

Great Falls Artists Meet Community

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PHOTO BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION



Photographer Walt Lawrence, posing here with his work, is one of the most recent artists to join the Artists' Atelier, which recently began holding regular open hours and inviting the public.

Recognizing Teens Who Serve

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Langley's Helmer Focused on the Prize

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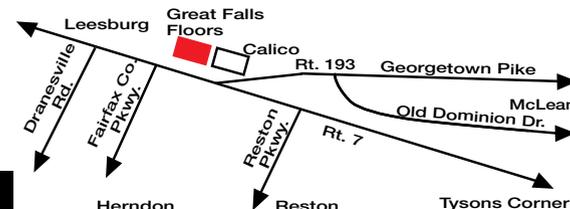
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Recognizing Teens Who Serve Others

McLean Rotary bestows annual Youth Service awards.

Insup Lee is president of Langley High School's Korean Club and a member of the National Honor Society, and he tutors other students while earning perfect grades. The high-school senior's interest in Korea's diplomatic history led him to start a program for summarizing and cataloguing documents on that subject in the Library of Congress.

However, none of these are the reason he received one of the McLean Rotary Club's Youth Service awards, presented at a luncheon last Tuesday, Feb. 3. Recipients of the awards are chosen for their embodiment of the Rotary motto, "Service above self."

Lee was one of three area students chosen for the awards this year. Also receiving plaques and \$400 checks were Cecilia Lam of McLean High School and Elyse Marriott of the Potomac School.

ROTARIAN MICHAEL DEROSE, who organizes the youth awards program, now in its fourth year, said Lee's nomination was among the most overwhelming he had ever seen. "This is one of the most remarkable stories," he told the Rotarians gathered for the luncheon at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer.

Diagnosed with leukemia, now in remission, Lee founded To the Next Stage, an organization that encourages teens with cancer to continue their studies and pursue their goals. Lee also shares his story as a counselor at Camp Fantastic, a camp for children with cancer. He created a back-to-school program for parents of children with cancer, was the speaker at the Growing Hope annual picnic and volunteers with patients at Children's National Medical Center for Oncology and Hematology.

"When I shook his hand for the first time, I knew this young man was destined to go on to do great things," said Jennifer Baldesare, the Langley counselor who nominated Lee for the award, adding that he "exemplified what it means to put others before self" and was also one of the best students she had known. Through To the Next Stage, Lee had motivated other teens by talking about his own experiences and distributed pamphlets about teen cancer at local hospitals, Baldesare said. "He's truly a real mentor and all these patients have benefited from his strength."

DeRose asked whether he correctly understood that Lee had kept his grades up during three months of daily chemotherapy. He had. Asked where he would be attending college, Lee said he wasn't sure — he had been accepted by Stanford, but was still waiting to hear from Harvard.

Introducing Lam, DeRose said, "This is someone whose life has been greatly influ-



Rotarian Michael DeRose introduces Langley student Insup Lee, who works to give hope and inspiration to other teens battling cancer.

PHOTOS BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION



From left, Youth Service awards organizer Michael DeRose poses with award winners Insup Lee, Elyse Marriott and Cecilia Lam, as well as McLean Rotary president Lois Wilson and Stan Richards of the Rotary Foundation.

"He's truly a real mentor and all these patients have benefited from his strength."

— Jennifer Baldesare

enced by music and she used music to influence the lives of those around her." A classical violinist, Lam founded and leads Union of Productive Performances, through which she assembles musicians from her school to give free concerts at the Lewinsville Senior Residences. The performers encourage audience participation and engage the seniors in discussions about music, as it relates to different periods in their lives.

She also organizes fund-raisers for Alter-

native House, Vienna's crisis shelter for teens, and is working with another McLean student to create a video that will promote community relations with the shelter. And Lam volunteers at the Holocaust Museum, where she gives presentations and acts as a translator for Chinese and Hispanic visitors, and mentors young musicians in the Queens Taiwanese Evangelical Church Summer Youth Orchestra.

HER GUIDANCE COUNSELOR, Isabelle Rahn, said Lam "represents what is best in today's youth." She also noted that Lam would be performing at the Kennedy Center later this month at Youth Orchestra Day with the National Symphony.

SEE ROTARIANS, PAGE 7

Koger Sentenced

Hundreds of local associations victimized.

Jeffrey Scott Koger, 39 of Oak Hill, was sentenced last week in federal court to more than five years in prison and ordered to pay more than \$2 million in restitution.

Koger embezzled more than \$3 million from many of the 400-plus Northern Virginia homeowners associations that contracted services from his family's company, Koger Management Group, located in Fairfax.

KMG collected homeowners association dues and provided a variety of financial and maintenance services for the HOAs. Homeowners associations in virtually every part of Northern Virginia were affected, including in Ashburn, Chantilly, Arlington, Burke, Springfield, McLean, Reston, Mount Vernon and Alexandria, among others.

Neither the United States government nor Jeffrey Koger's defense attorney call his criminal actions "sophisticated," but Koger used more than 140 bank wire transfers to move the money for his own purposes. The embezzlement was conducted over the course of several years.

"The defendant took steps to cover up and explain away his criminal behavior which made his theft more difficult to detect," according to Assistant U.S. Attorney Jack Hanly. "A significant term of incarceration is needed to reflect the seriousness of the defendant's crime, to impose just punishment, and to deter him from future offenses."

Koger, who also faces criminal charges in Fairfax County (see below), pleaded guilty to wire fraud and tax evasion last November.

U.S. District Court Judge Leonie M. Brinkema sentenced Koger Friday, Feb. 6 to 66 months in prison and ordered that he pay more than \$1.2 million in restitution as well as \$775,272 to the IRS for tax evasion.

Koger was the former Chief Financial Officer of his father's real estate management firm, Koger Management Group, which filed for bankruptcy in July 2007. Robert Koger, the defendant's father, reported to the Fairfax City Police in November 2006 that he believed his son had embezzled \$800,000, kicking off the investigation.

"The defendant's crimes caused substantial harm to numerous individuals, including: KMG which was forced to dissolve and declare bankruptcy; KMG's employees, many of whom lost their jobs as a result of the dissolution; the more than 350 HOA

SEE NEW, PAGE 5

Bulova Becomes Chairman

Democrat wins special election by slim margin Feb. 3.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

Former Braddock District Supervisor Sharon Bulova (D) was sworn in as the Fairfax County Board of Supervisor's newest chairman at the county government center Feb. 6.

Bulova defeated Springfield Supervisor Patrick Herrity (R) by 1,217 votes, a margin of less than two percent, in a special election for the countywide seat three days earlier. She replaces now U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), who left the office to join the U.S. Congress in early January.

A 21-year county board veteran, Bulova serves as chair of the supervisor's budget committee and was a founder of the Virginia Railway Express (VRE), a commuter train to Washington D.C. with stations in southern and central Fairfax.

In opening remarks at the swearing in ceremony, Fairfax County public information officer Merni Fitzgerald also said Bulova had "championed the redevelopment of Tysons Corner as an environmental project," while serving as Braddock District supervisor.

AS CHAIRMAN, Bulova has her work cut out for her in 2009. Fairfax County must close a projected \$650 million budget hole in the annual budget that begins in July.

Approximately 75 percent of the local government's revenue comes from real estate taxes and the county's property values have fallen significantly. The supervisors would have to raise the real estate property tax rate 14 to 15 cents just to keep county revenue at the same level as last year.

According to Bulova, residents should brace themselves for some cuts to county services, though Fairfax will try to take care of its most vulnerable citizens.

"We will adopt changes that will bring our budget into equilibrium ... [But we] need to take care of those among us who need our help now more than ever," said the new chairman at the swearing in ceremony.

"Working together, we will come through these difficult financial times. ... The darkest hour is just before the dawn," she added.

THOUGH FACING a tough situation, Fairfax County's economy is also resilient, according to Bulova.

Hilton Hotels recently decided to move its headquarters to Fairfax over other local jurisdictions. The military's Base Realignment And Closure process will also bring new jobs and economic development to the southern part of the county, said Bulova.



Sharon Bulova addressed the crowd after her swearing in as Fairfax County chairman Feb. 6.



Judge Jan Brodie swore in Sharon Bulova as the new Fairfax County chairman Feb. 6.

As chairman, Bulova will also push for the extension of Metro rail west in the Interstate 66 corridor and the expansion of VRE services, she said.

HERRITY, whose father served as board chairman in the 1970s and 1980s, attended Bulova's swearing-in ceremony.

