

Mount Vernon Gazette

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VOL. XIX, No. 52

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION PAPER

DECEMBER 22, 2008

Santa Weathers Economic Storm

More need is met with more generosity in this season of giving.

BY CHUCK HAGEE
GAZETTE

Anyone who wanted a positive picture of what Christmas is all about need only have come to Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department Station 11, Penn Daw, Monday morning last week.

“... our primary business sponsors have all stepped up to the plate.”

— Lt. Will Bailey, FCF&R Department

Eleven years ago Bailey started this toy drive with the help of his small son. The incentive was based on his own experiences as a child. The first year they collected 40 toys. On Monday morning, in the engine bays of Station 11, there were more than



PHOTO BY CHUCK HAGEE/THE GAZETTE

Boy Scout J.D. Tedrick, Troop 1865, helps Alison Wicks, an intern counselor at Franconia Elementary School, Lee District, load gifts for needy children at her school into her car.

organizer of the annual event.

“Even in this bad economic climate our primary business sponsors have all stepped up to the plate to make this a successful event,” Bailey said.

Eleven years ago Bailey started this toy drive with the help of his small son. The incentive was based on his own experiences as a child. The first year they collected 40 toys. On Monday morning, in the engine bays of Station 11, there were more than

80 bikes and numerous piles of toys and other gifts for needy children throughout Northern Virginia.

In addition to what was distributed at Penn Daw Station, this same effort has also greatly increased collections for the U.S. Marine Corps' Toys For Tots. “We have a box at every fire station in the county for Toys for Tots. We have already filled one tractor trailer load for that

SEE MORE NEED, PAGE 7

Dr. Bike's Labor Of Love

Needy children receive holiday bikes through one man's efforts.

BY CHUCK HAGEE
GAZETTE PACKET

What began with the belief that “every child should have a bike” has grown into a one-man crusade to make that a tangible reality. Charles Jones, a retired U.S. Army Colonel, is now known to many charity organizations as “Dr. Bike.”

A resident of Riverside Gardens, in Fairfax County's Mount Vernon District, Jones retrieves and repairs bicycles that people have either lost or abandoned or have decided the repair bill is not worth the end result — they'd rather get a new bike. He takes those bikes, repairs them, and makes them virtually brand new.

He then donates the finished product to charitable organizations who provide them to needy children. Forty-five such bikes were distributed this week to needy families by the Alexandria Citadel of the Salvation

SEE WORKING, PAGE 8

In Crisis: Need for Emergency Services

Non-profit community says calls for assistance are at unprecedented levels.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE GAZETTE

Many local non-profit organizations are seeing a particularly acute need in the areas of emergency food and housing assistance.

“We have just about doubled the amount of food we were giving out a year ago. We started out the fiscal year, which starts July 1, thinking we would probably feed about 4,500 people. We have since revised that estimate to about 8,500,” said Cynthia Hull,

executive director of United Community Ministries, the largest provider of emergency services in southern Fairfax County.

In the three months, the number of people asking United Community Ministries for help with job training employment has grown 139 percent, with about 50 percent of people using those programs for the first time, said Hull.

“I can't get into my office because there are too many people parked out front and I can't get into the parking lot. It is kind of scary,” she said.

HULL'S EXPERIENCE reflects what other local non-profit organizations providing emergency assistance to Fairfax County residents have seen recently. Government officials labeled the locality's unprecedented surge in requests for urgent help a “crisis” and called a press conference to address the situation Dec. 12.

To Help

- ♦ United Community Ministries, Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106
- ♦ FACETS, 703-352-5090
- ♦ Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), 7205 Old Keene Mill Road in Springfield, 703-569-9160
- ♦ Good Shepherd in the Route 1 area, 703-768-9404
- ♦ The Koinonia Foundation, 6037 Franconia Road, Franconia, 703-971-1991.

Since January 2006, Fairfax County has seen a 69 percent increase in requests for food stamps, a 46 percent increase in requests for emergency housing assistance and a 60 percent increase in requests for subsidized housing.

During this same period of time, the county population has only grown by one percent, said county spokesperson Merni Fitzgerald.

SEE CALLS, PAGE 8



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE

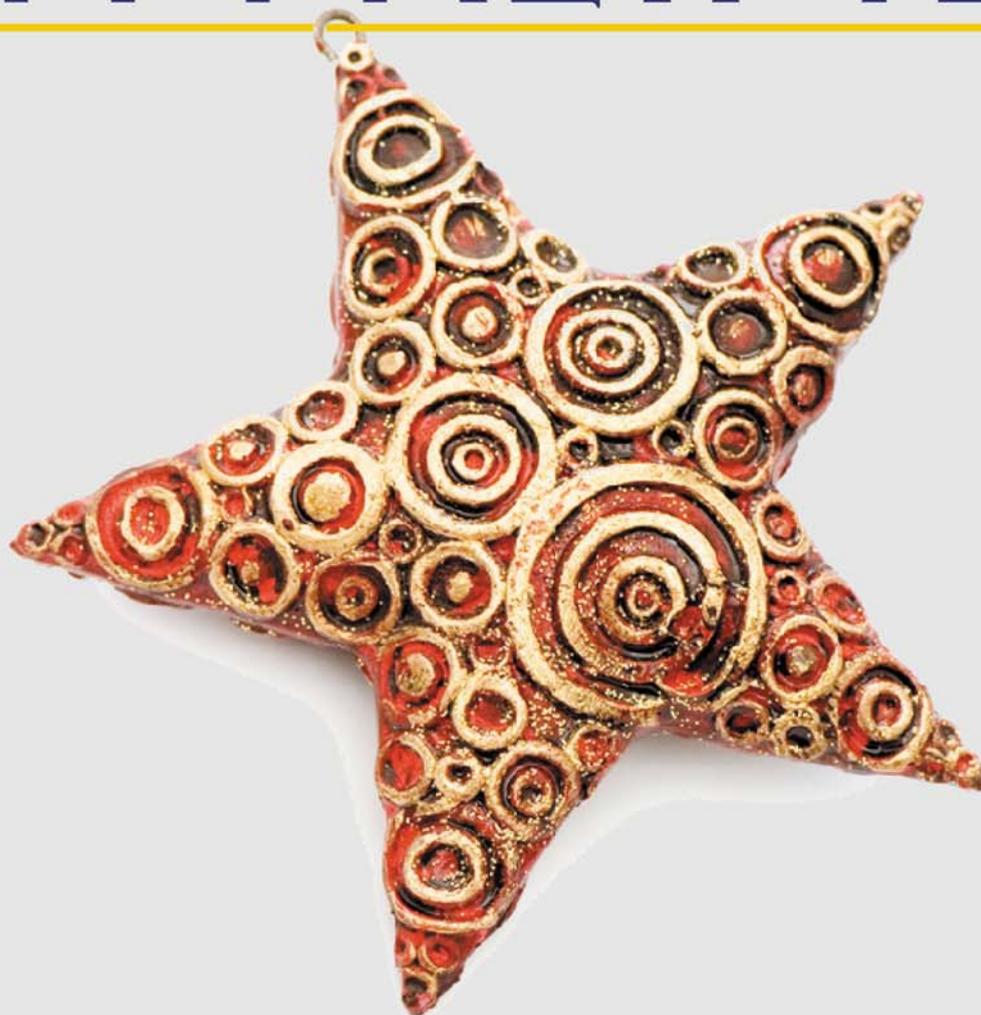
Charles Jones works on another child's bike in the workshop in his backyard.



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THIS WEEK IN MOUNT VERNON

Robbery, Carjacking at 7-11

A 44-year-old area man was robbed and had his 1987 White Chevrolet S10 Blazer stolen on Sunday, Dec. 14 at 4:50 a.m. outside the 7-11 store at 8010 Richmond Highway, according to Fairfax County Police.

The victim had parked his vehicle but left it running as he attempted to enter the store. He was approached by a man who produced a gun, demanded money, got into the victim's vehicle and fled southbound on Richmond Highway. There were no reported injuries and the vehicle was recovered nearby a short time later, police reported. However several items were missing from it. The suspect is described as black, in his early 20's, about 5 feet 10 inches tall and weighing an estimated 200 pounds. He wore a white ski mask and red coat with black stripes down the sleeves.

Anyone with information is asked to call Crime Solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS(8477) or the Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

Man Robbed in Laundromat

Fairfax County Police are searching for the perpetrator of an armed robbery at 3 a.m., Wednesday, Dec. 17, in the laundromat located at 7500 Richmond Highway. The 35-year-old male victim was approached from behind by the assailant who pointed a gun at him and demanded money, according to police.

The victim relinquished and undisclosed amount of cash and the suspect fled. He was described as Hispanic, approximately five feet five inches tall with brown eyes and weighing an estimated 150 pounds. He was wearing a gray cap and gray sweat shirt. Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS (8477) or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

Telegraph Road Construction

Telegraph Road, between Huntington Avenue and North Kings Highway, will be closed to vehicle and pedestrian traffic between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. on Dec. 22 and 23, according to the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Contractors will be erecting and connecting steel beams for the second of two bridges near Telegraph Road as part of ramps that will eventually carry traffic from the Outer Loop of the Capital Beltway to North Kings Highway and Huntington Avenue.

