‘An Evening of Fine Art’ on the Green

Approximately 40 children, ages 3 to 12, took part in “an evening of fine arts” during the Great Falls Aug. 9 Concert on the Green.

Colvin Run Elementary to Focus on Caring Culture

Brightview Celebrates First Anniversary in Great Falls
Join us Monday September 14th at our Military Appreciation Monday (MAM) event at The Old Brogue in Great Falls. We will be helping raise funds for the group: "Stop Soldier Suicide".

*The Old Brogue is located in the corner of Georgetown Pike and Walker Rd. in Great Falls. Call (703) 760-8500 to reserve your table at either the 12:30 or the 3:30 seating. Bob and his Co-Sponsors will each make a 10% matching donation of your dinner tab!"
As summer comes to a close, elementary schools in the Great Falls area are hard at work preparing to welcome students to a new school year.

Among these schools is Colvin Run Elementary, located off Route 7 on Trap Road.

“This year, we look to continue our focus on developing the whole child, providing them with enriched learning experiences, and collaborating with staff, students, and families to create new opportunities for our school,” said Kenneth Junge, principal of Colvin Run Elementary School.

Principal Junge cited making the school’s Caring Culture a priority in educating the whole child and an emphasis on utilizing the nine Critical and Creative Thinking Strategies across the curriculum.

Colvin Run’s Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) has set clear goals for the coming school year.

“As far as our PTO focus this year, it is to raise money through our Direct Donation Drive to purchase new laptops for our school,” said Dianne Emery, Colvin Run PTO President.

Newly purchased 120 laptops will be used in a 1:1 model in several classrooms.

Colvin Run Elementary reminds students to practice their character shapes. The character shapes are a way to educate students on core values and caring culture: square for responsibility, triangle for respect, circle for compassion, star for honesty and rhombus for courage.

“The teachers will continue to utilize Google apps and other valuable resources to implement a ‘blended learning’ model within their classrooms,” said Junge. “We are excited to increase our technology capabilities as this creates greater access and opportunities for all students at Colvin Run Elementary.”

The PTO is also focused on continuing to grow their STEAM Lab, foreign language program and Music and Arts Programs.

According to Junge, Colvin Run was selected to open a new Preschool Autism Center in the fall. The school is also enhancing its playground by adding an Art integration area as well as garden beds in which the student-grown herbs and vegetables will be donated to area food banks.

As far as activities go, a Family Movie Night is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 25. “It is a great evening to bring new and returning families together, enjoy a picnic and watch a favorite movie,” said Emery.

— Maddy Weingast

Brightview Celebrates First Anniversary in Great Falls

A special celebration will be held on Sept. 24.

“It’s been a tremendous year at Brightview Great Falls,” said Tina Aulakh, executive director.

“Residents and their families are enjoying what is truly important – time with family and friends, laughing and having fun.”

Residents, families, associates and special guests are celebrating the one year anniversary of Brightview Great Falls, Brightview Senior Living’s second community in Virginia.

“Live music and dancing, daily social hour and monthly signature family nights are a few of the resident’s favorite programs. And families tell us everyone rests easy knowing mom is receiving excellent care and services,” concludes Aulakh.

Residents, families, associates and special guests are celebrating the one year anniversary of Brightview Great Falls.

The community – located at 10200 Colvin Run Road – opened on Sept. 15, 2014. Featuring dedicated assisted living apartments, Brightview Great Falls also offers Wellspring Village, Brightview’s specialized program and environment for people living with dementia or other forms of dementia.

Brightview Great Falls has proved to be a popular choice for senior living in the area.

“Everyone tells us how thrilled they are with their decision to choose Brightview Great Falls,” said Carolyn Pennington, one of two community sales directors. “They appreciate our focus on possibilities, independence and choice.”

Her sales partner, Joanna Banks adds, “It’s remarkable to see the transformation of residents – their improvement since moving into the community. And it’s a relief for families too.”

A special celebration to honor residents, families, friends and associates of Brightview Great Falls – as well as to mark the community’s first anniversary – will be held on Sept. 24.

For more information on Brightview Senior Living, please visit www.brightviewseniorliving.com.
Great Falls
Concert on the
Green was
complemented
by “an evening
of fine art.”

‘An Evening of Fine Art’ on the Green

The Aug. 9 Concert on the Green, held in Great Falls Center, was a smashing success, with the Green full with newcomers and long time residents, extended families and toddlers to octogenarians. The music of the Diamond Alley band, sponsored by The Canto Group, and Westgate Realty Grange, Inc. had people clapping and dancing and swaying in their chairs to what was described as high energy pop, and rock and roll alternatives with the band’s own unique spin.

