

Joanna Slan in her Vienna home with her two canine companions, a Bichon Frise, Victoria, and a rescue Bichon/Poodle with three legs, Rafferty. Slan has published the first two books in her Kiki Lowenstein series.

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PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

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# Housing Market Stabilizing

Area faring better than many others.

BY DONNA MANZ  
THE CONNECTION

Vienna and Oakton's many in-demand neighborhoods, excellent schools, proximity to Tysons Corner and Washington, D.C., and access to mass transit afforded the area greater protection in the economic downswing than many other locations had in 2009.

"Vienna and Oakton, McLean and Great Falls are doing better holding their values than outlying locations," said Barbara McHale, a Vienna resident and Long and Foster Realtor. "If a house is in a good location and in good condition, updated, it will sell for a decent price, relatively speaking. In overall value, we did go down 10 percent, though. This has been a terrific drop in value."

McHale noted that banks have come a long way in learning how to handle the housing crisis, particularly in the area of foreclosure and short sales.

During her 31-year career, McHale has gone through real estate ups and downs, but none like this current one.

"We knew that the market could not sustain this upward mobility and that it would have to settle down," she said. "I have always been confident the market would rebound in downturns, but there are different conditions this time. We will regain ground in one to two years, but we have other economic factors that have come into play in the past year or so."

"The market will turn around," McHale said. "It will get better. The economy seems to be rebounding. Interest rates will go up, too."

To buyers, McHale would say, "there's not going to be a better time to buy." Prices and interest rates are down.

To a seller, she has this recommendation: "Unless you have to sell immediately, it might be to your advantage to wait a couple of years to list your home."

**ZIP CODE** 22182 was hardest-hit in the November 2008/November 2009 sales comparison. The average sold price in November 2009 dropped to \$627,250, compared to \$788,107 in November 2008, a drop of 20.41 percent. Average



'The market will turn around,' said Vienna realtor Barbara McHale.

**"You have excellent fundamentals in Vienna and Oakton. ... Good schools, desirable neighborhoods, close in proximity to D.C., mass transit close by, lots of extracurricular opportunities ... What's not to like about those areas?"**

— Jill Landsman, Northern Virginia Association of Realtors

days on the market, however, improved to 51 percent in 2009, a decrease of 48.48 percent from 2008. The average sale price as percentage of average list price was 95.61 percent.

The average sold price in Zip code 22180 in November 2009 was \$560,701, compared to \$594,928 in November 2008, a decrease of 5.75 percent. Average days on market in November 2009 was 59; in November 2008, 113. That represents a 47.79 percent improvement in 2009 over 2008. The average sale price as percentage of the average list price was 97.58 percent.

For Zip code 22181, the November 2009 average sold price dropped to \$573,385, compared to \$614,900 in November 2008, a decrease of 6.75 percent. The average days on market increased to 35 in November 2009, compared to 13 in November 2008, an increase of 169.23 percent. The average sale price as percentage of the average list price was 95.49 percent.

The biggest challenge of getting a home to market is getting the property appraised. Appraisers, McHale said, are cautious about putting their names on an appraisal nowadays. It's not unusual for appraisals to come in for less than the sales value. McHale meets with appraisers when listing homes to ensure that the appraiser has the details he needs to make an appropriate appraisal.

McHale cited the recent sale of an East Street home appraised for \$857,000. A large beautiful home

in a convenient location close to Maple Avenue, it sold in two days for \$850,000. "It was worth what it sold for," McHale said.

**CALLING THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA MARKET** "mostly stabilized," Jill Landsman of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors (NVAR) identified additional foreclosure activity in Virginia. "In Vienna, there won't be pervasive problems. Unemployment is not major in these Zip codes.

"You have excellent fundamentals in Vienna and Oakton," said Landsman. "Good schools, desirable neighborhoods, close-in proximity to D.C., mass transit close by, lots of extracurricular opportunities ... What's not to like about those areas?"

The people who purchased homes before 2005 are in a better position than those who did so in 2005 and later, Landsman added.

Currently, a lower inventory of homes under \$800,000 exists because they sell quickly. Market rebound for Vienna/Oakton will be easier, quicker and better than areas further out. Short sales and foreclosures may have multiple contracts, even in Vienna, McHale said.

The future of the real estate market is going to lie with first-time buyers, McHale thinks. "With every negative, there is a positive," she said. "The positive is that with the short sales and foreclosures, it has given first-time buyers an opportunity to get into a home at a price that they can afford."

## Area Families Will Feel School Budget Crunch

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE  
THE CONNECTION Center (Lee).

Superintendent Jack Dale wants to ask the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for an additional \$57.8 million in funding to help meet Fairfax County Public Schools budget needs next year, according to a presentation he made to the school board Jan. 7.

Fairfax already allocates the school system approximately \$1.7 billion annually, or about 53 percent of the county's overall revenue. But Dale said the schools are facing a projected shortfall of \$166 million in the 2010-2011 school year, in part due to rising costs that are out of the system's control.

The additional money equates to an increase of three-cents per \$100 of assessed land value in the Fairfax County real estate property tax rate. Fairfax schools draw approximately 75 percent of their funding from the local county government, which in turn, almost exclusively relies on real estate taxes for revenue.

In addition to requesting more money from the county, Dale has suggested \$108.2 million in spending cuts to assist in closing the schools system's projected funding gap for next year.

The superintendent added that the quality of Fairfax County public education system will suffer as a result of the cuts.

"We spend the same amount of money on schools as Montgomery County, Md. but we have 30,000 more students than they do," said Dale, referencing Fairfax's largest public education rival in the region.

Dale does not ultimately make the decision about the Fairfax schools' budget. The school board – largely relying on the superintendent's budget proposal as a template – will make its formal request for funding from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors next month.

In late April, the supervisors will pass an annual countywide budget and announce how much they intend to allocate to Fairfax schools overall next year.

Some school board members have already indicated that they would like to ask the county for funding above and beyond what Dale has suggested.

