

Springfield CONNECTION

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Colonial Experience

NEWS, PAGE 4

Monique Jackson shows how to assemble the hornbook during Island Creek Elementary's Colonial Day on Friday, Dec. 4.

Linking To Alaska

NEWS, PAGE 3

Meals Tax Voted Down

NEWS, PAGE 3

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CALENDAR, PAGE 10 ❖ SPORTS, PAGE 12 ❖ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 16

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Dr. Pamela Marzban

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Teeth Whitening...What You Should Know.



With the holidays around the corner, everyone seems to be coming in to whiten their teeth for their picture perfect moments. So before you start using whitening products that you may be completely unfamiliar with, you may want to read this article.

If you want to whiten your teeth, the best place to start is with a healthy mouth. Tooth decay, sensitive or cracked teeth, infections or periodontal (gum) problems should be diagnosed and treated before any teeth whitening procedure. Otherwise, you could experience discomfort. If using the right products, the whitening process is safe; however, it can aggravate existing problems.

Rather than heading to the local cosmetic counter or shopping mall in search of teeth whiteners, start with a dental check up. This way, we can diagnose the cause of discoloration—injury, stains from food or tobacco, antibiotic treatment and so on. Whitening products only work on natural tooth enamel, not on crowns, veneers, bonding materials or tooth colored fillings. Does this mean if you have any of the above mentioned conditions you are stuck with yellow teeth? Absolutely not! The diagnosis is important; from there, we can determine whether whitening will work for you and which product will suit you best; otherwise you could be wasting time and money!

Studies have shown the first thing a person notices when they meet you is your smile. Being a cosmetic dentist, I am aware of how desirable it is to have white, bright teeth and how it impacts your confidence, well being, and your entire life. By seeing a trained cosmetic dentist, you can achieve not only a whiter, more attractive smile, but one that is healthy and contributes to your overall health. For more information about whitening and to check out our holiday whitening gift ideas and specials, I encourage you to visit our website or set up a complimentary whitening consultation with our well trained and knowledgeable team. Happy Holidays!

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Bridging a Cultural Gap

Hunt Valley students learn digitally with Alaskan counterparts.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

Hunt Valley Elementary School Technology Specialist Evan Lemmerman knows that it takes more than just textbooks and lectures to reach his young students. Lemmerman has been a proponent of the integration of technology and education for some time, and in his latest venture, is taking that mission to a whole new level.

Lemmerman and his students have formed a partnership with Homestead Elementary School in Eagle River, Alaska in an effort to use technology to gain a better understanding of a place so far removed from theirs in both geography and culture.

"We're trying to encourage social interactions because living in Alaska is so much different than living here," Lemmerman said. "We thought that [using these technologies] would be a great way to bridge the gap between the Washington, D.C. area and Alaska."

The idea for the partnership, which utilizes videoconferencing, media exchange



A screen shot of the two classes linked up via videoconferencing.

and other online resources to connect the students, was spawned during a reunion of former coworkers last year. Lemmerman, who has been working in the Fairfax County

activities between their students.

Ideas were traded for nearly a decade until both Johnson and Lemmerman were sent to the National Educational Computing Conference in Washington, D.C. last June. While there, Johnson and Lemmerman met up, they realized that the best way to connect their classes was through videoconferencing and video exchange, and within months, the partnership was underway.

"When we met up at the NECC Conference, we went over where we wanted to take this project and how to expand it," Johnson said. "And this was a really powerful way for the students to connect with

SEE PROGRAM, PAGE 14

"We're trying to encourage social interactions because living in Alaska is so much different than living here,"

— Evan Lemmerman, Hunt Valley School Technology Specialist

Public School System for 10 years, worked in a similar capacity at Homestead before moving south. After leaving, he and fellow teacher Ross Johnson, now an educational technology teacher at the school, kept in touch via e-mail, constantly exchanging ideas on how they organize collaborative

Office Vacancies Reach 16-year High

County Executive Tony Griffin: 'We're now feeling full impact of a bad economy.'

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE CONNECTION

Fifty-one commercial office buildings with approximately 4 million square feet stand completely empty in Fairfax County today. Overall, the amount of office space available to rent is more 13.4 million square feet countywide, an amount equal to more than half of the total office space for rent in Tysons Corner, according to county documents.

The commercial office vacancy rate in Fairfax County reached 12.7 percent by the middle of 2009, its highest level since 1993, reports Fairfax's Department of Management and Budget.

Fairfax's vacancy rate has been climbing

steadily since the end of 2006, when it was just 7.7 percent. The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority predicts the final vacancy figure for the end of 2009 to be slightly higher than the current rate since a few new buildings were still planning to open in the second half of the year.

Increased vacancy rates led to a general decline in commercial land value, which spells bad news for a county that relies on real estate taxes to generate 64 percent of the revenue.

Fairfax County executive Tony Griffin said his staff is preparing for an 18 percent drop off in "nonresidential" real estate property values from last year, the largest single-year decline in Fairfax's commercial property values over the last two decades. The only

other double-digit decline in that time frame came in 1993, when the "nonresidential" property values dropped 13.22 percent.

Last year, taxes on commercial property accounted for over 11 percent of the revenue Fairfax collected in total and the relative health of the commercial real estate market has been compensating for declines in residential property values in the county for the past three years.

In 2007 and 2008, when residential property values leveled off in Fairfax, the non-residential property values continued to climb, by 13.6 percent and seven percent respectively, leaving the county a cushion of tax revenue.

Even last year, when all real estate tanked, Fairfax's residential properties lost approximately 12.5 percent of its value countywide but its commercial property values only declined 4.5 percent.

SEE VACANCIES, PAGE 5

Board Rejects Meals Tax

Hyland floats proposal to offset potential hike in real estate tax.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors killed a proposal for a special election to ask the voters if they would approve a new tax on restaurant meals in 2010.

Supervisor Gerry Hyland (D-Mount Vernon) put forward the suggestion at a Dec. 7 board meeting. He wanted to conduct the special election March 16, so that a meals tax could be incorporated into the upcoming 2010 budget planning if voters approved the measure.

The supervisors said a meal tax could result in an extra \$80 million in revenue for the county. Hyland argued it would also bring tax diversification to Fairfax and government, which relied on local real estate taxes to fund more than 60 percent of its budget last year.

According to recent county documents, approximately 1 cent per \$100 of assessed value in the real estate tax rate produces \$18 million in revenue for the county. By implementing a meals tax, the county could have potentially offset an increase in the residential real estate tax rate by about 4 cents, said supporters.

Hyland wanted to use money generated by the meals tax to fund Fairfax County Public Schools. Hyland's motion only garnered two other votes of support, from Supervisors Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) and John Foust (D-Dranesville).