While the music was center stage, for some children, there was another activity which might be called an “evening of fine art.” Celebrate Great Falls, and the Arts of Great Falls, both 501(c)3 organizations, got together to offer children the opportunity to draw using artist easels and art materials, including artists’ professional pastels and charcoal on various paper sizes, but mostly 18” x 24” paper. For most of the children it was a first time experience. The children had the opportunity to draw one of many objects set out on tables in front of the easels, including horse gear, fancy bright flowers.

Children had the opportunity to draw using artist easels and art materials.

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www.BracesVIP.com
**NEWS**

‘An Evening of Fine Art’ on the Green

**From Page 4**

red high heels, sports paraphernalia like a bright red baseball helmet, stuffed animals including dogs and bears and so much more. The children were also given the opportunity to just draw from their imaginations, those drawings turning out to represent horses, action figures, monsters and rainbows with butterflies, and abstract works. All told, approximately 40 children took part, their ages ranging from 3 to 12, with mostly younger children.

Celebrate Great Falls has been in existence for 20 plus years, its origins in the Brogue Charities, which morphed into Celebrate Great Falls over the many years and now manages many of the community activities that contribute to the vibrancy of Great Falls. The Arts of Great Falls is a newer organization existing for the last seven years in various iterations.

Under its aegis is the Great Falls School of Art, teaching student classes for children 7-16, as well as adult classes in drawing and painting, and The Artist’s Atelier, a group of 10 artists and their working studios and gallery.

Approximately 40 children, ages 3 to 12, took part in “an evening of fine arts” during the Great Falls Aug. 9 Concert on the Green.

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Sea Changes in Policing?

By Jim Corcoran
President and CEO
Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce

Report offers blueprint for transforming aspects of policing, jail and services for people with mental illness.

Yester day, for the first time in the history of Fairfax County Police Department, a Fairfax County Police officer was charged in a shooting death. On Monday, Aug. 17, former Fairfax County Police Officer Adam Torres was charged with the second-degree murder of John Geer, following an indictment returned by a special grand jury convened by Fairfax County Commonwealth’s Attorney Ray Morrogh. It appears to be only the second time in history that the Commonwealth’s Attorney has convened a grand jury in an officer-involved shooting.

John Geer was shot dead in the doorway to his own home on Aug. 29, 2013 after police were called in a domestic dispute. Torres was fired in July 2015, almost two years later.

FCPD began by releasing almost no information. It took a year-and-a-half, a judge’s order, a U.S. senator’s probing, and public outrage (the most important of these being the court order) to get information about the investigation.

But the public outrage led the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to form the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission, which has been meeting since April both as a commission and five subcommittees involving thousands of hours of work by about 70 people. Areas of focus by committee include Use of Force; Communications; Mental Health; Recruitment, Diversity and Vetting; and Independent Investigations and Oversight.

Communications recommendations came out last month, well worth reading on the commission website.

Police and county officials recognize that the world is changing around them, and have engaged in the process. The kind of changes needed represent a massive change in culture and approach, and none of it will happen overnight, but the process has started.

Several developments, beyond the indictment of Torres, mark progress and opportunity for change.

Last week, FCPD Chief Edwin Roessler posted a website summary of all officer-involved shootings, a major step and a work in progress. The department is wrestling with communications initiatives on many levels.

This week, the report released from the Mental Health and Crisis Intervention Training Committee marks a remarkable opportunity for Fairfax County to transform the way it provides services to people with mental illness. Recommendations reach beyond the police department to the county jail and the Community Services Board, which provides mental health services in the county.

Police are often the first responders in a mental health crisis. The jail is the county’s largest facility for people with mental illness. The costs, financial and human, of dealing with mental health in this way are enormous. The 26 recommendations of the Mental Health Subcommittee, presented by committee chair and state delegate Marcus Simon, offer the county a path to getting it right.

Recommendations including fully implementing the “Memphis model” of crisis intervention, which provides for response teams including officers specially trained in de-escalating situations with people in mental health crisis; creating a system of getting treatment rather than incarceration for people with mental illness; creating a mental health docket in the courts; funding a second Mobile Crisis Unit under the Community Services Board; establishing strategically located, 24-hour crisis intervention sites where police can safely transfer custody of person in crisis without taking them to jail.

How much will it cost? It will require upfront money, but it costs $50,000 annually to house someone in the Fairfax County Detention Center. To provide intensive therapy in the community costs $7,500 a year.