"Let's just say \$57.8 million is not my favorite number," said School Board member Brad

**New Fees For Families**  
To make up for the budget shortfall, Dale is proposing \$3.4 million in new fees for families and students, such as:

- ❖ a \$75 charge for any Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exam a student takes
- ❖ a \$100 student fee for participating on a sports team

### Proposed programs for elimination

Dale has proposed the elimination of the following services:

- ❖ "behind the wheel" drivers education. Fairfax students would now have to depend on the private sector for such training.
- ❖ bus service to "gifted and talented" centers if a base school has "gifted and talented" equivalent classes available.
- ❖ bus service to academy programs if there are fewer than five students enrolled in the program from a high school.
- ❖ freshman athletics, indoor track and winter cheerleading
- ❖ foreign language in the elementary schools (not including immersion programs)
- ❖ elementary "focus" programs (currently present at Riverside, Fort Hunt, Hollin Meadows, Woodley Hills elementary schools in Mount Vernon; Lake Anne and Forest Edge elementary schools in Reston; Kent Gardens Elementary School in McLean; Daniels Run Elementary School in Fairfax)

- ❖ Pimmit Hills Alternative High School in Falls Church
- ❖ Modified School Calendar (currently present at Dogwood Elementary School in Reston, Franconia Elementary School in the Springfield area, and Timber Lane Elementary School in the McLean area)
- ❖ Project Excel
- ❖ Most traditional summer school programs

**Other Budget Actions**  
Dale has also proposed the following:

- ❖ To increase class size by one student per teacher for all classes except special education.
- ❖ To freeze employees salaries and not give school system staff a "cost of living" increase in the next year.

# NEWS

**“Libraries are a part of our quality of life in Fairfax County.”**

— **Vienna Mayor M. Jane Seeman, a Patrick Henry volunteer**



PHOTO DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

**Patrick Henry librarian Vicki McMichael and branch manager Sheila Janega staff the information desk on Saturday. Proposed library budget option 2 reduces customer service on Saturday.**

## Libraries Brace for Budget Cuts

BY DONNA MANZ  
THE CONNECTION

**P**roposed budget cuts for Fairfax County libraries have inspired a grassroots campaign to preserve library hours and services.

“Libraries are a part of our quality of life in Fairfax County,” said Vienna Mayor M. Jane Seeman, a long-time Patrick Henry volunteer. “I don’t think libraries are discretionary. They are a basic need.”

In fiscal year 2010, the library system’s budget was slashed by 18 percent, with jobs and library hours lost to satisfy the budget. For FY2011, the proposed library budget, option 2, cuts another 15 percent. Under option 2, operating hours, services and programming would be reduced greatly.

Fairfax County Library spokesman Mary Mulrenan said that the library budget to be presented by County Executive Tony Griffin in February is proposed only. After review by the Board of Supervisors, the final decision comes in April. Library supporters have little more than three months to make their case to the Board.

“If the library is required to take a cut similar to last year’s 15 percent, it will result in a reduction in staffing and fewer hours,” said Mulrenan. “This will definitely impact the ability of branches to provide the same level of programming they are providing this year. However, the number and type of programs are likely to vary by branch.”

Option 2 proposes a reduction of services and hours, summarized as follows. The information desk may not be staffed on Friday and Saturday at community libraries, or on Sunday at regional libraries. Programs for youth and adults would not be offered on Friday, Saturday or Sunday. Telephone

**“Now, we’re getting to the core of what Fairfax County is all about.”**

— **Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill)**

calls from the public would not be answered on Friday or Saturday at community libraries or on Sunday at regional libraries. Equipment troubleshooting would be limited on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Proctoring would not be offered on Friday, Saturday or Sunday, and no after-hours use of meeting rooms is available.

“We don’t expect to eliminate all programs as they are part of who we are as a library, but certainly reductions would have to be made, if the library’s budget is drastically reduced,” Mulrenan said. Staffing and programming decisions will be made at the branch level.

**FRIENDS OF FAIRFAX LIBRARY**, an alliance of branch library “Friends” groups, are working together across the county to publicize the proposed budget cuts and to drum up citizen support. According to Karen O’Meara, president of Friends of Patrick Henry Library, countywide Friends are creating bookmarks and fliers for distribution and are taking signatures on a petition to be presented to the Board of Supervisors. A petition is online at <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/save-fairfax-county-public-libraries> and library users are encouraged to sign it online or in-person at a branch.

“Our libraries need to be open when people can get there,” said O’Meara. “For a lot of people, that means the evenings and Saturday. In option 2, librarians will not be

able to answer phone calls on Saturday.”

Programs funded by Friends groups will continue during regular library hours.

**PATRICK HENRY LIBRARY** offers 15 to 20 programs a month for all walks of life, demographics and age groups, said branch manager Sheila Janega. From children’s activities to adult events, homework help, English conversation and computer access, Patrick Henry provides resources not readily accessible, for free, elsewhere in the Vienna area. “Lunch Bunnies” and “Rock-a-Bye Baby” have a strong following of young mothers and their little ones. The children’s programs were designed to provide childhood literacy steps.

“The response of the community is important in our planning,” said Janega. “We’ll keep the programs with the highest participation, and we will try to keep as many as possible.”

Last year’s budget cuts prevented staff from the children’s department from going out into the schools, something Janega referred to as “huge.” Pages were cut by 50 percent at branch libraries last year.

Patrick Henry saw an increase in volunteers, some of them former branch staffers. The volunteer team at Vienna’s branch is a healthy one, many of whom have been at Patrick Henry Library for several years, making a weekly commitment. “Our volunteers are one of the strong qualities of Patrick Henry,” said Janega. “And we’ll probably be needing more.”

The Adopt-a-Shelf program is recruiting for volunteers, as is circulation. When an individual or group adopts a shelf, it falls on the adopter to read through the titles

SEE REDUCED SERVICES. PAGE 5

## What Your Neighbors Want

**In their own words, locals speak out at Virginia General Assembly hearing.**

BY JULIA O’DONOGHUE  
THE CONNECTION

**A**bout 60 people showed up to testify before the Fairfax County delegation to the Virginia General Assembly at a Jan. 9 hearing. The representatives, including state senators and delegates, headed to Richmond for the start of the legislative session on Jan. 13.

