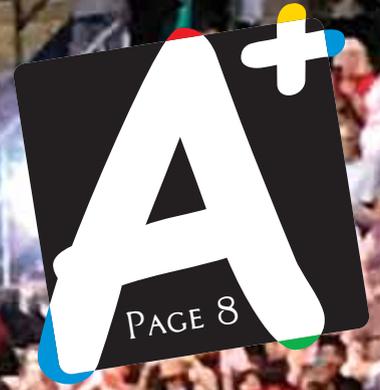




# Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION



## Hornet Pride Highlights Herndon High Graduation

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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

### Saying Goodbye To Oakton High

NEWS, PAGE 7

### Murder of Reston Teen: 'A Deadly Case of Road Rage'

NEWS, PAGE 3

The Herndon High School Class of 2017 toss their caps in the air at the conclusion of their graduation ceremonies held Monday evening, June 20. Guest speaker, NBC Channel 4 Anchor, Angie Goff urged the students to go outside their comfort zones and not be afraid to try something new, even if the outcome is unsure.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ASSISTANCE LEAGUE

**2017-18 Board of Directors, from left: Mary Spence, Lynn Barron, Kathy Jackson, Mary Gronlund, Karen Smith, Pat Thompson, Susan Wickman, and Susan Hurt.**

## Assistance League Installs New Board of Directors

Assistance League of Northern Virginia's Swearing-In and Installation Ceremony of the 2017-18 Board of Directors was conducted on June 12 during the nonprofit's annual chapter meeting. This year's meeting was held at Oh George! Tables and Taphouse in Fairfax and offered an opportunity for member volunteers to join together to celebrate chapter successes. Linda Shilts, president of Assistance League of Northern Virginia 2016-17, hosted the end of year event and expressed thanks to all members for their dedication to the organization's mission to provide essential programs to underprivileged children in Northern Virginia. "We are all volunteers and everyone contributes to the best of their ability. Thank you for giving back to our community," said Shilts.

Nomination Committee Chair Jeannine Boswell administered the oath of office and congratulated

the newly-elected and re-elected Board members, including President Kathy Jackson, VP Philanthropic Programs Lynn Barron, VP Membership Mary Gronlund, VP Resource Development Karen Amster, Education Chairman Mary Spence, Secretary Susan Wickman, Treasurer Pat Thompson, PR Chairman Susan Hurt and appointed Parliamentarian Darlene Cooke.

Incoming President, Kathy Jackson, praised Shilts for her service to the nonprofit and recognized members for their commitment to those in need.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia, a 501(c)(3) organization, accepts financial and in-kind donations throughout the year. To learn how you or your company can help transform lives and strengthen community, contact Karen Amster at karenamster@aol.com or visit [www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org](http://www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org).

## Boylan Named President, CEO of Chamber

The Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce has announced that John Boylan has been hired as its President and CEO, effective June 1, 2017. He is the successor in this position to Eileen Curtis, who retired after 23 years of service leading the Dulles Chamber. He has a wealth of experience and knowledge both in the private and public arena with a principal focus in the government areas of defense and technology.



**John Boylan**

He earned a BA from Fairfield University and a MA from California State University as well as a Fellowship at Tuft's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Boylan retired from the U.S. Air Force after 20 years serving as a KC-135 Navigator, as well as working in Geospatial Intelligence and Political-Military Affairs.

He was an Executive Vice President of National Security Group and Federal Marketing Practice for Cassidy & Associates, one of the Greater Wash-

ington area's top lobbying firms. Of late, he has worked as Principal of Bridget Partners developing strategy, marketing and business development for businesses in healthcare, defense, energy and infrastructure. Boylan has also worked at Lockheed Martin in Business Development and as VP of Government Relations with Riverside Research, a \$100 million not-for-profit.

John and his wife Ellen have three adult children, all living in Centreville, since 1993.

For more information, visit [DullesChamber.org](http://DullesChamber.org).



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PHOTOS BY FALLON FORBUSH/THE CONNECTION

In an act of solidarity, Isabel Membreno of Sterling, left, and Laura Fuentis of Sterling join a group of nearly 40 community members who showed up on Monday, June 19, to stand watch as Muslims enter the ADAMS Center mosque in Sterling for their evening Ramadan prayers.



Rizwan Jaka, ADAMS Center chairman of the board, steps out of the Sterling mosque to speak with community members on the sidewalk who gathered to show their support for the Muslim community.

## Murder of Reston Teen: 'A Deadly Case of Road Rage'

No evidence of hate crime; investigation continues.

BY FALLON FORBUSH  
THE CONNECTION

**D**arwin Martinez Torres, 22, of Sterling was charged with killing 17-year-old Nabra Hassanen of Reston in what police are calling a deadly case of road rage, according to the Fairfax County Police Department.

"There is nothing at this point to indicate that this tragic case was a hate crime," Julie Parker, spokesperson for the FCPD said during a press conference on Monday, June 19. "No evidence has been recovered that shows this was a hate crime. Nothing indicates that this was motivated by race or by religion."

Hassanen, a sophomore at South Lakes High School, was reported missing on Sunday, June 18, around 4 a.m. near Dranesville Road and Woodson Road in Herndon, which is in Fairfax County.

A group of as many as 15 teenagers were walking and riding bikes on Dranesville Road after attending an overnight event for Ramadan at a mosque in Sterling, which is in Loudoun County. The teenagers were traveling from the All Dulles Area Muslim Society, known as the ADAMS Center, to a restaurant, according to police.

As the teenagers were returning to the mosque from the restaurant, some were traveling on the sidewalk while others were on the road, according to police.

**DETECTIVES BELIEVE** Torres came upon the group in a car when a teenaged boy on a bike in the group began arguing with the driver. Torres then drove his car onto the curb as the group scattered. Witnesses say Torres caught up with the group in a nearby parking lot and got out of his car armed with a baseball bat. He then caught up to Hassanen, whom police believe was on foot, and assaulted her with the bat, according



A rainbow appears above the ADAMS Center mosque in Sterling as community members gather for Ramadan evening prayer services on Monday, June 19.

to police.

"It appears the suspect became so enraged over this traffic argument, that it escalated into deadly violence," Parker said.

Detectives close to the investigation were unwilling to provide details about the argument that incited Torres to murder.

"No, there was no indication of racial slurs or any kind of a back and forth, other than a verbal argument," Lt. Bryan Holland of the FCPD's Criminal Investigations Bureau said during the press conference. "It was just an argument between a driver and a bicyclist that was in the roadway and that's all I want to go into at this point," he added.