His race with Bulova is the closest high-profile countywide contest between a Democrat and Republican in several years. The last two Fairfax County chairmen, both Democrats, won their seats by a larger margin than Bulova did last week.

Former chairman Kate Hanley beat former Supervisor Elaine McConnell (R-Springfield) in a 1995 special election with 52 percent of the vote and approximately 3,500 ballots. In 2004, Connolly won his first chairman's race by nine points and approximately 17,000 ballots.

Bulova lost two magisterial districts, Mount Vernon and Dranesville, which Hanley and Connolly had won over the past four election cycles.

Fairfax County Chairman Special Election Results

Fairfax County provided these returns for the Fairfax County chairman special election Feb. 3.

District	Voter Turnout (%)	Bulova	Herrity
Braddock	22.7	8,750	5,849
Hunter Mill	15.5	6,655	5,129
Dranesville	17.1	5,810	6,252
Lee	13.3	4,665	3,489
Mason	15.7	4,510	3,519
Mount Vernon	14.7	5,066	5,256
Providence	14.7	5,148	4,356
Springfield	18.9	5,758	9,155
Sully	11.9	3,437	5,023
Absentee	-	2,150	2,704
Total	16.1	51,965	50,759

Herrity said the election results prove that not all residents are pleased with the direction of the county's leadership in recent years.

"I am going to continue to stand up for what I believe in. ... Clearly there is a difference of opinion in the county," he said.

THE ELECTION RESULTS do not necessarily reflect the views of the larger electorate. Voter turnout for the special election, at 16.1 percent, was low countywide.

Of the Fairfax's nine magisterial districts, Braddock — which Bulova has represented for over 20 years — had the highest voter turnout of 22 percent. Springfield — which Herrity and his father have both represented — had the second highest, with 18.9 percent.

With 11.9 percent, Sully was the magisterial district with the lowest turnout in the special election. It is also the only district besides Herrity's Springfield that is represented by a Republican, Michael Frey, on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

Blocking Metrorail Noise

Wolf, MWAA exchange letters.

It appears that the McLean Citizens Association (MCA) has U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10) on its side with regard to noise mitigation along the Dulles Access Road Extension. But it is not yet clear what measures will be taken to reduce noise from existing traffic and the coming Metrorail along that stretch of the Dulles Transportation Corridor.

Last year, members of the MCA Planning and Zoning Committee co-chair Mark Zetts and other members of the association's board of directors took measurements of the noise already generated by traffic along the extension of Route 267 that runs from Route 123 to Interstate 66, through the southwest corner of the McLean area.

At the association's January meeting, Zetts presented the results of the study, saying the measurements more or less resembled those documented in the Dulles Rail Project's environmental impact study but were often higher than the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority's (WMATA) standard of 50 decibels. The MCA passed a resolution calling for sound walls to be completed along the route, before rail construction begins, wherever noise exceeds standards.

Currently, there are gaps in sound wall coverage along the residential areas on both sides of the road and the concern is that rail construction and operation will produce more noise.

Following the resolution, Wolf sent a letter to Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) president James Bennett, asking that the organization work with WMATA and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to provide sound barriers along the length of the Dulles Rail Project. About a week later, Bennett responded, assuring that the Airports Authority would adhere to a uniform standard of noise abatement along the corridor.

"I don't know what this means, but I do know our representatives are very interested in seeing some kind of noise mitigation along that stretch of the Dulles Access Road Extension," Zetts said.

He said MWAA had also promised low walls directly along either side of the tracks to block the sound of the wheels running along the rail, but he said the MCA was still looking into how effective such walls would be.

— MIKE DICICCO

New Koger Trial Set to Start

FROM PAGE 3

[homeowners associations], many of whom suffered real financial hardship because of the stolen monies," according to Hanly.

KOGER COOPERATED with probation officers in preparing his pre-sentence report. He "places no blame on others for his conduct," according to his defense attorney Peter D. Greenspun.

"However, counsel for Mr. Koger feels it is important to bring to the attention of the Court the context of what occurred and a full understanding of mental health challenges untreated through the time of his offenses," according to documents filed by Greenspun in U.S. District Court, giving the position of the defendant with respect to sentencing.

"Mr. Koger's actions were ultimately derived not from pure greed but rather as a result of his severely deteriorated mental health state coupled with an unhealthy need to provide for his wife," he said.

Untreated mental health challenges included Koger's bipolar disorder, alcohol dependence, bulimia nervosa and borderline personality disorder as well as gambling addictions, according to Greenspun.

Greenspun described his client as a "bright and capable businessman" who lived for years in a "frantic and type A-plus manner" helping to make KMG successful.

There is no evidence of theft before Koger began his relationship with his wife in 2002, Greenspun wrote, when Koger started to support her fitness and restaurant business ventures as well as a newly acquired lavish "extreme life style."

"The theft scheme was not complicated," according to Greenspun. "Mr. Koger took out funds out of a

BB&T pass through account. While those transactions were covered up by various KMG accounting and administrative entries, there was no secret as to where the funds were going."

Koger embezzled the money and invested funds in personal accounts and businesses he and his wife were involved in, according to court documents, including: \$733,000 in Jordan's 8 restaurant on Capitol Hill; \$374,960 to pay a contractor to remodel his Oak Hill house and the Tri-Fitness, Inc. facility in Annandale; \$40,000 for a down payment on a 2005 Chevrolet Corvette convertible; \$60,000 for a down payment on a house in New Mexico; and \$56,668 for windows and doors for his home.

Koger also evaded \$775,273 in federal income taxes by failing to file personal income tax returns from 2003-06, according to the Internal Revenue Service. In 2005, Koger received taxable income of more than \$810,257.

FEDERAL SENTENCING may be the least of Koger's problems. He also faces three counts of attempted capital murder of police officers, two counts of aggravated maiming and five counts of use of a firearm in the commission of felonies in Fairfax County courts.

"The struggle for Mr. Koger only begins with this [federal] sentencing," said Greenspun.

Additional aggravated malicious wounding charges in the City of Alexandria Circuit Courts could also be prosecuted, although they have currently been nolle prossed, or set aside.

According to police reports and testimony at Koger's preliminary hearing in Fairfax County court in June 2008, Koger stopped his 1990 Jeep Cherokee behind a taxicab stopped at a traffic light at the corner of Seminary Road and

North Beauregard Street in Alexandria in the early morning of Feb. 2, 2008.

Koger got out of his Jeep, walked to the taxi driver's window and fired several shots into the cab. The driver was seriously injured.

Koger shot two other men in another car, who escaped him by driving into the Fairfax County Police Station on Franconia Road.

"These incidents are without reason and there is not any evidence of motive," according to Greenspun, who called the incidents "serious events" although "nothing but the delusional actions of a very challenged and intoxicated man."

Koger eventually fled in his Jeep to elude a Virginia State trooper. Koger crashed into a traffic control box in front of Springfield Shopping Mall, and got out of his car with a firearm in his hand.

When Koger fired his weapon, the trooper and Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority officers shot back, hitting Koger in the midsection. He was hospitalized with life-threatening injuries, but recovered.

After being shot, Koger said, "Help me, they're coming to get me."

Koger had a blood alcohol content of .25 or higher — three times the legal limit in Virginia to drive — according to federal court documents.

In August, Greenspun, filed notice of Koger's possible intent to claim the insanity defense.

"Law enforcement, family and defense counsel have not been able to identify any assaultive behavior in the span of Mr. Koger's life," he said.

Koger faces more than three life terms in prison if convicted in Fairfax County Circuit Court. His trial on those charges is currently scheduled for later this month.

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OPINION

Gun Show Loop Hole Stays Open

Affront to families of Virginia Tech victims leaves option open for felons and people with documented mental illness to buy guns.

It's a common sense measure that wouldn't stop a single qualified Virginian from buying a gun. We have the technology to implement it without massive expense or additional bureaucracy.

Right now, some of the guns sold at gun shows in Virginia are sold without the background check required of gun sales in any other official setting. This allows even convicted felons, stalkers with restraining orders against them, and people with documented mental health problems that could make them a danger to themselves or others a clear path to purchasing a firearm.

EDITORIAL

There is no reason for this.

In November, at the "Nation's Gun Show" the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly was the scene of record gun sales. It was an ebullient gathering of people with shared interests, and no doubt all but the tiniest percentage of participants were law-abiding, responsible people, fully qualified to own the guns they were buying. The record sales were motivated in part because of concern by some gun enthusiasts about new restrictions on some firearms that could come with Democratic control of Congress and the White House, and in part because of the recession.