Virginia’s budget is one of the top priorities for most state legislators in 2010. The General Assembly passes a new budget only once every two years and the current spending plan has a \$4 billion shortfall.

Former Gov. Tim Kaine (D) proposed closing Virginia’s budget gap through a mix of tax increases and cuts in services before leaving office this month. Among other things,

**JACK BRUGGEMAN’S** sister Cathy, 47, cannot walk, feed or dress herself.

Though Bruggeman’s parents cared for Cathy during the first 22 years of her life, she has spent the last 25 at Northern Virginia Training Center, a state-run facility on Braddock Road in Fairfax. Bruggeman, a board member of center’s “parents and associates” group, could not be happier to have her there.

“Although [Northern Virginia Training Center] is a state-run facility, I have never thought of my sister as being in a state institution. ... Because of the care she receives there, Cathy has a full life,” said Bruggeman, who credits the center’s staff with discovering his sister’s breast cancer last year while it was still treatable.

Bruggeman worries about the increasing pressure to close state institutions like the Northern Virginia Training Center, which he said suffer unfairly from negative stereotypes

Kaine’s plan included a \$60 million reduction in Fairfax County Public Schools’ state funding.

Unlike his predecessor, newly sworn-in Gov. Robert McDonnell (R) has said he would not raise taxes to balance the budget, which could mean deeper cuts to services than the ones proposed by Kaine.

About one-third of the people who took their Saturday morning off to speak to Fairfax County’s senators and delegates had serious concerns about Virginia’s budget impact on residents with disabilities who receive or are waiting to receive assistance from the commonwealth.

Other speakers addressed a range of topics including taxes, the local court system and state funding for Fairfax schools.

about government-run facilities.

Some other advocates for people with disabilities have called for the closing of state-run facilities like the Northern Virginia Training Center in favor of small settings, such as group homes or home health care. Group homes or personal aides not only provide a person with disabilities more in-

dependence but are also cheaper to run, according to these advocates.

Bruggeman doesn’t disagree with those advocating for more group homes and other individualized settings for the most part. For many people with disabilities, those types of arrangements are more appropriate. But there is small set of people with disabilities, like his sister, that need the type of care only a fully-loaded facility, like the Northern Virginia Training Center, can provide, he said.

“It is more expensive to care for someone like my sister. Period,” said Bruggeman.



**Jack Bruggeman, Vienna**

## Robbery at Vienna Radio Shack

On Jan. 4, at approximately 9:40 a.m., a male subject entered the Radio Shack store in the 300 block of Maple Ave. W., in Vienna and asked to see a particular cell phone.

As the clerk went to the back of the store to retrieve the phone, the suspect followed him. After a verbal exchange the suspect bound the clerk and left him in an office area. The suspect then made off with a large quantity of cell phones in two large white bags.

The clerk was not physically harmed and was able to wriggle free then call for help a short time later. It is believed that the suspect fled across the back parking lot and eastbound towards the Shell station across the street.

The suspect is described as a black male in his 40s wearing a black cap, black coat, and black sweat pants with a stripe down the leg.

Anyone with any information or who thinks they may have seen the suspect is asked to call Det. Gary Lose at 703-255-6313.

## Accidental Two-Alarm House Fire

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department units responded to a house fire, Wednesday, Jan. 6, at approximately 3:40 p.m. in the Wolfrap area of Fairfax County. The single-family home is located 1287 Middleton Court.

Firefighters encountered heavy smoke and fire coming from the roof of the two-story home upon arrival. First arriving units encountered fire on the second floor upon entry of the home. The Incident Commander struck a second alarm, bringing over 60 firefighters to the scene. Crews immediately initiated an interior fire attack as well as a coordinated exterior attack. Firefighters brought the fire under control in approximately 30 minutes. Neighbors placed the 911 emergency call after seeing smoke and fire coming from the home. The home was being renovated and not occupied when the fire broke out. A firefighter was transported to Reston Hospital for a non-life threatening injury.

Damage is estimated at \$200,000.

According to fire investigators, the fire was accidental. Plumbers using a torch caused the fire.

## Maple Ave Receives Green Certification

Maple Ave Restaurant just became the first and only green certified restaurant in Vienna.

Maple Ave, a mom and pop restaurant in the heart of Vienna, opened its doors for the first time in August. Maple Ave was awarded green certification due to its green activities that they put to use every day by recycling used cooking oil into bio-diesel fuel, eliminating usage of Styrofoam, using biodegradable carry-out containers and bags, implementing a recycling program, using natural lighting, and purveying local, sustainable and organic food.

Chef owner Tim Ma emphasizes the use of local, sustainable and organic food that can be seen throughout the menu. For additional information, contact Joey Hernandez, General Manager at 703-772-1197 or e-mail at [Joey@mapleaverestaurant.com](mailto:Joey@mapleaverestaurant.com).

## Learn How To Write a Memoir

"Foundations of Writing: the Memoir" will meet on Thursdays, Jan. 14-Feb. 25, from 8:30-10:30 a.m. at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., S.E.

For those writing a memoir or thinking about starting one, this class offers a supportive environment in which to write and read their work and receive helpful feedback. Award-winning writer Joanne Lozar Glenn will help get the ideas flowing.

The fee is \$70.40 for Town of Vienna residents and \$88 for out-of-town participants.

For more information, call the Vienna Parks and Recreation Department at 703-255-6360 or visit [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov).

## NEWS

# Business Leaders Hopeful in 2010

## At Tysons Corner, long-term outlook outweighs inconveniences.

BY DONNA MANZ  
THE CONNECTION

While business leaders across the local area were reluctant to categorize the Vienna-Tysons and McLean hub as insulated from the economic downturn in 2009, many indicated that Vienna-Tysons fared better economically than most other U.S. areas. Widespread unemployment and massive company failures do not exist here. The proximity to Washington, D.C. and its mass of government employees, and the area's tie to federal contracts afforded Vienna-Tysons-McLean a buffer.

Local remodeler Dan Govan of Govan Builders sees a renewed sense of consumer confidence within his business. "Last year, overall, was flat," said Govan. "But business seemed to be ramping up in December. Right after New Year's, the phones have been really busy, people ready to upgrade their houses. They've made the decision, 'We're going to be here, may as well enjoy our home.'"