THE THREE REPUBLICANS on the board — Supervisors Patrick Herry (Springfield), Michael Frey (Sully) and John Cook (Braddock) — said they opposed the meals tax for philosophical reasons.

"This is really nothing but a different way to increase the tax burden on our citizens," said Herry, during the board meeting.

Herry and Frey said they were also concerned about the expense associated with holding a

SEE MEALS TAX, PAGE 7

Police Charge Local Teen

Police charged a 15-year-old West Springfield High School student with making a bomb threat, destruction of property and trespassing Friday, Dec. 4. The charges stem from an incident on Oct. 8.

According to police, information was received that a classroom window at West Springfield Elementary School was broken some time after school hours on Oct. 8. A note was found the next morning that made reference to an explosive device at West Springfield High School. School officials contacted police and parents, and both schools were evacuated.

Numerous K-9 teams and Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel and equipment responded to both schools and found no explosive devices. School Resource Officers and detectives from the West Springfield Criminal Investigation Section were able to link the teen to the incident, though police were unable to divulge precisely how they linked him.

"Through a series of investigative steps, we were able to link him to the incident," said Police Spokesman Lucy Caldwell.

VDOT Extends I-95 Lane Closure Hours on Dec. 12

One lane of Interstate 95 north will be closed for portions of Saturday, Dec. 12 as the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is working to accelerate the opening of a new Interstate 95 north lane before the holidays.

One lane will be closed on Interstate 95 north between the Route 1 on-ramp and the Fairfax County Parkway from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., allowing crews extended daylight hours to pave the new lane while temperatures stay above minimum asphalt paving requirements.

VDOT is adding a fourth lane to Interstate 95 between the Fairfax County Parkway and Route 123 in Woodbridge. A new Interstate 95 south lane will open in fall 2010.

Commercial Vehicles Banned From Residential Streets

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted to ban most commercial vehicles, trailers, trucks and vans from parking on residential streets at the group's meeting Dec. 7. Only one board member, Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock), dissented.

"This is something that we hear about in our offices all the time," said Fairfax County Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large).

Among the handful of witnesses that testified, not one person opposed the measure and most spoke enthusiastically in favor of it.

"We want you to prohibit the parking of certain vehicles in residential areas," said Margie Wheedleton, vice president of the Brookfield Civic Association in Chantilly.

William Coleman, who lives in the Lee District, said approximately nine D.C. taxi cabs park on one of his neighborhood streets, which is only one-third of a mile long, every night.

"They leak oil and destroy the professional character of our neighborhood," said Coleman, who added that the cabs do not seem to belong to any nearby residents.

Barb Branham of the Lake Braddock Homeowners Association said that 20 to 30 vehicles park on one stretch of street with only about 12 homes on it. None of the residents in those homes typically know who owns the vehicles.

"The ladder vans lined up really impair the site line of people trying to get in and out of their driveways. ... There

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 8



Brendan, Matt and Luke work on the books during Island Creek's Colonial Day on Friday, Dec. 4.



David, Mohammed and David play colonial games in Ross Flint's class.

Back in Time

Island Creek fourth graders relive colonial days.



Monique Jackson's class begins work on making hornbooks.



Teacher's aide Jerome Franck explains to Madison and Auggie how to play Nine Men's Morrice.

PHOTOS BY
LOUISE
KRAFFT

NEWS

Vacancies

FROM PAGE 3

"We are now feeling the full impact of a bad economy. Our commercial property always lags behind the economy by about a year," said Griffin, about the sharp decline in local commercial real estate value.

In addition to a bad economy, a recent commercial property building boom has exacerbated the market surplus in Fairfax.

Approximately 4 million square feet of Fairfax office space came online in 2008 and was followed up by about 341,000 square feet of new commercial space in the first half of 2009, according to county documents.

Of the 13 new commercial buildings under construction in Fairfax at the end of 2008, seven were 100 percent speculative, with no tenants lined up in advance to rent the space, according to county documents.

Two office buildings have been foreclosed on in the county and Griffin expects more will follow in the coming months.

County staff also predicts that the commercial real estate values will continue to decline, by about 10 percent in 2011 and 5 in 2012, before stabilizing in 2013.

Fairfax County Unemployment Still Rising

Fairfax County's unemployment rate reached 4.7 percent in September, approximately 1.8 percent higher than it was during the same month a year earlier.

During August, the number of jobs in Northern Virginia declined by 13,000, approximately 1 percent, overall. It was the region's 10th straight month of job losses, though Northern Virginia still has the lowest jobless rate in the commonwealth, at 4.9 percent overall. In September, Virginia, with the fifth lowest unemployment rate in the county, was 6.6 percent.

While Fairfax's economy remains strong when compared to other parts of the country, the county's jobless rate never exceeded four percent during its previous two economic downturns, according to budget documents.

Fairfax County unemployment insurance claims also increased 116 percent from July 2008 to July 2009.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE



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OPINION

Choose Responsibly

Many families have paid dearly for mistakes of others; SoberRide offers a safety net.

The season for holiday parties is upon us, and with it the increased incidence of driving under the influence.

The possible consequences of driving drunk and underage drinking are often hard to comprehend. But the stories and grief of local families who have lost loved ones to such accidents should provide a chilling cautionary tale.

William Cameron Schlifke, born in Fairfax and a graduate of Robinson Secondary School, died Monday, Nov. 24, 2008, less than three days after his Volkswagon Jetta was rear-ended in Newport News. He was 22.

Schlifke was serving as designated driver for friends in his fraternity at Christopher Newport University. The driver who crashed into him, Eric Fowler, 20 at the time and also a student at CNU, was arrested at the scene and charged with DUI refusal, reckless driving and underage possession of alcohol, and later with involuntary manslaughter.

Last week on Nov. 30, 2009, just after the one-year anniversary of Schlifke's death, Fowler was convicted of involuntary manslaughter in Newport News, according to court

records. Fowler's bail was revoked and he will be in jail over the holidays awaiting sentencing in March.

Unfortunately, such tragedy is not rare. In fall 2008, a different young man from Fairfax was sentenced to three years in jail for involuntary manslaughter because of a drunk-driving accident on Dec. 3, 2007 that resulted in unspeakable tragedy for three families. One family lost a beloved daughter after she clung to life for five brutal days; one family has seen their active son reduced to 70 pounds and "unresponsive" and living in a nursing home; the family of the defendant has also seen life as they knew it change.

Don't take the risk. Plan ahead, arrange for a designated driver, or choose to abstain if a designated driver isn't available.