"Residents should be aware that the work requires the use of tools and equipment that will cause noise and vibration, but contractors will strive to minimize these and other potential disturbances," according to VDOT's press release. During the closure, northbound traffic will be detoured via North Kings Highway to Route 1 to Huntington Avenue and back to Telegraph Road. Southbound traffic will be detoured via Huntington Avenue to Route 1 to North Kings Highway and back to Telegraph Road.

Over the next two months, related daytime work may require Telegraph Road be reduced to two lanes in each direction from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Related night work may require Telegraph Road to be reduced to one lane in each direction from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., according to VDOT.

Arrests Made in Robbery

Fairfax County Police have arrested and charged three men with the use of a firearm in the commission of a felony and robbery in connection with the Oct. 11 robbery of a 20-year-old pizza delivery man in the 8500 block of Richmond Highway at approximately 11:30 p.m. A 17-year-old male from the southeastern Fairfax County area and a 22-year-old man, of no fixed address were arrested on Nov. 25. A 19-year-old Forestville, Md., man who was already incarcerated on unrelated charges was arrested and charged on Dec. 9, according to police.

Two of the suspects approach the victim, one armed with a gun, pushed him against the wall and demanded money. The victim complied and there were no reported injuries, according to police.

Investigators from the Criminal Investigative Bureau were assisted in the arrests by Mount Vernon District Station's Neighborhood Patrol Unit officers. Information on the arrests was released Dec. 17.

PEOPLE



PHOTOS BY DANIJELA GRUJIC/THE GAZETTE

Bill Vaughan's Christmas display will be on until Jan. 2.

Lighting Up the Christmas Spirit

Resident keeps adding to his outside holiday decorations.

BY DANIJELA GRUJIC
THE GAZETTE

Bill Vaughan, carpenter by profession, elicits plenty of smiles with his display of Christmas decorations. During the holiday season, long lines of cars stop in front of his Collingwood Road home to view one of the largest Christmas displays in the area. These days most grownups find it difficult to believe in miracles and holiday excitement, he said, but he doesn't.

Every year his displays get bigger, better and he is not planning to stop anytime soon. Why? He sees the appreciation on the faces of his visitors and it moves him to work on his holiday display every year.

This tradition began 18 years ago, and he's added new decorations every year. Vaughan said that he always had some obsessions, like fireworks last Fourth of July, but Christmas has been his longest obsession.

HIS HOUSE is located across the street from a retirement home and, as he tells it, about 13 years ago, after Christmas, as he was taking down the lights, a woman stopped by to thank him for the annual display. She also mentioned how much joy it brought the residents each year and in particular one woman. Then she said that woman died a few days after Christmas and she wanted to thank him for the comfort it brought to her in her final days.

Plans for the new display start right after he takes down the previous year's. Since his display is synchronized with music, it takes many hours to complete. For every minute of musical synchronization, it takes 11 hours of work, and hundreds of hours listening to the same song.

He also does all the wire frames including leaping deer, shooting stars and fish jumping, which are not available in any store in the way he wants them.

Sometimes, he thinks about giving it up, but when

he sees all the people who are stopping in front of the house just to check if lights are on, it moves him to get up and work. "I don't want to disappoint them," he said.

From October, he starts to put the display together, first working on higher parts like stars and trees and then moving on to the leaves on the ground.

For a man who has "problems even with a TV remote," Vaughan says he's gotten used to the software that connects the lights to his computer. Vaughan remembered one woman who waited in front of his house for the lights to go on. After she waited for some time, she knocked on the door and asked him to turn them on. Unfortunately he couldn't because the software is programmed to a specific time period.

He noted that in January when he takes the lights down, sometimes there are still people waiting for the display to go on.

ALTHOUGH HE ADDED LED energy-saving lights that have cut costs by a third, the 155,000-light display costs him about \$800 monthly more than usual.

SEE LIGHTING, PAGE 21



Bill Vaughan has worked on his property's Christmas display for 18 years.

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Outstanding Achievement Honored

Kauffman recognized for his people skills.

By CHUCK HAGEE
GAZETTE

More than 120 leaders and volunteers of local organizations from throughout Lee District filled the ballroom of the Springfield Hilton Tuesday night, Dec. 16, to participate in the 53rd Annual Lee District Association of Civic Organizations (LDACO) Banquet and Holiday Celebration. It is also the occasion of the presentation of the Les Dorson Awards for outstanding achievement and service.

Prior to recognizing the award recipients, the audience heard an appraisal of the economy and its impact on Fairfax County by the evening's guest speaker, Gerald L. Gordon, president and CEO, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority. His ultimate conclusion was: "This part of the County will continue to grow."

As noted in his introduction by Lee District Supervisor Jeffrey McKay, Gordon has been with the county's EDA since 1983. "Since that time, the county has evolved from a bedroom suburb of Washington, D.C., to an economic powerhouse in its own right," McKay said.

The author of nine books and numerous articles on strategic planning, economic development, leadership styles and other management topics, Gordon, in 2006, became the first American to address the All-Parliamentary Exports Group in the British House of Commons. In 2007 he was named a Fellow of the International Economic Development Council.

"Fairfax County has been one of the leading economic powerhouses in the nation. And, the leading economic engine in Northern Virginia," Gordon said. "We now have more jobs than Washington and 24.4 percent of all state income tax revenue comes from Fairfax County. For every dollar we send to Richmond we get 19 cents back in programs and services," he said.

Gordon also emphasized that one of the primary



Harry Zimmerman, holding the plaque he received as the recipient of the Les Dorson Citizenship Award during the Lee District Association of Civic Organizations' annual banquet, is joined by, from left, Lee District Supervisor Jeffrey McKay, LDACO Chairman Paul Gagnon, U.S. Representative-elect Gerald Connolly, and Master of Ceremonies Rodney Lusk.



Former Lee District Supervisor Dana Kauffman, displaying the plaque presented to him as the recipient of the Les Dorson Award for Distinguished Public Service Leadership, is joined on stage by, from left, his successor, Lee District Supervisor Jeffrey McKay, LDACO Chairman Paul Gagnon, and U.S. Representative-elect Gerald Connolly.

"Fairfax County has been one of the leading economic powerhouses in the nation."

— **Gerald L. Gordon, president & CEO, Fairfax County EDA**

reasons the county Board of Supervisors is facing such a critical budget shortfall is because "we can not tax our own wealth." He pointed out that Fairfax County is the wealthiest in the state but has to rely primarily on real estate taxes to generate revenue rather than a personal income tax.

However, he stated, the county needs to attract more businesses in order to maintain its economic stability. He cited Lee District, and most particularly the Springfield area, as an area of the county with the potential to grow and prosper in the years ahead.

FOLLOWING GORDON'S presentation, the Les Dorson Awards for public service and citizenship were given to "outstanding members of the county staff, key county leaders, and dedicated citizens who have served Fairfax County and Lee District." These awards are made in memory of the late Les Dorson, former vice chairman of LDACO.

Jim Getts, senior engineering inspector, Land Development Services, Environmental and Facilities Inspection Division, Fairfax County, was presented with the Les Dorson Distinguished Public Service Professional Award. "Jim is a public servant who daily goes far above and beyond his job description," said Paul Gagnon, chairman, LDACO, in making the award.

"He makes sure that construction projects meet county regulations and educates contractors on their responsibilities to the community. It is not a coincidence that he is known as "Jim Getts It Done," Gagnon said.

Harry H. Zimmerman, Jr., a registered engineer and former Navy civilian career executive, was named this year's recipient of the Dorson Citizenship Award. Lee District's representative to the Fairfax County Transportation Advisory Commission, Zimmerman is a long-time resident of Lee District who has been involved in a number of transportation issues ranging from alleviating neighborhood cut-through traffic to highway concerns related to the Fairfax County Parkway and BRAC transportation concerns.

As noted in the award presentation, "Harry currently serves on the Lee District Supervisor's Budget Advisory Committee where he balances the need for fiscal responsibility with the transportation needs and

SEE DORSON, PAGE 22



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OPINION

Happy Holidays

Much cause for optimism, but also many reasons to help others.

We wish our readers a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukah, and an exciting New Year. There is much to fuel optimism here, despite the drumbeat of dismal economic news.

While Northern Virginia is certainly feeling some of the effects of the economic crisis, this is probably the best place in the nation to weather the storm. Employment is strong here, with unemployment still below 4 percent.

This region's economy will get a boost from the January change in administration. Events and visitors for the inauguration itself will bring an infusion, the movement of officials in and out of the region will create economic activity.

And the sheer optimism and enthusiasm for change, and for this particular change, will lift spirits and boats.

Close-in real estate, inside the Beltway, is holding its value. At the bottom end of the real estate spectrum, some condos, townhouses and even some single family detached homes have reached levels of affordability not seen in many moons, and that should bring out first-time home buyers. When first time homebuyers enter the market, this can kick off a kind of domino effect, allowing owners of the houses they buy to move up.

At the same time, we'll all feel the effects of budget cuts in local government, from reduced library hours and other services to the possibility of larger class sizes. There are many more families in Northern Virginia feeling the pain of the recession, with thousands of foreclosures and, while unemployment is low, the loss of some jobs.

This has dramatically increased demand on groups that provide emergency help for food, housing, utilities and more.