The size and scope of remodeling projects have increased over last year, what Govan sees as a reflection of a hopeful economy. He looks at his business as a good barometer of what is happening on the local level. "We're a local business depending on the local community," he said. "We live here, we do business here."

**TO EXPAND** business opportunity and showcase its expertise, Govan Builders diversified its product offering. Govan offers handyman services, as well as remodeling services.

Govan's approach is characteristic of the newer business model of adapting to the economic environment, a strategy the Vienna-Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce (VTRCC) is aggressively promoting.

"I think a lot of people are optimistic," said Gina Cocomello, 2010 VTRCC chairman of the board and development director for the non-profit Alternative House. "We're stronger than elsewhere because of our location. There's still a lot of business opportunity and



**Gina Cocomello, chairman of the board, Vienna-Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce.**



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ  
THE CONNECTION

**Rich Irons, Citizens Bank.**

growth in our community."

With the delivery of the new Tysons Corner urban center, a "smart growth" model and construction of mass transit access at Tysons Corner, the general sentiment among business leaders is that Tysons Corner will emerge as a vibrant and vital business, residential and social center.

"Tysons Corner is our downtown, our economic engine," said Keith Turner, West Group senior vice president-development services. Also the president and chairman of the Tysons Transportation Association (TyTran), Turner said it is hard not to be optimistic about the future of Tysons Corner. "The future of Tysons Corner will be well worth the temporary inconvenience," Turner said. "There's an incredible efficiency underway to address the issues of the present construction challenges." He pointed to Keep Tysons Moving, a region-wide congestion management plan. Virginia Megaprojects Employer Solution Team works with companies to create customized transportation programs for companies.

"Most people I've spoken to are hopeful, looking at the future and wanting to be a part of it," said Diane Poldy, VTRCC president. "Businesses are responding to new growth potential. Rail, office space, living space and green space ... Tysons will be the heart of Northern Virginia."

Others echoed that sentiment. "Of the core economic markets in the Commonwealth, Tysons Corner is on the map," said Rich Irons of Citizens Bank, former VTRCC board chairman.

**THE NEW TYSONS CORNER**, centered on transit-oriented development, and a "city" center with the infrastructure to support busi-

ness, cultural arts, recreation and residential life, will be a model nationally for urban development, Irons contended. Tysons Corner businesses have a lot of influence on how the area should be developed. "I really do believe we're on the cusp of greatness," Irons said.

He acknowledged that in the business world, people are being more thoughtful and particular about where they are allocating their financial resources to market their businesses. A priority of VTRCC is to maximize a business' return on investment, to get businesses to their target markets, he said. Businesses are more mindful than ever about the most effective use of their marketing money.

Along those lines, VTRCC is launching its debut trade show in June, concentrating on business to business networking and consumer relationships.

For the 400-plus VTRCC members, 2009 was a year of proactive approaches to the changes going on in the business community. The chamber set out to create more tangible value, re-branding itself in mid-year as the "link to opportunity." Construction congestion has affected businesses on Routes 7 and 123 to some extent, but the businesses in the Tysons Corner corridor are taking a long-term approach to the current traffic mess. On the chamber's board is West Group's Turner, who heads the Tysons Corner development committee on behalf of the chamber. To keep business humming during the construction phases, stakeholders, project managers and public arms are working together to keep employees, commuters and consumers informed of lane and street closures and traffic bottlenecks.

"Everyone is guardedly hopeful for this coming year," Poldy said.

# Reduced Services Proposed for Libraries

FROM PAGE 3

and call numbers to maintain the shelf's order. Janega suggests that potential volunteers stop by Patrick Henry to fill out an application. "It's a workload for us to train volunteers so we try to recruit reliable ones," she said.

**"Libraries are a part of our quality of life in Fairfax County."**

— **Vienna Mayor M. Jane Seeman, a Patrick Henry volunteer**

**SUPERVISOR**

Cathy Hudgins (D - Hunter Mill) said that this round of budget cuts is harder than last year because the Board of Supervisors has already done the "easier" cuts.

"Now, we're getting to the core of what Fairfax County is all about," Hudgins said. "Libraries have become everything to everybody, so-to-speak. There's not a population libraries don't touch. There's such diversity in how people use the library."

Hudgins stressed that the community and the board are all in this together, trying to keep cuts in balance to ensure an equitable distribution of funding to services Fairfax County residents have come to expect and need.

Seeman was on the county library board for eight years, serving during the last round of budget cuts.

She witnessed first-hand the lag of restoration of services when the economy rebounded. "The library is the first to cut, the last to restore," Seeman said.

"The number of library books per capita is an important statistic. It says so much about the character of a community," she said. "The Fairfax County Library system is a jewel in the crown of the county."

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## Large Classes, Tough Choices

### Opening the doors for more charter schools in Virginia.

One reason for growth in the student population in public school systems in the area right now is the effect of the recession on family budgets. With more than 70,000 unemployed people in Northern Virginia, and thousands more underemployed, some families who did have children in private schools have switched to public school. Given the stellar reputations of the schools in question, it's a rational financial move.

But now growing enrollment and costs combined with stagnant budgets are forcing some local public school systems to rework their budget calculations as well, resulting in more than 30 students in many classes, more than 40 students in some classes.

This will no doubt send some parents back to the family budget drawing board, seeking a way to afford private school and smaller class sizes for their children.

#### EDITORIAL

Most parents don't care very much about the size of the average class, only the sizes of the classes in which their children are trying to learn.

Very large classes, especially classes with 30 or more students in them, are a detriment to learning. Students with any sort of challenges are particularly poorly served by large classes. Very large classes also make the

task of maintaining a civil school environment much more difficult.

Schools would do well to focus first on limiting very large classes, worrying a bit less about average class size.

It's also an excellent time to begin paving the way for charter schools in Virginia. What, in the middle of a financial crunch? If we start now to develop more encouraging guidelines for charter schools in the region, by the time the first schools are open, the economic climate will be vastly different.

Public schools cannot meet all the needs of all the students that come through the doors. Families deserve some well-constructed alternatives. Governor-elect Bob McDonnell, along with President Obama, is right to push to open the doors for more charter schools in Virginia.

