

Springfield CONNECTION

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT, DINING & GIFT GUIDE

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U.S. Navy veteran
Stephanie Leung of
Fairfax (left) and Caroline
Kramer (right), wife of
U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jacob
Kramer, of Springfield,
place markers on a world
map where the military
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Military families gather for a special Shabbat dinner before the service at Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station.

Praying in Freedom Together

Temple B'nai Shalom recognizes veterans with special Shabbat dinner and service.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Lt. Col. Jacob Kramer was concerned after finding a Star of David in a moving box. The Springfield resident was previously stationed in Morocco by the U.S. Army. Kramer said he and his family tried to “cleanse the Jewishness” out of their house there because of how dangerous it was to be one of just 3,000 Jews in the north African country.

“It’s very difficult to conceal your identity,” Kramer said. “We entered that decision with the clearest of minds, the weightiest of hearts.”

Kramer shared his story during a special Shabbat dinner at Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station to honor veterans and their families. Shabbat is the day of the rest in the Jewish faith that lasts from sundown to sundown on the seventh day of the week.

AT THE DINNER, which included breaking of traditional challah bread, lighting Shabbat candles and catered food from longtime Temple B'nai Shalom partner Spartans Family Restaurant in Burke, several military veterans shared anecdotes about their time in the service.

“We have a lifetime of stories in our congregation,” said Senior Rabbi Amy Perlin, “of Jewish communities in the services with the connection of a uniform and a religion.”

Jim Sturim is a retired colonel in the U.S. Air Force, where he did a lot of test-flying and acquisition while serving. He helped organize the evening’s events on Nov. 13, which included three mini-sermons by veterans from the congregation during the Shabbat service following dinner.

“Tonight, veterans will have a bigger part,” Sturim said. “They’ll give a glimpse of what life was like for those Jews in the service.”

Stephanie Leung of Fairfax served 26 years in the U.S. Navy, including posts in Bahrain, Israel and Kenya. “Sometimes you have to really put behind your identity,” she said.

Other speakers described finding support in practicing their religion from military chaplains, as well as more welcoming locals in Scotland and Italy.

For Bev Seiden, a retired Commander in the U.S. Navy, the service was where she found her identity. During her mini-sermon, Seiden described growing up Roman Catholic and then drifting away from the Church. As a nurse in the Navy, she met the man who would become her husband and decided to fully embrace his faith as her own: Judaism.

“I felt I was joining a long line of people,” Seiden said about completing her conversion and becoming a bat mitzvah, or full-fledged adult female member of the Jewish community. “It was like being encircled in a warm hug.”

Seiden spoke to the congregation from a lectern in the temple’s sanctuary. Behind her several sacred Torah scrolls are housed in a compartment behind heavy wooden doors. A special binder for the scrolls includes material from uniforms of different U.S. military branches, representing a deep bond between the congregation and the armed forces.

B'NAI SHALOM MEMBER Suzanne Lederer’s father once held services with one of the same sets of scrolls while working for the U.S. government in Panama. Years later, the temple coincidentally acquired the scrolls, which Lederer’s children then used in their mitzvah services transitioning to adulthood.

“There’s a thread running from my father to his grandchildren through this Torah of ours,” Lederer said. “It’s a wonderful connection.”

As the service concluded, Rabbi Perlin gave a final message of remembrance and thanks for veterans and their sacrifice.

“We’re always aware there were times when we were not free to pray,” she said. “Now we pray in freedom together.”

Temple B'nai Shalom is located at 7612 Old Ox Road in Fairfax Station. For more information visit www.tbs-online.org.



Spouses of active duty and retired military, including Caroline Kramer (center) of Springfield, light Shabbat dinner candles at Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station.

Temple B'nai Shalom Senior Rabbi Amy Perlin welcomes military families to a special Shabbat dinner before evening services.



Temple B'nai Shalom member Jim Sturim of Burke is a retired lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force. Sturim helped organize a special Shabbat dinner and service to recognize the veterans in the temple community.

PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION



Lt. Col. Jacob Kramer of Springfield talks about the challenges of living as a Jewish family while stationed with the U.S. Army in Morocco.



The display case at Temple B'nai Shalom in Fairfax Station shows off memorabilia of past and current members of the congregation who have served in the U.S. military.



— REAL STORIES FROM THE EXPRESS LANES —

"My daily commute to work used to take me over an hour. Now, it only takes me 20 minutes. Those extra minutes allow me to spend quality time with my children."

- Jennifer G.
Alexandria, VA

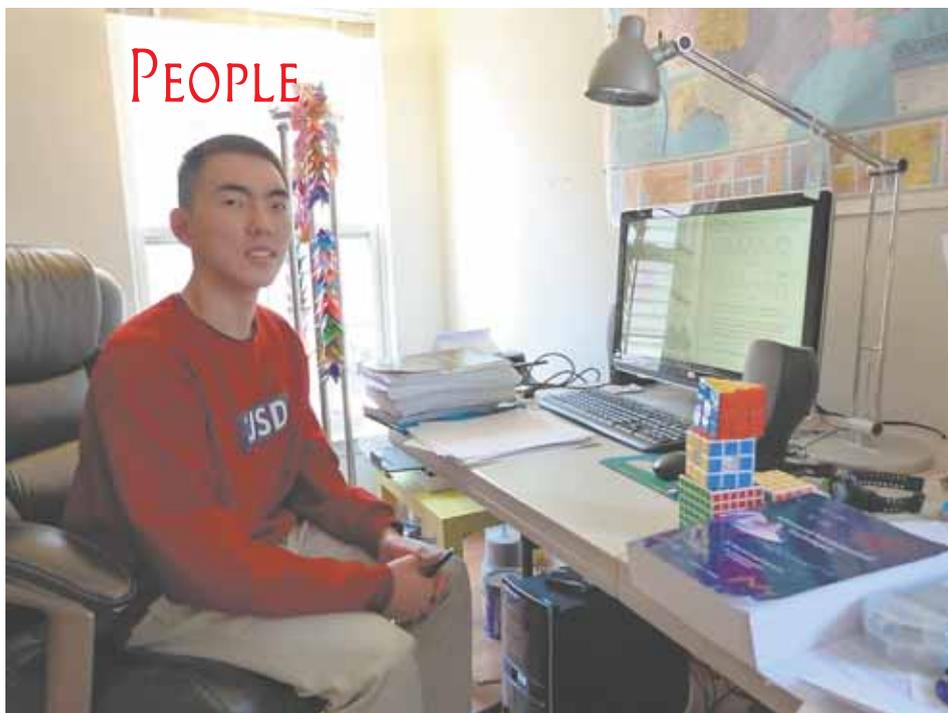
Thanks to the 495 Express Lanes, Jennifer says she can balance being the mother of five young children and working at her job in Tysons. Traveling from Alexandria to Tysons Corner used to take her over an hour, but now it only takes 20 minutes. With those extra 40 minutes, Jennifer is able to eat breakfast with her kids and spend more time with them in the morning. She even has time to take her older children to school before heading to work—and now she can pick them up on the way home, too.

See more real stories from the Lanes at ExpressLanes.com



Jennifer's story was one of our winning entries in our "Express Lanes Love Story" promotion.

PEOPLE



Michael You was a regional finalist in the 2015 Siemens Foundation STEM Competition. He researched SONAR (SOund Navigation And Ranging)-related whale beachings.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL YOU

Local Student Receives National Science Honor

Alexandria teenager awarded scholarship for sonar research.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When Michael You was 3 years old, he would flip through the pages of science picture books. He was particularly drawn to those with illustrations or photographs of ocean animals.

"I've always liked oceans and sea life and I enjoyed visiting the Baltimore and Washington Aquariums," said You, now a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and Hayfield Secondary School, both in Alexandria, Virginia.