Even groups that help animals are seeing a

huge surge in trouble. Some owners are giving up beloved pets when they face foreclosure, while others say they can no longer afford to feed their pets. The Humane Society of Fairfax County, for example, has started a PET food pantry to help people keep their pets.

Enjoy the holidays, and remember to give locally.

For a list of local charities in need, see "Give Locally," <http://connectionnewspapers.com/article.asp?article=322554&paper=68&cat=110>

January Is for Fun

This is the last "regular" edition of the Connection for 2008. The edition that will be delivered after Christmas is our annual Children's Connection, featuring the writing and art of area students.

Our first publication date in January will appear on Jan. 7, kicking off a four-part series on fun, with more than 100 ideas for fun local activities in each of our 17 weekly papers. This will no doubt add up to more than 1,101 ways to have fun near home. We'll include tips on free fun, outdoor fun, indoor fun, arts, music, theater, fun at home, food fun and more.

If you have an idea that you think we should include, please let us know.

The Jan. 7 issue will also be our chance to catch up on news and events that happen between Dec. 18 and the beginning of the New Year.

In the meantime, we encourage you to check our Web site to read hundreds of stories from Northern Virginia. See www.ConnectionNewspapers.com.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Plantation Christmas At Gunston Hall

"During the time of George Mason, Christmas Day primarily was a religious holiday. People who were inclined to attend church did so as the weather and availability of clergy permitted. Some, but by no means all, Virginians indulged in a particularly fine dinner. Guns fired into the air sent a volley of seasonal greetings from plantation to plantation. Gift-giving generally was directed to subordinates and most often in the form of tips for servants and slaves who might also be afforded some free time. But, for many, masters and household servants alike, the day was not unlike any other. Expect not to find a decorated tree or lavish bows and boughs. A few greens used sparingly might be on a mantle. It was the eye-catching table setting that was the preeminent seasonal embellishment at any social gathering ..."

— GUNSTON HALL



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE

Open-Hearth cooks Sue Hodes, Frank Barker, Mary Lu Chatelier, Sandy Galletta, Becky Laudenslager, Mary Kay Ruwe, Donna Boulter, Faith Chudzik, Brenda Hall and Bobbie Taylor were busy in the kitchen area as guests to the plantation arrive all evening for samples.

Brian Allen, Sarah Clark, Zach Casper and Allida Born wait in line for a carriage ride around the plantation on a recent Saturday evening.



Jason and Evan Grabarczyk warm themselves by a fire with a cup of hot cider.

Mount Vernon Gazette

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Newspaper of Mount Vernon

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.
1604 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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A Connection Newspaper

More Need Is Met with More Generosity



PHOTOS BY CHUCK HAGEE/THE GAZETTE

Lt. Willie Bailey, Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department, presided over the annual distribution of Christmas toys and gifts for needy children at Penn Daw Fire Station.

FROM PAGE 1

campaign," Bailey said.

Each year's annual toy drive is the combined efforts of the Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department, the Progressive Firefighters of Fairfax County, Inc., and Fairfax County Professional Firefighters and Paramedics, Local 2068. This year they were joined by the Alexandria Fire Department.

"We have been trying to take an active role in all community engagements. It is important to recognize that these types of programs are bottom up efforts and not top down. The people who support these efforts do so because they want to," said Alexandria Fire Chief Adam Thiel.

"None of this would have ever happened without the vision and hard work of Will Bailey. Everyone in this department wants to be here today to share this event with Will," said Assistant Fire Chief David Rohrer, FCF&R Department.

New contributors to this year's effort were the Boy Scouts of Fairfax County's Troop 1865. They collected more than \$1,615 by doing various chores throughout their neighborhoods, according to Erik Severeid, the troop's adult community leader. All of those funds were donated to Bailey to purchase Christmas gifts for needy families.

Adding an air of Christmas authority to the event was the presence of Santa and

Mrs. Claus, aka Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department Chaplin Grant MacIntosh and his wife Ruth. "This is a great event that I thoroughly approve," said Santa.

All of the gifts are collected by school and social service representatives who have received specific gift requests from their schools and organizations. They, in turn, serve as couriers to bring those gifts back for distribution. What started as a very localized event for needy children and families living along the Route 1 corridor has spread countywide and even into Alexandria and Prince George's County.

This now nationally recognized effort has been made possible by the support of an array of locally based businesses, corporations, and individuals that include BearingPoint, Inc., Destinations DC, Rollins PCI Construction, Nationwide Creditors, Promax Realtors, Wal-Mart, Phil Rosenthal, Union Street Public House, Chadwicks Restaurant, Curtis and Renee Stilwell, Brian Abel, Cheryl Collins, Jeannie Theisman, and a host of others.

The end result is that "several thousand school-aged children and their families will receive toys and gifts this holiday season." Lt. Will Bailey's sleigh, composed of a series of large red trucks, are loaded with the largess of firefighters, community business leaders, and individuals.



Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus, aka Grant and Ruth MacIntosh, joined in the Christmas toy distribution to needy children conducted by the Fairfax County Fire & Rescue Department.

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Working To Ensure Needy Children Have Bikes

FROM PAGE 1

Army as part of their Christmas Toy Drive. He also presents his bikes to individual recipients.

"WE GAVE out our first bike two years ago. Since then I have been able to refurbish more than 250 bikes to organizations such as the Salvation

"We also feel we are helping needy kids by helping Charles."

— **Bill Mould, Spokes Etc, Inc.**

Army, Good Shepherd Housing, United Community Ministries, Malcolm X Elementary School in the District of Columbia, and others," Jones said. "We always work through welfare agencies to identify children in need. The Salvation Army this year wanted 105 bikes. I couldn't accomplish that by Christmas. But, I was able to do 45. After, the holidays I'll keep giving them about 10 bikes at a time until we hit the 105 requested," he said.

Two years ago Jones, an avid bicyclist himself, as well as his wife DeJuana, attended a bike repair class at Spokes Etc, Inc., 1506 Belle View Boulevard, at the Belle View Shopping Center. "He then decided to take that knowledge and start to repair bikes that could be given to needy children," said Bill Mould, Jones' instructor at Spokes.

"Since he started that effort, whenever a customer comes into to have a bike repaired and then decides it's better to buy a new bike, we suggest that it be given to Charles for repair. When we tell them about his project they are more than willing to donate the bike rather than give it to the trash man," Mould said. This has gained



PHOTO BY ED MCCLELLAND

Richard Peterson, Mary Oliver, Bob Trimble, Charles Jones, Dejana Jones and Norman Gindlesperger pose for a picture before loading up the bikes for delivery last week.

more than 100 bikes for Jones over the past two years.

"We also supply him with parts, tires and other items he might need to repair bikes. Some of the old bikes aren't worth repairing or can't be repaired but he can use parts from them to fix up other bikes," he said.

"It's a goodwill relationship. When the bike business is robust, particularly in the spring, we have lots of bikes and part and Charles is welcome to whatever he wants. We also feel we are helping needy kids by helping Charles in his efforts," he said.

JONES DOES all the repair work in his own shop in back of his home. He originally got the idea for his philanthropy when he saw a flyer at Spokes asking individuals to donate their old bikes to be shipped to Africa.

"It's all well and good to help others around the world but I thought there are a lot of kids right here that don't have bikes. Why not supply them as well," Jones said.

That's when he established "Bike For Tykes & Teens," a nonprofit charitable organization to supply refurbished bikes, primarily to children between the ages of six and 10. One of the members of his board of directors is retired U.S. Air Force Col. Robert Trimble.

An active member of Ventures In Community (VIC), an ecumenical charitable organization, Trimble became active in Bikes For Tykes assisting Jones in both his reclamation efforts and working with other members of VIC in distribution of the finished products. "I have assisted him since the beginning but Charles has done all the work," he said.

"I also have a truck so I'm able to go and pick up bikes. I get a lot of bikes from the Fairfax County Police Department who get ones that are lost, stolen or abandoned and not claimed," Trimble said.

He can pick up as many as 11 bikes at one time with his truck, according to Jones. "We (VIC) also support Charles with other

assistance such as financial support. I have pushed this program with other members of VIC. From the very beginning Charles has said over and over, to me personally and at meetings, "every child should have a bike," Trimble said.

"Both VIC and Spokes have been very generous in support of this program. Spokes has been particularly generous with bikes, parts, tools and other items," Jones said.

ALONG THE WAY Jones has had some interesting ancillary experiences as well. "There have been several things surprising to me. When I present a bike to an individual or get a personal donation of a bike I usually wait for the story. And, usually there is one," he said.

"One local doctor told me that he owed his career to a bicycle. He was in France studying and couldn't afford a car or to take cabs so he got a bike. He rode it everyday to various locations where he had to go as part of his studies. Without the bike he wouldn't have made it he said," according to Jones.

"I was able to give a young girl from New Orleans a bike. She had lost hers in Katrina. She looked at me and said, "You know there's just something special about having a bike. Thank you," Jones recalled. Those stories come from both the donors and the recipients.

Each bike refurbishing takes, on average, approximately three to four hours. In addition to the bikes, Jones's organization also supplies helmets to individual bike recipients. "We are not able to do that when we make large contributions of bikes like to the Salvation Army," he said.