#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### 2010 Session Begins

To the Editor:

In 1619, a delegation of Virginians convened in Jamestown for the first meeting of the House of Burgesses. On Wednesday, Jan. 13, the western world's oldest continuing legislative body returns to Richmond for the 2010 General Assembly session. This year, the session is 60 days long. It will be a busy 60 days as we will be swearing in a new governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, as well as 20 freshman delegates, passing a budget for the next two years, and reviewing the hundreds of bills that will be considered by the House of Delegates and the State Senate.

As the delegate from the 53rd District, which includes the City of Falls Church, and parts of Fairfax County including parts of McLean, Vienna and Fairfax, I look forward to hearing your thoughts on issues and legislation to be acted upon during the legislative session. I encourage you to follow the bills and share your questions, thoughts and concerns. With revenues sharply lower, we will have a very difficult, but necessary job, of balancing the state budget without doing serious damage to important services. I hope you will let me know of any concerns and/or recommendations that you have. You can track the bills at <http://legis.state.va.us/> and contact me through my e-mail at [DelJScott@house.state.va.us](mailto:DelJScott@house.state.va.us) or by phone at 804-698-1053.

**Del. Jim Scott**  
D-53

### Officer Saves Vienna Dog

To the Editor:

I am writing with regard to Animal Control Officer John Barker. On Thursday, Jan. 7, our dog Brimmer became frightened while outside with my husband and took off. Brimmer is a small German shepherd that we rescued almost a year ago as a 6-month-old puppy. Someone had definitely abused this little dog and she came to us terrified of everything. She has made huge strides but is still a very fearful little dog.

We contacted the Vienna Police Department and informed them of the dog being at large. Officer Barker responded to our call and recognized our dog from a previous encounter in our yard. As he was coming to our home, he observed that she was just down the street in a neighbor's backyard and informed us that she was still close in the neighborhood. We called her and began to drive around to see if we could catch her. Officer Barker began to make the rounds and drive through the neighborhood, also in an effort to find her. I finally spotted her in the backyard of a home that fronts Cedar Lane. I jumped out of my car and attempted to get her to come to me, but she was so panicked from the run that she just took off. Officer Barker — still assisting in locating this dog — observed me trying to contain her in this yard and thankfully, took off after her in his van while she ran down the yellow line of Center Street. He was able to maintain

traffic at a dog's pace while flashing his police lights to alert oncoming cars of a situation. Brimmer traveled down Cedar Lane and went left on Williams Avenue into the neighborhood and headed straight out to Electric Avenue. Again, Brimmer decided that the yellow line in the street is her guideline and is running down the center of Electric Avenue. With Officer Barker's assistance, I was able to get in front of them and stop Brimmer before she reached the intersection of Cedar Lane.

The whole thing was absolutely terrifying and I know that had it not been for the assistance of Officer Barker, I would have more than likely observed my dog being run over on Cedar Lane and/or Electric Avenue rather than the happy ending we achieved.

The Town of Vienna has some exceptional personnel on its police force and I believe that Animal Control Officer John Barker is one of them. His genuine concern for the animal's well being and safety is evident. If not for his assistance, I honestly believe that I would not have Brimmer with me here today. Had he not continued to circle through my neighborhood in an effort to return Brimmer to her home, I have no doubt we would not have had such a good outcome.

I want to thank Officer Barker for his dedication and his concern. He is an outstanding representative for the police force in Vienna and I am very pleased that he is our Animal Control officer. Thank you again.

**Beth Williams**  
Vienna

### Lifesaving Bill

To the Editor,

As a two-time cancer survivor I was encouraged that the Senate passed its health care reform legislation before the Christmas holiday. It was an early gift for cancer patients, survivors and their families, who are closer than ever to reaping the benefits of historic legislation that will dramatically improve the health care system in this country.

The experiences of families affected by cancer highlight the major problems in our health care system. The difficult and complex road that begins with a diagnosis, cancer patients can encounter all of the major problems in the health care system today. They are often denied coverage because of preexisting condition exclusions or charged more than they can afford for critical care simply because they have cancer.

If enacted, this bill could have immediate and lasting benefits for millions of people with cancer and other life-threatening chronic diseases. Getting a cancer diagnosis would no longer put families at risk of being denied or getting priced out of lifesaving coverage.

This is a critical point in the war against cancer. And I would like to thank Sens. Warner and Webb for putting patients before politics by voting in favor of this lifesaving bill.

Thank you Sen. Warner and Sen. Webb for standing up and looking out for cancer patients.

**Jim Radmore**  
American Cancer Society  
Cancer Action  
Network Volunteer  
Herndon

PEOPLE

# Vienna Author Makes Cozy with Murder

Joanna Slan introduces new heroine to mystery genre.

BY DONNA MANZ  
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Joanna Slan spent most of her adult life writing non-fiction books, but when she turned her attention to fiction, she found a voice, a mischievous one, in “cozy” mystery novels. Her first mystery, “Papers, Scissors, Death,” published in 2008, was nominated for an Agatha award in 2009.

“When I started writing these books, I said I was just going to populate them with the things that I’m passionate about,” said Slan. “I thought, why not put the things that make me happy and, maybe, they’ll make others happy. So far, it’s worked.”

A “cozy” is a crime novel in which characters are usually known to one another; no excessive violence or explicit sex is included; the plot is set in a community of place or kinship; and the main character is, usually, an amateur sleuth. They tend to have light-hearted moments, as well.

Miss Marple, Agatha Christie’s prim creation, is the inspiration for the Agatha award.

Slan has written seven books on scrapbooking. In Slan’s first mystery, Kiki solved the murder of her unfaithful husband. Left with a pre-teen to raise on her own, Kiki took a job at a scrapbooking supply store. Scrapbooking, a conceit

of Kiki Lowenstein mysteries, flavors the stories with the ins-and-outs of the popular and financially successful scrapbooking business. The books are dotted with humor and nods to budding romance.

Her second mystery, “cut, crop & die,” centers around the death of an unlikable bigwig scrapbook designer. Kiki must clear her own name in “cut, crop & die.”