— Mary Kimm

Get Involved

The public is invited to speak at the next meeting of the Fairfax County Ad Hoc Police Practices Review Commission. Monday, Sept. 14, 7:30 p.m. Walt Whitman Middle School 2500 Parkers Lane, Alexandria VA 22306

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecommission/

Read the Mental Health Subcommittee’s final report and recommendations:


See Fairfax County Police Department website on Officer Involved Shootings

http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/made-fips/063015a5.htm

Now Is Time To Unite for Education

By Jim Corcoran
President and CEO
Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce

Recent ly, the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers ran advertisements in the Connection newspapers questioning the dedication of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the business community to the county’s education system.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The Fairfax Board of Supervisors has worked tirelessly to support Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). In fact, approximately 70 percent of FCPS’ budget is unfairly shoul dered by the county, which comes directly from residents and commercial taxes. From FY 1996-2014, contributions from the county quadrupled that of student growth. And this past April, the Board of Supervisors, in its FY2016 adopted budget, increased funding for FCPS for the fifth consecutive year, funding our schools at 99.8 percent of their advertised budget, bringing the total increase from FY2012 to FY2016 to $240 million.

All the while, residents and businesses are being taxed by lawmakers in Richmond, with little return in education dollars coming directly from the state to show for it.

The Fairfax Chamber has, for decades, supported the full funding of K-12 education throughout the entire Commonwealth. The Chamber believes that the future growth of the Northern Virginia economy, and consequently Virginia’s economy, depends on a significant investment in K-12 education.

The Chamber has been a leading voice in Richmond, working hand in hand with the county, to thwart any attempt to cut the state’s contributions to FCPS.

Our work on behalf of FCPS extends beyond advocacy. Since 2010, the Fairfax Chamber has partnered with FCPS to establish the Education Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, to secure the county’s public school system.

Every two years, the Fairfax Chamber spearheads the School Bond Referendum committee, ensuring there are appropriate dollars for the county’s education infrastructure to meet the needs of our growingly diverse community.

Additionally, the Fairfax Chamber has been recognized by the School Board for its years of dedicated partnership with Fairfax County Public Schools.

And we promise that will not stop. We will continue to advocate for the needs of our schools. However, the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers is wrong to direct their frustration at the Board of Supervisors and the business community. The problem rests with Richmond.

Historically, the Local Composite Index (LCI) places Fairfax County at a disadvantage by not taking into account important factors such as the differential between county and city taxing authority, the impact of cost of living on a locality’s ability to pay staff, and the increased costs associated with providing services to growing limited English proficiency and special education populations.

For years, the Board of Supervisors, FCPS, and the Fairfax Chamber have called upon the General Assembly to provide FCPS their fair share of state education dollars. Our schools, our children, and our economy depend on it.

We must come together and work united towards a common goal. A failure to address the problem of inadequate state funding for education will leave our schools and our children behind.
Great Falls Senior Center to Host International Photographer

The Great Falls Senior Center (GFSC) event for Sept. 1 features Kenneth Garrett, international photographer. His topic will be Journey Through Halloved Ground: Birthplace of the American Ideal. His photography reflects his creativity in covering major archaeological sites of the Mayas, Aztecs, Olmecs and ancient Egyptians and the important discoveries in the evolutionary history of humanity. Garrett is an independent photographer and his articles for National Geographic include “Square-rigger: Voyage from Baltic to Bicentennial”; other notable articles include The Iceman (Ice Age Human Body), Dawn of Humans: Tracking the First of Our Kind, Valley of the King’s (Egypt), Journey to the Ice Age Humans, Dawn of Humans: Hunt for the First Americans, Death on The Nile and many more. He has also photographed for National Geographic Traveler and for such magazines as Smithsonian, Fortune, Time, Life, Forbes, Audubon, Archaeology and Natural history. His extensive book credits includeEI Templo Mayor: The Great Temple of the Aztecs in Mexico; Floaters and Stickups; Egypt of Pharaohs; Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of Pharaohs. Garrett’s work has been exhibited at the Smithsonian, the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology, and in Egypt, Cuba and Japan.

The Sept. 1 event will be held at St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church, 1020 Springvale Road, Great Falls 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m and includes lunch. The event sponsor is Lozo Dentistry, Great Falls. Reservations are a must; to reserve email Polly Fitzgerald at pollyfitz1@verizon.net or call 703-759-4345.

Faith Notes

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna, is holding Sunday evening worship service in a less formal atmosphere and more intimate setting to help you get ready for the week ahead. Sundays, 6 p.m. Communion offered. No childcare. 703-938-2119 or www.elevenia.org.

St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, offers musical, educational, outreach and fellowship ministries in addition to worship services, including a 7:45 a.m. worship service without music; 9 a.m. worship service, children’s chapel and children’s choir; 10 a.m. Sunday school and adult forum; and 11 a.m. worship service with adult choir. 703-759-2082.

