

Great Falls CONNECTION

Beautification Project Launched

NEWS, PAGE 3

Stained glass window at Salem Baptist Church near the intersection of Georgetown Pike and Seneca Road, displaying the beauty in the glasswork, is an example of the heritage Great Falls citizens want to preserve.

Senior Living Options Considered

NEWS, PAGE 3

Living With Grace

PEOPLE, PAGE 6

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PEOPLE, PAGE 6 ♦ CALENDAR, PAGE 16 ♦ OPINION, PAGE 8 ♦ FAITH, PAGE 13 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 15 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 16

PHOTO BY WALT LAWRENCE

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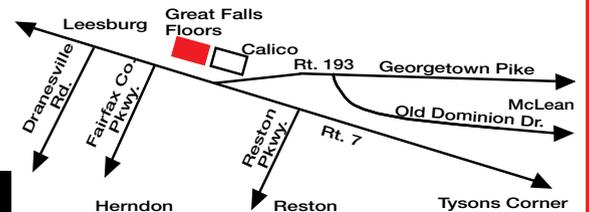
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PHOTO BY WALT LAWRENCE

The Old Schoolhouse now called the Forestville School is located on Georgetown Pike in the heart of Great Falls and has had a long and varied history. It is now administered by the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Senior Living Considered

Landowner comes forth with acreage near Village Centre for possible development.

BY MIKE DICICCO
THE CONNECTION

Terrell Hutchison has lived in Great Falls with his wife, Audrey, for 31 years, and he doesn't want to leave. But the couple lives in a four-bedroom house on three acres off of Springvale Road, and while they are managing nicely now, he said, "We're just thinking this isn't going to last forever." This was why the couple attended a meeting last Tuesday, Oct. 21 about a possible senior living development in Great Falls.

Like many other seniors in the community, the Hutchisons live in a home that is larger than they need but don't have local options for downsizing or family in the area to move in with. Hutchison said he and his wife were already willing to put money down on a house in the proposed development in order to stay here. "I don't think you can find a better place in the United States than Great Falls," he said.

When local landowner Jamie Jessee read that the Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA) had decided not to pursue a senior living community in the Marmota Farm area due to protests from some neighbors, he approached the association with an idea: The three acres he owned near the Village Centre, which he had planned to sell for high-end housing, could support 10 to 12 smaller patio houses for senior living. "I was kind of tired of seeing these McMansions getting shoved in all over the place," Jessee said.

He emphasized that the project was still in the brainstorming phase and had not yet even been mentioned to the neighbors, although there wouldn't be many of them.

THE LAND IN QUESTION is near the Village Centre Shopping Centre, next to the Village Green Daycare Center, and the only adjacent residential neighborhood is Oliver Estates. There is currently one house on Jessee's property.

Kathleen Murphy, co-chair of the GFCA's Long-Range Planning Committee, said about 15 people had attended the meeting last week, including GFCA members. The senior citizens in attendance expressed interest in the project. "At the end, everybody

SEE SENIOR LIVING, PAGE 19

Beautification Project Launched

Community invited to join next meeting on Thursday, Nov. 6.

BY KATHLEEN J. MURPHY
SPECIAL FOR GREAT FALLS CONNECTION

How do we think the Great Falls village center can be made to look more charming, enjoyable, and inviting? Rather than a gathering of separate and independent shopping areas, how can we create an experience of entering a coherent village marked by native plantings, characteristic signage, winding footpaths, places to gather, sit, and enjoy that makes us feel welcomed? This was the question that a few caring citizens came to participate in answering at the kick-off meeting of the Great Falls Beautification Project held by GFCA's Long-Range Planning & Development Committee.

Candice Campbell, known for her involvement in the Great Falls Optimists Club and the Great Falls Garden Club, brought photos of a charming village in Canada that was brimming with well-planted islands in the middle of the roadways, lovely plantings along either side of the sidewalks, period street lights and signage, diverse building architecture yet common signage, etc. She encouraged the group to involve landscape architects, architects and town planners who live or work in Great Falls in assisting in designing a really coherent plan to develop the concept and implement the program in a competent and professional man-

ner. She pointed out that members of the Great Falls Garden Club have tended to the native garden at the Great Falls Library every week from April through November to ensure that it maintains its magnificent presence at the entry to the library. Once the professional plans are prepared, the assistance of many local resident gardeners will be required to realize our vision of a well-articulated small, semi-rural village center.

JACQUE OLIN, known for her involvement in the Great Falls Historical Society and the Great Falls Analemna Society, stressed the importance of our many historic properties throughout Great Falls that require listing as historic properties, tax relief for owners, proper historic signage, etc. To preserve and protect the semi-rural character of Great Falls, we must endeavor to preserve those markings throughout the community that are authentic semi-rural structures and artifacts. Further, in the interest of preserving the view of outer space from Great Falls — the darkest location in Northern Virginia, she would like to see dedicated enforcement of the dark skies provision of the Comprehensive Plan throughout our community.

Tanya Beauchamp, noted for her work in listing Georgetown Pike as a historic byway, has very clear notions of what an authentic semi-rural town looked like in the good old days. For example, according to Beauchamp, streetlights are not synonymous with semi-rural. We look forward to her sense of historic integrity as we work through the village center beautification design.

SUE BENNETT noted the importance of foot-traffic and bike-traffic in shaping a place where people will come to enjoy, hang out, and buy local.

Mike Kearney, although unable to attend the first meeting, shared the Village Centre community's willingness to participate in the effort.

We hereby call for all local talent to step forward and assist in doing a really artful and notable design for our community. We invite all landscape architects, architects, town planners, gardeners, and other interested parties to join our next meeting to be held at the Great Falls Library Meeting Room on Thursday, Nov. 6 from 7 to 9 p.m. If you have a landscape architect that you have worked with, urge them to do some pro-bono work on behalf of Great Falls. All volunteer organizations and individual volunteers will enjoy recognition for their contribution. Our intention is to create a unique experience of "beauty" in Great Falls — a unique semi-rural village with a hometown feel. The more input we get, the more unique the outcome in search for the design features that will express our vision for Great Falls and communicate clearly to residents and visitors about the things we care most about - preserving and protecting the semi-rural character of Great Falls — "Great Falls, Treasuring Heritage, Home, and Habitat." This is an open meeting and anyone interested is welcome to attend and actively participate.

The author is the chair of GFCA Long-Range Planning, Development & Outreach Committee.

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NEWS

Optimist Club To Hold Barn Dance

The Great Falls Optimist Club is holding its third annual barn dance, complete with a live band, "Standing Room Only," and barbecued ribs and chicken on Saturday, Nov. 8 from 7 to 11 p.m. Proceeds from this year's event will support the club's youth-oriented activities and programs.

