

# Reston CONNECTION

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Annie Mae of Reston jumps into Lake Anne while participating in the 2nd Annual Polar Dip at Lake Anne in Reston on Feb. 7. More than \$17,000 was raised from the event for support of Camp Sunshine.

# Polar Dip Raises \$17,000

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## Remodeling The Process

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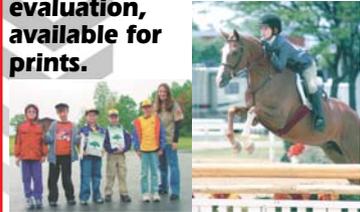
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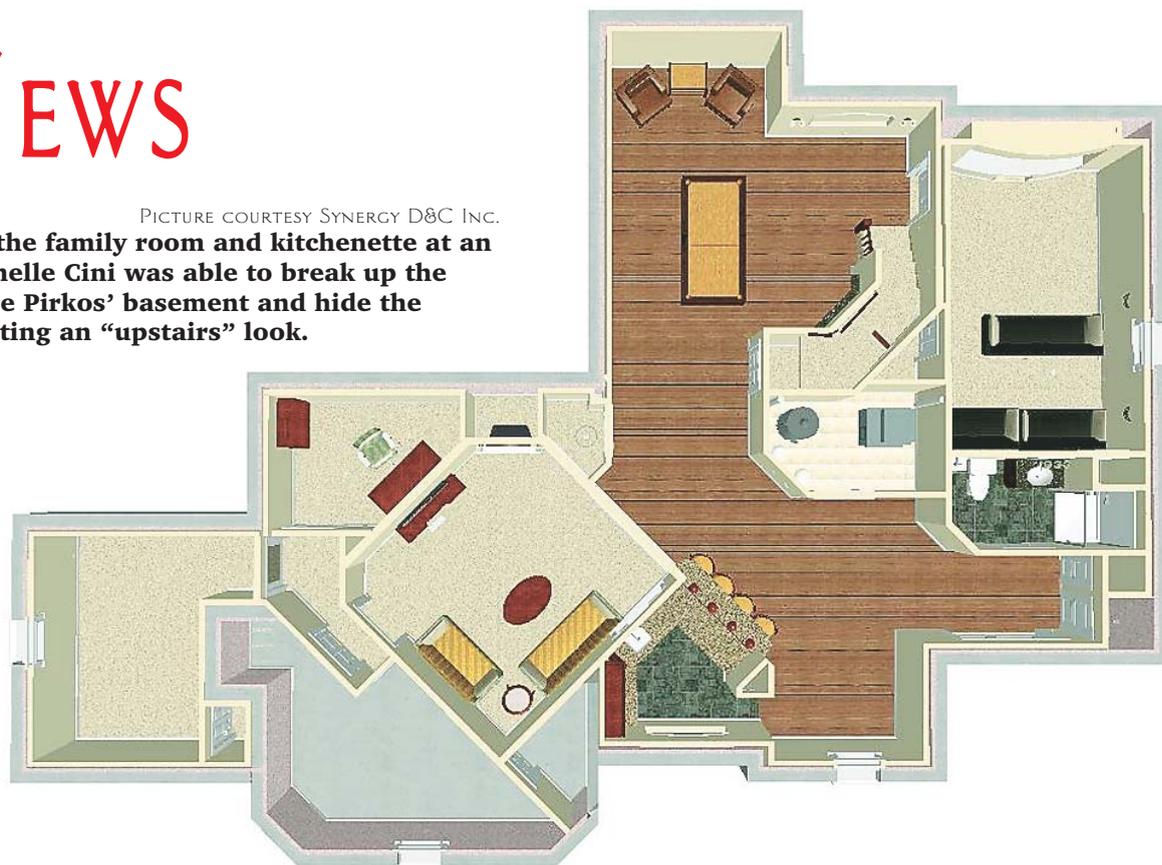
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# NEWS

PICTURE COURTESY SYNERGY D&C INC.

By setting the family room and kitchenette at an angle, Michelle Cini was able to break up the space in the Pirkos' basement and hide the poles, creating an "upstairs" look.



## Remodeling the Process

Local business attempts to defy recession by changing the way to renovate.

BY MIKE DICICCO  
THE CONNECTION

By most accounts, this is not the best time to start a business in the home industry, but that is what Herndon resident Mina Fies did last month, when she launched Synergy Design and Construction Inc. The Reston-based company consists of Fies, her husband Mark and designer Michelle Cini, who currently lives in D.C. but plans to return soon to her hometown of Reston.

The trio hopes to find success despite the plummeting economy by reshaping the process of home renovation.

The concept is relatively simple. Normally, homeowners who want to renovate contact a number of contractors and each company comes up with its own vision for the project and its own price tag. Instead, Synergy works through a detailed design with the homeowner and then puts the project out to bid among three or four of the 11 or so contractors with whom the company partners.

"We know we're bringing the best price for the plan we know they want," said Fies, the company's founder and CEO, noting that homeowners often have a hard time comparing prices when different contractors are proposing different plans made with different products and materials.

"The whole reason Mina and Mark and I wanted to start this was because we've seen the frustration on the part of not just the

PHOTO BY  
MIKE DICICCO  
THE CONNECTION  
From left,  
Mina and  
Mark Fies and  
Michelle Cini  
of Synergy  
Design and  
Construction  
sit in the  
home theater  
in Brian and  
Suzanne  
Pirko's base-  
ment, which  
Cini and Fies  
designed.



homeowner but also contractors," Cini said. She has been working as an interior designer and architect for six years and previously worked with Mina Fies at a home renovation company, now defunct.

Fies has worked in sales and marketing for design firms for 16 years and is a licensed real estate agent and mortgage specialist. Mark Fies, a business manager by trade, works behind the scenes as the company's chief financial officer.

"No one expects two women to show up

when they call a construction contractor," Cini said.

