

Mount Vernon Gazette

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MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MARCH 4, 2010



First-place winners presented by Alane Dent, president of Burke-Fairfax Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, (from left to right): Kenya George, Isaiah Floyd, Mfonobong Emah, and Christalyn Solomon, and Dent.

MVHS Wins Black History Forum

Sixteen students from four schools compete to win trophy, display prowess of African American history.

BY AMBER HEALY
THE GAZETTE

Mount Vernon High School took home the trophy for the 26th annual Black History Month Forum, which may have surprised the four students from that school more than their 12 competitors.

"I thought we lost," said Kenya George. "The autobiography questions were really hard."

"I really thought Lake Braddock was going to win," said Isaiah Floyd. Other members of the

winning team were Mfonobong Emah and Christalyn Solomon.

In total, 12 students from four schools — Lake Braddock Secondary, Mount Vernon High, Fairfax High and The Flint Hill School — competed in a new "Jeopardy!"-style question and answer game. Each school had three contestants and an alternate, and each group of four students, one from each school, competed in a 25-question round in Olsson theater at Flint Hill School in Oakton.

SEE MOUNT VERNON HIGH, PAGE 4

Costco Considers Multiplex Site

Fairfax County Supervisors Jeff McKay (D-Lee) and Gerry Hyland (D-Mount Vernon) said the national discount food chain Costco Wholesale has expressed interest in moving onto the old Multiplex Cinema site near the corner of Richmond Highway and Sherwood Hall Lane.

The expansive commercial property has been vacant since the movie theater company shuttered all of its operations in 2007.

If neighbors express support for the Costco bid, McKay said the supervisors would try to put the project on a fast track for county approval, though another national bargain retail chain would not have

been his first choice for Richmond Highway.

"It is another big box, warehouse retailer but it would bring high-quality jobs to the corridor and Costco would tear down the building and put in something new," he said.

According to McKay, the Multiplex site is the only "blighted" property on the western side of the Richmond Highway. But the fact that the vacant building is at the corner of a busy intersection and has a large sign outside makes it stand out and may be deterring potential commercial interest in the area.

SEE COSTCO, PAGE 3

Nonprofit Needs Unwanted Items

Retail traffic is heavy at Goodwill, but donations fail to meet expectations.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

Since it opened in November, merchandise has been flying off the shelves at the new Goodwill store in Mount Vernon. But donations have lagged behind, and now the nonprofit is asking the community for their old clothes, used DVDs and extraneous furniture.

"Spring cleaning is coming," said Aliya Porter, production manager at the Mount Vernon Goodwill. "And we would like people to consider contributing items to our donation center this year."

The sluggish donations have forced the nonprofit to bring mer-

chandise from other stores, although the number of donated items has been increasing. During the first full month the store at 8228 Richmond Highway was open, it received about 500 items. Then, in January, the donation center accepted about 1,000 items. Last month, the store received about 1,200 items. Porter says she's glad to see the increase, but the level of giving hasn't been enough to sustain the retail side of the operation yet.

"We need at least twice that amount," said Porter. "I would say we would need at least 2,500 items a month to meet expecta-

SEE NONPROFIT, PAGE 5

County Budget Cuts Hit Mount Vernon

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County Executive Anthony Griffin has targeted a few Mount Vernon-specific programs in his proposed \$100 million-plus worth of cuts to the 2011 county budget.

Fairfax faces a \$257 million shortfall in its \$3.2 billion general fund for next year. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors can amend Griffin's budget proposal before they pass the final county spending plan in late April.

Some of the cuts that would particularly affect Mount Vernon include:

❖ Shutting down the swimming pool in Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Residents can typically use the pool for free from the time school closes until August. It draws approximately 7,500 patrons in the summer. This would save \$51,393.

❖ Elimination of the Fairfax County Police Department's marine patrol, which consists of two officers and one marine patrol boat. This unit most serves the Mount Vernon area of Fairfax County and primarily patrols along the Potomac River. Last year, the marine patrol conducted eight rescues and towed seven citizen

SEE BUDGET, PAGE 25





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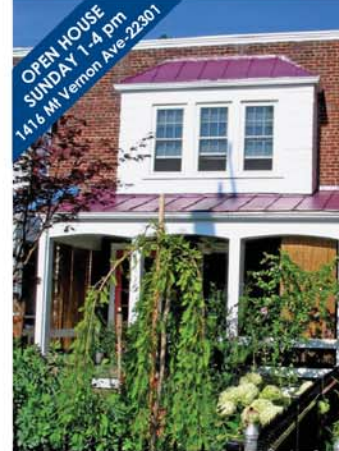


Move right in to Mount Vernon Court

Spacious, three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath newer townhouse boasts eat-in kitchen, open floor plan with generous sized living and dining room offering chair rail and crown molding, sleek master suite with full bath, bonus lower level recreation room and garage parking! Walk to trendy Del Ray, minutes to DC, airport, Old Town, and Metro.

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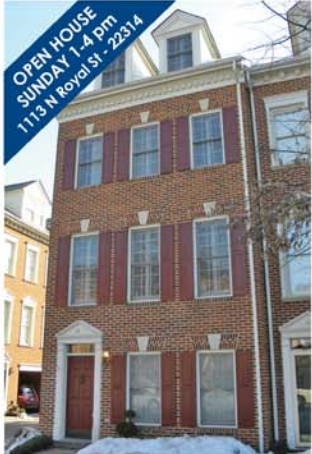


Fabulous 1940s Rowhouse Restoration

Old world charm seamlessly blends with modern conveniences including three bedrooms, two full baths, gorgeous chef's kitchen, generous room sizes, finished lower level perfect for home office or au pair, welcoming front porch and a hidden rear garage. Steps to trendy Del Ray shops, eateries, and Metro.



OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA \$799,000



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ALEXANDRIA \$590,000



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Located in Wellington Estates, enjoy peaceful neighborhood walks to Mount Vernon Trail. Pleasant open floor plan on main level, three spacious bedrooms on upper level with two full baths. The lower level has a fourth bedroom and third bathroom. Laundry room and walk out to spacious back yard from recreation room.

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Stone's throw to 'The Avenue'

Keep the car in the driveway and walk to the excitement of the bustling shops and restaurants of 'The Avenue!' This absolutely adorable two-bedroom 'Pottery Barn' home has wonderful updates throughout. Features include updated kitchen and baths, new light fixtures plus a wonderful main-level den addition. Professionally landscaped yard with bluestone patio.

MLS ID# AX7268001

Sue Goodhart 703.263.8321 www.suegoodhart.com

OLD TOWN ALEXANDRIA \$599,900



Location Can't Be Beat!

This adorable stone-front, corner-lot home provides an easy commute to Reagan National and Washington, DC plus walk to Metro, restaurants, shops and the Potomac. Fabulous detailing throughout includes a stunning updated kitchen and baths. The finished lower level boasts a wet-bar and fireplace. Outside is a large back patio and fenced-in manicured yard.

MLS ID# AX7267824

ALEXANDRIA \$389,000



Cute as a Button!

Just in time for Spring, this sparkling Bucknell Manor home is located on a spacious lot with a large back deck perfect for entertaining. Fresh paint, three sizable bedrooms including a main-level bedroom, lots of storage and a nicely appointed kitchen make this home a dream! Located minutes from the GW Parkway, Rt 1, 495 & Old Town.



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Resident Creates, Writes, and Acts in New TV Show

Local screenwriter's pilot premieres at American Film Institute.

BY GERALD A. FILL
THE GAZETTE

Borrowed from storylines about real life and not reality TV, Edward Robert Bach's "Hard To Be Me" is reminiscent of the comedy dramas of the past three decades. The characters reveal their stories about friendships, family, and life in the modern world.

Q. What is the TV show about?

A. Although I am the creator of the show, I am actually the co-writer with the very talented David Gannon. The story line revolves around the exploits of an art school sophomore, Kevin Hamilton, who is played by me. Kevin prefers to express himself through his art, but is forced to face his fear of public speaking when he receives an assignment to post a weekly vlog for his Communications 101 course. Through this take off, we get to know Kevin, his art school friends, his family, and a host of quirky characters. "Hard to Be Me" focuses on the value of relationships and links between people. It is a TV series for the entire family.

Q. Is this TV series somewhat autobiographical?

A. There is definitely some of me in the plot and character developed around Kevin. Viewers will see themselves in all the characters. Our intention is to touch on universal themes of life, love, success, disappointment, and the ability to overcome life's foibles.

Q. Is there any shows now or in the recent past that compare to "Hard to Be Me"?

A. "Family Ties" is one show that is similar. But we are a significant updating of that show. We cover present day social technologies; the issues facing students, parents, grandparents, and the community and institutions of today. We take the viewer behind the scenes to explore the vagaries of the fast-paced pressure-packed families of today. Our goal is for viewers to want to "hang out" with our characters, to grow and learn with them, and to find themselves inside these characters. At the same time we don't take ourselves too seriously; thus, the characterization of the show as a dramedy.

Q. Why is the setting for the show Washington, D.C., and not in the Bronx, New York, or Lake Forest, Illinois, or Orange County, California?

A. The producers and I hope that we can present another side, a positive non-political side, of life in our Nation's Capitol. A side of life that we think has not been revealed before. Viewers locally will get to see themselves in positive settings and situations which they have never seen before in a TV series. We have and continue to plan on tapping into the acting talent in the region.

The Washington metropolitan area has some wonderful neighborhoods, historic sites, art, theater, dance, outdoors, sports, and high schools and colleges. Our show will open the door up about that aspect of life in the D.C. area for viewers nationwide.

Q. So what is the next step after Sunday nights' American Film Institute (AFI) Preview?

A. The next big step is to acquire a TV network sponsor who will get us on the air as a pilot TV series. We are submitting our finished pilot to TV festivals nationwide as part of our promotional strategy seeking sponsors. If the pilot is a success then we will be given a contract for one season or longer

Profile

EDWARD ROBERT BACH

Education: State University of New York (SUNY), at Potsdam, and Oswego. Studied acting, dance, directing, scene design and graphic design.

Parents: Robert P. Bach and Lonnie Coy

Current Job: Graphic design, photographer, production of information materials for the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as a contract employee for BAE Systems, Inc.

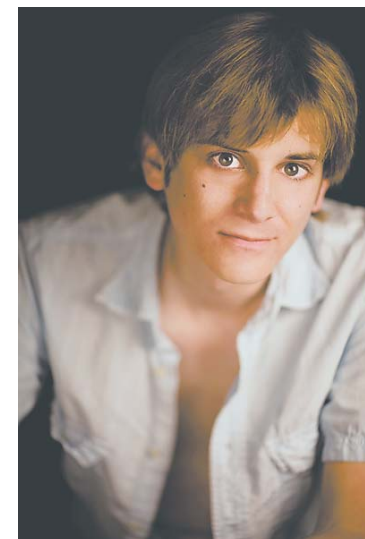
Passion: Theater, art, dance, the performing arts

Most Influential: His parents

Goals: To be successful in the performing arts

Favorite Actor: Harrison Ford

Favorite Actress: Meryl Streep



and hopefully much longer. We still have a long way to go but I and the others of the cast and crew are optimistic that we will be successful.