Club member Linda Thompson has again donated the use of her refurbished bank barn in Great Falls for the upcoming event. "Standing Room Only" will entertain guests with classic rock; Famous Dave's Bar-B-Que will provide dinner; and a cash bar with beer and wine will be provided by The Old Brogue. Tickets are \$50 each and are tax deductible. Tickets must be purchased in advance because space is limited. For information, call Linda Thompson at 703-759-2959 or visit www.greatfallsoptimist.org.

"We had a spectacular time again last year," said Club President Lisa Jackson. "It's not every day you get to have a great party and dance in an old barn like this and at the same time help young people in the community. Linda has fixed up the barn with lights, a stage, heaters and country-style decorations that create the perfect ambiance. We've got a tent to handle the overflow because we expect dancers to spill out into the star-lit night for a breath of fresh air when the band takes a break. We've also



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Last year, more than 70 people celebrated the 26th Anniversary of the Great Falls Optimist Club at the second annual barn dance.

moved into rock and roll this year instead of only country music because we thought that might appeal to more people."

The Great Falls Optimist Club is a child-centered non-profit organization that focuses on supporting, encouraging and challenging children to reach greater heights. A voluntary organization, the club is always interested in welcoming new members and volunteers. Among the many annual family-oriented events sponsored or assisted by the club are the Spring Festival and Egg Hunt, the Fall Spooktacular at Halloween, and the Fourth of July celebration in Great Falls.

WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

SHARE Collects Food Certificates

SHARE, Inc. of McLean, serving families in need in the local area, is collecting Safeway or Giant food certificates for the annual Thanksgiving Dinner program. Donations of food certificates will help a needy family purchase a turkey, fresh vegetables, or other fresh items to supplement other food donations at Thanksgiving. Non-perishable food items, detergent, cooking oil, rice, and pasta are also appreciated. Drop-off is at the McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Road in McLean from 10 a.m. till noon on Saturday, Nov.

8 and Saturday, Nov. 15.

Kearney To Speak At Friends' Breakfast

Join the Great Falls Friends on Wednesday, Nov. 5 at 8 a.m. at the Great Falls Library for the monthly Breakfast and Speaker. This month the speaker is Mike Kearney, owner of the Old Brogue Restaurant and Katie's Coffee House. Mark the calendar for next month's Great Falls Friends Holiday breakfast on Wednesday, Dec. 3 at the Great Falls Library. For more information contact Candace at 703-759-0375.

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Independent Wants No Party

Nigam runs for Congress with no political affiliation for second time.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

In his second go around, underdog candidate Neeraj Nigam got a significant head start on his bid for Virginia's 10th congressional district seat this year.

He did not wait to jump into the race until late August as he had in 2006. In 2008, he declared his candidacy in February and was already in the full swing of the campaign by mid-July.

The candidate, who is running as an independent, is feeling more confident about this second campaign.

"I have been getting a lot more support. Last time, I did not know anybody and I did not know anything. ... Now, I know my way

around the system. I was a little bit hesitant to meet people before," said Nigam, who is originally from the New Delhi area of India.

The Sterling Park resident will face incumbent U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10) and Democratic candidate Judy Feder in the election Nov. 4.

In the 2006 race, Nigam won 1,184 votes or less than one percent of the total ballots cast. Wolf, the winner, garnered approximately 139,000 votes in the same race, according to the Virginia State Board of Elections.

Nigam said he used to identify as a Republican, though he only agreed with the Grand Old Party 60 percent of time and favored Democrats about 40 percent of the time.



Independent candidate Neeraj Nigam passes out literature outside Giant Food in McLean.

Neeraj Nigam

Age: 54
Occupation: Systems Analyst/IT specialist, CACI International
Born in: New Delhi, India
City/Community: Sterling Park
Family: Wife Pratibha, two sons – Anchal and Rajarshi
Education: New Delhi University - B.S. in mathematics, physics and chemistry; M.B.A. in marketing and finance
Relevant experience: 10th congressional district candidate, 2006
Web site: www.neerajnigamforcongress.org

Now, he sees all the political parties as part of the problematic Washington culture and does not want to identify with any of them.

"I saw all the congressman and senators voting for the benefit of the party instead of the people they represent. I cannot support any party because I cannot support any part of that," said Nigam, who has lived in Northern Virginia since 1995.

He realizes his candidacy will be an uphill battle without a party machine and said he is up for the challenge.

"It is hard but it is not impossible. It is little bit difficult to do but I do not mind difficult tasks,"

SEE NIGAM, PAGE 7

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Living with Grace

Beth Jannery,
Great Falls resident,
publishes next book
in series.

BY DANIELLE LANDAU
THE CONNECTION

The current Ms. Virginia (Corporate) 2008, Beth Jannery of Great Falls, does not consider herself a pageant girl. Author of the Simple Grace book series, motivational speaker, mother of two, and former Ms. Connecticut America, Jannery sees these competitions as “opportunities to spread awareness in today’s world.” Her platform in the July 2008 pageant focused on healthy body image and weight for women and girls across the United States.

Jannery has just completed her third book, the second in her Simple Grace collection, which urges readers to stop and appreciate ordinary moments every day. “Simple Grace Daily Joys,” the newest addition, is organized into seasons so the reader can pick up the book and read the section that relates to their current situation.

THE PURPOSE of the book is to “help people find the joy in every day life through a spiritual sense of grace,” said Jannery. “Daily Joys” is made up of quotes and stories that exemplify the idea that less is more. In the book, Jannery introduces her winter segment as “A quiet time of solace, if we’re lucky, to hibernate, slumber and think. Winter is when we simplify our minds and spirits”(page 19).

“The reactions have been truly inspiring and are a major motivation for me to continue writing.”

Beth Jannery

But Jannery’s outlook on life has not always been so peaceful. Her first book, “Shut the Hell Up! 101 reasons to appreciate your life,” which Jannery wrote in her mid-20s when “our country was being slammed for being lazy,” urges Americans to stop whining and complaining and instead appreciate their lavish lives. As an intern for CNN, Jannery covered the Pentagon while earning her masters in broadcast journalism from Boston University. Just out of college, Jannery jumped into the political world but her attitude was transformed into a more serene



CONTRIBUTED

Beth Jannery

outlook when she left the political scene. Jannery was covering a story on a new weapon system but ended up writing about the man she interviewed and his incredible personality. “I felt a shift at that moment and knew I wanted to create books that advise people to do things and appreciate them, no matter their relative importance in life,” said Jannery.

REACTIONS to “Simple Grace Living a Meaningful Life,” the first book in the series, have inspired Jannery. “I hear from people of all sorts. Leaving the targeted audience undefined allows anyone to identify with my work. I have heard from young teenagers, moms and dads, and even a group of Harley Davidson Bikers who read the first book and spread it around to their friends. The reactions have been truly inspiring and are a major motivation for me to continue writing.” Jannery is constantly asked about her thoughts on the current economic crisis in the United States. “Everyone is struggling and I just remind them to not get so caught up in the crisis that they miss the moments that make them smile,” said Jannery.