"The looks we get — 'You're not actually going to do the work, are you?'" Mina Fies laughed.

They don't do the heavy lifting.

**FOR EACH PROJECT**, the two women work out a few different plans and then, with the homeowner, combine elements of each plan into a final design, which speci

SEE BEAUTIFYING. PAGE 15

### VIEWPOINTS

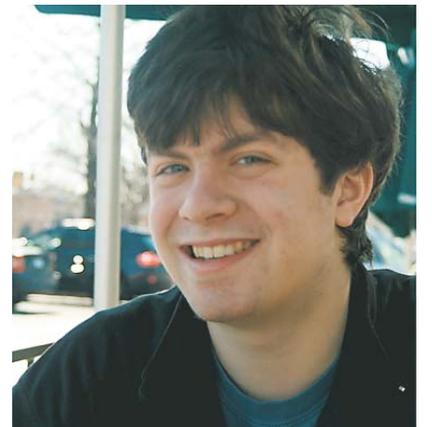
## Valentine's Day: Celebration of Love

— MERRILL ROTH AND DANIELLE LANDAU



Nicole Landau, Oak Hill, The Madeira School, ninth grade

"My friends and I exchange hugs, sweets and cards on Valentine's Day. It is such a feel-good holiday. Everyone really has an opportunity to 'spread the love'."



Sam Faktorow of Reston, Langley High School Class of '09

"I don't really like Valentine's Day because it is very commercialized. It's not so much about love as making up for treating your significant other poorly the rest of the year. It makes people feel better about not being the best boyfriend or girlfriend, but I think if you really care about someone you should treat them well every day of the year, not just one day and if not you should break up. I think they should change the name to Hallmark Day."



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."

# Bulova Becomes Chairman

Democrat wins special election by slim margin Feb. 3.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE  
THE CONNECTION

**F**ormer 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>51,965</b>	<b>50,759</b>

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.

## WEEK IN RESTON

### Reston Man Dies in Crash

Brian Chae Gun Piepergerdes, 27, of Reston, died in a single-vehicle crash in the Manassas area in the early morning of Sunday, Feb. 1. Two other unidentified men, ages 26 and 31, also of Reston, were flown to an area hospital with life-threatening injuries, according to Prince William County Police.

Police responded to the crash at about 3:45 a.m. A 2009 Nissan Murano, driven by the 31-year-old, had been traveling south on Prince William Parkway, approaching Balls Ford Road, when the driver lost control and hit a traffic-light pole head-on, police said. Piepergerdes, who had been riding in the front passenger seat, was pronounced dead at the scene. The 26-year-old had been riding in the back seat.

Police said speed and alcohol appeared to be factors in the crash, but no charges have yet been filed.

### DWI Directed Patrol Results

Fairfax County police officers conducted DWI directed patrols throughout the Reston District, to deter and apprehend intoxicated drivers on Friday, Feb. 6, from 9 p.m. until 4 a.m. Saturday. Motorists stopped for suspicion of driving while intoxicated were checked to assure that their abilities to drive had not been impaired by alcohol or drugs. Approximately 62 motorists were stopped. Three arrests were made for DWI. Forty-two summonses were issued for miscellaneous traffic offenses. Eight officers and one auxiliary police officer participated in the operation.

### Discussion of Intelligence Issues

The Hazak Active Retirees Chapter of Congregation Beth Emeth, Herndon, will present a talk by Mark Lowenthal, formerly assistant director of Central Intelligence for Analysis and Production, Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 1 p.m. Lowenthal has written extensively on intelligence and national security issues, including five books and more than 90 articles or studies. His most recent book, "Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy," has become the standard college and graduate school textbook on the subject. Lowenthal will offer an overview of the relationship between the American and Israeli intelligence communities. There is no cost and light refreshments are served. For more information, call 703-860-4515, Ext. 127. Congregation Beth Emeth is located at 12523 Lawyers Road, Herndon.

# OPINION

## One Forward, Two Back In Reston

BY JOHN LOVAAS  
CIVIC LEADER AND RESTON  
IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST

**R**eston Association, after having its bacon saved by its stream restoration contractor who patiently educated and calmed a once-howling mob, is about to stumble again. RA leadership plans to fast-track a referendum to authorize \$15 million to purchase a headquarters building. In 2005, the community passed a referendum for \$5 million for the same purpose.

**INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE** I know little about the new proposal and would like to know a lot more before I get a note in the mail asking me to vote yes or no. RA should accept the Association of Reston Homeowners and Clusters thoughtful proposal for a community dialogue on the question to clear the air before rushing to referendum.

The Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) for Lake Anne's revitalization/tweaking is just about in final form for presentation to Reston founder Bob Simon for his 95th birthday on April 14. County planning staff and Supervisor Hudgins' operatives were hashing out CPA provisions to send it to press on Feb. 10. This CPA will fill Lake Anne's future with mostly quantity, not quality, development. As we went to press, it called for:

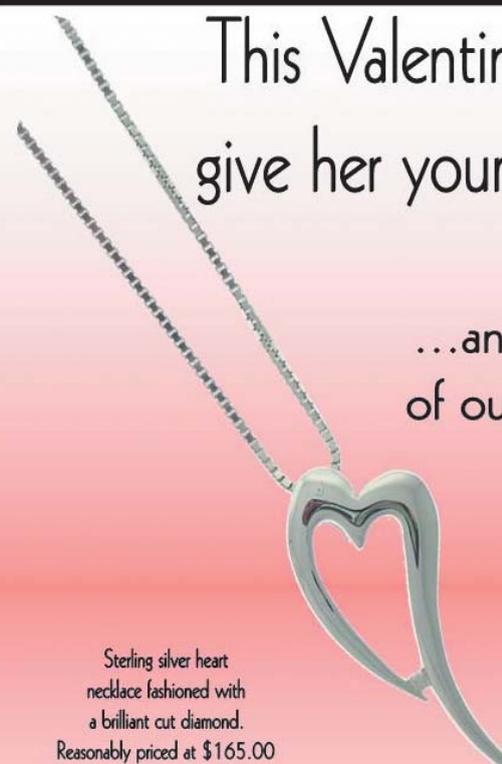
- Construction of 1,400 additional residences;
- Tripling retail from the current 40,000 square feet to 120,000 square feet;
- Up to 180,000 square feet of commercial space and possibly a hotel;
- To accommodate this, a minimum of six large garages.

