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The Fairfax Chronicle

April 2011

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Up in Smoke County Board Declines To Buy Incinerator

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors last week opted not to purchase the Lorton-based waste-to-energy plant owned by Covanta Energy, deciding instead to extend a service contract that will allow Covanta to continue to own and operate the facility until 2041.

The final decision to extend the contract came after extended debate of a proposal to purchase the 21-year-old incinerator for \$417.5 million. The county

already owns the land on which the incinerator was built, and the terms of the original contract, written in 1987, gave the county the option to purchase the incinerator when the contract expired.

The county began exploring the purchase option after Covanta and county officials were unable to come to agreement on the terms of a new contract. Some members of the Board felt that terms

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Changes Proposed to School Disciplinary Process

In the wake of a pair of stories in the Washington Post pointing out deficiencies in the disciplinary system used by Fairfax County Public Schools, Superintendent Jack D. Dale proposed, and the school board accepted, a number of changes to the system.

(See this month's editorial, page 19.)

"We have been listening

carefully to the conversations and suggestions being shared by parents and members of the community," said Dale. "These recommendations incorporate many of the suggestions and changes we have heard. We look forward to continuing discussion around these revisions with the school board in April and May."

The recommended

Anticipation



"Anticipating New Years," by Virginia artist Denise Shamoun Phalan is part of an exhibit of work by Phalan and fellow Virginian Nancy Hannans that will be displayed at the Workhouse Arts Center's Studio 5 through May 8. More information is available at www.workhousearts.org.

changes, outlined in a press release issued last week, are:

- Refine the guidelines on parental notification for potential suspensions and expulsions and help parents prepare for the hearing process.
- Enhance communica-

tion related to the Student Responsibilities and Rights (SR&R) handbook with a goal of improving understanding by parents and students.

- Audio record all hearings.
- Shorten the timeline between disciplinary inci-

dents and the disposition of the decision.

- Provide instructional support during the suspension and provide an intervention education program, if appropriate to the offense.
- Authorize school prin-

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NEWSBRIEFS

Virginia Historical Society Creates Searchable Database of Slave Names

The road from emancipation and reconstruction to the civil rights movement and the election of Virginia's first black governor is well documented in Virginia history.

But early black history, from the arrival of the first Africans through the Civil War, is often represented only through the words of white observers, freed persons who looked back on slavery many years later, or the records generated by others about African Americans who achieved recognition for their actions.

For most enslaved Americans, the only physical record of their existence may be a name in a register kept by a slave owner.

The Virginia Historical Society (VHS) is creating a free, online database called Unknown No Longer: A Database of Virginia Slave Names. The searchable database will contain personal information about enslaved Virginians gleaned from some of the more than 8 million processed manuscripts in VHS collections.

Unknown No Longer is unlike any research tool currently available and will be valuable for academic researchers, family historians and genealogists alike.

The VHS received a grant from Dominion Resources and the Dominion Foundation to fund the creation of this database. Right now they are in the research phase, combing through material such as diaries,

letters, insurance papers, wills, freedom papers, receipts and deeds to extract raw information.

Once the VHS launches Unknown No Longer in September with 1,000 names, the database will be searchable through the use of a variety of keywords, such as name, gender, location, occupation and plantation. A website visitor could enter as much or as little information known about a particular African American to conduct a search.

To learn more about black history records at the VHS, use the Guide to African American Manuscripts.

Visit the VHS website in September to utilize the free Unknown No Longer database. It was designed to remove a barrier that has stood too long and will allow people today seeking to connect with their past the opportunity to do so.

Portrait Presented to Soldier's Surviving Family

Survivor Outreach Services at Fort Belvoir on March 18 hosted a portrait presentation in honor of Cpt. Andrew Pearson. The portrait was presented to Pearson's surviving family.

The American Fallen Soldiers Project is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that makes available to the families a no-cost original portrait of their fallen loved one that fully captures their appearance and personality. This organization presented an acrylic portrait of Cpt. Andrew Pearson to his surviving family.

Cpt. Andrew R. Pearson was supporting

Operation Iraqi Freedom. He died April 30, 2008, in Baghdad, Iraq, from wounds suffered when his vehicle encountered an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Hood, TX.

Spring Schedule for Youth Theater Program Announced

Acting For Young People Stages has announced its slate of Spring performances, including a musical version of "Snow White" and another show that asks the question: what would happen if Dr. Seuss had a whack at "Romeo and Juliet?"

AFYP Stages creates both touring productions, performed for young audiences by professional actors and Showcase Productions, in which new plays and adaptations feature young actors. All shows take place at theSPACE in Fairfax, are free (donations accepted) and suitable for all ages.

"We are delighted to bring these new shows to family audiences in and around Fairfax," said Mary Lechter, AFYP Stages' artistic and executive director. "With these new productions we continue to grow our repertoire and expand the goal of bringing high-quality programs with important and timely messages to families and children."

First up, on April 8, is a screening of "Who Was Sadie?" a comedic short film about a group of kids who find themselves abandoning the dance floor at their high

school's Sadie Hawkins dance. Written and directed by Dannie Snyder, this is part of AFYP's Film Acting 101.

On April 9 and 10, the Young Actors' Showcase feature is "Snow White," by Marjorie Sokoloff, directed by Candice Carter with musical direction by Patrick Magill. "This musical tale features characters from the beloved classic," commented Lechter. "Including all seven quirky dwarves, a tongue-tied prince, a sassy mirror, a dancing chicken and, of course, Snow White."

Other productions include "The Seussification of Romeo & Juliet" and a new adaptation of "The Fisherman and His Wife."

theSPACE is a raw space located in the retail center of Old Town Plaza at 3955 Chain Bridge Road in Fairfax. More information is available at www.afyp.org.

Parks Service Award Nominations are Open

The Fairfax County Park Authority is now accepting nominations for the 2011 Elly Doyle Park Service Award.

The Elly Doyle Park Service Award was established by the Fairfax County Park Authority on December 20, 1988, in recognition of Ellamae Doyle's years of outstanding service toward the preservation of parkland, natural and recreational areas for the benefit of Fairfax County residents. The purpose of the award is to publicly recognize a volunteer or group of volunteers for outstanding contributions to Fairfax County parks.

Eligibility is open to individuals and groups that have made outstanding service contributions to Fairfax County parks, including Fairfax County Park Authority volunteers.

The contribution on which the nomination is based must have occurred within the prior year (March 2010 through March 2011), but the nomination may also include accomplishments accumulated over time.

Award recipients will be honored at a reception and recipients' names will be placed on a bronze plaque at the Fairfax County Government Center.

Anyone may submit a nomination for the Elly Doyle Park Service Award.

Nominations are open until June 24, 2011. Visit information is available at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/2011doylenom.htm.

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Going Green at Woodlawn . . . Literally

By Irma A. Clifton

In late March, a plow broke ground on a new partnership between Woodlawn Plantation and Arcadia Food, Inc., a nonprofit organization that will operate the Arcadia Center for Sustainable Food and Agriculture on the grounds of the historic plantation. Woodlawn staff will collaborate with Arcadia to offer innovative programming and events related to the agricultural heritage and historic foodways of the site, Fairfax County and the region, drawing on food and cultivation practices from throughout Woodlawn's history as a working farm of more than 100 years.

Woodlawn is a property of the National Trust for Historic Preservation who has leased five acres to Arcadia and cultivation

began last month. The first crops planted were radishes and greens to be followed later in the season by herbs, squash, tomatoes and other vegetables. The plot under cultivation is in the area of the formal garden that for many years has been in grass because of shortages of funding and staff to tend it. Arcadia's plan has been approved by the Restoration Committee of the Garden Club of Virginia and closely follows the landscape plan that the late Alden Hopkins, resident landscape architect for Colonial Williamsburg, created for Woodlawn in the 1950s. Arcadia also planted approximately one-third of the meadow that runs along Rte. 1 with rye grass in order to restore the soil.

Arcadia was established as a nonprofit, in conjunction with Woodlawn, by Neighborhood Restaurant Group co-owner Michael

Babin to help bridge the farm-to-consumer gap. Quoted in a Washington Business Journal article in Oct., 2010, Babin said, "As people who work in the restaurant industry, we are participants in the food system, and we are constantly made aware of how distorted and broken it has become. With Arcadia, we hope to provide a rallying point and a resource for the many passionate and committed people trying to change this system." Neighborhood Restaurant Group began more than a decade ago with the opening of the Evening Star Café in Alexandria. It has grown to include nine restaurants and bars, a bakery and dessert lounge and a catering business.

Starting small this spring, with just one acre under cultivation, Arcadia and Woodlawn plan to expand the project in coming

years and expect to be able to distribute locally produced foods to the Washington, DC, area well as provide experiential learning opportunities for schools and the community. In addition, according to Susan Hellman, deputy director of Woodlawn and the Pope-Leighey House, Woodlawn has entered into a partnership with Star Catering, part of Arcadia's operation, to provide catering for events held at Woodlawn in which they will use as much produce raised on the property as possible.

Hellman said she is especially excited that several beehives have been placed at Woodlawn and the bees are expected to arrive any day.

Volunteers will plant and tend the garden plot under the direction of a farm manager.

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Tax Tips

Crunching numbers while stooped over a pile of receipts, forms and coffee gone cold is a scene that most people are familiar with this time of year. It is no wonder that we dread and procrastinate the work of having to reconcile income, expenses and taxes.

With the mid-April deadline fast approaching, it's time to start the tax filing process if you have not already done so. This tax season, if you are planning to get assistance from a tax preparer or even if you're planning to do the legwork yourself, the Better Business Bureau (BBB), along with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) recommend following these top ten tax filing tips.

1. Start Gathering Your Records: Round up any documents or forms you'll need when filing your taxes: receipts, canceled checks and other documents that support income or deductions you're claiming on your return.

Marketplace Issues



Edward Johnson

2. Be On the Lookout: W-2s and 1099s should have arrived by now and you'll need these to file your tax return.

3. Use Free File: Let Free File do the hard work for you with brand-name tax software or online forms. Everyone can find

an option to prepare their tax return and e-file it for free. If you made \$58,000 or less, you qualify for free tax software that is offered through a private-public partnership with manufacturers. If you made more or are comfortable preparing your own tax return, there's Free File Fillable Forms, the electronic versions of IRS paper forms

available online at www.irs.gov.

4. Try IRS E-File: After 21 years, IRS e-file has become the safe, easy and most common way to file a tax return. According to the IRS, 70 percent of taxpayers used IRS e-file. Starting in 2011, many tax preparers will be required to use e-file and will explain your filing options to you. This is your chance to give it a try. IRS e-file is approaching 1 billion returns processed safely and securely. If you owe taxes, you have payment options to file immediately and pay by the tax deadline. Best of all, combine e-file with direct deposit and you can get your refund in as few as 10 days.

5. Consider Other Filing Options: There are many different options for filing your tax return. You can prepare it yourself or go to a tax preparer. You may be eligible for free face-to-face help at an IRS office or volunteer site. Give yourself time to weigh all the different options and find the one that best suits your needs.

6. Consider Direct Deposit: If you elect to have your refund directly deposited into your bank account, you'll receive it faster than waiting for a paper check.

7. Visit the IRS Website Again and Again: The official IRS website is a great place to find everything you'll need to file your tax return: forms, publications, tips, answers to frequently asked questions and updates on tax law changes.

8. Remember the Number: 17: Check out IRS Publication 17. It's a comprehensive

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FY2012-2017 Six-Year Improvement Program Working Draft Public Hearings*

The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) invites your comments about essential rail, transit, transportation demand management, bicycle, pedestrian and highway projects in the Working Draft Fiscal Year 2012-2017 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP) to be approved by the CTB in June 2011.
*(Public hearings for local/secondary/municipality-maintained roads are held in other forums.)

All projects in the SYIP that are eligible for federal funding will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, which documents how Virginia will obligate its share of federal funds.

Districts	Location	Date
Richmond, Culpeper, Fredericksburg	VDOT Central Office Auditorium 1221 East Broad St. Richmond, VA 23219	Wednesday, May 18, 2011 Public hearing, 6 p.m.
Northern Virginia	VDOT Northern Virginia District Office Potomac Conference Center 4975 Alliance Drive, Suite 1N2301 Fairfax, VA 22030	Wednesday, May 4, 2011 Public hearing, 7 p.m.
Hampton Roads	Hampton Roads Planning District Commission 723 Woodlake Drive Chesapeake, VA 23320	Wednesday, April 27, 2011 Public hearing, 6 p.m.
Salem, Bristol, Lynchburg, Staunton	VDOT Salem District Office Auditorium, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem, VA 24153	Thursday, May 12, 2011 Public hearing, 6 p.m.

*If you can not attend a hearing, you may send your comments to: Public Information Office, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219, drptpr@drpt.virginia.gov or to Programming Director, Virginia Department of Transportation, 1401 East Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219, Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Comments must be received by May 27, 2011.