Holland was also unwilling to divulge details about a second assault the victim endured.

"There was an assault that occurred in Fairfax County and another assault that occurred in Loudoun," he said.

After Torres's initial assault, he took Hassanen in his car to a second location nearby in Loudoun County, according to police.

"At this point, we don't want to disclose [the location]," Holland said.

When Hassanen's friends could not find her when they regrouped at the mosque after the altercation with Torres, police were called to help, according to police.

Patrol officers from the Fairfax County Police Department and Loudoun County Sheriff's Office immediately began a search. A police helicopter, K-9 teams and search and rescue teams searched for the missing and injured teen, according to police.

While searching, one officer saw a car driving suspiciously in the area and stopped

it. The driver, later identified as Torres, was taken into custody as a suspect, according to police.

Around 3 p.m. on Sunday, June 18, the remains of a female were found in a pond in between two office buildings on Ridgetop Circle and the Fields at Cascades apartments on Huntington Square in Sterling, approximately 4 miles from the mosque.

The Office of The Chief Medical Examiner of Virginia conducted an autopsy on Monday, June 19, confirming the identity of the remains to be that of the missing Reston teenager, according to police.

The autopsy results showed Hassanen suffered from blunt force trauma to the upper body, according to police.

**TORRES IS BEING HELD** without bail and police are not searching for other suspects, according to Parker.

Since police report that assaults occurred in both Fairfax and Loudoun counties, it is undetermined where the criminal case against Torres will be tried, according to Holland. While police do not think Torres's motive for the murder was bias-related, they will not know for sure until the investigation is complete.

"If during the course of this ongoing, active criminal investigation, information or evidence surfaces that would indicate that this was potentially hate motivated, at that point, detectives would obviously take the investigation in that direction," Parker said.

Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, stepped in to reiterate this fact during the press confer-



PHOTO COURTESY OF FCPD

**Darwin Martinez Torres, 22, of Sterling.**

ence.

"Law enforcement will not know for sure until the investigation uncovers all of the facts in the case," Bulova said. "This is still an ongoing investigation. While the police work to uncover the motive, the fact remains that any violent murder is a senseless and a hateful act."

Though Muslim community members were grateful for law enforcement's swift actions, in the wake of the FCPD's press conference, they encouraged police to continue investigating the motive for the murder.

"We call on law enforcement to investigate all aspects of the motive," said Rizwan Jaka, ADAMS Center chairman of the board. "All angles of the motive must be investigated thoroughly. The perpetrator must be prosecuted to the full extent of the law."

Law enforcement intends to seek the harshest punishment for Torres.

"I can assure you that while justice will not bring Nabra Hassanen back, justice will be done as the suspect in this brutal attack is in custody and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law," Lt. Col. Tom Ryan, FCPD deputy chief of police for administration, said during the press conference. "I say to our Muslim community and to our Fairfax community as a whole, that the Fairfax County Police Department is committed to your safety and that when crimes such as this occur, our officers and detectives take it personal."

**DURING THE MONTH** of Ramadan, a prayerful time for Muslims to connect with God, family and community, the tragic situation was heightened, sending waves of shock and anger throughout the country.

SEE MURDER, PAGE 11

# OPINION

## Losing One of Our Own

**Worst fear of any parent of a teenager, losing a child to violence.**

Later this week, when area Muslims celebrate the end of Ramadan, a month of observance and daily fasting at Eid al-Fitr, the surrounding community grieves with them the loss of 17-year-old Nabra Hassanen of Reston.

Nabra was among a group of teenagers who were gathered at the All Dulles Area Muslim Society for an all-night event overnight Saturday during Ramadan, and who were returning to the center after going to eat at a fast food restaurant.

Fairfax County Police report: "At about 3:40 a.m. on Sunday, a group of as many as 15 teenagers was walking and riding bikes on Dranesville Road. The group of teens had been attending an overnight event at a mosque, the All Dulles Area Muslim Society or ADAMS Center, and had left to go to a fast food restaurant. As they were returning to the mosque, some were on the sidewalk and others were on the road itself. Detectives believe [Darwin Martinez Torres, 22, of Sterling] came upon the teens while he was driving. The investigation reveals a teenaged boy on a bike began arguing with Torres. Torres then drove his car onto the curb as the group scattered. Witnesses say Torres

caught up with them a short time later in a nearby parking lot and got out of his car armed with a baseball bat and began chasing the group. Torres was able to catch Nabra. His anger over the encounter led to violence when he hit Nabra with a baseball bat. Torres then took Nabra with him in his car to a second location nearby in Loudoun County."

Nabra's body was found in a Loudoun pond. Torres is charged with her murder, which police describe as a road rage incident rather than a hate crime, although more charges could come later.

All parents who have successfully raised children into a teenagers know fear for their safety as they become more independent. We expect our teens to be safe participating in events based at a house of worship. We expect our teens to be safe from violence. Nabra's death means that all of us now have a diminished sense of safety; we all grieve with Nabra's parents, who lost their beautiful and beloved daughter during Ramadan, on Father's Day. We share their horror at what their daughter suffered.

Coming together in support of the Muslim community in vigil, prayers and other support has meant a great deal.



PHOTO COURTESY KHADIJAH ABDULLAH-LARDAS  
**Nabra Hassanen, 17, of Reston was a sophomore at South Lakes High School.**

"Basically, the outpouring of support from the Christian community, the Jewish community, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Bahá'í; everyone is comforting to us," Rizwan Jaka of the ADAMS Center told a Connection reporter. "People care so much and it means so much to us."

But we will all feel the loss of Nabra Hassanen, and a loss of sense of safety here, in weeks and years to come.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## November General Elections

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

With the conclusion of the political party primaries last week the general election is now teed up for Nov. 7. There were some surprises coming out of the Democratic and Republican primaries. Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam easily won the



Democratic primary to be the nominee for governor even though there was discussion beforehand that polls indicated a tight race. Polling for primaries is notorious for being inaccurate because with a typically light turnout the universe of potential voters is almost impossible to determine. Former one-term U.S. Rep. Tom Perriello has a great deal to offer and will hopefully stay on the scene for future opportunities. Although the term "establishment" was grossly over-used in describing Ralph Northam, his service in the state senate plus his active role as lieutenant governor made him well known and greatly admired throughout the state.

Justin Fairfax gained everyone's admiration after a primary loss to Attorney General Mark Herring four years ago led to his active campaigning during the interim time making him well known for this primary. He was also well known for his work as an attorney. If you review the areas where Ralph Northam did well

and compare them with where Justin Fairfax was strongest, you create a strong statewide team that will be nearly impossible to defeat. Attorney General Mark Herring was not challenged in a primary and will be on the ballot to succeed himself in November. There is no one-term limitation with the attorney general and the lieutenant governor as there is with the governor.