As Captain Ken Argot, Corps officer, Alexandria Citadel, Salvation Army, said during the Citadel's thank you breakfast for volunteers and board members last week, "Charles Jones's bikes are not just fixed-up old bikes.

For all intent and purpose they are new bikes. And, they look and function like absolutely brand new bikes. That's why we and others call him 'Dr.Bike.'"

Calls for Assistance at Unprecedented Levels

FROM PAGE 1

"With the worsening economy, middle class folks are now in need of help. Some of the same people who used to give their time and money to these organizations are now coming to them for help," said Fitzgerald.

The situation only appears to be growing worse. In 2007, approximately 9,900 people contacted the county for help seeking a job. In 2008, Fairfax fielded 22,000 of the same calls, even though the end of the year hasn't finished yet, said Fitzgerald.

Fairfax County's latest unemployment rate numbers show it grew from 2.3 percent in June 2007 to 3.1 percent in June 2008. This rise equates to 4,671 more residents going without a job in June 2008 than

a year earlier.

Fairfax County Public Schools has also seen a 40 percent increase in the number of homeless students, up to 1,270 now from 900 at the same time in 2007.

"This is the highest I have ever seen at this point in the school year and I have been doing this job for eight years," said Kathy Sheffel, the school system's homeless liaison.

ECHO Inc., another county non-profit that specializes in emergency services, said their rate of increased requests for services are very similar to the countywide statistics provided by Fairfax officials.

"There is a tremendous increase in demands for food and financial assistance to help pay rent and utilities. ... We helped

about 4,000 family members last year and this year we are definitely going to be up. We are going to way up," said executive director Pat Gauthier, whose organization serves people in Springfield, Burke, Fairfax Station and parts of Lorton.

THE DECLINING ECONOMY has become a hot topic recently but several of the non-profits who provide emergency assistance said they have seen the need for those types of service rise steadily over the past few years.

"I know the economic downturn has broken into the headlines in the past six months. But over the past several years, we have been seeing an increase in need. ... We have been noticing trend in that direc-

tion for quite some time," said Amy McDowell, events and communications manager for Reston Interfaith, a non-profit social services organization mostly serving northern Fairfax County.

McDowell and others did acknowledge that there had been a sharp increase in requests for emergency services over the past six months to two years. Some said that over the past three months, the situation appeared to have gotten significantly worse.

"[The upturn in emergency services] has been going on a good 18 months to two years but there has probably been an increase since mid-summer," said Gauthier.

Many non-profits said most of the surge in demand for assistance is coming from

SEE UNPRECEDENTED, PAGE 21

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Finish the Year at First Night Alexandria

BY CHUCK HAGEE
GAZETTE

For the 14th year, Alexandria will welcome in the new year Dec. 31 with its family-oriented "First Night" celebration. And, that celebration will commence with the Second Annual King Street Mile.

Sponsored by Virginia Paving, Fitness Together and Nike, the one-mile race up King Street from Market Square to Union Station commences at 5 p.m. It is limited to 600 runners.

Following the race, the fun begins. This year there will be 30 entertainment venues — up from 26 last year. These will feature a total of 65 acts featuring 178 performances on 40 stages throughout the night.

First Night Alexandria's grand climax is a midnight fireworks spectacular at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. "It's all great fun, affordable, safe and alcohol free," said Anne Dorman, executive director, First Night Alexandria.

The price of admission is \$12 per adult if purchased online through Christmas. Badges purchased at retail locations are \$15 through Dec. 25. From Dec. 26 through Dec. 28, badges on the Web site (www.firstnightalexandria.org) will be available for \$17. Web sales end Dec. 28.

Retail badge sales will continue through Dec. 31 at \$20. One badge will admit the wearer to all venues. Badges must be worn by adults at all times. Children 12 and under are free. There is also free parking at various Colonial Parking Garages and at the Market Square city parking garage. Participants can travel to various venues via a free shuttle service throughout the celebration.

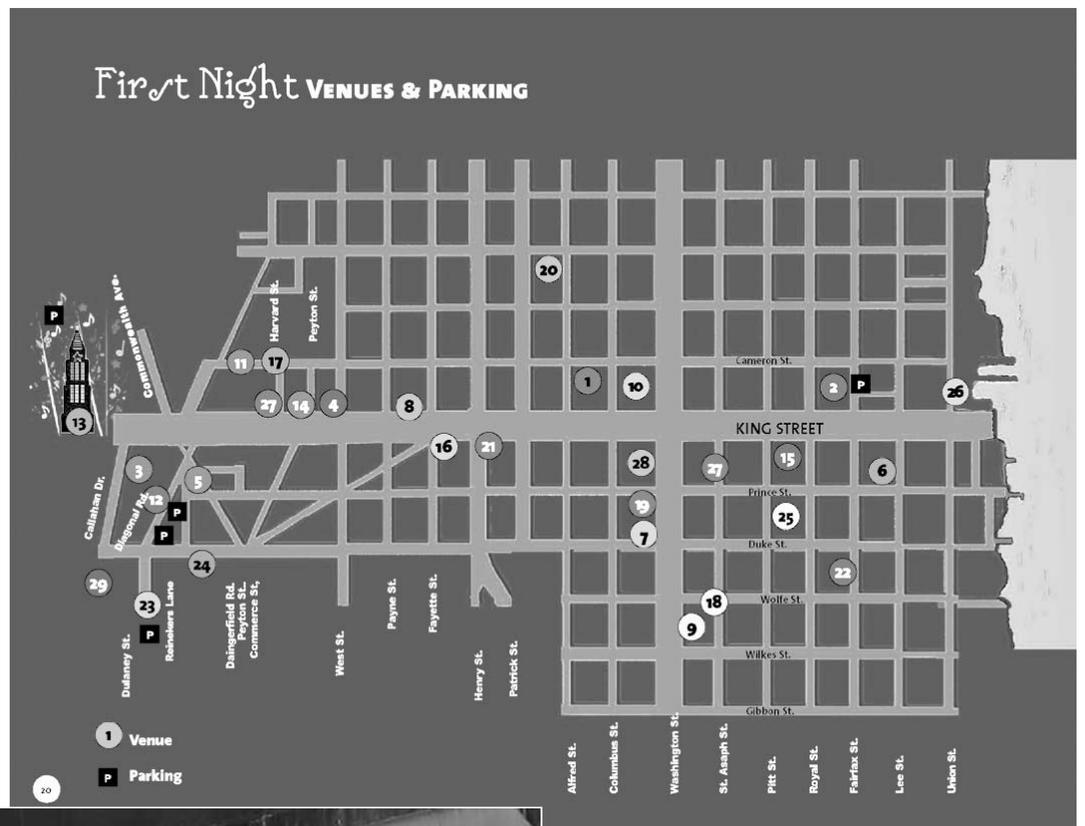
Several Alexandria hotels are offering special New Year's Eve packages and the City's array of restaurants will be open and ready to serve attendees. However, reservations are strongly suggested. No food is included with a First Night Alexandria admission badge.

"First Night Alexandria is a perfect event to end each year and welcome the new one.

I am delighted so many of our residents participate in various ways and we welcome the thousands of adults and children from all across the region and country who join us for our celebration," said Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille.

Details concerning all the festivities for First Night Alexandria can be found by visiting www.firstnightalexandria.org.

The map of all the venues can be found at www.firstnightalexandria.org. Below left is a picture from the last year's King Street Mile. To the right is a view of Old Presbyterian Meeting House during last year's event.



Ringling the Bell

Memoir of Hammond High School lauds the Greatest Generation.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE

A native of Washington, D.C., Maggie Kirkpatrick grew up in Alexandria and graduated from Hammond High School in 1969. She is now a commercial sign consultant in Marietta, Calif. Her memoir, "Mom, Dad, And The Greatest Generation; Their Stories and Mine," was published Dec. 6 by PublishAmerica and is available online at Amazon and Barnes and

Noble.

Why did you write this memoir?

I had a story to tell that I felt was unique. My parents were very interesting people, and they lived in interesting times. I had an uncle that was involved with CIA, and although I didn't come out and say that in the book, I alluded to it.

What parts of the story take place in Alexandria?

I write about going to Hammond and then staying in Alexandria to work at the Pentagon. I was trying to paint a picture of the brick homes and the schools. People in Alexandria will be able to relate to at least one part of the book, which is my high-school years.

What was Alexandria like when you were in high school?

I feel like it was kind of a cross between

SEE BELL, PAGE 17



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400 Madison Street #208 | \$620,000

Spacious and light filled three bedroom, two bath unit overlooking the park. Featuring hardwood floors, crown molding, updated kitchen with granite counters and table space, two garage spaces, storage unit and extensive wrap around balcony. Alexandria House offers 24 hour security, swimming pool, large party room with a view, sauna and sundeck. Two blocks from the Potomac River.

Jeanne Warner | 703 980-9186 Old Town

Just About Perfect



523 North Alfred Street | \$575,000

Including the Price! This totally renovated, 2-3 bedroom Victorian town home, 1 1/2 baths and located in Old Town is in move in condition. Nothing left to do! Kitchen, baths, floors, appliances, carpet, painting, partial roof, HVAC, most replaced in 2008. Even a beautiful patio and landscaping! A perfect Old Town location... close to Metro, shopping, restaurants, bike path, Starbuck's, DC and airport. Call Linda Wolf for more information.