A citizens alternative plan proposed much less residential building. The county's own economic analysis proposed two-thirds less. Also, at the last moment, county staff were about to yield to pressure to delete the LEED Gold Standard — high environmental quality and energy efficiency — for new construction proposed by yours truly and endorsed by Hudgins' community liaison group. LEED Gold is the norm in Montgomery County, but Lake Anne would be its first use in

SEE LOVAAS, PAGE 7

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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.

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.

### EDITORIAL

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.

## What's Alive, What's Not

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

The General Assembly has reached "crossover," the point in the legislative session when each house must have completed work on its own bills and begin to consider bills from the other house. Since bills are often introduced in both houses, it is difficult to say with certainty the outcome of legislation at this point in the session because the House and the Senate often take very different positions on the same issues. Differences between the House and the Senate on a specific measure are reconciled in the final days of the session in a committee of conference.

Here is what I know at this point in the session on what is alive and what is not, subject to further changes in the next two weeks. A smoking ban in restaurants appears close to passage as the governor and the Speaker of the House have both endorsed such a measure. I will vote for it. Bills to close the loophole that allows persons to buy guns at gun shows without a criminal or mental-health background check have been defeated on the floor of the Senate and in a House committee. I would have voted to close the loophole had a bill been reported in the House.

An increase in the state cigarette tax to help pay Medicaid costs associated with cigarette smoking has been rejected in House and Senate committees. I supported it. The issue may emerge again as the



RICHMOND REPORT

final budget is put together, as the tax would produce a couple hundred million dollars in revenue. Surprisingly the Senate passed a bill to allow concealed weapons in restaurants. The bill will pass the House easily, although I will vote against it.

The House passed a bill to override a directive by the superintendent of the Virginia State police that required chaplains to deliver nondenominational prayers at State Police functions. The debate sounded like a revival meeting as several members talked of their love for Jesus Christ. I voted against the bill. Bills that would

have banned the use of cell phones while driving died as the technical aspects of the bills and the exceptions could not be agreed upon. I supported the bills.

A bill to mandate insurance coverage for treatment of autism died in a subcommittee of the House. I supported the bill and had introduced similar legislation in the past. My bill to establish a 19 percent energy efficiency goal for the commonwealth was defeated in a House committee. A companion bill is being considered in the Senate. My bill to allow the Fairfax County Human Rights Commission to investigate discrimination based on sexual orientation was defeated in a subcommittee for the sixth-straight year. My bill to establish an independent, nonpartisan redistricting commission to draw legislative district lines after the next census was defeated in a House subcommittee, as were all others dealing with the subject.

Check on legislation of interest to you at <http://legis.virginia.gov>. The budgets of the two houses will be reported next week and will be the subject of this column at that time.

### BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-917-6437 with questions. Deadline is Friday.

#### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 11

**Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee.** 7 p.m., Hoover Conference Room, 765 Lynn Street, Herndon. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee will meet. Call 703-435-6804.

#### FRIDAY/FEB. 13

**Lincoln-Reagan Dinner.** The Republican Club of Greater Reston is hosting the seventh annual Lincoln-Reagan Dinner at 6:30 p.m. at the Hidden Creek Country Club, 1711 Clubhouse Road, Reston. \$50/person. RSVP by Feb. 9 to RCGR, P.O. Box 2891, Reston VA 20195.

#### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 18

**MOMS Club.** 10-11:30 a.m., Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. The MOMS Club of Herndon will host its monthly meeting. All Herndon and Oak Hill stay at home mothers are welcome. E-mail [herndon\\_moms\\_info@yahoo.com](mailto:herndon_moms_info@yahoo.com).

#### MONDAY/FEB. 23

**NARFE Meeting.** 11:30 a.m., Amphora's Diner Deluxe, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. The National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association Chapter 1241 will have a luncheon meeting. Christopher D. Allen, Advanced Financial Advisor, Ameriprise Financial Services, will speak. Call 703-435-3523 to make your choice of lunch entree for \$16. Visit [www.vanarfe.org/1241/1241news.pdf](http://www.vanarfe.org/1241/1241news.pdf).

### VOLUNTEERING

**Become a volunteer stream monitor** and help Reston Association assess the health of our streams. Assist with stream monitoring at several locations throughout Reston during all season. A **training workshop** will be held **Feb. 11, 7:30-9:30 p.m.**, at 1930 Isaac New-

ton Square, Reston. Contact Ha Brock, Volunteer Coordinator, at 703-435-7986.

The **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program** is seeking volunteers to deliver free tax preparation services at no cost to working families and indi-

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## THE CONNECTION

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# OPINION

## Lovaas

FROM PAGE 5

Fairfax County — if Supervisor Hudgins and her colleagues honor their commitment to green. Other major flaws in the CPA include: 1) extreme density — 125 condos, retail and garage/s — on the Lake Anne parking lot abutting and dwarfing the historic plaza; 2) no required safe crossings for pedestrians on North Shore; 3) no building height limits; and, 4) competing retail away from the plaza. The last chances for residents to speak out about the CPA are at the Reston P & Z courtesy meeting at RA, March 2, at 7:30 p.m., and the county Planning Commission hearing on March 11.