The greatest surprise of the primaries may have been on the Republican side to pick a candidate for governor. Ed Gillespie who has been mentioned for years as the next Republican governor of Virginia barely got through the primary with a shockingly strong showing by Corey Stewart who is known for his anti-immigrant work in Prince William County and for campaigning with a Confederate flag. He has the distinction of being so over the top that he was fired by the Trump campaign. Turnout was especially low in the Republican primary, and Stewart was just over a percentage point in taking out Gillespie. It will be interesting to see if the folks who voted for Stewart will vote in the general election or decide to stay home.

The Republican primary for lieutenant governor was a slug-fest between two state senators with Jill Vogel winning after a mud-slinging campaign that left neither candidate looking good.

All 100 seats for the House of Delegates are

up for election this fall with a record number of contested elections.

Historically it has been difficult to recruit candidates to run for the House of Delegates, but events of the past year have brought forth more candidates than ever before. There was a record number 27 seats where the candidates were determined by the primary because there was so much interest in running. Democrats will certainly pick up seats in the House of Delegates getting closer to shifting or sharing power in that legislative body.

While I am uncontested in my race for the House of Delegates you can still expect to see me campaigning. It is a good way to stay in touch with constituents and to increase turn-out for the statewide elections. Expect a busy fall of campaigning leading up to the fall elections in Virginia that will send a signal to the nation as to the public's reaction to national events.

### Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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Call 703-917-6444  
Email editors@connectionnewspapers.com

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Published by  
**Local Media Connection LLC**

1606 King Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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# OBITUARY

## Elvira Belloma Washburn

Elvira Belloma Washburn, 77, of Oak Hill, died Friday, June 9, at the Dulles Health and Rehab Center in Herndon, after a long battle with cancer.



**Elvira Belloma Washburn**

Elvira was born Dec. 3, 1939, in Rutland, Vt. She graduated from Mount Joseph Academy in Rutland, Castleton State College (BA) and Western Connecticut State University with a masters degree. She taught junior high English and reading in Terryville, Conn. until her marriage to her husband in 1979.

They relocated to Richmond where they lived for six years. She has been a homemaker in Oak Hill since 1985. Elvira was predeceased by her parents, Antoinette and Joseph Bellomo, sisters Linda, Arlene, Concetta, and brothers Anthony and John. She is survived by her loving husband, Gerald Washburn, sisters Mary Sullivan (Bernard) and Charlene Boylan (Don) of Woodstock, Ga. and brothers Salvatore

(Barbara), Joseph and Anthony (Audrey) Bellomo of Rutland. She is also survived by Eugene Washburn (Betty) and DP Washburn (Linda), brother in laws of Shelby, N.C. and sister in law, Evelyn Washburn Giles (Walter) of Mooresville, N.C. She is survived by many nieces and nephews.

Elvira enjoyed cooking, oil painting and preserving and canning food. To her neighbors, friends and family, she was celebrated for her gifts of jellies and relish particularly at holidays. Elvira was active in assisting with the Reston Lions Club's eye glass recycling and donation program.

A memorial service was held at St. Veronica Catholic Church in Chantilly, on Thursday, June 15. Donations can be made to St. Veronica Catholic Church, 3460 Centreville Road, Chantilly, VA 20151 or St. Peters Catholic Church, 134 Convent Ave., Rutland, VT 05701.

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Master Gardener Training.** The Fairfax County Master Gardener Association offers plant clinics, home turf training or speakers for homeowner's meetings. Fees vary. Visit [fairfaxgardening.org](http://fairfaxgardening.org) or call MG Help Desk at 703-324-8556 for more.

**Fairfax County** needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer

opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**Fairfax County's Meals on Wheels** urgently needs drivers in the Annandale, Franconia/Kingstowne, Reston, Mount Vernon and McLean areas. 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults).



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# Hornet Pride Highlights Herndon High Graduation

Hard work pays off as opportunity awaits the Class of 2017.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

For the 426 Herndon High School students, the graduation ceremony held Monday, June 19 at EagleBank Arena, George Mason University, will be an event they will always remember. Not only because of the lessons learned in the classroom but those outside the classroom as well.

"Life is all about learning," said Grant Bommer, a member of the 2017 Class Council in his parting remarks. "And as long as you learn from your past mistakes, they aren't so much failures, but rather lessons for the future."

Maddy Johnson, another member of the 2017 Class Council, spoke about the student body's Kids at Hope Pledge, one that for four long years gave them hope. The pledge reads, "I am a Kid at Hope. I am talented, smart & capable of success. I have dreams for the future, and I will climb to reach those goals & dreams every day. All Children are Capable of Success, No Exceptions!" Johnson said. "It's that setting goals and having something to work towards that gets us up in the morning and keeps us working long into the night."

The third Student Council member to speak was Cyril Antony who thanked those who supported them. "Of course, we couldn't have taken risks and followed our ambitions without our teachers, our counselors, and our family members," Antony said to the audience.

**DR. LIZ NOTO**, Herndon High School Principal, recognized the students in the class of 2017 who were true academic scholars, those who took the most challenging courses and succeeded. She said, "They are our best and brightest and have participated in every aspect of student life. They are outstanding musicians, thespians, student government and club officers, athletes, and volunteers with hundreds of hours of service to their churches and community." Noto reported that the class of 2017 received more than \$3.7 million in local and national college scholarships.

Noto presented The Faculty Award, the highest honor awarded annually to the young man or woman considered the most outstanding senior, to Ryan Alcorn, founder of The American Veterans Support Group, who Noto said is one of the most inclusive people you will ever meet. "This humble young man is always looking for ways to make a difference; is greatly respected in both the school and the com-



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**The Navy Junior ROTC Color Guard presented our nation's colors at the Herndon High School's Graduation Ceremony held Monday, June 20 at EagleBank Arena, George Mason University. Herndon graduated 426 students.**

munity; and has touched many lives in his four years as a Hornet."

It is a tradition for the senior class to give back something back to the school in appreciation for all the help teachers, counselors and everyone in the community have given them. Rochelle Barasona presented a class gift that the Student Council hoped would have a direct impact on the other students. The gift, a spirit bag, was meant to encourage greater enthusiasm, liveliness, and passion within the school. "At the beginning of the next school year, each student will receive a bag containing various spirit items. The objects are to be used during pep rallies and other school-sponsored events to promote unity and boost student morale within the school," Barasona said.