The Antioch Christian Church offers a time of Prayer and Healing on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. for anyone wanting encouragement and healing through prayers. People are available to pray with you or for you. Antioch Christian Church is located at 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna. www.antiochdoc.org
Checking the Back-to-School Healthcare Blocks

Local governments, clinics offer free immunizations for all and required immunizations — are important parts of back-to-school preparations.

By Marilyn Campbell

At the lazy days of summer wind down, beach trips, lemonade stands and last bedtimes give way to alarm clocks, textbooks and backdrops. Public health officials say that a back-to-school season should include more than pencils and paper. For many, the first order of business is a child’s physical, dental exam and required immunizations.

During a physical exam, parents should check that immunizations are up to date, ask if their child’s growth is on target and what normal developmental changes they should expect during the next year. Parents should also be prepared to answer questions about their child’s sleep patterns and eating habits.

“Vitamins checks are an important part of a routine school physical exam so make sure to ask for one,” said Caroline Sutter, a family nurse practitioner, BSN, BCC, co-director of Mason and Partners (MAP) clinics and an assistant professor of nursing at George Mason University in Fairfax. “Routine exams are important to maintain health. Ask for a referral for a dental visit.”

George Mason University’s College of Health and Human Services MAP clinics, which offer school entry physicals at no cost, are open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Fairfax County Health Department provides free school-required immunizations at five locations in the county. “We are offering some special extended hours in August and September to accommodate the back-to-school rush, but we recommend that parents make the appointment now,” said John Silson, public safety information officer, Fairfax County Health Department.

In conjunction with Mason Health System’s Partnership for Healthier Communities, the Department’s School Health department also offers free physicals for school entry or unvaccinated children. The health department also operates three dental clinics that provide services to children based on eligibility.

“We are offering some special extended hours in August and September to accommodate the back-to-school rush, but we recommend that parents make the appointment now.”
— John Silson, Fairfax County Health Department

Healthcare Resources

Mason and Partners (MAP) Clinics
1816 Backlick Rd., Suite 100A
Fairfax, VA 22030
(703) 336-0070
www.masonpartners.com

Fairfax County Health Department Community Health Care
8901 Old Lee Highway, #200
Fairfax, VA 22031
(703) 336-0070
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health

Fairfax County Health Department Children’s Health Clinics
7001 Old Lee Highway, Suite 400
Fairfax, VA 22031
(703) 336-0070

Fairfax County Immunizations
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/public-health
www.211fairfax.org

In the next year, pediatric health care plans should not be overlooked. Transitioning from a summer of sleeping late to a school year of early wake-up calls can be challenging if children are not prepared. “Establish a ‘sleep schedule zone’,” said Sutter. “With summer coming to an end, it is important to get kids on a regular sleep schedule before school starts.”

“Stress the importance of routine physical activity with your child,” she continued. “Talk about sports they might be interested in during the school year or other ways to stay physically fit but most important, exercise regularly yourself or model for your children.”

For those experiencing anxiety about returning to school, Sutter suggests addressing the issues before the first day of school. “Come up with a good plan to address them,” she said. “Talk to your children about kindness and what to do if he or she is a victim of bullying and how to ask for help if needed.”

Bands for Bikes Concert on Saturday

Langley High students Jack Lichtenstein and Morgan Poirier are hosting the second annual Bands for Bikes benefit concert on Saturday, Aug. 22, from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Old Firehouse Teen Center in Herndon. The rising sophomores organized the concert in support of Wheels to Africa and are seeking donations of used bikes for children who live in remote villages in Africa. Numerous FCPS students are volunteering their time to perform in the concert, representing Langley, Mclean High, Madison High and South Lakes High, along with FCPS alumni currently attending college. The bikes will be stored in donated storage containers from 2000-PROJECT2, a co-sponsor of the benefit. Local music school Bach to Rock is also co-sponsoring Bands for Bikes. At their first benefit for Wheels to Africa, the students collected more than 250 bikes and $1,500 in donations. Their goal for the Aug. 22 event is to exceed those totals. Used bikes can be dropped off any time at the Old Firehouse Teen Center between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Admission is free and a bike donation is not required to attend. Contact d.uncman@comcast.net.

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**NEWS**

**Former Police Officer Charged with John Geer Murder**

Adam Torres Indicted by Special Grand Jury.