But if you find yourself in the unfortunate position of drinking without a safe way home on your own, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program has provided you with a safety net called SoberRide. Take their number with you when you head out, and be sure any young

Free Ride Home

WRAP's 2009 Holiday SoberRide program will be offered from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. nightly from Friday, Dec. 11, 2009 through Friday, Jan. 1, 2010. To receive a free cab ride home (up to a \$50 fare), call 800-200-8294. You must be 21 or older to use the SoberRide service. For more, see www.wrap.org.

adults in your family are similarly armed.

Founded in 1982, WRAP is a public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington-metropolitan area.

Parents are well advised to talk to their teens and let them know that if they find themselves without a safe ride home, that they can call their parents to be picked up. There are consequences of binge drinking for teens that go beyond driving under the influence. But it is also important for parents to let their teens know that whatever happens, it is not OK to drink and drive or to get into a car driven by someone who has been drinking.

Since 1993, WRAP has provided over 41,010 safe rides home. Call 800-200-8294. For more information, see www.wrap.org

WRAP's 2009 Holiday SoberRide program will be offered from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. nightly, from Friday, Dec. 11, 2009 through Friday, Jan. 1, 2010. To receive a free cab ride home (up to a \$50.00 fare), call 800-200-8294. You must be 21 or older to use the SoberRide service.

EDITORIAL

COMMENTARY

Increasing Taxes Easy Way Out

County should address its spending problem.

BY SUPERVISOR PAT HERRITY
R-SPRINGFIELD

There has been a lot of talk about the return of the automobile decal fee or a new meals tax in Fairfax County as an answer to the county's budget shortfall. These proposals are being pushed as "revenue diversification" initiatives. "Revenue diversification" may sound good but the reality is someone has to pay these taxes. I see them as nothing more than different ways to increase the tax burden on our citizens in these tough economic times.

Simply put Fairfax County has a spending problem not a revenue problem. This spending problem can be seen in the massive growth of the county budget over the past 10 years, which was fueled by a doubling of the real estate tax bills over the same time period. We began to fix our spending problem last year when we cut the county budget for the first time in recent memory. The roughly \$100 million in reductions made last year have had no significant impact on county services and have resulted in no major increase in complaints about county services.

Even as we talk of cutting the county budget to deal with our shortfall, some on the Board of Supervisors are simultaneously proposing increasing the size and role of our county government. Last year, we added a county version of a "czar" with the creation of the Office to

Prevent and End Homelessness. While I certainly feel that the county has a role in helping those most in need, this office, which was created with a budget of \$500,000 for a director, staff and administrative costs, is nothing more than a new layer of bureaucracy. It provides no direct benefits or support to our homeless population. Also last year, the board passed 127 pages of regulations on trees without looking at the efficiency or fiscal impact of implementing and enforcing these regulations.

This year, the board is moving forward with a plan to add public art proffers to the county's Comprehensive Plan. This plan is moving forward despite the fact there has been no effort to determine the cost impact to the county or our citizens of processing, reviewing and approving the additional requirements. Developers would now be pushed to provide proffers for public art, which will directly compete with the other proffers that developers already contribute — including those for transportation,

education, affordable housing and environmental projects — all of which are county priorities. While I support public art, and there are some great examples in the Springfield District, I do not believe county staff should have a role in pushing public art over transportation or education projects.

These are just a few examples of the county attempting to do good things for its citizens while failing to look at the cost of implementing them. In doing so, the board has blindly increased the size and cost of the county bureaucracy. It is long overdue for the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to focus on the priorities of our citizens as well as ways to make our county government more efficient and effective in addressing those priorities.

Clearly, this is not the time for the county to be increasing the tax burden on our citizens. Revenue diversification and increasing the tax burden on our citizens is the easy way out. But as we have seen over the past decade taking the easy way out has drastically increased the size of our county government while doubling the tax burden on our citizens. It is long overdue for this Board to take the more difficult route of focusing county spending on our priorities while working to increase the efficiency of our existing government programs.

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Meals Tax Defeated

FROM PAGE 3

countywide special election. Given that Hyland has known about the county budget forecast for months, they also questioned why the Democrat had not recommended putting a meals tax on the November general election ballot.

"I will not support doing this as a special election. It is just too costly," said Frey.

A few of the four remaining Democrats who voted against Hyland's proposal wanted to have more discussion on the matter of a meals tax referendum before voting on the proposal.

Given that there was no chance for a more in-depth discussion, some board members felt uncomfortable voting for Hyland's proposal, even though they might have supported a meals tax referendum overall.

"I think this has been brought up too abruptly. ... I want to make sure we have a package that could be presented that the restaurant and business community would believe is fair," said Fairfax County Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large).

But Hudgins said the board had discussed the possibility of a meals tax at several times already, including during the supervisors' group retreat and through a board matter Hyland brought to a few months ago.

"Each time we have raised this, there has

"This is really nothing but a different way to increase the tax burden on our citizens."

— **Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield)**

been some reason not to discuss it," said Hudgins.

Under Virginia law, most counties must conduct a voter referendum on the issue of a meals tax in order to implementing it. But governing bodies in towns, cities and some urban counties have the ability to implement a meals tax without a specific vote of approval from the public.

The result is that Fairfax, where a meals tax overwhelmingly failed in 1993, has fewer revenue options than some surrounding jurisdictions. Elected officials in the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, Manassas and Manassas Park have all passed meal taxes as well as those in Arlington County and the towns of Herndon, Leesburg and Vienna have all passed taxes on restaurant meals without the hurdle of a referendum.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

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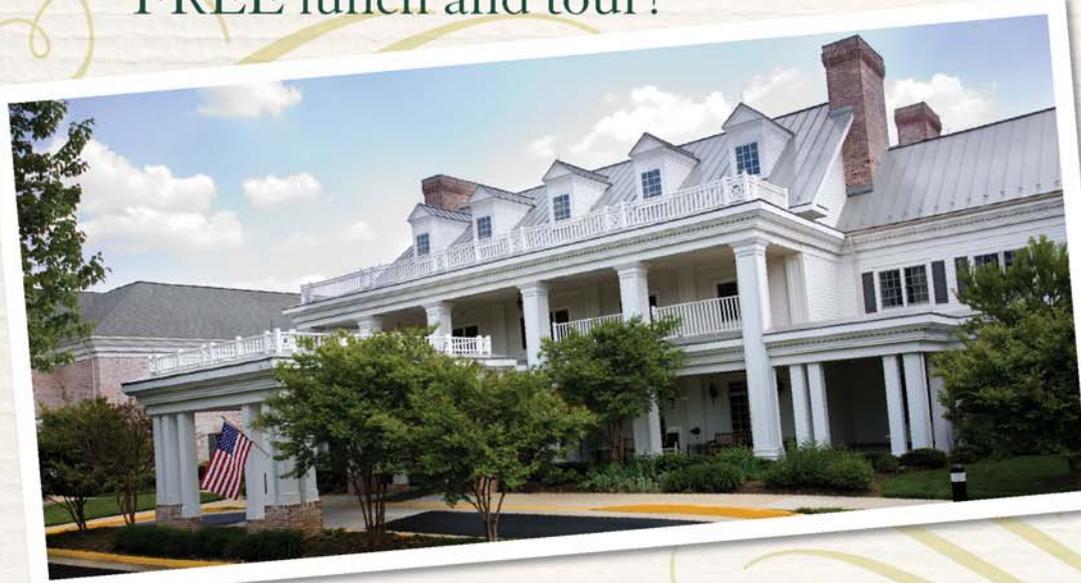
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Sanctuary Dedicated On Wednesday, Dec. 02, the Keene Mill Elementary School Student Council Association (SCA) and staff conducted a dedication ceremony for the Beth Bryan Memorial Bird Sanctuary. Each year, the SCA donates an end-of-the-year gift to the school. Last year's officers and representatives voted to buy a birdbath and feeder for a garden in memory of Bryan, the school's kindergarten instructional assistant, who died last spring. She had been a staff member for seven years. Here, Principal Nicholas Rousos speaks at the ceremony. He is surrounded by members of the SCA.