**WITH FAMILY**, friends and distinguished guests watching on, Noto presented the diplomas. After the last student had received a diploma, Noto asked the graduates of the class of 2017 to stand.

Noto said, "By virtue of the authority vested in me as the Principal of Herndon High School, the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Governing Regulations and Policies of the Virginia Department of Education and the Fairfax County School Board, I hereby confirm that the seniors of the class of 2017, whose names have been presented to me, are graduates of Herndon High School. Graduates, you may shift your tassels from right to left."

## VIEWPOINTS

## Herndon High Graduates Reflect on Years Past, Years Ahead

PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS BY MERCIA HOBSON

### Isabella Back

"I am so blessed to have the opportunities that I do through the Navy. The scholarships that I received will allow me to go to my dream school and to serve my country. Attending Yale will expose me to countless things that I can use to better myself and work towards my goals. I am so grateful for the generous scholarships that I have from the Navy and the chance to grow into a better and more useful citizen."



### Christopher Randolph

"I want to thank my mother for doing everything in her power to give me a stable life during my high school career. I also want to thank my grandparents for always being there for me, Mr. Colton Walker for helping me figure out how to get to this day, Mrs. Kathleen Jacoby for being my rock and providing a safe space for me to go whenever I needed it, and my sister Meghan for providing me with a motivation to keep trying my hardest every day for the past four years."



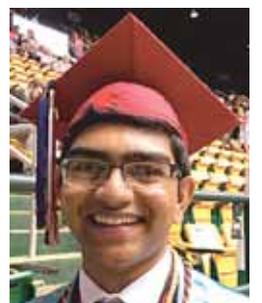
### Maddy Johnson

"My favorite memory at Herndon has to be taking AP Chemistry. It had to be the hardest, but the most rewarding experience for me thus far. I've never had my classmates and my teacher form such a family-like bond, but I guess staying up all night studying and struggling with the same assignments really brought us together. There are so many great things to remember about Herndon, but taking that elective will always stick out to me because it taught me that with a support system, I could be capable of anything I set my mind to."



### Cyril Antony

"Everyone I know helped me get here today. I can't possibly list them all, but especially my parents, my family and every single teacher from kindergarten through the senior year has helped me become who I am. I am so grateful to each and everyone for inspiring me and for being my role models."



### Cyril Antony

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SEE VIEWPOINT, PAGE 9

# Saying Goodbye to Oakton High

The class of 2017 had 188 honor graduates, more than any previous Oakton High School class.

BY MAGGIE GIORDANO  
THE CONNECTION

The color burgundy filled the floor of Eagle Bank Arena at George Mason on June 15. Oakton High School students gathered for the 2017 graduation ceremony at 2 p.m. The graduating class of 587 students nervously and anxiously awaited the moment their names would be called to walk across the stage.

Steve Buckhantz, television play-by-play announcer for the Washington Wizards, encouraged students to reach for their dreams.

“Find something you’re passionate about, pursue it, and be persistent,” Buckhantz said.

He is a Washington, D.C., native and attended Washington-Lee High School in Arlington. With 40 years of broadcasting experience with stations including NBC and Fox 5 TV in D.C., Buckhantz had a lot of advice for the young adults. He reminded students that they should remember where they came from and work hard for their futures.

The faculty awarded Ryan Davis the Faculty Award, which goes to a graduating senior who has been a great contributor to the Oakton High School Community.

This year was the last year that the Oakton principal, Dr. John Danbury, would be shaking students hands and handing them their diplomas. He was promoted to executive principal of region 1 a few months ago. Since then, Daniel Meier has been the interim principal until the position is filled.

Faculty received their share of appreciation from the speakers, including student Lydia Lodge, the Executive Council President, who said, “Without teachers, there would be no graduation.”



SGA officers pose for one last picture. From left: Kaitlyn Hyn, Will Miller, Ahmad Hasanian, Lydia Lodge, Caroline Deloach, Carly Golden and Katie Mcdaid.

PHOTOS BY MAGGIE GIORDANO/THE CONNECTION



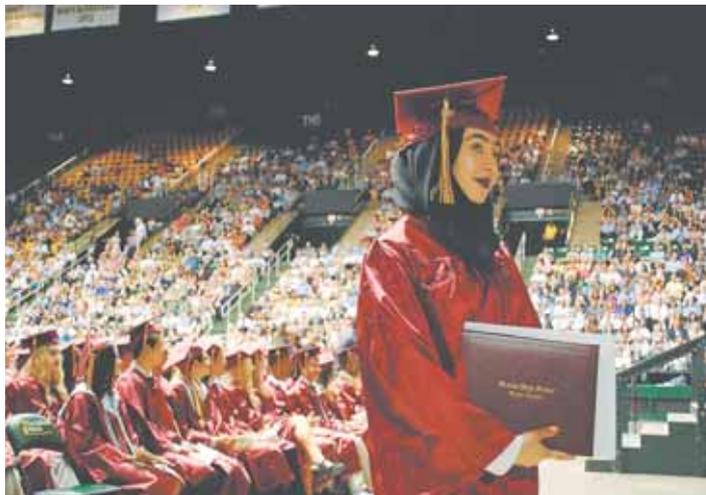
From left: Leah Harriman, Alyson Calvello (counselor), Sarah Hanlon, Sam Harmic and Seamus Hanrahan.

The chorus sang a senior tribute of “Unwritten” by Natasha Bedingfield. The class of 2017 had 188 honor gradu-

ates, more than any previous Oakton class. The Oakton cougars were able to proudly throw their burgundy caps in the air.



Parents, Rodney and Dawn Whitmore, wait with daughter, Briana, to see their son Myles Whitmore graduate.



Students received their diplomas and stopped to have their pictures taken once they stepped off the stage.

VIEWPOINTS

## Oakton High School graduates reflect on where they see themselves in 5 years?

PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS BY  
MAGGIE GIORDANO

**Kylie Paldao**

“I am attending Elon University. I will be studying either education or something with public health. In five years I hopefully will work as a teacher or be attending nursing school.”



**Nitya Reddy**

“I am going to the University of Pittsburgh to study pre med. I see myself going to med school and doing some internships.”



**Hunter Carrico**

“I am going to James Madison University and studying theatre and hopefully minoring in studio art as well. In the future I will hopefully be doing something along the lines of acting, whether or not it be teaching or performing on stage in D.C. or other cities.”



**Gifty Wisdom**

“I am thinking about going straight to a four year college. I was accepted to many colleges and am thinking about it. In five years I would be doing my dream job as a nurse and traveling around.”