**By Tim Peterson, The Connection**

Adam Torres has been charged with murdering John Geer. Though Torres shot the unarmed man once in the chest nearly two years ago, the then-Fairfax County Police officer remained on the department’s payroll until being terminated July 31, 2015. Commonwealth Attorney Raymond Morrogh had convened a special grand jury to hear testimony from officers and other witnesses to determine whether Torres had committed any criminal wrongdoing. It first met for a week beginning July 27 and resumed on Aug. 17. The indictment of second-degree murder was announced later in the day Aug. 17.

Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler and Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova held a joint press conference to discuss the new charge.

Roessler opened by sharing that he had reached out to the Geer family to again offer them “my personal condolences and sympathy.”

But he didn’t stop there. “To the men and women of Fairfax County Police Department and our great community, my heartfelt sympathy to everybody, because the loss of life in this case impacts the Geer family and all of us.”

**TORRES** was in the process of surrendering himself and being processed at the Fairfax County Adult Detention Center while the press conference was taking place. He’s currently being held without bond, a police report said.

On Aug. 29, 2013, Geer had been standing in the doorway of his Springfield home for about 40 minutes, talking with officers who had their guns trained on his chest. Geer’s longtime partner Maura Harrington called the police earlier because Geer had been throwing her belongings out of the house after she previously told him she was planning to move out of the residence and he became upset.

In police reports of the incident, Torres claimed to see Geer quickly lower his arms, presenting a threat. The other officers present provided contradicting accounts, that Geer’s movements were slower and nonthreatening. Torres fired once, striking Geer in the chest.

In police reports of the incident, Torres claimed to see Geer quickly lower his arms, presenting a threat. The other officers present provided contradicting accounts, that Geer’s movements were slower and nonthreatening. Torres fired once, striking Geer in the chest.

Roessler said he decided to terminate Torres because after reviewing the incident investigation, “the use of force was not reasonably necessary in this matter” and violated police general order 540.1.

Despite the tragedy of the incident itself, Geer’s case drew public and media attention because it highlighted a perceived lack of transparency and accountability in the way Fairfax County and the police department handled communication and other policies such as use of force.

One response to the criticism was Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova’s creation of an ad hoc commission to review police policies.

“Fairfax County has learned a lot through this very difficult process,” Bulova said at the press conference, “learned a lot about sharing information in a timely way.”

Though Geer was killed Aug. 29, 2013, very little information about the case was made public, much less released to Geer’s family following the incident. Ongoing investigations by the police department, Commonwealth Attorney’s Office and Department of Justice were cited as reasons why information such as the name of the officer who shot Geer was withheld for a year and a half.

Geer’s family finally filed a $12 million civil suit against the county, including the request for information. Fairfax County settled out of court, paying nearly $3 million, and released over 11,000 pages of documents from the incident investigation.

“This is the first time we’ve had a situation like this where there has not been a relatively fast resolution to a police-involved shooting,” Bulova said. The chairman referred to the situation as a “convoluted” one that “held things up in a way that frustrated the Board of Supervisors. We were not happy that things ended up not moving forward to resolution, that instead it wound up at the fed level.”

**The Ad Hoc Commission** is scheduled to present its final recommendations to the Board of Supervisors in October, however Bulova and Roessler said the county hasn’t waited to begin already implementing some of the suggestions that have already been put forward by the commission.

“I have every confidence a scenario like this won’t happen again,” Bulova said.

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**MedStar to Hold 12th Super H 5K Run, Walks & Wheel**

Attention runners/walkers, and athletes with disabilities: MedStar National Rehabilitation Network will be holding its 12th annual Super H 5K Run, Walk & Wheel, Sunday, Sept. 20, beginning and ending at Sport & Health Club in Tyson Corner (9250 Greensboro Dr., McLean, Virginia 22102).

Registration begins at 7 a.m., and the race begins at 8 a.m. Registration includes a post-race party with food and entertainment. Proceeds from the race will support MedStar NHR’s adaptive sports programs, which enable adaptive athletes—those with disabilities who stay active by competing in various sports—to participate in paralympic sports such as wheelchair basketball, wheelchair tennis, sled hockey, quad rugby, sit volleyball, hand cycling, rowing, paralympic archery and more.

Registration fee is $30 until Sept. 1; $35 after Sept. 1.


**Fundraiser Supporting The Children’s Science Center**

A fundraiser for The Children’s Science Center has been announced by HBC Realty Group’s (Keller Williams Realty) Community Charity Champions. Come to dinner on Tuesday, Sept. 15, from 5 to 8 p.m. at Pulcinella Italian Host in McLean to support The Children’s Science Center. Enjoy dinner and know that approximately 70 percent of the proceeds from food and drink will go to the charity, as long as the diner brings the flyer for the event. Contact HBC Realty Group at 703-734-0192 or visit www.HBCRealtyGroup.com to receive a flyer.