FANS of Kiki Lowenstein mys-

teries identify with the heroine, something that surprises but gratifies Slan. Kiki is an ordinary woman thrust into extraordinary circumstances. Kiki, like many of today’s women, is hard on herself, always seeing her own flaws, Slan said. Slan’s main character is “loving, warm, loyal, compassionate, insecure and overweight,” but in the end, Kiki is always self-reliant. “I think women see themselves in

SEE PUZZLES, PAGE 15

## Vienna Artist Exhibits at Kellary

Vienna mixed-media artist Nia Tavlarides Stratos is exhibiting a collection of works at the Kellary, 1700 K St., N.W. in Washington, DC. Reception and Art Exhibition, featuring a variety of Greek wines, cheese and olives is going to be Sunday, Jan. 17, 1-4 p.m. More information at [www.kellaridc.com](http://www.kellaridc.com), [www.niastratosart.com](http://www.niastratosart.com).



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# Student Orchestra Takes the Stage

By WILLIAM SCOTT MARTIN  
THE CONNECTION

It's hard enough to organize and synchronize almost three dozen people. It's even more difficult with something as sensitive as music. But to conductor Matthew Martz and the about three dozen musicians in the Student Symphonic Orchestra, success is determined by passion and love for music.

The students had been rehearsing the pieces for five months, only set back by the recent snowstorm and by the holidays. "We've had a bit of a struggle because we missed rehearsals here and there," said Martz. The music includes pieces from John Williams to theme songs from TV shows to even video game music. The students chose all of the music. "It's music. ... I love it, so it's a fantastic thing," said Martz.

The musicians of the Student Symphonic Orchestra put in a great deal of practice and artistry, and Martz is often seen urging, sometimes playfully, the students to strive to be better.

"I'm trying to compliment you, guys," said Martz to the orchestra during a rehearsal.

Some of the families drive half-hour distances to practice. Even



PHOTO BY WILLIAM SCOTT MARTIN/THE CONNECTION

The Student Symphonic Orchestra's brass section during the rehearsal at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in McLean.

students who were reluctant at first, like flautist Ellen Upsal, warmed up to it. "My mom kind of made me," she said. "At first, I didn't like it, but now I like it."

For many of the students, it Saturday will be their first performance.

They will be performing selections from the "Phantom of the Opera" at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in McLean, beginning at 7 p.m. For many parents, it will also be the first time they see

their children on stage.

**MARTZ, WHO** was a senior at Marshall High, founded the orchestra, beginning with only a handful of students. "It started off with about 12 players that were all just my friends," said Martz. "I had purchased some music. I just started telling about it my friends who played stringed instruments and wind instruments and it started growing." Since Martz graduated, the orchestra now

boasts 35 members.

"Originally, it was mostly kids from Marshall High School," said Nick Kemp, orchestra member. "But I was one of the first ones that was outside the general group of the first year, and now we're recruiting from different schools more than just Marshall. I've recruited several players. ... It's just a good way to connect."

Martz attributed the rapid growth and success of the orchestra to several things. First, the orchestra does not charge the students to be able to play, unlike other major youth orchestras. Many of these organizations must buy their music and these fees are transferred to orchestra members. The orchestra also doesn't use auditions. "I pretty much want players to play at a reasonable level and we work with the rest," said Martz.

Finally, Martz insists that students pick out their own music, even if it may not be traditional. "In high school, you play whatever the director wants you to play," Martz said. "A lot of that is the traditional band music, and there's so much more out there."

The musicians come from middle and high schools from all over Fairfax. Most of them already knew Martz and joined the orchestra at

his request. Others heard about it from another friend or were told about it at church. The students drive the entire organization. They are the ones who decide what and where they want to play. "There's no parental direction," said Katherine Culbertson, mother of orchestra member Lizzie Culbertson. "We're just here as support for them."

**FOR PLAYERS** like pianist Bobby McKay, the enjoyment comes from something that is ultimately simple. "It's a good way to play music with people I don't know and I get to meet people from all over the county," he said. McKay attended school with Martz and has been playing the piano for six years.

Already, the Student Symphonic Orchestra has been attracting attention. "We work with Wolftrap, the Kennedy Center, National Theater, the NSO, and the National Philharmonic," said Martz. Their Saturday concert will include cellist David Cho, and a professor from Shenandoah University will be performing a pre-show.

The Student Symphonic Orchestra performs Saturday, Jan. 16, 7 p.m. at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 1545 Chain Bridge Road in McLean. Concert is open to the public with no charge.

## CALENDAR

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

### THURSDAY/JAN. 14

**The Grandsons.** At The Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. 7:30 beginner lesson, 8-10 p.m. live music. \$10. 703-424-1745 or [www.headoverheelsdance.com](http://www.headoverheelsdance.com).

**Jammin' Java's Mid-Atlantic Band Battle II.** 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Financial Planning During Separation and Divorce.** 7 p.m. at the Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. \$45 non-members, \$35 members. [www.thewomenscenter.org](http://www.thewomenscenter.org) or 703-281-2657.

**Vienna Art Society Monthly Meeting.** 10 a.m. at the Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., N.W., Vienna. With Robert Liberace. 703-319-3971 or [www.viennaartsociety.org](http://www.viennaartsociety.org).

### FRIDAY/JAN. 15

**Capitol Steps.** 8 p.m. at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. 703-790-0123.

**U.S. Navy Band's 33rd International Saxophone Symposium.** 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. With clinics, recitals and vendor displays, 3-7 p.m. 202-433-2525 or [www.navyband.navy.mil/saxophonesymposium](http://www.navyband.navy.mil/saxophonesymposium).

**English Conversation.** 10 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Group for adult non-native English speakers of all levels. Call for

details. 703-938-0405.

**Pokemon League.** 3 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Learn and play. Age 5-18. 703-938-0405.

**Chelsea Lee.** 6 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Sonos.** 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Daedalus Quartet.** 8 p.m. at The Barns at Wolf Trap, Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. \$35. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org) or 703-938-2404.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 16

**Gizmo Guys Juggling.** 2 p.m. at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. \$14 non-residents, \$10 district residents. There will also be a Tennis Ball Juggling Workshop for ages 9-adult at 3:30 p.m.; the cost is \$10 per person. 703-790-9223.