Linda Trinkle Wolf | 703 518-6165 Old Town

New Listing



400 Madison Street #1805 | \$345,000

Spectacular 18th Floor with Panoramic River View, including the Monuments and Downtown DC. Take it all in from your 28' balcony or through the floor-to-ceiling insulated glass in your dining room, living room and bedroom. Rooftop pool, sundeck, Party Room, Sauna and 24 hour security. Leave the car in your garage spot and walk to Old Town shops and restaurants. One bedroom, one bath. Decorator allowance for paint carpet, etc...

Fred DeVinney | 703 518-2803 Old Town

New Listing



504 South Columbus St | \$539,000

Elegantly appointed three bedroom town home in charming south Old Town. Main floor features an ample living room, open dining room and kitchen with granite counters, sparkling glass backsplash and room for a center island. Brazilian hardwood flooring, oversized brick hearth, stylishly renovated bathrooms. Glass doors lead to private brick patio and access to private walkway and convenient parking.

Karen Leonard | 703 328-7041 Old Town

Old Town Classic



1209 Duke Street | \$575,000

Circa 1846 brick TH gem, heart of Old Town with garage and driveway parking! Two levels, 2BRs, 1.5BAs. Warm hardwood floors, tasteful moldings, two fireplaces, updated kitchen with granite counters and SS appliances, neutral decor. Walk out to Georgetown patio and carriage house garage with bonus upstairs storage. Just blocks to King St Metro, Whole Foods, restaurants, et al. Photos on www.paddockhomes.com

Vaughn & Diane Paddock | 703 628-2828 Old Town

Gorgeous Features



6071 Piney Woods Court | \$825,000

Only 3 years young with all of today's architectural features! Chef's kitchen with stainless steel appliances, 5 burner gas stove, granite counters, breakfast bar with counter space and a sunroom for informal dining - all open to two story family room. Formal dining room. Huge master bedroom suite with sun filled sitting area surrounded by windows and master bath has separate tub and shower. Enormous finished lower level with guest suite, den and recreation room. Two fireplaces. Located on lovely private cul de sac! Close to Fort Belvoir.

Liz Bucuvalas | 703 626-8400 Alexandria S

New Listing



4 West Rosemont Avenue | \$879,000

A classic Rosemont beauty on a great lot just blocks from the King St Metro. Comfortable, flowing floor plan with sunny living room leading to charming porch, large formal dining room, gourmet kitchen, powder room and family room that opens to private patio and yard. This three bedroom, two and a half bath home is an elegant renovation of a timeless classic.

Karen Leonard | 703 328-7041 Alexandria

Welcome Home



5062 Donovan Drive | \$447,000

Pristine two level condo TH with garage, in prime Cameron Station location. 1500+ square feet, two master bedroom suites, 2.5 baths, warm hardwood floors, new carpet, neutral decor. Designer touches throughout. Close to community fitness center and pool, coffee shop, restaurant, easy access to free shuttle to Metro. Photos on www.paddockhomes.com

Vaughn & Diane Paddock | 703 628-2828 Cameron Station

Great Value



1108 Waynewood Boulevard | \$619,000

All-brick Berkeley model with popular floor plan. This home is light and bright, fresh paint, beautiful hardwood floors, new Berber carpet in recreation room, oversized back yard and spacious attic. Wonderful location between Waynewood school, pool, tennis and parks. Enjoy exercising along the beautiful GW Parkway Trail. Convenient to DC, Fort Belvoir, Old Town and Metro.

Sue Dickerson | 703 380-0153 Alexandria S



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912 Clifton Drive
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Located just off East Boulevard Drive along the GW Parkway, this home has the feel of yesterday with today's amenities. Wide planked floors, coffered ceilings, stone fireplaces, back staircase, archways, multi-piece moldings and hand made paneling on 3/4 acre. Both main and upper level masters plus 4 bedroom suites, library, catering center, kids mud room, fitness and theater, hobby and reading rooms. Wired for home media/technology, 3 car garage. Dir: South on George Washington Parkway, left East Boulevard Drive, left Clifton Drive.

Phyllis Patterson | 703 518-6158 Wellington

Shows Like New

PREVIEWS INTERNATIONAL



1737 Potomac Greens Drive
\$998,000

Finally one of Potomac Greens largest models is available and shows "just like new". This lovely 4 level town home offers gorgeous hardwood floors, gourmet kitchen with center island, granite counters and stainless steel appliances, two sided fireplace, fourth level loft and roof top deck - perfect for entertaining. 3 bedroom, 2 full and 2 half baths, and a 2 car garage. This home is also offered for rent at \$4,000 per month.

Karen Leonard | 703-328-7041 Old Town

Park Like Setting

PREVIEWS INTERNATIONAL



908 Clifton Drive
\$1,195,000

Spacious rambler on 3/4 acre just off East Boulevard Drive and steps to the river on large level lot with beautiful old trees and mature plantings. three spacious bedrooms, two and a half baths, large rooms, two car garage, front porch, brick patio, hardwood floors. Plenty of room for expansion or new construction. Quite, private street with park like setting just 10 minutes to National Airport and 20 minutes to DC.

Phyllis Patterson | 703 518-6158 Wellington

Model Home Perfect

PREVIEWS INTERNATIONAL



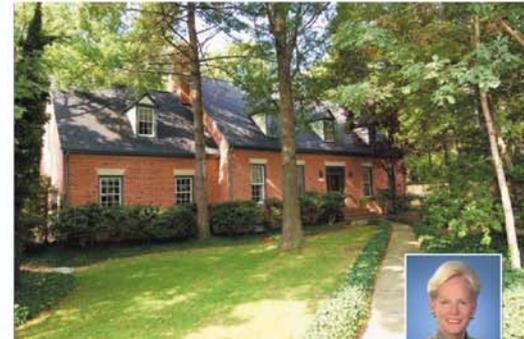
6406 Wood Haven Drive
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A new price on this "Like New", four/five bedroom, two and a half bath, two car garage, three finished levels above grade plus storage level, high ceilings, hardwood floors, new kitchen with granite and center island opening to large family room overlooking private deck and yard, designer carpet, master retreat, wine cellar, study, formal living room and dining room. Perfect! www.phyllispatterson.com

Phyllis Patterson | 703 518-6158 New Alexandria

Just Reduced

PREVIEWS INTERNATIONAL



3750 Seminary Road
\$1,495,000

Perfect for gracious entertaining and comfortable family living, this wonderfully spacious five bedroom plus 4 1/2 + 1/2 bath brick colonial awaits the most discriminating purchaser. Just two blocks to the upper school campus of Saint Stephen's and Saint Agnes School, this lovingly maintained home boasts grand room sizes, hardwood floors, fine moldings, four fireplaces plus two car garage. The large level rear yard with towering trees is an ideal area for children to play. This is an exceptional value at only \$1,495,000.

Donnan C Wintermute | 703 518-6156 Alexandria

Stately Colonial

PREVIEWS INTERNATIONAL



504 Canterbury Lane
\$1,195,000

Located in one of Alexandria's most sought-after neighborhoods, this solidly constructed brick colonial offers four bedrooms plus three and a half baths, a first floor family room, three fireplaces, plus swimming pool! The circular floor plan and grand room sizes make this lovely home perfect for gracious entertaining! The finished lower level features a bedroom suite, plentiful storage plus one car garage. This is an outstanding value at only \$1,195,000.

Donnan C Wintermute | 703 518-6156 Alexandria

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Alexandria
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Alexandria
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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 Rebecca Halik at 703-917-6407 with questions.

ONGOING

Historic Mount Vernon welcomes all Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Camp Fire Club members (in uniform or wearing an official pin) to free admission during its *Scouting Days* program beginning Nov. 1 through Feb. 15, 2009. For more information, visit www.MountVernon.org.

Gallery West presents "Small Works and Holiday Show and Silent Auction" **through Jan. 4** at 1213 King St. Features a variety of art work by

members in every size. Silent auction ends Dec. 8. Visit www.gallery-west.com or call 703-549-6006.

Gather the Family at Woodlawn runs **Dec. 28** at Woodlawn. Experience an 1820s Christmas with America's First Family before trees, Santa and stockings. Tours available from 5:30-8:30 p.m. \$15/person; \$5/grades K-12. Visit www.woodlawn1805.org or call 703-780-4000.

The Alliance Dance Institute presents "**The Nutcracker**" from **through Dec. 28** in the Landmark Mall, 5801 Duke St. Fifty-five minute long performances are Saturdays and Sundays at 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. \$20/person. After the show, stay for photo opportunities. Visit

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 17

You're Invited to party like a Parisian.

Celebrate New Year's Eve at **BISTROT LAFAYETTE** and enjoy a glass of champagne on us! Seating begins at 5:00pm

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#2

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25 36
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Model #FA1659EW 2009 Civic LX AT Sedan for 36 months WAC. \$1,999 total due at lease signing (Incls. first mo. pymt., sec. dep., AHFC upfront acq. fee and cap. cost reduction). Plus tax, license, title, and processing fee of \$289 Offer good through 1/5/2009. See dealer for complete details. Photo for illustration only. Based on 2009 EPA mileage estimates, reflecting new EPA fuel economy methods beginning with 2009 models. Use for comparison purposes only. Do not compare to models before 2009. Your actual mileage will vary depending on how you drive and maintain your vehicle.