Like many mothers today Jannery keeps daughters Tess and Skye busy with soccer, ballet and imagination. She knows that as a mother “if I can teach my daughters the concept behind Simple Grace, enjoying life, I will have accomplished more than I set out to achieve.”

Jannery has started working with other authors and is creating “Simple Grace Soul Embrace” to be released in a year. Jannery hopes that her books help people see that so much of life is fear based and therefore “we must put in effort if we want to experience the happiness that is sometimes hidden.” Her work is sold at bookstores across the nation and online. More information about Jannery’s work is available on her Web site www.bethjannery.com.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Celebrating Homecoming

Langley High School students, from left, Alex Voorhees, Erin Cobb, Blaine Appleby, Scott Jones, Clay Rainie and Stephanie Gaibler get together to celebrate Homecoming on Saturday, Oct. 18.



Pastor Gysan’s ‘Tattertots’

A Mother’s Day Out class of Christ the King Lutheran Church pictured with some of the potatoes they dug at the Gysan Farm. Each year the children dig potatoes and enjoy their efforts by taking them home for supper. Pastor Paul Gysan calls them “Tattertots.”

Professional Debut

Connor Knutsen will appear onstage in the Children’s Chorus for upcoming performances of “Carmen” (composed by Georges Bizet, Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy). Carmen will be performed by the Washington National Opera, Placido Domingo General Director, at the Kennedy Center. The opera will be sung in French with English subtitles. This will be Connor’s professional debut as a singer and theatrical performer.



Connor Knutsen

Connor, a resident of McLean, is currently a freshman at Flint Hill School in Oakton. He is deputy head chorister at the St. Paul’s K-Street Anglican boy choir. He was selected for advanced singing courses at the Royal Society of Church Music at Washington National Cathedral in 2007 and 2008. In 2006 he appeared in the Magical Pied Piper at the Alden Theater in McLean. He appeared in several school plays at The Langley School in McLean.

Nigam Relies on Volunteers

FROM PAGE 5

said the candidate, who attended Annandale High School but returned to India for college.

Nigam may have an easier time running as an independent in a congressional race than he would in statewide or national election, said Dan Keyserling, deputy communications director for the University of Virginia's Center for Politics.

"It might not take on a partisan tinge. The really local elections, often those are non-partisan," said Keyserling.

NIGAM ORIGINALLY became interested in running for Congress because he was upset by the federal government's intrusion on the private lives of citizens.

He said President George W. Bush should not be allowed to use telecommunications companies to spy on people and listen to their conversations. Recently, he was disturbed to read about the Maryland state government spying on anti-death penalty organizations.

"This is something I would expect from a Hitler. These actions of the government are laying the foundation for Hitler to take over this country," said Nigam.

Nigam opposes the so-called Wall Street bailout package passed by the U.S. Congress and supported by Wolf. Instead, the federal government should give a \$500 credit in the form of a pre-paid credit card to every American and tell the public they have to use the money in six months.

"That would get money pumped into the economy and the economy would have to go up," said Nigam.

The candidate thinks those people who are facing foreclosure should be given the option of taking out a "regular" mortgage at the price their house is currently worth. If they cannot afford their home through a regular mortgage on their current income, then they should be able to "walk away" from the property without penalty or wrecking their credit, he said.

"If they can't qualify for a regular mortgage, they should be able to walk away. If a company gave them a creative mortgage, I don't think we should hold that against them," he said.

ON A SHOESTRING budget, Nigam is relying on volunteers to get the word out about his candidacy and the systems specialist from federal contractor CACI, International has enlisted the support of at least one of his coworkers,

"It is hard but it is not impossible. It is little bit difficult to do but I do not mind difficult tasks."

— Neeraj Nigam

ers, Charmaine Britt.

"I am out here trying to get these posters up ... I gave what little support I could two years ago," said Britt, a Prince William County resident who cannot actually vote for Nigam.

Britt added that Nigam would put his constituents first.

"I know he is about the people," she said.

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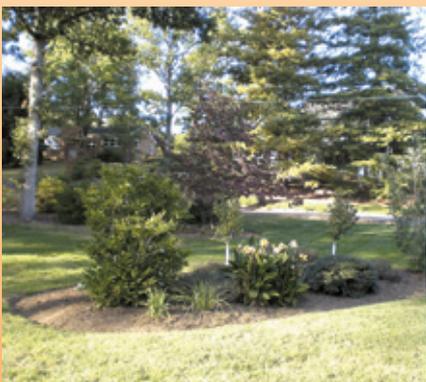
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Battle for Virginia

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Walk Like MADD

Last week, a young Fairfax man was sentenced to three years in jail for involuntary manslaughter, in a drunk-driving accident that resulted in unspeakable tragedy for three families. Reporter Ken Moore tells the story in this week's Fairfax Connection: one family lost a beloved daughter after five brutal days clinging to life; one family has seen their active son reduced to 70 pounds and "unresponsive" and living in a nursing home; the

family of the defendant has also seen life as they knew it change. (Read the story, "Three Families Devastated by Drunk Driving," at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com)

In coming weeks, Moore will tell the stories of other local families touched by the tragedy of drunk driving.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving Northern Virginia, whose mission is "to stop drunk driving, support the victims of this violent crime

and prevent underage drinking," will hold a walk, "Walk Like MADD" this weekend in Lake Fairfax Park in Reston to raise awareness and funding.

The walk is Saturday, Nov. 1, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., open to children, teens, adults, families and pets. To register as a walker or as a "virtual walker," visit www.WalkLikeMadd.org and select "Fairfax, VA," email karen.horowitz@madd.org or call 703-379-1135.

EDITORIALS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Taking Pride In Our Choice

To the Editor:

I am responding to the letter from Betsy Campbell ["Trickle Down Politics," Great Falls Connection, Oct. 22-28] She is correct; no yard signs should be stolen or destroyed, that behavior is Un-American.

What I disagree with is her opinion that Republicans are rude or hostile to her as she canvasses the neighborhood with Obama brochures. Betsy, you should not be offended by your neighbors; their dismissal of you is not personal. Politics is ideology, much like religion. It is hubris to expect that the well-informed voters of Great Falls should welcome the political views of an acquaintance. Most people do not appreciate uninvited religious or political intrusions into their lives. Once people have chosen a political party, they rarely make a change and certainly not because a neighbor wants to convince them of their "better" choice.