That fascination, boosted by months of research and preparation, manifested itself recently when You became a regional finalist in the 2015 Siemens Foundation STEM Competition, which promotes science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education. The competition supports and honors students who push their academic boundaries beyond the classroom and engage in hands-on research projects. You won a \$1,000 college scholarship for his efforts.

You researched SONAR (SOund Navigation And Ranging)-related whale beachings and how bubbles in the blood vessels of whales can cause injuries when whales are exposed to SONAR. A television documentary about endangered ocean animals inspired the project. "It was interesting because I didn't understand how it could be because I couldn't find a connection between SONAR and whale strandings."

You realized that SONAR-related whale beachings were a legitimate, growing problem. "But no one was

really paying attention to it or researching it," he said.

He developed a mathematical model to test the effects of high-energy sound sources on bubble oscillation in small tubes. In announcing You's award, David Etwiler, CEO of the Siemens Foundation, said the project has the ability to "advance research and exploration in critical fields."

One might say that scientific research is in You's blood: His father, Liangzhi You, is a senior scientist at the International Food Policy Research Institute and his mother, Xuemei Chen, is a patent examiner at the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

In fact, his mother served as his mentor for the Siemens research project. "My mom has done research on bubbles in oscillation," he said. "She helped me understand bubble mechanics."

Chen says that her son has always been interested in science and technology. "He really deserved this honor," she said. "He's a very motivated kid. When he decides to do something, he makes up his mind and he manages to finish it."

You hopes his project can help individuals become more aware of human impacts on the ocean and galvanize people to protect vital marine ecosystems. "I have concerns about whales becoming extinct," he said. "Military sonar could be part of the problem."

In his spare time, You is a competitive swimmer and plays the violin and piano. You also teaches competition math at his local Chinese School on Sundays, focusing on number theory, combinatorics, algebra and geometry.

"My schedule is pretty packed," he said. "When I'm doing something, I try to do it as fast as possible and by focusing on one thing, I can do it quickly. Then I feel accomplished and you can move on. I enjoy doing everything I do."

You, who has a 4.5 weighted grade point average, recently finished applying to two colleges. He hopes to study electrical engineering

and Economics at George Mason University. Recognition on the George Mason University dean's list is reserved for students who were registered for 12 or more semester hours and received a grade point average of 3.2 or higher with no grade below a C for the previous semester's work.

William Douglas Krawczak of Springfield has been recognized by George Mason University on the school's dean's list for his academic achievement during the spring semester. William graduated from West Springfield High School and is double majoring in En-

SCHOOL NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Arden L. Scott, of Springfield, received a Master of Science in Media Ventures from Boston University in Sep-

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY KRISTIN SALVATO

Honoring Veterans at West Springfield Elementary

West Springfield Elementary School community and military veterans were invited to a special assembly on Wednesday, Nov. 11. There were guest speakers and a few surprises for all veterans. All military personnel were invited to come in uniform. After the assembly, veterans, along with their families, were invited for a reception in the library.



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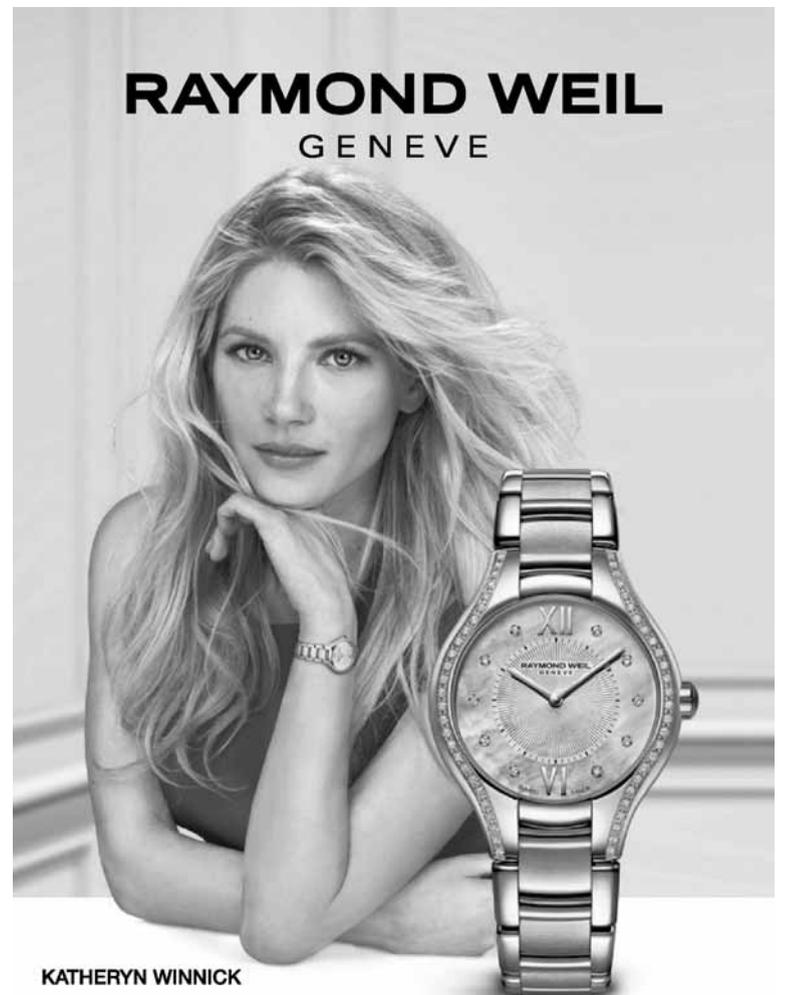


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AREA ROUNDUPS

Click It or Ticket Starts this Week

This Thursday, Nov. 19, Fairfax County Police will be joining other state and local law enforcement officers to help save more lives by strongly enforcing seat belt laws. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA), one in five Americans fails to regularly wear a seatbelt when driving a motor vehicle.

Need a tougher reminder? Read the following statistics and keep yourself safe. Be home for your family this holiday season. Buckle up!

* In 2013, a total of 21,132 passenger vehicle occupants were killed in crashes, and almost half (49 percent) of them were NOT wearing their seat belts at the time of the crash.

* Approximately 64 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants killed in nighttime crashes in 2013 were NOT wearing their seat belts, compared to 48 percent during daytime hours.

* Among passenger vehicle occupant fatalities in 2013, the age group 21 to 24 had the highest percentage of occupants killed that were unrestrained: 2,415 fatalities, of which 1,340 (55 percent) were not wearing seat belts.

* Seat belts saved approximately 12,584 lives nationwide in 2013. If everyone had worn seat belts that year, an additional 2,800 lives could have been saved.

* Proper seat belt use reduces the risk of fatal injury to front seat passengers by 45 percent and the risk of moderate to serious injury by 50 percent.

* Ejection from a vehicle is one of the most dangerous events that can happen to a person in a crash. In fatal crashes in 2013, 79 percent of the passenger vehicle occupants who were totally ejected from vehicles were killed. Seatbelts are effective in preventing total ejections; only one percent of the occupants reported to have been using restraints were totally ejected.

For more information, please visit NHTSA's Thanksgiving Holiday Campaign.

Volunteer Advocates Sought

The Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/.



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

U.S. Marine Corps veteran and current art student Dani Figueroa of Alexandria speaks at the Springfield Progressive Service Center and receives a donated Toyota Rav4.

Veterans Receive Refurbished Cars

When Alexandria resident Dani Figueroa left the U.S. Marine Corps after being injured during a tour in Afghanistan, she said, "I knew I was different, I had changed."

In addition to recovering from her physical wounds, the veteran also struggled with other conceptual, personal conflicts. "What is winning, what's my purpose?" she asked.

Figueroa found solace and direction in art, specifically the 296 Project, an Arlington-based organization offering art and expressive therapies to help people heal from traumatic events and injuries. With an aging and unreliable car, however, stress found its way back into her life as she struggled to commute to and from her classes with bulky canvases and supplies.