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FROM PAGE 4

are also property value issues," said Branham. Previously, Fairfax County prohibited vehicles of a certain weight to park in residential neighborhoods. Now, the ban has been expanded to include vehicles that are more than 21 feet long, more than 8 feet high, and at a width of 102 inches or more. Vehicles carrying commercial freight as well as many trailers or semi-trailers are prohibited.

Residents will also not be able to park any vehicle with three or more axles on the street, according to county documents.

A few exceptions exist where commercial vehicles are permitted. One resident of each single-family dwelling unit is allowed to park one taxi cab or limousine on the street, but the vehicle has to be registered in Virginia.

Virginia law also exempts commercial vehicles of a public service company, school buses, vehicles used to transport people with disabilities, vehicles for cable television and vehicles for propane gas service from being prohibited. Additionally, moving vans or trucks are allowed to park on a residential street for up to 48 hours, according to Fairfax documents.

Residents are also allowed to keep boats, campers and motor homes on a residential street until a "community parking district" restricting such vehicles from public property is implemented. Currently, both the Mount Vernon and Lee districts have such a ban in place.

The supervisors said they would allow a "grace period" of 30 days before they start enforcing the new regulation, so that commercial vehicle owners can figure out an alternative parking situation.

— JULIA O'DONOGHUE

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CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/DEC. 10

Tiny Tots Holiday Concert. 10 a.m., 12 p.m. and 7 p.m. at South County Secondary School, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. \$3 per person. 571-332-5920 or redroc26@aol.com.
C is for Candle. 10:30 a.m. Richard Byrd Library, 6315 Backlick Road, Springfield. Holiday stories and activities. Age 2-5 with adult. 703-451-8055.

FRIDAY/DEC. 11

La Leche League of Springfield Breastfeeding Support Group. 10:30 a.m. at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Free. Casual and informal discussion format. 703-298-4133.
Lunch Bunch. 12 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Bring lunch and join us for stories. Birth-5 with adult. 703-971-0010.

SATURDAY/DEC. 12

Breakfast with Santa. 9 a.m. at West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. Continental buffet breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Tickets are \$8.50 at www.wshschorus.org.
Clifton Horse Society Annual Christmas Parade. 2 p.m. in the town of Clifton. Follow horses and riders dressed in costumes to Kings Field to sing carols, enjoy cookies and a costume judging contest. If it is raining or snowing the event will be canceled. jjirucha@cox.net.

Collector's Showcase Event and Third Annual Fund Raising. 6-11 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Pillow Talk: The Designer's Showcase, 6-8 p.m. on the first floor of building W-16. Pillows designed by members of the Association of Interior Design Professionals will be auctioned. \$25 per person, including appetizers, live music from Royce Campbell, wine tastings and a chance to win an interior designer's pillow. Followed by Fete d'Etoile: A Festival of Stars, 8-11 p.m. on the second floor. Food, art and dancing. Each ticket holder will leave with one original piece of artwork and be entitled to attend Pillow Talk. \$150 per person or \$175 per couple, including an original piece of artwork, lecture on the topic of collecting art, hors d'oeuvres and desserts by Bistro L'hermitage. Tickets can be purchased online at www.workhousearts.org or 703-584-2900.

Friends of the Library Book Sale. 10 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. 703-339-4610.

SUNDAY/DEC. 13

Christmas Cantata: Morning Star. 11 a.m., at Franconia United Methodist Church. Franconia United Methodist Church is located at 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. The Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are handicapped accessible. 703-971-5151 or www.franconiaumc.org.
A Classic Brass Christmas. 7 p.m. at 225 E. Broad St., Falls Church. Choral concert by Choralis; Gretchen Kuhmann, Artistic Director. Also The Classical Brass Quintet, Edison High School Concert Choir, a candlelight procession and carol sing-along. \$25-40 adults, \$5 students; age 12 and under free. www.choralis.org or 703-237-2499.

The Tale of the Drowsy Shepherd.

Leinz Dances as Nutcracker's Clara

Lake Braddock Secondary School freshman Kailey Leinz, 14, will dance the role of Clara in the Ballet Arts Ensemble of Fairfax's (BAE) performance of "Nutcracker in a Nutshell" on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and on Sunday, Dec. 20 at 3 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall at Northern Virginia Community College's Alexandria campus at 3001 N. Beauregard St. Tickets for the holiday classic are \$20 and are available in advance by calling 703-273-5344. Tickets will also be available at the door.

For more information on "Nutcracker in a Nutshell," The Center for Ballet Arts or The Ballet Arts Ensemble of Fairfax, visit www.thecenterforballetarts.com or call 703-273-5344.

6:30 p.m. at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8508 Hooes Road, Springfield. Reception following performance. 703-451-8223 or www.sumcdisciples.org.

MONDAY/DEC. 14

PAL Reading Visits. 4:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Read to a trained therapy dog. Call to reserve a time slot. Call for title. 703-249-1520.
Early Reader Book Discussion. 3:30 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Call for title. Ages 6-8 with 703-971-0010.
Gingerbread Tales. 10:30 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Warm stories for cold days. Age 24 months to 5 with adult. 703-339-4610.

TUESDAY/DEC. 15

Book Discussion Group. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Call for title. Adults. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.
All About Me. 10:30 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Stories that celebrate me. Age 13 to 23 months with adult. 703-339-4610.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 16

Needlework Group. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Bring a project to work on in the company of fellow needlecrafters. Adults. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.
Hidden Ponds Nature Program. 4:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Includes dissection of a rotting log; be aware in case of mold allergies. Ages 6-12 with parent. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.
One-on-One Genealogical

Research Assistance. 6-7:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Start personal genealogical research with experienced volunteers. Adults. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.