#3

2009 Accord LX

21 30
CITY HWY.



\$209/MO.

Model #CP2639EW 2009 Accord Sedan AT LX for 36 months WAC. \$2,899 total due at lease signing. (Incls. first mo. pymt., sec. dep., AHFC upfront acq. fee and cap. cost reduction). Plus tax, license, title, and processing fee of \$289 Offer good through 1/5/2009. See dealer for complete details. Photo for illustration only. Based on 2009 EPA mileage estimates, reflecting new EPA fuel economy methods beginning with 2009 models. Use for comparison purposes only. Do not compare to models before 2009. Your actual mileage will vary depending on how you drive and maintain your vehicle.

#4

2009 Odyssey LX



16 23
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\$299/MO.

Model #RL3829EW 2009 Odyssey LX & Model #YF3829EW 2009 Pilot 2WD LX AT for 36 months WAC. \$2,999 total due at lease signing. (Incls. first mo. pymt., sec. dep., AHFC upfront acq. fee and cap. cost reduction). Plus tax, license, title, and processing fee of \$289. Offer good through 1/5/2009. See dealer for complete details. Photo for illustration only. Based on 2009 EPA mileage estimates, reflecting new EPA fuel economy methods beginning with 2009 models. Use for comparison purposes only. Do not compare to models before 2009. Your actual mileage will vary depending on how you drive and maintain your vehicle.

#5

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LITERATURE

Local Author Pens Memoir

FROM PAGE 9

New England and the Carolinas. I always think of the brick and the cobblestone and the colonial flavor. It was very traditional. That's the word I would use if I was going to encapsulate it in one word. My friends were very close, and I would say Alexandria was a tight-knit community at that time. People in Alexandria wanted to distinguish themselves from Arlington. It was a big community, but Alexandria had a small-town flavor. People were friendly.



Maggie Kirkpatrick

dad's generation knew the value of what it was like to make a living and support your family and take care of each other.

The subtitle of the book is "Their Stores and Mine." How do they intertwine?

It starts with my mom and dad, how they got together and how I entered the picture. My dad was not my biological father, but the story explains how he came into the picture and took care of us and took care of us as a family.

What was Hammond like at that time?

Tradition was a big part of it. We were very proud of our football coach at that time, who was later part of the transition when they went to T.C. Williams. One part of my story is about how the graduates each year would ring the bell at Hammond. After graduation, we would all line up in the courtyard and ring the ship's bell, which I'm sure is still there today.

What can people learn from the book?

Values and patriotism. I feel they were much closer to their families than we are today. We've had too many people going off in different directions, and I think that's been very hard on the family. I see kids today take way too much for granted. My mom and

Why did you feel like the story was something that needed to be told?

I just think my mom and dad had a lot of great experiences, whether it was contributing to the war effort or work experiences in different environments like the federal government or private industry or the people they met along the way. My mother worked as a young girl at the Willard Hotel, and I felt these were great experiences.

Why should people read this book?

There's a lot of relatability. I feel the Baby Boomer generation looks back on their parents as the example we should have set for our children. But so many of us did not. Somehow we've lost their values along the way.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 14

www.adidance.com or 703-354-6000.

Historic Mount Vernon welcomes

Inauguration visitors in January with 20 percent off adult admission. Visitors must print the coupon from Mount Vernon's Web site: <http://visit.mountvernon.org>. January is also the 250th wedding anniversary of George and Martha Washington, and on display Jan. 12 - Feb. 23 are Mrs. Washington's wedding slippers. \$15 for adults; \$7 for youth ages 6-11; and free for children five and younger. Visit <http://visit.mountvernon.org> or 703-780-2000.

Woodlawn's Needlework

exhibition is March 1-31 at 9000 Richmond Highway. There will be demonstrations, lunch by Nelly's Needlers and more. See needleworks from around the world. Visit www.woodlawn1805.org or 703-780-4000 for more.

FRIDAY/DEC. 26

Wee Ones Storytime. 10:30 a.m. at Hooray for Books, 1555 King St. Children 2 and under can enjoy stories and songs. Free. Visit www.hooray4books.com or 703-548-4092.

SATURDAY/DEC. 27

Art Exhibit. See artwork by Yuri Kokoyanin at The von Braehler Ltd./Gallery, 1437 Powhatan St., from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Call for weekday hours, 703-798-8686. Free.

Get Fancy Storytime. 11 a.m. at Hooray for Books, 1555 King St. Children ages 2 and up can don a tiara, bow tie or something festive for a fun storytime. Free. Visit www.hooray4books.com or 703-548-

4092.

SUNDAY/DEC. 28

Art Exhibit. See artwork by Yuri Kokoyanin at The von Braehler Ltd./Gallery, 1437 Powhatan St., from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Call for weekday hours, 703-798-8686. Free.

Bridge Club. 4 p.m. at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Teens and adults can learn how to play. Free. 703-765-3645.

TUESDAY/DEC. 30

Puppets. 2 p.m. at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. All ages can see "The Nutcracker Fantasy" by Bob Brown Puppets. Free.

Registration required, 703-765-3645.
Short Story Discussion. 7 p.m. at Burke Library, 4701 Seminary Road. Discuss selections in "The Art of the Short Story." Free. 703-519-3498.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. Celebrate the New Year with activities, performances and more in approximately 30 venues in Old Town and Del Ray. There is a cost. Visit www.firstnightalexandria.org or 703-838-5005.

Hooray For First Night. 6-8 p.m. at Hooray for Books, 1555 King St. Take part in an interactive storytime. Free with First Night Badge. Visit www.hooray4books.com or 703-548-4092.

Music Performance. 7-9:30 p.m., hear Bunjo Butler and the T.C. Williams High School Jazz Combo at Meade, 322 N. Alfred St. Free with tickets to First Night Alexandria. Visit www.firstnightalexandria.org or 703-838-4200 ext. 210.

First Night Music. Carbon Copy will perform 7:30-10:30 p.m. at the Durance RecCenter, 1605 Cameron

St. Free with First Night tickets. 571-278-3231.

THURSDAY/JAN. 1

MAGFest. Enjoy a video and computer gaming festival run by fans at Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria. There will be music, activities and more. Tickets are \$40 in advance. Visit www.magfest.org for more.

FRIDAY/JAN. 2

Wee Ones Storytime. 10:30 a.m. at Hooray for Books, 1555 King St. Children 2 and under can enjoy stories and songs. Free. Visit www.hooray4books.com or 703-548-4092.

MAGFest. Enjoy a video and computer gaming festival run by fans at Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria. There will be music, activities and more. Tickets are \$40 in advance. Visit www.magfest.org for more.

SATURDAY/JAN. 3

MAGFest. Enjoy a video and computer gaming festival run by fans at Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria. There will be music, activities and more. Tickets are \$40 in advance. Visit www.magfest.org for more.

SUNDAY/JAN. 4

Twelfth Night Celebration. 5 p.m. at Advent Lutheran Church, 2222 S. Arlington Ridge Road. Enjoy music, activities and more. Family-friendly. Free. Visit www.adventlc.us or 703-521-7010.

MAGFest. Enjoy a video and computer gaming festival run by fans at Hilton Mark Center in Alexandria. There will be music, activities and more. Tickets are \$40 in advance. Visit www.magfest.org for more.

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Wednesday - All American Night

Meatloaf, Chicken Fried Chicken. Va. Ham

Thursday - Italian Night

Lasagna, Chicken Alfredo, Calamari

Friday - Fish Night

Crab Cakes, Shrimp & Scallops over penne pasta with white sauce

Saturday - Steak and Chop Night

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www.FirstNightAlexandria.org