What others say about Edward Bach:

Evelyn Rice, the longtime artistic director of the Fauquier Community Theater who directed Edward Bach in "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," in which he played the Pharaoh, said, "I think he is a terrific actor, he takes direction very well, and is able to do what you ask, yet still be able to make the part his own; he is a multitalented performer. ... I consider myself lucky to have met him and directed him, and am

TV Preview: 'Hard To Be Me'

When: Sunday, March 7, 5 p.m.
Where: American Film Institute, 8633 Colesville Road, Silver Spring, Md.
Cost: \$10
<http://Hardtobeme.com>

even prouder to call him my friend."

Erik Cieslewicz, director of "Hard To Be Me": "Edward as a writer is not egotistical nor married to his work; as an actor he has good instincts; and as a producer he is committed to excellence and leads by example. ... Edward has, with this production, brought back to TV the traditional family, and found great realistic dynamics between family members."

MVHS Wins Black History Forum

FROM PAGE 1

The questions covered a variety of topics, from Eminent Leaders, in which the answers were the names of African American pioneers in the fields of athletics, science, academics and politics, to music, sports, literature, the civil rights movement. The "In Our Backyard" category that featured significant events and landmarks in Virginia and Washington, D.C.

The annual quiz competition is sponsored by the Burke-Fairfax Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, an organization started in Pennsylvania by African American mothers in 1938, a fun fact that was one of the many questions posed to the students.

"We're trying to get our young people excited about our history and take part in learning," said Carla Mazique, a Jack and Jill Committee member. Her husband, Arman Mazique, played moderator for the quiz and asked the students to call him Alex Tre-Black, a play off of Alex Trebek, the host of the real "Jeopardy!" television

game show for 26 years, just as many years as the local Jack and Jill of America chapter has been hosting the tournament.

"Sometimes the kids aren't as excited about Black History Month as they could be and sometimes our history isn't taught as much as we'd like."

The students began studying for the quiz tournament back in November, Carla Mazique said, memorizing facts and historic figures in preparation for their big day.

But in a moment, some of the parents and teachers in the crowd might rather to forget, the moderator unveiled one of the answers in the Civil Rights Movement category: "April 4, 1968."

The panel of four students looked puzzled. One student appeared to be running over dates and events in his head, moving his index finger around as if trying to put history in a chronological order.

Moderator Arman Mazique paused for a moment and asked,

"Any of you want to take a guess?" When he was answered with silence, he said, "You'll remember this for the rest of your lives."

Just before the timer buzzed on the question, Lake Braddock student David Curry-Johnson raised a hand and asked, "What is MLK's assassination?"

His answer was followed by relieved applause — April 4, 1968 was the day Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tenn., by James Earl Ray.

At the end of the quiz, the students were given a chance to redeem themselves, in the form of a surprise two-part question asked by Abraham Scott, whose wife, Janice, was killed in the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001. He offered a \$500 scholarship for the entire team for the student who correctly answered a two-part question about Motown, the famous label that launched such artists as Smokey Robinson, The Miracles, The Supremes, Marvin Gaye,

SEE MOUNT VERNON, PAGE 4



PHOTO BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE/THE GAZETTE

Costco Wholesale is interested in the vacant property that housed the old Multiplex Cinema on Richmond Highway.

Costco at Multiplex Site?

FROM PAGE 1

"I want it gone. A boarded up building is the last thing an investor wants to see," said McKay.

The supervisor said that half a dozen other entities have ex-

pressed interest in developing the property since the movie theatre closed three years ago. But the owners were not interested in any offers until Costco approached them recently.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

Hyland Notes Changes in Mount Vernon

Supervisor Gerry Hyland (D-Mount Vernon) provided a brief update about new construction projects, development and businesses that have started up in the Mount Vernon area during his town hall meeting Feb. 20.

As part of the annual gathering, Hyland conducts a virtual bus tour of his district for those in attendance. The following is information Hyland shared on the tour:



❖ Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, 2501 Parker's Lane, has added a 5,000 square foot addition to its radiology department for approximately \$14 million. Hyland said, for the first time in several years, this branch of the hospital is "in the black," and that the amount of time a patient has to spend in the hospital's emergency room has been cut in half.

❖ Martha Washington Library, 6328 Richmond Highway, is being renovated and will include additional 8,000 square feet of space when it is completed this coming summer.

❖ Mulligan Road will provide a four-lane connection from Richmond Highway to Telegraph Road. The section from Telegraph Road to Pole Road will be completed in late 2010 and a second section from Pole Road to Richmond Highway should be finished in 2012.

❖ Fort Belvoir Community Hospital, lo-

cated on the army base, will be a 1.2 million square foot facility with six stories, 120 in-patient beds, 3,100 staff members and 2,600 parking spaces once it is completed. The \$747 million facility is expected to draw 500,000 visitor trips per year.



❖ Belle View and New Alexandria residents could be getting a flood wall along their stretch of George Washington Parkway as well as some new levees in order to guard against future disasters

❖ Near the Huntington Metro station, a developer has restarted work on 85 new townhouses that should be completed by this spring.



❖ Spring Hill Suites and Holiday Inn Express, located between the Ford car dealership and Virginia Lodge on Richmond Highway, burned down in 2008 and is now rebuilt. The project is expected to be com-

plete by this spring.

❖ By August 2012, the Fairfax County Parkway should be completed, allowing drivers to travel all the way from Mount Vernon to Reston without getting off the corridor.

❖ The National Museum of the United States Army is still coming to the corner of the Fairfax County Parkway and John J. Kingman Road. The facility is expected to bring 1 million visitors per year.



❖ Kings Crossing, which might be better known as the Chuck-E-Cheese shopping center on Richmond Highway, will be home to a new 80,000 square-foot Wal-Mart. The owner is also looking to lease 10,000 square feet of redeveloped space, possibly to a fitness center.

❖ The Fairview Motel, also along the



northern stretch of Richmond Highway, is going to be torn down and replaced with a new Fairfield Inn & Suites.

❖ A new bridge will soon carry cars traveling on Gunston Road over Richmond Highway. As part of this project, Gunston Road will be widened to four lanes.

❖ By Sept. 15 2011, Fort Belvoir will have 3,500 additional workers as a result of the Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) process.

❖ The Fairfax-Falls Church community services board has opened up a 16-bed treatment facility for people with mental health and substance abuse disorders on the site of the old police barracks.



❖ The Smitty's Building Supply site will soon be home to a Super H Mart, an Asian grocery story.

❖ The Woodlawn McDonald's is going to be renovated to accommodate a new concept and design for the fast food chain. The McDonald's will serve high-end coffee drinks and include lounge chairs and other places for people to relax and socialize.

❖ Comfort Inn is opening a new 60-room hotel at the site of the \$29.99 Shoe Warehouse

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

Mount Vernon High School Wins Black History Forum

FROM PAGE 3

Stevie Wonder and the Jackson 5.

Jason Dodge, a representative of the Fairfax High School team, correctly answered that Motown was founded in Detroit, but could not name the founder, Barry Gordy Jr. Scott overlooked the second half of the question and promised to award four \$500 scholarships to Dodge and his teammates, Vivian Bornell, Lindsay Hopkins and Monique Hopkins.

During the afternoon-long event, the winner and runner-up of Jack and Jill's local oratorical contest, Lauren Porter and Joshua Mann, presented their winning speeches, which Porter said is a kind of preparation for the Teen Conference next month.

While she did not compete in the quiz,

Porter said she enjoyed the afternoon and "learned so much" from her fellow students.

"I've never seen anything like this before," she said. "It was really interesting to me."

Those in the audience were also treated to a presentation by Dr. Greg E. Carr, associate professor of Africana Studies and chair of the Department of Afro-American studies at Howard University.

While he was only supposed to speak for 10 minutes, he easily went twice as long, emphasizing how the leaders the students have learned about, from Mohandas Ghandi to Barack Obama, were not trailblazers as much as the students may believe.

"What you are doing is reconnecting to something," he said to the students, many of whom are seniors preparing to leave their homes and head off to college. "There is no

"We're trying to get our young people excited about our history and take part in learning."

— Carla Mazique

traveling roads that haven't been traveled before. Harriet Tubman, when she was walking the tobacco fields her parents and grandparents had worked, she knew that she was somewhat better than what had come before, but she knew something better was on the way."

He also spoke about "the blue note," a deep, almost mournful tone widely heard

and used in songs written by African American artists and songwriters.

"The blue note, we brought that with us on the boats," he said. "It is praise. When we hear the blue note, it is in the wail of every song that still moves us."

Carr spoke of hearing the blue note in songs by Aretha Franklin and Mary J. Blige, but had to laugh when speaking of the legendary music of Marvin Gaye.

"Oh Marvin," he laughed. "All his songs were blue notes," he said, proceeding to pick out lines from songs like "Let's Get It On" and "What's Going On."

The blue note, which sounds like a minor key when sung or played, "that's the note the mothers and fathers taught us, that's when the ancestors come up into our brains and speak through us," he said.

Nonprofit Needs Unwanted Items

FROM PAGE 1

tions.”

GOODWILL OF GREATER Washington operates nine stores in the region, offering job training and employment to those in need. Of the nine stores in the region operated by the nonprofit organization, the Mount Vernon location has become the second most profitable. Brendan Hurley, who is the vice president of marketing and communications, says the revenue at the store has greatly exceeded expectations.

“The people who donate to Goodwill are not necessarily the same people who shop here,” said Hurley. “So, at this point, the challenge that we are faced with is getting people to donate.”

Hurley says it’s a way of getting rid of unwanted items while helping the community.

Part of that challenge is being new to Richmond Highway, located in a storefront formerly occupied by Barnes C L Furniture Company. Another part of the challenge is a nearby construction site, where a dumpster has been mis-



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) speaks during a December grand opening event.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GOODWILL OF GREATER WASHINGTON

taken for the Goodwill donation center several times.

“We hire anyone who has a barrier to employment, and we offer job training to people who are without work in this difficult economy,” he said. “And it’s an inexpensive way for consumers to get more out of their dollar.”

STROLLING THROUGH the aisles of the Mount Vernon Goodwill, customers are confronted

with everything from wedding dresses and antique furniture to old records and VHS tapes. Supervisor Dondi Randolph says many of the items are donated when people upgrade electronics, so the store is well stocked with stereo systems and televisions.

“I would say that DVDs are our most popular item,” said Dondi. “As soon as we put them on the shelf, there’re on the way out the door.”