Why would those people want to run the risk that a tragedy like the one at Virginia Tech nearly two years ago that claimed the lives of 33 people would involve a gun purchased without a proper background check at the Nation's Gun Show?

For the record, the Virginia Tech shooter was able to buy his guns legally because his name was mistakenly not included on the list of those excluded from gun ownership; he was previously ruled a danger to himself or others and should not have been able to buy from a licensed gun dealer. But if he had been excluded through normal means, he could have traveled a few miles from his home to the gun show in Chantilly in search of weapons he could buy without a background check.

In any event, legislation in the General Assembly that would have closed the gun show loophole is dead for this year. Only one Northern Virginia senator, Ken Cuccinelli, voted against closing the loophole.

Budget Dominates Assembly Discussions

BY MARGI VANDERHYE
STATE DELEGATE (D-34)

lition observed from the gallery.

We are halfway through our legislative session. All the bills that originated in the House have been passed or voted down in committee or on the floor and will now be considered by the Senate. We begin to deliberate this week on the bills that were passed in the Senate, some of which are similar to bills considered by the house.

One example of a bill that has a "twin" is HB2200, my bill to create a fund to treat underserved women with breast or cervical cancer. The bill passed unanimously with many co-sponsors from both parties. In the Senate, Mary Margaret Whipple (D-Arlington) introduced a version of the bill that also passed unanimously. The bills will be assigned to a conference committee to work out small differences between the two. This kind of affirmation reinforces the chance that the legislation will ultimately pass each house and be signed into law by the governor. The Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention and Treatment Fund will qualify for a two-to-one federal match and will reduce health-care costs and mortality through early diagnosis and treatment for indigent Virginia women. After working for more than a year, with the guidance and advice of numerous stakeholders and legislators on both sides of the aisle, I was thrilled to have HB2200 pass unanimously as representatives from the Virginia Breast Care Coa-

AT THIS WRITING I expect favorable consideration on several more of my bills that were reported out of committees without opposition. One of them is HB2201 that calls for consolidating the councils that advise the governor on research and development in technology. When enacted, the new streamlined technology authority will reduce current costs and will include university presidents, financial leaders and entrepreneurs among its appointees in order to make sure that our critical technology industry remains vibrant.

Another of my bills, HB2171, will remove legal barriers to farmers who want to invest in waste to energy technologies, such as methane digesters. The legislation paves the way for economic development for our farming communities, offers a way to clean up our water supply and gives us a chance to develop an alternative energy source right here in Virginia. On two headline issues that our citizens consider important, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that a compromise was reached to place limitations on smoking in restaurants, an important step to reduce the effects of second-hand smoke and related health-care costs. Considerable effort will be made to keep the compromise intact throughout the



RICHMOND
REPORT

remainder of the session. The bad news is that once again, both the Senate and the House have declined to close the gun-show loophole, a measure that has overwhelming support in our district and throughout Northern Virginia. Despite intense lobbying, there is almost no chance this legislation will come to an up or down vote on the House floor before 2010.

THE BUDGET continues to dominate the discussions and debates in both houses. The extent to which the federal stimulus package will affect our Virginia

economy remains uncertain, but any help in transportation and education funding can offset some of the painful choices we must consider to close our current deficit of more than \$3 billion. A special session of the legislature is possible this spring to assess the impacts of the stimulus funds. Each of the bills I have successfully introduced this session have benefited from bipartisan cooperation and support. I hope that the budget deliberations receive the same serious bipartisan collaboration. The stakes for Virginia are too high to do otherwise.

As always, I welcome your comments and views about our state government. You can still fill out my survey by going to www.vanderhye.com. Thank you.

VIEWPOINTS

Valentine's Day: Celebration of Love

Clint Leonard,
McLean High School
Class of '09

"It's a day where people love each other."

Natalie Holm,
McLean High School

"It's just a day where you can go all out about your feelings for someone. On a normal day it would be weird, but Valentine's Day gives you an excuse."



— MERRILL ROTH AND
DANIELLE LANDAU

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Rotarians Present Annual Awards

FROM PAGE 3

Lam said she started Union of Productive Performances in part for her grandparents, who never got to see her play the violin after she moved from Hong Kong when she was little. She said she liked playing at the senior citizens residence because she thought the elderly appreciated the performances more than others might, "and it reminds me of my grandma, and I hope she'll see that."

After Marriott and her family spent a week volunteering in India with Rising Star Outreach, an agency that works with leprosy colonies, Marriott brought the founder of the organization to her school for an assembly, DeRose said. The next week, she organized a fundraiser that raised \$1,000 for Rising Star.

Upon Marriott's enrolment in

the Potomac School, "It was immediately apparent to everyone in our community that she was an exceptional student and a great person," said Doug Cobb, one of her teachers, noting that she juggles homework with varsity sports throughout the school year. Despite her rigorous schedule, "which, frankly, makes me ex-

hausted just looking at it," Cobb said, Marriott still finds time to volunteer, working as a student leader in the Community Service Club and a youth leader in her church's Young Women's Presidency, and

sewing blankets for patients at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

"I tried my best to find even a tiny bit of cynicism in Elyse and it was impossible," Cobb said. On top of all this, he said he suspected the slight high-school senior was "pound-for-pound, probably the world's donut-eating champion."

"I tried my best to find even a tiny bit of cynicism in Elyse and it was impossible."

— Doug Cobb

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'Community Business' In Great Falls

The staff of Elite Fitness Concepts on Colvin Run Road in Great Falls, along with the friends and clients of gym owner Joe Cassella, are working together on a special project this year — keeping the business going strong while Cassella faces a daunting personal health challenge, a rare form of cancer. “Our goal is to take some of the stress off of Joe and his family so that they can concentrate fully on his treatment and recovery,” Joe Femia, long-time friend and client, said. “We thought the best thing we could do was to free him from some of the day-to-day tasks, so that he had one less thing to worry about.”

“No one should feel like they have to carry this kind of burden on their own,” Bob Morris, friend and client, said. “One of the great things about this community is that we rally around our neighbors in rough times. We’re not doctors, but we can help ensure the health of Joe’s business, so that just seemed like the most useful thing we could do.” Cassella and partner, Scott Ackerman, started the gym in 1998 in the center of Great Falls and moved to its present location in 2001. Ackerman will soon be opening up a second Elite Fitness in Ashburn. “It was always Joe’s dream to have a facility for everyone in the community,” Femia said, “a place to get expert fitness advice that is safe, clean and comfortable. The staff is like one big family.”

A small group of friends are working with the staff of Elite Fitness Concepts to promote special discounts and membership packages that will be offered for Valentine’s Day and beyond. “The nicest thing about



CONTRIBUTED

Personal trainer and business partner Jason Stavish works with Andrew McLean at Elite Fitness Concepts on Colvin Run Road.

the gym is that it’s a friendly place to go, it has everything you need and it’s right down the street,” said member Candace Campbell. “It’s our neighborhood workout place, not a big chain, and you always run into friends and neighbors, which makes working out more fun. Joe always had a smile for everyone. We’re all looking forward to the day he can come back to work.”

“Our hope is that, at some time in the not too distant future, Joe will be able to come back to the gym and it will be as if he never took any time off,” Peter Garahan, friend and client, said. “What better gift could we give him?” Individuals interested in purchasing discounted packages, memberships or gift certificates can call 703-759-7820 or visit the gym’s Web site at www.elitefitnessconcepts.com In addition, members can pick up free guest passes at the front desk to give to someone they know is thinking about joining.

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COMMUNITY

Studios Honors Arts Supporters

Doris Leadbetter and Sharon Rainey win awards from Great Falls art group.

Two patrons of the Great Falls art scene were singled out for special recognition by Great Falls Studios at the art group's annual meeting Thursday evening at the Great Falls Community Library. Doris Leadbetter and Sharon Rainey both received awards for their support of the arts in the community.

Leadbetter, a Realtor headquartered in Great Falls, has been a major force behind the local arts movement for several years. Shortly after the artists first organized themselves into a support network called Great Falls Studios, she began providing financial help, offered space in her offices for the artists to exhibit, sponsored art receptions and helped promote art events. Leadbetter is now associated with the Keller Williams real estate company.

Rainey, who runs Internet information networks in Great Falls and adjoining communities to keep residents current on local events, has spread the word about Great Falls Studios, helping the group become better known throughout the region. Her company, called Neighbors Network, provides business referrals and local information for the greater Northern Virginia and Maryland suburban areas through its Web site and e-mail networks. Last year, Rainey also helped artists to participate in the Great Falls Farmer's Market, providing booth space.