Book Discussion Group. 6:30 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Possession: A Romance by A. S. Byatt. Adults. 703-971-0010.

Practice Your English. 6:30 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-339-4610.

Tell It Again. 6 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 6315 Backlick Road, Springfield. Enjoy a holiday story in English and Spanish. Music and activities. Age 4-12 with adult. 703-451-8055.

Lorton Book Club. 6:30 p.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. "Confederacy of Dunces" by John Kennedy Toole. Adults. 703-339-7385.

THURSDAY/DEC. 17

Starlight, Starbright. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Sparkly stories, songs and activities. Ages 2-5 with adult. Call for title. Adults. 703-249-1520.

FRIDAY/DEC. 18

Natalie MacMaster: Christmas in Cape Breton. 8 p.m. at George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Celtic melodies and classic Christmas carols. Tickets are \$23-\$46. Youth through grade 12, half price when accompanied by an adult. Charge by phone at 888-945-2468 or www.gmu.edu/cfa.

Lake Braddock student Kailey Leinz as Clara

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Lunch Bunch. 12 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Bring lunch and come for stories. Birth-5 with adult. 703-971-0010.

Naturalist Boot Camp. Send Children ages 6 to 10 to a naturalist boot camp on at Hidden Pond Nature Center. Help them burn off that holiday excitement and focus on the adventure of learning about natural world from 6:30-10:30 p.m. They will hike, go critter watching, meet, feed and hold live animals. They will make a craft with natural items. The boot camp will conclude around a campfire with snacks, holiday songs, and ghost stories. The cost is \$30 per child per day. Reservations are required. To reserve a child's spot, call 703-451-9588. Hidden Pond Nature Center is located at 8511 Greeley Blvd. in Springfield.

SATURDAY/DEC. 19

Gallery After Hours: Point Blank. 7:30 p.m. at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Cover songs and dancing with Point Blank. Advance tickets \$10 member, \$8 non-member. www.workhousearts.org or 703-584-2900.

PAWS To Read. 11 a.m. Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Read to Chance the therapy dog for a 10-minute session. Call to register. Arrive early to check in. 703-339-7385.

Santa at Lake Accotink. Santa wants to take pictures with visitors' pets from 1-2 p.m. Take a photo of a dog, cat or other pet with Santa. Bring own camera and get the shot you want. The registration fee is \$5 per pet. Santa offers hayrides from 3-8 p.m. Call early to get your preferred hayride time. The fee is \$8 per person and babies on laps are free. Registrations must be made in advance. Call 703-569-0285 to make a reservation or for more information. Visa and MasterCard are accepted. For more information about Lake Accotink Park, visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/>.

Naturalist Boot Camp. Send Children ages 6 to 10 to a naturalist boot camp on at Hidden Pond

Nature Center. Help them burn off that holiday excitement and focus on the adventure of learning about natural world from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. They will hike, go critter watching, meet, feed and hold live animals. They will make a craft with natural items. The boot camp will conclude around a campfire with snacks, holiday songs, and ghost stories. The cost is \$30 per child per day. Reservations are required. To reserve a child's spot, call 703-451-9588. Hidden Pond Nature Center is located at 8511 Greeley Blvd. in Springfield.

SUNDAY/DEC. 20

A Festival of Music. 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8508 Hoops Road, Springfield. Combined choirs, band and orchestra. Reception between the performances. 703-451-8221 or www.sumdisciples.org.

Naturalist Boot Camp. Send Children ages 6 to 10 to a naturalist boot camp on at Hidden Pond Nature Center. Help them burn off that holiday excitement and focus on the adventure of learning about natural world from 1-5 p.m. They will hike, go critter watching, meet, feed and hold live animals. They will make a craft with natural items. The boot camp will conclude around a campfire with snacks, holiday songs, and ghost stories. The cost is \$30 per child per day. Reservations are required. To reserve a child's spot, call 703-451-9588. Hidden Pond Nature Center is located at 8511 Greeley Blvd. in Springfield.

MONDAY/DEC. 21

LifeLine Screening. Beginning at 9 a.m. at American Legion Post #162, 8210 Legion Drive, Lorton. Five screenings available, for cardiovascular conditions, osteoporosis and more. Packages start at \$139. 1-877-237-1287 or www.lifelinescreening.com.

Read to the Dog. 3:30-4:30 p.m. John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Read aloud to a trained therapy dog. Call or sign up online. Age 6-12. 703-971-0010.

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PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Chris Williams hauls in the game winning touchdown reception during Lake Braddock's 27-24 overtime victory over Battlefield. The catch was Williams' first touchdown reception of the season.

Williams' Catch Lifts Bruins to Finals

Bruins advance to Virginia Division 6 AAA State Finals after nail-biting overtime.

BY REED S. ALBERS
THE CONNECTION

Chris Williams sure picked an opportune time to catch his first touchdown pass of the season.

After 13 weeks without a touchdown, Williams worried that even if he did manage to catch one, it would probably get taken away due to a penalty.

"I joked about it not counting," he said. "It just seemed that's how it would go this season."

Fast forward to Monday night, Dec. 7, in overtime in the state semi-finals, Lake Braddock trails Battlefield 24-21, facing a dire third and 15 situation. Quarterback Michael Nebrich needs someone to catch a pass to end the game.

Down, set, hike.

Williams cuts a slant route across the end-zone and the set play degenerates into a scramble to find an open receiver.

Nebrich rolls out of the pocket toward the Lake Braddock sideline before zeroing in on Williams deep in the end zone.

"I ran the route, turned around and looked for the ball," Williams said. "I wasn't expecting it all. It went right up over the

defensive backs and I had to put my hands up to get it."

Williams makes an acrobatic jump, clasps both hands around the ball and touches his feet in the end zone before falling backward to the ground.

Game over.

Lake Braddock wins 27-24 and advances to the Virginia State Division 6 AAA final in Charlottesville, marring Battlefield's perfect 12-0 record.

"I've been waiting for a touchdown catch," Williams said. "Me and Nebrich are really good friends, and I knew it was nothing against me. I just needed to get open."

— Chris Williams

"I've been waiting for a touchdown catch."

The catch was Williams' first and most important of the season. It also came from Nebrich, Williams' neighbor and best friend.

"[The catch is] huge for him and will give him a lot of confidence for the title game," said Nebrich. "[The touchdown] was just like playing in the backyard [with Williams]."

For Nebrich, the game was just another platform to showcase the junior's strong grasp of the spread offense.