In Richmond, the Virginia Legislature is once again achieving both major public policy failure and dark humor. The Republicans in particular are addressing a budget gap so as to maximize prospects for a depression, while OKing guns in bars and endorsing gun sales to wife beaters, terrorists and Dick Cheney. Check out [www.VPAOrg](http://www.VPAOrg) to see who pays the bills and gives the gifts to lubricate the legislative gears and turn out favorable laws.

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Send announcements to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com) or call 703-917-6437. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit [www.connectionnewspapers.com](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com).

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 11

**Adult Book Discussion.** 10:30 a.m., Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Call for title. Call 703-689-2700.

**I Love the Color Red.** 10:30 a.m., Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Stories and activities. Ages 2-3 with an adult. Call 703-689-2700.

**Valentine's Day Storytime.** 11 a.m., Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Celebrate Valentine's Day with stories, songs, activities and a craft. Ages 2-5 with adult. Call 703-437-8855.

**Spanish Chats.** 7 p.m., Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Informal refresher for people who want to practice Spanish. Adults only. Call 703-689-2700.

## FRIDAY/FEB. 13

**Lincoln Day Dinner.** 6:30 p.m., Hidden Creek Country Club, 1711 Clubhouse Road, Reston. Reston Republicans will host the seventh annual Lincoln Day Dinner. Choice of entree (NY Strip Steak or Chicken Florentine), salad, dessert, champagne toast, glass wine. Cash bar. \$50/person. Mail check and entrée preference to RCGR, P.O. Box 2891, Reston, VA 20195. Call 703.406.9740.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 14

**The Fabulous Hubcaps.** The Fabulous

Hubcaps, an oldies and classic rock show band, will perform at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., 8-11:30 p.m. Tickets: \$35/person. Call Yvonne at 571-313-0189 or e-mail Chris at [cmogensen@cox.net](mailto:cmogensen@cox.net).

**Contra Dance.** 7:15-10:45, Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Celebrate Valentine's as Susan Taylor calls a contra dance to the music of the June Apple Band. Beginners' workshop 7:15-8 p.m., dance 8-10:45 p.m. Admission: \$7 (workshop free). Partner not necessary. Bring snack to share (juice provided). Call 703-476-4500.

**Valentine's Day at the Hyatt.** Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St., Reston. The Hyatt is offering two packages for Valentine's Day. Enjoy a three-course dinner at the hotel's Market Street Bar & Grill Restaurant, breakfast for two and champagne and strawberries for \$269 per couple. Stay in the Presidential Suite, have Dom Perignon, chocolates and more and wake up to breakfast in bed for \$2,999.99 per couple. Call 703-709-1234 for reservations.

**Chocolate Festival.** 10 a.m.-3 p.m., Floris United Methodist Church, 13600 Frying Pan Road, Herndon. Floris United is hosting the 17th Annual Chocolate Festival to raise funds for charity. This event is open to everyone in the community and will feature chocolate, music, games, door prizes, a silent auction and a live auction. For every package of diapers brought to donate, one raffle ticket will be given. Call 703-793-0026.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 15

**Capitol Steps.** The Capitol Steps Benefit Performance to benefit Reston

Interfaith will take pace at 7 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St., Reston. Enjoy wine, desserts, a live and silent auction and sponsorship opportunities. Call Amy McDowell, Events and Communications Manager, at 571-323-9582 or [Amy.McDowell@restoninterfaith.org](mailto:Amy.McDowell@restoninterfaith.org), or visit [www.restoninterfaith.org](http://www.restoninterfaith.org) to sign up.

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 18

**Newsweek Trip.** 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Join Reston Association for a trip to the Newsweek, the world's most interactive museum. This trip is for Senior adults, 55 years and older. Bus pick up locations at Hunters Wood Shopping Center, Thoreau Place and Lake Anne Fellowship House. \$30/Reston Residents; \$36/Non-Reston Residents. Call 703-435-6577 to register.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 19

**Canines in Reston.** 7-8 p.m., Reston Association, 1930 Isaac Newton Square, Reston. Learn about the behavior and how they are changing fox behavior. \$3/RA members; \$5/non-residents. Reservations required by Feb. 17; call 703-435-6530.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 21

**Norman Wright and the Travelers** are performing their bluegrass music at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon, 7:30 p.m. Tickets: \$12; call 703-435-8377.  
**Reston Chorale.** 6 and 8 p.m., Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. The Reston Chorale will perform two shows. Visit

[www.restonchorale.org](http://www.restonchorale.org).

## SUNDAY/FEB. 22

**Jazz Meets Rock.** 2-3 p.m., Frying Pan Farm Park, 2739 W. Ox Road, Herndon. Explore the evolution of style during the years when greats like John Coltrane and Grover Washington were kings. Free. Call 703-437-9101.

**Capitol Steps.** 7 p.m., Herndon High School Auditorium. The award winning political satire group Capitol Steps will perform to benefit the Class of 2009. Tickets: \$35/person; visit [www.fcps.edu/HerndonHS/](http://www.fcps.edu/HerndonHS/).

## MONDAY/FEB. 23

**Ansel Adams: A Documentary.** 7 p.m., Lake Anne Community Center, 1609 N. Washington Plaza, Reston. Join the Great Falls Group of the Sierra Club for this Emmy Award-winning film featuring scenery from the American West and photographer Ansel Adams. Contact Linda Burchfiel at 703-506-4310 or [larva@atglobal.net](mailto:larva@atglobal.net)

## FRIDAY/FEB. 27

**Organic Gardening.** 7-8:30 p.m., Reston Association, 1930 Isaac Newton Square, Reston. Join a master gardener for some information on organic gardening. \$5/RA members; \$8/non-residents. Reservations required by Feb. 24; call 703-435-6530.

**Audition.** 7:30 p.m., Lindsay C. Petersen Hall, 266 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. The Reston Community Players are holding auditions for their production of "Laughing Stock." There are 9 male roles and 5 female roles.