The former Marine was one of a pair of veterans recognized at the Springfield Progressive Service Center on Nov. 11. She and Josh Heath of the U.S. Army, currently at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, each received newly refurbished cars as part of Progressive's third annual "Keys to Progress" program.

This year, the insurer donated 134 vehicles nationwide to veterans and their families.

"I'm humbled and grateful," Figueroa said. "They're making it easy for life after the military."

Premier Collision Repair and Koons Collision Center refurbished the two donated vehicles.

For more information about The 296 Project, visit www.the296project.org.

—TIM PETERSON

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OPINION

Holidays Are About Giving

Give thanks and share locally; tens of thousands of families around us are in need.

The holidays are about giving, and giving thanks. The holidays are about children and family. The holidays are about sharing, about joy. The holidays are about being thankful and about faith and appreciation. The holidays are about alleviating suffering for others.

Northern Virginia is among the wealthiest areas in the country, and many if not most of us go through our usual routines without encountering evidence of needy families among us.

Where to Give Locally

- ❖ **FACETS** helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. 703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Avenue, Suite 300, Fairfax, VA 22030.
- ❖ **Our Daily Bread** in Fairfax expects to have 3,000 individuals and families on their list for the Holiday Program which helps those in need with food for the holidays and gifts for children. For more information on their holiday programs, including how to sponsor a family, go to www.odbfairfax.com/holiday.
- ❖ **Fairfax City Area FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help)**, helps local people who are in temporary need of life's basic necessities such as food, clothing, and financial assistance for rent, mortgage payments, utilities, and medical treatments. FISH also provides limited transportation for doctor appointments and food delivery. 703-222-0880. http://fairfaxfish.org/.
- ❖ **Lamb Center**, www.thelambcenter.org, Day center for homeless, Fairfax. 703-691-3178.
- ❖ **Food for Others** distributed more than 2.4 million pounds of free food to families in need in Northern Virginia in the year ending June 30, 2012. The nonprofit provides a safety net for people who suddenly face unforeseen emergencies such as a

But more than 51,000 children who attend Fairfax County Public Schools are poor enough to receive free or subsidized meals, a significant measure of poverty. That's 28 percent of students in Fairfax County Public Schools.

EDITORIAL

In Arlington more than 31 percent of the students are poor enough to receive free or subsidized meals; that's 7,749 students at last count.

In Alexandria, 8,664 students are poor enough to receive free or subsidized meals. That's 59 percent of the 14,671 students enrolled.

family illness or the loss of a job or a spouse. Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031. 703-207-9173. www.foodforothers.com

❖ **Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO)**, 703-569-9160. Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families, helping more than 5,000 people last year. www.echo-inc.org.

❖ **Lorton Community Action Center** operates the Act II Thrift Shop at 9506 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Sales from the shop generate funds for LCAC and clients also shop there. Now collecting gift cards and food baskets for Thanksgiving, gifts and food baskets for Christmas, and warm coats. 703-339-8611. www.lortonaction.org.

❖ **12 Ways of Giving:** Fairfax County Office of Public Private Partnerships "12 Ways of Giving" campaign is an annual event that showcases many ways for meaningful, local giving during the holiday season, highlighting nonprofits in Fairfax County. www.fairfaxcountypartnerships.org.

❖ **Assistance League of Northern Virginia** is an all-volunteer organization that clothes, feeds, educates and nurtures those in need focusing five of the neediest elementary schools. Volunteers and donors are always needed. Contact ALNorthernVA@yahoo.com or see www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org.

❖ **Comfort for America's Uniformed Services**

These are children who are living in families who may be on the brink of homelessness, families who must choose between medical bills, car repair, heat and food. These are children who may not be sure that they will have a meal between the meals they get in school. School holidays can bring uncertainty and hunger, a far cry from the celebrations, gifts and plenty that we associate with Thanksgiving and Christmas. Hundreds of homeless students attend the public schools, and their needs are greater.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season. Here are a few ideas. We will rerun this list again during the holiday, so let us know what we have missed.

— MARY KIMM.

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

(CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. 4114 Legato Road Suite B, Fairfax, VA 22033. 703-591-4968. cause-usa.org

❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia. 703-541-3063. www.capitalareafoodbank.org.

❖ **Homestretch** is the largest provider of transitional housing in Fairfax County and offers a services to help the homeless better their lives through education. Email: jhenderson@homestretchva.org. 703-237-2035 x125. http://homestretchva.org/volunteer/.

❖ **Pathway Homes** focuses on providing housing and support services to individuals with serious mental illnesses, with the mission to help these individuals reach their full potential and lead stable lives. They offer both in-home programs, semi-independent houses and assisted living facilities. 10201 Fairfax Boulevard, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703-876-0390. info@pathwayhomes.org. http://www.pathwayhomes.org. http://www.pathwayhomes.org/support-pathway/.

❖ **Shelter House** provides crisis intervention, safe housing and supportive services to promote self-sufficiency for homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. http://www.shelterhouse.org/get-involved/.

More Support Needed for Runaway, Homeless Youth

BY JUDITH DITTMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
ALTERNATIVE HOUSE



About Alternative House

The Alternative House, a Northern Virginia nonprofit organization, provides emergency shelter, transitional living programs and community based supports for homeless, runaway, abused and at-risk young people. Alternative House has provided services for young people for more than 43 years.

November is National Runaway Prevention Month and The National Runaway Safeline estimates are that nationally 1.3 to 1.7 million runaway, thrown away and homeless youth live on the street. Fairfax, even with its excellent schools and supports for young people, is not immune from this problem. Alternative House, a Fairfax nonprofit organization, provides emergency shelter and counseling to more than 150 young people each year. The Fairfax County Public Schools homeless liaison's office reports that there were 324 homeless youth under the age of 18 who didn't have the support of a par-

ent or guardian during the last school year.

Why do young people run away or become homeless? They run for many different reasons. Sometimes young people are experiencing "typical" teenage behavior. They get mad at their family and leave home usually going to a friend's house. But even this can be dangerous. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children estimates that one in six endangered runaways is a victim of sex trafficking. It's unfortunately too easy for even a suburban teen to be sucked into this horror when

they've left home.

Many young people are fleeing family conflict or an abusive situation. According to the National Runaway Safeline, 47 percent report conflict in their home, 80 percent of runaway girls report being physically or sexually abused and 43 percent of runaways have experienced physical abuse. These are young people who believe the street is safer than home and more than 50 percent of youth who are on the streets are there because their parents told them to leave or didn't care if they left.

Once they have left home young

people are at higher risk to become victims of sex trafficking, and assault. Young people are simply not prepared to fend for themselves. It's not surprising that mental health issues increase significantly with 32 percent of runaway and homeless teens reporting having attempted suicide.

Unfortunately, there are few resources for these young people. Here in Fairfax we have Alternative House. It is the only emergency shelter for teenagers in Northern Virginia. There is only one other shelter like it in the entire state of Virginia and that one is far away in Virginia Beach. In the past 15 years four other Northern Virginia emergency shelters for teenagers have closed. Fairfax

SEE ALTERNATIVE HOUSE,
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Springfield CONNECTION

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LETTERS

Worrying School Budget Cuts

To the Editor:

I am writing in response to an article published in the last week's Connection ("Garza Presents Budget Task Force Report to School Board.") I am concerned with the future of Fairfax County Public Schools' education system. The Fairfax County Public School board's main priority should be ensuring that the kids of Fairfax County receive the best education possible. With Superintendent Garza's proposed budget cuts, this will not be possible. Proposed ideas such as increasing class sizes and eliminating foreign language immersion programs not only hurt the student's education but also negatively affect their future in this era of globalization. Math and literacy rates in the U.S are significantly lower compared to many other countries, and cutting important educational programs ensures that we continue to fall behind.