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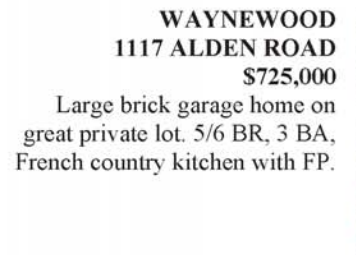
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PEOPLE



District Awards

This year Hollin Meadows Elementary School had a record number of 279 students that participated in the national PTA Reflections Program. Hollin Meadows has five students that have achieved awards at the District Level for the Reflections PTA program. Students photographed with Principal Jon Gates (back row) are: (left to right) Martin Enyinnaya, Award of Merit, Literature; Katie Jo Moery, Award of Merit, Literature; Anna Pekiunas, Award of Merit, Literature, Immediate; Kiki McDonnell, Award of Outstanding, Dance; and Sebastian Altmann, Award of Excellence, Visual Arts.

COURTESY OF HOLLIN MEADOWS ES

Procurement Forum

More than 130 small businesses participated Feb. 2 in the 5th Annual Fort Belvoir Procurement Forum, an educational networking event for small businesses within the government contracting industry. Tracey Pinson (left), director, Office of the Secretary of the Army, Office of Small Business Programs offered the luncheon keynote on opportunities for small businesses to do business with the Army. Event chair Linda Drake (right) is business development manager, Network Intelligence Division, Applied Signal Technology, Inc. The Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce's GovCon Council presented the event.



Wear Red Day

Inova Mount Vernon Hospital celebrated National Wear Red Day in support of Women's Heart Disease and Stroke Awareness and Prevention on Feb. 5. Stroke is the No. 3 cause of death in the United States. Wearing red dress pins are Kimberly Krakowski, RN; Refugio Castro, John Mornan, Diane Kenney, Casey King, Stephanie Johnson, Department of Radiology and Stroke Champions.

PEOPLE

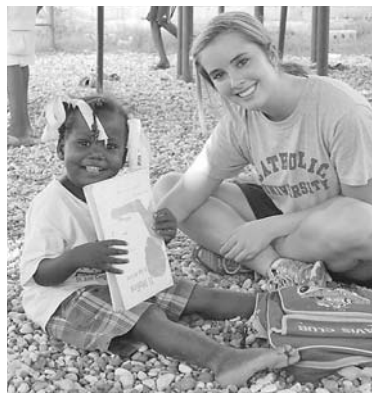
Two Collect Shoes for Students in Haiti

BY JEFFREY AARON
THE GAZETTE

Returning from a boarding school last November where they had just spent a week helping the disadvantaged, Carrie Gillespie and Sarah Rupp wanted to continue their aid from the states. So the two Bishop Ireton High School students did what most other students their age do: They turned to Facebook.

The 16- and 17-year-old respectively developed a Web page asking for donations of shoes, any size, any condition, so that they could send them to the neighborhood children who have lunch, play, and are tutored at Louverture Cleary School, 10 miles north of Port-au-Prince in Croix-des-Bouquets.

The Facebook page can be found by searching "Helping Haiti." You'll also find 452 results from that search, but the duo's page is the one with 4,565 members, more than any other of its likeness on the site. It also comes with a quote from Dr. Seuss: "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."



Carrie Gillespie sits with a child from the neighborhood of Louverture Cleary School, 10 miles north of Port-au-Prince, Haiti.



Carrie Gillespie and Sarah Rupp collected 500 pairs of shoes to send to the neighborhood children who attend Louverture Cleary School in Croix-des-Bouquets, Haiti.

The 350 students who attend Louverture Cleary Monday through Friday dress in uniform, but the neighborhood children who are invited for afternoon classes come as they are: most oftentimes shoeless and wearing "ratty clothes." "One girl came in a Pocahontas costume because that's all she had," said Gillespie, who is the daughter of Ed Gillespie, the former Republican National Committee chairman.

Shoes were a practical request, Rupp said, easy to pick up, easy to ship, and needed desperately by these children who live in neighborhoods that are less than sanitary.

"The kids play on gravel in bare feet. You don't want to cut your foot on glass in Haiti, it's hard to get a doctor," Gillespie said.

WHEN THE PAIR launched their Web page, supporters dribbled in, between 160-200, but within days of last month's 7.0-magnitude earthquake, their numbers skyrocketed. At last count, they had

4,565 supporters.

"We weren't prepared to get that many," Rupp said. They have now collected 500 pairs of shoes, which are stashed in green garbage bags piled high in Rupp's Alexandria living room. "It smells like a gym."

The girls needed help bundling pairs together. So Rupp's mother, Mary, threw a pizza party one weekend night where 10 to 15 of her daughter's friends gathered to eat and tape pairs together so they wouldn't get lost in shipping.

Since their donations have escalated, they have now partnered with "Shoes 2 Share," a Delaware-based organization that collects and donates shoes internationally for those in need.

BISHOP IRETON has been affiliated with Louverture Cleary for the last seven years, sending five to 10 students to volunteer for a week, said Linda Loffredo, Bishop Ireton's communications director.

"We work in classrooms and perform physical labor," Rupp said. "It's actually a privilege to man-

age. There's no trash disposal, so we burn it in the incinerator. We paint, we weed, we catalog books in the library — there's no computer for that. Sarah taught English; I taught religion," Gillespie said.

Since the earthquake, students at Bishop Ireton have stepped up its appeal for money to donate to the school by collecting at two of its basketball games and donating all proceeds from a student-performed play. Gillespie and Rupp pushed a mobile cart around the gym asking for donations of shoes during the games.

Before the Feb. 27 annual "Winter Ball," students also asked their peers to save and donate the money they would have spent in preparation and celebration. "Wear last year's dress or your sister's to save money. Avoid Starbucks," Loffredo said.

So far, \$8,000 has been raised for the relief effort, she said. Gillespie hopes it will reach \$10,000.

"You can't ignore what happened," Gillespie said. "After meeting the students and seeing their great attitude, they're hopeful for the future and we want to help."

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OPINION

Increasing Burden, But No Tools

State will cut hundreds of millions in expenditures that localities will have to pay for; but how?

In Virginia, localities like Fairfax County, Arlington or the City of Alexandria, have only the exact powers that the Virginia General Assembly has bestowed upon them.

The right to extend protection from discrimination to particular groups? No.

The right to decide when school will open in the Fall? No.

The authority to tax income? No, only the state can tax Northern Virginia residents' income, and then the state spends that income everywhere but here. Northern Virginia gets

back less than 20 cents on the dollar it sends to Richmond. No "piggyback" income tax allowed.

The authority for local elected officials to consider a variety of broad based sources of revenue to fund schools and other services? No.

And let's be clear, voters could evict representatives who overstepped tolerances.

So now as the state budgets is shaping up, or shaping down would be more accurate, without knowing the exact details or numbers, it's clear that hundreds of millions of dollars in non-optional social services and education expenses (K-12 and higher education) will shift to localities.

Localities are already grappling with decreases in revenue because of the decline in real estate values. And taxing real estate, commercial and residential, makes up the vast majority of most localities' revenue base.

Arlington has proposed increasing the property tax rate by more than 11 percent, or 9 cents.

Fairfax's real estate property tax rate would increase from \$1.04 to \$1.09, though the drop in home values would mean that Fairfax residents would pay approximately \$48.55 less on their property tax bill than they did last year.

Home values in Fairfax declined between 3 percent and nearly 8 percent, depending on location (see chart at <http://connectionnewspapers.com/photoview.asp?id=218615>). But consider the drop in value since the top of the market. In McLean, the jurisdiction that held up the best, assessments are down 12.5 percent from the top a few years ago. In Lorton, assessments are down 28.7 percent from the top of the market.

So while in Richmond, the General Assembly slashes and burns its way to a budget with no revenue increases, here where the rubber meets the road, there are few options, because the General Assembly won't allow them. They're passing the bill, but refusing to allow any reasonable method of making up the difference.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Conflicts Of Interest

To the Editor:

Fellow citizens, your Comprehensive Plan may be amended this year, based upon nominations now being considered by your Area Plans Review (APR) Task Force. I attended their Feb. 23 meeting and was disappointed at the actions of certain Task Force members as well as by the attendance of fewer than 10 interested citizens.

Nomination No. 24MV, from the Mount Vernon Council (MVCCA), concerns the Penn Daw Shopping Center. Before the MVCCA's representative commenced his presentation, a

Task Force member who is an immediate past co-chair of the MVCCA (and was involved with the conception of the MVCCA Nominations) asked to be recognized and she spoke for several minutes concerning the history of how the nomination came to be made and why it should be approved. This was clearly "testimony," not within the proper role of a Task Force member, yet no one on the Task Force raised any objection to a Task Force member first testifying as a witness in favor of a nomination she had a hand in preparing, and then voting on the nomination as a Task Force member. She should have recused herself.

Subsequently, the Task Force took up a nomination identified as 26MV, a proposed 5 acre development at the corner of Fairview Drive

and Richmond Highway. During the course of the discussion, another Task Force member became deeply involved in the discussion. This Task Force member wears an astounding six separate hats since he is: (1) another immediate past co-chair of the MVCCA, (2) the MVCCA's current Planning and Zoning Committee Chairman, (3) the current President of a community association immediately adjacent the location of nomination 26MV, (4) a resident of Fairview Drive living 5 houses from the nominated property, (5) a member of the Task Force, and (6) the Task Force's vote counter. This Task Force member asked to be recognized and then spoke at length, as if he was a witness, about his community association's support of the nomination and how they expect to be directly involved with the developer in determining the parameters of the development. The Task Force co-chairs took no action to require this Task Force member to recuse himself, based upon his multiple conflicts of interest and testimony described above. When the vote was taken on the nomination, he voted and then counted the vote for the co-chairs. He should have recused himself.

I testified concerning the MVCCA's Nomination 25MV, suggesting reducing the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) so the threshold for requiring a traffic study would not be exceeded. After my testimony, the Task Force member first mentioned above (24MV) asked to be recognized and then she explained to the Task Force that they need not worry about the traffic study issue because the Virginia Legislature was working on a fix that would absolve the MVCCA of the obligation to conduct and pay for the traffic study. I knew this was inaccurate since the Bill in question had passed the Virginia Senate with that provision stricken. The MVCCA will have to conduct and pay for any traffic studies required for its nominations. The Bill was subsequently approved by the House of Delegates



At Riverside U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan is introduced to Riverside Elementary Student Government President Hannah Lombardo last month. He participated in a roundtable discussion about the Recovery Act a year later.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11

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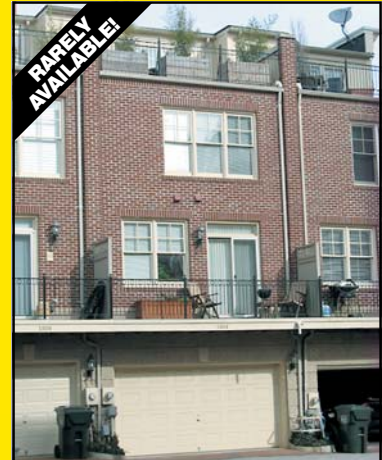
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LETTERS

House and Senate Pass Different Budget Bills

By TODDY PULLER
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



The House budget bill passed 61-38 on a party line vote, the Republicans for it and the Democrats opposed. The Senate budget was passed 30-10 with bipartisan support. Eight Republicans and all 22 Democrats voted for it. Included in both budgets is \$1.9 billion "to continue aid to local governments for the Car Tax Relief Program" to help fund local services.