The Secretary of Transportation's Office ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, call 1-888-508-3737 (TTY users, call 711).

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Calendar

April 2011

Send calendar listings to Kathy Marinucci
at calendar@chroniclenewspapers.com

EXHIBITS

1–May 3—“Connected.” This art show, sponsored by the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, will feature the work of Lisa Brotman and Erica Leigh Orgen. Sun.–Thurs., 8 a.m.–10 p.m.; Fri., 8 a.m.–6 p.m.; Sat., 12:30 p.m.–6 p.m. at the Bodzin Art Gallery, 8900 Little River Tnpk., Fairfax. (www.jccnv.org, IreneG@jccnv.org, 703-323-0880)

16–May 3—Fairfax Art League Exhibition will be held at the Old Town Hall, 3999 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxartleague.com, 703-273-6097)

16–May 6—“Super Specific” will feature selections from the George Mason University School of Art. Fri., 1–7 p.m.; Sat., noon–7 p.m.; Sun., noon–5 p.m. at the Adam Lister Gallery in the Old Town Fairfax Village Plaza, 3950 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.adamlistergallery.com)

17–N-Guage Train Display. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will have a display and trains running. \$3; \$1 for kids. 1–4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Rd., Fairfax Station. (www.fairfax-station.org, 703-425-9225)

29, 30, May 1—“Portals of Light and Color” is the title of the 15th Annual ValeArts Spring ART Show. Enjoy local art—oil and acrylic paintings, watercolors, photographs and mixed media—with special emphasis on the ability of light and color to affect the work. The guest artist is Carolyn Koslow, photographer and artist. Fri., 10 a.m.–9 p.m.; Sat. & Sun., 10 a.m.–6 p.m. at the historic Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Rd., Oakton. (www.valearts.com)

30—“Art in the Park” is an opportunity for local artists from the Fairfax Art League to paint in the Kitty Pozer Garden while people observe their works in progress. Noon–5 p.m. in the Kitty Pozer Garden, next to Old Town Hall, 3999 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxartleague.net)

May 6–18—“Stranger than Reality: Optical Illusions by Remmi Brant” will be presented in collaboration with the George Mason University School of Art. Fri., 1–7 p.m.; Sat., noon–7 p.m.; Sun., noon–5 p.m. at the Adam Lister Gallery in the Old Town Fairfax Village Plaza, 3950 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.adamlistergallery.com)

INSTRUCTION

4–28—Fall Prevention Classes, providing a transition from physical therapy to everyday living, will be offered. Mon. and Fri., 2–3 p.m.; Tues. and Thurs., 1:30–2:30 p.m. at the Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Drive, Fairfax. (www.thewoodlandsccrc.com/, 703-667-9800)

16—Virginia’s Secession from the Union. Historian Michael Shumaker will explore the issues put before Virginians, especially local voters, that ultimately led to the secession of the commonwealth. 2 p.m. at the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (fairfaxva.gov/MuseumVC/WalkingTours.asp#LectureSeries, 703-591-0560)

May 2–15—Bereavement Training to become a Haven volunteer will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Registration required. 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. at Haven of Northern Virginia, 4606 Ravensworth Rd., Annandale. (www.havenofnova.org, 703-941-7000)

May 19—Catherine Mann-Grady will speak on her extensive career in the news, radio, Capitol Hill and the recent events that unfolded at the WMAL radio station at the meeting of the Western Fairfax Republican Women’s Club. 6:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center (Sully District Station), 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. (www.wfrwc.org/)

PERFORMANCES

16—Spotlight on Virginians Concert will feature the premiere performance of a newly commissioned work by Travis Cross, director of the Virginia Tech Wind Ensemble, and a reprise performance of Mark Camp-house’s (GMU) “Foundation,” commissioned and premiered by the band in 2006. A Meet the Composers panel discussion will precede the concert. \$15, \$9. 8 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. (www.fairfaxband.org, 703-757-0220)

16—Mason Dance Company’s Spring Concert (\$15) will be held at 8 p.m. in the

Harris Theater of George Mason University, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax. (cfa.gmu.edu, 888-945-2468)

17—Commission on the Arts: John Mason Arts Achievement Award & Recital will be held at 2 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (703-273-6097)

17—Music Link Recital will be held at 3 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3999 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.musiclinkfoundation.org, 703-273-6097)

17—Bob Brown Puppets will perform at 10:30 a.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxarts.org, 703-273-6097)

21—Friday Morning Music Club Composers Concert will feature the works of five composers. 11 a.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3999 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.fmmc.org, 703-273-6097)

22—U.S. Air Force String Orchestra will perform at 8 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (703-273-6097)

23—Avant Fairfax. This concert will feature the best of underground music from the DC area, featuring performances by Michael Chapman, Black Twig Pickers, Kenny Millions, Kohoutek, Caves Caverns, Human Ault Band, Drums Like Machine Guns, Heavy Medical, FUN and more. Admission is what you can afford. 5 p.m. at theSPACE, 3950 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.myspace.com/avantfairfax, 571-232-2086)

23—Polka ‘Til Ya Drop. The Alte Kameraden German Band will perform alpine village bands music. 7 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxband.org, 703-385-7858)

28—A Little Night Music will feature John Gardecki, founding board member of the Washington International Piano Arts Council, in concert. \$25; \$40 for couples (includes preconcert cocktails); \$15 for college students and seniors; free for ages 8–14. Cocktails at 6:30 p.m., concert at 7 p.m., followed by an informal reception at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (www.wipac.org, 703-385-7858)

29—The Fairfax Saxophone Quartet, with guest pianist Amy LaCivita, will play new saxophone quartet arrangements of Bach and Rimsky-Korsakov. 8 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3999 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxband.org, 703-273-6097)

29—“Swan Lake and the Colors of Spring” will feature the NOVA Springfield Annandale Symphony Orchestra in concert. \$15; \$10 for seniors and students; free for kids. 8 p.m. at the Ernst Center at Northern Virginia Community College, 8333 Little River Tnpk., Annandale. (www.nvcc.edu, 703-323-3159)

29, 30, May 6, 7—“The Odd Couple.” The Woodson Players will perform Neil Simon’s 1965 comedy. 7:30 p.m. (all dates); 2 p.m. (Sat.) at Woodson High School, 9525 Main St., Fairfax. (www.wtwdrama.org, [onlinetickets.htm](http://www.wtwdrama.org/onlinetickets.htm), 703-503-4600)

30—“The Fisherman and His Wife.” Acting For Young People will perform this classic fairy tale. 11 a.m. at theSPACE, 3950 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.afyp.org, 703-307-5332)

30—Jump for Joy will feature the big-band sounds of Woodson High School. 7:30 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax.

30, May 1, 5, 6, 7—“The Wizard of Oz” will be performed by the Robinson Drama Department. \$15. 7:30 p.m. (Sat., 2 and 7:30 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m.) at Robinson Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Rd., Fairfax. (www.robinsondrama.org/)

May 1—The American Youth Philharmonic Chamber Ensemble. A variety of small ensembles composed of students who perform with amazing quality, clarity and depth of understanding will perform. \$7; \$5 for students and seniors. 1 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3999 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.aypo.org, 571-423-3792)

May 1—Concert for Hope will be presented, 4–8 p.m., at theSPACE in the Old Town Plaza, 3950 University Dr., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxspotlight.org)

May 1—Music for a Lazy Sunday Afternoon will be provided by the Main Street Community Band.



4 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxband.org, 703-385-7858)

May 6–8, 13, 14—“Grease,” will be performed by the FXPlayers. \$8; \$12 at the door. 7:30 p.m. (all dates); 2 p.m. (May 8) at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. (www.fxplayers.org, 703-219-2200)

May 7—“A Musical Evening at Home” will feature Sior-Og performing classic dance tunes such as jigs, reels, slip jigs and hornpipes using uilleann pipes, fiddle, bodhran, guitar and a variety of Irish whistles. 6 p.m. at the Historic Blenheim & the Civil War Interpretive Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. (703-591-0560)

GATHERINGS

19 & 26—Open Rehearsal for the Encore Choral at Potomac Academy of George Mason University. Improve your voice, meet new friends and enjoy a great new adventure singing music in four parts in preparation to join other area Encore Chorales for exciting spring concerts. 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. at the Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Dr., Fairfax. (encorecreativity.org/NewEncore/, 301-261-5747)

29—A Royal Affair. This breakfast will celebrate the royal wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton with a viewing of the wedding on a large screen. Hosted by the Women’s Club of Fairfax. \$10. 7 a.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (703-385-7858)

30—Run for the Children. This 10K race and 3K run/walk through Fairfax, benefitting the Fairfax Court

Appointed Special Advocates program, will offer food, prizes and entertainment for runners and spectators. \$25; \$30 after April 23. 8:30 a.m. at the Fairfax Courthouse complex on Chain Bridge Rd., Fairfax. (www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com, 301-871-0400)

30—Model Classic 2011, offered by the Northern Virginia chapter of the International Plastic Modelers Society, will feature museum-quality scale models, modeling contest, vendors, raffles, make & take event for kids, lecture, demonstrations and more. \$8, \$10 for families. 9 a.m.–4 p.m. at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. (www.novaipms.org, 703-680-9354)

May 8 & 15—RunFit Kids 2-Day Running Camp. Kids in grades 3–8 will enjoy dynamic warm-ups, strengthening and speed drills, plyometrics, and plenty of games. \$30. 2–3:30 p.m. at Van Dyck Park, 3720 Old Lee Hwy., Fairfax. (www.FairfaxCityFit.com, 703-586-5037).

May 10—Dementia Care Givers Support Group, sponsored by the Shepherd’s Center of Fairfax–Burke, will meet at noon at the Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 5114 Twinbrook Rd., Fairfax. (eileen.thompson1@gmail.com, 703-451-8626)

May 19—Lunch ‘n’ Life, for ages 50 and better, will feature a history lesson from Martha Washington as portrayed by Bonnie Fairbank. Reservations (by May 12) required. Sponsored by the Shepherd’s Center of Fairfax–Burke. \$8. Noon at St. Mary of Sorrows Church, 5222 Sideburn Rd., Fairfax. (www.fairfax-burkesc.org, 703-620-0161)

EASTER

21—Agape Dinner & Holy Eucharist. Guests are invited to bring a Mediterranean-inspired dish to share. Childcare available immediately following the dinner. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; service, 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter’s in the Woods, 5911 Fairview Woods Dr., Fairfax Station. (www.SPIW.org, 703-503-9210)

22—Good Friday Service will be held at 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter’s in the Woods, 5911 Fairview Woods Dr., Fairfax Station. (www.SPIW.org, 703-503-9210)

23—Easter Egg Hunt. Ages 1–9 will hunt for eggs, enjoy a moon bounce, eat popcorn and more. Bring your own basket. \$7. Registration onsite. 10 a.m.–noon at Mason District Park, 6621 Columbia Pike, Annandale. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/, 703-941-1065)

23—Easter Egg Hunt. Ages 1–9 will hunt for eggs by age group, meet the Easter Bunny and win special prizes. Bring your own basket. For information, call 703-324-8566. \$7. Registration onsite. 10 a.m. at Nottoway Park, 9537 Courthouse Rd., Vienna. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/wp-omp.htm, 703-324-8566)

24—Easter Sunday Services will be followed by an all-ages Easter egg hunt. Bring your own basket and hunt for eggs on the church grounds. 6:30, 8 and 10:15 a.m. at St. Peter’s in the Woods, 5911 Fairview Woods Dr., Fairfax Station. (www.SPIW.org, 703-503-9210)

FARMERS’ MARKETS

23, 30, May 7, 14—Smart Markets in Oakton. 10 a.m.–2 p.m. at the Unity of Fairfax Church, 2854 Hunter Mill Rd., Oakton. (www.smartmarkets.org/)

26, May 3, 10, 17—Smart Markets at Fairfax Corner. 1–4 p.m. at the entrance to Fairfax Corner (Monument Dr. and Government Center Pkwy.), Fairfax. (www.smartmarkets.org/)

27, May 4, 11, 18—Smart Markets at GMU. 11 a.m.–2 p.m. in the Southside Plaza at George Mason University, Fairfax. (www.smartmarkets.org/)

SALES

30—Community Yard Sale and Bake Sale will offer crafts, furniture, toys, housewares, knickknacks, hardware, books, baked goods and more. 8 a.m.–noon at St. Peter’s in the Woods, 5911 Fairview Woods Dr., Fairfax Station. (703-503-9210)

30 & May 1—Fairfax Fine Arts Festival will offer for sale more than 10,000 pieces of original art in a variety of media. Sat., 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.–5 p.m. in Fairfax Commons, Fairfax.

Fairfax County's Sports Scene

Robert E. Lee High Wins the First One with New Soccer Coach John Millward

By Joseph Hight

On March 14 against Hayfield, the Lee Lancers boys' varsity soccer gave up two quick goals. Would this be the same as last year when they won no games—that's no games as in zero, nada, zilch, a goose egg?