**St. John Neumann Parish Center, 11900 Lawyers Road, Reston, is hosting "Dancing Thru the Decades Swing-tacular" Saturday, Feb. 14, 8 p.m.-12 a.m. For only \$15, feast on desserts, get dance instruction from area professionals (for the first hour), then dance to the most popular dance tunes from the 1930s-1990s. All ages are welcome and dancing partners are not required. Call 703-860-8510 or visit [www.sjnthatreministry.org](http://www.sjnthatreministry.org).**

## ART

An exhibition of **contemporary landscape paintings and sculpture** will be on display at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon, **through March 9.** The reception will be held Feb. 21, 5-7 p.m. Large paintings by Jo Fleming of Great Falls and bronze sculptures by Bill Moore of Silver Spring, MD will be shown.

The **Elden Street Players** received 13 nominations for outstanding performance in three productions during calendar year 2008. The Washington Area Community Theatre Honors program announced the nominations at The Birchmere in Alexandria. WATCH is an organization of thirty area community

theater companies founded for the adjudication and presentation of annual awards recognizing artistic and technical excellence in community theatre throughout the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. The awards ceremony will be held March 1, 7 p.m., at the Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria.

Mandarin Oriental, Washington D.C., in association with Galerie Brigitte of Reston, presents an exhibit of modern lacquer, Vietnamese paintings, **"Blending Traditions: Contemporary Lacquer"** by Duong Sen. The gallery, located on the ballroom mezzanine level of Mandarin Oriental, Washington, D.C., will run the exhibit **now through Feb-**

**ruary.** The artwork is available for purchase through Galerie Brigitte. Call 703-860-2345 or visit [www.galeriebrigitte.com](http://www.galeriebrigitte.com).

Works by **Matthew Best** will be on display **through April 6** at the Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston.

**The Reston Museum** will be closed for renovations **through April 17.** A new interior and new exhibits are in the works. Children's Art Workshops will be on hiatus during the renovations, but Pat McIntyre's Art Workshop will continue Saturdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.



**Hank Kuhlmann** presents a mixed media exhibit including artwork from his "Tiffany-Style" stained glass panels, fused stained glass designs, collages, realistic and abstract acrylic paintings and crayon batiks. The exhibit is on display at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston, until Feb. 15.



Jane Ross with "Painting Number 3" from the "briar Series" and Karen Danenberger with "Morning Clarity Venice." Both paintings will be on display with other works from the two in the exhibit "Delight" at Jo Ann Rose Gallery, 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston through March 1.



The Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston, will hold "Focus Exhibitions" through Feb. 14. Works from Erin Antognoli, Joy Every and Marcia Wolfson Ray will be on display.

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# Reston Olympian in Behavior Management

**Resident goes to Special Olympics World Games as skating coach.**

BY MIKE DICICCO  
 THE CONNECTION

Ten years ago, Reston resident Helen Rose had never worn a pair of ice skates. But in the next few days,

she will be returning from the Winter Olympic World Games.

At this year's Special Olympics World Games, held in Boise, Idaho, Rose is coaching four teenage girls in speed skating and figure skating. As the only Special Olympics

coach for girls in the region, she is traveling with two girls from Richmond, one from southern Maryland and one from Connecticut. This is her first World Games.

"I do find it to be very rewarding to see improvement and engagement in a sport that I really love," she said.

Rose was in college when she decided she wanted to learn to ice skate, and she started working at the Reston SkateQuest rink and skating in her free time. Soon, she ran the rink's learn-to-skate program. She was also studying therapeutic recreation at the time.

"There was a need at the skating rink for instruction for kids with disabilities, so that's when I started combining my love of ice skating with my background in therapeutic recreation," Rose said. That was almost eight years ago.

**HER FIRST STUDENT** was an autistic boy named Tejus Sharathchandra, now 13. In the early years, Tejus was more interested in running into the women's bathroom, pulling the fire alarm or otherwise provoking reactions than skating, said his mother, Chitra, of Reston. Over time, though, Rose taught him to focus.

"You get it, the whole idea of behavior management," Sharathchandra told Rose, recalling that she had found Gummi Worms and stopwatches to be effective enticements to keep the boy on the ice.

When Tejus started participating in the Special Olympics a little more than four years ago, Rose went with him and became a Special Olympics coach. "The Special Olympics wouldn't take him without her," Sharathchandra said. "The first day we attended, they said, 'Don't come back unless you have someone to guide him.'"

When another coach stepped down two years ago, Rose became the head ice skating coach for Special Olympics Area 26, which encompasses much of Northern Virginia.

Meanwhile, Tejus has improved to the point that he now competes in speed skating without any help and has taken up long-distance biking, his mother said. His parents had given up on teaching him to ride a bike, but learning to balance on skates gave him the skill he needed. He now wants to bike 30 to 40 miles with his father on the W&OD Trail every day, Sharathchandra said. "Of course, now his doctors are concerned he's lost too much weight."

She said Tejus was also success

SEE ROSE, PAGE 11

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 All listings due by Monday at 3 p.m.

# Rose Goes to World Games

FROM PAGE 10

fully participating in a swimming class with children without disabilities and she and her husband were now thinking of enrolling him in a hockey program. Without Rose's influence, she said, she did not think her son would have been interested in any sport but swimming. "We're very thankful to have Helen in our lives."

While at SkateQuest, Rose also created a program for "adapted" group speed skating lessons, which is designed to accommodate the special needs of participants. Sharathchandra said it was the first program of its kind in the area.

ROSE now works for the National Recreation and Park Association, advocating for therapeutic recreation and programs that include both those with and without disabilities. Tejus will not be going to Boise, as he would have had to finish first in his event at the state level to qualify for the World Games, and he is much younger than most other competitors, many of whom are, as Rose put it, "men with beards."