As to your concern that your children hear Obama being compared with a terrorist on the school bus ... relax! My kids listened to kids on the bus compar-

ing President Bush to Hitler for years. On top of that, they have been exposed to years of mean-spirited Hollywood drivel and media bias that targeted not only the sitting President and Vice President, but the entire Republican Party. You know, we "gun toting nuts clinging to religion." You can't be thin skinned and be a Republican. We combated the lies and bias with hours of political dinner time discussions. My kids are comfortable with their party of choice, as your children will be.

We should all take pride in our choice for President and if our party should lose, we should lose with grace and wish the very best to the new President and the country we love.

Josee Cox
Great Falls

Media Censorship Endangers Lives

To the Editor:

In recent years a number of products from China have been contaminated: pet food, toothpaste, children's toys and now milk products. Beijing did not allow

state-run media to break the news of the tainted milk until after the Olympics, even though it was known about in July.

Information censorship endangers lives.

For this reason I am particularly grateful to Congressman [Frank] Wolf for joining nearly 70 members of Congress in writing to French-based satellite company Eutelsat, requesting it reinstate independent U.S.-based Chinese-language New Tang Dynasty Television (NTDTV) to its Asia satellite.

New Tang Dynasty TV carries news the Chinese regime wants quiet. NTDTV provides a platform for Chinese citizens to let the rest of the world know what is going on in China. Thank you Congressman Wolf for supporting free media so that we will all be safer and better informed.

Anne Yang
Vienna

Unanswered Question

To the Editor:

Dan Storck, Chair of the Fairfax County School Board, advocates acquiring a new building to cen-

tralize the Fairfax County Public Schools administration [It's Another Smart Move, Letters to the Editor, McLean Connection, Oct. 22-28]

The school board does not answer a fundamental question: What is the ratio of administrators to faculty in Fairfax? Without valid information as to how the FCPS spends our tax dollars, citizens are not able to make a decision as to the worth of the FCPS proposal. On the surface, paying many millions for a building, whether it is a new building or an existing building will not improve the education of our children. Instead, it will just increase the overhead in a possibly bloated bureaucracy.

John Rudzki
McLean

Keeping the Best In Congress

To the Editor:

Is there a better man in the U.S. Congress than Frank Wolf? I don't think so. Let's keep him.

Ingeborg Schleier
McLean

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Newspaper of
Great Falls

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Brenda Drake will be holding a mixed media art exhibit at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, from Nov. 4-Nov. 28. 703-757-8560.

GALLERIES

THURSDAY/NOV. 6

McLean Project for the Arts has three exhibitions from Nov. 6-Dec. 20. The Ramp and Atrium Galleries will feature photography by Michael Mendez and Aimee Helen Koch, and the Emerson Gallery will have an art installation by Georgia June Goldberg. 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. 703-790-1953 or www.mpaart.org.

SUNDAY/NOV. 9

Larissa Tung-Berry will be exhibiting "The World Around Us" in watercolors from Nov. 9-Dec. 20, at the Vienna Arts Society Gallery, 513 Maple Ave. West, Vienna. Tuesdays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. 703-319-3220.

SATURDAY/NOV. 8

Judith St. Ledger-Roty will exhibit her oil paintings from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Great Falls Farmer's Market, at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike. 703-647-0866.

THURSDAY/NOV. 20

Third Thursday Art Night, 5-8 p.m. Miniature works by exhibiting artists for sale, stylish jewelry and more. Ayr Hill Gallery, 141 Church St. N.W., Vienna. 703-938-3880 or info@ayrhillgallery.com

HEALTH NOTES

Health notes are for support groups, exercise classes, blood drives and similar events open to the public at no or minimal cost. Send information to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

Great Falls Parkinson's Disease Support Group meets on the **fourth Tuesday** of each month at 7:30 p.m. at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike. The Parkinson Foundation welcomes PD patients and family members. They are dedicated to mutual self-help and the enhancement of coping skills for those with Parkinson's Disease. There is no fee. Call Glenn Lawrence at 703-406-2732.

Body and Soul fitness classes recently began. Contact instructor for more information on individual classes; visit www.bodyandsoul.org for more classes. New students receive 15 percent discount. At McLean Bible Church, 8925 Leesburg Pike, McLean, on **Mondays and Fridays**, 9:45-11:15 a.m., free childcare, call Mary Ward at 703-754-3722.

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703-790-0123/TTY: 711
www.mcleancenter.org

CALENDAR

Send announcements to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit

WEDNESDAY/OCT. 29

The New York cast tour of Forbidden Broadway, 8 p.m. at the Alden Theater, 1234 Ingleside Ave. in the McLean Community Center. Tickets are \$37, \$30 for McLean residents, at the Alden Theatre box office, at 703-573-SEAT or www.ticketmaster.com. 703-790-0123 or www.mcleancenter.org/alden.

Halloween Fun Fest at Riverbend Park, from 12:30 to 2 p.m. or 2:30 to 4 p.m. Come in costume for an afternoon of non-spooky fun at the batty scavenger hunt, spider challenge, Halloween howl and more. Suitable for children ages three to six years. \$8 per child. Prepaid reservations required, at 703-759-9018. Riverbend Park Nature Center, 8814 Jeffery Road in Great Falls.

THURSDAY/OCT. 30

Braddigan. Acoustic/rock/reggae. 7:30 p.m. \$15. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

The New York cast tour of Forbidden Broadway, 8 p.m. at the Alden Theater, 1234 Ingleside Ave. in the McLean Community Center. Tickets are \$37, \$30 for McLean residents, at the Alden Theatre box office, at 703-573-SEAT or www.ticketmaster.com. 703-790-0123 or www.mcleancenter.org/alden.



CONTRIBUTED

Concerts at The Old Brogue

Moch Pryderi (Welsh for "Pryderi's Pigs"), a six piece Celtic band, performs at The Old Broogue on Sunday, Nov. 2. Two sittings: 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Reservations must be made in advance through the Old Broogue's staff. Season tickets may be purchased for \$65 for all five Sunday concerts throughout November. Individual concerts are \$15 each. Call 703-759-3309

FRIDAY/OCT. 31

Chris Smither, 8 p.m. Vocals and blues at The Barns. Tickets \$22. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

Halloween Party, featuring Mambo Sauce, Future, Mojai and Jon Braman. 8 p.m. \$12. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Halloween Gathering at 7:30 p.m. Costumes optional. Musicians are invited to bring their instruments. Bring tricks and treats to share; beverages provided. TaBois-

Bonhomme Galerie d'Art, Regency at McLean, 1800 Old Meadow Road, Suite 113, McLean. 703-442-7588 or www.ctabois.com.