**Allison Grant**

“I am going to be going to the University of Mary Washington and I am not quite sure what I want to study yet. I will probably be getting my master’s degree after.”





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**The Women in Search of Excellence (WISE) Mentoring Program run by Northern Virginia Community College is designed to address challenges faced by young women in higher education.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## Finding the Right Mentor

**A mentor can brighten a young person's future.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**T**amyka Mason says that she was struggling with academics, finances and time management. She knew that she needed to make a change, but didn't have a source for guidance. Mason discovered the Women in Search of Excellence (WISE) Mentoring Program run by Northern Virginia Community College and her life began to change.

"When I joined WISE, [I] was assigned [a] mentor and learned how to speak about the challenges I was facing and the goals I had," said Mason. "[My mentor] helped me dramatically ... plan for future events."

The upcoming summer months offer teens an opportunity to connect with adults other than parents who can offer guidance through mentorship programs. Finding the right mentoring match can be a life-altering experience, say experts.

"Through supportive relationships with adult mentors, teens can learn how to develop practical goals, identify resources to accomplish goals ... regulate emotions, communicate effectively with others and cope better with stress," said Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University.

The Virginia Mentoring Partnership (VMP) is a source for those who are looking for a mentor or those who want to mentor others. The organization's program managers train mentoring program coordinators and mentors. Their goal is to increase the number and quality of mentoring programs in Virginia. VMP maintains a database where prospective mentors or mentees can plug in a ZIP code and find the closest mentoring program.

"We provide support across the State of Virginia to help align program practices that research shows make high quality mentorship programs," said Betsy Bilharz, Virginia Mentoring Partnership. "We recruit, screen and match mentors with young people using that set of standards."

Recognizing that a mentoring relationship is not usually a relationship of equals is an important aspect

of mentorships, says Amy L. Best, Ph.D., professor and chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology at George Mason University. "There are really two types of mentors: those who provide guidance and willingly share knowledge they have accrued from their experience in the field," she said. "The second type are those who facilitate opportunity, vouching for someone or helping the person with points of contact in their area of interest. Both are important."

**THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP** develops best when mentors listen to a young person's concerns and expectations [and] empathize and tailor support and skill building around the teen's needs and with their input, says Short. "The relationship should benefit both the mentor and the teen through expressions of gratitude, a sense of accomplishment, and expectations for future support and success."

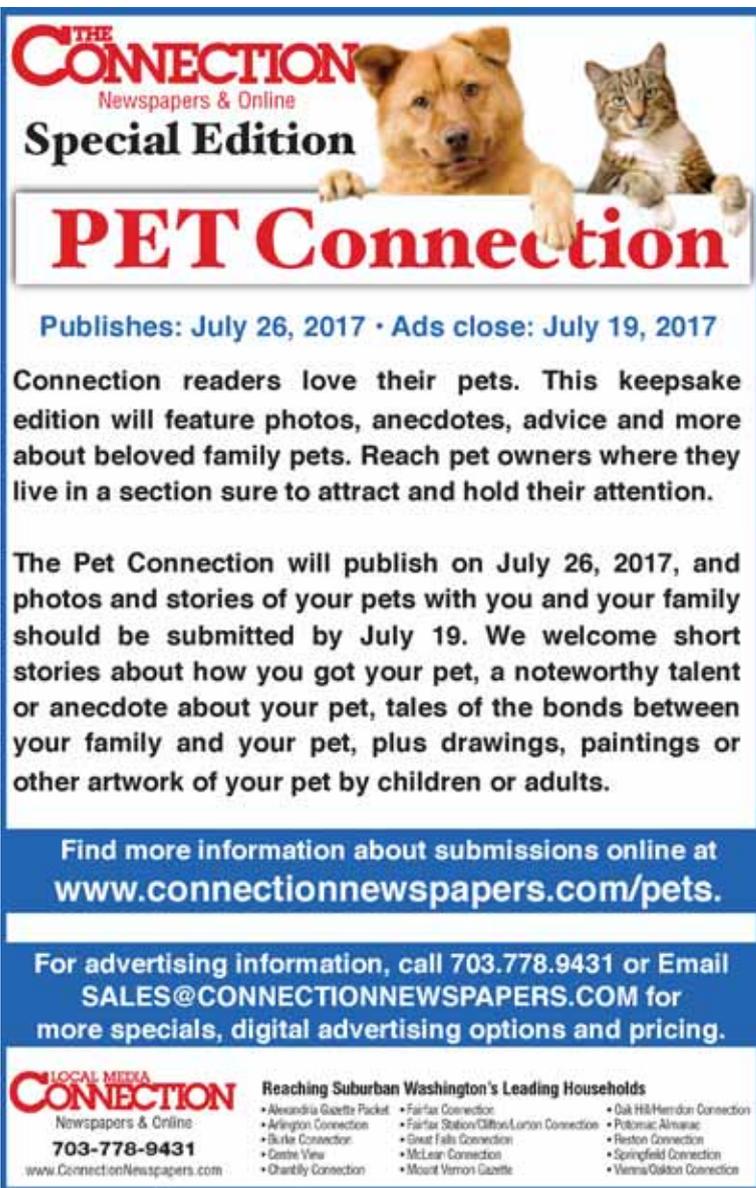
Effective mentors are as interested as they are interesting and are forthcoming with accounts of their own struggles and the strategies they used to overcome them, says Best. "The best mentors listen first and then lead. It's not a one size fits all relationship," she said. "The best mentors are concrete in their guidance and work with attainable and flexible goals. [They] don't play favorites, but work to create an ethos of fairness and mutual respect."

Tykesha R. Myrick works as a financial aid manager at Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) and is the founder of the WISE program on campus. The program, which targets minority women, pairs students with adult professionals who offer guidance to the students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. "The relationships go beyond academic accomplishments and are life changing and life lasting," said Myrick. "The goal is to provide a holistic environment for these young women."

Mentorship programs such as WISE work best when those being mentored are receptive. "The [best] mentees [respect] the mentor's gift of time [and] recognize the importance of learning by listening and ask thoughtful questions, and they are open and responsive to guidance," said Best. "It is equally important to invest not simply in the best and brightest, but those with the smallest glimmer of promise. Good mentors move mountains."

### Details

For more on Virginia Mentoring Partnership, visit [vamentoring.org](http://vamentoring.org) or [connect.mentoring.org](http://connect.mentoring.org).



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VIEWPOINTS

# Herndon High Graduates Reflect on Years Past, Years Ahead

PHOTOS AND INTERVIEWS BY MERCIA HOBSON

FROM PAGE 6

**Benjamin Walter**

“I can honestly say I’ve changed from freshman year to senior year. I am more outgoing, excited for life, and moving onto better things.”