Each received a framed print by Great Falls Studios photographers. The prints — one by Walt



Great Falls Studios president Laura Nichols presents a print to Sharon Rainey, right, at the art group's annual meeting. The award is to honor Rainey for her support of the growing arts movement in Great Falls on her Neighbors Network, an e-mail exchange.

PHOTOS BY AL REITAN



Longtime art patron Doris Leadbetter, right, receives her award from Nichols at the Great Falls Studios annual meeting in recognition of her longtime support of local arts.

Lawrence, the other by Al Reitan — are of scenes in Great Falls. They are intended to symbolize the importance of the arts to quality of life in the Great Falls community.

"Our thriving arts movement in Great Falls starts with more than 75 artists who live here, but it gets its momentum from friends, supporting businesses and patrons in

Great Falls who have come to believe in the importance of nurturing the arts," Cindy Grisdela, a board member of Great Falls Studios, said. "We owe much to these people and we're proud to single out Sharon and Doris for their extraordinary help in putting Great Falls on the map as a center for the arts in Fairfax County."

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PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Community outreach coordinator, Sean Whinnie, artistic director Mark Krikstan and spokesperson/set builder Brad Kalbfeld stand on the set of "Pig Farm."



PHOTO BY BRAD KALBFELD/1ST STAGE

Wife, husband, farmhand, EPA agent ... the professional cast of "Pig Farm," the third production of 1st Stage Theatre at Tysons Corner.

CALENDAR

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

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 11

Sonya Kitchell, "Burn Brightly," Residency and John Shannon. Acoustic/indie. 8 p.m. \$10. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Chris Bohjalian signs 'Skeletons at the Feast.' 7 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 7851 L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. 703-506-2937 or www.bn.com.

Great Falls Historical Society. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The Great Falls Historical will meet with special guest Jorge Adeler of Adeler Jewelers, who will talk about his travels over the world in search of gems and coins. Free. Visit www.GHFS.org or call 703-759-9188.

Mothers First Book Club. 7:30 p.m., Amphora Restaurant, 377 Maple Ave. West. Discuss "Love in the Time of Cholera" by Gabriel Garcia-Marquez. Call Ceci Campbell at 703-281-0380.

THURSDAY/FEB. 12

Rokia Traore. Progressive West African music. 8 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$25. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

Taarka and Whiskey Rebellion. 8 p.m., Jammin' Java, 227 E. Maple Ave., Vienna. Taarka, a gypsy string quartet, performs live with local band Whiskey Rebellion. Visit www.jamminjava.com and www.taarka.com.

FRIDAY/FEB. 13

Julie Murphy Wells, Sophisticated Lady. Jazz and Broadway tunes. 8 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$20. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

K-Beta, Bo Jankans and D II. Rock. 10 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.

Pig Farm. 8 p.m., 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. 1st Stage presents "Pig Farm," a comedy by Greg Kotis, playwright of "Urinetown." Tickets: \$25/adults, \$15/students; call 1-800-838-3006 or visit www.1ststage.com.

SATURDAY/FEB. 14

Shemekia Copeland, blues vocals. 7:30 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$20. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

Crash Boom Bang, Boys Will Be Boys, Sunset Shootout and Surprise Attack. Pop/rock. 5:30 p.m. \$15. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Mambo Sauce. Hip-hop. 10 p.m. \$12. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. N.E., Vienna. 703-255-1566 or www.jamminjava.com.

Valentine's With Noah's Ark Animal Workshop, 2 p.m. Come and make your own teddy bear valentine. The Noah's Ark Animal Workshop promises to be a fun-filled event. Age 6-12. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-757-8560.

Propogation Workshop. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. Horticulturist Tammy Burke will show how to start annuals and perennials from seeds and cuttings. Free. Reservations required; call 703-255-3631.

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McLean Symphony. 7:30 p.m., Alden Theater, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingelside Ave., McLean. A celebration of love, Latin style with the music of the Americas. General Admission: \$25/person; \$20/seniors; \$12/youths 18 and under. Call the Alden Theater Box Office at 703-790-9223.

Fairfax Jubil-Aires Barbershop Harmony Chorus Singing Valentines, at a location of your choosing. Contact Ron at 703-978-7691 or order online at www.fairfaxjubilaires.org.

Jim West's Puppets. 2 p.m., 1234 Ingelside Ave., McLean. Jim West and Jeremy Wingle of Jim West's Puppets will perform Aesop's Fables II. Tickets: \$12/person, \$8/McLean district residents. Call 703-573-SEAT or visit www.ticketmaster.com for tickets.

Dinner Dance and Silent Auction. 6 p.m., American Legion Auxiliary, 330 Center St. N., Vienna. The American Legion Auxiliary is holding a Valentine's Day Dinner Dance and Silent Auction to benefit the Auxiliary Emergency Fund. Tickets: \$35/person; call 703-625-5736 for tickets.

Pig Farm. 4 and 8 p.m., 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. 1st Stage presents "Pig Farm," a comedy by Greg Kotis, playwright of "Urinetown." Tickets: \$25/adults, \$15/students; call 1-800-838-3006 or visit www.1ststage.com.

SUNDAY/FEB. 15

The Virginia Opera and "Tosca," 2 p.m. George Mason University Concert Hall on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University, at the intersection of Braddock Road and Route 123. A pre-performance discussion, free to ticket holders, begins at 1:15 p.m. on

The Virginia Opera performs 'Tosca,' Feb. 15 at the George Mason University Concert Hall on the Fairfax campus of George Mason University. A pre-performance discussion, free to ticket holders, begins forty-five minutes before the performance on the Center's Grand Tier III.

the Center's Grand Tier III. Tickets are \$44-\$98. Charge by phone at 888-945-2468 or at www.tickets.com. www.gmu.edu/cfa.

Pleasant Piano. 3 p.m., Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingelside Ave., McLean. Chamber music. Free. Tickets are not required. Call 703-790-0123.

Maple Syrup Boil-Down. 12-2 p.m., Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Mason Maddox will demonstrate the maple syrup-making process and guests can sample syrup served on cornbread made from cornmeal milled onsite. \$5/adults, \$4/children, free/children under 4.

Call 703-759-2771.

Pig Farm. 2 and 6 p.m., 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. 1st Stage presents "Pig Farm," a comedy by Greg Kotis, playwright of "Urinetown." Tickets: \$25/adults, \$15/students; call 1-800-838-3006 or visit www.1ststage.com.

TUESDAY/FEB. 17

Book Discussion, 10:30 a.m. Call the branch for title. Adults. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-757-8560.

Langley Chamber Orchestra performing Celtic music at the Old Brogue in Great Falls. Shows are 6 p.m. and 8 p.m., \$10.00 per ticket. Call 703-759-3309 for reservations.

The Von Bondies and Nico Vega. Rock. 8 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.

Beer Dinner, 6:30 p.m., Wildfire Tysons Galleria, 3rd floor, 1714U International Drive, McLean. Wildfire will host a four course beer dinner where each of the courses will be paired with a different beer from Old Dominion Brewery. \$40/person. 703-442-9110 to reserve.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 18

Sonya Kitchell, Residency and Naia Kete. Acoustic/indie. 8 p.m. at Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. 703-255-1566 or jamminjava.com.

C. J. Chenier & The Red Hot Louisiana Band. General admission dance. 8 p.m. at The Barns. Tickets \$20. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. 1-877-WOLFTRAP.

Book Discussion, 7:30 p.m. Call branch for the title. Adults. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-757-8560.

Recital Series. 1 p.m., St. Luke Catholic Church, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The "Third Wednesday at One" recital series presents organist Jonathan Laird. Free. 703-356-0670 or www.musicianclean.org.

Professional Theater Comes to Tysons

'Pig Farm' runs four weeks.

By DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

For several years, a group of theater enthusiasts talked about creating professional theater in Fairfax County. In June of 2008, their concept became reality. Housed a quarter mile from Leesburg Pike on Spring Hill Road, 1st Stage Theatre opened its 100-performance seat theater in September. On Feb. 13, 1st Stage premieres a four-man play, "Pig Farm." The play's original run, at the Roundabout Theatre in New York and the Old Globe in San Diego, was in 2006.

"We're trying to provide a place for young local talent to launch professional careers and get professional credits to their names," 1st Stage spokesman, Brad Kalbfeld, said. "Secondly, but just as importantly, we want to provide a local cultural center where people can see new productions at a reasonable price.