The Children’s Science Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to creating a world-class, interactive children’s museum in Northern Virginia. Their mission is to instill a love of learning science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in all children by providing unique opportunities to explore, create, and be inspired.

Sponsors of the event are: Karen Briscoe and Lizzie Conroy with the HBC Realty Group of Keller Williams Realty, Barb Kinlin of Reveal Remodel, Marcus Simon with EKKO Title, Kevin Dougherty of Pillar to Post, Kathy and Justin Neal of The Neal Team/SunTrust Mortgage, The McLean Chamber of Commerce, and Moe Jebali with Pulcinella Italian Host.

Send announcements to north@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week’s paper. Photos/work/graphics encouraged.

FRIDAY/AUG. 19
Morning Book Group. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call branch for title. Adult admission.

Pokemon Book League. 4-30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in. Play Pokemon with your friends.

Beautiful Butterflies. 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Summer is butterfly time. Learn about these beautiful insects and their interesting lives using puppets, games, felt board activities and stories.

Frankie Valli And The Four Seasons. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Come save the unique falsetto and 1960s-quartet inspired a Tony-winning music with unique falsetto and 1960s-quartet.


The Beach Boys. 3 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. America’s favorite surf rockers bring the “Fun, Fun, Fun” with their iconic summer soundtrack featuring their hit songs. Tickets: $30-$60.

TUESDAY/AUG. 25
Reading Buddies. 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Volunteers available to read to/with beginning readers. All ages. "Young Frankenstein" will perform at Jammin’ Java on Aug. 26.

Adult admission.

STAR WARS: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER. 7 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Free movie screening of the newest film in the Star Wars saga.

Family Game Time. 11 a.m. Great Falls Village Center, 7767 Walker Road, Great Falls. Teen volunteers available to play board games, tabletop games, and much more. All ages.

THURSDAY/AUG. 27
Wendy’s Book Club. 7 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. "The Story of The Windsong" is the story of a young emergency airplane pilot and a bold artist. "Ashby Run" will perform at Jammin’ Java on Aug. 26.

Adult admission.


SATURDAY/AUG. 29
Women Unplugged. 8 a.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls. Unplug and spend the weekend outdoors with kayaking, a dinner and bonfire Saturday night, camping under the stars, and archery lessons on Sunday. The program ends at 11 a.m. on Sunday. Tickets are $214. Call 703-795-9018.

KAYAK MINI FLOAT Trip. 11 a.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls. A scenic wagon ride from Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls. Drop-in and play space, while adults enjoy coffee and conversation. Cost: $2.50. www.celebrategeorgeflands.org/events-on-the-green.

Sunday afternoon fun. 1:30 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills Street, Great Falls. Teen volunteers available to read to/with beginning readers. All ages.

Adult admission.

STAR WARS: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER. 7 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Avenue, McLean. Free movie screening of the newest film in the Star Wars saga.

Family Game Time. 11 a.m. Great Falls Village Center, 7767 Walker Road, Great Falls. Teen volunteers available to play board games, tabletop games, and much more. All ages.

Adult admission.
Sports

Langley’s Donaldson Returns from ACL Tear

Six-foot senior outside hitter is leader of talented Saxons.

By Jon Roetman
The Connection

After earning all-state honors as a sophomore in 2013, helping the Langley volleyball team win the 6A state championship, Jessica Donaldson missed the majority of her junior season after tearing the ACL in her left knee during a tournament in Richmond on Aug. 30, 2014.

While injured, Donaldson, a 6-foot outside hitter, continued to spend time around the Saxons, cheering her teammates from the bench. After losing to Fairfax in the Conference 6 semifinals, the Saxons won a regional match against Chantilly, but ended their season with a 3-0 loss to South County in the quarterfinals.

Donaldson wasn’t down for long. She “worked really hard at rehab” and was cleared to play just four months after her injury. She returned to practice with her Metro American Volleyball Club team, but took things slowly for an additional two months.

Now, nearly one year after suffering her season-ending ACL tear, Donaldson is back in a starting role and is happy to be back in a starting role.

“Definitely want to make a run at states,” said rising sophomore Elena Shklyar, who started at setter as a freshman. “That’s our goal. We want to play well together and have fun, of course, and we want to win and get some titles.”

The return of Donaldson, who is committed to Lehigh University, is a major reason for optimism.

“She looks great,” head coach Susan Shifflett said. “She’s hitting the ball as hard as she ever was. … To see that power back on our court is very exciting. The morale in general with the girls is huge because she’s back.”