New coach John Millward says "I've got a ton of talent on this team. The hardest thing is getting that talent to play as a team." He compares his job as coach to an artist putting the paint on the canvas.

In the 33rd minute of the Hayfield game, Lancer senior midfielder Henry Rivera put some of that paint on the canvas, scoring on a penalty kick.

Still down by a goal at 1-2 in the second half in the 55th-minute mark of the game, Lancer senior Mo Shalal got the ball to his junior teammate Jamie Ahmed. Goal for Ahmed, assist for Shalal, the Lancers had tied the game.

Millward, 25, was born on a naval base in Newport, RI.

He's a redhead, a Rhode Island red he says, referring to the rooster that is the official state bird of Rhode Island.

Rhode Island reds are proud birds. They never rest. And like the bird, Millward has

his players working hard. In the week before the game against Hayfield, he had the team in two-hour practices on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Tuesday and Friday, they played full-game scrimmages.

But Monday, the day before the Ides of March, the Lancers were playing in their first official game under the new coach.

Despite his young age, Millward has coaching experience. He was an assistant coach for a girl's club soccer team in 2004. And from 2005 through 2008, he was head swimming coach for the Canterbury Woods C-Serpents in the Northern Virginia Swimming League.

He was a stand-out soccer player and team co-captain at W.T. Woodson High. In 2003, he was a Virginia High School League All Star. Under Woodson coach Richard Broad's tutelage, Millward made First-Team All Liberty District, First-Team All Region and was a Washington Post All-Met Honorable Mention.

Millward wants to infuse his Lancers with some of that success. In the 60th minute of the game against Hayfield, Robert E. Lee soccer took a first step. Just five minutes after they had tied the game, Ahmed passed the ball to fellow junior Luis Aguilar, who scored the

go-ahead goal to make it 3-2 Lancers.

Now with the lead, defense is what the Lancers needed. Their new coach knows a thing or two about defense. When playing for Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania, Millward was a defensive specialist, playing in 51 games at the center back position. He had drilled the Lancers on the importance of defense, and for eight minutes they held the score at 3-2. Then in the 68th minute of the game Lancer senior Kelechi Uchella got the ball to Aguilar, who scored his second goal of the night.

Millward started playing soccer when he was five. "I never stopped," he says. His dad was an officer in the U.S. Navy. At one point John Millward attended seven schools in seven years, but soccer was a constant.

The young coach says he relates well to the high school athletes. It wasn't so long ago that he was dealing with the same stresses and strains of adolescence, the complex high school social scene and the balancing of academics with other activities.

While he can relate to his young athletes in a different way than an older, more seasoned coach, Millward may have to work harder to maintain a healthy respect for his authority. You need to impose discipline he says, hold them accountable so they learn to be responsible for their actions. "It's a fine line that you have to balance."

Millward says the team has a goal to go deep into the Patriot District Tournament this year.

After Shippensburg, Millward returned to Northern Virginia, where he works for ADDX Corporation. He lives with his wife Sarah and dog Rommel, not more than 10 minutes away from his mom and dad.

As high points in his soccer career Millward lists starting in the VHSL all-star game in Newport News and his freshman year at Shippensburg when his team made the top 10 in the NCAA Division II national poll.

Winning his first game as the Lee Lancers' head coach of boys' varsity soccer has to rank right up there with those two.

❖ ❖ ❖



photo by Joseph Hight
New Lee High School soccer coach John Millward

Northern Virginia Musicians Receive Awards in String Competition

By Eleanor Gomolinski-Lally

The outreach programs of the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra (FSO) offer many opportunities for young people to further their musical skills. There are in-school programs for students in grades kindergarten to 12. FSO musicians perform and work with students directly in their schools with assemblies, workshops and side-by-side concerts.

Master classes are held each season with guest artists who perform at FSO concerts. A small number of students perform for the master teacher in a public lesson in which the audience benefits from the expert advice given by the teacher to the performers.

Students from age six to 18 are eligible to join the new Student Passport Club. Members of the club get their passports stamped at each concert attended, receive free gifts from local merchants, meet FSO musicians and attend a special reception at the end of each season. Student tickets are \$5 with accompanying adult tickets that start at \$25.

Each year the Dorothy Farnham Feuer Memorial String Competition is held in honor of the founder of FSO. In 1957, violinist Dorothy Farnham Feuer recruited 18 musicians to form what eventually became

the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra. As the orchestra grew to more than 80 members by 1960, a board of directors was formed. In 1964, the board recognized the need to support young string players and appointed orchestra member Penny Farris to start a youth orchestra. That grew into four orchestras known as the American Youth Philharmonic Association. After Feuer's death in 1963, the string competition was established to recognize and reward outstanding achievement in young Northern Virginia string players from grades seven to 12. The first \$100 award was given to a student in 1964. On Feb. 20, 2011, four winners of this competition were chosen from a group of nine finalists. At the March 19 FSO concert they were recognized on stage and received their awards.

The first prize of \$1,500 was awarded to violinist Brian Hong, a junior at Robinson Secondary School. Among his many accomplishments, Brian is concertmaster of the American Youth Philharmonic. He began playing the violin at the age of four and realized by middle school that he was serious about continuing to excel in the study of his instrument. His mother says she never had to push him to practice. Brian is interested in physics and chemistry and has a full schedule

at school but still manages to practice three to four hours a day. This was not the first competition Brian has won. Two other competitions provided him with the opportunity to perform at Strathmore Music Center in recital and with the National Philharmonic. When he attended the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, he was recognized as the youngest Fellow of 2009. During the week of May 30, he will appear on the NPR radio show "From the Top," a program that features very talented young artists.




photo: Barry Wheeler
The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra 2011 Dorothy Feuer Memorial Scholarship Final Competition, from left, Jackie Lin, honorable mention; Michael Romans, third prize; Daniel Tavani, second prize; Brian Hong, first prize.

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Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts Festival

By Jill Graziano Laiacona

If you live in Fairfax, you know the signs when spring has finally sprung—flowers are in full bloom next to Old Town Hall, Mason students are clad in shorts and tees, the soccer fields and baseball diamonds are full—and the Spotlight on the Arts Festival returns to the City of Fairfax, showcasing the best of the visual and performing arts right in our own backyard.

Ellen Brouwer, Spotlight co-chair, said this year's festival features exciting new events and participating organizations, as well as favorites that have been part of the festival for the past 26 years.

"The Spotlight on the Arts Festival will include more than 50 different events over 19 days, making it the premier spring arts festival in Northern Virginia," Brouwer said. "We have chosen to present a selection of diverse performances and exhibitions that will appeal to audiences of every age and artistic interest."

Founded in 1985 as a partnership between the City of Fairfax and George Mason University, the 26th annual Spotlight on the Arts Festival kicks off on Friday, April 15, with the inaugural Mayors' Ball, hosted by Fairfax Mayor Robert Lederer and former Mayor John Mason in collaboration with Spotlight at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, a state-of-the-art facility that opened to the public in February 2011.

The Sherwood Center will host numerous events throughout the three-week festival, including Polka "Til Ya Drop by the Alte Kam-

eradan German Band; A Little Night Music, presented by Washington International Piano Arts Council; Jump for Joy, a big-band swing concert featuring the Woodson High School Band and Music for a Lazy Sunday Afternoon by the Main Street Community Band. The Sherwood Center will also be host to A Royal Affair, a breakfast celebrating Prince William and Kate Middleton's nuptials, presented by the Woman's Club of Fairfax and Fairfax Ladies Lunch Group.

"The Sherwood Center gives a new dimension to the size of the audiences and the events that we can now accommodate," said Jo Ormesher, executive director of Spotlight on the Arts. "It complements all of our other venues, giving us a wide range of spaces that are unique, historic, traditional and now state-of-the-art. We have the ability to run numerous events concurrently throughout the city."

In addition to the Sherwood Center, the Spotlight network includes Old Town Hall, theSPACE at Old Town Plaza, the Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, Truro Church, Fairfax Museum, the Auld

Shebeen, Fairfax and Woodson high schools, the Ernst Center at Northern Virginia Community College's Annandale Campus, George Mason University's Center for the Arts and more.



The Main Street Community Band

This year's festival will also spill outdoors with a new event called Paint the City, which gives both professional and amateur artists the opportunity to capture the landscapes,

architecture and landmarks within the City of Fairfax while residents observe their works in progress.

"Paint the City is a fantastic new venture, and given that we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Fairfax, what better way to honor the city than capture our beautiful cityscape?" Ormesher said.

Ormesher and the other festival organizers are thrilled with Spotlight's increasing popularity and hope that this year's festival will attract even more people than in years past.

"With our new venues and participants, Spotlight continues to grow and develop along with the City of Fairfax," Ormesher said. "It is truly reflective of our community and we are proud of the involvement and commitment our residents have shown to make this festival successful year after year."

For more information on the 26th annual Fairfax Spotlight on the Arts Festival, please visit www.fairfaxspotlight.org.

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Taking a Spin Around Elite Saint Pete

On a sunny Saturday morning, I had a pelican's-eye view of the contemporary city skyline from St. Petersburg Pier. Pelicans perched on each pylon, shifting from foot to foot as runners passed by on their morning routes. The rhythm was reminiscent of "All the Single Ladies" and I laughed. Despite its reputation as being retirement central, Saint Pete is growing younger and trendier by the year. (VisitSt-PeteClearwater.com)

On Jan. 11 at 11:11 a.m., The Salvador Dali Museum revealed its new facility right smack dab in the center of things in the town park. The new building is worthy of the artist. A slightly misshapen glass bubble beckons. A maze invites viewers to get lost in the sunshine. And, rising from the floor is a circular staircase to nowhere. It ends pointing toward the sky, where much of Dali's art left you dangling, between heaven and Earth with the sound of cerebral music in your ears and dirt in your mouth.

Next it was a spin around the Saturday farmers' market, where music, jewelry, art and craft are as plentiful as the produce. Then, onto the Chihuly Exhibit right on Beach Drive, where the rich folks dwell in the condo canyons. The Chihuly collection opened in its own space designed by award-winning architect Albert Alfonso. Those who find Dale Chihuly an enigma will be fascinated by this exhibit. The colorful, complex and multi-dimensional glass sculptures shine in their own space.

The collection includes large-scale installations including the Ruby Red Icicle Chandelier, baskets, drawings and some of his series works including Macchia, Nijima Floats, Persians and Tumbleweeds. I was particularly enamored by the film that places the artist in Jerusalem working on an exhibit at the

2,000-year-old ruin. Tickets to the Chihuly Collection are dated and timed, allowing an intimate experience with the art.

Straub Park, which buffers Beach Drive from the water, also offers a beach, a great place to study how the sun sparkles on the glass towers. When it's time for a taste of St. Pete, there are dozens of trendy eateries

along Beach Drive and Second Avenue North. Most locals dine al fresco and the sidewalks are convivial and crowded. Young folks display short skirts and high heels but flip-flops are also considered formal wear in Florida. Pull up a chair and enjoy lunch or dinner at Bella Brava, Ceviche Tapas Bar, Moon Under Water or Park Shore Grill.

Don't miss the Fine Arts Museum in Straub Park. Small as it is, the permanent collection reflects an appropriate sampler of European Art from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, American Art from the 18th and 19th centuries including Robert Henri, George Inness and Georgia O'Keeffe.

And, if you are emotionally tough enough, the Florida Holocaust Museum will break your heart and give you hope during the same visit. Just a short walk off Beach Drive on Fifth Street South, the Holocaust Museum hosts an array of artifacts, survivor stories and frequent art exhibits. Through May 31, 2011, you can explore a show by Richard Notkin titled "Peace/War, Survival/Extinction," an artist's plea for sanity. While the contemporary art is moving and representative, the biggest impact comes from the actual artifacts of the museum from baby shoes to a wooden boxcar used to transport Jews to the death camps.

Celebrate the sunshine and the warm waters of the Gulf at one of a series of beaches.

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Prepare for Plant Sales with a Garden Plan

Spring at last. Despite the threat of late snow, warmth and sunshine are coaxing leaf buds, tulips and people out of dormancy. As plant sales beckon, the delayed effects of color starvation can drive a normally reasonable person to rush at any pretty plant in a pot and set them out willy-nilly in the yard. Count me in! Some preparation on the way to the garden center can help us with our choices. A plan can do this.

There is plenty of evidence to suggest that it is not necessary to have a plan before having a garden. That said, it can save you time and money, and guide your decisions. The result of line-of-sight plant purchasing is that the garden this year develops the same hodgepodge quality that last year's garden did. And the problems that were present last year—the blank wall, the too-steep slope, the ugly view—are still there this year. A little planning may help us make selections that fulfill our desires for the garden.