Both the House and Senate budgets are very austere to close a budget shortfall of about \$4 billion. The Senate budget includes a number of fee increases to soften the blow on education, health care and public safety. The House has refused thus far to accept any higher fees, considering them as "taxes." It is hoped that some movement may come in that Governor Bob McDonnell has indicated he might accept "higher fees that have a direct link to the services they provide." This could "offer some cover to the House Republicans" in the possibility of accepting some new fees.

RICHMOND REPORT

In the past few years, Virginia has trimmed its budget by \$7 billion. Previously, the necessary services of education, health care and public safety have been spared.

This year all of these areas are being cut some because of the drop in state revenues.

The difficulty now will be working out a compromise between the two budget bills. Not one of the House conferees is from Northern Virginia. Only one is a Democrat. Four Democrats and two Republicans are among the Senate conferees. Fortunately four of the Senate conferees are from Northern Virginia.

Education K-12: I, along with other Northern Virginia legislators offered a budget amendment to unfreeze the rebenchmarking of the Local Composite Index (LCI). This brings a great deal of funding back to Northern Virginia schools. It is one of the first times, due to falling home values, Northern Virginia would receive an increase in the state LCI. All other localities were "held harmless" in their LCI funding. Fortunately, General Fund reductions to K-12 education are minimized.

Higher Education: The Senate proposes no additional reductions over the introduced budget to Virginia's public colleges and universities. The Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) program funding was cut by almost \$10 million but not eliminated. TAG helps many Virginia students with tuition assistance to attend in-state private colleges and universities.

Arts Funding: The House budget would eliminate 50 percent of the Virginia Commission for the Arts funding \$2.23 million the first year and 100 percent of the funding \$4.46 million in the second year. The Senate budget retains \$4.46 million in the arts funding for each year.

VRS: Both chambers agree to lower state contributions to the Virginia Retirement System (VRS), the public employment pension fund, to save about \$508 million. The Senate bill also includes a three-day furlough for state employees which is less than that proposed by the Governor.

Health and Human Resources: The budget would free up \$86 million from enhanced federal Medicaid funding related to the Medicare Part D "clawback" payment that will eliminate additional provider rate reductions in FY 2011. Enrollment is not frozen for low-income children and pregnant women in FAMIS and does not eliminate funding for consumer-directed waiver services and an additional 236 mental health treatment beds. There is hope that Congress will pass an additional six months of enhanced federal Medicaid funding to provide more help. The Senate budget restores \$1.9 million for free health clinics and community health centers and preserves dental services through local health departments.

Public Safety: One or more additional state correctional facilities to be determined

by the Department of Corrections will be closed. Alternatives to incarceration including electronic monitoring, early release provisions and geriatric parole release are encouraged.

State Parks: No state parks were closed in either budget.

Economic Development: 14 separate bills were passed by the Senate to provide "a variety of economic development and job creation measures ranging from sales tax exemptions and green jobs tax credits to major business incentives and mega-project site grants." The Senate also agreed to open some new ABC stores and extend Sunday hours with an opt-out provision for localities.

For more information about the budget bills go to: <http://legis.state.va.us> and click on budget.

The General Assembly is scheduled to end on Saturday, March 13. It is hoped that these two differing budgets can be reconciled and passed by that time. These are difficult economic times for our Commonwealth. But in working together, we are trying to continue to protect and improve the lives of all Virginians.

Please continue to let me hear from you on issues of concern: Sen. Toddy Puller, P.O. Box 396, Richmond, VA 23218. Phone: 804/698-7536. Email: district36@senate.virginia.gov. Website: www.toddy.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 8

in the same form and awaits the Governor's signature.

I asked to be recognized to correct the record. The co-chairs recognized me, but another MVCCA-affiliated Task Force member, raised a point of order that I should not be permitted to speak because I am not a member of the Task Force, even though the public hearing had not closed. His objection was overruled and I provided the Task Force the factual legislative status, correcting the misinformation. Subsequently, nomination 25MV was tabled for further consideration at a later meeting of the Task Force.

The blame for the inappropriate behavior of these MVCCA-affiliated Task Force members properly rests with the person who appointed them to the Task Force, namely, Supervisor Hyland. Their multiple hats and personal agendas are well known to the supervisor, yet he appointed them anyway. I pointed out the conflict of interest issue in my letter to the editor of Feb. 4. The Task Force does not belong to the MVCCA nor does it even belong to Supervisor Hyland, although he appointed it. The Task Force belongs to the people of the Mount Vernon District. Task Force members must bear in mind that they represent the citizens of the Mount Vernon District and are not supposed to be serving to promote their own personal agendas or the agendas of organizations to which they belong or with which they are active.

I respect the co-chairs of the Task Force. They must pull the reins in and insist that Task Force members avoid even an appearance of a conflict by recusing themselves from Task Force deliberations where appropriate. This will ensure the Task Force represents the 125,000-plus citizens of the Mount Vernon District and not the partisan objectives of some individual members. To my fellow citizens: if you refrain from attending Task Force meetings and making your views known, you will have little justification to complain about the votes the Task Force takes in your name. It's your Comprehensive Plan.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

Need To Improve Communication

To the Editor:

I am writing as a 15-year resident on the Mt. Vernon Highway corridor, the historical land route to the estate of Mt. Vernon. One of the reasons we and many of our neighbors around here moved specifically to this area is the proximity to the natural, wooded lands around George Washington's estate. We have also enjoyed the association with and proximity to the Mt. Vernon Estate, which has clearly done a lot of good for this community with all its many interesting historical, cultural and botanical offerings.

While Mt. Vernon Estate does get many things right (i.e., hiring sensitive architects and landscape architects), there does seem to be a gap with regard to neighborhood communication/outreach/dialogue that could and should be improved. A clear and recent example is the proposed 40,000-plus sq ft. library/conference/lodging facility in the woods on 235 N/S - which many of us only learned about through a recent Washington Post article and some Gazette coverage.

Though no one could possibly object to the pursuit of further scholarship on George Washington, it does concern many of us in this neighborhood that we have essentially "been the last to know" about this proposed research campus in our neighborhood. Up until March 1, when Mt. Vernon Estate Director Jim Rees invited Wessynton subdivision residents to attend a not widely advertised, essentially semi-private briefing on the Estate's rapidly forward moving plans for the Library's construction, few of us had any notion of how far along this project had progressed. There had been little to no prior opportunities for community members to provide input; this is especially true for those of us who do not live in Wessynton itself but nonetheless live on the Mt. Vernon Highway corridor. While the Ladies of Mt. Vernon certainly have the right to do with the Estate's land as they see fit, there is something vaguely tyrannical and rather unneighborly about presenting what amounts to a "fait accompli" to those of us who live in 'George's backyard.'

There are a few specific points of concern that many of us in the neighborhood have about this proposed project:

An 18th century view: The uncluttered, natural drive along the GW Parkway to the Estate provides an inviting, delightful and unconscious stepping back into time. Along 235N and S, this transitional psychological preparation is already more truncated, but it does exist as things currently stand. We worry that no matter how architecturally and landscape-sensitive this proposed library structure is, there's really no way to truly shroud a 40,000-plus sq.ft. facility - with all its accompanying parking, an outlying residential structure, curb-cuts, electrical/sewer lines, and associated vehicular traffic. As a point of comparison, George Washington's house itself is only 8,000 sq.ft. Even with stacking the building to "limit" the actual footprint to 20,000 sq.ft., this is still a sizeable structure. It is reassuring to hear that Mt. Vernon proposes to make every effort to screen off the buildings and the 20-acre proposed construction site by planting 800 trees, with many evergreens along 235N. Those plantings will also need to screen the chain-link fence the estate has proposed to surround this gated-20 acre-complex.

He wasn't King George: As we came to fully understand at the March 1 meeting, this large library complex is not designed for the "average George" hobby historian, but rather for "resident scholars" as well as

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 11

to host conferences for academic, corporate and political clients. This seems somewhat contrary to the spirit of a man who himself did not have the benefit of an elite higher education (he had about 7-8 years of formal schooling). The sheer scale and scope, not to mention exclusivity of this proposed facility, seems contrary to the relatively humble nature and origins of Mr. Washington himself. It also seems a bit contrary to the alleged mission of the Estate "to make George Washington accessible to the 300 million people who will never come to Mt. Vernon." I suppose they will all have virtual access to the library, but physically the gates and doors will be locked to the general visiting public. There will be no democratic strolls through the fine wood galleries and bluestone floors of this \$80 million (including endowment) library facility. Sadly, this fenced-off enclave on 235N/S will exude exclusivity rather than the democratic spirit for which Washington himself is heralded.

Scale/Security: Presumably such a presidential library will contain some rare and important artifacts, though it's hard to imagine there would be enough to fill 40,000 sq.ft. of space. Given the nature of what this library would contain and its proposed limited accessibility, many of us residents attending the meeting on March 1 wondered why it wouldn't make more sense to site this library within the existing walls of the

Estate, perhaps behind the walls along Rte 235S (where there is currently overflow parking) or perhaps near the river, out of the sight-line of the Estate, on the eastern end of the Mt. Vernon property. Either of these would provide secluded, contained settings for scholars, with easy access to points within the estate. By siting such a facility away from the main focus of the visiting public - and by taking it out of such a public setting as the 235 N/S triangle - the Estate might be sending out a more palatable, less irritating message about its "private" library.

Precedent for Commercial Activity/Traffic: Many of us local residents also wonder "What are our assurances that this proposed facility will remain low-key and contained?" Conference facilities and lodgings are often full-fledged commercial operations necessitating an influx of commercial and private vehicles, additional maintenance staff, and all-night lighting. Many at the March 1 meeting expressed concern about our lack of information about Mt. Vernon's "master plan." Aside from some general and vague assurances that there are no other big projects down the pipeline, there were no agreements to share any master plans or make any commitments to the neighborhood that there would be no further activity for the balance of the 55-acre parcel of land on which the proposed library is to be sited.

We know Mt. Vernon Estate would like to be a good neighbor. In the recent past, when



Speaking at Kiwanis Abigail Konyndyk, a parent trainer at First Home Care, spoke to the Mount Vernon Kiwanis Club at the Mount Vernon Country Club on Feb. 3. She explained the benefits and responsibilities of foster parenting. With her is MVKC President Bruce Malkin. On April 7, the club will host Laurie Tracy, retired U. S. State Department Foreign Service Officer, who is an expert on the Middle East, especially Iran and Iraq. To learn more about the club, visit www.mtvernonvakiwanis.org.

no one in the county would do anything about the horrendous amount of garbage being dumped by passing vehicles on Rte 235N, it was Dean Norton at Mt. Vernon who personally committed to sending in

teams on a weekly basis to clean up the mess. This has benefited all of us, and we appreciate it very much. The Estate itself also has a Neighborhood Friends of Mt.