Donaldson said watching from the bench while injured allowed her to “appreciate the game from a different perspective.”

“Jess is basically the heart and soul of the team,” Shklyar said. “Even last year when she was on the bench, people would look to her when we were in trouble. We would just look to her to cheer everyone up. Now, having her on the court is going to make it so much better because you can always rely on her.”

Donaldson is one of several weapons to which Shklyar can set the ball. Shifflett described the sophomore setter as “smooth and athletic.” Rising senior outside hitter Kristian Stanford is the only Saxon other than Donaldson to start for Langley’s 2013 state championship team.

“She is our other bookend for the outside,” Shifflett said. “Last year, she had problems with consistency. We’ll wait to see, but this year, what we’ve seen in our pre-season is she has closed that gap. I expect really big things from her.”

Rising senior middle blocker Katie Stissler and rising sophomore middle blocker Allison Franke are also threats at the net.

Rising junior Sarah Maebius is the team’s libero.

Langley will open the season on the road against Broad Run at 7 p.m. on Sept. 1. The Saxons’ first home game is Sept. 9 against Stone Bridge.

“We need to be a factor,” Shifflett said, “and I think we’re going to be a factor at all levels.”

Madison Football Focused on Beating Rival Oakton

Warhawks look to snap seven-year losing streak to Cougars.

By Bonnie Schipper
For The Connection

Oakton and Madison high schools are located less than two miles apart from each other, and the annual football games between these “cross-town rivals” have drawn enormous crowds. For the last seven years, the Cougars have come out on top, but this year the Warhawks are determined to break the streak.

Having gone 5-5 in 2014 and missed the playoffs, coach Lenny Schultz and the Warhawks are focusing solely on their opening game against their Vienna rival. “Oakton is always a challenge,” Schultz said. “We haven’t done anything until we start the season with a win. … [S]o that is our first challenge and we aren’t looking really past that until it’s done.”

The Warhawks will begin their season at Oakton on Sept. 4. Hoping to improve from last year, Madison put extra emphasis on the importance of strength and conditioning during the offseason, with three players breaking the school’s previous squat record. Offensive lineman John Bingham (6 feet 4, 215 pounds) holds the new school record with a 475-pound squat.

“Our offseason conditioning was really challenging and tested us physically and mentally,” Bingham said. “We did a lot of intense, cross-fit-type stuff and it really works and gets us in shape. We came back this year bigger and faster.”

Running Madison’s offense is fourth-year varsity team member and three-year starting quarterback Jason Gastrock, who threw for 2,000 yards in 2014.

“It’s good to have an experienced returning quarterback because we all already know his strengths and his weaknesses,” Bingham said. “[Gastrock’s] strong, he’s smart with the ball, and he makes good choices. He’s a good leader on offense.”

Also returning to the offense are receiver Jordan Ebersole and linemen Ryan Partridge and Drew Smith. Schultz hopes to see an improvement in the team’s running game, and suspects that the offensive line will be the muscle of the team.

“We have a veteran offensive line and we really feel that they could be the strength of our team this year,” Schultz said. “They committed to getting stronger in the weight room and it shows on the field.”

Defensively, returners include safety Sam Kidd, who had seven interceptions last season, corner Kullen Kritsky, and linebacker Paul Gordon.

“We run a lot of zone coverage,” Kritsky said. “We’ve run the same thing for a long time and it’s worked. Our defensive backs have played well for the past few years.”

With low turnover numbers for tryouts, some inexperienced players will step into starting roles. Jimmy Goldsmith, after missing last season, will fill one of the linebacker positions.

“I have a lot of confident kids this year because of working out and being stronger. We are prepared to do whatever it takes to win,” Schultz said. “If we need to beat people with our skill game, we’re ready to pound it at them and play a hard-nosed, driven game. We can do a variety of things offensively to control the game. We haven’t beat Oakton in eight years, so if we beat them, great, on to week two with another strong team.”
Langley Crew Athletes Excel at the Next Level

Langley Crew athletes and alumni of the Langley Crew team are excelling in the greater crew community. Taking the skills they have gained from being on the Langley Crew team, and applying them in summer club and collegiate teams, Langley crew athletes are achieving success both academically and on their respective crew teams.

Nathaniel Howe (’12), studying at Yale, has been rowing for the past three seasons on the Yale Lightweight Crew team. During his freshman year, he rowed 4-seat in the Freshman Lightweight 8+, and they took first in the Sprints Championship in that event. At the conclusion of the season in his sophomore year, Nathaniel rowed 2-seat in Third Varsity Lightweight 8+, and his boat won a silver medal at the Sprints Championship. This past spring, he again rowed (this time 3-seat) in their Third Varsity Lightweight 8+, and they came in fourth at the Sprints Championship, finishing just a few inches back from third.