Increasing student fees and cut-

ting certain programs serves solely as a temporary fix for the county's budget problems. We need to move discussion away from program cutting and towards ways to increase revenue. Property taxes are the number one contributor to schools' funding. If property taxes are increased, even by a small amount, schools will benefit. We cannot continue to cut our way through the financial issues that our county faces.

I may no longer be a student of Fairfax County, but I still have siblings and friends in the school system. Their futures are very important to me, and I want to make sure they receive the best possible education. It is vital that we save and maintain the quality of Fairfax County Public Schools.

Rachael Talento

Fairfax

Sophomore at James Madison

University.

Alternative House

FROM PAGE 8

needs more housing and supports for our runaway and homeless young people.

In addition to working to provide more safe shelters for those youth who have runaway or are homeless, there are things we can do as individuals and as a community to provide the support young people need to stay safe. Additional counseling resources can help families learn to better communicate. Since family conflict is

one of the primary reasons young people leave home this can have a huge impact. Studies also show that increased mental health supports and substance abuse treatment options for both youth and families help prevent runaway episodes.

Our young people deserve to have caring adults and a safe place to stay so they can grow to their full potential. If we can create this, we can prevent the tragedy that faces young people who run away and become homeless.

FAITH NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Clifton Presbyterian Church is offering a **Grief Support Group**. Offered for eight sessions on Thursdays from Dec. 3-Feb. 3 from 10:30 a.m.-noon for those who have experienced a recent death and loss in their lives. Dec. 3, 10, 17; Jan. 7, 12, 21, 28; Feb. 3. Clifton Presbyterian Church is located at 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. office@cliftonpc.org. 703-830-3175.

Workshop with Dr. John Mundy author of "Living A Course in Miracles" and publisher of "Miracles" magazine will take place on **Saturday, Nov. 21 at Unity of Springfield**, 8136 Old Keene Mill Road, Suite B-300, Springfield from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The workshop will focus on Eternal Life from A Course In Miracles and the report of near-death

and mystical experiences. \$20/\$25 unityspiritualcenterofspringfieldva.com.

International Bible Day at **First Church of Christ Scientist**, 5315 Backlick Road, Springfield will be on **Monday, Nov. 23** from 1-8 p.m. The public is invited to celebrate by viewing an exhibit of antique Bible leaves. A lecture, "The Origins of the King James Bible," will be presented at 7 p.m. Free. www.csspringfield.org.

The Guhyasamaja Buddhist Center, 10875 Main St., Fairfax City provides free classes to both newcomers and advanced practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism. The center emphasizes working with the mind and learning how to understand the workings of the mind, overcoming inner causes of suffering, while cultivating causes of happiness. Under the direction of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the center is a place of study, contemplation and meditation. Visit <http://www.guhyasamaja.org> for more information.



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 Lorton, VA 22079

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Tues., Dec. 8, 2015 • 6 to 7 p.m.
MedStar Orthopaedic Institute
 9455 Lorton Market St., Suite 200
 Lorton, VA 22079

Hand & Upper Extremity
Thurs., Dec. 10, 2015 • 6 to 7 p.m.
MedStar Orthopaedic Institute
 12825 Minnieville Rd., Suite 203
 Woodbridge, VA 22192

Attendance is free but registration is required.
 Space is limited. To register call **855-788-6464**. Light refreshments will be provided.
MedStarOrthopaedicInstitute.org/OrthoLectures

Knowledge and Compassion
Focused on You

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT & GIFT GUIDE



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton will be transformed into a Winter Wonderland on Saturday, Nov. 28. Holiday activities, fine art, entertainment, food and music abound.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Operation Lifesaver Santa Trains arrives at Burke Centre Station on Saturday, Dec. 12. Ride the train with Santa. Don't forget to bring a toy for Toys for Tots. Get tickets at vrespecialevents.org starting Monday, Nov. 23.

Holiday Guide

Go

SATURDAY/NOV. 28

Workhouse Winter Wonderland. 3-7 p.m. Full campus, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join and celebrate the holiday season creatively. Get into the holiday spirit by taking a special date or the whole family on a magical sleigh bell ride around our historic campus in horse-drawn carriages. Enjoy delicious holiday treats such as s'mores and roasted chestnuts by the fire. Free admission. workhousearts.org. 703-585-2900.

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

City of Fairfax Festival of Lights and Carols. 11:30-7 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Come enjoy live holiday music, hot cider, s'mores by the Yule log, petting farm, Ferris wheel, caroling and lighting of the Christmas tree in the winter wonderland. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/festival-of-lights-and-carols for times and locations.

Horse Society Holiday Procession. 2 p.m. Town of Clifton. Clifton kicks off the holiday season by parading through the town to Lustre's Field for the costume judging and to share refreshments with the town folks who come to admire and "get in the holiday spirit." This year there will be a special appearance by - you guessed it - Santa. <http://clifton-va.com/>.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 5-6

26th Annual Holiday Model Train Show. Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, Noon-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Model and toy trains displays in G, Standard, O, S, Lego, HO, N and Z Gauges. The "Train Doctor" will be available to fix or advise on broken models. Free for museum members. Adults \$5, children \$2. www.fairfax-station.org.

See and Hear

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 21-22

The Nutcracker. 2 p.m. 6 p.m. Ernst Community Cultural Center, NVCC Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Presented by the Burke Civic Ballet, come share in the magic of the holiday tradition. \$28, \$20. Order tickets at www.buffas.com. Contact burkecivicalballet@gmail.com for more information.

SATURDAYS/NOV. 28; DEC. 5, 12, 19, 26

Children's Theatre: "The Nutcracker." 1-2:15 p.m. and 3-4:15 p.m. W-3 Theatre, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Presented by Mestey Films Productions. Playwright Vianlix Mestey produces an original re-telling of the favorite holiday story in play form. Running time 75 minutes with one intermission. All ages. \$9-\$13. workhousearts.org. 703-585-2900.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 4-5, 11-12

Popular Christmas Drama. Call for times. Harvester Presbyterian Church, 7800 Rolling Road, Springfield. "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" play by Barbara Robinson. Show suitable for all ages. \$6-\$20. 703-455-7800.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 9

Middle School Orchestras. 7 p.m. Robinson Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Enjoy selections from the Nutcracker, the Leyden String Serenade and more. Canned food drive to benefit families of FCPS bus drivers. Free. 703-426-2143.

TUESDAY/DEC. 15

High School Orchestras. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Special performance. Festive music to get you in the holiday spirit. Free. 703-426-2143.

Do

SATURDAY/NOV. 28

Donuts with Santa. 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m. W-16, Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Santa is returning for a wonderful family event just in time for the holidays. Join Santa and his helpers for a special experience at Donuts With Santa. Each ticket holder will enjoy two doughnuts and a choice of juice or coffee while Santa and his elves read a classic Christmas story and lead a fun-filled family sing-a-long. \$20. workhousearts.org. 703-585-2900.

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

Santa's Workshop. 1-5 p.m. Springfield Methodist Church, 7047 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Come out to Santa's Workshop for crafts, cookie and cupcake decorating, storytime, a cake walk, letter writing to Santa and more. Additional fee for refreshments and photos with Santa. \$5. Children 12 and below.

amitchem@live.com.

Lunch with Santa. 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Have lunch with Santa. \$6. Parents free. Ages 10 and under. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov for ticket information or call 703-385-7858.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 9

Springfield Christian Women's Connection Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Springfield Golf and Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Program is on Creative Christmas Fashion Show. If you have purchased an outfit you would wear to a Christmas party - whether new or second hand - for under \$25, we want to see it. Bargain hunters and creative crafters, put on your tennis shoes or your crafting apron to find us something exciting for our show. \$20. Reserve by Monday, Dec. 7. SpringWmConn@yahoo.com. 703-922-6438.