**Joe Walter**

“From freshman year to senior year, I have transitioned into a responsible adult. After becoming a full-time member of my high school robotics team and being given the responsibility to design part of our robot, I had the chance to prove myself and show I could be relied on.”



**Johnson Wan**

“I see myself being a dietician; eventually I want to be a technician. It could be a good change of pace for me.”



**Nastajia Walker**

“Knowing that I had to graduate and wanting to get the full experience of my senior year made me get up and go to school. Grades and my parents pushed me on. I plan on going to NOVA for two years and then transferring to Virginia Commonwealth University.”



BULLETIN BOARD

To have community/civic events listed in the Connection, send to [connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar](http://connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar).

**THURSDAY/JUNE 22**

**Fundraiser.** Shop at a Whole Foods Market located in Fair Lakes, Reston, Springfield, Tysons or Vienna and 5 percent of net sales will be donated to the Fairfax County Park Foundation to help Fryling Pan Farm Park, Hidden Pond Nature Center, and other Fairfax County park programs.

**JUNE 26-AUG. 25**

**Summer Lunches.** The Fairfax County Public Schools Office of Food and Nutrition Services will be hosting the FEEDS (Food for Every Child to Eat During Summer) BBQ program, a USDA-funded program is free to all children 18 years and under and \$2 for adults. There is no registration involved, and open to everyone. Meal service will be provided at the following sites Monday-Friday, 11:30-1 p.m. No service on July 3 and 4. In the Reston-Herndon area,

FEEDS is offered at the following schools:

- ❖ Dogwood Elementary School, 12300 Glade Drive, Reston
- ❖ Hutchison Elementary School, 13209 Parcher Ave., Herndon
- ❖ Herndon High School, 700 Bennett St., Herndon

**ONGOING**

**Sunrise at Reston Town Center** offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers, to meet and develop a mutual support system and to exchange practical information and possible solutions. Call 703-956-8930 or email [Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com) to RSVP.

**Exercise for Parkinson’s.** Every Monday, 1:15-2:15 p.m. Reston Sport&Health, 11445 Isaac Newton Square, Reston. This program brings together people impacted by Parkinson’s Disease. Free. [parkinsonfoundation.org](http://parkinsonfoundation.org). Call Natalie McCall at 703-904-7600 for more.



## Diocese of Arlington Victim Assistance Coordinators For Sexually Abused Minors 703-841-2530 • 703-841-2759

The Diocese of Arlington provides comprehensive assistance to anyone who as a minor was sexually abused by a priest, deacon, teacher, employee or representative of the diocese. Parents, guardians, children and survivors of sexual abuse are invited and encouraged to contact the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinators, experienced social workers, who will provide a confidential consultation.

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## Yard Sale

"Huge Annual Church Yard Sale- 304 E Church Rd, Sterling, VA 20164. Saturday June 24 from 7 am to 2 pm. If you need it we probably have it. Appliances, clothing, housewares, furniture, electronics, exercise equipment, etc. Rain or shine."

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# ENTERTAINMENT

Send entertainment announcements to [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## ONGOING

**Art Exhibition.** 8 a.m.-5 p.m. through June 29 at U. S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive. Exhibit "H. K. Anne Presents The American Landscape," will be on exhibit at the USGS National Center is a public building, parking is available in the visitor's lot outside the visitor's entrance. Photo ID is required to enter. Visit [www.HKAnneFineArt.com](http://www.HKAnneFineArt.com) for more.

**Lake Anne Exhibit.** Through July 2 at the Reston Community Center at Lake Anne, 1609 Washington Plaza N. Exhibit features work by members of the Reston Photographic Society. Visit [www.leagueofrestonartists.org/rps](http://www.leagueofrestonartists.org/rps) or call 703-476-4500.

**All-comers' Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running.** Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. Call 703-689-0999 [potomacriverrunning.com](http://potomacriverrunning.com).

**"A Bird in the Hand"** through spring 2017 Reston Town Square Park, 11990 Market Street, Reston Town Center. See and explore Patrick Dougherty's monumental public art sculpture made from tree saplings. Presented by GRACE in collaboration with IPAR. 703-471-9242 [restonarts.org](http://restonarts.org)

**Teen and Adult Art Classes**  
**ArtSpace Herndon** Every Monday from 5:30-8:30 p.m. 750 Center Street, Herndon. Drawing and Mixed Media with Melanie Stanley - During Fall and Winter of 2016. Cost: \$45/class. The class will use a variety of techniques for drawing, painting, mark making, and collage using fine arts tools and materials. Students will be taken down a creative path to learn to use drawing tools and brushes more effectively. Register by emailing Melanie, and she will send you the supply list and payment options/information: [ridingfree2@gmail.com](mailto:ridingfree2@gmail.com). 703-956-9560. [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com).

## THURSDAY/JUNE 22

**Road Trip to "RENT."** 5:15-11 p.m. meet at 5:15 pm Hunters Woods Shopping Center (Ledo Pizza) or at 5:30 pm Lake Anne Plaza parking lot, 1609 Washington Plaza N., 2254 Hunters Woods Plaza. Reston Association trip to National Theatre to see "RENT," a Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning theatrical production follows a year in the lives of seven artists struggling to follow their dreams without selling out. \$95 for RA members, \$110 for non-members Email [Ashleigh@reston.org](mailto:Ashleigh@reston.org) or 703-435-6577 to register.

**Improv Comedy Night.** 7:30 p.m. at NextStop Theater, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. "Last Ham Standing," show for all ages. Visit [www.nextstoptheatre.org](http://www.nextstoptheatre.org) for more.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 24

**Slam Allen Concert.** 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Blues style music. \$20. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com) or call 703-956-6590.

## JUNE 24-25

**SoccerFest.** Various times at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Full weekend of soccer competition. call 703-471-5414.

## DEADLINE JUNE 27

**T-Shirt Art Competition.** Reston

Bicycle Club (RBC) and Arts Herndon invite all 2D artists to enter the Reston Century T-Shirt Art Competition following a theme that identifies it with bicycle road cycling, "Ride Safe/Ride Fun." Winner notified July 15. Visit [restonbikeclub.org/](http://restonbikeclub.org/) for more.

## WEDNESDAY/JUNE 28

**The Great Zucchini (Comedy/Magic).** 10-11 a.m. at the Visitor Center Pavilion 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Wednesday Morning Children's Series. Free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)

## DEADLINE JUNE 30

**Call for Artists.** at the US Geological Survey, National Gallery, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Eligible works are paintings, mixed media, and two-dimensional works suitable for wall hanging (no photography). The exhibit will be on display from July 3-28. Artwork that reflects USGS's environmental mission is encouraged. Enter works here [www.leagueofrestonartists.org](http://www.leagueofrestonartists.org).