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 22

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9105
Patton Blvd
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Stunning Opportunity!
Large home on gorgeous half acre lot in prime Mt. Vernon location at exceptionally price. Many features include large room sizes, bright, open floor plan, 4 bedrooms, 3baths, 2 fireplaces, hardwood floors, walkout lower level and covered parking. Long time home of original owners. Hug value! Open Sun 3/7, 1-4 PM. GW Parkway S, past estate, Right-Old Mill, Right-Patton.



8621
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Super Value!
Super Value! Spacious 3 level colonial in prime Mt. Vernon location for under \$500,000! Pristine condition with many features! Huge bedrooms, bright white eat-in kitchen & separate dining room. Family room, living room and lower level rec room creates abundant living space. Lower level has outside access and large storage room. Covered parking!



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Just listed—special pre-construction opportunity! Fabulous new Wakefield Home on 3/4 acre site. Spacious custom residence with bright, open floor plan loaded with special features. Prime location combining large lot privacy with the convenience of being in the center of everything! Pre-construction pricing!



9324
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3906
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9316
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Home features bright, open floor plan with soaring cathedral ceilings in the main living area. This fabulous property has been substantially updated and is in absolutely impeccable condition. Gleaming hardwood floors, track lighting, finished lower level, garage & much more. Gorgeous setting on 1/2 acre tract fronting a quiet street in the heart of Mount Vernon.



8824
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Huge price reduction! Brand new Wakefield home to be built on gorgeous 3/4 acre tract just off the GW Parkway in prestigious Stratford Landing! Three finished levels, high ceilings, gourmet kitchen with 42" cabinets and granite counters, full walk-out lower level and two car garage. Pre-Construction offering provides maximum opportunity to customize!



4413
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Yacht Haven!
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4401
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4816 Stillwell Ave



3102 Waterside Ln



4821 Stillwell Ave



1208 Tatum Dr



9413 Brambly Ln



1810 Hollindale Dr



8311 Mt Vernon Hwy



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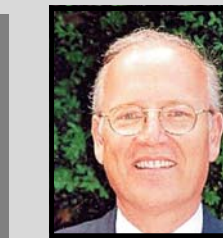
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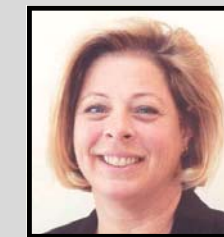
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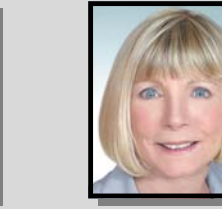
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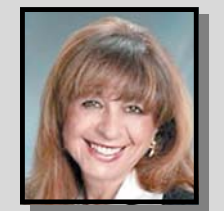
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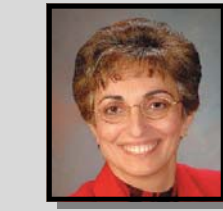
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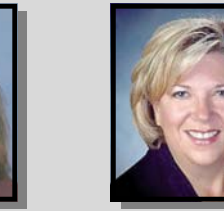
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Major Antiques Show in Alexandria

Antiques In Alexandria, a show featuring 60 of the nation's top antique dealers, returns to Flippin Field House at the Episcopal High School, 3900 West Braddock Road, Alexandria, on March 12-14. Hours for the show are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, March 12; 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 13; and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, March 14. A Gala Preview Party will be held on Thursday, March 11 from 7 to 10 p.m.

Antiques In Alexandria features a wide array of fine American, English, Oriental and Continental furniture, silver, porcelain, rugs, paintings, jewelry, clocks, folk art, garden furniture, and other decorative arts. With 60 nationally-recognized dealers, Antiques in Alexandria has dealers of interest

to all collectors.

Among the dealers exhibiting are Mark and Marjorie Allen, W. Graham Arader III, Alfred Bullard, Douglas Constant, Judd Gregory, G. Sergeant Antiques, Andrew Spindler, and William Cooke.

Special events at this year's show include a guided show tour with a decorative arts expert (Friday, 10 a.m. \$25), an illustrated folk art lecture with Americana expert Bev Norwood (Friday, 2 p.m. \$25), a speakeasy party (Friday, 6-8 p.m. \$45), a champagne brunch with Chris Jussel, original host of Antiques Roadshow (Saturday, 11 a.m. \$45), an evaluation and conservation clinic (Saturday, 2-5 p.m. \$5 per item), a lecture and fashion show on the eight-decade history of the cocktail dress (Sunday, 1 p.m.



The show features 60 of the nation's top antique dealers.

(\$35), and a loan exhibition (Spirits in America).

Proceeds from ticket sales and special events benefit three Washington-area charities. Admission is \$15 per person and includes a show catalog. There is free parking, a cafe and a bar. Visit www.antiquesinalexandria.com or call 703-548-SHOW.



St. Patrick's Day Parade Is March 6

The City of Alexandria and the Ballyshaners (Gaelic for "Old Towners") will host the 29th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade, in celebration of Irish-American heritage on Saturday, March 6. The parade begins at King and West Streets and follows a route down King Street, past the reviewing stand at North Royal Street, and ends on the block of Fairfax Street between King Street and Cameron Street. The parade will begin at 12:30 p.m., and is expected to conclude by 2:30 p.m. The Grand Marshal for the 2010 Parade will be Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, Commanding General, U.S. Army Materiel Command.

The day's festivities officially kick off with the Classic Car Show Competition. The show starts at 10 a.m. with automobiles on display on North Pitt Street at King Street. The Fun Dog Show begins at 10:30 a.m. in Market Square (corner of North Royal and King Streets) and will conclude at noon.

All events are sponsored by the Ballyshaners, a not-for-profit group that organizes and orchestrates the Alexandria St. Patrick's Day Parade in partnership with the City of Alexandria. Visit www.ballyshaners.org.

All That Jazz!

Big Band sparks "Chicago."

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
THE GAZETTE

The rocking jazz sound of one of the best community theater bands in recent memory kicks off the Little Theatre of Alexandria's new production of Kander and Ebb's fabulously entertaining musical "Chicago" when they launch into the flashy opening number, "All That Jazz." The band, however, is only one of the pleasures this superb production offers.

There is a fine pair of performances by the leading ladies. Bethany Blakey is a super-sexy hardened murderess awaiting trial in Chicago's women's detention center under the extortionist supervision of "Matron Mama Morton" (Jennifer Strand). Jordan Hougham is wonderfully flighty on the surface but with a devious plotting brain underneath as the fame-intoxicated new arrival on murderer's row. Both sing and dance well either separately or as a team in the up-tempo finale "Nowadays/R.S.V.P./Keep It Hot."

The show also offers an equally fine pair of principal supporting actor performances. Andy Izquierdo is just as flashy and flamboyant as you could want as the defense attorney who believes he can win any defendant an acquittal through pure razzle-dazzle and he's in fine voice for the smarmy "All I Care About" (is love) and, aided by Hougham, handles the faux-ventriloquism of "We Both Reached for the Gun" with high humor. Jon Keeling pulls off the sometimes difficult trick of drawing comic attention to his character's principal characteristic as the wronged husband who is such a milquetoast as to be practically invisible. His droll delivery of "Mr. Cellophane" is a kick and he gets a great laugh when requesting his "exit



PHOTO BY SHANE CANFIELD

Andy Izquierdo (Billy Flynn) and the ensemble of "Chicago," which plays through March 20 at The Little Theatre of Alexandria.

music."

But it is the band — the 13 enthusiastic as well as skilled musicians under the baton of music director Paul Nasto — that is the real star of the show. Nasto is making his Little Theatre of Alexandria debut. It is a debut that makes me hope he'll handle music direction duties for more musicals both here and at other community theaters in the area.

"Chicago" is a piece that requires this kind of quality performance by a band. It is a musical that tells its story in individual scenes that are each a type of vaudeville act in the style of the revues and variety shows of the early part of the 20th century. The script by the original director/choreographer, Bob Fosse, and lyricist, Fred Ebb is about as fast-paced as a Broadway show's can be, and Ebb's lyrics are both witty and revealing of the character of the person singing. Thus, each scene is a potential show stopper with a full-out, sell-the-number performance by the vocalists and a loud, brassy accompaniment from the band.

John Kander composed music that ran the gamut of early variety styles and the great Ralph Burns orchestrated it all for 13 musicians. The show was a solid hit in 1975 and would be remembered as a smash if it weren't for the fact that it was the year that "A Chorus Line" opened to such rapturous reviews and word of mouth that "Chicago" was all but lost in the shuffle. But in 1996 a revival was staged, putting all the action on and around an on-stage bandstand. Again using Burn's charts, the band was very much a part of every scene — even the conductor got into the act, announcing some of the scenes. Nasto handles these duties with aplomb while leading the band with solid rhythms, a good sense of tempo and drawing a real sense of musical excitement from his crew.

True to the staging of the 1996 revival which is still running on Broadway after over 5,000 performances, the entire show takes place on the black bandstand outlined with proscenium lights until the final moments when a silver tinsel curtain picks up on Ken and Patti Crowley's multi-colored lights for "Keep it Hot." Throughout the night, the cast does a capable job with the choreography that Amy Carson has adapted from the unmistakable work of Ann Reinking for the revival, which was, itself, billed as "in the style of Bob Fosse."

Where and When

"Chicago" plays through March 20 at the Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street. Performances are Wednesday - Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$18 - \$21. Call 703-683-0496 or log on to www.thelittletheatre.com.

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CALENDAR

E-mail announcements to the Gazette, gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos and artwork are encouraged. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 20

"Chicago." Wednesday to Saturday at 8 p.m.; Sunday at 3 p.m. Presented by the Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. The cast includes: Bethany Blakely as Velma, Jordan Houghham as Roxie, Andy Izquierdo as Billy Flynn, Jennifer Strand as Mama Morton, Jon Keeling as Amos, Melissa Stamps as Mary Sunshine, along with a talented ensemble that includes Ivan Davila, Akiyo Dunetz, Danielle Eure, Jacqui Farkas, Kristen Magee, Daniel McKay, Keith Miller, Angela Norris, Lauren Palmer.

FRIDAY/MARCH 5

World War II Lecture. With speaker U.S. Army Lieutenant Dee Paris, now 94, a World War II Tank Commander. Sponsored by the Mount Vernon Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. At Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Contact Mike Everard, President, Harmony Heritage Singers, 703-941-1057, smartalexme@aol.com or Ron Brandt, publicity, 703-765-4779, brandtron@verizon.net

World Day of Prayer. Noon to 1 p.m. Sponsored by the Salvation Army Alexandria Corps. Captain Ken Argot of The Salvation Army will preside over the hour long service. The Corps is located at 1804 Mount Vernon Avenue in Alexandria, Virginia. In addition to the World Day of Prayer service, a bag lunch will be provided.