Nebrich threw for 305 yards, connected with wide receiver Brandon Johnson for two passing touchdowns and rushed for 102

In Overtime

High school football overtime is akin to NCAA overtime rules, but teams are given the ball at the 10-yard line and have four downs to score. If the score remains tied after each team's possession, overtime is played back-and-forth until there is a winner.

BATTLEFIELD

- ❖ **First and 10:** Cedric Agyeman rushes for three yards.
- ❖ **Second and seven:** Agyeman rushes for five yards.
- ❖ **Third and two:** Nagee Jackson rushes for no gain.
- ❖ **Four and two:** Jason Hoepker kicks a 20-yard field goal. Battlefield leads 24-21.

LAKE BRADDOCK

- ❖ **First and 10:** Michael Nebrich's pass intended for Brandon Johnson is incomplete.
- ❖ **Second and 10:** False start called on the offense, five-yard penalty.
- ❖ **Second and 15:** Nebrich's pass to Ali Banihashemi is incomplete.
- ❖ **Third and 15:** Nebrich's pass to Chris Williams is caught. Lake Braddock wins 27-24.

yards, including a four-yard touchdown run late in the fourth quarter.

"He's on his way to being the best in the

SEE BRUINS, PAGE 13

Spartan Optimism

Tough schedule highlights 2009-10 indoor track.

After a strong showing in the 2009 cross-country season, the West Springfield indoor track team is preparing for what head coach Chris Pellegrini said could be an extremely competitive season.

The Patriot District was represented in fine form at the State Cross-country meet in November and with many cross-country runners making the move to indoor track for the winter, Patriot District competition will remain a challenge for the Spartans.

"Our district went No. 1, No. 3 and No. 4 at the State Cross-country meet," Pellegrini said. "Our district is going to be extremely competitive on the distance running side this season."

While many of the district's top teams, such as West Potomac and 2009 Cross-country state champion Lake Braddock, feature former cross-country runners on their rosters, the Spartans will field some of their best on the track team as well.

Stand-out runners Paige Kvartunas, Anna Barber and Alex Watt take to the indoor track and lead the Spartans in distance and relay events.

"Our girls run relays extremely well," he said. "They're going to be very strong this year."

Pellegrini also thinks the stacked rosters will result in some record-breaking performances throughout the season.

"I think [our District] can put out performances at the District meet in February that no one has ever seen in the past 15 to 20 years," he said.

Pellegrini is also anxious to see Alex Watt return to the indoor track. Watt has struggled with injuries, but has since overcome them.

"I'm excited for Alex Watt," he said. "She just had her first season running completely healthy. With another healthy season, she can really tip the scale towards us."

The Spartans also have high hopes for Barber, who Pellegrini said adjusts well from cross-country to indoor track. "Anna Barber translates well to the track," he said. "She might have a big season."

— REED S. ALBERS

Spartan Boys Start B-ball Season with 64-40 Loss

The West Springfield boys' basketball season started the 2009-10 campaign with a 64-40 loss to Centerville on Dec. 2.

Lawrence Rouse led the Spartans with 17 points and Hyung-Ju Kim added another nine to the total.

The Spartans wrapped up their first week of basketball with a [result when it comes] against Westfield.

West Springfield's next three games are against T.C. Williams on Dec. 11, Robinson on Dec. 15 and Chantilly on Dec. 18.

2010 Central Springfield Little League Registration

Registration for the 2010 Central Springfield Little League baseball season will take place Jan. 9 and 16 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at the Franconia Moose Family Center at 7701 Beulah Street, near Island Creek Elementary.

Boys and girls ages 5-16 are eligible to play in the league. Parents must bring proof of age (e.g., birth certificate) and three proofs of residency. Visit www.csll.org for registration forms and required information.

Northern Virginia Indoor Lacrosse Registration

Northern Virginia West Lacrosse (NoVa West) is currently in the process of registering for its indoor lacrosse season.

The group is also accepting registrations for tryouts in its summer select teams, which include U11, U13, U15 and two levels of high school play.

For more information about NoVa West Lacrosse's youth sports offerings for 2010, visit, <http://www.novawestlax.com>.

Fit Kids Holiday Sports Camp Dec. 28-30

Parents seeking a high energy camp for children during the holiday break might be interested in the Fit Kids Sports Mania Holiday Camp.

The Camp is for children ages 5 to 9 and will be at the Claude Moore Community center from Dec. 28 to Dec. 30.

Camp runs from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and will feature a variety of sports including soccer, hockey, t-ball and more.

The camp's goal is to emphasis teamwork and sportsmanship. Interested parties can find registration information at <http://webtrac.loudoun.gov> or call 571-258-3500.

Youth Basketball Tourney Dec. 28-30 in Pennsylvania

The 16th Annual Mason Dixon Holiday Tip-Off Basketball Tournament for boys and girls in the 8, 10, 12 and 14-and-under age groups is currently accepting registration.

The event is Dec. 28, 29 and 30 in York County, Pa.

The tournament features round-robin competition and all teams are guaranteed a minimum of three games.

Those interested in registering for the tournament can find forms at usaamateursports.com.

Additional information can be acquired by calling 410-363-8610 or e-mailing usaamateursports@aol.com



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Sub-40 degree weather made the semi-final match a cold affair for both teams, but it didn't stop the Bruins defense from coming up with key stops throughout the game.

Bruins Head to First Finals

FROM PAGE 12

area. Senior year, there won't be anyone better," said assistant head coach Bill Renner.

Nebrich's top receiving target, Brandon Johnson, finished with 130 yards receiving which includes his 29- and 49-yard touchdown receptions.

Johnson fought back tears of joy as reality hit — his team was going to the Virginia state finals.

"I'm speechless," he said. "It's just unreal. I've been dreaming of this since I was in third grade."

Despite the dramatic outcome, the game wasn't as simple as Nebrich tossing touchdown passes to receivers all night. On Lake Braddock's first drive, an errant snap forced Nebrich to take a safety giving Battlefield a 2-0 lead.

The troubles didn't end there. After assuming control with a 14-8 lead after the first half, Nebrich fumbled twice, giving way to a Battlefield touchdown drive. Fortunately for the Bruins, Battlefield kicker Jason Hoepker missed the extra point attempt.

With the score even at 14-14 and just over a minute left on the clock, Nebrich hit Johnson with a deep pass for 30 yards, setting up Nebrich's four-yard touchdown run to take the lead with 14 seconds left in regulation.

With such a miniscule amount of time left in the game, the Lake Braddock sidelines prepared its celebratory rush to the field, but Battlefield defensive back Blaine Mason hushed the Bruins with a miraculous kickoff return.

As Battlefield's Bobo Beathard was being tackled, Mason caught a pitch from Beathard and ran the ball 75 yards for the game-tying touchdown with only .9 seconds left in regulation.