"1st Stage would like to be part of the betterment of Tysons Corner."

For the principals and founding members, 1st Stage is a labor of love, Kalbfeld said.

Only artists are paid; all others, from artistic director to operations, set design and construction, and fund raising, are volunteers. Volunteers pitch in where ever help is needed.

"We all find the time when we can do what we can contribute to the success of the theater," Kalbfeld said. Kalbfeld and artistic director, Mark Krikstan, are retired. Krikstan spent 12 years teaching drama at George C. Marshall High School, leading the school's One-Act Play drama team to the state championship five times. Kalbfeld worked as a broadcast reporter and editor for the Associated Press in Washington, D.C., and Great Britain.

"There's no professional theater in Fairfax County," Krikstan said. "Kids go off to college majoring in theater and have nothing to come home to professionally. When I was at Marshall, I took kids on field trips to D.C. and New York, but never locally.

"That's where the impetus for this came from. To answer a need, to fill a void of the theater experience."

Founding members of 1st Stage are Krikstan, Deb Crierie, Alex Mandell, Lucas Beck, Nat Krause and Vienna residents Jane Kalbfeld, Brad Kalbfeld, Peter Van Valkenburgh, and David Winkler.

Jane Kalbfeld, Brad's wife, studied in New York under famed acting coach, Stella Adler. She works as a voice and acting coach now. "Mark has such an eye for detail and that's how I was trained," said Jane Kalbfeld.

There are approximately 15 people volunteering their time and skills to 1st Stage. Stage manager, Lauren Friedman, is a 2003 graduate of Marshall High School and lives in Vienna.

The theater company is a 501 (C) (3) nonprofit organization, primarily funded at this time by personal contributions. Ticket sales are 1st Stage's main source of financial support. "We are looking for opportunities to work with our corporate neighbors in Fairfax County," Brad Kalbfeld said.

FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT of "Urinetown," "Pig Farm" is part love story, part commentary on government interference, set against the backdrop of a 1,837-pig farm. Four professional actors perform the play on a set built by theater company volunteers. 1st Stage describes "Pig Farm" as the story of a "pig farmer who's struggling to keep his business going, whose wife is dallying with the new farmhand — a 17-year-old fresh out of Juvenile Hall — and who has suddenly come under the eye of the feds, in the person of a gun-toting EPA inspector asking questions about sludge washing up on the shores of the Potomac. When the feds demand a count of just how many pigs there are on the farm, havoc reigns."

"Pig Farm" is the third production in the five-show schedule planned for this season, the first. Actors audition for the roles in all 1st Stage productions.

THE 1ST STAGE VENUE is New York-artsy, a former industrial facility turned theater with soaring ceilings. The volunteers who conceived the theater company focused on making an environment that was "interesting and differ-

ent," Brad Kalbfeld said.

Sean Whinnie attended 1st Stage's first show with a friend. After the show, they talked to Krikstan, and asked, "How can we help?" Since then, Whinnie has avidly supported the theater company, becoming its community outreach coordinator and database master. Whinnie, an energy engineer by profession, said, "this is an organization of people. We can benefit from the skills set of every-

body."

Brad Kalbfeld calls 1st Stage an "intersection of learning and performance."

"Mark, Jane and others impart their knowledge and experience to a younger generation," Brad Kalbfeld said.

Presently, 1st Stage offers a Saturday class, taught by Lucas Beck, for high-school students. The company's goal is to offer a series of classes for both adults and students. 1st Stage plans on running a summer camp for high-schoolers.

"Our shows have gotten really rave reviews," Brad Kalbfeld said. "We have free parking, reasonable pricing for professional theater and we're less than a gallon of gas away from most places in Fairfax County.

"When people come here, they are going to be entertained and delighted by what young local artists are doing on our stage."

'PIG FARM' RUNS from Feb. 13-March 8, at 1st Theatre, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Suite LL. Parking is free. See <http://www.1ststagespringhill.org> for further information and for ticket sales.



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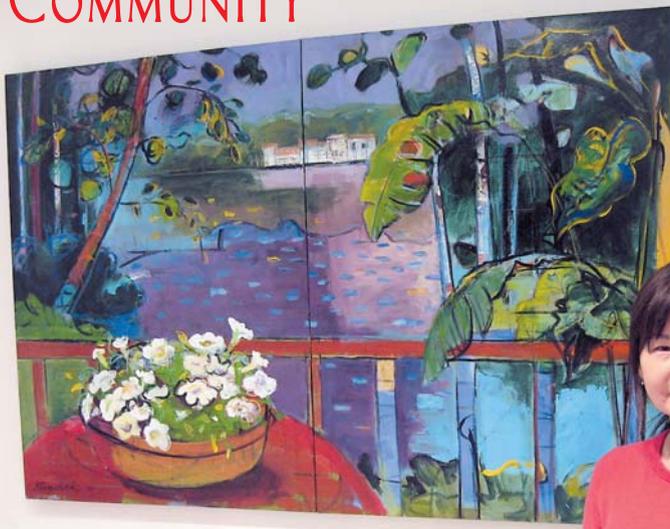
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COMMUNITY



Painter Jenna Klimchak joined the Atelier this month. Here, she poses with one of her paintings on display in the studio's gallery.



PHOTOS BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION



Artists and guests chat among the works of art.

Great Falls Artists Draw Visitors Artists' Atelier establishes regular open hours, invites public.

BY MIKE DICICCO
THE CONNECTION

Mollie Vardell, chair of the Great Falls Foundation for the Arts, said the artists at the Great Falls Artists' Atelier wanted the public to know set hours when they could drop in and check out the work being done there and visit with the

resident painters, potters, photographers and other artists. "We want to be accessible," she said.

So, in December, the studio, located behind Dante's Ristorante in the Colvin Run area, began holding monthly open houses on the first Friday of every month and also is now open every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon.

At the third Friday evening open house

Feb. 6, the Atelier introduced its two newest members, photographer Walt Lawrence and painter Jenna Klimchak. Lawrence had been a member of Great Falls Studios, an affiliation of about 75 local artists, for years, but he just moved into the Atelier this month. "I wanted an opportunity to work with these people and also have my work on display somewhere where people knew they could find it," he said.

Klimchak said she has a home studio and displays her work with the ValeArts group in Oakton, but wanted to expand her reach. "So far, everybody's been very friendly and welcoming and I like the work they do in here and the setting is nice," she said.

As the newest artists in the Atelier, Klimchak and Lawrence had their work on display in the studio's gallery space.

SEE ARTISTS, PAGE 13

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COMMUNITY

Artists Meet Community

FROM PAGE 12

Among the visitors Friday evening were Dick and Dee Buba from Reston. "We were surprised how good these artists are," Dick Buba said, noting that the couple had traveled considerably and seen many artists and that his wife also paints. "So we have some appreciation for art."

"It's an excellent show and it makes me go home and really want to work," Dee Buba said. She added, "The price range ranges from something almost anyone could afford to something most people couldn't afford."

Vardell said members of the public seemed to particularly enjoy talking to the artists, watching them work and asking questions about their techniques and inspirations. Eventually, Atelier artists hope to have more open hours, she said. For now, on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, "The studios are open, the artists are working and people are welcome."

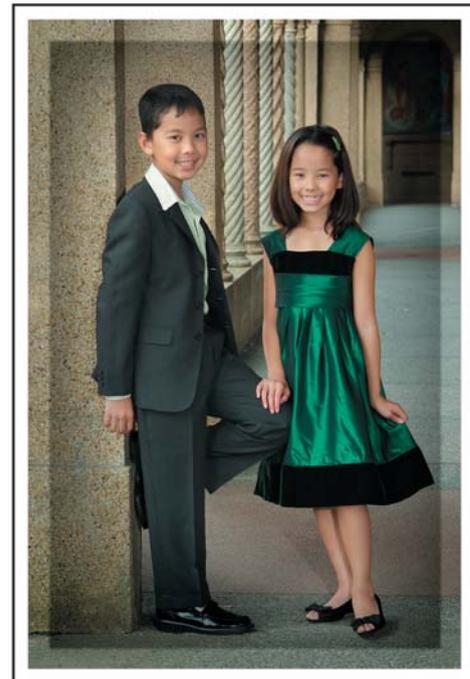
And the Friday open houses, held the first Friday evening of every month, also feature complimentary snacks and wine.