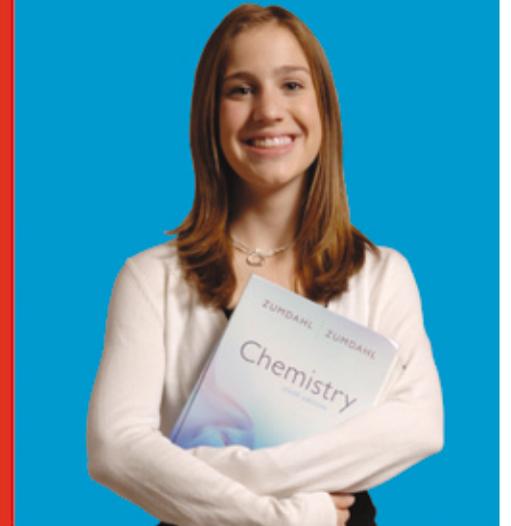
SATURDAY/NOV. 1

Starfish, original rock and comedy for the whole family. 11 a.m. Tickets \$8. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. www.jamminjava.com/kids.php.

Author Rod Batiste Book Signing, "20 Years to Suicide." 1-3 p.m. Borders, 8027 Leesburg Pike, Vienna.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 12

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If your daughter is looking for an academic environment where she can really develop her sense of self and her unique abilities, we encourage your family to attend one of the following Open Houses:

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

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The Juggernaut Jug Band, with founder Roscoe Goose (vocals, washboard, trumpet, cans, blues harp, bells, snare and jug) and original member The Amazing Mr. Fish, (vocals, walking bass, nose flute, washtub bass). 8 p.m. at the Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., inside the McLean Community Center. \$23 McLean district residents, \$29 non-residents. 703-790-0123 or www.mcleancenter.org.

SUNDAY/NOV. 2

Ten Shekel Shirt with Special Guest Seabird. Rock. 7 p.m. \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

MONDAY/NOV. 3

Author Laurie Halse Anderson, book discussion and autograph session. Free. 7 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 7851 L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. 703-506-2937.

TUESDAY/NOV. 4

Elisa. 8 p.m. Italian pop at The Barns. Tickets \$20. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 5

Gourds and Gobblers. 10:30 a.m. Age 3-5 with adult. Do wild turkeys still roam in Great Falls? Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-757-8560.

Battlefield Band. 8 p.m. Celtic folk group at The Barns. Tickets \$22. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

What's in My Pocket? 10:30 a.m. Age 2-5 with adult. Kangaroo stories and activities. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak ridge Ave., McLean. 703-356-0770.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines, with Filmmaker Steve Gonser at 7 p.m. at the Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., inside the McLean Community Center. \$8 McLean district residents, \$10 non-residents. 703-790-0123 or www.mcleancenter.org.

THURSDAY/NOV. 6

James Cotton. 8 p.m. Grammy-winning blues legend at The Barns. Tickets \$25. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

David Mead and The Grey Race. Pop/acoustic. 8 p.m. \$10. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

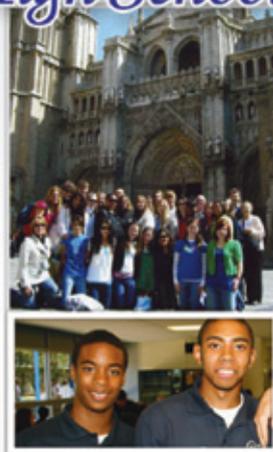
Mothers First of Great Falls, 10 a.m. at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-827-5922 or www.mothersfirst.org.

FRIDAY/NOV. 7

Jeremy Denk. 8 p.m. Pianist at The Barns. Tickets \$35. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

An Evening with The Nighthawks. Rock/blues. 7 p.m. \$20. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

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FAITH

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

All Souls Day Concert on Sunday, Nov. 2, at 4 p.m. Saint Luke Festival Choir, Paul Skevington, artistic director, and Cheryl Branham, conductor, perform the Rutter Requiem and Barber's Adagio for Strings. The program features choir, organ, cello, oboe, flute, and harp. Adults \$15, seniors and students \$15. **Saint Luke Catholic Church**, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. 703-356-0670 or www.musicinmclean.org.

St. John's Episcopal Church All Saints' Sunday service of Holy Eucharist, featuring F. J. Haydn's Maria Theresa Mass on Sunday, Nov. 2 at 7:30 p.m. The choir will be joined by The Sunrise String Quartet, trumpets and clarinets, and the Small Vocal Ensemble of Northern Virginia Community College, Loudoun Campus. St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike in McLean. 703-356-4902 or www.stjohnsmclean.org.

Lewinsville Presbyterian Church's annual Salzman Lecture will be Sunday, Nov. 2, at 4:30 p.m. with Dr. Elizabeth Caldwell, Professor of Pastoral Theology at McCormick Theological Seminary, on "Making a Home for Faith." 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. 703-356-7200.

Faith Halter, leadership coach and yoga teacher, will teach simple tools for reducing stress, and explore how to put ethical principles into practice. Free admission. Sunday, Nov. 2 at 11 a.m. at the **Northern Virginia Ethical Society**, 225 Nutley St. N.W., Vienna. www.esnv.org or 703-437-3161.

Election Day of Prayer at Church of the Holy Comforter, 543 Beulah Road N.E., Vienna. Join us on Nov. 4 to pray for our country and all those running for elected office. Morning Prayer begins at 7 a.m., and the chapel will remain open through Evening Prayer at 7 p.m. 703-938-6521 or LGibson@holycumforter.com.

Day of Prayer on the "Divine Mercy." Presented by Sr. Paulette Honeygosky, S.C.V. on Wednesday, Nov. 5 at the Dominican Retreat, 7103 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. 703-356-4243 or www.dominicanretreat.org.

Day of Recollection for Widowed Catholics, led by Fr. Gregory Salomone, O.P. Thursday, Nov. 6, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Dominican Retreat House, 7103 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. 703-356-4243 or reservations@dominicanretreat.org.

Alternative Gift Market, Saturday, Nov. 15, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The McLean Baptist Church Women's Ministry will have gifts from around the world and a light lunch. All proceeds benefit women's ministry causes. Admission free; lunch \$5. McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. 703-356-8080 or www.mcleanbaptist.org.

The Jewish Social Services Agency, 3018 Javier Road, Fairfax, offers a variety of family programs. **Call 703-204-9100 to register.**

♦**Just Chill: An Anxiety Management Group**, for ages 8-10. Learn tools to manage anxiety through group discussion, games, education, and role-play. Wednesdays, Oct. 29-Feb. 18, from 6-6:50 p.m.

♦**Teen Talk: An Adolescent Adoption Series**, for ages 13-18. Topics will include searching for birth parents, integrating dual identities, intimacy and attachment. Tuesdays, Oct. 28-Dec. 23, from 7-8:15 p.m. Pre-registration required.