A plan is only paper, but it is a powerful tool. The simple process of putting your yard on paper forces you to take a good look at it and know it better. A copy of the plat of your house and lot is a great way to begin, but you can start with one part of the yard or one planting area. Graph paper is handy. Measure and record the length, width and height (if appropriate) of a space, such as the one under the windows in the front, and shop

for plants with confidence. If the window ledge is at three feet from the ground, you can avoid future maintenance by choosing plants that only grow that tall. In front of the same window, a shrub that grows to six feet will require routine pruning or may be better suited somewhere else, unless your objective is to create a window screen. Measuring the space at the front door and steps will help you choose the right size and shape of containers.

Noting the existing conditions of the yard on paper makes it harder to ignore the issues you may have with it. A beautiful shade tree or a handsome view is an asset that can be emphasized in a design, but a steep slope is

a liability for walking or erosion and may need to be the first priority this year. Other important things to note are the location and height of overhead wires; the limits of a drain field; where power, telephone and cable lines run and irrigation or lighting. Select trees that will not grow up into power lines or far enough away so as not to interfere with them. Make cultural observations. Note sunny and shady areas, keeping in mind that the sun angle and tree foliage will affect the duration of sun or shade. Squiggle in wet and dry areas. A downspout is both a source of undesirable erosion (and watershed pollution), and an opportunity for a rain barrel or

continued on page 16

Gardeners' Tips



Irene Mills

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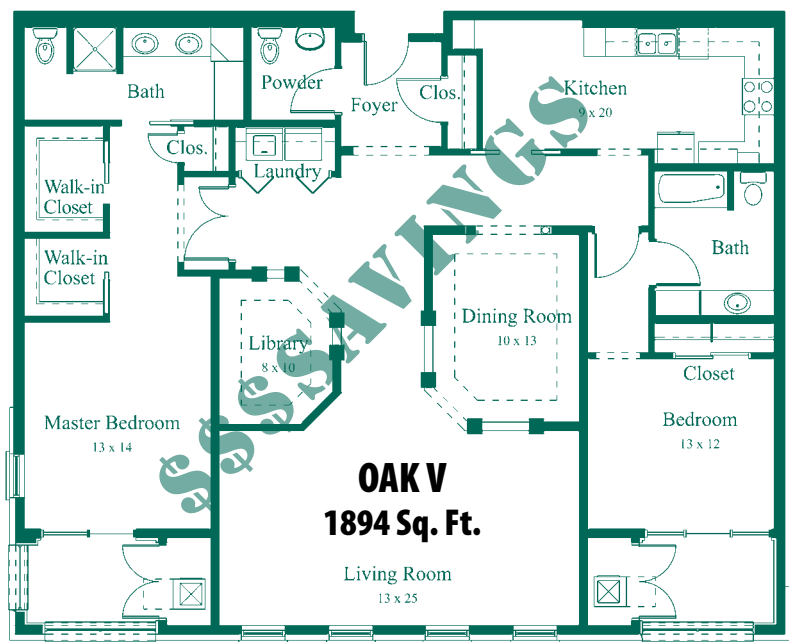
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Win or Die: Playing the Game of Thrones

Without a single episode airing, HBO's upcoming "Game of Thrones" already has high expectations—it's been dubbed the most anticipated television series of 2011. The upcoming series pushed the novel on which it is based—first published in 1996—to the New York Times bestseller list, and the book's sequels have been selling well.

For those who haven't read the novels, the show may look like the second coming of "Lord of the Rings." It's an epic fantasy and features Sean Bean (who played Boromir in the Rings movies).

But the comparisons end there. Both brilliant in their own way, "Game of Thrones" is radically different in tone and setting from J.R.R. Tolkien's work. For starters, "Game of Thrones" features no elves, only one dwarf (of the human variety), and the barest hints of magic and the supernatural. Secondly, in "Lord of the Rings," it was pretty easy to tell the good guys from the bad, and one could rest assured who would triumph. In George R.R. Martin's "Song of Fire and Ice" series, the characters are all gray.

The good guys do nefarious things, while the bad guys occasionally do something noble. Just telling the difference between them is challenging enough. Far more perilous to the reader, however, is that a lot of great characters die, often unexpectedly and sometimes frustratingly.

In short: this show, and the novels on which they are based, are not for the faint of heart. If Martin had written *Lord of the Rings*, Frodo probably would have been slain by Aragorn just before he destroyed Sauron's ring of power.

Still, the novels are gripping and fantasy at its best. Because it is not derivative of Tolkien, "Game of Thrones" feels unique, and sometimes more like a historical novel than a fantasy book. Although Martin plays down the supernatural elements in the world of Westernos, they still exist. The novel begins with rumors that the "white walkers"—creatures of legend that lurk in the cold and

use the dead to do their bidding—have been sighted again. There is also talk of dragons, the last of which was slain 100 years ago.

But it is the well-drawn characters that really make the novels such a good read. Eddard Stark, played by Bean in the HBO series, is as close as it gets to a good guy. Noble, moral and intelligent, Stark reluctantly accepts King Robert Baratheon's request to come to the capital of Westernos and become the Hand of the King—running the kingdom while the king goes hunting, drinking and carousing. When Stark arrives in King's Landing, however, things quickly go awry. The former Hand has mysteriously died, someone has plotted to kill Stark's second youngest son and rumors of a threat against the king

himself have started to circulate.

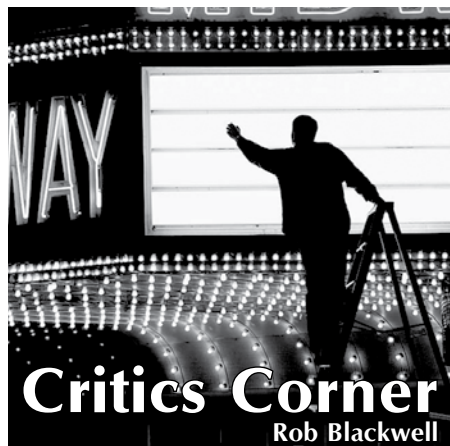
But the novels don't stay exclusively with Stark, instead jumping around to other characters, including his wife and five children, the conniving queen who despises Eddard, and Tyrion Lannister, the dwarf who seeks his father's respect. All of the characters are fascinating to watch, because each one has compelling reasons for his or her actions, even if some ultimately lead to their doom.

Other than Stark, the most interesting is Daenerys Targaryen, the exiled princess of mad King Aerys, who King Robert slew to take the crown. Her story is almost entirely separate from the others as she at-

tempts to build an invasion army to retake the crown. (Indeed, I've nearly finished three of the four published novels and have yet to see how her story connects with the rest.) Although her quest makes her sound like the "bad" guy, Martin does not portray her that way. While she is young and inexperienced, she cares about her allies, helps to free slaves and believes her goal is right.

HBO looks like the network to handle these juggling plotlines and deliver some gripping television. Based on what I've seen to date, the casting seems spot-on and the high production values readily apparent.

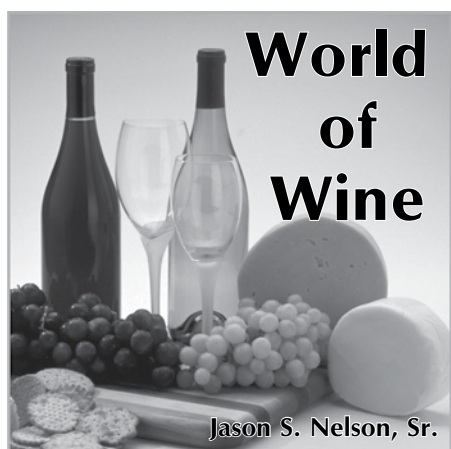
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Because it is not derivative of Tolkien, "Game of Thrones" feels unique, and sometimes more like a historical novel than a fantasy book.

Uncork New Zealand Pinot Noir

It seems to me that pinot noir is the "it" grape of the moment. New Zealand is perhaps the "it" wine country of the moment. So it stands to reason that the "it" country would produce the "it" wine. Thus, New Zealand pinot noir was born. Originally it was believed that a quality red wine could not be produced in a country with the latitude of New Zealand; it was too dark and too cold. However, due to some experimental plantings of pinot noir



been producing, then pinot noir may well

and Gamay vines in the 1970s, pinot noir emerged as New Zealand's second-most important varietal wine. Sauvignon blanc may be New Zealand's No. 1 wine export, but pinot noir is a close second. If New Zealand continues to produce pinot noir as excellent as it has

Mamma's Kitchen Serves it Up

Mamma's Kitchen serves hearty, homestyle food in a bright, airy storefront in the Hybla Valley section of Alexandria. Although it is one of many such Greek restaurants serving popular Mediterranean dishes, including pizza, Mamma's Kitchen stands out for its inviting dining space and its delicious versions of the classics.

Inside Mamma's Kitchen, large murals of outdoor and picturesque scenes from Greece—including one of the old city in Athens with a view of the Parthenon—cover several portions of the walls in the dining room. The scenes are painted in bold and bright colors. Some are simply picturesque, while others are whimsical and light-hearted.

Service at Mamma's Kitchen is fast and friendly. Families are welcomed, and highchairs are readily available for young diners. The kids' menu (\$3.99 to \$5.49) includes: spaghetti and meatballs, grilled cheese sandwiches, grilled chicken, hamburgers and pita pizza. In addition, the To Go Menu enables diners to order their meal for take-out.

The appetizer menu includes many Greek favorites: Grilled Halloumi Cheese (\$8.50), Tzatziki, yogurt dip with cucumber, garlic and mint served with pita (\$4.99), hummus and pita (\$5.25) and stuffed grape leaves (\$5.95). We enjoyed the Tzatziki, which went down as a very nice, refreshing start to the meal, and also liked the fried calamari (\$7.50), which comes with a marinara sauce and a spicy "boom boom," Aioli-like sauce. This latter sauce was very pungent had a definite kick. Overall, the calamari was cooked just right—nice and chewy but not rubbery.

The gyro platter (\$9.99 lunch, \$12.95 dinner) is presented with a choice of either chicken or a combination of beef and lamb. (Gyro refers to the Greek style of roasting spiced meats on a vertical spit.) The beef-lamb combo is served over a bed of fries and sprinkled generously with feta. Served on the side are wedges of pita, and small containers with chopped tomatoes, chopped onions, and tzatziki. We highly recommend this dish. The meat was spiced just right—neither too

overwhelming nor overly pungent—and the various condiments complemented the meat dish well. The portion of both the meat, and especially the fries, was quite generous.

We also sampled the lunch portion of the chicken gyro, served over pita bread as a sandwich with yogurt sauce, and sliced onions and tomatoes. The sandwich is served with a portion of fresh-cut fries. (We were pleased to learn during a carry-out run that the kitchen will wait until you arrive to pick up your order to make the fries so that you can walk away with a batch that's just been freshly made.) Again, we enjoyed the flavor of the spiced chicken and would happily stop by often for a quick lunch to pick up a version of this popular sandwich

if we worked in the area.

A variety of hot and cold sandwiches (\$4.99 to \$8.50) provides plenty of options. For vegetarians, the fresh mozzarella, tomato and basil sandwich (\$6.99 lunch, \$7.99 dinner) is a delicious taste of classic Mediterranean flavors. It comes with fries, too.

Several baked pasta dishes are also available. The Mushroom Ravioli Al Forno (\$14.99) is a mushroom and parmesan-stuffed ravioli baked in Alfredo sauce. It was decadently rich and creamy—a true treat for cheese lovers. The portion is sizeable, so much so that we took some home with us and

enjoyed it for lunch the next day.

Mamma's Kitchen offers lots of choices in pizza, which is made on a thin and crispy crust. Though the pizza is perfectly acceptable, we found the Greek specialties to be the area where Mamma's Kitchen truly shined.

For dessert—three versions of baklava (\$3.50), the traditional Eastern Mediterranean dessert made of layered sheets of thin phyllo dough, nuts and a sweet syrup made from either rose water or orange blossoms—offered plenty of temptation. Good, standout baklava is not always easy to find, and we were quite pleased with both the classic version as well as a less traditional chocolate version. This latter is served as two long rolls drizzled with chocolate syrup. Both were served in generous portions. Tiramisu (\$4.25), choco-

continued on page 17



They offer lots of choices in pizza, which is made on a thin and crispy crust.

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LIVE WIRE

Theater of the First Amendment *Live Wire*

Sunday, April 17 at 4 p.m.

Take a trip back to the Golden Age of Radio as *Live Wire* recreates the distinctive look, sound, and feel of a classic 1930s radio studio. Mason's award-winning Theater of the First Amendment presents a selection of actual shows from the archives of the Federal Theatre Project. Spanning styles from Living Newspaper to mystery to musicale, these shows were created as part of the New Deal's WPA program to keep the radio industry alive during the depression. TFA's original staging of *Live Wire* in 1992 was critically acclaimed by *The Washington Post* and was broadcast by National Public Radio.

\$18, \$28, \$36



ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Orpheus Chamber Orchestra

Arabella Steinbacher, violin

Saturday, April 23 at 8 p.m.