PHOTO BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION

From left, Atelier artists Jill Banks and Mehrnaz Moussavi, chat with Leesburg painter Trisha Adams and Herndon painter Tricia Ratliff.

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In Great Falls, Salome, 703-917-6467, or salome@connectionnewspapers.com

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In McLean, Lauri, 703-917-6460, or lauri@connectionnewspapers.com

SPORTS



Langley's David Helmer, right, defeated his district finals opponent, Andrew Tzikas, left, with a first-period pin last Saturday night.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/ THE CONNECTION

Helmer Focused on the Prize

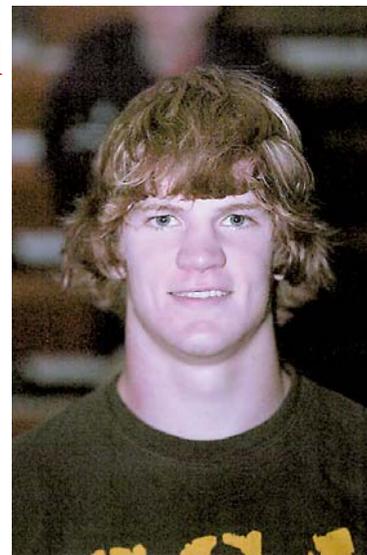
Saxon senior is on quest to defend region and state titles the next two weeks.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

When David Helmer wrestles, he is the aggressor in a match. The Langley High senior holds nothing back. From the start, he relentlessly goes after his opponent with a controlled ferocity that creates a momentum that ultimately leads to victory.

"My coach [John Belyea] always tells me I wrestle best when I go after it 100 miles per hour," Helmer said. "That allows me to stay aggressive and open with all my moves. When you come out hard, all [an opponent] can do is wrestle defensive."

Helmer, one of the top wrestlers in the Northern Region, is in the final weeks of his high-school mat career — an incredible four-year stretch that has seen the Saxon team co-captain build a 153-16 record with three Northern Region titles and one state AAA crown. Last Saturday night, in his 152-division weight class, Helmer captured his fourth Liberty District championship with a first-period pin of South Lakes' Andrew Tzikas. The No. 1 seed of his weight class, Helmer helped his Langley team win its ninth consecutive district crown. At the conclusion of the postseason meet, which took place at Langley, Helmer was named the



Northwestern-bound David Helmer.

"Davey's just a tough kid, no doubt. When he came in as a freshmen we knew we had something special there."

— John Belyea, Langley wrestling coach

tournament's Most Outstanding Wrestler.

"Davey's just a tough kid, no doubt," Langley coach John Belyea said. "When he came in as a freshmen we knew we had something special there."

HELMER, WHO has also been a standout football player at Langley, recently accepted a collegiate scholarship to wrestle at Northwestern University, a Big 10 Con-

ference school located just outside of Chicago. In some ways, it will be like going home for Helmer, who was born in the Windy City and spent some of his childhood years there.

"I committed to Northwestern before the season," Helmer, who officially committed on Nov. 11, said. "It took a lot of pressure off my senior year. I've been able to train hard and wrestle hard [this season]."

Northwestern is a strong academic school with an impressive wrestling program. Helmer said he will likely be red-shirted his freshman year, meaning he will not actively take part in matches next winter season. Instead, he will get used to his new surroundings, focus on schoolwork and get his feet wet practicing with the wrestling team. He considered going to other top wrestling schools such as Cornell and the University of Minnesota. But following campus visits to Northwestern last summer and fall, he knew that is where he wanted to continue his education.

THIS WINTER, Helmer has put together an outstanding 44-1 record. He broke through to win his first-ever Virginia state AAA crown last year as a junior and has continued to dominate this season. Winning the 152-weigh-division district title last week was his first postseason step toward what he hopes will be a second straight state championship.

This weekend, Helmer and the Saxons will compete at the region championships, which will take place at Fairfax High School. Helmer will be going for his fourth straight region crown.

SEE HELMER, PAGE 19

FAITH

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

Great Falls United Methodist Church is at 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-759-3705.

❖ **All Things New**, an ecumenical worship service every

Wednesday at 6 p.m. Based on the Beatitudes of Jesus, for people affected by anger, fear, stress, dealing with rejection, credit abuse, drug/alcohol abuse, physical/sexual addiction or eating disorders.

The **Watoto African Children's Choir** will perform at Providence Baptist Church, 8980 Brook Road, McLean Wednesday, **Feb. 11** at 7 p.m. A blend of African rhythm, contemporary gospel and ethnic dance. Visit www.providencetoday.org.

Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean, is hosting its semi-annual consignment sale of baby, child and maternity items Friday, March 20, 7-9 p.m. and Saturday, March 21, 8-11 a.m. 703-356-3567.

McLean Women's Thursday Bible Study, at 9:15 a.m. The Book of Proverbs will be the focus for the next 12 weeks. Contact Martha Wiles at 703-448-2020 or MarthaWiles@msn.com.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center offers ongoing classes on meditation and Buddhist philosophy, Mondays at 7 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. \$10 per class. 202-331-2122 or www.meditation-dc.org.

The Unitarian Universalist Con-

gregation of Fairfax, at 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton chorale, a 60-voice adult choir, welcomes new members any time and meets Thursdays, 7:15 p.m. The Circle of Music Makers meets the first Monday of the month, for those who can share a vocal or instrumental solo. Contact Judy Harrison at 703-281-4230, ext. 26, or jharrison@uucf.org. Joint Activities in Music at Sunrise is for preschoolers, kindergarteners, parents and residents of Hunter Mill Sunrise Assisted Living Center, on Wednesdays, 1-1:30 p.m. Contact Marsha Giusti at 703-425-1902 or giustim@juno.com.

McLean Bible Church Fitness Class at Body & Soul fitness. Balance is key, energy is renewed, strength is gained, and friendships are formed. Mondays 9:15 a.m. and Fridays 9:45 a.m. Childcare is free for registered students. E-mail bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org for more information.

A **Centering Prayer Group** meets Fridays, 9:30 a.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. The hour includes a brief reading related to Centering Prayer, followed by a 20-minute prayer period. E-mail Martha Thomas at mmthomas211@hotmail.com or call the church at 703-759-3509.

St. John's Episcopal Church supports over twenty outreach ministries, including SHARE, Habitat for Humanity, Martha's Table, and the Gen. Colin L. Powell Leadership Club at Macfarland Middle School in Washington D.C. Services at 7:45 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. 703-356-4902 or www.stjohnsmclean.org.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Jewish Outreach Institute offer the Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella of free educational events and resources. Jewish rituals, ethics and the creation of a Jewish home, regular meetings and group Shabbats and holidays. Participants include Sha'are Shalom, Congregation Beth Emeth, Temple Rodef Shalom and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia. ShalomDC.org.

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

❖ **Just Chill: An Anxiety Management Group**, for ages 8-10. Wednesdays through Feb. 18 at 6 p.m.

❖ **Teen Talk: An Adolescent Adoption Series**, for ages 13-18. Tuesdays through Dec. 23 at 7 p.m. Pre-registration required.

❖ **Support Group for Parents of Young Adults with Asperger's Syndrome and Related Disorders**. Jan. 28 at 7 p.m.

❖ **Social Club for Young Adults with Asperger's Syndrome**. Call for a schedule of events and costs.

❖ **Starting Over: A Widow and Widower Support Group**, meeting the third Monday of every month, at 1 p.m.

❖ **You and Your Aging Parents**, meeting the third Wednesday of every month, at 6 p.m.

Vienna Assembly of God has a ministry to children on Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m. at the corner of Center N and Ayr Hill Avenue, N.E. Children's Church on Sundays also available. 703-938-7736 or www.ViennaAG.com.


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No Surprise as Saxons Soar at Wrestling Districts

Langley wins three weight classes; 14 Saxons advance to regionals.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

There is really no stopping the Langley High wrestling team when it comes to district competition. Year in and year out, the Saxons prove themselves to be the best team in the Liberty District. That was the case again last Saturday night when Langley captured its ninth consecutive district crown at the postseason championships event held at Langley.

