistency has remade the time leading up to the scan stressful again, because now we don't know what not hearing from the oncologist might mean; heck, it might mean nothing, it just might just be that he's on vacation (as was the actual case one time and it was no one's responsibility to inform us of anything so no one did). Of course, we didn't know, so naturally we went negative thinking it was bad news.

Similar to the CT scan results meaning/not meaning, this is not exactly two halves making a whole, this is more like eight quarters making up two different wholes. Unfortunately, easy is the last thing it has become, when it's the first thing it needs to be. Cancer is tough enough on its own. It doesn't need any help. I'm extremely grateful to still have a chance. I just wish I had more of a choice.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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GARDENING

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE CONNECTION



Aronia Berries



Red card in Nguyen's garden wards off animals.

Backyard Vegetable Gardens Feed Multi-Cultural Cuisines

In Fairfax County, tomatoes are a staple of local gardens along with peppers, cucumbers, potatoes, beans and herbs.

By MIKE SALMON
THE CONNECTION

Highlights from Report

NGA report "Garden to Table: A 5-Year Look at Food Gardening in America" states:

- ❖ 1 in 3 households are now growing food, highest levels seen in a decade
- ❖ Americans spent \$3.5 billion on food gardening in 2013, up from \$2.5 billion in 2008
- ❖ 76 percent of all households with a food garden grew vegetables, a 19 percent increase since 2008
- ❖ Households with incomes under \$35,000 participating in food gardening grew to 11 million, up 38 percent since 2008

There's nothing like a juicy red tomato fresh out of the backyard garden to brighten up a summertime salad or a sandwich. Or a bittermelon, aronia berries or "paradise apple," as persimmons are known in Bulgaria. Another sign that the multi-cultural population in Fairfax County has grown roots in the backyard vegetable garden.

"In my country, the name is paradise apple," said Jiuka, an Alexandria resident from Bulgaria, as she held a small, green persimmon fruit on a tree in her yard. Jiuka's yard was full of cucumber plants, eggplant, green peppers, squash, tomato and okra, as well as aronia berries and drenka, another Bulgarian favorite. Planting her own fruits and vegetables "is very important, I came from a country where we had good agriculture," she said. She does all the gardening herself. "I learned from my mom," Jiuka said.

It's not just the "backyard" garden for Springfield resident Henrey Nguyen, who lives in a corner lot that is full of vegetables, herbs and fruit, mostly of an Asian variety. His grandmother "does all the work when it comes to the garden," Nguyen said. There are Bartlett Pears growing on a few trees in the yard, with melons, red peppers and bittermelon, an Asian specialty that gives soup its flavor. Bittermelon has another unexpected use in the garden, said Nguyen. "We used to have deer, they took a bite of the bittermelon and never came back," he said.

Some of Nguyen's vegetables and herbs go to local Vietnamese restaurants too where they know the owners, he said, like the Golden Cow, Pho Factory and Bangkok Noodle, all in Annandale.

JIUKA AND NGUYEN are not alone in the backyard garden craze. In fact, there is a surge of gardeners growing their own food in the last few years, according to the National Gardening Association, based in Williston, Vt. In its report, "Garden to Table: A 5-Year Look at Food Gardening in

America," Americans growing their own food in home or community gardens went from 36 million households in 2008 to 42 million in 2013, an increase of 17 percent. The NGA attributes the increase to federal agencies increasing awareness and educational efforts, and by First Lady Michelle Obama's "Let's Move," initiative that features food grown in the White House Kitchen Garden.

In Fairfax County, tomatoes are a staple of local gardens along with peppers, cucumbers, potatoes, beans, and herbs like mint, oregano and cilantro. Tomato gardening is what most of the questions the county Master Gardeners get, said Adria Bordas, a senior extension agent at the Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener helpdesk.

The Fairfax County Master Gardeners Association, Inc. (FCMGA) is a nonprofit organization of volunteers who provide research-based horticultural information, tips, techniques and advice to home gardeners in the community.

Bordas noted that one of the strong points about vegetable gardening in Fairfax County is that gardens "can be a four-season veggie garden if you work at it with frost protection," she said in an email.

Besides being fresh and organic, some of these exotic fruits and vegetables have health benefits that are not known to many in this area.

Bittermelon, known as bitter gourd to some, has been known to be used for gout, cholera, eye problems and even hangovers. Aronia berries are used for urinary tract disorders, and another Bulgarian vegetable, drenka, helps digestion.

ENTERTAINMENT

Email announcements to chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

MONDAY-FRIDAY/JULY 13-17

All-American Girl Living Dolls Camp. 9 a.m.-12 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Children are invited to bring a doll friend and experience the life of an American girl growing up in the most interesting eras in history. They will practice the life skills girls needed in the past and relate them to the present. Attendees will find activities, costumes, crafts and themed games. The camp will cost \$190. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 15

Bouncin' Babies. 3 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories, and other activities for 1 year olds and caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883

Small Wonders. 4 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories, and other activities for 2 year olds and caregiver. Build an early literacy foundation. Free. Call 703-502-3883.

THURSDAY/JULY 16

Hunger Games Kit. 2 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Make a Mockingjay necklace, armband/cuff, keychain, arrow pillow and even a fiery cupcake with Shannyn Snyder.