Performing without a conductor and rotating the musical leadership roles for each piece, the "Orpheus Chamber Orchestra elegantly refutes the notion that a collective mind is unlikely to produce the same caliber of performance produced by a single mind." (*Chicago Tribune*) With German violin virtuoso Arabella Steinbacher, the program will include Strauss' *Serenade for Winds in E-flat Major, Op. 7*; Hartmann's *Concerto Funèbre*; Mozart's *Rondo for Violin and Orchestra in C Major, K. 373* and *Adagio in E Major, K. 261*; and Haydn's "London" Symphony (No. 104).

\$28, \$48, \$56



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www.FairfaxCounty.gov/parks/farm-mkt.htm

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Starting May 7, Saturdays, 8 AM–1 PM

West Street Parking Lot

www.FairfaxSaturdayMarket.com

Sunday Farmers Market

Starting May 1, Sundays, 10 AM–2 PM

George Mason Sq

(corner of North and Old Lee Highway)

www.FairfaxSaturdayMarket.com



Lemons: A Bowl of Sunshine

Just sitting in a bowl on the counter, lemons are so bright, cheery and fragrant that it's easy to appreciate them for decorative reasons rather than for their culinary uses. But their sharp acidity makes them an all-purpose player in the kitchen, and unlike most fruits they're useful in both desserts and savory dishes.

Lemons are one of the most useful fruits you can have in the kitchen. Use lemons wherever or whenever you need to sharpen the flavors of a dish without added salt—a bonus for anyone on a low-sodium diet. Lemons add a welcome freshness to rich dishes and a refreshing zing to everything from pasta to salad to jams. A squeeze of lemon is a classic flavoring for fish and they're the essential ingredient in lemon meringue pie. Use lemons instead of vinegar for a quick dressing—whisk together olive oil, lemon juice and herbs to drizzle over a salad. Lemon juice prevents unwelcome browning of cut fruit

such as apples. Don't overlook the peel or zest of the lemon. The essential oils in the peel make it a powerful flavoring agent. Lemons are prized throughout the Mediterranean, but the most creative uses are in North African

cooking, where pickled or preserved lemons are a major flavoring agent and condiment.

Choose lemons that are heavy for their size with thin, unwrinkled skin. There are several tricks to extract the most juice from a lemon. Bring it to room temperature before squeezing. Alternatively, microwave for a

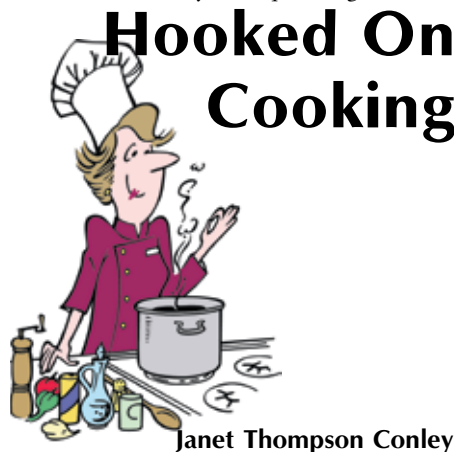
few seconds or roll on the counter before squeezing to get the most juice. The juice can then be frozen for longer storage. Generally, a medium lemon yields three tablespoons of juice. The most intense lemon flavor lies in the skin and there are lots of gadgets out there for removing the peel or zest without getting any of the bitter white

pith underneath. If you're using the zest and juice, zest the lemon first. Lemons will keep for several days on the counter, but the refrigerator is best for longer storage.

Familiar conventional lemons, also known as Eureka or Lisbon varieties, are widely available at grocery stores year-

round. Meyer lemons are sweeter than ordinary lemons and more fragrant with a floral quality. This lemon/orange hybrid is not grown on a commercial basis, but if you're in

continued on page 14



Meyer lemons are sweeter than ordinary lemons and more fragrant with a floral quality.

Meteorite Donated to the Smithsonian

Months after a meteorite crashed through their rented office space, a pair of Lorton doctors were able to finalize the donation of the space rock to the Smithsonian Institution, and the proceeds to Doctors Without Borders. From left, attorney Michael Chamowitz, Dr. Marc Gallini, Dr. Frank Ciampi and attorney Keith Marino.



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A Wild Suggestion for
Climate Change

THOMAS E. LOVEJOY

Professor, Environmental Science and
Policy

Monday, April 25, 2011 at 7 p.m.

Our planet does not work as just a physical system, but rather as a physical and biological system combined. This is more apparent now as the biology of the planet responds to the current amount of climate change (three quarters of a degree increase, as a global average). This talk will start by describing the response and great sensitivity of nature to the current temperature increase, will project ahead to what further increase could bring, and then focus on how managing the ecosystems at a planetary scale could contribute to a solution.

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What's That Croak? Must Be Cope's Gray Tree Frog

Have you ever heard a frog croaking in the spring brush along a pond edge or later in summer in the woods but just couldn't find it? You may have been in very close proximity to Cope's gray tree frog, a master of disguise. This little 1¼- to 2½-inch gray tree frog isn't just gray. It has the ability to mask its presence

with subtle changes in color based on what it is perched on, humidity and the season. This frog can show black blotches on its back or throw a variety of brown, green and pearl-gray shades of color on its rough and warty back. Greens are more common during the breeding season when the frog visits brush along pond edges where green leaves are sprouting. Most of these frogs will have a small white mark beneath the eye and sport a white belly that it holds close to wherever it's perching. The inner thighs are yellow to bright orange. The call of Cope's gray tree frog is described as a short, vibrant flute-like trill of 45 trills per second. During the breeding season you can follow his call and try to find him, but you must have an excellent eye to find such a well-camouflaged critter.

The ideal home for this little frog is in wooded areas near temporary or permanent bodies of still water such as flooded fields,

ditches, ponds, lakes and swamps. After breeding they may move further from water and inhabit farm woodlots, wooded suburban neighborhoods and forests where they can be found in damp, rotting logs or hollow portions of trees. In winter they will hibernate under logs, leaves and other debris on the

forest floor. In spring they will head toward standing bodies of water to breed.

Cope's gray tree frog finds its meals where it can. Adults hunt the understory small trees and shrubs in wooded areas and will take advantage of most any insect it happens across while foraging. Fine dining for the tree frog is a nice meal of moth and

butterfly caterpillars, assorted beetles, ants, snails, worms, spiders, mites, ticks, plant lice and similar pesky bugs. Being an opportunistic feeder, it won't hesitate to gulp down another smaller frog that happens to cross its path. As youngsters, the tadpoles dine on plant material such as algae or underwater plants. They will also filter feed off the bottom, resulting in cleaner pond water.

Hyla chrysoscelis usually breeds between May and August. You will begin to hear their mating calls after the evening air temperature rises above 59 degrees. Warm, cloudy nights

from dusk to midnight will be noisiest. If the temperature drops, all calling ceases. The males cling to brush, tree limbs and other vegetation overhanging shallow breeding sites to scream out their breeding calls. They'll defend their territory using different calls to let other male frogs know their territory boundaries.

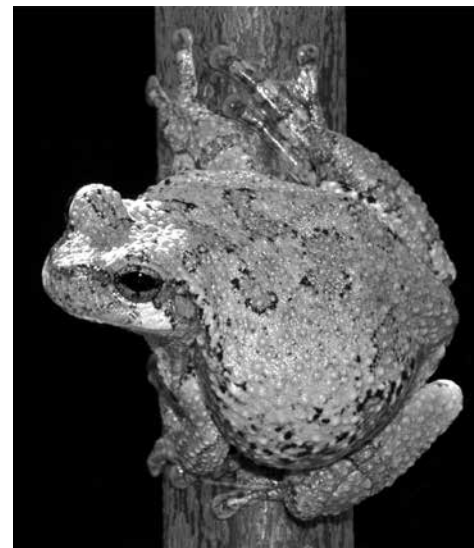
Lady frogs are attracted to the man frog with the longest and most frequent mating call. Once she finds the man of her dreams, he will join her in the pond to fertilize the eggs as she lays them. She will lay scattered groups of 10 to 40 egg masses on the surface of small ponds or other small, still water. The egg masses will drift until they contact plants or other vegetative matter in the pond and then will become attached. The total number of eggs laid is anywhere from 1,000 to 2,000. With the eggs being laid, the parents' job is done and they wander off into the woods, however, the males may stick around for additional breeding opportunities. In a short four or five days, depending on temperature, the eggs hatch into tiny tadpoles.

It will take another 45 to 64 days for the tadpoles to completely change into tiny frogs only about ¾ of an inch long. Then it will be two more years for the little frogs to reach maturity and start making baby tadpoles of their own. Some adult frogs have been known to reproduce twice during a single breeding season.

Cope's gray tree frog can live quite a long time in captivity, up to seven years. In the wild they fall prey much earlier in life to a wide variety of predators. Most tree frogs will eventually be gobbled up by snakes, birds, shrews and other small mammals, green frogs and bullfrogs. Even as tadpoles they are a tasty snack to fish, giant water bugs and larger amphibian larva such as tiger salamanders.

At the Forest's Edge

Allen Easterly



Cope's gray tree frog

◆ ◆ ◆

Allen Easterly is a freelance writer, Complimentary Work Force volunteer for the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and a state-certified Virginia Master Naturalist who has been studying wildlife for 50 years.

Tips for Spawning Crappie and Bass

By Mark Fike

The air was breezy yet warm when I lobbed the whole nightcrawler toward a barely discernable stump sticking out of the mud in the bottom of the pond. It was submerged at least three feet but my polarized sunglasses helped me pick it out. I knew from experience fish liked to hang out around the cove end and I was repeatedly rewarded for my efforts each

I had noticed a few dark "submarines" that had been cruising back and forth in front of me.

time I visited the pond.

This trip was no different as I watched my line begin a sideways slide away from where the nightcrawler had landed. A sharp snap of my wrist put the hook firmly in the fish, and the rod began arcing and throbbing as the fish tugged back. The fish swam around the end of the log in front of me and then around some emerging lily pads when the fight ended as the fish slid up on the bank and then was deposited into my bucket. I caught a half-dozen crappie and then switched over to a topwater Mann's Phat Rat. The Phat Rat is an effective artificial bait that gets a lot of attention from bass.

I had noticed a few dark "submarines" that had been cruising back and forth in front of me when I was busy hauling out crappie for dinner. When the pair entered the lily pads in the back of the cove, I heaved the Phat Rat into the jungle of emerging lily pads and let it settle until the ripples were gone. The water erupted just after the first twitch of the

bait. Lucky for me the lily pads were not fully grown. Still, the fish was fully entrenched in the vegetation and had to be worked out of the mess. My line held and the hook stayed put, too.

The bass I caught measured 22.75 inches long and was fat with eggs. She was slid back into the water to procreate for another year. Crappie and bream reproduce very fast and can quickly overrun a pond. So I did take the crappie and the few bream I caught to the house. The crappie were in various stages of spawning too. Fresh fish caught in cold water are the best-tasting you will ever encounter.

Tips for Taking Crappie in Ponds

Spawning crappie are relatively easy to catch, but for the novice I offer a few tips. These tips are primarily for pond fishing but will also work in lakes and reservoirs.

First, you have to find the fish. Crappie like to spawn in shallow water. Look at water less than four feet in depth. Use polarized glasses

The bass I caught measured 22.75 inches long and was fat with eggs.

to search for movement in the shallows. Be sure to paddle quietly and avoid using even a trolling motor if at all possible. Travel upwind to minimize the need to paddle or motor more than necessary. When fishing from the bank, walk softly and slowly. Crappie spook easily, but they will return to the spawning beds. Look in the corners of coves, particularly those with treetops or lily pads

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Democracy Coming to Washington?

Will real democracy ever come to Washington, DC? Across the Middle East dictators topple like dominoes. Desert autocracies are rent asunder by an explosion of people power. Here in the bastion of democracy Washington residents still live under the thumb of the U.S. Congress. Washingtonians can't even ban handguns to make their city safer without the consent of six congressional subcommittees. The DC government sanctions gay marriage. Focus on the (heterosexual) Family and their conservative allies on the Hill gleefully promise to overturn it.

Residents of Washington, DC, enjoy (if that's the right word) a quasi-democracy. District residents have no U.S. senator among the 100 more or less distinguished individuals who jokingly call themselves "the world's greatest deliberative body." They have no congressional representation in the House save phantom delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, whose modest powers have been reduced further by the new Republican majority. Like a naughty child, Ms. Norton has been sent to a corner, admonished to be seen but not heard. District of Columbia residents have fewer rights than voters in Tehran. House Speaker John Boehner is just a tanner version of Iran's Grand Ayatollah Khamenei.

Washingtonians watch helplessly as freedom-loving Tunisians, then Egyptians, now Libyans take up arms against their undemocratic rulers. However, unknown to the potentates on Capitol Hill, a quieter

revolution is now bubbling much closer to home. Disappointed that the city's most prominent citizen, B.H. Obama, has not strongly championed DC voting rights, local government and union leaders are ready to take radical action.