PHOTO BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION

**Chitra Sharathchandra, left, has known Helen Rose since her son became Rose's first skating student almost eight years ago.**

Special Olympics spokeswoman Holly Claytor said Rose would be one of two skating coaches representing Virginia at the games. About 8,000 athletes from about 100 countries will compete at the games, which will feature celebrities, a Global Law Enforcement Torch Run and opening ceremonies comparable to those of the regular Olympic Games, Claytor said.

She said it was unusual for one of the organization's coaches to have taken up their sport after high school.

Rose, however, has managed to build on her high-school experience as a long-distance runner in order to compete locally in speed skating competitions.



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# Six Seahawks Advance to Wrestling Regionals

## South Lakes' Ryan Forest earns 125-division Liberty title.

BY RICH SANDERS  
THE CONNECTION

For the South Lakes High wrestling team, this winter has been a breakthrough season in which the Seahawks have put together a stellar 10-5 record. Following years of struggling to effectively be competitive within the Northern Region and district standings, the Reston public-school program has turned things around under coach Bruce Hall the past couple of seasons.

Therefore, South Lakes had high hopes of being among the elite teams at last weekend's Liberty District Championships, which took place at Langley High School. The Seahawks, who have just one senior on their current roster, finished sixth in the team standings. The placing might not have been as good as Hall and his team members would have hoped. Nevertheless, South Lakes, with a few breaks going its way, could have finished better. South Lakes finished with 91 team points, finishing just behind fifth-place Stone Bridge (93). Langley finished first in the eight-team field.

South Lakes, regardless of its final place in the tournament standings, had several positive showings at districts as one champion — Ryan Forest (125-weight class) — was crowned while two others — Austin Rosmarin (103) and Andrew Tzikas (152) — reached the finals. In all, six Seahawks earned place finishes — top four — to qualify for this week's region championships at Fairfax High School.

"I couldn't be happier with our program," said Hall, pleased with the way his squad has rounded into form this season.

**FOREST, SOUTH LAKES'** district champion, is just a freshman but has competed

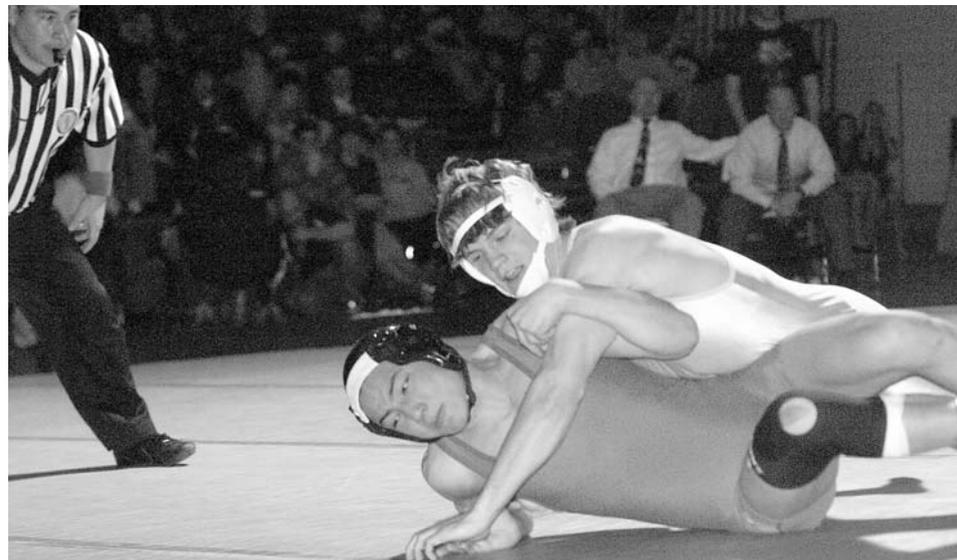


PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**South Lakes' Andrew Tzikas, bottom, made it to the 152-weight-class district finals before losing to defending state champion David Helmer, top, of Langley.**

in the sport for years. Watching him on the mat in his 8-4 finals win over 125-class opponent Matt Wilson (Langley), he showed the poise of a much more seasoned high school wrestler.

"We knew Ryan was coming [into the program]," Hall said. "I coached him as a youth. He was always extremely gifted as an athlete. He plays baseball and football, too, and has always been tough on the mat. He has always been mature. His demeanor on the mat is that nothing bothers him."

Forest (27-6) opened the scoring in the finals match with a two-point takedown in the final seconds of the first period. He later added to the lead with a two-point reversal 25 seconds into the second period to go ahead 4-0. By that point, he was in control of the match. Wilson (28-15), who had finished second in the district the year before, got into the scoring column in the opening seconds of the third period to make it 4-2. Later, with 1 minute, 18 seconds remaining, Wilson pulled within 5-4 on reverse points. But Forest got an escape point and, seconds later, got a two-point standing takedown with 55 seconds left to pretty

much seal the win.

Forest, upon being declared the winner, did not hide his emotions, throwing his right arm into the air in joyful exuberance.

"He was a little excited and happy," Hall said with a laugh. "That's as excited as he gets. As a coach it makes me feel real good to have Ryan." Forest said his takedown at the end of the first period set the tone of the match.

"After the first takedown, that started up my confidence and it kept on building," he said. Forest reached the finals with wins over Jefferson's Matt Lamb and Stone Bridge's Eric Vogel. He was pleased with the way he wrestled at districts.

"I didn't make many mistakes," he said of the three wins. "I had a bit of a sore throat, but [overall] I felt good going out there"

**IN THE 152 FINALS**, South Lakes' Tzikas (21-6), who finished third at districts a year ago, went up against one of the top wrestlers in the state in Langley senior David Helmer (44-1), a three-time region champion and a state champion last year.

Tzikas, who lost by decision to Helmer, 11-4, during the regular season, was pinned in the first round of Saturday's finals. 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," Hall said. "He's phenomenal. He beats the heck out of anybody. There are not too many wrestlers in the region who could give him a good [match]."

Of Tzikas, Helmer said, "He's a good wrestler and tries hard. He hustles hard throughout the match."