## SATURDAY/JULY 1

**Independence Day Celebration.** 10 a.m. at Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Water Mine opens 11 a.m.-3 p.m.; boat rentals open 1:30-2:30 p.m.; puppet show 3-9:15 p.m.; live music 9:15 p.m. (approximately) Fireworks show \$10/car. Food vendors will set up near the park main office. Campgrounds are available for an overnight stay. Reservations recommended, call 703-471-5415.

**Deanna Bogart Band Concert.** 7:30-10 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. A night of dancing to the jump blues of this pianist/saxophonist/vocalist. Call 703-912-4062 or visit [restontowncenter.com/concerts](http://restontowncenter.com/concerts).

## MONDAY/JULY 3

**Mr. Knick Knack Performs.** 10:30-11:15 a.m. in the pavilion at the Reston Town Center, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Music for the children, part of musical Mondays program. Call 703-912-4062 or visit [www.restontowncenter.com](http://www.restontowncenter.com).

## TUESDAY/JULY 4

**Firecracker 5K.** 8-10 a.m. Reston Town Center, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Live music and American flags while rooting for the runners in the "Battle of the Branches" competition. Call 703-912-4062 or visit [www.restontowncenter.com](http://www.restontowncenter.com).

**Herndon Independence Day Celebration.** 6:30-9:30 p.m. in Bredy Park at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave. Family-fun event featuring games, patriotic arts and craft activities, live music, family games, bingo, food, balloon artists and more. Visit [herndon-va.gov/recreation/special-events/4th-of-july](http://herndon-va.gov/recreation/special-events/4th-of-july).

## WEDNESDAY/JULY 5

**Blue Sky Puppet Theater.** 10-11 a.m. at the Visitor Center Pavilion 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Wednesday Morning Children's Series. Free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov)

## THURSDAY/JULY 6

**The Annandale Brass (American Popular Music).** 7:30- 8:30 p.m. at Kidwell Farm, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Thursday Evening Concert Series. Free. Visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov).

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# Investigation Continues

FROM PAGE 3

"The community is together every night," Jaka said. "This affects everyone's heart in the deepest fashion."

Hassanen's Muslim community was particularly stricken.

"The community is grieving," Jaka said. "The community is in shock and we're trying to counsel the whole community and counsel the youth. Regardless of what the motive was, this was a heinous and horrific murder and tragic."

Jaka remains hopeful and is heartened by the show of support the mosque has received from around the state.

"Basically, the outpouring of support from the Christian community, the Jewish community, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Bahá'í; everyone is comforting to us," he says with tears in his eyes and emotion in his voice. "People care so much and it means so much to us."

Gov. Terry McAuliffe, Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam, U.S. Rep. Barbara Comstock, Fairfax County and Loudoun County Board of Supervisors and other government officials have issued statements of support and sympathy for Hassanen's family and the grieving Muslim community.

**IN AN ACT OF SOLIDARITY**, a group of nearly 40 community members showed up on Monday, June 19, to stand watch as Muslims entered the ADAMS Center mosque in Sterling for their evening Ramadan prayers.

"She didn't deserve to die," said Laura Fuentes of Sterling, who held a lit candle as she stood on the sidewalk outside of the mosque. "I can't even imagine what her family is feeling."

"I've been living here for over 30 years and it's very sad that something like this happened in our neighborhood," said Isabel Membreno of Sterling, who also stood while holding a candle that was burning brightly.

"They've extended their support, so it means a lot that we can come together," Jaka said. "God tells us in the Koran that we must respond to bad with good. It just shows the love that overcomes the bad."

Online fundraisers on LaunchGood and GoFundMe are raising money for Hassanen's family to cover funeral expenses and other needs with a combined goal of \$365,000. As of the morning of Tuesday, June 20, the campaigns raised a total of \$327,305 from more than 12,000 contributors nationwide.

The South Lakes High School Muslim Student Association is organizing a "Vigil for Nabra" event at Lake Anne Plaza at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 21.

"We have to always remember, respond to bad with good," Jaka said. "We have to show more love, more harmony. We were overwhelmed by calls, by emails, by visits by the interfaith communities. Pastors are coming and calling, rabbis are calling and coming over. That's the love that overcomes the hate."

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# Relatively Speaking



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

If you live long enough, it's quite likely that many of the family members/generations born before you will have predeceased you. Moreover, the family members born before them, two generations-plus behind, are most surely to be geshtorbin (Yiddish for dead) as well. The effect: memory loss. Specifically, the memories lost of a generation of great grandparents – and beyond, you probably never knew or for whom you have extremely limited knowledge; after all, you were an infant when your maternal grandmother died. And when your widowed mother died nearly nine years ago, you lost what may very well have been that final anecdotal connection to your family's history, especially if your Jewish and your grandparents immigrated from Russia, Romania, The Baltic States, etc. before World War II where recorded history of Jews was evidence not documentation.

It just so happens that in my family, in fact, our closest surviving cousins, Ronnie and Gil, who themselves are in their 80s, are alive and extremely well and living with their daughter, Jayne, in Massachusetts. This past weekend, Ronnie and Gil drove eight hours to visit my brother Richard and me. And though we are regularly in touch over the phone, it has been years since we were all together in Washington, D.C. And being in their company, naturally we reminisced – ALL WEEKEND. What spawned this column was a comment Ronnie (a singer/pianist in Boston for 25 years) made in response to a question we asked about whether there was any other musical talent in the family. She said quite matter of factly that my maternal great-grandfather – who I had never met or even heard of before, "was a cantor in Russia – with a beautiful voice" (who never left Russia). "What! I never knew that." I don't recall knowing anything about my great grandparents, maternal or paternal.

You see, Ronnie was there almost at the beginning. She was the first born to my mother's oldest sibling and only sister, my Auntie Lee. My mother was the baby of the family – after two brothers were born. As such, the age difference between my mother and Ronnie was about 14 years, atypical for a niece and an aunt. As a result, Ronnie was witness to lots of family history that I thought might have been lost forever when my mother died in 2008. As a few examples, Ronnie knows who was present at my mother's "Auntie's" house for Passover Cedar in the early 1960s. She knew that "Auntie" was my mother's mother's brother's widow, not my mother's mother's sister. I certainly didn't. She knew that three families/our cousins lived together in this three-story home and all worked together in the family market: Levine's. Still more that I didn't I know.