SATURDAY/DEC. 12

Holiday and Petition Party. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Irving Middle School, 8100 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Begin with the line dance class with Cathy Byon followed by performances by outstanding senior dance teams, accompanied by potluck delicacies, including kim-chi and lumpia. We will discuss petition for annex to Pohick Regional Library. Family and Friends are welcome to join our celebration. corazonfoley@yahoo.com.

Operation Lifesaver Santa Trains. Burke Centre Station, 10399 Premier Court, Burke. Ride the train with Santa but don't forget to bring a toy. Burke Centre will become a drop off site for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots campaigns. Tickets go on sale Monday, Nov. 23. \$5-\$6. http://www.vrespecialevents.org/Seasonal_Santa_Trains/.

SUNDAY/DEC. 13

First Holiday Half at Burke Lake Park. 9 a.m. Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Runners can expect a premium experience starting with pre-race entertainment, a winter and holiday themed decorated course, scoring and awards, and an incredible post-race celebration including the awards ceremony, post-race breakfast buffet, and vendor expo. <http://www.metrorunwalkspringfield.com/holiday-half-home>.

SATURDAY/DEC. 19

VFW Post 7327 Thanksgiving and Christmas Adopt-a-Military-Family Party. Noon-4 p.m. Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department, 7011 Backlick Road, Springfield. Each year, the Post and Auxiliary provide food for the families at the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holiday. At

Thanksgiving they receive a "wish list" from the children and provide those gifts for the parents to put under the tree on Christmas day. Finally, they hold a Christmas party that includes food for the entire family, a visit from Santa Claus, crafts, entertainment, and music. Call 703-732-6596 for more information.

Shop

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 21-22

City of Fairfax Holiday Craft Show. Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Over 200 juried crafters and gourmet food vendors. \$5, \$8, free for under 18. Free shuttle bus. www.fairfaxholidayshow.com. 703-385-7858.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 3-6

Library Holiday Book Sale. Dec. 3, 3-9 p.m. Dec. 4-5, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 6, noon-2 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Come and find those perfect books, CDs and DVDs for your holiday shopping. Whether it's a cute little book to put a gift card in, a craft/hobby book for your favorite aunt or that special gift for mom, dad or the little ones - there are offerings galore waiting for you. Purchases will help fund valuable library children's programs. Bag sale on Sunday. For more information, please contact rbfriends@gmail.com or 703-451-8055. TTY 703-324-8365.

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

Art Guild of Clifton Holiday Show. 2-7 p.m. Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. A feature of this year's show will be instruction and craft demos for youth visitors. They will be able to use a variety of papers and stamping to create holiday cards and gift accessories suitable for their gift giving. www.artguildofclifton.org.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 5-6

38th Annual Arts and Crafts Show. 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Audrey Moore RECenter, 8100 Braddock Road, Burke. Top quality handmade arts and crafts will be offered by nearly 120 of the area's finest artisans selling handmade items and plenty of great gifts to choose from. Visitors will also be able to find clothes, drawings, photography, pottery, ceramics and metal and wood crafted items. Admission is \$2 per person; children ages 12 and under are free.



PHOTO BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO/THE CONNECTION

This house on Nanlee Drive in Springfield had the honor of being in Holly's Tacky Lights in 2014. Take a tour of your neighborhood and find out the best light show right in your neighbor's front yard. <http://www.fairfaxchristmaslights.com/>.

City of Fairfax Holiday Craft Show

Saturday, November 21, 2015
10 AM-5 PM

Sunday, November 22, 2015
10 AM-3 PM

Fairfax High School
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The Most Popular Art & Craft Show in the Greater Metropolitan Washington DC area!

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT & GIFT GUIDE

Creating a New Holiday Tradition

“A Fairfax Nutcracker” presented by Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and Fairfax Ballet Company.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Two venerable Fairfax County performing arts institutions are joining forces for a singular holiday season experience for the whole family. Long-standing local performing arts organizations, the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra (FSO) and the Fairfax Ballet Company, have re-envisioned and created “A Fairfax Nutcracker” to be performed at the Center for Arts.

The wintertime wonders of “A Fairfax Nutcracker” will have the memorable Tchaikovsky score performed live by the FSO under the baton of the classically trained Luke Frazier, FSO Principal Pops Conductor. Frazier is noted for conducting a number of FSO programs of his own creation as well founding and conducting the American Pops Orchestra with Great American Songbook performances at D.C.’s Lisner Auditorium.

Serving as “A Fairfax Nutcracker” production artistic director is Joseph J. Simeone, who will also dance the key role of the Nutcracker Prince. Simeone has danced with the American Ballet Theater, appeared on Broadway and recently at the Kennedy Center on “Little Dancer.”

Fairfax Ballet Company member Kellyn



Fairfax Ballet Company dancers in rehearsal for “A Fairfax Nutcracker.”

McNulty will dance the major role of Clara, the young girl who dreams of magical moments on Christmas Eve. The enchantment and mischief that Clara witnesses and joins includes a brave Nutcracker Prince coming to life, whimsical and exquisite characters such as Mother Ginger and the Sugar Plum Fairy along with a multitude of dancing angels, a ballerina doll, sugar plum fairies and witnessing a fantastical epic battle between heroic toy soldiers and mischievous mice. Dancing with McNulty and Simeone will be artistic staff and students from Fairfax Ballet and experienced professional dancers.

According to Karla Petry, executive director, Fairfax Ballet, “A Fairfax Nutcracker” gives students “a priceless opportunity to perform in a full production with professional dancers, with a major classical or-

chestra on a large stage.” Frazier, Petry and Simone agreed that “partnering together with other local arts organizations helps to promote youth involvement and greater arts awareness.”

Inviting audiences to “A Fairfax Nutcracker,” Simeone noted that “our Nutcracker offers everything that is exciting about an evening of live theater.” For Frazier, this is a great “opportunity for audiences to have a grand experience and to introduce new audiences to all that the performing arts offers in an inclusive and accessible production.”

What better way to kick-off these festive times of holiday cheer, than by experiencing a new holiday classic with the FSO and the Fairfax Ballet, partnering to create a wondrous evening of entertainment to cherish.

Luke Frazier, Fairfax Symphony Orchestra, Principal Pops Conductor.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LUKE FRAZIER



Joseph J. Simeone, “A Fairfax Nutcracker” production artistic director and Nutcracker Prince.

PHOTO BY STEFANIE BROWN



Kellyn McNulty, performing as Clara in “A Fairfax Nutcracker.”

PHOTO COURTESY OF FAIRFAX BALLET COMPANY



Where and When

“A Fairfax Nutcracker” presented by Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and Fairfax Ballet Company at the George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Ave, Fairfax. Performance, Dec. 5, 2015 at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$34-\$58. Call 888-945-2468 or visit <http://cfa.gmu.edu>

Robinson Theater Presents “Noises Off”

The Rambunctious Theater Company – in partnership with the Robinson Secondary Drama Department – presents Michael Frayn’s “Noises Off” on Nov. 19-21 at Robinson’s Russell Theater.

Showtimes are 7 p.m. with an additional 2 p.m. matinee on the 21st. The satirical presentation is directed by Robinson’s Megan Thrift and features an outstanding team of high school actors and technical crews as they bring this comedy to life.

“Noises Off” is a three-act play that tells a story within a story. The show takes its name from the theatrical direction for sounds heard off-stage. The playwright realized what he was seeing occurring behind the stage was funnier than the actual show on stage.

The premise is that director Lloyd Dallas was hired to helm an Americanized take on a British play and does his best to control an eccentric group of stage

actors. During practice sessions, things run smoothly.

However, when Lloyd and his actors begin a series of performances leading up to a Broadway premiere, chaos ensues. Star actress Doty is quickly passing her prime, male lead Frederick has no confidence and bit actor Selsdon is rarely sober.

The Cappies award-winning Rambunctious Theatre Company Boosters is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Comprised of community members and the parents of Robinson Secondary School Drama students, the boosters support and help facilitate the school’s various events and productions. The boosters host summer drama camps for younger actors and provide scholarships to Robinson students pursuing theatre arts in college. Tickets and additional details are available at robinsondrama.org.