Tzikas reached the finals with wins over Stone Bridge's Ryan Purcell and Marshall's Misha Smarzik. In the finals against Helmer, he trailed 6-2 before Helmer got him onto his back on the edge of the mat and got the pin. A year ago after finishing third at districts, Tzikas continued to wrestle well at regionals and finished one win away from qualifying for states. This season, he has also been outstanding.

"Andrew is my best conditioned wrestler, by far," Hall said.

Also making Saturday's finals for South Lakes was Rosmarin at 103. A freshman and first-year wrestler, Rosmarin (16-12) met two-time district champ and defending region champion Anthony Kotoriy (38-4) of Langley. Rosmarin competed hard, but trailed 8-2 after one period before getting pinned with 1:16 left in the second period.

Rosmarin, who is nicknamed "The Freak" because of his gifts on the mat, defeated both Daniel Feldman of Madison and Stuart Maier of Jefferson to reach the finals.

"I knew he'd beat those kids because he's beaten them in the regular season," said Hall, of his ninth-grader. "We call him 'The Freak' because he has great stuff. He's a straight-A student."

South Lakes' other place finishers at districts were Ken Robair (third at 215), Alex Stanley (third at 189) and Justin Magerer (fourth at 140). Robair defeated Langley's JD Drasbek, 3-1, in the match for third place, while Stanley handled McLean's Will Stanton, 6-0, to garner third at 189.

## SPORTS ROUNDUPS

The **Reston Nightmares**, a U17 WAGS Division 4 girls soccer team based in Reston, is interested in adding players who are committed to continuous improvement. Contact either manager Andy Gluck at 703-328-2383 or coach Camilo Beltran at 240-277-1514 or at cmlbltrn02@gmail.com.

The **Herndon Ice Hockey Club** won its first Northern Virginia Scholastic Hockey League (NVSHL) title with a recent 4-1 win over McLean. The victory not only clinched the regular season title, but it guaranteed the team a bye in the first round of the upcoming NVSHL playoffs.

After a series of dominating wins, the victory over McLean did not come easy as the Hornets struggled in the first two periods.

Despite outshooting its opponent 11-4 in the first period, Herndon was unable to penetrate the Highlanders' netminder. The second period proved no better and ended with the Hornets in the unfamiliar position of being behind, 1-0. But the Hornets' league-leading offense finally woke up two minutes into the third period when junior Max Kortegast scored off a pass from Ville Rutanen. The goal seemed to wake the struggling Hornets and less than a minute later, senior assistant captain Chris O'Brien notched an unassisted tally to put his team ahead 2-1. The game remained close, but with just under six minutes remaining, freshman Michael Horn combined with sophomore Matt Ellison to open the Hornets' lead to 3-1. Thirty seconds later,

Herndon locked up the victory with an unassisted goal by junior Sam Stone.

Herndon was scheduled to finish off its regular season against North Stafford at Reston SkateQuest last week. Four Herndon seniors — Kyle Curran, Krister Kasulis, Andrew Norman and Chris O'Brien — were to be honored prior to the game in Senior Night ceremonies.

**South Lakes High junior forward Natalie Kendall goes up for a shot in a game against Madison last week. The first-place Seahawks will close out the regular season this Friday night at home against McLean. South Lakes will celebrate Senior Night. The Liberty District tournament begins next Tuesday.**



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



CONTRIBUTED

Ava McLin

# Ava's Story

Reston Burger King teams up with MDA in honor of Ava McLin.

“Crowns for a Cure,” Burger King’s annual fund-raiser, was kicked off last week on a particularly high note. Meghan Anderson, the Muscular Dystrophy Association’s program coordinator, planned the quick pep-talk event, jumpstarting the MDA-Burger King partnership. The Shamrock Campaign, which Anderson helps oversee, is a fund-raiser where merchandise is sold in stores and boutiques and the profits go to MDA research and funding. “Burger King Corporate got involved this year and is selling special crowns for the Shamrock Campaign,” Anderson said.

Ava McLin, a 3-and-half-year-old who lives in Reston with her parents Anya and Randy, attended the meeting to help inspire Burger King employees to sell the crowns for MDA funding. McLin, a girl who loves the outdoors, was diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy Type II in 2006 before her first birthday. Muscular atrophy is an inherited genetic disease that causes nerves in the child’s spine to malfunction; it is one of 40 kinds of muscular dystrophy. A cure for the illness has yet to be discovered. Contributions to MDA are directed to researching the 40 types of muscular dystrophy. Both Anderson and the McLin family look forward to Burger King’s help in the fight against muscular dystrophy. To learn more visit [www.MDA.org](http://www.MDA.org) or [WWW.FriendsofAva.com](http://WWW.FriendsofAva.com).

— DANIELLE LANDAU

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# 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 to 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 Connection Newspapers.

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PHOTO BY MIKE DICICCO/THE CONNECTION

Beyond the open area occupied by a pool table, the Pirkos' basement splits between another open space and the family room and other rooms beyond.

# Beautifying Home For 'Better Times'

FROM PAGE 3

fies "everything from the faucet to the light fixtures to the towel bar," Mina Fies said. The project is put out to bid among a few contractors the company knows well and that operate in the price range and scope of the renovation, and then Synergy acts as the homeowner's agent throughout the construction. "So the client doesn't end up being their own project manager," she said.

The process is similar to the approach that is usually taken in commercial design-and-build projects.

"Our concept is absolutely working. We're not only getting interest from clients, we're getting interest from contractors," Fies said, noting that the contractors save money in marketing and design work.

"They do a great service for both the homeowner and also the general contractor," agreed Jason Kirkpatrick, owner of Kirkpatrick Construction in Centreville. He said his company often competes with other contractors who aren't offering comparable plans or quality and that homeowners may not know the difference. "We try to educate homeowners on choosing a contractor," he said, "even if they don't choose us."