Another family connection Ronnie and Gil reminded us of was a family line we have in South America. Again, before World War II, one of my maternal grandfather's (Hyman) brother's Simon (Shimon) immigrated to Argentina where to this day exists first (Eduardo) and second cousins (names I'm afraid don't know) I've never met, though Ronnie and Gil have met numerous times in Miami and in Argentina (Ronnie and Gil used to live in South Florida). The more we talked, the more we travelled back in time. But I won't self-indulge myself and bore you any longer. I will try to wrap it up in the next paragraph.

My mother, Celia died in December 2008, my father died in December 2006. With their passing, my brother and I lost – among a million other things, their first-hand, on-site accounts of our Lourie/Blacker history dating back 150 years or so to Russia/Eastern Europe, before any of my relatives immigrated to America. Ronnie, my mother's cherished niece, knows as much about our family history as there is still to know and her husband of nearly 63 years, Gil, knows almost as much. Their visit wasn't just a weekend. It was a lifetime. A weekend of a lifetime for which Richard and I are extraordinarily grateful.

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



PHOTOS BY MOVOLY PRODUCTIONS

More than one hundred people attended Movoly Production, LLC's Screening Premiere of the movie "Novacane." The event was held May 5 at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria. Movoly Productions, LLC is a film and video company founded by Brian Rose.



Brian Rose, "Novacane" producer (far right) joined his producers: Megan Zinn-Burke, Shawn Neifert-Chantilly, and Josh Oswalt-Herndon to enjoy a moment in the limelight at the Screening Premiere of their first feature length film, "Novacane," a series of four short films. After six months of shooting, production concluded March 1. The crew plans on submitting "Novacane" to various film festivals.

## Herndon Native Produces Feature Length Film

Screening Premiere held; Brian Rose makes film on a near zero dollar budget.

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

More than 100 people-actors, production crew, and guests gathered at Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria May 5, to witness the premiere screening of the feature film, Novacane, a four-part short film series produced by Brian Rose, filmmaker, videographer, and owner of Movoly Productions, LLC. The film is centered on a group of young adults, their coming of age stories and the culture of the millennial generation. Rose, a Herndon native, is currently pursuing studies in Film and Video Production at George Mason University in Fairfax.

Rose produced "Novacane" on micro budget, near zero dollars. He is known for making things happen and literally grew up behind a camera. Rose has been involved with film his entire life. "My parents met while volunteering for Herndon Community Television and my family has been volunteering there since then. Herndon Community Television (HCTV) was a great place for me to learn the ropes of television and develop my craft," said Rose.

According to Nancy Rose, Executive Director of HCTV, while her son was born with a camera in his hands, "He makes things happen," she said. Rose reported that when her son volunteers at HCTV his perpetual response to film challenges and requests to incorporate innovative ideas has always been, "Yeah, I think we can do that."

**BRIAN ROSE** said he created "Novacane" as an experiment to see if a bunch of nobodies, he and his film buddies, could produce a high-quality professional feature length film on a micro budget. They did it,

but it took them two years from concept to premiere night. They tackled the project professionally, took sequential steps and they were flexible.

First, Rose recognized the need to form a limited liability company, an LLC, before starting the filmmaking. "We incorporated [Movoly Productions, LLC] in May 2016," Rose said. "We'd been doing filming under our names before then. We had this movie 'Novacane' in mind, so we knew that was coming up. We wanted to take on more significant projects with a more professional branding."

According to Rose, Movoly Productions, LLC comprises artists dedicated to telling stories through digital media — promotional, advertisement, narrative, and event coverage such as weddings and corporate gatherings.

Next, Rose retained high-quality actors and producers even though he could only offer them compensation of "love, food, and a great experience." Asked how he got actors for free, Rose said, "We went onto backstage.com, that's an online site that helps actors book roles. We got over 100 responses...We found that there are a lot of people dedicated who want to [act] for the craft and not for a paycheck."

Using volunteers as actors had its limitations. Megan Zinn from Burke was "Novacane" Executive Creator and Josh Oswalt from Herndon was "Novacane" Producer. Zinn said, "The most challenging aspect of making this film was that it was all essentially volunteer-based... It was tricky to nail down everybody's availability. We got lucky and had a wonderful cast who put in a lot of free hours to make this film as amazing as we did."

Oswalt reported additional challenges the crew met and overcame. "For some scenes



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**Brian Rose, Herndon native and George Mason student produced the four-part feature film series "Novacane." Rose edited more than a terabyte of footage, which required three weeks of nonstop editing. Although a movie is shot in locations, it is built in the editing room.**

we envisioned, we had to change them significantly, rework things as they were happening. It's one thing to write a script and debate about ideas. It's something entirely different to get behind the camera and position people."

On the first day of filming in September 2016, Rose said he had been excited, "I couldn't wait to get out of bed," but by March 2017, the excitement had tapered, and Rose found it was hard to move forward. Filming was three months over schedule and after six months operating on a shoestring budget with his crew shooting film across a range of locations in Northern Virginia, going to school, and working on weekends to uphold the digital demands of his company, time caught up with Rose.

It was three weeks before the screening premiere date for "Novacane." Rose had 20 hours of film footage, over a terabyte to edit. He met the challenge head on. He locked himself in a room and worked. Twenty days later he emerged. "Novacane" was nearly ready.

**ROSE REPORTED** that May 5, the premiere's date, was a stressful day not because of the premiere itself but because they were still editing the film eight hours before they were supposed to release it. The production crew wanted it as near perfect as they could get it.

"We were still making changes to it, so it was pretty down to the wire. It takes a lot of time to get the ins and outs of sound perfect...We were trying to get it as good as we could for the screening," Rose said. As for the turnout and the audience reaction, Rose said, "We had probably around 100 people come out...and everyone I talked to seemed to like it. All the actors were happy with the film."

Dilruk De Silva of Burke played the character of Alvin. He said, "This was honestly one of my favorite roles to play because the character of Alvin was very much like me. He was the funny man of the group but had a reason for being the way he was...This role allowed me to have a lot of freedom as an actor and I would be honored to do it again."

According to Rose, now that the film is complete, he intends to submit it to different festivals. "I want to send it to a whole bunch of them, some big, some small and local. We also want to try to see how much we can spot it online; it's free on YouTube," he said. "Novacane," it was a labor of love," he added. "We want to grow it. I would hope we would make some money off of it."

Asked where Rose sees himself 40 years from now, he replied he'll be doing the same thing as he is today but with two major changes. "On a much larger scale and with income. Passion is important but so is income."