MARCH 5-6

Gaetano Donizetti's Comic Opera. 8 p.m. By the Repertory Opera Theater of Washington. At Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, 3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria. Tickets are \$20/person, \$15/seniors and students. Call 571-403 0814.

MARCH 5, 6, 12, 13

"Go-Go Beach." 7:30 p.m. Matinee on



SATURDAY/MARCH 6

Two Men in Skirts Concert. 2:30 p.m. Scottish music duo performs. Tickets are \$20/adults, \$12/students. Buy tickets at www.rscds-greaterdc.org. At the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. Call 703-838-4994.

March 7 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10/adults, \$8/seniors and students. Call 703-212-5166. A musical presented by Bishop Ireton High School, Cambridge Road, Alexandria.

SATURDAY/MARCH 6

St. Patrick's Day Parade/ Antique Car Show/ Dog Show. 12:30 - 3 p.m. In Old Town Alexandria. The event is co-sponsored by the Ballyshanners Inc. Contact 703-237-2199 or www.ballyshanners.org.

Irish Heritage Program. 2 to 4 p.m. Enjoy Irish music, dancing, and other entertainments of the late 1790s. Cost is \$5 adults, \$3 children. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Call 703-549-2997 or visit www.carlylehouse.org.

SOLA Ball. 6:30 p.m. to midnight. The 23rd Annual Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria (SOLA) Ball. At the Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City, 1250 S. Hayes St., Arlington. Silent and live auctions, dinner and dancing. Prices: \$150 for first-timers, \$200 for others. Contact Jane Ring at 703-548-7454 or jring10@comcast.net. To purchase ASO concert tickets, contact the box office at 503-548-0885 or go to www.alexsym.org.

Black Opal Gala. 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. The 10th Anniversary Gala of the Northern Virginia Urban League Young Professionals Network (YPN). YPN engages area young professionals in the Urban League movement toward social and economic empowerment through community service, political awareness and professional development programs. Tickets are \$60 until Feb. 15; \$70 after. At the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Contact Karen James, Director of Social Programs, social@nvulypn.org; 703-785-9762.

MARCH 6-7

The 24th Annual Jazz & Tap Dance Festival. Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 4 p.m. At the Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus Cultural Center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Tickets: \$18 - In advance at www.jatdf.org 1-800-595-4TIX; \$20 - At the door.

SATURDAY/MARCH 6

Alexandria Choral Society. 8 p.m. Presents Pour l'amour de la Musique with Brian Gendron, Artistic Director. At Fairlington United Methodist Church, Alexandria. Cost is \$10/seniors, \$20/adults over 13 years of age, children 12 and under are free. Visit www.AlexChoralSociety.org or info@AlexChoralSociety.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 7

Landscaping With Fruits. 1:30-3 p.m. Lee Reich, author of Landscaping with Fruits, will speak about luscious landscaping with fruiting trees, shrubs and vines. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Cost is \$10. Call 703-642-5173.

Ten Thousand Villages

Fundraiser. Noon to 6 p.m. 10 percent of sales will be donated to the Alexandria Office on Women's Domestic Violence Program. At 915 King Street in Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.alexwomen.com.

Folk Festival. 2 p.m. By The United States Marine Band — The President's Own. Maj. Jason K. Fetting, conducting. With Percy Grainger and Dorothy Chang. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, NVCC, 3001 North Beauregard St., Alexandria. Call 202-433-4011 or visit www.marineband.usmc.mil.

Ethiopian-American Celebration of Motherhood. 3-5 p.m. Free. Join an intimate gathering of women to learn about the customs, traditions, music and food that Ethiopians use to celebrate the coming of a new baby in their lives. At Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 10

Ladies Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The Springfield/Alexandria Women's Connection invites everyone to our "Fashion Bargains Galore!" luncheon. At the Springfield Golf & Country Club. Cost of \$17 includes the luncheon and free childcare. Reservations must be made by Friday, March 5th, to 703-569-4670 or 703-590-6562 or email to SpringWmConn@yahoo.com.

THURSDAY/MARCH 11

Our Natural Puzzle: Putting the Pieces Together. 7:30 p.m. Get a peek at just how interdependent our insects, plants, other wildlife, and even humans can be and try to put together our local nature puzzle. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria.

Bob Sima Concert. 7 p.m. The warmth and sincerity of Bob's tone matched with his delicious words are a powerful pairing. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Call 703-548-0035. Visit www.bobsima.com.

Comedy Stage Hypnotist. 7 p.m. Jason Linett performs at T.C. Williams High School fund-raiser. Tickets are \$8. Proceeds benefit the Class of 2010. At 3330 King Street in Alexandria. Contact Dawn Crawford at dawn.crawford@acps.k12.va.us.

FRIDAY/MARCH 12

Ballroom Dancing for Couples. 8:30-11:30 p.m. Friday Nighters St. Patrick's Day Dance. Enjoy waltz, fox trot, cha cha, swing and more to live music on large wooden dance floor in Mount Vernon area. \$15/person; reservations required. www.fridaynightersdancingclub.com.

SATURDAY/MARCH 13

Silent Auction. 7-10 p.m. To benefit the Tauxemont Cooperative Preschool, Alexandria. Lots of great deals. Details: <http://www.tauxemont.org/support/silentauction2010.pdf>

Dance Studio Lioudmila's Saint Patrick's Dance Party. Beginner Rumba Dance lesson from 7:30-8:30 p.m. Dance party from 8:30-11 p.m. Cost is \$15. At Dance Studio Lioudmila, 18th Roth Street,

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 21

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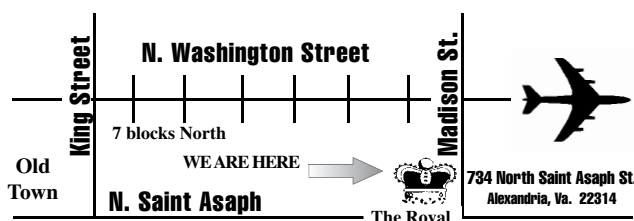
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SATURDAY/MARCH 6

Alexandria Choral Society. 8 p.m. Presents Pour l'amour de la Musique with Brian Gendron, Artistic Director. At Fairlington United Methodist Church, Alexandria. Cost is \$10/seniors, \$20/adults over 13 years of age, children 12 and under are free. Visit www.AlexChoralSociety.org or info@AlexChoralSociety.org.

THEATRE

'Mahalia' Returns To MetroStage

BY CAROLYN GRIFFIN
METROSTAGE

Bernardine Mitchell and the original cast of "Mahalia, a gospel musical," which includes Alexandria's own award-winning artist William Hubbard, have returned to MetroStage (after a five-year absence) to cheering, clapping, swaying audiences. The story of Mahalia Jackson, gospel music and the civil rights movement has touched the hearts of everyone who sees it.

The production of "Mahalia, a gospel musical" is a beautiful example of the power of theater. Whether audiences grew up with Mahalia's music in their homes and gospel music in their churches, or know Mahalia in name only, and have only a limited connection or knowledge of gospel music, one thing is certain. Everyone responds to the extraordinary story of Mahalia Jackson and is moved by her story, her faith, her music, and her heart. Mahalia rose from humble beginnings in New Orleans, moving to Chicago during the Great Migration of the 1920's, singing at churches with professional gospel groups.

Many of her most famous gospel songs are included in this production, including "Take

My Hand, Precious Lord," and "Move on up a Little Higher." As the "Queen of Gospel Music," Mahalia performed at Carnegie Hall to great acclaim. But she also played an important role in the Civil Rights movement, as a friend of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and performing in front of 250,000 at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. With Mitchell's extraordinary contralto voice, critics and audience alike find that Mitchell is literally channeling Mahalia Jackson in both her music and her spirit.

In addition to showcasing some of the most talented artists in the country, MetroStage is committed to producing plays full of heart and soul that touch our audiences deeply and embrace the diversity of our population. There are only two weeks remaining in this run of "Mahalia, a gospel musical," but there is still time to experience Bernardine Mitchell and the multi-talented cast of S. Renee Clark and Alexandria's beloved William Hubbard as we celebrate the music of Mahalia Jackson and her contribution to both the rise of gospel music and her role in the Civil Rights movement.

Carolyn Griffin is the Producing Artistic Director, MetroStage

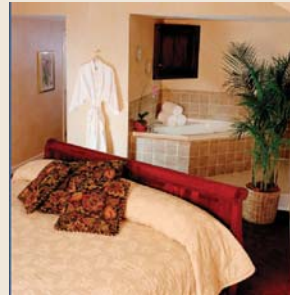
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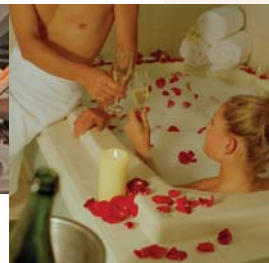
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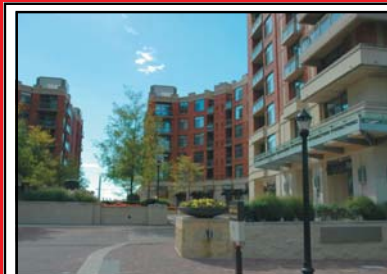
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Mozart in March. 7 p.m. Free. Presented by the Washington Sinfonietta. At Plymouth Haven Baptist Church, 8600 Plymouth Road, Alexandria. Call 703-360-4370.

Used Book Sale. Friends Book Sale. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Call 703-339-4610.

March Madness Festival. 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Historic Non-Fiction Author Thomas E. Crocker (Braddock's March) at 9:30 a.m.; Children's Author Betty Shepard (Virginia: An Alphabetical Journey through History) at 9:45 a.m.; Face Painting with Miss Nadine from 10 a.m. to 12 noon; Children's Author Bebe Willoughby (Saving Emma) at 10:45 a.m.; Adult Novelist R. K. Price (I've Already Met the Devil) at 11 a.m.; Katie Balloons and her balloon show from 12 noon to 3 p.m.; Folk Dancers from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., plus refreshments and a book sale! At the Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library, 4701 Seminary Road, Alexandria.

Alexandria Coin Show. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be 50 tables with U.S. coins and currency, world coins, banknotes, ancient coins, hobby books, gold, silver, medals, tokens and collectibles. Buy, Sell, Trade. Open to the public. Visit www.members.cox.net/alexandriacoinclub. At the Hampton Inn & Suites, corner of I-495 Beltway and Route 1, Alexandria.

Storyteller Baba Jamal Koram. 11 a.m. to noon. Koram will present "African Stories in De Americas: The



Scout J.J. Stinson, who is earning his Eagle Scout award by collecting quilts made for preemies.

TUESDAY/MARCH 9

Mount Vernon Quilters Unlimited. 12:30 p.m. Business meeting, Show and Tell, Preemie quilts collected for INOVA hospital. All quilters and folks interested in quilting are welcome. At Hollin Hall Sr. Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road Alexandria. Visit www.quiltersunlimited.org/mtv.htm

Gullah People" which explores the Gullah culture through traditional stories. From 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m., take part in "Black Storytelling 101." At the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street, Alexandria. Call 703-746-4356.