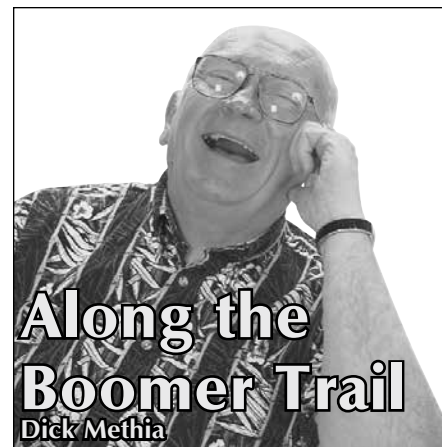
This columnist was recently invited to a clandestine leadership meeting held in Council Chair Kwame Brown's spacious SUV (the one with the black interior). The Lincoln Navigator's pricey entertainment system, one committee member explained, would keep eavesdropping congressional investigators at bay.

Activists plan to hit Congress where it hurts. Just before

4:30 every Thursday afternoon as members speed out of their House garages to National Airport, city garbage trucks will mysteriously stall in front of the concrete barriers.irate congressmen who hail cabs will be sped to the airport—at 25 mph. (DC cabbies have agreed to join the insurrection in return for meter removal.)

When members and senators fly back to "work" Sunday evening, exhausted from fund-raising and constituent meetings on the 16th green, activists will be waiting for them. Using a tactic famed activist Saul Alinsky used successfully against Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, volunteers armed with reading material will stand at the urinals and settle into the rest room stalls at National Airport and lock the doors behind them. Suffering airline

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A Respite for the Homeless

I was really looking forward to sleeping on the floor of a local church on a recent Wednesday night. That church serves as an overflow hypothermia shelter, and husband and I had volunteered, for the second year to spend the night there. Instead, we had to sleep in our bed at home.

When we volunteered for this last year, I did so grudgingly. My I-can-sleep-anywhere days ended in my 20s and now I complain if a hotel doesn't offer room service. Nonetheless, 10 men arrived at the church last year around 8 p.m., having already showered and eaten dinner at the shelter. Each of them had stayed at the church before and knew what to do. They signed in, took a blanket and pillow, and placed them in a pew or in an aisle as a placeholder to mark their sleep spot. Then they sat in front of a small television in the back room next to a table of coffee and Girl Scout cookies, and we all watched reruns of "The A Team."

As we talked with them I was intrigued by their stories. One guy professed to be a chess whiz, and after cluing me in on a few high-level strategies, I am convinced that he was. A few of them had served in Vietnam.

One earned a college basketball scholarship offer. But the guy I remember most was the one who asked me, tears streaming down his face, why God had done this to him. He had lived a decent life, he said. He'd never been dishonest with anyone. Now he was homeless and nearly blind.

I had no answer. No one tried to sneak out, start a fight or behave like any of those bad stereotypes I had convinced myself would happen. They just wanted a place to sleep. By 10 p.m., the lights were out and everyone settled in for the night. Mike and I took turns sleeping in four-hour shifts. I checked the sacristy a few times during my 2 a.m. to 6 a.m. patrol. All was quiet.

The day laborers asked me to wake them at 5 a.m., and everyone else was up and out before 6 a.m. We collected the bedding and gave them a McDonald's voucher and a bus token. I didn't know what they would do for the next 14 hours until they returned to the shelter for the night.

But no one came this year. As my husband and I waited by the piles of bedding, discussing who would sleep first, a social worker

continued on page 16

Get Out and Give Back

Jane Collins

The guy I remember most was the one who asked me, tears streaming down his face, why God had done this to him.



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Hooked on Cooking

continued from page 11

California or Florida, they're worth seeking out at farmers' markets.

My current favorite use of lemons is with chicken and seasonal vegetables wrapped in foil, then baked in the oven for a complete meal. While the packets bake, sliced lemons perfume the chicken and vegetables. Picky eaters will enjoy being able to pick and choose their favorite vegetables to include in their individual packets. These packets are especially

good with garlic,
mushrooms,
fingerling
potatoes and
zucchini or



squash, but you could also use onions, carrots, rosemary and tomatoes or anything that looked good at the market that week.

Think of this recipe
as a blueprint; adjust
ingredients and amounts
to your taste.

Chicken Packets, Italian-Style

Think of this recipe as a blueprint; adjust ingredients and amounts to your taste and according to what is in season. Avoid delicate vegetables such as asparagus that won't hold up to 40 minutes in the oven. Adapted from Grace Weissman's recipe in the Washington Post, Oct. 20, 2010. (4 servings.)

Ingredients

2 medium zucchini or summer squash,
sliced
4 new potatoes, sliced or 4 handfuls of
fingerling potatoes, cut in half
1 small onion, sliced very thin (optional)
2 cloves garlic, sliced
1 cup jarred artichoke hearts, drained and
quartered
½ cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
1 lemon, sliced
1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts,
cut into strips or use chicken tenders
Thyme and/or rosemary sprigs
Salt and pepper
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Directions

Preheat oven to 400°. Cut 8 large pieces (2 pieces per packet) of aluminum foil, each about 10 inches long. Divide the zucchini, potatoes, onion and garlic evenly among four pieces of foil. Add a quarter of the artichokes, tomatoes, lemon, chicken and herbs to each. Season with salt and pepper. Drizzle each with a tablespoon of olive oil. Place the second piece of foil on top and fold the edges together tightly to seal. Place the packets on a baking sheet. Bake for about 40 minutes or until the chicken and potatoes are cooked through. Open carefully as the steam will be hot. Discard foil before serving. Make ahead: The packets can be assembled and refrigerated several hours before baking.

School Gardens Start Planting for Spring

As the lyrics of a traditional American and English folk song go: "Oats peas beans and barley grow. Can you or I or anyone know how oats peas beans and barley grow?" Well, not only can you and I know about growing vegetables, but school children in 36 Fairfax County schools can know a lot about growing vegetables, fruit and herbs. Some schools in our vast county are just planning their first vegetable gardens this year, but one school, Churchill Road Elementary School, is in its eighth year of planting and harvesting.



photo courtesy of Alan Borbauer
Larry Cook helps Savannah Carey (FECEP Headstart) fill her paper-mâché pot with dirt and seeds to help start the garden indoors.

What follows is a random sampling of the varied school gardening programs in Fairfax County.

Churchill Road's active gardening program is called Outdoor Odyssey and now includes a greenhouse where seeds are first planted while raised beds await the seedlings. Plantings begin in early March and continue



photo courtesy of Alan Borbauer
Mr. Borbauer, guides sixth-graders Josue Borges, Lana Short and Stephanie Torrico on how to spread mulch during the winter cleanup.

through May. In early spring students plant peas, radishes and lettuce. Later, tomatoes, carrots, green peppers, corn, squash, pumpkins, beans, green beans, eggplant, sunflowers, onions, cabbage and cucumbers are planted. Their herbs include lemon balm, oregano and mint.

Lane Elementary's garden has been in existence for several years. Students maintain the garden where lettuces and herbs are planned for this year. Nicole Goeneweg, who teaches a multi-age class of first- and second-graders, runs an after-school program called Roots & Shoots, where students learn about the environment, ecology and plant life. Liberty Middle School has an after-school VIP club that helps plant in the spring. This VIP club (Value in Prevention) runs

in the summer with 50 children.

Providence Elementary School is in year two of their garden. Last year they planted tomatoes, carrots, corn, sunflowers, squash, zucchini, okra, cantaloupe, turnips, beets, peas, cabbage, beans, jalapeno and green peppers and pumpkin. Last September the school cafeteria served the beans during lunch and made an okra medley one day and then the parsley was used with potatoes. Students at Mountain View Alternative High eat salads and salsa and fresh squash from their garden all spring. Fourth- and sixth-graders at Lorton Station Elementary School are starting a Colonial Garden this year. They won't



photo courtesy of Alan Borbauer
Vrushali Patel (fourth grade) helps Madison Dubyak (FECEP Headstart) and Layan Abujahara (FECEP Headstart) in making their paper-mâché planting pots.

be planting vegetables; they plan to grow thyme, sage, rosemary and chamomile.

Pumpkins are a favorite crop at several schools. They are used during the students' pumpkin study. Seeds can be planted when the students are in school in the spring and the pumpkins harvested when the students return in the fall.

Floris Elementary was awarded grant money in 2007 that helped to start an outdoor vegetable garden from the Youth Garden Grants Program, which was sponsored by the National Gardening Association and Home Depot. With the money they bought the supplies for



photo courtesy of Alan Borbauer
Boyoon Kim (FECEP Headstart) with her paper-mâché planting pot.

raised-bed gardens and a storage shed for the gardening tools. First-grade teacher Jane Ann Cole explained how teachers and their husbands came on a Saturday, built the raised beds and filled them with

soil. "Kindergarten students plant pumpkin seeds in the late spring that they harvest as first-graders in the fall. First-grade students plant corn in the late spring and when the stalks are up, our fourth graders add pole beans and squash for a three sisters garden."

Cole explained how Native Americans taught early white settlers the technique of planting squash, whose broad leaves protect the roots of the young corn and how the corn stalks later supported



photo courtesy of Alan Borbauer
Sixth graders Oscar Urbina and Juliana Fuentes harvest green beans last fall.

add in the compost and get the area ready for the late spring crops to be planted," says Cole. When school is not in session during the summer break, the plants are on a timer system for drip irrigation. Floris Elementary

School is lucky to have such an avid outdoor gardener as Cole, who lives near the school and through the summer comes by every few weeks to weed.

Students learn water conservation through the use of rain barrels, which have become part of gardening activities at Washington Mill, Island Creek and Haycock elementary schools. Kings Glen Elementary uses compost from the school cafeteria. Floris has its own compost bin.

Island Creek Elementary in Kingstowne and Newington Forest Elementary are two schools that plan to plant a garden that attracts butterflies.

Schools coordinate their planting of milkweed and other plants friendly to butterflies with second grade's science studies of butterflies and moths.



photo courtesy of Alan Borbauer
Sixth-grader Brian Pevarnik spreads mulch on the garden pathways.

the climbing beans. Squash, corn and beans—these are the three sisters. "We plow it all under in the fall after pumpkin harvest and cover it for the winter. We also have a compost bin, and in the spring we

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Along the Boomer Trail

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passengers just deplaned will be handed contact information for members of Congress opposed to DC voting rights.

Committee members would not divulge all the tactics in their planned insurrection, but they are confident that House members and senators, fed up with missed flights and angry calls from the flying public, will not hold out long. “Saul Alinsky’s playbook is full of mischief,” said one activist at the meeting. “If it tamed the Windy City’s Boss Daley, the windbags on the Hill don’t stand a chance.”

Gardener’s Tips

continued from page 6

a nearby rain garden.

Don’t know how a three-foot shrub will look in a spot? Try placing a three-foot box there to get a feel for the volume it will have. Use a garden hose to experiment with the location and outline of a new planting area. The shape and size will suggest the number and type of plants to put there.

Bring your plan to the plant sales and garden centers. In the most hectic time of year for nurseries, a plan can communicate a great deal of information in a short time. Landscape designers can develop plans for you, from vegetable gardens to rain gardens and wildlife gardens. But if you can, take a measuring tape out into the yard and reconnect with your yard before shopping. Bring a friend to hold the other end of the tape, and sketch bravely on paper. It is an eye-opening lesson every year.

Lastly, try new plants that you did not plan on meeting at the plant sale. It’s fun. Remember that we can expect frost as late as the end of April. Some plants shiver bravely into the growing season. Others do not

recover gracefully from the shock. Like icy rain on open-toed shoes or the first sunburn of the year, container plants need to avoid early exposure to the weather just like we do. See you out there!

Irene Mills is a landscape designer at Silverbrook Nursery and Landscaping.

Get Out and Give Back

continued from page 13

stopped by the church to tell us that that the shelter could accommodate all of the homeless that evening. We could go home.

I was happy to sleep in my own bed that night. I was even happier that those men would sleep in a bed and not in a church pew or on the floor.

But I really wanted to get to know them. Get out and give back.

Jane Hess Collins helps and encourages people to give back through her writing, speaking, coaching and workshops. She also established game nights for at-risk families throughout the country.

Great Escapes

continued from page 6

It’s amusing to hit the beach in downtown St. Petersburg and walk from the Vinoy but one of the most beautiful can be found at Fort De Soto Park. Named America’s Best Beach in 2005 and 2008, and TripAdvisor’s No. 1 Beach for 2008 and 2009, this sweet slice of heaven is soft sand, emerald waters and shady pines. Comprising five separate islands, the park features a seven-mile paved trail, paw playground and dog beach, camping, fishing and Fort de Soto, of course.

Despite the oil spill, the gulf looks surprisingly lovely and its seafood is just as tasty as ever. And, visiting the gulf this year is just the

nice and neighborly thing to do; it will help this gorgeous gulf coast recover.