“Noises Off” runs Nov. 19-21 at 7 p.m.; Nov. 21 also at 2 p.m. Robinson Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Rd in Fairfax. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$10 for students.



Robinson Secondary School actors present Michael Frayn’s comedy “Noises Off.” Top row, from left: Madyson Hanton, Daniel Williams, Julia Mahon Kuzin, Matthew Ross, Hanna Kornell, RJ Pratt; bottom row, from left: Colin Diggs, Alex Lane, Matthew Cook.

PHOTO COURTESY OF RAMBUNCTIOUS THEATER COMPANY

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

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Thanksgiving Buffet

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- Mixed Seafood Bisque
- Balsamic Onion Soup
- Oven Roasted Young Turkey with Giblet Gravy and Homemade Cranberry Relish
- Honey Glazed Ham
- Beef Filet with Merlot Wine and Horseradish Sauces
- Chipotle Chicken Breast
- Salmon Teriyaki
- Rotini with Romano and Pomodoro Sauces
- Shrimp and Scallop Fettuccini
- Homemade Stuffing
- Sweet Potatoes with Honey and Cinnamon
- Three-Potato Smash
- Soffrito Rice • Jasmine Rice
- Oven Roasted Vegetable
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THE CONNECTION

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

Ongoing

Inaugural Workhouse Glass National 2015. Through Jan. 17. W-16, Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join for the family-friendly exhibitions of glass art and the opening reception on Tuesday, Nov. 10, 6-8 p.m. workhousearts.org, 703-585-2900.

FCPS Art Teachers Exhibition. Nov. 14-Dec. 6. W-16 McGuireWoods Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join for the exhibitions by the FCPS best art teachers. Discover the breadth of talent found in FCPS as you view works by art teachers. The exhibit will feature various media, unified by the artist's passion to educate. workhousearts.org. 703-585-2900.

Sue Grace Art Exhibition. Nov. 14-Dec. 6. Workhouse Arts Center, Building W-10 Gallery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Her paintings share the experience of giving birth, explore the bridge between abstract and figurative expression. Gracefamily999@verizon.net. www.workhousearts.org. 703-585-2900.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/NOV. 19-21

"Noises Off." 7-10 p.m. Robinson Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Road, Burke. Hired to helm an Americanized take on a British play, director Lloyd Dallas attempts to control an eccentric group of actors. During practice, things run smoothly. However, serious chaos ensues during performances leading up to a Broadway premiere. \$12. 703-402-6653.

THURSDAY/NOV. 19

Pohick Christmas Mart. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. The Parish House and the Vestry House will be transformed into a festive Christmas atmosphere with rooms filled with Arts and Crafts, a Consignment Shop, and a Pantry Shelf with fresh baked goods, homemade apple butter, and frozen casseroles. The Docent Guild will be leading tours of our historic church, and a delicious luncheon will be served by ladies dressed in colonial costumes. www.pohick.org. 703-339-6572.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 19-22

Peter Pan: The Boy Who Hated Mothers. Thursday-Sunday, 8 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, 2 p.m. George Mason Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Exploring the original ideas and inspirations behind this iconic fantasy unveils a darker story of the boy who wouldn't grow up. This is Peter Pan as you have never seen it before but how it was always meant to be told. \$10, \$15. cfa.gmu.edu. 888-945-2468.



Chanticleer, hailed as "the world's reigning male chorus," performs at George Mason's Center for the Arts on Saturday, Nov. 28.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/NOV. 20-21

Annual Craft Fair. Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. St. Matthews United Methodist Church, 8617 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Over 35 crafters, enjoy lunch in our cafe along with our bake sale. All proceeds benefit United Methodist Women Mission Projects. Free. www.stmatthewsumc.org. 703-978-3500.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 21-22

City of Fairfax Holiday Craft Show. Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Over 200 juried crafters and gourmet food vendors. \$5, \$8, free for under 18. Free shuttle bus. www.fairfaxholidayshow.com. 703-385-7858.

The Nutcracker. 2 p.m. 6 p.m. Ernst Community Cultural Center, NVCC Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Presented by the Burke Civic Ballet, come share in the magic of the holiday tradition. \$28, \$20. Order tickets at www.buffas.com. Contact burkecivicballet@gmail.com for more information.

SUNDAY/NOV. 22

Hands On Activities Day. 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Activities include demonstrations and actual use of 100 year old telegraph sets, display of Civil War telegraph insulators, viewing the operation of the railroad "crossing guard" equipment, and building and painting model train scenery. Free for museum members and children under 4. \$2 ages 5-15, \$4 16 and older. jhill6712@aol.com.

23rd Annual Burke Area CROP Hunger Walk. 1:30 p.m. Living Savior Lutheran Church, 5500 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Walk 6K/3.7 miles or shorter Golden Mile to support local and global efforts to fight world hunger and

bring disaster relief to victims of recent disasters. Proceeds benefit international relief and development efforts of Church World Service and local Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO) in Springfield and Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) in Chantilly. Nonperishable food will be collected for ECHO. Free. ekringer@aol.com.

Third Annual Free Community-wide Turkey Dinner. 5-7 p.m. Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. Free Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings, all ages, all welcome. Free. adminfumc@vacoxmail.com. 703-971-5151.

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 4:30 p.m. Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, 6304 Lee Chapel Road, Burke. Susan Gray from the City of Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center will give a presentation entitled, "Love and Legacy: The Civil War Romance of Antonia Ford and Major Joseph C. Willard."

ECHO Benefit Concert. 3-4:30 p.m. Springfield United Methodist Church, 7047 Old Keene Mille Road, Springfield. Benefit concert for ECHO (Ecumenical Community Helping Others) with award-winning jazz ensemble Veronneau, soprano Nancy Scimone. ECHO assists in-need families in Burke and Springfield. Suggested donations \$15, \$12. Please bring non-perishable food item for the food bank. 571-232-1873.

THURSDAY/NOV. 26

Turkey Trot for Parkinson's. 9 a.m. Burke Lake Park, 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. 5K Run/Walk and One-mile gobble wobble to benefit the Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research. www.WestSpringfieldRunning.com.

SATURDAY/NOV. 28

Workhouse Winter Wonderland. 3-7 p.m. Full campus, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Join and celebrate the holiday season creatively. Get into the holiday spirit by taking a special date or the whole

family on a magical sleigh bell ride around our historic campus in horse-drawn carriages. Enjoy delicious holiday treats such as s'mores and roasted chestnuts by the fire. Free. workhousearts.org. 703-585-2900.

"A Chanticleer Christmas." 8 p.m. George Mason Center for the Arts, 4373 Pond Drive, Fairfax. An evening of ancient hymns, venerated sacred songs, contemporary classics, gospel spirituals and treasured American and European carols, all performed with Chanticleer's lush harmonies and impeccable technique. \$32-\$54, half-price for children and youth through grade 12. cfa.gmu.edu. 888-945-2468.

TUESDAY/DEC. 1

Tiny Tots Concert. 10 a.m. 7 p.m. Robert E. Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. Join Robert E. Lee High School Band and Drama for their annual Tiny Tots concert featuring favorite characters and seasonal selections. \$2. 703-663-0185.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 3-6

Library Holiday Book Sale. Dec. 3, 3-9 p.m. Dec. 4-5, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 6, noon-2 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce St., Springfield. Come and find those perfect books, CDs and DVDs for your holiday shopping. Purchases will help fund valuable library children's programs. Bag sale on Sunday. For more information, please contact rbfriends@gmail.com or 703-451-8055. TTY 703-324-8365.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 4-5

Norwegian Festival/Bazaar. Friday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Christ Lutheran Church, 3810 Meredith Drive, Fairfax. Fifth year with Norwegian café, Fjord horses, live music, Nordic Dancers, Norwegian food products and goods. Local Nordic artisans. Waffle, krumkake, lefse demos, baked goods and Kransekake sales. Free. www.norwaydc.org. 703-573-5943.