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Tuesday, December 9, 2008
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Thursday, January 8, 2009
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All Open Houses are from 9am-12pm, with tours at 9am and 11am and information sessions at 10am.
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LONDON

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1781 Chain Bridge Rd #401	\$649,990	Sat 12-6	Maureen Simpson	Christopher	703-356-6035
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09/10/08 ~ 09/30/08

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9708 MILL RUN DR	5	4	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,600,000	Detached	1.03	MILL RUN ACRES
9020 BELCOURT CASTLE PL	5	5	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,400,000	Detached	5.00	CHESHIRE
974 MILLWOOD LN	4	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,150,000	Detached	2.20	OFFUTT HOME TRACT
1107 DAPPLE GREY CT	5	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$939,500	Detached	0.92	SADDLEBROOK ESTATES
10215 FOREST LAKE DR	5	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$860,000	Detached	1.01	FOREST LAKE ESTATES
809 LUNENBURG RD	5	2	1	GREAT FALLS	\$770,000	Detached	0.50	HICKORY CREEK II
10895 WOODLEAF LN	4	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$768,000	Detached	2.08	WOODLEAF
9126 WEANT DR	5	3	0	GREAT FALLS	\$650,000	Detached	0.67	WEANT
10848 MONTICELLO DR	5	3	0	GREAT FALLS	\$475,000	Detached	0.28	GREAT FALLS FOREST
20059 GREAT FALLS FOREST DR	5	2	1	GREAT FALLS	\$468,000	Detached	0.24	GREAT FALLS FOREST

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Closing

Bulldogs Hand Langley First Loss

Saxons hoping for re-match with Stone Bridge in district finals.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

The Langley High girls' volleyball team concluded the regular season with a tough loss to Stone Bridge on Oct. 23. The Saxons, in a match for the regular season Liberty District title, lost three games to two (25-12, 18-25, 25-22, 24-26, 12-15).

As a result, the Saxons (14-5 overall, 5-1

HIGH SCHOOL NOTEBOOK

district) are the No. 2-seed at this week's district tournament. Langley was scheduled to meet No. 7 Marshall in a first round match earlier this week on Monday. Stone Bridge (6-0 district), the top seed, was scheduled to meet No. 8 South Lakes on Monday as well. Semifinals matches were set to be held the following day on Tuesday (Oct. 28). The finals will take place on Thursday night (Oct. 30) at Stone Bridge High in Ashburn, beginning at 7. As the No. 1 and 2 seeds, Stone Bridge and Langley could meet in the finals.

Langley coach Susan Shifflett said her team, a younger squad from last year's more seasoned team that won the Northern Region title, was taking last week's loss to Stone Bridge in stride. Both teams entered the regular season finale with identical 5-0 district records, so the meeting was for the regular season title and top seeding for this week's tournament.

"They do feel some of the pressure has been lifted off their shoulders," said Shifflett, of the Saxons not having to feel the pressure of a No. 1 seed at districts. "I think they're ready. I know they're physically ready and I hope they're mentally ready too."

Langley had five players recently named to the All-Liberty District team. They were: Logan Sebastian (first team), Elysse Richardson (first team), Audrey Dotson (second team), Kathryn Caine (second team) and Carlie Owen (honorable mention). Stone Bridge's Lily Vera was named player of the year.

Liberty Cross Country Results

The Liberty District boys and girls cross country championships were held Oct. 22 at Burke Lake Park.

On the boys' side, Jefferson (19 points) finished first, ahead of second place Woodson (52), third place South Lakes (98) and fourth place Stone Bridge (137). The top four team finishers at districts earned a



Langley's Kathryn Caine (10) goes up for a block in a Saxons' match against Herndon earlier this season.

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERNUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

spot at the upcoming Northern Region championships, set to be held this Thursday (Oct. 30) at Burke Lake Park.

Finishing fifth through eighth at districts were Langley (144), McLean (151), Madison (161) and Marshall (188), respectively.

The boys' races overall winner was Jefferson senior Alex Witko (15:58). Jefferson runners garnered seven of the top 10 places. Other medal winners included Madison sophomore Matt Sollinger (7th place, 16:17), McLean senior Joe Thompson (11th, 16:28) and Langley junior Tommy Bylund (13th, 16:35).

ON THE GIRLS' side, Jefferson was also the top team finisher with 25 points. The

other three teams to qualify for regionals were second place Woodson (64), third place Langley (89) and fourth place Stone Bridge (98). Finishing fifth through eighth in the team standings were Madison, McLean, South Lakes and Marshall, respectively.

The individual champion on the girls' side was Jefferson sophomore Stephanie Marzen (18:01). Stephanie Paradis, a Stone Bridge High senior, was second with the same time of 18:01. Other medal winners included Langley senior Lauren Shaw (7th, 18:45), Langley senior Amanda Steffy (9th, 19:00), Langley senior Carolyn Shaw (12th, 19:15) and Madison's Brigid Byrne (13th, 19:18).

McLean's Sam Audet led the McLean girls with a 17th overall finish.

Langley Hopes All But Dashed

BY NICK CAFFERKY
SPECIAL TO THE CONNECTION

It is rare that one game means so much for both teams. But last Friday night's Liberty District high school football contest between Woodson and Langley was important for both squads' Northern Region Div. 5 playoff hopes.

FOOTBALL

In the late season meeting, it was Woodson, led by its offense, that showed it is perhaps more playoff worthy as it defeated the Saxons, 28-14.

IN THE EARLY GOING, the defenses took control as both made stops on fourth down plays from around midfield to prevent early scores. However, after both teams were initially stopped, Woodson's offense woke up with big drives to get the offensive battle started.

Starting near midfield, Woodson continually gained at least four yards per carry, whether it was from junior running back James Johnson or junior quarterback Connor Reilly on the option. Finally, after punishing the Langley defensive line, Reilly torched the secondary with a 27-yard strike to senior receiver Max Waizenegger.

Following the Cavalier touchdown, Langley put together an impressive drive to knot up the score with a five-yard run by senior running back David Helmer. Langley used a balanced attack of passing and Helmer's running to put the ball in the end zone.

"We just went out there and stuck to our game plan," said Langley senior tightend Chris Sievers.

Unfortunately for Langley, the Woodson offense took the ball back and put up a drive that was almost identical to its first scoring march and ended with the same result, a 27-yard pass to Waizenegger for a touchdown to give the Cavaliers a 14-7 lead.

AFTER HALFTIME, Langley drove 90 yards to tie the game up as it road the arm of senior quarterback Danny Pritchett and the running of Helmer, who scored on a short run to help the Saxons tie the score up at 14. For the second straight week, Langley had put the ball into the end zone on its first possession following halftime.