**Capitol Steps.** 8 p.m. at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. 703-790-0123.

**U.S. Navy Band's 33rd International Saxophone Symposium.** 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. With clinics, recitals and vendor displays, 3-7 p.m. 202-433-2525 or [www.navyband.navy.mil/saxophonesymposium](http://www.navyband.navy.mil/saxophonesymposium).

**Northern Virginia Model Railroaders Open House.** 1-5 p.m. at the W&OD Depot (along bike trail), 231 Dominion Rd., Vienna. Operating HO scale display depicting the Western North Carolina Railroad, a portion of the Southern Railway. Free, donations accepted. [www.nvmr.org](http://www.nvmr.org) or 703-938-5157

**Chelsea Lee.** 6 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227

Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**John Eddie (full band).** 9:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Northern Virginia Country Western Dance.** at Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church. Line dance at 7:30 p.m., beginners' couples dance at 8 p.m., Open dancing 8:30-11 p.m. \$10 for NVCWDA members, \$12 for non-members, \$5 for ages 16-20 with student ID. [www.nvcwda.org](http://www.nvcwda.org) or 703-860-4941.

**Ballroom dancing with The Family Band.** Colvin Run Schoolhouse, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Jitterbug lesson at 8 p.m., \$5; dancing 9-11:30 p.m., \$12. 703-795-2003 or [www.colvinrun.org](http://www.colvinrun.org).

**John Jennings & Friends.** 8 p.m. at The Barns at Wolf Trap, Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. \$22. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org) or 703-938-2404.

### SUNDAY/JAN 17

**Hungry For Music Benefit.** 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$12. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Garden Scale Trains.** 1-4 p.m. at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Washington, Virginia, Maryland Garden Railway Society will run G-Scale model railway trains. Adults \$2, children \$1. 703-425-9225.

### MONDAY/JAN. 18

**Give Together: A Family Volunteer Day.** 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Dewberry Hall in the Johnson Center, George Mason University, 4400

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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# OPEN HOUSES

Saturday & Sunday, Jan. 16th & 17th



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To add your FREE Realtor represented Open House to these weekly listings, please contact Don Park at 703-778-9420, or [dpark@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dpark@connectionnewspapers.com)

## COMMUNITY



Check presentation ceremony.

### Firefighters, Area Charities Receive Rotary Support

Capt. Willie Bailey of the Fairfax County Fire Department accepted a check for \$2,000 from the Rotary Club of Tysons Corner at the annual Holiday Party at the Tower Club on Dec. 17. Rotarians presenting the check were: David Danner, Ingrid Parris-Hicklin, Isabel Kelly, Santa Claus (Club President, Brian Mansir) and Denise Dixon-Basil. Bailey heads up a group of firefighters, who this year have distributed thousands of school backpacks, coats and toys to needy children in Fairfax County. In addition to the check presented to Bailey, the Rotary Club of Tysons Corner helped with the distribution as well.

In addition to the check for the Fairfax County Fire Department, \$12,000 was also distributed to Alternative House (new computer), Pimmet Hills Senior Center (outings for members), Chesterbrook Residences (books for the library), the McLean Orchestra, Lewinsville Senior Center, Stroke Comeback (nine-week group session), Alzheimer's Family Day Care Center and Tibetan Children (computers for Internet access to e-books).

The Rotary Club of Tysons Corner [<http://tysonsrotary.org>] is a service club of professional men and women serving the community in and around Tysons Corner. The club was chartered on April 12, 1983, and has been making an impact in the area for more than 20 years. Members are business professionals, executives and owners who live or work in Tysons Corner and surrounding locales. The club meets every Thursday at 7:30 a.m., at the Tower Club.

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Washington Christian Church... 703-938-7720  
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**Baha'i**  
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**Baptist**  
Global Mission Church ... 703-757-0877  
Peace Baptist Church ... 703-560-8462  
Bethel Primitive Baptist Church ... 703-757-8134

Cartersville Baptist Church ... 703-255-7075  
Fellowship Baptist Church ... 703-385-8516  
First Baptist Church ... 703-938-8525  
The Light Mission Church ... 703-757-0877  
Vienna Baptist Church ... 703-281-4400  
New Union Baptist Church... 703-281-2556

**Buddhist**  
Vajrayogini Buddhist Center... 202-331-2122

**Church of the Brethren**  
Oakton Church of the Brethren ... 703-281-4411

**Catholic**  
Light Mission Church ... 703-757-0877  
Our Lady of Good Counsel ... 703-938-2828  
St. Athanasius Catholic Church ... 703-759-4555  
St. Mark's Catholic Church ... 703-281-9100

**Charismatic**  
Christian Assembly ... 703-698-9777  
**Church of Christ**  
Berea Church of Christ ... 703-893-7040

**Disciples of Christ**  
Antioch Christian Church ... 703-938-6753

**Episcopal**  
Church of the Holy Comforter ... 703-938-6521  
Church of the Holy Cross ... 703-698-6991  
St. Francis Episcopal ... 703-759-2082

**Jehovah's Witness**  
Jehovah's Witnesses ... 703-759-1579

**Lutheran**  
Emmanuel Lutheran Church... 703-938-2119  
St. Athanasius Lutheran Church... 703-455-4003

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Andrew Chapel United Methodist ... 703-759-3509  
Church of the Good Shepherd ... 703-281-3987  
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Great Falls United Methodist... 703-759-3705  
Oakton United Methodist ... 703-938-1233

Vale United Methodist ... 703-620-2594  
Smith Chapel United Methodist ... 571-434-9680  
Wesley United Methodist ... 703-938-8700

**Non-Denominational**  
Christian Assembly Church ... 703-698-9777

**Presbyterian**  
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**Quaker**  
Langley Hills Friends... 703-442-8394

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**Unitarian Universalist**  
Congregation of Fairfax ... 703-281-4230

**Unity**  
Unity of Fairfax ... 703-281-1767

### COMMUNITY NOTES

The **Vienna Theatre Company** will present the drama **"Colder Than Here"** at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., S.E., Jan. 22, 23, 29 and 30, and Feb. 5 and 6 at 8 p.m. and Jan. 31 at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 general admission and \$9 for students and senior citizens age 65 and older, available at the Community Center. For more information, call 703-255-6360 or visit [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov). Sign language interpretation for the January 31 matinee is available by sending a request to [vtcshows@yahoo.com](mailto:vtcshows@yahoo.com) by January 15 (subject to the availability of a qualified interpreter).