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

City of Fairfax Festival of Lights and Carols. 11:30-7 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Come enjoy live holiday music, hot cider, s'mores by the Yule log, petting farm, Ferris wheel, caroling and lighting of the Christmas tree. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/about-us/special-events/festival-of-lights-and-carols for times and locations.

Lunch with Santa. 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Have lunch with Santa. \$6. Parents free. Ages 10 and under. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov for ticket information or call 703-385-7858.

A Celtic Christmas with Sior-Og. 7:30 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. City of Fairfax Commission on the Arts sponsors the seventh annual Christmas concert. Adults \$5.00 and Children 12 and under free. www.fairfaxarts.org.

Santa's Workshop. 1-5 p.m. Springfield Methodist Church, 7047 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Come out to Santa's Workshop for crafts, cookie and cupcake decorating, storytelling, a cake walk, letter writing to Santa and more. Additional fee for refreshments and photos with Santa. \$5. Children 12 and below.

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Area Writer Celebrates With a Book Launch

'Boundaries of the Wind' becomes local author's most recent work.

BY MARISSA BEALE
THE CONNECTION

Urmilla Khanna was never a writer; her friends and family knew her as a doctor. Growing up in India, she knew what she wanted to do at an early age, and began her pre-med studies at the age of 15. By the time she was 17, she enrolled in medical school, and by the age of 22 she became a medical doctor.

"In India it was very streamlined," said Khanna, whose father supported her studies. But her life became a paradox when she returned home from school only to find that her father had arranged a marriage for her.

"I was very rebellious about the thought that my father had arranged a marriage," she said. "On the one hand my father trusted me to treat patients, but at home I had to be an absolutely obedient daughter."

OUT OF THIS TENSION grew a story that would fill the pages of Khanna's book, "Boundaries of the Wind," which was published earlier in 2015.

The book launch took place at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax in October, bringing her friends, family members and fellow writers together.

"It's been a long process," said her granddaughter, Anjali Khanna. "I found [the book] surprisingly relatable. She talks about wanting to be intellectually curious. I'm figuring out who I want to be and she was figuring out the same."

Khanna moved to the United States with her arranged husband in 1963. Despite initial aversion to the idea of being told whom to marry, she came to terms with it.

"I was not married against my wishes. I started to take interest in the man and the choices I was given." Her husband, Kris, had one more year of postgraduate study left in



PHOTOS BY MARISSA BEALE/THE CONNECTION

Urmilla Khanna (front, second from right) is the author of "Boundaries of the Wind," a memoir of growing up in India, going through an arranged marriage and starting a new life with her husband in the United States. Celebrating the release of her new book are her family members and close friends.

the United States, and planned to return to India in order to marry before completing his studies. He and Khanna met each other only briefly before marrying 10 days later.

They moved to Connecticut where Khanna got to know her husband, who she said became her very best friend. She worked part-time jobs in the basic sciences, needing to be recertified to practice medicine. Raising two small children, she eventually did everything to meet all licensing requirements and board certifications, and earning her master's in pharmacology in Ann Arbor.

They moved to Annandale, where she had a pediatric practice in the City of Fairfax located off of West Drive across from the Old Courthouse. She had a solo practice for about 25 years.

However, the untimely death of her hus-

band in 2003 caused her life to take a different turn. She expected them to have a long and happy retirement together.

"When he was no longer around I didn't know what to do with myself. My son suggested that I start writing my feelings in a

book." To take her mind off things, she started traveling and considering a second career.

"I knew I had to engross myself in something that would engross my life," she said. Without any formal training in how to be a writer, Khanna enrolled in a Fairfax County ACE Class taught by Joanne Glenn.

"Students can choose what they write about and we try to teach them the conventions of the genre," said Glenn.

"I took my first class with Joanne," said Mary Lucas, a friend of Khanna's who attended her book launch. "In my first class I sat by Urmilla."

THE TITLE of her book comes from a quote by her husband, who said, "Just like the wind, knowledge has no boundaries." Khanna never planned to craft a book, but writing and coaching from her teacher helped her to put a story together.

"Everybody has a story to tell if you really delve into it and work hard at bringing out the heart. If you write it from you heart, everybody has a story. You just have to really work very hard," she said.

Khanna has maintained friendships with individuals vastly different from herself.

"My own temperament has been described as boundless," she said with a laugh. Her book can be purchased on Amazon.



Urmilla Khanna with her granddaughter, Anjali Khanna. "She talks about wanting to be intellectually curious," said her granddaughter. Reading it as a teenager, she found the book to be surprisingly relatable.



Urmilla Khanna signs a copy of her book for a friend who attended her book launch in October.

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SPORTS



The Lake Braddock girls' cross country team on Nov. 13 won its second state championship in the last four years.



The Lake Braddock boys' cross country team repeated as state champion.

PHOTOS BY ED LULL

Lake Braddock Wins Girls', Boys' XC State Titles

The Lake Braddock girls' and boys' cross country teams won state championships on Nov. 13 at Great Meadow.

The girls' team produced a score of 44, finishing ahead of Oakton (76) and Madison (89). It was the Bruins' second state title in the last four years.

The Bruins had four harriers finish in the top 15, led by junior Kate Murphy, who won the individual state title with a time of 18:20.

Sophomore Sarah Daniels placed 10th for Lake Braddock (19:07), junior Emily Schiesl was 11th (19:10) and senior Sonya Butseva placed 14th (19:19).

Sophomore Samantha Schwerts com-

pleted the Lake Braddock top five with a 16th-place finish (19:25).

West Springfield senior Reagan Bustamante earned all-state honors with an eighth-place finish (19:02) and South County junior Faith Zolper took ninth (19:07).

The Lake Braddock boys' team posted a score of 46. Madison finished runner-up with a score of 106, followed by Cosby (127), Robinson (150) and Woodson (154). It was the Bruins' second straight state title and third consecutive top-two finish.

Senior Colin Schaefer was the Bruins' top finisher, placing fourth with a time of 16:02. Junior Conor Lyons placed eighth (16:16), senior Spencer Jolley took 11th (16:24),



Lake Braddock senior Colin Schaefer placed fourth at the VHSL 6A state cross country meet on Nov. 13 at Great Meadow.

senior Cavanaugh McGaw finished 14th (16:26) and junior Evan Chase finished 22nd (16:49).



Woodson senior Robert Lockwood finished fifth at the VHSL 6A state cross country meet on Nov. 13 at Great Meadow.

Woodson senior Robert Lockwood placed fifth (16:06), earning all-state honors. Robinson senior Hunter Jutras placed 13th (16:26).

West Springfield Volleyball Falls One Win Shy of States

Spartans won first conference/district title since 2007.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

After capturing the program's first conference/district championship since 2007 and defeating South Lakes and Patriot in the regional tournament, the West Springfield volleyball team needed to win just one more set to secure a berth in the state tournament.

The Spartans led defending state runner-up Madison 2-1 entering the fourth set of their 6A North region semifinal match on Nov. 12 at West Springfield High School, but couldn't close out the Warhawks. Madison won the final two sets, handing West Springfield its first five-set defeat of the year while ending the Spartans' season with a 3-2 (23-25, 25-18, 23-25, 25-15, 15-6) victory.