MARCH 13-14

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. Saturday at 8 p.m.; Sunday at 3 p.m. With Maestro Kim Allen Kluge, violin soloist Allison Bailey and vocalists Elizabeth Bishop and Ta'u Pupu'a. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 3001 N. Beaugard St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-0885 or visit www.alexsym.org.

MARCH 4-8

Biennial Ikebana Show. The Art League welcomes The Sogetu School for its biennial Ikebana Show in the Art League Gallery. Ikebana is the art of Japanese flower arranging and Sogetu is one of the many schools of Ikebana. The Art League is at 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday from noon to 6 p.m. Thursday until 9 p.m. This exhibit will include:

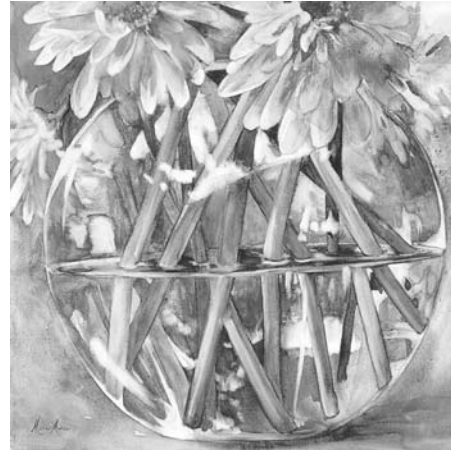
- ❖ Flower arranging demonstration by Tone Olson: Saturday, March 6 at 1 p.m.
- ❖ Japanese Tea Ceremony and discussion of Chado, the Japanese way of tea, with Stephen di Girolamo of the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution: Sunday, March 7, 1:30 p.m.
- ❖ Musical Performance by the Washington Toho Koto Society, performed by Mrs. Kyoko Okamoto: Sunday, March 7 at 3 p.m.

MARCH 5-31

Sidney Lowery's "Waves." Reception on March 5 from 6:30 to 10 p.m. and March 28 from 4:30 to 9 p.m. At Blueberry Art Gallery, 116 E. Del Ray Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-894-8854 or info@blueberryartgallery.com.

FRIDAY/MARCH 5

Women in Art: Body of Work. Opening reception 7-10 p.m. Artists will explore the varied roles of women in the creative life. At the Del Ray Artisans gallery, Nicholas A. Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Contact Ellyn Ferguson at 703-549-2660 or elferguson@netzero.com or Vivienne



Marni Maree - "Stems"

MARCH 1 TO APRIL 25

Art in the Gardens. Free. Featuring the watercolors of Marni Maree and photographs of Jefferson Evans. Open noon to 4:30 p.m. daily. Meet the artist reception is Sunday, April 11 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens Park Horticultural Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.GreenSpring.org.

Lukacs at 703-979-8996 or viv703@msn.com. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

At the Art League Gallery, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Go to www.theartleague.org or call 703-683-1780.

FRIDAY/MARCH 12

Workshop: In the Bag. 6-10 p.m. Create a bag from recycled materials, old clothing, your favorite dress, vintage towels and more. At the Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Advance registration is required by Tuesday, March 9 at https://secure.delrayartisans.org/ssl/Accessories.htm. Fee is \$40 for DRA members / \$45 for non-members. Contact Jen Athanas 571-332-0181 or jenathanas@hotmail.com.

NOW THROUGH MARCH 25

Springfield Art Guild Art Show. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Works include oil, watercolor, photography, and mixed medium. At the Franconia Government Center, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria.

Contact: Reggie Garrett, FGC Show Chair at reggiedrew@aol.com. Call 703-971-6262.

MARCH 26 TO MAY 9

Cedric Williams' Nostalgia and Dereliction. Artist's reception is Sunday, April 18 from 4-6 p.m. The hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday and during performances. At the Schlesinger Center Margaret W. & Joseph L. Fisher Gallery, at the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College.

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6:30 pm Mass (Starts Sept. 13)

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Proposed House Budget Hits Home

By SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE DELEGATE



As the state legislature enters the final weeks of this session, a House-Senate conference committee is trying to resolve the differences in their two versions of the budget.

I voted against the budget that came before the House of Delegates because it is short-sighted and will do great harm to our schools and many families in our area.

RICHMOND REPORT

Education is key to the future fulfillment and productivity of our children and gives them more choices in life. Virginia's public education system enabled me to accomplish whatever I wanted. The House Budget for education funding is disturbing. It guts kindergarten through 12th grade education by reducing payments to localities by \$700 million or \$233,000 per Virginia school and including about \$40 million for Fairfax County. This will result in 28,000 Virginia educators losing their jobs. When combined with the Fairfax County School Board's proposals, the proposed cuts are about \$1 million per school and \$1,000 per child in Fairfax County. This will result in fewer opportunities for Virginia's chil-

dren. It will also mean that localities will try to replace this lost revenue by raising real estate taxes yet again.

The House and Senate also proposed to "adjust" revenue and expense forecasts, something which always raises red flags with me. For example, the House and Senate passed

legislation to reduce state employee pension contributions by changing payout formulas, delaying and reducing our obligations to state employees. The Pew Foundation estimates that state pensions are already \$1 trillion underfunded nationwide, with Virginia's being 10 percent underfunded. The legislature just proposed to underfund it even further. This is short-sighted and extremely risky in the long-term, setting us up to pay a much larger bill 20-30 years from now.

Today, Virginia's per capita Medicaid spending is 48th in the United States. The House budget proposed to reduce Medicaid by \$400 million. This will result in lower payments to providers and fewer low-income children, pregnant mothers and elderly getting health care coverage. It will also bring higher premiums for all Virginians with private health insurance and is predicated to eliminate 6,000 health industry jobs.

The House Budget also deleted arts funding which will affect local programs like the Mount Vernon Children's Community Theatre and arts programs in our schools. It also reduced funding for homeless programs affecting New Hope Housing and Good Shepherd Housing. It wiped out funding for United Community Ministries' Healthy Families Program, a program with a proven record of reducing domestic violence.

The House Budget passed with no Democratic votes for the first time in recent memory. I voted "no." Virginia has always prided itself on first-class public schools and colleges. We have always maintained our AAA bond rating and have been ranked the Best Managed State six of the last seven years. I will continue to fight these proposals because I am deeply concerned we are sacrificing our future for short-term expediency and putting Virginia into the kind of expense cycle that has handcuffed states like California and New York. I am hopeful that the Senate Budget will be more responsible.

I have posted many more articles on my blog *The Dixie Pig* at scottsurovell.blogspot.com. Good government depends on good communication and your input. Please send me your comments and suggestions.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

Vernon "club" (\$50-\$5000 membership fee), which it could use much more effectively to inform area residents about upcoming plans, not just upcoming events. In this day and age of electronic communication, a Friends email-group list could be used, for example, for even such basic but courtesy-inspired communications as letting residents know when Mt. Vernon will be letting off fireworks or cannons at 10 p.m. so residents (especially, young school-age kids and the elderly) don't keep waking up in alarm at these unanticipated sonic disturbances.

In a nutshell, we would like to see better communications and more community-based ventures between Mt. Vernon Estate and its resident neighbors — along with county and state agencies — to preserve and in some cases improve the historical and aesthetics importance of the Mt. Vernon Hwy corridor. This will be of mutual benefit to Mt. Vernon Estate, the good impression left on its out-of-area tourists arriving via Rte 235, as well as to local residents who do take great pride in their local treasure, Mt. Vernon.

We hope that Mt. Vernon Estate will act on the realization that its neighbors are potentially its biggest support base — but we are also taxpaying, politically active residents. Disgruntled neighbors complain; sometimes they leave, but when property values decline because of perceived development problems in the area, the Mt. Vernon Estate could lose the good will and support of the very people it needs to keep the Mt. Vernon corridor — "George's Highway" — looking good.

Andree C. Dumermuth
Mt. Vernon

Hoath Recieves In Hope Freedom Rings Scholarship

Marcy Hoath of Mt. Vernon High School received a \$10,000 In Hope Freedom Rings scholarship on Jan. 12 at the Café at the Gatehouse Administrative Center in Falls Church.

Marcy is the president of the National Honor Society; managing editor of the school newspaper; and a member of the Mock United Nations, Varsity Math Team, and the Future Business Leaders of America while maintaining a 4.174 grade point average. A star field hockey and soccer player, Marcy helped her hockey team win the National District Championship.

Her school counselor points out that "Marcy selects the most rigorous courses available to her ... she has admirable persistence and has demonstrated time and again that she is a blossoming leader."

The Foundation was started five years ago by local business owner Margo R. Friedman, a former school teacher, who wanted to give back to the community.



Marcy Hoath of Mt. Vernon High School attended the presentation of In Hope Freedom Rings scholarship.

Each year, Friedman participates as a sponsor and recruits other sponsors from the local business community who share her goal of helping students attend college. This enables her to award the scholarships with 100 percent of the donations going to the scholarships. The foundation has awarded \$90,000 to Fairfax County students.

This is the fifth year that the foundation

has awarded the scholarships. The businesses that contributed are: Burke Centre Automotive; CouponsToGo.com; Cropp-Metcalf Air Conditioning, Heating, Plumbing & Security; Hadeed Oriental Rug Cleaning; Papa John's Pizza; Prince William Home Improvement; Springfield Lorton Dental Group; and Virginia Tire & Auto.

Irresponsible Lawsuit

To the Editor:

Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli announced that his office had filed a petition with the Environmental Protection Agency asking them to reconsider their finding that carbon dioxide emissions are pollution and constitute a threat to human health. Mr. Cuccinelli is wasting critical time and money pressuring the federal government to delay action on the issue of climate change.

At a time when Virginia's budget is already strapped and we are forced to make severe cuts to education, mental health, and the environment, this frivolous lawsuit could cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars. That is fiscally irresponsible.

The General Assembly is currently considering cuts to programs that help conserve land, protect our water from being polluted, and assist farmers in their efforts to do both of these things.

The House of Delegates is proposing a \$400,000 cut (eliminating the entire program) to a Purchase of Development Rights program that helps farmers to preserve their working farmland from development. This

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 25

Wolverines Dedicate Season to 'Coach Moe'

West Potomac wins Patriot championship, while honoring former assistant coach.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

West Potomac boys basketball coach David Houston III needed a minute. He stood down the hall from the Wolverines' locker room, composing himself while leaning against a wall.

The Wolverines' season had just ended with a 63-51 home loss to Chantilly on Feb. 25 in the quarterfinals of the Northern Region tournament. But it was more than just the culmination of the 2009-10 campaign to Houston and the Wolverines. It was the end of an emotional run which saw a group of players improve from six wins and seventh place in the Patriot District to district champions, 17 wins and a regional victory over Falls Church.

Eight West Potomac seniors had played their final game and Houston wanted a moment before he spoke to them in the locker room.