"I looked up to the sky and said, 'God, what did I



PHOTO BY REEDS ALBERS/THE CONNECTION

Assistant head coach Bill Renner hugs quarterback Michael Nebrich after Chris Williams' game-winning touchdown reception. '[Nebrich] is on his way to being the best in the area. Senior year, there won't be anyone better,' Renner said.

do?" Lake Braddock head coach Jim Poythress said. "There had to have been something I did wrong in a past life to deserve this."

Poythress was overjoyed with the win, but he wasn't afraid to point out the mistakes that he said can't happen in the State finals.

"We gave Battlefield nine points on special teams," he said. "We let them hang around. They hung around and almost broke our backs. That can't happen next week."

Lake Braddock's first appearance in a state title game also signals the first time in 15 years a Patriot District team is contending for a state title. Annandale is the last Patriot District school to win a state championship, taking the 1993 and 1994 state titles.

"I'm already thinking about going over game film and what we need to do next week," Poythress said. "I don't have time to [think about the team's accomplishment]."

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COMMUNITY

Program Links Schools

FROM PAGE 3

people who seem like they're right next to you, but [are] thousands of miles apart."

The first linkup occurred at the beginning of this school year with each school's classes making a video introducing their hometown and themselves. Johnson said that the Homestead students made a video comprised of pictures of their school and of Eagle River, while the Hunt Valley students made a video showing their school and landmarks in Washington, D.C. Instantly, Johnson said, the students were enthralled with the new technology.

"The kids got really excited about it," Johnson said. "It was much more powerful than seeing [Washington, D.C.] in a textbook."

Due to the students' strong response to the exchange, Lemmerman and Johnson quickly began planning future activities. The next communication, they decided, was to be a live Internet transmission of Hunt Valley's participation in the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation's "Cultures at Jamestown" program. The foundation sent a presenter to the fourth grade class at Hunt Valley on Friday, Nov. 13 to teach students about the complex cultural interactions that took place in Jamestown in the early 17th century and how this interaction shaped American history and life in the United States. The presenter, according to Foundation Spokesman Debby Padgett, engaged the students in role-playing activities, demonstrations and the examination of artifacts.

Meanwhile, Lemmerman filmed the entire presentation and streamed it to a computer in Johnson's classroom so that Johnson's students could take part in the program. Johnson said that his student were able to participate almost as fully as the Hunt Valley students; asking questions to the presenter and looking at the artifacts up-close when Lemmerman zoomed in on them with the video camera.

"The presenter spoke and presented items right into the Web cam and they were able to ask questions in Alaska," Lemmerman said. "The students loved it."

THE NEXT interaction came less than two weeks later, as Johnson continued a tradition that Lemmerman started while teaching at Homestead. Lemmerman used to raise salmon in his classroom at the school to teach his students about the lifecycle of a fish that is so important in Alaskan culture. Now equipped with the technology, Lemmerman asked Johnson if he could do a dissection of the salmon while streaming it to Lemmerman's third grade class at Hunt Valley.

Johnson agreed, and brought in Alaska Fish and Game officials to lead the dissection and used an Internet videoconferencing tool to film and transmit it. Lemmerman said that his students watched while the Fish and Game officers dissected the fish with the Homestead students.

"Everyone that saw the interaction just said 'wow, what a great experience,'" Lemmerman said. "We were just getting the ball rolling [with the partner

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Sound of Music Spreads Holiday Cheer

Trans-Siberian Orchestra performs for patients at Inova Fairfax Children's Hospital.

BY JUSTIN FANIZZI
THE CONNECTION

With a stage full of pyrotechnics and laser lights, the 30-member Trans-Siberian Orchestra is used to playing in front in 20,000 people. However, the musicians proved that even at a smaller venue, their show can be just as powerful.

A stripped-down version of the internationally-famous orchestra played a set at Inova Fairfax Hospital Tuesday, Dec. 8 for the patients of the Children's Hospital and its physicians. The show, which

was also broadcast to every room in the hospital, treated the audience to the orchestra's take on Christmas favorites.

"It's always a really good feeling to do a

"It's always a really good feeling to do a show like this because we know what it means to [the patients]."

— Chris Caffery, orchestra member

show like this because we know what it means to [the patients]," orchestra member Chris Caffery said. "If there's something we can do to make them feel better, we'll do it."

ACCORDING TO Inova Fairfax Children's Hospital Administrator David Goldberg, concert promotion company Live Nation, the sponsor of the orchestra's current tour, was responsible for bringing the show to the hospital. Goldberg said that a former hospital employee that works at Live Nation reached out to the hospital as part of the company's commitment to community outreach, offering a chance to see the orchestra.

Initially, Goldberg said that only a few members of the orchestra had signed on to

play. The group had played a show the previous night in Tampa, Fla. and Tuesday was their scheduled day off. Once word spread through their troupe about the show, however, more quickly joined the lineup and 11 members, comprised of two guitarists, two keyboardists and seven vocalists performed.



PHOTO BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

The stripped-down orchestra has four backing vocalists.

"We, in our society, aren't as generous as

we can be," Goldberg said. "To make time to do something great for our children on their day off shows that they are not only great people, but great citizens as well."

After a five-song set that included "This Christmas Day," the bluesy "Good King Joy"

SEE TRANS-SIBERIAN. PAGE 16

Walking for New Hope Housing

Mondloch House Family Shelter was site of mini-walk.

New Hope Housing's Help the Homeless Community Mini-Walk took place Saturday, Oct. 24 at the Mondloch House Family Shelter.

The mini-walk was part of the Fannie Mae Help the Homeless Walkathon program, which includes school, church, and community mini-walks leading up to the Help the Homeless Walkathon at the National Mall, Saturday, Nov. 21.

The Walkathon program raises awareness about homelessness in the local area, and raises crucial dollars for agencies like New Hope Housing that provide direct services to homeless families and individuals. Several local schools — Woodlawn Elementary, Bush Hill Elementary, Hybla Valley Elementary, Robinson Secondary and Burgundy Farm Country Day School — have conducted mini-walks in October to benefit New Hope Housing.



Mini-walk participants pose for a photo on Oct. 24.

ing. The Oct. 24 festivities at Mondloch House were hosted by the Mondloch family, the children and grandchildren of Robert J. Mondloch, who played an instrumental role in opening the first shelter in Fairfax County on the site of today's Mondloch House.

The Mondloch family hosts an annual volunteer workday at the shelter, and this year decided to organize the mini-walk and a day

of fun for the residents at the shelter. The day included games for the children, a Halloween costume "store," the mini-walk, and a cookout.