"It's tough to be that close, to taste it and not get it," West Springfield head

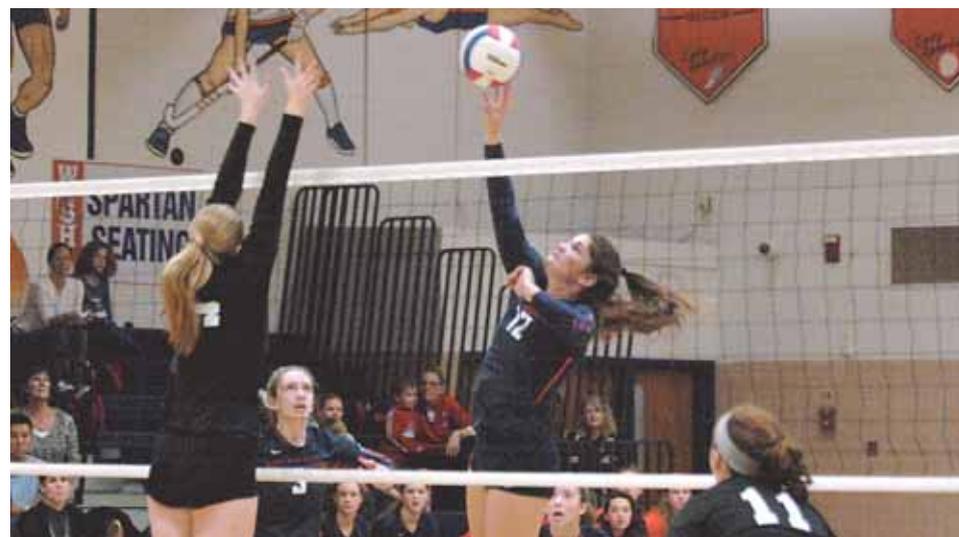


PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

West Springfield senior Megan Marin had 12 kills against Madison on Nov. 12 in the 6A North region volleyball semifinals.

coach Stephanie Noriega said, "but I'm so incredibly proud of my team."

West Springfield finished the season with a 17-4 record, including a 12-match win streak prior to its season-ending loss to Madison. The Spartans went 4-1 in five-set matches, including a pair of five-set victories in the region tournament.

West Springfield swept Lake Braddock in the Conference 7 tournament championship match on Nov. 5, giving the Spartans their first title since 2007.

"That was our goal all season long," Noriega said. "We looked at our banner every single day before practice started and visualized the 2015 going up there. We knew

all season long that we were going to capture the [conference] championship."

The Spartans won the conference title one year after failing to qualify for the region tournament. How did West Springfield turn things around?

"This team had more passion, in my opinion, to win," senior Brittany Padgett said. "We had the drive to win. That's why 90 percent of the time ... we'd go to five sets, we'd win. We have that fight in us."

Padgett earned Conference 7 MVP honors despite transitioning from setter to outside hitter during the season.

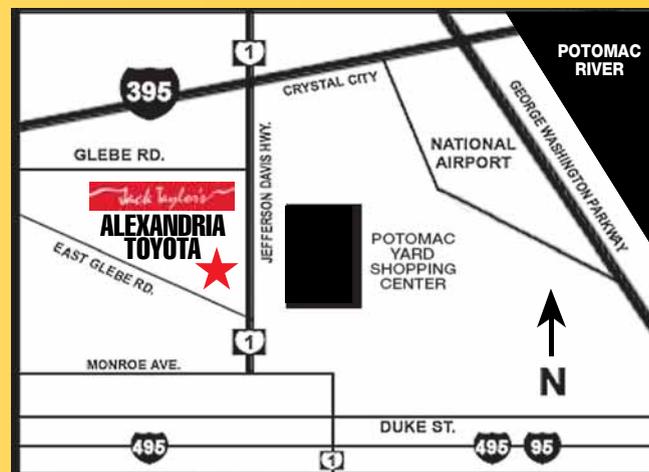
Against Madison, Padgett and senior middle blocker Megan Marin each had 12 kills.

"[Padgett] is one of the most ... positively aggressive athletes that I have worked with," Noriega said. "She is so hungry for that ball. ... Due to injury, we did this huge lineup change and moved her to the outside. She's hit outside for a month and a half and she's one of the top outside hitters in the region ... which speaks volumes to her all-around skill."

West Springfield's Tyler Wernecke had 18 digs and Jasmine Roy had 14 against Madison. Sara Khatouri finished with 34 assists and Hailey Olsen totaled six blocks.

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6A North Football Playoffs Down to Final Eight

Six of the top eight seeds advanced to the 6A North region football quarterfinals, while No. 4 Madison and No. 8 West Springfield had their seasons come to an end.

Madison was on the losing end of the biggest upset of the opening round, falling 27-19 to No. 13 Chantilly. West Springfield lost to No. 9 West Potomac 40-19, despite beating the Wolverines 28-9 during the regular season.

No. 1 South County advanced with a 35-21 victory over No. 16 Annandale. Stallions quarterback DeAndre Clayton completed 18 of 27 passes for 305 yards and three touchdowns, with one interception. He also carried 12 times for 61 yards and a score.

No. 2 Lake Braddock blanked No. 15 Woodson 49-0. Bruins quarterback Kyle Edwards went 25-of-31 for 292 yards and five touchdowns. Running back Ibrahim Mansaray carried seven times for 81 yards and two scores.

No. 5 Robinson faced No. 13 Centreville for the second straight week and edged the Wildcats 24-21. The Rams trailed 21-14 early in the fourth quarter but won on a 20-yard Nathan Musso field goal with 3 seconds remaining. Robinson running backs Da'Jon Lee, Sean Foncha and Roman Lowery each scored a touchdown.

The quarterfinals will be held on Friday, Nov. 20. South County will host West Potomac at 7:30 p.m.; Lake Braddock will host No. 7 Battlefield at 7 p.m.; No. 3 Westfield will host No. 6 South Lakes at 7:30 p.m.; and Robinson will host Chantilly at 7 p.m.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

SUNDAY/NOV. 22

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 4:30 p.m. Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, 6304 Lee Chapel Road, Burke. Susan Gray from the City of Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center will give a presentation entitled, "Love and Legacy: The Civil War Romance of Antonia Ford and Major Joseph C. Willard."

THURSDAYS/DEC. 3-FEB. 3

Grief Support Group. 10:30 a.m.-noon. Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton. The Clifton Presbyterian Church is offering to the church and community a Grief Support Group for those who have experienced a recent death and loss in their lives. This group will offer a safe and supportive place for participants to explore ways to walk the journey of grief and to "wrestle" with difficult, and sometimes unanswerable, questions. Dec. 3, 10, 17; Jan. 7, 12, 21, 28; Feb. 3. office@cliftonpc.org. 703-830-3175.

ONGOING

Blanket and Children's Winter Coat Drive. Through Dec. 5. Region-wide effort to help more than 4 million refugees fleeing from Syria and Iraq due to ISIL and civil war violence. Gently used blankets and children's winter coats will be collected and will be shipped to refugees who have fled to Turkey. www.helpsyrianrefugees.us
Senior Fall Prevention Classes. 1:30-2:30 p.m., at the Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Drive, Fairfax. Tuesday and/or Thursday classes in a heated pool designed to work on balance and core muscles for injury prevention. \$10. 703-667-9800.

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PUBLIC HEARING FOR TOWN OF CLIFTON
PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO SPECIAL USE PERMIT

PUBLIC HEARING TOWN OF CLIFTON
PLANNING COMMISSION

November 30, 2015

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, November 30, 2015 at 7:30 P.M. at the Acacia Lodge Hall, 7135 Main Street, Clifton, VA 20124 to consider the amendment of the special use permit of the Clifton Café, located at 7144 Main Street, to include an expansion of the use, including, but not limited to, the increase in number of seats, inside and outside; an increase in parking onsite; expansion of the hours of operation; increase in employees. The application for the proposed amendment to the Clifton Café's special use permit is available for review and downloading on the Town's website at www.clifton-va.com and a hard copy may be examined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton VA, 20124. All interested parties are invited to attend and express their views with respect to the requested amendment to the Clifton Café's special use permit.

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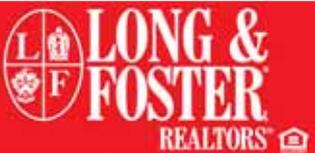
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