Teens. Free. Call 703-830-2223.

FRIDAY/JULY 17

Ice Cream and Butter Making. 1-2 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Churn butter, crank ice cream and play historic games. There is a \$7 fee. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

Ready For School Storytime. 2 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Get preschool-aged children ready to be on their own with this early literacy storytime program. Call 703-502-3883.

Brewery Spotlight Beer Class. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Total Wine, 13055-C Lee Jackson Highway, Fairfax. Learn about beer styles and cheese pairings at this class featuring Samuel Adams. \$5 per person. Register at www.totalwine.com.

FRIDAY/SUNDAY/JULY 17-19, JULY 24-25

"Mary Poppins." 7:30 p.m. on July 17-18, July 24-25 and 2 p.m. July 19 and 25. at Westfield High School, 4700 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Students perform the popular musical. \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. Visit www.westfieldtheatreboosters.com

SATURDAY/JULY 18

Uno, Dos, Tres Sing and Dance. 2:30 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Sing and move with music and dance with Andres Salguero. All ages. Free. Call 703-830-2223.

Clifton Film Fest. 7-11 p.m. at Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Listen to live music and eat great food before

watching original films made by amateur and professional filmmakers at this annual festival. \$10 admission. Visit www.cliftonfilmfest.com/.

MONDAY/JULY 20

Preschool Science. 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Fun and amazing experiments for ages 3-6 with adult. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Book Nerds Club. 3:30 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. A book club for fifth and sixth graders. Copies of book available. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a space.

Writers Workshop. 6:45 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Share writing, as well as give and receive feedback in a supportive setting. Free. Call 703-502-3883.

TUESDAY/JULY 21

Sci-Fi/Fantasy Book Discussion. 4:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Book discussion focused around sci-fi and fantasy titles. For students in grades 6-8. Free. Call 703-502-3883 with questions, to find out book title, and to reserve a space.

Ravenous Readers. 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. A book club for seventh and eighth graders. Copies of book available. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a space.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 22

Under the Sea. 2:30 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200

St. Germain Drive. Meet and greet live sea creatures. Ages 6-12. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a spot.

Bouncin' Babies. 3 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories, and other activities for 1 year olds and caregiver. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Small Wonders. 4 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories, and other activities for 2 year olds and caregiver. Build an early literacy foundation. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

THURSDAY/JULY 23

Silly Sleuths Day. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Learn history and make a craft. The topic will be "Weather-Wise." There is a \$10 fee. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

Around the World Musical Adventure. 10:30 a.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Music and Movement for Ages 3-7. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Ask an Expert Series: Getting the Heroes Home. 12:30-12:45 p.m. at Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air and Space Museum Parkway, Chantilly. Learn about the landing and recovery of the Apollo astronauts from Air and Space Museum staff member Allan Needell. Free admission. \$15 parking. Visit airandspace.si.edu/events/

FRIDAY/JULY 24

Ice Cream and Butter Making. 1-2 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Churn

butter, crank ice cream and play historic games. There is a \$7 fee. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov for more.

Sandal Craft Hour. 4 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Make barefoot sandals, complete with decorations. Grades 7-12. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Friday Night Flights. 7-8:30 p.m. at The Winery at Bull Run, 15950 Lee Highway Centreville. Enjoy a night of chocolate and wine pairings. Admission is \$20-30. Visit www.wineryatbullrun.com/events for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 25

A Blind Wine Tasting — Undercover Vines. 3-5 p.m. at Total Wine, 13055-C Lee Jackson Highway, Greenbriar Town Center, Fairfax. Learn to identify eight unlabeled wines at this blind-tasting class. \$20 per person. Register at www.totalwine.com/eng/event/84233.

MONDAY/JULY 27

Rocknoceros. 10:30 a.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Coach Cotton, Williebob, and Boogie Woogie Bennie play award winning music. All ages. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a spot.

Sully Book Club. 1 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Book title is "The Known World" by Edward P. Jones. Adults. Free. Call 703-830-2223.

Under the Sea. 2:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Meet and greet live sea creatures. Ages 6-12. Free. Call 703-502-3883.

TUESDAY/JULY 28

The End (Or Is It?) Book Group. 7:30 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Book discussion group for 5th and 6th grade aged boys and girls. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 29

Clay Cafe. 2 p.m. at the Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Paint and decorate an ice cream bowl to can take home. Grades 7-12. Free. Call 703-502-3883 to reserve a spot.

Papier-mâché Art Workshop. 2 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Create unique forms from goeey paper, such as boxes, skulls, or clothing forms. Teens. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a spot.

A Novel Society Book Discussion. 7 p.m. at the Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Book title is "David Copperfield." Adults. Free. Call 703-830-2223 with questions and to reserve a spot.

THURSDAY/JULY 30-SUNDAY/AUG. 2

Fairfax County 4-H Fair and Carnival. 9 a.m.-10 p.m. at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Rd, Herndon. Carnival rides, fair food, animal shows, stage entertainment, exhibits, competitions, tractor pull and more. Free admission. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks.fryingpanpark/4-h-fair.htm.

THURSDAY/JULY 30

Silly Sleuths Day. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Learn history and make a craft. The topic will be "Weather-Wise." There is a \$10 fee. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov.

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