Sabrina Lamont (’14) was the coxswain in the First Varsity 8 at George Mason University where she guided her boat to an eighth-place finish at the prestigious Head of the Charles in Boston, the largest twoday regatta in the world. During Dad Vails, the largest regular intercollegiate regatta, Lamont coxed the Freshman 8+ to a silver medal, the highest medal finish for the history of the George Mason program.

Tillman Findley (’14) began rowing with Auburn University after four years of experience with Langley Crew and quickly earned his place as stroke seat of the Novice 8 boat. Findley’s boat raced at several prestigious regattas such as Head of the Hooch in Chattanooga, Tenn., and SIRAs in Oak Ridge, Tenn. While at the SIRAs, Findley was able to catch up with Coach Mike Lehmann, the Langley Head Coach during his four years at Langley who is now the Head Coach of men’s crew at Notre Dame.

During the majority of the spring season, Tyler Seckar (’14) rowed in the seven-seat of Trinity College’s Second Varsity 8 and helped lead her team to a winning spring season. Based on Trinity’s strong spring season and ECAC performance, Trinity won an at-large bid to the NCAA Division III Championship Regatta in Sacramento, Calif. Trinity successfully-defended its 2014 National Championship in the First Varsity 8 and took Silver honors as a team due to the Second Varsity 8’s Bronze finish in its event.

Looking forward to her sophomore year at Trinity, and strong 2015-16 crew seasons, Seckar will be joining local club, Resilient Rowing, as a coach-athlete. To hone her coaching and rowing skills, Seckar is pursuing a US Rowing Level II Coaching Certification and will be coaching and competing at US Rowing Club National Championship and the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta during summer 2015.

Seckar is overjoyed with her Trinity freshman year experience and Resilient Rowing coaching opportunity, and she credits her Langley Crew coach, Ashley Leake, with giving her such a strong rowing foundation upon which to grow her collegiate and coaching crew career. Charlie Bavisotto (’14) is wrapping up his freshmen year at Drexel University in Philadelphia, where he is majoring in marketing, and a member of the Men’s Division I crew team. During his freshman year he was a coxswain for the Men’s Freshmen Four and Eight boats.

The Men’s Drexel crew team had a very strong season in 2015; and won the Team Trophy at the Dad Vail Regatta in May, and qualified to compete at the 2015 IRA National Championships also in May. Bavisotto’s Freshman 4 boat won the bronze medal at Dad Vail. At the IRA Nationals, Bavisotto coxed the Freshman 8 boat, which advanced all the way to the Grand Finals; and finished 6th place overall against the best teams in the USA.

Bavisotto has been very happy with his experience at Drexel; and has enjoyed being part of the crew team. Next year he will work six months and attend classes for six months, as part of the Drexel co-op program.

Ryan Cheng (’13) is double majoring in biomedical engineering and physics at University of Virginia and rowing on the Virginia Men’s Rowing Varsity squad. Early in the season, he traveled with the team as an alternate to London, Ontario in Canada for a regatta hosted by Western University.

In the spring, he competed at the Murphy Cup, the Southern Intercollegiate Rowing Association Regatta (SIRAs), and the American Collegiate Rowing Association Regatta (ACRAs). At the Murphy Cup, Cheng raced in the Varsity 4 and placed 6th in the Grand Final. At SIRAs, he raced in the 2nd Varsity 8 to a silver medal. At ACRAs, he raced in the 2nd Varsity 4 and took another a silver medal. While at the Murphy Cup, he ran into Langley Crew Alumni Charlie Bavisotto, while he was coxing for Drexel, and during SIRAs and ACRAs he caught up with Mike Lehmann (past Langley head coach) while he was coaching for Notre Dame.

As a member of the Christopher Newport University Rowing Club, Brittany Smith (’14), a pre-med scholars student, has enjoyed opportunities in addition to rowing with the team. Being a member of the rowing club has enabled her to learn how to lead, organize, compromise, and expand the team as well as herself. Early in the year she was elected to the position of Scholarly Chair, and recently she was elected to the Vice President role where she will be responsible for the logistics of the team. Continuing to row in college has added to Smith’s college experience exponentially.

Olivia White (’13) just finished her second year on the West Virginia University rowing team where she find the workouts intense. White says, “Rowing at WVU has been an experience these last two years. There have been some ups and downs but that’s just part of the sport. My teammates are an amazing bunch of girls. We all have the same goals and we work together and push each other to do better.” Many of her closest friends are on the team and they make her proud to be a Mountaineer.
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