Consider it a public service to taste great grouper, crab, oysters and more at 400 Beach Seafood and Tap House. Bella Brava, Cassis American Brasserie and Park Shore Grille. Or try the pier-side seating at Sea Critters Café on historic Pass-A-Grille at St. Pete Beach. Another local favorite is simply old Florida fun at the Chattaway . It’s colorful, cash-only and out of range of the rich folks, if you’ve had enough elite St. Pete. The staff at the Don Caesar will applaud your good taste.

World of Wine

continued from page 9

Total Wine.

Kim Crawford Wines produces a pinot noir that is a dark, brooding wine. It is purple with a touch of crimson. The flavors of Kim Crawford’s pinot noir can best be described as layered: black cherries, raspberries, red currants, strawberries, spice, rich mushroom, smoky oak and bright fruit. I recommend a bit

Kim Crawford Wines produces a pinot noir that is a dark, brooding wine.

of decanting time for the Kim Crawford pinot noir, to release this elegant aromatic which is marked by dark cherry flavor balanced by smoky tannins, yielding a velvety finish. This wine works equally well with salmon or roast beef. Kim Crawford Pinot Noir Marlborough is approximately \$17.50 at Total Wine.

Oyster Bay is another Marlborough vineyard that produces a very good pinot noir. Theirs is noted for cherry and plum flavors rounded by vanilla and perhaps mint. This wine is both barrel- and tank-fermented

and matured with a mix of new and older French oak. This yields a complex and spicy pinot noir that is a great stand- alone wine, in my opinion. Oyster Bay Wines Pinot Noir Marlborough is \$14 at Total Wine.

So if you are looking for a new and exciting wine to try that is wallet friendly, look to the up-and-coming New Zealand as a New-World country that produces wines that compete with the Old World. If you have a hard time finding them in the store, they tend to be shelved with the Australian wines, which are usually easy to find.

Marketplace Issues

continued from page 3

sive collection of information for taxpayers highlighting everything you’ll need to know when filing your return.

9. Review! Review! Review! Don’t rush. Be sure to double-check all the Social Security numbers and math calculations on your return as these are the most common errors made by taxpayers.

Be sure to double-check all the Social Security numbers and math.

10. Don’t Panic! If you run into a problem, remember the IRS is here to help. Try www.irs.gov or call toll-free 800-829-1040.

Remember, when seeking the assistance of a tax preparer, always get referrals from friends and family on who they use and check the BBB Business Review on tax preparation services.

Edward Johnson is president and CEO of the Better Business Bureau serving the greater metro Washington, DC, region.

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School Discipline

continued from page 1

cipals to act as the superintendent’s designee for the purpose of conducting a preliminary review in individual cases at their schools where a student is found to be in possession of his or her own prescription medication.

- Develop a data-collection process analysis to include academic success, recidivism, and on-time graduation.
- Create an exit survey for parents to complete at the end of disciplinary hearings.
- Review and reinforce the training program for school board members and staff members to achieve consistent implementation of the disciplinary process.
- Continue the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports program in all schools.

Woodlawn Goes Green

continued from page 3

Employees from the Neighborhood Restaurant Groups restaurants will help out, as well. Arcadia’s vision is to have 20 acres devoted to a local and sustainable food initiative. “We anticipate a successful return to Woodlawn’s agricultural heritage, and look forward to providing our guests a more realistic portrayal of life on a 19th-century working farm,” said Hellman.

Musicians Receive Awards

continued from page 5

Feuer Competition award money must be used to further the music training of the recipients. Brian plans to use his to commission a new bow.

The second prize of \$1,000 went to Daniel Tavani, a sophomore at Battlefield High School. Daniel is principal cellist of the Youth Symphony Orchestra in Prince William County. He began studying the cello at age six and at 11 performed in a master class for cellist Lynn Harrell. Daniel has taken part in other competitions. He won first prize at 12 in the Senior Division Concerto Competition of the Northern Virginia Music Teachers Association and was a finalist in the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) Young Artists Competition. He has participated

in many concerts in the area, including the Masterworks Festival and performs cello in a piano trio and with members of his family in the Tavani Ensemble. Daniel intends to use his prize money toward the purchase of a new cello.

The third prize of \$700 was awarded to Michael Romans, a sophomore at Lake Braddock Secondary School, where he is concertmaster of the symphony orchestra. He has studied the violin for the past six years, but has also been playing the viola for two years. It was his performance on the viola that led to his award. For the past two years he has played violin in the Virginia All-State Orchestra and in the senior regional orchestra. Michael has had two recitals at the Alexandria Lyceum, where he played both violin and viola. He recently earned first place in a competition held by the Northern Virginia Music Teachers Association. Michael plans to use his award money to purchase a professional violin.

Usually the Feuer Competition awards only three prizes, but this year a \$200 honorable mention award was added, which was given to violinist Jackie Lin, a sophomore at Centreville High School. Jackie has been part of the Youth Fellowship Program and was a finalist in the NSO Young Soloist Competition. She played for Gil Shaham in a Youth Fellowship Master Class and for Timothy Fain, who was soloist at FSO’s Nov. 2010 concert. Jackie also studies piano and is on her school’s tennis team. She plans to use her prize money to attend a summer music program.

Crappie and Bass

continued from page 12

near deeper water. The coves or pockets near the corners of the pond dam are good spots to look, but any cove with cover will hold fish. Docks are also good places to look.

Second, use a light action rod with light test line on it to avoid educating or turning off fish. Four- to six-pound test line is fine for crappie fishing. A spin cast or spinning setup is perfect.

Third, live bait works the best for crappie. Most people use minnows for crappie, but I have found that a garden worm or night-crawler that is threaded on the hook leaving

some hanging off to trail behind entices fish very well. Artificial baits such as jigs and grubs, small spinner baits, mini crankbaits and flies all work well for crappie. It is hard to beat live bait on a bad day though.

Finally, crappie are very good at procreating. It is important to harvest fish regularly. However, you can let the largest fish go or even set a minimum size limit of nine inches if you wish to do so. However, be sure there are plenty of predators to thin out the smaller fish to avoid overpopulating the pond.

If you are itching to fish this month, be sure to take a bucket of minnows or worms and hit the local ponds. The bass and crappie are spawning now and the fishing is fine. So is the eating.

Incinerator Purchase

continued from page 1

for a contract extension, originally negotiated in 2008, were too favorable to Covanta.

The plan to buy was controversial, with several members of the Board voicing strong opposition to the county taking over the plant, which would likely have continued to operate under Covanta’s management.

Last month, the Board voted to allow county staff members to make one last attempt to reach a satisfactory contract allowing for Covanta’s continued ownership, while simultaneously preparing for a bond-funded purchase if the deal fell through.

Board Chairman Sharon Bulova said that the terms ultimately reached by the county and Covanta were a significant improvement over the original contract, and said they would not have been attainable without the credible threat that the county would exercise its option to purchase the facility.

“Exercising our option to purchase allowed us to negotiate a service contract renewal based on the new economic reality and with a stronger negotiating position,” she said in a statement presented to the Board. “The extension will result in \$300 million in savings over the life of the new contract compared to the terms negotiated in 2008.”

Additionally, she said, “With a service contract based on these new terms, Fairfax County residents will continue to have affordable and reliable trash service for the next 30 years. Our county staff worked very hard

to secure these terms and I commend them for their efforts.”

Springfield District Representative Pat Herrity, the most vocal opponent of the purchase, called the Board’s decision a victory for small government principles.

“I vocally opposed this purchase from the start for many reasons,” said Herrity. “Taking over the trash incinerator from a private company would have been a massive expansion of government at a time when governments at all levels are returning their focus to core functions.”

Suburban Gourmet

continued from page 9

late cake (\$4.99) and cheesecake (\$4.25) are also available. We also very much enjoyed the chocolate cake, rich and chocolaty, but not overly sweet.

Mamma’s Kitchen is located at 7601 Fordson Road in the New Huntley Meadows Plaza. It opens at 11 a.m. on weekdays and at 8:30 a.m. on weekends. Breakfast is served on Saturday and Sunday. They close at 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and at 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights. The phone number is 571-312-6690.

Critics Corner

continued from page 9

This may be the first fantasy television series in history that doesn’t look cheap or campy. With author Martin serving as an executive producer, the show also looks like it will stay close to the books’ plotline.

My one concern is that HBO may quit with the 10 episodes it has filmed. “Game of Thrones” is really just the tip of the iceberg and ends with several plot lines unresolved. If you just watch the show, the finale is liable to leave you wondering what is going on. With three sequels out (and three more expected later), many events started in “Game of Thrones” do not reach their apex until much later.

However, since HBO has bought the rights to the other books in the “Song of Fire and Ice” series, it appears they are ready to move forward. If so, that could make “Game of Thrones” not just the most anticipated series of this year, but of the decade.

Commentary



Sharon Bulova (D)
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

New Buses and HOT Lanes

When I gave my State of the County address in January, I listed several items on our plate for 2011 that were “happening to us.” One of the major events looming on the horizon is the September deadline for the movement of 20,000 Defense Department employees to the Ft. Belvoir area under the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process.

To prepare for these workers, my col-

leagues on the Board of Supervisors and I have been working with our county staff to identify transportation improvements and choices in the corridor. We have also worked with the Virginia Department of Transportation on a revised plan for HOV and HOT Lanes on I-95.

Beginning in May, Fairfax Connector staff will launch a broad service change campaign and public outreach effort to inform South

County residents of bus service changes that will accompany the BRAC movements this fall.

Information on the proposed bus service changes will be provided on the Fairfax Connector website (www.fairfaxconnector.com) and through various social media outlets, including Twitter (@ffxconnector) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/fairfaxconnector).

In June, staff will hold a series of public meetings in southern Fairfax County to share information with the public about the proposed new service and receive comments on the routes and schedules. When the public meetings have concluded, the comments received regarding the proposed bus service changes will be reviewed and considered for incorporation into the final service plan.

By August, staff will finalize the schedules and begin training drivers. The final schedules will be available to the public by the end of August. Look for the new service to hit the streets in late September or early October.

The proposed BRAC service plan incorporates nine new buses and significantly increases Fairfax Connector bus service in South County. Funding for these new buses and the increase in service will come from our Commercial and Industrial Real Estate Taxes, earmarked for transportation improvements.

Regarding the I-95 HOV and HOT Lanes, transportation secretary Sean Connaughton released a revised proposal in February that is a truncated version of the previous plan. While our Board had hoped for the original

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Commentary



Pat Herrity (R)
Supervisor, Springfield District

County Board Erred in Subsidizing Luxury Affordable Housing

On Tuesday, March 8, the Board of Supervisors approved the 270-unit Residences at the Government Center over the objections of Supervisor Cook, Frey and me. I opposed this plan because I do not believe that the county should be in the business of subsidizing luxury affordable housing, especially when it directly competes with the private sector.

There are right ways to encourage development of affordable housing and wrong ways. This project was wrong on a number of fronts:

- **Luxury Does Not Belong in County-Subsidized Affordable Housing.** As was clearly stated on the applicant's web site, "Although the development is a luxury product, the units will be leased out to households earning between 50 and 100 percent of the Area Median Income." The luxury units also include significant onsite amenities—a pool, spa, exercise and weight room, tot lot and party rooms.

- **Federal Tax Credit Subsidy in Addition to the County Subsidy of \$10 to \$15 Million.** By providing the land, the county will be subsidizing the units to the tune of \$10 to \$15 million. By approving this project for a developer who can make this project work only by taking advantage of the county subsidy and the Low Income Housing Tax Credits Program (LIHTC), we are also contributing to our national deficit. In 2010, the President's Economic Recovery Advisory Board estimated that the LIHTC program would cost the federal government \$61 billion in lost tax revenue from participating corporations from 2008 to 2017.

- **Subsidizing a Product that Competes**

with the Private Sector. Because this is in my district, I know there are ample (several hundred) units currently available at or below the subsidized rents that will be offered by this project. In essence, the county is subsidizing a luxury product to compete with the existing private-sector apartments that actually have equal or lower more-affordable rents already. This subsidized luxury project will reduce the values of surrounding private-sector buildings and have a negative impact on our commercial tax base.

- **No Park Contribution.** The applicant did not provide the per-unit funds typically contributed as a part of the requirement for the Park Authority, typically used for things such as the construction and maintenance of community fields (for example, Patriot Park). They did not provide these funds because of the extensive money they will be spending for onsite amenities including a pool, spa, exercise and weight room, tot lot and party rooms. However, most of these facilities are not accessible to the public.

- **No Preference for Fairfax County Government Employees.** This project was initially proposed by my predecessor for Fairfax County Government employees. Despite a \$10 to \$15 million subsidy, there is no guarantee that any of the 270 units will be occupied by Fairfax County employees.

Despite the fact that this property is in the Springfield District and my familiarity with the impact on the surrounding properties, Chairman Bulova provided a substitute motion to my motion to deny this project and asked the Board to approve it. It was approved 7 to 3 with supervisors Cook and Frey joining me in opposing the project.