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7117 MARINE DR	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$743,500	Detached	0.33		MARLAN HEIGHTS
1101 POTOMAC LN	5	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$700,000	Detached	0.33		WAYNEWOOD
7617 LEITH PL	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$700,000	Detached	0.34		MASON HILL
3625 DREWS CT	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$563,000	Detached	0.16		MOUNT VEE MANOR
1704 RIVER FARM DR	3	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$540,000	Detached	0.76		RIVER BEND ESTS
7585 LINDBERG DR	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$525,000	Detached	0.12		THE GROVE AT HUNTLEY MEADOWS
7514 LINDBERG DR	5	4	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$510,000	Detached	0.12		HUNTLEY MEADOWS
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8428 HALLIE ROSE ST	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$340,000	Townhouse	0.03		SKYVIEW PARK
3712 BLWOOD DR	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$330,000	Detached	0.21		BURGUNDY MANOR
6465 BRICK HEARTH CT	2	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$320,000	Townhouse	0.05		SOUTH KINGS STATION
8463 BYERS DR	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$320,000	Townhouse	0.04		SKYVIEW PARK
3420 GROVETON ST	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$320,000	Detached	0.22		GROVETON HEIGHTS
7416 NORTHROP RD	5	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$307,600	Detached	0.38		HYBLA VALLEY
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8467 BYERS DR	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$285,000	Townhouse	0.03		SKYVIEW PARK
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6502 BRICK HEARTH CT	2	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$260,000	Townhouse	0.03		SOUTH KINGS STATION
6612 EAST WAKEFIELD DR #A-1	2	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$230,000	Garden 1-4 Floors			BELLE VIEW
6617 EAST WAKEFIELD #A1	2	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$230,000	Garden 1-4 Floors			BELLE VIEW
8515 ENGLSIDE ST	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$206,900	Detached	0.13		ENGLSIDE
5817 BLAINE DR	4	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$206,000	Townhouse	0.09		HUNTINGTON
7508E SNOWPEA CT #221	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$205,000	Garden 1-4 Floors			SOUTH MEADOWS
2917 DUNBAR ST	3	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$195,900	Detached	0.22		THORNROSE
7025 BRYANT TOWNE CT	3	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$160,500	Townhouse	0.03		BRYANT TOWNE
2618 FORT FARNSWORTH RD#232	2	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$155,000	Garden 1-4 Floors			HUNTINGTON CLUB
2237 FARRINGTON AVE #06-301	1	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$152,000	Garden 1-4 Floors			FARRINGTON PLACE
2910 DUNBAR ST	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$151,000	Detached	0.22		THORNROSE
8610 VILLAGE SQUARE DR#15/861	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$132,000	Back-to-Back			VILLAGES THE
3829 MONTE VISTA DR #97A	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$130,000	Townhouse			SEQUOYAH
2607 FORT FARNSWORTH RD#313	1	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$115,000	Garden 1-4 Floors			HUNTINGTON CLUB
7949 SAN LEANDRO PL #105B	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	..	\$110,000	Garden 1-4 Floors			SEQUOYAH
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SPORTS

Life in the Minors

Area hockey player is pursuing his NHL dreams for a minor league team in Utah.

BY MARK GIANNOTTO
THE GAZETTE

Take a look the state motto for Utah and it's fitting that former West Potomac student and current Alexandria resident James Sixsmith would be toiling away there this hockey season.

Founded by early pioneers that had few material resources, the so-called "Industry" state had to rely on its own resources to simply survive early on. The 5-foot-9, 180-pound Sixsmith can relate.

A star at Holy Cross who ended his career there as the school's all-time leading scorer, Sixsmith helped lead the Crusaders to the biggest upset in college hockey history. As a No. 4 seed, they defeated the No. 1 team in the country, Minnesota, in the first round of the 2006 NCAA Tournament. In basketball terms, it would be like the winner of the play-in game in the NCAA Tournament defeating the No. 1 team in the country.

Now in his second season playing in the minor league hockey ranks, Sixsmith has gotten used to fighting the odds as he tries to become the first NHL player to ever come out of the state of Virginia.

"I kind of just live game to game and just try to get better," said the 24-year-old Sixsmith. "Every day you're just focused on trying to get up to the next level."

BEFORE THIS SEASON, Sixsmith had never been to Utah before. So it came as a shock to his system when he arrived in Salt Lake City to see picturesque mountain peaks and mild weather — even in the winter. Then again, Sixsmith never expected to be there in the first place.



"He just has to trust the system," said Utah Grizzlies coach Kevin Colley about James Sixsmith's chances of being promoted to the AHL (hockey's equivalent to AAA baseball) and eventually the NHL.

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Sixsmith attended West Potomac High School from 1999-2001, but left after his junior year to play hockey at Canterbury Prep in Connecticut to face top flight competition and get more exposure from a recruiting standpoint. His mother, Betty, is currently the field hockey coach at West Potomac.

After his successful career at Holy Cross, he shuttled between the ECHL's Cincinnati Cyclones and the AHL's Milwaukee Admirals in his first full season in the minor leagues a year ago. As a result, he signed a one-year minor league contract with the NHL's New York Islanders, and after a strong preseason, figured he'd be back in the AHL (hockey's version of AAA baseball as compared with the ECHL, which is the AA equivalent).

Islanders' management agreed, except three players the organization was interested in had been released by other teams toward the end of training camp. The team signed all three and assigned them to the AHL's Bridgeport Sound Tigers. Sixsmith lost out on the numbers game.

He's taken the ups and downs in stride. "Being in Utah hasn't been such a bad thing, I'm playing a lot down here, I'm one of the go-to guys down here," said Sixsmith. "It's nice not to be playing a more limited role in the AHL."

But if he ever wants to achieve his goal of eventually playing in the NHL, he can't just be an elite player in the ECHL. If he stays in Utah — or something equivalent — the rest of his career, there's really no chance of realizing his dream. Through 23 games this year, Sixsmith leads the team with 20 points (eight goals, 12 assists).

"Do I think he's an (AHL) player?" Utah Grizzlies coach Kevin Colley said rhetorically. "Yes, but he can't get discouraged just because he's not there now. He just has to trust the system."

LIVING JUST OUTSIDE Salt Lake City, Sixsmith has what he calls a "pretty nice set-up." The Grizzlies have every member of the team living in two apartment complexes close together. Sixsmith's roommate is Mike Walsh, who played college hockey at Notre Dame, a Jesuit school like Holy Cross.

And unlike college, Sixsmith's days are almost entirely dedicated to hockey. On non-game days, he goes to the rink around 9 a.m. for a morning skate, practices for two to three hours, and then has a team meal. The rest of the day is his to enjoy. On game days, players have a morning skate and then report back to the arena around 5 p.m.

"You get a lot of time to yourself," said Sixsmith. "There's a lot of down time,



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE UTAH GRIZZLIES

Former West Potomac student and Alexandria native James Sixsmith (right) is attempting to become the first Virginia native to make it to the NHL. Right now he's playing in front of sparse crowds for the ECHL's Utah Grizzlies.

and if you don't have a hobby it's just a lot of watching TV. The best part of the job — just playing hockey — can sometimes be the worst."

Making matters worse is that Sixsmith doesn't have a car to get around. He left it in Virginia because he didn't want to worry about bringing it with him should he get called back up to the AHL.

THERE ARE HORROR STORIES about life on the road in other minor league sports. Long bus rides, dingy motels, and fast food for dinner are generally what pass for comfortable accommodations.

But Sixsmith said traveling with the Grizzlies is about as good as one could expect. The team flies to all but a few of its away games.

The worst trip so far this season, according to Sixsmith, was when the team went to Victoria Falls in the beginning of November. To get there, the Grizzlies flew from Salt Lake City to Seattle, took a bus to Vancouver, and finally hopped on a ferry to get to their final destination. In all, it was nearly 12 hours of traveling.

To offset trips like these, the Grizzlies have amenities like an adopt-a-player program, where area fans provide food and gifts to players throughout the season. It's a welcome respite for Sixsmith, who makes much less than the NHL league minimum of \$450,000 a year. Club rules prohibit him from disclosing his current salary, but he ball-parked the figure as "one-tenth of the NHL minimum."

Like everyone around the country these days, the economy weighs heavily on Sixsmith's mind. According to the Grizzlies' director of operations, Adrian Denny, the ECHL is like any other sports league, with strong owners that have no problem meeting costs in a tough economic climate.

But there are organizations like the Augusta Lynx in Georgia, which had to suspend operation in midseason. They became the third ECHL team to shut down operations since last season for various monetary

reasons. The Grizzlies play in the ECenter in Salt Lake City, the venue where hockey was played for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Sixsmith said a good crowd is usually around 7,000 fans for the 10,000-seat arena.

"Some areas in the league, you can see the economy wearing on people and different organizations," said Sixsmith. "Empty seats doesn't mean the economy is killing the league, but it'd be foolish to say it's not affecting it at all."

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON will mark the first time Sixsmith can get back to the Northern Virginia area since training here in the offseason. He said because of his hockey career, he hasn't been home for

Thanksgiving in years.

The Grizzlies include a bonus in each player's contract that is meant to be money for a flight home around the holidays. Sixsmith will fly back Dec. 21, but has a Christmas morning flight back to Utah at 6 a.m. because of a game on Dec. 26.

But to make it to the place he really wants to go, it will take a lot more than a plane ride. If Sixsmith can get the

promotion many think he deserves to the AHL, anything can happen. The Washington Capitals provide an example of what could be. They've called up 10 players from their AHL affiliate in just the past month.

Right now, though, Sixsmith tries to stay focused on what he can control, his play on the ice with the mountains of Utah in the background.

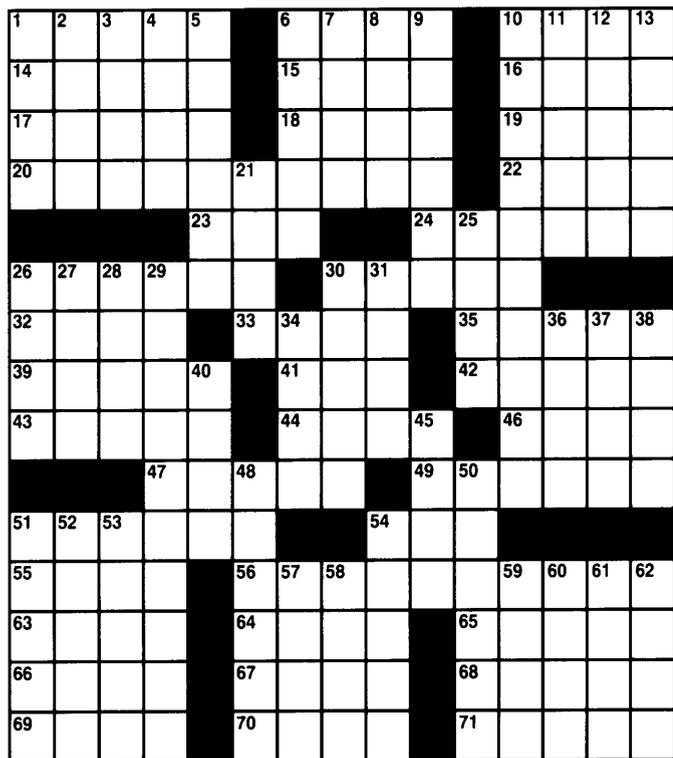
But on a minor league journey that seems to present new obstacles at every turn, perhaps the hardest part of Sixsmith's life is not letting the doubt of an uncertain future take over. "I don't really think about what I'm going to do down the road," said Sixsmith. "You constantly have some kind of goal or some kind of vision in mind. But to be honest, I don't want to be a 30-year-old guy playing in the minors."