More than 130 participants—residents, staff, volunteers, and other supporters from the community—enjoyed the day. Mondloch House is located at 3516 Lockheed Blvd., in Alexandria.

MILITARY NOTES



Air Force Airman Matthew J. Gordon graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. Gordon is the son of Lois Gordon of Anola Court, Springfield, and the grandson of Dorethy Kasello of Chestnut Ave., New Windsor, N.Y. He is a 2009 graduate of Annandale High School.



Jay Pierce sings.

PHOTOS BY JUSTIN FANIZZI/THE CONNECTION

Trans-Siberian at Inova

FROM PAGE 15

and a holiday-season take on Pachelbel's "Canon," all of the group's members stayed to meet the children and sign autographs. The band handed out tour books, jackets, T-shirts and guitar picks and posed for pictures. One child even gave an impromptu a cappella performance at the urging of one of the members. The entire experience, the children said, was one to remember.

"I thought it was great," said Kadejah Hebb, 15. "The girls we on point, the guitarists and other singers were great. Everybody just did a great job. I'd love to see them play again."

The orchestra continued its generosity the following day, inviting former Children's Hospital patients and their families to their show at the Verizon Center in Washington, D.C. for free. The children were transported to the show in the hospital's "Bus of Dreams," and at the show, were brought on stage to help introduce the band with Goldberg.

"They really do give back," Goldberg said.



Chris Caffery sings 'This Christmas Day.'

FAITH NOTES

Chanukah Happening. Sunday, Dec. 13, 2-5 p.m., at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Latkes and sufganiyot, Little Latke Lounge for ages 2 and under, olive oil press, arts and crafts, Chanukah story time and song room, moon bounce, face painting, balloon artist and more. Bring a bag of nonperishable items for the local food bank and/or a new toy to be donated to those in need. \$10 member families, \$18 non-member families. www.jccnv.org.

A Celtic Christmas. Sunday, Dec. 13, 10 a.m., at Springfield Christian Church, 5407 Backlick Road, Springfield. With the Springfield Christian and Burke United Methodist combined choirs, assisted by Celtic ensemble Mystic Harmony on Celtic harp, flute, keyboard, percussion and vocals. 703-354-4994.

Burke Presbyterian Church events

are open to everyone, at 5690 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. All events are free. Contact 703-764-0456 or www.BurkePresChurch.org.

◆ **Breakfast with St. Nick.** 9 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 12. Pictures with St. Nick, craft making and more. Reserve at SaintNick@BurkePresChurch.org.

◆ **Christmas Eve Services** on Thursday, Dec. 24, 5 p.m. Children's Pageant with children's and youth choirs; 7:30 p.m. Candlelight Service with chancel and bell choirs; 11 p.m. Candlelight and Communion Service with folk group and flute choir.

Come see the Christmas Cantata, "Morning Star," Dec. 13, 11 a.m., at Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. Celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are handicapped accessible. 703-971-5151 or www.franconiaumc.org.

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21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE
On December 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the Clifton Community Hall, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton, Virginia, the Town Council of the Town of Clifton will hold a public hearing on a lease of Town-owned property located at 7137 Main Street, Clifton Virginia, known as the "Pink House" property. The public hearing will be held pursuant Virginia Code Section 15.2-1800 (disposal of public property). The public hearing was authorized at a special meeting of the Town Council on November 22, 2009. Copies of the rental criteria are available for public inspection at 7150 Main Street, Clifton Virginia.

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PEOPLE



Jessica Romano and Ronald Zacharias

Romano, Zacharias Tie Knot

Jessica Romano and Ronald Zacharias of Springfield were joined in Christian Marriage on Saturday, Oct. 24, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. at Silverbrook United Methodist Church in Lorton. Rev. Ralph Rowley of Messiah Methodist Church in Springfield officiated.

The bride is the daughter of Nick and Lana Romano of Wilmington, N.C.. The groom is the son of Amy Zacharias of Manassas and Ken and Carla Zacharias of The Villages, Fla.

The bride was escorted down the aisle by her father. The bridesmaids were Susan Betts, friend of the bride, of Arlington; Beth Wheeler, friend of the bride, of Lawton, Okla., and Michelle Hunt, sister of the groom, of Ashburn.

The best man was Larry Zacharias, brother of the groom, of Inwood, W.Va.; Groomsmen were Mike Petrassi, friend of the groom, of South Riding, and Ian Trumbore of Woodbridge.

The dinner reception, hosted by the Romanos, took place at Madigan's Waterfront Restaurant in Occoquan. The rehearsal dinner, hosted by the Zacharias', was at The Occoquan Inn.

The bride has a master's degree from Old Dominion University and teaches second grade at Bren Mar Park Elementary School. The groom works for Fairfax County Public Schools as an electrical mechanic. The couple lives with their adorable cat in West Springfield.

Seamands Pins on First Star

Thomas C. Seamands has been promoted to the rank of brigadier general in the U.S. Army.

Seamands, son of George and Loretta Seamands of Setter Place, Springfield, pinned on his first star during a ceremony in the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., where he serves as chief of the General Officer Management Office, with the Department of the Army Office of the Chief of Staff.

With more than 28 years of military service, Seamands has had assignments that have taken him to such places as Germany, Hawaii, North Carolina, Iraq and Washington, D.C. He has served in numerous personnel officer positions, as well as commander of a personnel services battalion. As a senior leader, he served as the top personnel officer for the XVIII Airborne Corps, both in North Carolina and through a tour of duty in Iraq. He was named the 14th chief of the General Officer Management Office

in 2007.

Seamands was commissioned a second lieutenant through the Army ROTC program following graduation from the University of Dayton, Ohio, in 1981. He went on to earn a master's degree in 1996 from Webster University in St. Louis, Mo.

His awards include the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, six awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army Commendation Medal and two awards of the Army Achievement Medal.

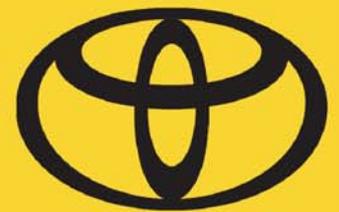
Seamands and his wife Melissa have two daughters, Katie and Colleen.



Seamands

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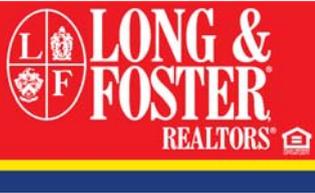


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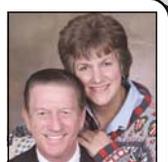
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This 2 BR, 2 BA first floor condo is features a large LR w/ gas fireplace, sliding glass door to balcony, sep DR, and HDWD floor in KIT. The spacious MBR has a walk-in closet and full MBA. Convenient to shopping, schools, I-95 and transportation.

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