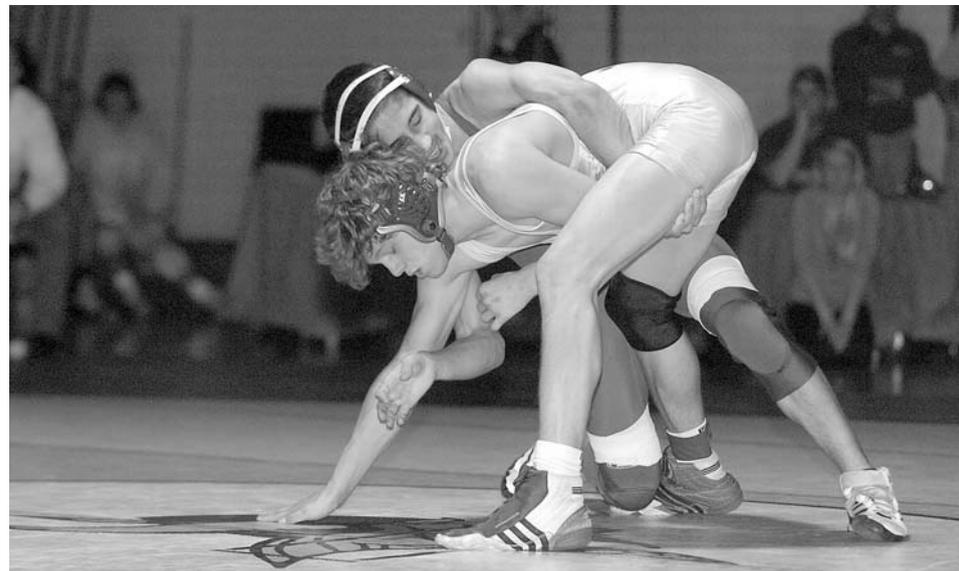
"We just get the kids ready for this time of year," Langley coach John Belyea said, in regards to his team's annual dominance at the district championships.

Of Saturday's title, in which Langley (193 points) finished well ahead of second-place Jefferson (138) and third-place Woodson (131), Belyea indicated that the Saxons' overall depth was the key.

"This team definitely wrestles together hard as a team," he said. "We had guys we expected to win, but we had other guys who were seven or eight seeds who finished in the top four."

Langley saw seven wrestlers reach the finals and three of those come away with individual titles. The three Saxon champions were defending state titleholder David Helmer (152-weight class), named the tournament's Most Outstanding Wrestler, Jay Ives (130) and Anthony Kotoriy (103).

Helmer, a senior, garnered his fourth straight district crown with a first-period pin



Langley's Matt Wilson tries to escape the grip of South Lakes' Ryan Forest in last Saturday night's 125 finals.

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

over South Lakes' Andrew Tzikas in the 152-class finals. From the start, Helmer (44-1) was the aggressor. He earned a two-point takedown on the edge of the mat in the first 10 seconds of the match. Several moments later he scored a standing takedown to go up 4-1. Before long, Helmer got his opponent on his back at the edge of the mat and got the pin. It was a dominant outing for Helmer, who had beaten Tzikas, 11-4, in a regular-season meeting.

Meanwhile, in the 130 finals earlier in the evening, Ives (28-16), a freshman, also won his finals match by a pin in defeating Marshall's Andy O'Meara, a senior and defending district champion. Ives led 2-0 after the first period.

He scored a takedown in the opening seconds of the second period to go up 4-0. Later in the period, ahead 4-1, Ives got his opponent onto his back and earned the pin with 1 minute, seven seconds remaining in the

period.

And in the 103 finals — in the match that started the evening's championship round of action — Kotoriy, a junior and two-time district champion going in, pinned his opponent, South Lakes freshman Austin Rosmarin (16-12). Rosmarin competed hard, but trailed 8-2 after one period before getting pinned with 1:16 left in the second period.

LANGLEY'S FOUR second-place finishers were Scott Jones (heavyweight), Josh Bates (145), Griffin Dulany (140) and Matt Wilson (125).

Jones, a senior and defending district champion, lost a tough 3-1 decision to Jefferson senior Matt Becker (25-5).

All things considered, it was an outstanding showing by Jones, who had missed most of the regular season with a chest injury. His three matches at districts were his first

"We had guys we expected to win, but we had other guys who were seven or eight seeds who finished in the top four."

—John Belyea,
Langley wrestling coach

outings since December.

"He's just not in [wrestling] shape," said Belyea, who said his heavyweight would work hard to get ready for this week's Northern Region Championships at Fairfax High School.

Jones recently signed a letter of intent to play college football at James Madison University.

Langley's Bates (35-14), a senior, lost in the 145 finals by pin to Jefferson junior Alex Shmorhun (19-6). The pin came late in the second period.

At 140, Langley's Dulany, a sophomore, lost to Jefferson's Mike Howard, 11-2. It was Howard's third career district crown.

And in the 125 championship, Langley's Wilson lost an 8-4 decision to South Lakes' Ryan Forest, a freshman who has competed in the sport for years.

Langley had two third place finishers — Cameron Kaihara, who defeated Stone Bridge's Ben Oslund, 6-3, in the match for third place, and Daniel Hozik (119), who was a 4-1 winner over Stone Bridge's Jon Sommer. Fourth-place finishers for Langley were JD Drasbek (215), Michael Pechstein (171) and Kiefer Hazard (160).

Now it's on to regionals for the Saxons, who captured the region crown two years ago before finishing second last year. In all, 12 Saxons will be wrestling at regionals.

After Slow Start, Langley Girls Team Is on a Roll

Second-place Saxons are getting ready for upcoming district tournament.

BY NICK CAFFERKY
THE CONNECTION

Following a trip to the Liberty District tournament finals last year, the Langley girls basketball team had high aspirations when this season began. Despite a rocky start, the Saxons (12-8 overall, 9-3 district) will not only be a major contender for the upcoming district tournament title, but also they will be one of the favorites to win it.

Langley started its season by stumbling out of the gate by going 3-6, including a loss to local rival McLean. In that nine-game span, the Saxon defense had trouble stopping opponents and gave up an average of

50 points a game. However, that would change, as the new year seemed to bring new life to the team.

"I think that it was the trip down to Miami that really helped us out," Langley coach Cheryl Buffo said of her team's winter holiday break venture down south. "We didn't start the season off like we wanted, but I think playing teams that we didn't know and [who] didn't know us gave us an opportunity to build team chemistry."

Since coming home from that holiday tournament, the Saxons have gone 9-2. Going into this week, they were just a game in back of first place South Lakes, who the Saxon's swept a pair of games from during the regular season.

If Langley wants to claim the upcoming district tournament title next week, it will most likely have to beat the Seahawks in their own gym, where the district finals will be held.

"I'm not quite sure why we have had such success against [South Lakes]," Buffo said. "The easy answer is that we have played defense well. They have three great players and we have done our best to deny them the ball."

OFFENSIVELY during the postseason, things will mostly be up to Saxon standouts Audrey Dotson, Rachel Warrick and Kristen Kody, who combined to average almost 30 points a game during the regular season. With any of those three players able to get hot at any time, it can make the Saxon offense hard to stop.

"With Kristen being more of an outside threat and Audrey and Rachel being more

inside, it makes it hard for teams to match up against us," Buffo said. "When all three of them hit their averages, we usually don't lose."

One of the keys in Langley's strong district run this season has been the team's experience from last year. Four of the five starters from that team are on this year's roster with a year more of experience.

"I think last year's trip to the [district] finals helps us a lot," Buffo said. "By upsetting Woodson in the semifinal, it gave the girls a great opportunity to play in that big of a game. If we end up playing South Lakes, that experience is something [the Seahawks] don't have and I think it gives us a big advantage."

The Saxons finish off their regular season this week with games against Woodson, senior night, and at Marshall. The district tournament will start on Feb. 17 with Langley hosting a team to be determined.

Dying To Find Out, Sort Of



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I have to admit, the pain was a bit unusual, and it had migrated so, at my wife, Dina's, insistence, I made the trek to my HMO's emergency room, relayed my symptoms to the receptionist and took a seat in their waiting room.

All things considered, the wait wasn't interminable, nor was it hours; of course, it wasn't minutes, either, but given the holiday-nature of the day, it could have been much worse.

And apparently, so could the diagnosis. After having my vital signs taken by a nurse, and answering questions from a physician's assistant, there was no clear picture (heck, at this point, it wasn't even blurry, it was completely befuddling, even after the chest x-ray was viewed) to explain my discomfort. It was so befuddling that the physician's assistant actually involved a doctor.

He asked me the standard questions. My answers offered no standard help. So much so, that I remember asking the doctor, if it only hurt when I make certain movements, perhaps I shouldn't make those movements; and then watching as the doctor shrugged his shoulders and said, "Yes, probably." And so I was excused, with the ever-popular: "If it gets worse, come back." And symptom-wise, it didn't; it got better, until five days later.