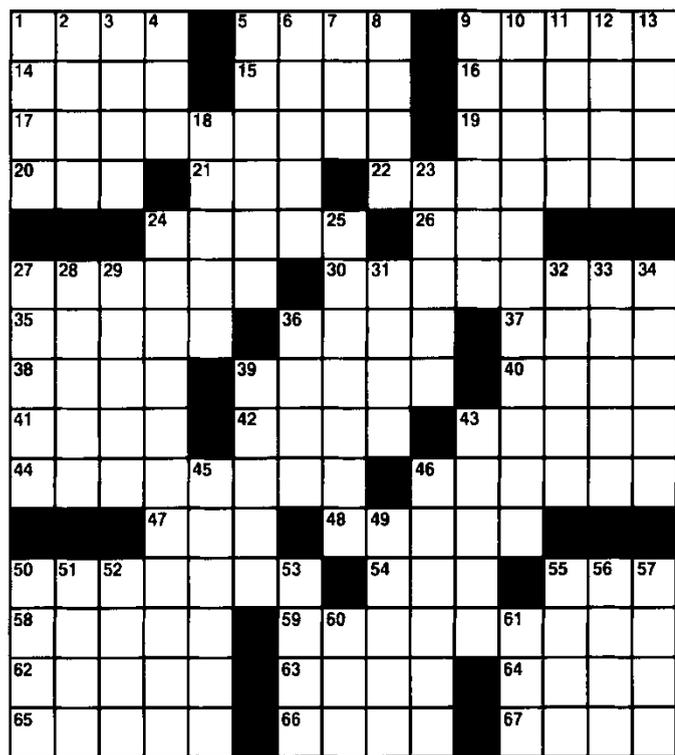
The game wasn't tied for long though, as Woodson did just what it had done in the first half, moving the ball with success and scoring. After the loss, Langley was all but eliminated from the playoffs. At 4-5, the Saxons, who host local rival McLean in both teams' regular season finale next week, might look at the season as the one that slipped away.

"It's always a disappointment when you don't make the playoffs, but especially this year because of the injuries we have had on both sides of the ball," said Langley coach John Howerton.

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

Edited by Will Shortz

No. 0405-6



Puzzle by Gregory E. Paul

- ACROSS**
- 1 Big first for a baby
 - 5 Fly high
 - 9 Burns's "sweet" stream
 - 14 Louisville's river
 - 15 Years ago
 - 16 Skiing locale
 - 17 Inflexible
 - 19 Game with straights and flushes
 - 20 Be in the red
 - 21 Best seller's number
 - 22 Scholarship allowance
 - 24 "Waiting for Lefty" playwright
 - 26 Hans of Dadaism
 - 27 Wyoming city
 - 30 Crowd-pleasing basket
 - 35 Throbs
 - 36 Control knob
 - 37 Writer — Stanley Gardner
 - 38 Palindromic time
 - 39 Long-winded
 - 40 Detrained, e.g.
 - 41 Apothecary's weight
- DOWN**
- 1 Manhattan area with lots of galleries
 - 2 Take out of the freezer
 - 3 Emerald Isle
- 42** — vera
43 Had control of the wheel
44 Witness
46 Junior high student
47 French article
48 Not be frugal
50 Kismet
54 Capone and Capp
55 "Steady as — goes"
58 Where Pocatello is
59 Having 20/20 vision
62 Emergency signal
63 Writer James from Tennessee
64 Holdup
65 Coin toss call
66 German mister
67 Brazilian booter

- 27 Seabees' motto
- 28 Squirrel's prize
- 29 Sand bar
- 31 Water-skiing locale
- 32 Wrinkle-resistant fabric
- 33 Martini garnish
- 34 " — and the Wolf"
- 36 Broad valley
- 39 Frost's "The Road Not —"
- 43 Crowded
- 45 Gazpacho ingredients
- 46 Person who handles bills

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



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21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

Weather 'Tis Nobler



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For me to invoke a quote from Shakespeare, double entendre or not, must mean that either my creative juices have been completely drained or something extraordinary has happened. Unfortunately for the millions of residents along the Gulf Coast, something extraordinary has happened, and of course, it has to do with the weather. Specifically, I am referring to the twin cycles of destruction, Hurricanes Gustav and most recently, Ike. Back to back category-three storms that have tested the emergency services and preparedness — and residents — of the many states and jurisdictions along the Gulf Coast (and to a somewhat lesser effect, inland as well), most notably Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas.

Abandon your ship (so to speak) or batten down the hatches? Stay or go? It's reminiscent of the advertising campaign involving the restaurant, Bob's Big Boy; specifically concerning whether the larger than life size statue of Bob that stood out front of all those restaurants for all those years, weathering the hot and cold, should himself (or would it be itself?) stay or go. Eventually, "Bob's" time came and went, as did the restaurant and its nationwide presence. I can still see him, though; right arm raised above his head; big smile on his face; black, wavy curl just above his forehead. I remember marveling at his size. Sure, he was just a pumped up version of a little boy, completely out of proportion to any little boy that I ever saw, but who cared? Times were much less complicated then; there was never any talk of steroids.

Regardless of the time, and the evolution of the technology we have all become accustomed to, generally speaking, if you're in the line of an oncoming hurricane's fire and fury, the decision to evacuate and leave your home, and most of your possessions, must be excruciating. Never having been pressured by such circumstances, I can barely imagine the range of issues to be considered. And as I listen to — and watch — Mike Seidel and Jim Cantore, two of the Weather Channel's more intrepid and experienced in-storm reporters, I can only marvel at the fortitude of many of the residents who make these hurricane-prone areas home.

Obviously, there's a trade off for these residents: taking the good with the bad. Residing in areas subject to unusual and destructive seasonal weather events is not for the weak of heart, make that body, mind and soul, too. The disruption, at the very least; the devastation, maybe even the death, disability or disease, at the very most, is quite a risk to endure for the folks who live in these severe-weather effected communities. And with every storm/event, there are some residents, like my cousins Ronnie and Gil, who say enough is enough and move to higher ground, permanently. But there are others, equally determined to stay put, who rebuild if necessary and live their lives to the fullest, remaining rooted in their respective communities.

Surviving these occasional disasters/power outages, road/school/business and government closures, is apparently just another day not at the office; nothing more, nothing less. From my perspective, though (in my living room), I don't see how these people live with the knowledge that one day, potentially, all that they've spent a lifetime building, literally and figuratively, could be taken away in a matter of minutes and there's not too much they could have done to prevent it. Mother Nature is not funny that way.

I suppose none of it matters; it's home and as Judy Garland/Dorothy said repeatedly in the classic tale, "The Wizard of Oz," there's no place like it. Oddly enough, it was a weather event, a tornado, that landed her in Oz in the first place.

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

White House Christmas Ornament on Sale

Great Falls Woman's Club is selling this year's White House Christmas Ornament as a fund-raiser for the Fairfax Women's and Children's Shelter.