Gerald E. Connolly (D)
Congressman, 11th Congressional District

A Government Shutdown Would Affect Everyone

As I write this column, the prospect of a federal government shutdown is once again surfacing as the Congress and the administration seek to reach agreement on a budget for the fiscal year ending on September 30.

Throughout fiscal year 2011, the House and Senate have been unable to pass a year-long budget and have, instead, passed six short-term funding bills, known as continuing resolutions, to keep the government running on a week-to-week basis. But patience is wearing thin for these short-term budget bills and it is unclear whether Congress will agree to any more of them.

The impact of a government shutdown is far-reaching in Northern Virginia.

Confusion and uncertainty reign in many federal agencies as they struggle to plan for the remainder of the year. Services

food inspectors, and delays of war-damaged equipment repairs are but a few of the problems that could arise.

Ironically, the funding of government by short-term resolutions results in gross inefficiencies that end up costing more federal money than if the programs were funded for the entire year. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates called the use of continuing resolutions "a crisis at our doorstep."

I support the passage of a responsible funding plan for the remainder of this fiscal year that takes into account the need to cut unnecessary spending to reduce the federal budget deficit, but also provides the funds necessary to keep the government running efficiently for the benefit of all citizens. It won't be easy. There are too many of my new colleagues in Congress who seem to know the

cost of everything, but the value of nothing when it comes to government programs.

I also wanted to take a moment to recognize the brave men and women of Fairfax County's Task Force 1, the federal urban search and rescue team composed of

Services are being scaled back, contracts delayed, hiring frozen, and programs have been canceled as federal managers wait to find outabout funding levels.

Fairfax County fire fighters, paramedics and other first responders who recently spent a week on Northern Japan following the earthquake and tsunami that struck that nation.

I had the honor of greeting this team when they returned from Haiti last year and I can tell you that they are a dedicated and elite band of first responders who put the lives of others ahead of their own.

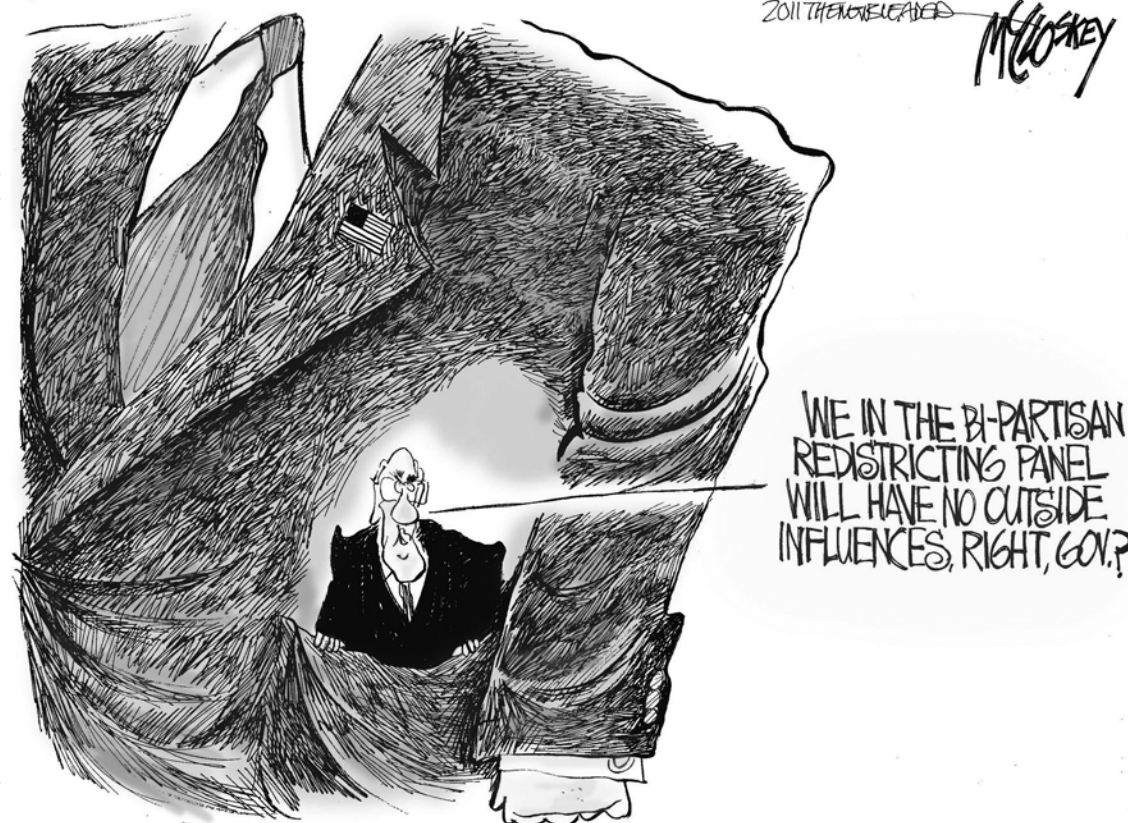
I welcome them home and join with their families in feeling pride in their accomplishments and relief that they made it home from Japan safely.

Finally, if you have an opportunity to visit the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center (at 9601 Ox Road in Lorton) before April 18, take a few moments to enjoy the many works of art created by students from the 11th Congressional District of Virginia. Students from more than 20 schools in Fairfax County, Prince William County and the City of Fairfax participated in this year's Congressional Arts Competition.

Their artwork is wonderful. They use a variety of media from watercolors and oil paints to photography and graphic design to provide us with their views of the world around us.

The winner of this year's contest will have his or her artwork displayed for one year in the U.S. Capitol. Winners in the competition also receive scholarships.

The Lorton Workhouse Arts Center is well worth a trip any time, but it isn't every day you get to see some top-quality art work created by Northern Virginia students.



Our Viewpoint

School Discipline

The challenge of creating an effective and constructive disciplinary system that contributes to a positive learning environment is a challenge that, sadly, many schools around the country fail. Solving this problem is significantly easier for a small school district with a single high school than it is for a system like Fairfax County, with 195 schools and 177,000 students.

As the 11-largest school system in the country, with a hugely diverse student body, operating a transparent, fair and equitable disciplinary system is very difficult. Fairfax County Public Schools are doing it successfully. However, that doesn't mean the system is perfect. There are few issues more serious or emotionally explosive for a parent than how their child is being treated in school.

On March 14, the school board started a review of the student discipline policies and it is clear that there is an enormous diversity and range of opinions among all the affected constituencies—the school board itself, faculty and school administrators and parents—as to whether the system is fair and effective or rigid and unfair. It appears to us that overall the system is, in fact, fair and effective, but that minor changes could make it better. We are pleased that a careful review is under way.

Two recent cases reported in the Washington Post have attracted a lot of attention and have inflamed some parents. One was the suicide of Nick Stuban, a Woodson student suspended for buying one capsule of a (legal at the time) marijuana-like synthetic compound. Was his suspension and transfer to a new school appropriate and unavoidable? And was it a contributing factor in his death?

The second recent case was that of Hayley Russell, a middle school student who was out of school for seven weeks because she had prescription acne medicine in her locker. Given the information available to the public, it is hard to accept that punishment as appropriate, necessary and constructive for her growth or necessary to maintain school discipline.

The problem with both of these cases, and particularly the death of Stuban, which is as emotionally disturbing as it can get for the community, is that none of the (most likely complex) details or circumstances of either of these cases has been made, or can be made, public by the school system. The result is that the public is making negative judgments about the school system's actions based on only partial information.

The procedure for these serious cases of violations of the rules laid out in the Students Responsibilities and Rights Handbook is that when a principal recommends expulsion, the case is transferred to the Hearings Office. That office conducts a hearing attended by a hearings officer, the principal and the assistant principal, the school resource officer or a county police officer, the student and the parents. In the 2009–2010 school year 636 cases were sent to the Hearings Office.

The word “expulsion” is almost a misnomer, as only a small number of students are actually expelled from the Fairfax County School System each year. What actually happens when a student is “expelled” is that they are transferred from their home-base school to either another base school or to one of a number of special Fairfax County programs.

At-large board of education member Martina A. Hone, an attorney, is more uncomfortable with the existing procedures than many of her associates. She is concerned that the hearing officers become prosecutors and that there is not a neutral party in the hearing. She also believes that the hearings should be recorded. We certainly agree with her on that second point, as it would not increase the cost significantly and it would enable an easy review if the hearing results were later challenged. We are not persuaded that having a third “neutral party” in the hearings would be either cost-effective or beneficial.

There is nothing nice about such a hearing, and unfortunately many parents are unwilling to fully acknowledge the meaning of what their child did. Suddenly the excuses, justifications and accusations start pouring out: It was an innocent mistake. He didn't mean it. It was someone

else's fault. The penalty is way too harsh. The hearing officer wasn't fair or nice. It will wreck his chances of getting into a “good” college. The list goes on.

However, when you look at the actual statistics from the 2009–2010 school year—the most recent figures available—we are hard pressed to conclude that anything is amiss. That is not to say that an error does not occur in an individual hearing.

To us, the most significant statistic that leads us to believe that overall the procedure is thoughtful and fair and working properly is that of the 636 students recommended for expulsion and sent to the Hearing Office only 134 were forwarded to the school board for action. In other words, 79 percent received lesser punishments. That doesn't sound inappropriate or unreasonable to us. Finally, out of 177,000 students only 119 were actually transferred and only 11 were truly expelled from the system. Those are very small numbers.

Hone raises an extremely good issue with regard to the record-keeping in these discipline cases. She points out that the Fairfax County Public Schools system has an extremely sophisticated computer system, but it is not tracking what happens to the specific students in the disciplinary system and the effect of transfers on them. Better information could confirm that the procedures are successful or that they are not successful and alternate policies need to be developed. Tracking these students today would require a tedious manual review of the records.

Hone would also like some analysis that explores whether there is a relationship between attendance problems and future discipline problems. That information might produce some data that could lead to effective treatment programs.

The one serious problem that does need to be addressed is that once a student has been suspended, it sometimes takes way too long before a hearing is scheduled. Is there sufficient staffing available for the workload? Given the seriousness of these cases and the serious negative impact on a student who is out of school and in limbo for an extended period of time, these hearings need to happen promptly almost regardless of what it costs to achieve that service.

So, with some reservations, we believe the students of Fairfax County are well served by the school system's disciplinary procedures. Fairfax provides good information about its procedures for students and parents, laying out its policies in a clear handbook.

However, the school system faces a difficult challenge as the vast majority of parents want strict discipline until their child violates the rules.

How does a large system ensure that students in different schools, charged with the same offense under similar circumstances, end up with the same punishment? Solving that problem often results in rigid rules and penalties that are not sensitive to the circumstances and can sometimes result in inappropriate punishments. The minute a system makes subjective judgments, the door is opened to the charge of unequal treatment. Did the child of an “important community leader” get different treatment than the child of a low-income immigrant who doesn't speak English?

While we don't believe Fairfax has a serious problem, we do believe a careful review of the policies is justified. Clearly in response to the March hearing and the ongoing discussions, Superintendent Jack Dale proposed a number of changes to the disciplinary system that directly respond to many of the concerns that have been expressed. His proposals include: audio recording of all hearings, shortening the timeline between disciplinary incidents and the resolution, refining the guidelines on parental notification for potential suspensions and expulsions and authorizing school principals to conduct a review where a student is in possession of their own prescription medication. At its April 4 meeting, the school board agreed to move forward with implementing Dale's recommendations.

Perhaps these and other changes will insert some flexibility into the system without damaging the confidence in the procedures or weakening the equal penalties for similar offenses. Finally, careful analysis may determine that procedures that are assumed to be effective actually aren't, and that alternatives should be tried.

Parents who have direct experience with the schools absolutely should take the time to communicate with their school board representative how they feel about the system. If there are unrecognized problems, the board needs to hear about them now and look for solutions. On the other hand, if you are happy about how the system is run, it would be good to convey that opinion to your representative.

We have a great school system. We have an opportunity to make it better and it requires everyone's participation.

Bulova

continued from page 17

design that called for new HOT Lanes that stretch all the way from Massaponix to the Pentagon, we have expressed support for the revised proposal.

The new proposal adds a third lane to existing HOV lanes on I-95 beginning in Stafford County, but ends the HOT Lanes just inside the Capital Beltway instead of bringing the new third lane all the way to Washington, DC, as was the plan originally. The rescoped HOT lanes project will link directly to the I-495 HOT lanes currently under construction on the Capital Beltway within Fairfax

County and provide a direct HOT to HOT lanes connection between I-95 in Springfield and Tysons Corner.

The new proposal includes a companion project to build a ramp from the existing HOV lanes on I-395 at Seminary Road. This ramp is a critical component of the new plan as it will allow direct HOV access to the new Mark Center site that by September will be home to 6,400 Defense Department employees relocating as part of BRAC.

As the BRAC relocations continue (employees began moving to the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency in January), Fairfax County will continue to identify strategies and make adjustments to make the transition as smooth as possible both for the employees and for county residents.



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