That's when the same physician's assistant called back. Still puzzled by my pain and lack of symptoms, she had, on her own initiative sought out the opinion of a Radiologist to review my chart/x-ray. Based on that consultation, I was urged to go to my nearest HMO pharmacy, that evening, to pick up a precautionary prescription to begin taking immediately. The concern was, despite being asymptomatic, perhaps I had a touch of pneumonia. And so it continued.

The next day, still improving and symptom free, my HMO called to tell me that they had ordered a CT Scan. Somewhat perplexed by their uncharacteristic speed, I nonetheless complied and went the very next day. TWO HOURS after completing the scan, my primary doctor called to discuss the results. Unfortunately — and surprisingly — there was cause (given my age and health history) for concern.

Perhaps I'd like to schedule an appointment to discuss the findings, my doctor suggested. "No, just tell me," I said. And so he did. There were lesions on my lungs that might be malignant. WHAT! Still unsure, however, the doctor scheduled an appointment with a pulmonary specialist as soon as possible. Two hours later, ON THE SAME DAY, the appointment was made for the next afternoon, with a P.E.T. scan to follow, all of which seemed incredibly fast and efficient given my previous experiences with this same HMO. Nevertheless, I was appreciative of their record-breaking haste.

The pulmonary doctor didn't interpret the x-ray and CT scan as the cancer threat that my primary care doctor and radiologist had (canceling the P.E.T. scan in the process), but nonetheless, suggested I return in a week, take a second x-ray and see what develops. And so I did. Still symptom free.

A week later, I'm back with the pulmonary specialist, second x-ray in hand. The second x-ray confirmed the doctor's suspicions that maybe I had indeed had pneumonia and so two weeks after the initial fact, I was once again excused; with the "We'll call you if ..." goodbye.

THE NEXT DAY, the pulmonary doctor calls back to say that, upon further review with yet another radiologist, he now wants me to see another doctor, a thoracic surgeon.

Five days later, I see the thoracic surgeon, x-rays and CT scan in hand. Likewise puzzled by what he sees, he apologized for his inconclusiveness and says he too, would like to review the x-ray and scan with his radiologist to get a better understanding A biopsy and/or surgery are certainly possible but he's not sure. Moreover, he's not sure another diagnostic test (P.E.T. scan, M.R.I.) would clarify anything. Let him review everything he asks, and he'll get back to me, probably in the next day or two.

THE NEXT DAY, the thoracic surgeon calls back to tell me that he now thinks I should have the P.E.T. scan and to schedule it as soon as it's convenient. And so it continues.

Four weeks later and still wondering. I wouldn't say I'm worrying yet, however, but I am beginning to have a little trouble falling asleep.

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

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Faith-based, non-profit has position open at Arlington-based shelter. Complete assessments of behavior, skills and needs; prepare written reports; monitor and direct program activities; and ensure the safety and security of program operations. Provides direct support to residents as needed and provides translations for program staff and Spanish-speaking residents. Req: Bachelor's in Human Services or a related field and 1 year of community-based social services exp. or a HS diploma w/2 years community-based social services exp. Pre-employment screening. EOE M/F

Contact lamoore@arlingtonva.us or fax: 703-228-0028

LPN (PT)

Faith-based, non-profit Provide health care facilitation for clients and coordinating health care needs of clients; monitor prescribed medication, contact client-stated physicians and/or health care providers for client services; health assessments; provide training to staff and educational groups to residents. Req: Licensure as a Licensed Practical Nurse in VA and at least 2 years recent experience, in substance abuse, social services, and/or residential programs. Must maintain own professional medical liability insurance. Pre-employment screening. EOE M/F.

Contact: hrjobs10.08@gmail.com or fax: 703-228-0028



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-Andrew Jackson

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PUBLIC NOTICE
PROPOSAL TO CLEANUP AN UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK (UST) SITE
There has been a release from an underground storage tank system at:

Rosslyn Gas
1625 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22209

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is requiring Rosslyn Gas to develop a Corrective Action Plan to address cleanup of gasoline at the site. If you have any questions regarding the cleanup, please contact:
Old Dominion Environmental, Inc.
185 Deep Woods Road
Louisiana, Virginia 23093
540-967-3188
Attn: Kathleen Albertson

The Corrective Action Plan will be submitted to the Northern Regional Office of the DEQ in February 2009. If you would like to review or discuss the proposed Corrective Action Plan with the staff of the DEQ, please feel free to contact Mr. Alex Wardle at 703-583-3822 after the date of the Corrective Action Plan submittal. The DEQ Northern Regional Office will consider written comments regarding the proposed Corrective Action Plan until March 15, 2009 and may decide to hold a public meeting if there is significant public interest. Written comments should be sent to the DEQ at the address listed below. The DEQ requests that all written comments reference the tracking number for this case; PC # 2008-3203.
Department of Environmental Quality
Storage Tank Program
Northern Regional Office
13901 Crown Court
Woodbridge, Virginia 22193

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PUBLIC NOTICE
PROPOSAL TO MODIFY CORRECTIVE ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED AT A PETROLEUM RELEASE UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK (UST) SITE

A petroleum release from former underground storage tank systems had occurred, and corrective actions have been implemented, at:

2758 North Washington Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is requiring Mr. Frederick Kline to prepare a Corrective Action Plan Addendum to address cleanup of petroleum fuel contamination at the site. If you have questions regarding the cleanup please contact:
John Diehl
Environmental Consultants and Contractors, Inc.
43045 John Mosby Highway
Chantilly, VA 20152
(703) 327-2900

The Corrective Action Plan Addendum will be submitted to the Remediation Division of the Northern Regional Office of the DEQ by January 30, 2009. If you would like to review or discuss the proposed Corrective Action Plan with the staff of the DEQ, please feel free to contact Mr. Randy Chapman of the DEQ at (703) 583-3816 after the date of the Corrective Action Plan Addendum submittal. The DEQ Remediation Division will consider written comments regarding the proposed Corrective Action Plan Addendum until March 6, 2009, and may decide to hold a public meeting if there is significant public interest. Written comments should be sent to the DEQ at the address listed below. The DEQ requests that all written comments reference the tracking number for this case; PC # 1991-1474.

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Northern Regional Office
Remediation Division
13901 Crown Court
Woodbridge, Virginia 22193

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The Fairfax Symphony held its annual Valentine Pops Gala fundraiser on Friday evening, Feb. 6, at the McLean Hilton.

Valentine Pops Gala at McLean Hilton



Mark and Donna Rogerson of Great Falls attended the annual Valentine Pops Gala.

PHOTOS BY
ROBBIE HAMMER/
THE CONNECTION

Helmer Pursues Two Titles

FROM PAGE 14

nomenal.”

He said winning last year's states was an incredible feeling and that he has been focused throughout his senior year on getting back and trying to defend his title.

“All I have thought about was when I won that state tournament match [last year],” Helmer said of his victory in the state finals. “It was a great experience and took the pressure off.”

Helmer, as a sophomore two years ago, had finished fifth at states after winning the region title. The following year, as a junior, he was determined to break through and garner a state title.

“Since I lost [at states] my sophomore year, I knew I couldn't let another opportunity like that get away,” he said.

Coach Belyea said Helmer has gotten better and better every year as a high-school wrestler.

“As time has gone on, he has had his eye not just on winning matches, but on getting better and preparing better,” Belyea said.

Helmer is athletic, strong and has outstanding balance on the mat.

“He's not only one of the best wrestlers in the region, but may be the top athlete in the region,” South Lakes High wrestling coach Bruce Hall said of Helmer. “He's phe-

nominal.”
HELMER, at last week's districts, enjoyed his team's success and watching his teammates excel more than his own personal accomplishments. He said the atmosphere surrounding the tournament was fun and festive.

“Watching guys on my team who hadn't won before [win titles] fired me up,” he said.

Of his finals opponent, South Lakes' Tzikas, Helmer said, “He's a good wrestler and tries hard. He hustles hard throughout the match.”

On the football field for Langley over the years, Helmer has played at running back on offense and in the secondary on defense. This past fall, Helmer rushed for 1,075 yards and 15 touchdowns for coach John Howerton's Saxons.

Like wrestling, Helmer loved his football experience at Langley. During the gridiron season, he did not have to worry about such things as making weight as he has had to do in wrestling.

“It was so much fun,” Helmer said of his football career. “All of my friends played football.”

Then, with a laugh, he said. “And I could eat as much as I wanted.”

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