"Every day you're just focused on trying to get up to the next level."
— James Sixsmith

NEW YORK TIMES CROSSWORD

Edited by Will Shortz

No. 0413-3



Puzzle by Fred Piscop

ACROSS

- 1 False witnesses
- 6 Vocalizes like the Beastie Boys
- 10 Parks in 1955 news
- 14 Venezuela's — Falls
- 15 Clairvoyant's start
- 16 Has a tab
- 17 Suffix with sea or moon
- 18 Grocery vehicle
- 19 College course division
- 20 Production in a given period
- 22 Trait determinant
- 23 Pirouette point
- 24 MacNeil's longtime partner
- 26 Sombrero accompanier
- 30 Transparent
- 32 "—'Clock Jump"
- 33 Classic soft drink
- 35 Italian tourist center
- 39 Third-stringer

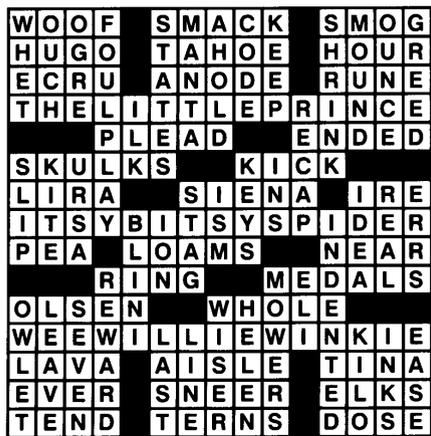
- 41 Sharpshooter's gift
- 42 Beat by a whisker
- 43 Use weasel words
- 44 Meat loaf serving
- 46 "Holy moly!"
- 47 Papa Doc ruled it
- 49 Stats for a porous defense
- 51 Battle site of 1916
- 54 Gulped down
- 55 Mideast bigwig
- 56 Pro-slavery Northerners, before the Civil War
- 63 Mission cancellation
- 64 Folklore fiend
- 65 Speechify
- 66 Lone Star State sch.
- 67 Chemicals giant
- 68 Hertz — Car
- 69 Slippery critters
- 70 Sit a spell
- 71 Alma —

- 2 Rainfall measurement
- 3 Lab gel
- 4 Bank takeback
- 5 Mr. Moto, e.g.
- 6 Nouveau —
- 7 "Hurry, please!"
- 8 Pizarro conquest
- 9 Avoid a trial
- 10 Hero of 1898
- 11 Dog tag datum
- 12 Left Bank river
- 13 Autumn bloomer
- 21 Hoodlum
- 25 Move carefully (into)

- 26 Swanky
- 27 Years ago
- 28 Uncool sort
- 29 Cold comfort?
- 30 Burger or dog topper
- 31 Vegetable soup bean
- 34 All-star game side, often
- 36 Waffle brand
- 37 Warm, so to speak
- 38 States further
- 40 Belle's man
- 45 One of Alcott's "Little Women"

- 48 Like some pools or paint
- 50 — Judaism
- 51 Stage or stadium, say
- 52 Ham it up
- 53 Star in Orion
- 54 Insurance seller
- 57 Look lustfully
- 58 "QB VII" author
- 59 Field of study
- 60 Defeatist's word
- 61 Politically incorrect suffix
- 62 Mark with a branding iron

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



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NEWS

Lighting Up Christmas

FROM PAGE 3

For next year he doesn't have specific plans yet, but he supposes that he will add more parts for children — perhaps some animations inspired by cartoons.

For those who are inspired to make their own decorations, Vaughan advises that they go to specialized stores such as Lightorama and put major effort into it.

The lights will be on display until 10:30 p.m. through Jan. 2, except in rain. The address is 1601 Collingwood Road, Alexandria.

Unprecedented

FROM PAGE 8

new people who have not needed help in the past.

"We are seeing people we have never seen before. There is a group of people coming that have lived independently always. People who were always able to make ends meet. Barely perhaps, but they did. Now, those people are losing employment or can't do it anymore because their expenses are higher," said Hull.

"There is a definite increase in people seeking services due to unemployment and several instances of people who used to donate to us now coming to us to seek emergency services, which is alarming," said McDowell.

THE TIMES could prove to be financially difficult for non-profits as well as their clients. Most of the organizations see a boost in individual giving during the holidays but many are worried what will happen in the new year and how they are going to meet increased demands on a limited budget.

"At this point, it is difficult to say what the future impact is going to be. Clearly, we are looking at a long economic downturn and we will need to work much harder to meet the increasing needs of the community. The concern is that if we see a drop off in our financial resources, we will need to scale back our programming," said McDowell.

Several local social service agencies, including United Community Ministries and Reston Interfaith, are already facing a financial hit due to Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae's recent troubles. It is unclear what will happen to the two mortgage companies foundations and charitable giving now that they have been taken over by the federal government.

"We are really affected by the fact that Freddie Mac is not giving out its grants. Everyone is kind of waiting with bated breath to see what Freddie is going to do. They just don't know what to tell us but I have to be skeptical at this point," said Hull, who said her organization received a \$50,000 grant directly from Freddie Mac

SEE ECONOMY, PAGE 22

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HAGEE THE GAZETTE
Jim Getts, recipient of the Les Dorson Award for Distinguished Public Service, is joined on stage during the Lee District Association of Civic Organizations' annual banquet by, from left, Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay, LDACO Chairman Paul Gagnon, and U.S. Representative-elect Gerald Connolly.

Dorson Awards Given at Banquet

FROM PAGE 5

issues of the entire community.”

FORMER LEE DISTRICT Supervisor Dana Kauffman received the Dorson Award for Distinguished Public Service Leadership. For 12 years Kauffman served as Lee District supervisor “with common sense, a sense of humor, and a vision that united what was best for the common good,” Gagnon said.

In addition to serving as Lee District supervisor, Kauffman also represented Fairfax County on the Metro Board of Directors and

served as its chairman. “Some of Dana’s best work was in building a sense of community among the people of Lee District,” Gagnon said. He was succeeded in public office by McKay who had served as Kauffman’s chief of staff for 12 years.

Gagnon also presented his Chairman’s Awards to volunteers who have made special contribution to LDACO. Serving as the evening’s master of ceremonies was Rodney Lusk, Lee District’s representative on the county Planning Commission.

The invocation was given by the Rev. Grant McIntosh, chaplain, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

Economy Leaves Many in Need

FROM PAGE 21

in 2008 and had initially hoped to get more money for programs related to housing in 2009.

“I have a feeling that the funding will be worse next year than it is this year. A lot of foundations have their money in the stock market and who knows what is going to happen with that,” she added.

IN ADDITION to seeing major drops in their private funding, many local social service organizations might be subjected to cuts in state and local government aid next year.

Virginia is facing a \$2.9 billion shortfall in the second of its two-year budget cycle and Fairfax County has a projected deficit

of \$600 million in 2010.

United Community Ministries has already been informed that the commonwealth intends to pull the non-profit’s funding for its employment center. The county — which supplies about 15 percent of the organization’s budget — will make no decisions about what it will do until the spring.

“We don’t get a lot of funding from the county but every bit helps,” said Hull.

Hunter Mill District Supervisor Cathy Hudgins, who chairs the county board’s human services committee, said she hopes the county is able retain funding for some of the “prevention” programs, like affordable housing preservation, it currently supports.

“We want to reduce the number of people who need to call on services,” said Hudgins.

‘Martha Washington’ To Recall Her Memories

Historic Mount Vernon will celebrate the 250th wedding anniversary of George and Martha Washington every Saturday and Sunday during January 2009 with a free special program by “Mrs. Washington” in the Robert H. and Clarice Smith Auditorium 2 p.m.

Entitled “Our Worthy Partnership,” the one-person show recounts the private moments between herself and General Washington during their 40-year marriage. Watch Mrs. Washington as she unpacks a special trunk of memories and listen to the stories

behind those private treasures.

In honor of the couple’s 250th wedding anniversary, Mrs. Washington’s wedding slippers are on display from Jan. 12 through Feb. 23. They have not been on public display at Mount Vernon for over 30 years. Due to their fragile condition, this will be the only time they will be able to be seen for the foreseeable future, according to Mount Vernon Estate.

Additional information on this special event can be found by visiting <http://Visit.MountVernon.org>.

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