"They gave everything they had," Houston would later say. "Nobody felt like we would be in the regional tournament — not even in the regional tournament — let alone the top team in the best district in the re

SEE WEST POTOMAC, PAGE 24



PHOTO LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE
West Potomac senior Shakil White goes up for a shot while Chantilly junior John Manning, listed at 7 feet, defends.



COURTESY PHOTO
Maurice Barbour, a former West Potomac summer coach and junior varsity assistant, died May 21 of a heart attack at the age of 35. The West Potomac varsity dedicated the 2009-10 season to "Coach Moe."

Ferguson's Hot Hand Not Enough for Mount Vernon

Senior hits 5 3s but Majors lose to Chantilly in regional semifinals.

JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

With Mount Vernon's top scoring threats struggling and 7-foot Chantilly junior John Manning swatting away ill-fated attempts in the paint, senior Deontre' Ferguson tried to shoot the Majors back into Saturday's Northern Region semifinal from long range.

Ferguson drained five 3-pointers, including four in the first half, en route to a season-high 24 points. It wasn't enough, however, as the Majors fell to Chantilly 69-57 at Robinson Secondary School, ending their season in the regional semifinals for the second consecutive year.

Ferguson's fifth 3-pointer brought Mount Vernon to within seven at 62-55 with 55 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter. But Chantilly knocked down seven of its final eight free-throw attempts and put the game away.

Ferguson was the game's high scorer and kept the Majors from getting blown out early while the "big three" of Skylar Jones, Robert Smith and Jesse Konadu struggled to find their rhythm. Mount Vernon went without a field goal for the first 6 minutes, 29 seconds of the game — until Ferguson came off the bench and made a 3-pointer. His second triple stopped a 7-0 Chantilly run to open the second quarter, and his third and fourth were part of a 9-0 Majors run.

"[Ferguson] did what we ask him to do on this team," Mount Vernon coach Alfonso Smith said. "He's one of the better shooters that's come through Mount Vernon since I've been there. He showed that that was actually the case tonight. ... We really were in an offensive funk. Some of the guys that really get us kick started offensively were struggling a little bit early. Deontre' came in and really gave us a big spark off the bench."

Ferguson joined the Majors during the

second semester after becoming academically ineligible. His first game was Feb. 4 against Stuart.

Ferguson scored 13 of Mount Vernon's 16 points in the second quarter.

"From the beginning [my teammates] were looking for me," Ferguson said. "After the first [3-pointer], I just got hot and they kept giving me the ball."

Jones, Smith and Konadu carried Mount Vernon on the offensive end for most of the season. On this night, Jones and Konadu had their shots blocked or altered numerous times by Manning, and Smith also struggled to get into a rhythm. Konadu finished with 13 points, Jones had seven and Smith added six. "[Manning] had a tremendous impact," Jones said, "on how we attacked the basket."

In the second half, the Majors got within five when Jones scored the first basket of the third quarter and six when Sean Stewart knocked down a 3-pointer to cut Chantilly's

lead to 37-31 with 2:28 remaining, but couldn't get over the hump. Alfonso Smith said one of the biggest differences between Saturday's contest and when Mount Vernon defeated Chantilly 55-52 on Jan. 9 is the Chargers on Saturday had an answer for every Majors run.

While the season ended in disappointment for Mount Vernon, the team's seniors — Smith, Stewart, Stann Hazelwood, Jones, Dylan Bischoff — leave the program having helped turn it into one of the more successful in the Northern Region. The Majors won back-to-back National District championships while losing only one district game (this season against district newcomer Hayfield).

"We really felt confident coming in that we'd be able to get over this hump," Alfonso Smith said of getting past the regional semifinals. "It's an empty feeling, a disappointing feeling. ... The senior class has been an excellent class. With the run that T.C. [Williams] put together [winning 80 consecutive Patriot District games before forfeits]; I think that kind of gets overlooked."

Wolverines Dedicate Season to 'Coach Moe'

FROM PAGE 23

gion. ... This is the best team that I've had as far as a collection of players with one goal. ... We won the [district] championship [and] I think we did it the right way. We didn't go out and get transfers. We did it with the same kids we had last year."

MOTIVATION came in multiple forms for West Potomac. While the Wolverines wanted to prove others wrong regarding their ability, they also played for a greater purpose.

Rev. Maurice Barbour, "Coach Moe" to the Wolverines, died May 21, 2009, of a heart attack at the age of 35. He was a summer league coach for West Potomac before Houston added him to the Wolverine staff as a junior varsity assistant for the 2008-09 season. An ordained Baptist minister, Barbour's relationship with the Wolverines was such that they dedicated their 2009-10 season to his memory.

"He was a fiery guy, always positive," Houston said. "I don't think I ever heard or saw him [act in a] negative [manner], not once. He'd do anything for the kids. He loved being around them. He'd drive them to summer league games when we were bad. We were getting beat by 25, 35, 40 points and he's still picking them up and

"He'd do anything for the kids. He loved being around them."

— West Potomac head boys basketball coach on former assistant Maurice Barbour

driving them to McDonald's or KFC."

Barbour joined Mt. Zoar Baptist Church in Fairfax in 1999. He attended Washington Baptist Seminary in 2000 and was ordained in 2006. He had two sons, Maurice Barbour II and Micah Church-Barbour, and one daughter, Mauriah Church-Barbour.

The Wolverines had a moment of silence to honor Coach Moe before every game. The team also kept a two-by-four board bearing Barbour's name next to the bench. When Coach Moe died, Houston said 18 kids in the West Potomac program attended his funeral at the Greater Little Zion Baptist Church in Fairfax.

"He was just a really good person with a

good heart that believed in God and believed that there was a better purpose," Houston said. "He used to talk all the time, even though we were losing, 'It's going to turn around, it's going to come around.' The kids really loved him."

BARBOUR'S ATTITUDE made the Wolverines want to give maximum effort.

"He was always positive," senior Shakil White said. "He just knew how to pump you up."

"He was real good before the games at getting us real motivated," senior Matt Cunningham said, "and lighting that fire inside of us."

Coach Moe's ability to inspire remained after his death.

"He always treated me like a brother," senior Martez Redfearn said. "We could talk about anything. ... He was a good man — good coach, too. ... When he passed, I was like, 'I know what I have to do. I've got to push myself to another level now. I've got to work hard.' I knew that's what he wanted."

"He wanted to see us go far. I wish he was here to see this year. He would have been hyped on the bench. ... He was a big part of West Potomac basketball."

As a coach, Barbour told the Wolverines to push the tempo and believe in them-

selves.

"His favorite words were always, 'Have Wolverine pride,'" senior Shawn Lee said. "He always used to talk about pride."

Pride wasn't enough for West Potomac to get past Chantilly. Consecutive 3-pointers by senior Terrell Ward gave the Wolverines a 21-14 advantage at the end of the first quarter, but the lead slowly slipped away. West Potomac led 27-25 at halftime but Chantilly took over late in the third quarter when Adam Fridy drained three consecutive 3-pointers to put the Chargers ahead, 38-29.

Fridy's fifth and final triple put Chantilly ahead by 15 with 3:49 to play in the fourth quarter. Despite the deficit, the Wolverines continued playing hard, just how Coach Moe would have wanted.

"No matter what the score was of any game, he still kept us up," senior DeAndre Essex said. "We still played hard for him every game. The way he spoke to us was motivation."

Fridy led Chantilly with 21 points. Daryl Copeland paced West Potomac with 16 points and Ward added 10.

"I think he's looking down proud," Houston said after the game. "I definitely don't think that he's angry right now or said or disappointed."

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Budget Cuts

FROM PAGE 1

boats to safety after mechanical failure. By eliminating this unit, the county would save \$222,287.

❖ Eliminate daytime "lock up" service at the Mount Vernon District Police Station. Currently, police officers can book and hold suspects at the Mount Vernon police station instead of transporting them to the Adult Detention Center in Fairfax. Griffin has proposed cutting this service during the day, which would mean that officers may have to spend more time driving people who are arrested to the main detention facility. The center averages 1.4 prisoners per day. The "lock up" service will be available at night. By implementing this cut, the county would save \$160,000.

❖ Reduce the service of the basic life support unit at the Mount Vernon fire station from 24 hours per day, seven days per week to eight hours per day, five days per week. The fire station's service area will be staffed only by an advanced life support unit on weekends and during "non-peak hours," resulting in longer wait times for an emergency response.

❖ Eliminate regular patrols by the fireboat that previously took place from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the boating season. The fireboat will still be available to respond to emergency calls but response times may be longer. The cost savings to the county is about \$10,000.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 22

is the amount of money that could be wasted on this lawsuit against EPA.

Mr. Cuccinelli has asserted that the endangerment process and climate science in general are being misused as a part of a broader political agenda. In fact, the EPA under both President Bush and President Obama played critical roles in developing the finding over a two-year period of time beginning in 2007. Cuccinelli, however, asserts that climate change is not man made and has publicly stated that he intends to use his office to pursue his personal agenda, a part of which is stopping important environmental legislation in its tracks.

Virginia's coastline is a vulnerable area in the United States to the threat of sea level rise. We rank behind only New Orleans in areas that will be inundated by rising seas due to climate change. The Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences released a report on their research demonstrating that storms and the resulting flooding will be more severe due to climate change. Other recent reports have shown that Virginia's agricultural industry, as well as our native plant and wildlife species, face threats from changing climates. A report issued this summer showed that Virginia's corn growers stand to lose \$5 million annually from climate change.

Martin Tillet
Alexandria

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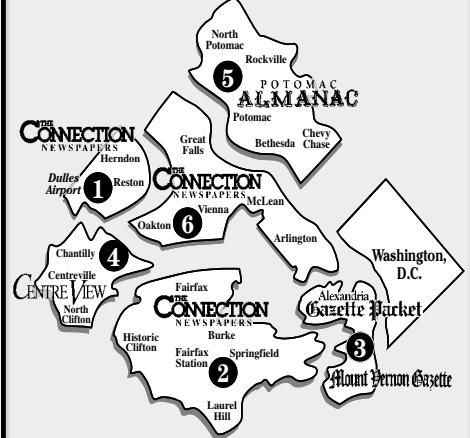
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Gourmet kitchen w/granite counters, cherry cabinets & HW floors. Exercise rm w/sauna & shower. MSTR BR w/2 walk-in closets, cathedral ceiling, wet bar, sitting rm w/gas fireplace. MSTR BA w/soaking tub, sep shower, double sink & ceramic tile. Plus much much more. Directions: I95S to exit 166A Newington/FXCo Pky S to US Route 1 (Richmond Hwy (R, 1/2 to R Inlet Cove, immed R to Regional Inlet Cove to 7023



**ALEXANDRIA \$575,000
WITH AU PAIR SUITE**

Spacious all brick home, hardwood floors, beautifully crafted moldings & details throughout. 3 finished levels, 5 Bedrooms, 4.5 baths.



**ALEXANDRIA \$330,000
ONE-LEVEL LIVING**

Beautifully maintained, bright sunny home with open floor plan. Perched on large lot with garage. Rose Hill area. 3 Bedrooms, 2 full baths.

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