This year's ornament honors the administration of President Benjamin Harrison (1833-1901), the 23rd president of the U.S. Serving one term from 1889 to 1893, Harrison was a centennial president inaugurated 100 years after George Washington. Inspired by the Harrison family's Victorian Christmas tree, this 24-karat gold finished ornament interprets the first recorded tree to decorate the White House. The tree, laden with baubles and garland, is a canvas for all sorts of treats and toys. Beneath the tree are the presents the Harrison grandchildren received: a toy train and a wooden sled await Benjamin, Mary's rosy-cheeked doll sits on a tricycle, and nearby is Marthena's much wished for dollhouse. A three-foot-high Santa Claus completes the season's



This year's White House Christmas Ornament honors the 23rd President of the United States Benjamin Harrison.

spectacle.

Great Falls Woman's Club is taking orders for the ornament right now. They cost \$18 each and all of the proceeds benefit the Fairfax County Women's and Children's Shelter.

To place an order, call Jane at 571-239-0011. Ornaments can also be purchased at Sandy Allison Jewelry, Great Falls Center.

Senior Living Options Explored

FROM PAGE 3

wanted to put down their dollar to hold their place," Murphy said. "Hopefully, the neighbors will agree that it's a good thing."

She said the county allows four times as many small patio houses for senior living on a parcel as it would single-family homes. "The intention is not to increase density," she said, noting that the density should be about equivalent. "The key thing is for it to have a semi-rural character with a lot of paths and walkways and a lot of charming, semi-rural features so it's viewed as an extension of the Village Centre."

Jessee said four senior living units are allowed on a parcel zoned for one single-family home because they are smaller and only one or two people live in them. He said requirements for septic fields would limit the development to 10 or 11 dwellings, rather than the maximum density of 12. Such houses range from 1,200 to 2,500 square feet, he said, noting that the seniors at the meeting seemed to want something around 2,200 square feet, with two bedrooms and a family room, kitchen, dining room, living room and two-car garage.

"That's considered small for this group," Murphy said.

Jessee said he expected such homes to end up costing \$750,000 to \$1 million. "It's not like they're going to bring down the neighborhood in real estate values," he said, noting that the price would approach that of the average home in Great Falls.

BY SELLING their current homes, most residents would be able to afford the price tag, Murphy said.

Jessee was still not certain whether the homes would be individual or duplexes. He said he had an engineer and architect work-

ing with the county to figure out how the community might be laid out.

However, he said he would not be the one to actually develop the property. "I'm just trying to sell land," he said. He and the GFCA had suggested that interested seniors form a consortium to buy the land and hire a developer themselves. "I'd like to try and help them put it together. I just don't want to fund it," Jessee said. "That's not what I do."

He said finding purchasers should not be a problem, as six to eight buyers were already prepared to make down payments and demand for senior living in the community is high.

Jessee noted that such a development would be in accordance not only with the results of the Great Falls "2020 Vision" survey, which found a high demand for local senior living, but also with the county's expressed desire to help seniors age within their own neighborhoods.

"It would give those of use who are in larger homes the opportunity to downsize and stay in the community," said Alison Crews, who had attended the meeting and was interested in moving into such a development. Crews has lived in Great Falls for 42 years, and she said she wanted to stay because her friends were here and she liked the area. However, she said she was currently paying to heat about 7,000 square feet of space, including 2,500 square feet of storage, for only herself.

She said she had not yet spoken with any of the other seniors who attended the meeting about purchasing the property.

Neither had Hutchison, but he said he liked the idea of local seniors banding together to purchase the property and oversee the project. "I think the subscription to it is going to be amazing," he said.



PHOTO BY PAUL D. SHINKMAN/THE CONNECTION

Speakers Jim Dieter and Helene Shore, center, flanked by event organizer and fellow EcoSteward Alliance member Mauren Becker of Reston, left, and fellow Discovery Circle member Leigh Glenn of McLean, right.

Not Buying For a Year

A couple shares experience in not buying anything new for a year.

BY PAUL D. SHINKMAN
THE CONNECTION

Over the whirring of an espresso machine and the clinking of oversized coffee cups, Jim Dieter and Helene Shore of Reston spoke on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 26 about their experience spending all of 2007 without buying anything new.

Upwards of 60 people packed themselves into the Conscious Bean Coffee House, a small, independently owned café in Great Falls, to hear the couple recount their experience of drastically reducing their consumption to simplify their lives and have a lesser impact on the environment.

While the two deny responsibility for the current state of the national economy, the recent financial melt-down attracted many local residents to the highly-attended event, like Karen Paull of Arlington.

"I was curious about how they were able to not buy new things for a year," said Paull. "With the state of the [U.S.] economy and stock market, I wanted to get some tips for myself."

DIETER AND SHORE began their discussion by explaining how they established parameters for their challenge. For a year, the two would not buy anything new except groceries, wine, and basic hygienic products like toothpaste and deodorant. "We like being around people," Shore quipped.

While the endeavor would require a significant lifestyle modification for the couple — both of whom admittedly enjoy shopping — the two agreed that finding alternatives was surprisingly easy.

"We didn't 'dumpster dive,'" said Dieter, "but we did learn to find used stuff."

For essential items, the couple sought out

second-hand suppliers and even found distributors for items like used, but still functional, drinking-water filters. Instead of buying presents for friends and family, the two gave equally thoughtful services to the recipients, like a donation to a charity of which that person was particularly fond, or a night out at a restaurant or sporting event.

"It's really liberating," said Shore, "particularly after you get your mind out of being programmed for buying."

Dieter and Shore were inspired to undertake this initiative through their involvement in the EcoStewards Alliance, a locally-based non-profit environmental advocacy organization which sponsored Sunday's event. Through their discussion group — called a "Discovery Circle" — based in the Blueberry Hill community, the couple learned about what the alliance calls "voluntary simplicity" and decided to apply it directly to their lives.

VOLUNTARY SIMPLICITY "is about being a more thoughtful consumer and having the Earth in mind," said Maureen Becker of Reston, another EcoStewards Alliance member who helped organize the event. Becker met Dieter and Shore last winter and had been eager for them to share their experience with a wider audience. She eventually came upon Kathy Huff, who founded and operates the Conscious Bean Coffee House as a venue for community groups focusing on environmental and health issues, and agreed to host the event.

"I think it's very interesting how many people are looking to simplify their lives," said Huff, commenting on the unexpectedly large turnout for Sunday's event.

"I'm interested in this idea of simplicity," said Nicole Davison of Reston. "I don't know that I would want to do it for that long, but getting hints for how to buy less is great."

Dieter and Shore encouraged those in attendance to forgo purchasing new items, particularly together with a group, and not necessarily for a whole year. "Just start with a day," said Shore. "It may turn to a week, then to a month. You'll see how good it feels."

More information on EcoStewards Alliance events and initiatives can be found on its Web site at ecostewardsalliance.org.



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