Kirkpatrick said he didn't know of any other company following Synergy's model. "There are companies out there that try to capitalize on connecting the homeowner with the contractor. What they do is so much more," he said, adding that Synergy capitalized on having each project built by the best contractor possible. "They're not going to bring me in on a project that's not a good fit," he said.

Kirkpatrick said his company does "very complicated projects that others don't want to or don't know how to" and only operates in Northern Virginia. Only when Synergy has a job that fits that profile does he expect to be contacted.

Kirkpatrick said he had also just brought Synergy in to work on one of his own projects, a partial home renovation and large addition to a home. He said he had

only ever brought one other outside designer in to work with him. "For me to bring anyone else in on any of our projects takes a lot," he said, noting that he appreciated Synergy's professionalism and ethics.

Having just launched, Synergy does not have any completed projects yet, but one project Fies and Cini designed together was the basement of Ashburn residents Brian and Suzanne Pirko, which was completed last May.

**AT FIRST**, Suzanne Pirko said, the couple just wanted drywall and a bathroom. "Michelle walked us through and had great suggestions that we never would have thought of on our own."

The 1,800-square-foot basement now houses a home theater, a family room, a kitchenette, a home office, a playroom, a storage room and open spaces, as well as the requisite bathroom.

Because of the arrangement and number of supporting poles in the community's basements, most of the Pirkos' neighbors have much of their basements taken up by a single long, open space. Cini avoided this design by placing the family room and kitchenette at an angle, hiding the poles in the walls and carving a number of smaller areas out of the space.

"It feels more like an upstairs than a basement," Pirko said. "People always say it doesn't feel like a basement."

Cini said this was a function of hiding the poles in walls, rather than in columns.

With the market depressed, Fies said, more people who might have moved are now trying to make their current homes more livable places to wait out the slump and are also looking for ways to make their houses more valuable for the time when they do sell. Many are also "in cash positions," having taken their money out of market investments and seeking other ways to invest it, she said.

And, she said, real estate investments remain among the safest.



Event organizers and staff from Body by Geoff take the last plunge during the annual Polar Dip at Lake Anne on Saturday.

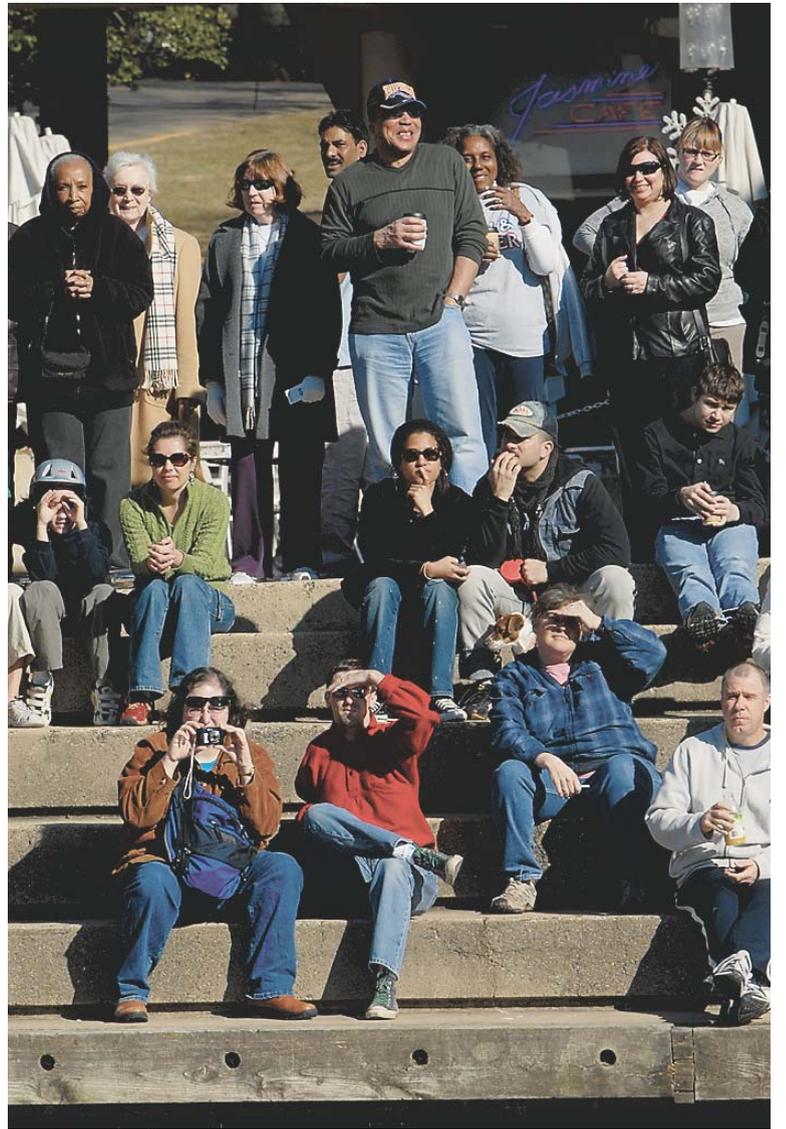
# Polar Dip Raises \$17,000



Heidi Marggraf of Reston participates in the 2nd Annual Polar Dip for the second time in Reston on Feb. 7.



Andy Susi and Bill Katrba, both of Reston, participate in the 2nd Annual Polar Dip.



PHOTOS BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

Friends and family of the Polar Dip participants watch the 2nd Annual Polar Dip at Lake Anne in Reston on Feb. 7. More than \$17,000 was raised from the event for support of Camp Sunshine.



Friends and family of the Polar Dip participants watch the 2nd Annual Polar Dip at Lake Anne in Reston.



Eduardo Faubert, chef and owner of the Jasmine Café in Reston, jumps into Lake Anne during the 2nd Annual Polar Dip at Lake Anne in Reston on Feb. 7.