Vienna area 6th, 7th and 8th graders are **invited to show off their talents on Friday, Jan. 22, at Club Phoenix Teen Center**, located in the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., S.E. Register by Jan. 20. The show is scheduled for 5 p.m. with rehearsal at 4 p.m. Whether you sing, dance or tell jokes, you'll have your 15 minutes of fame.

Admission to the show is free of charge, and friends and family members are welcome to attend.

Call the Vienna Parks and Recreation Department at 703-255-6360 or visit [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov).

Club Phoenix features a big screen TV, VCR, jukebox, CD player, video games, pool and ping pong tables, food area, and a state-of-the-art sound system.

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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

University Drive, Fairfax. Volunteer for multiple nonprofit agencies at one central location. Service projects will benefit populations served by FACETS, Fairfax 4-H, the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia and the Orphan Foundation of America. Pre-registration encouraged at [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org). Contact 703-246-3826 or [swatson@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:swatson@volunteerfairfax.org).

**Martin Luther King Jr., Celebration.** 10 a.m. at First Baptist Church of Vienna, 450 Orchard Street, Vienna. Speaker: Rev. Pastor Kenny Smith, Past President, NAACP, Fairfax County Branch. Musical performances by local choirs and community volunteers. 703-938-8525.

**Open Mic Showcase hosted by Ron Goad.** 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$2. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

## TUESDAY/JAN. 19

**Colvin Run Community Center Weekly Dance.** 7 p.m. at Colvin Run Schoolhouse, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. \$10. [www.colvinrun.org](http://www.colvinrun.org).

**Chris Merritt (full band), Gills and Wings, Greg Holden and Ian Axel.** 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 in advance, \$13 at the door. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Building and Maintaining Credit and Debt Management.** 7 p.m. at the Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. Free. Registration required at [www.thewomenscenter.org](http://www.thewomenscenter.org) or 703-281-2657 ext. 266.

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 20

**Todd Fickley Organ Recital.** 1 p.m. at Saint Luke Catholic Church, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Free. 703-356-0670 or [www.musicinmclean.org](http://www.musicinmclean.org).

**International Guitar Night.** 8 p.m. at The Barns, Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. Lulo Reinhardt, Itamar Erez, Stephen Bennett & Brian Gore. \$24. 703-938-2404 or [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Jan Elvin, author of The Box from Braunau: In Search of My Father's War.** 7 p.m. at Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place. Books available for sale and signing. Free admission. Register at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library) or call 703-242-4020.

**Lunch Bunnies.** 11 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Bring a snack, enjoy stories and songs. Age 1-5 with adult. 703-938-0405.

**Avoiding Divorce Court: How To Negotiate a Property Settlement Agreement.** 7 p.m. at The Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. \$40 non-members, \$30 members; \$75 non-member couples, \$50 member couples. [www.thewomenscenter.org](http://www.thewomenscenter.org) or 703-281-2657.

## THURSDAY/JAN. 21

**Chapter 227, Vietnam Veterans of America Inc. Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. at Neighbor's Restaurant, 262D Cedar Lane, Cedar Lane Shopping Center, Vienna. Challenges of Women Serving in the Modern U.S. Military, with speaker Kayla Williams, former army Arabic linguist of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and Iraq War veteran, author of "Love My Rifle More Than You: Young and Female in the U.S. Army." All invited. Free. 703-255-0353 or [www.vva227.org](http://www.vva227.org).

**Peter Mulvey and Jeffrey Foucault.** 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple

Ave. E., Vienna. \$12 in advance, \$15 at the door. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Washington Ballet Artistic Director Septime Webre.** 7:30 p.m. at Langley School, 1411 Balls Hill Road McLean. Weber will discuss how a strong education in the arts prepares children to excel, and will share strategies for parents to help build 'performing arts intelligence,' in their children, encouraging them to develop a lifelong appreciation of all performing arts. Free, reservations suggested. 703-356-1920 or [www.langleyschool.org](http://www.langleyschool.org).

## FRIDAY/JAN. 22

**English Conversation.** 10 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Group for adult non-native English speakers of all levels. Call for details. 703-938-0405.

**Pokemon League.** 3 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East,

Vienna. Learn and play. Age 5-18. 703-938-0405.

**Enter the Haggis and Adam Ezra Group.** 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$12. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**American Legion Post 270 Citrus Sale.** 8 a.m.-6 p.m. at American Legion Post 270, 1355 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Honeybells, seedless grapefruit, navel oranges, Murcot tangerines and maple syrup. Proceeds support local community youth, patriotic activities and veteran needs. 703-356-8259.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 23

**Violinist Augustin Hadelich and the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra.** 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. 7 p.m. pre-concert lecture free to ticketed patrons. Tickets \$25-\$55, available at 1-888-945-2468 or [Tickets.com](http://Tickets.com).

## FAITH

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to [vienna@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:vienna@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

**Antioch Christian Church,** 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna, is hosting guest speaker the Rev. Deborah Thompson for the church's Martin Luther King Jr. Sunday Celebration at 11 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 17. The public is invited, and a reception will follow. [www.antiochdoc.org](http://www.antiochdoc.org) or 703-938-6753.

**Grief Share Group.** 7-9 p.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 7426 Idylwood Road, Falls Church. A 12-week program beginning 7 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 21 to support those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. [stpaulsoff@aol.com](mailto:stpaulsoff@aol.com) or 703-573-0295.

**The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA)** offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. Contact Gary Axelrod, 301-610-8309 or [gaxelrod@jssa.org](mailto:gaxelrod@jssa.org), or [www.jssa.org](http://www.jssa.org).

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# Madison Girls Start Fast in Liberty District

Led by senior Kavanagh, Warhawks victorious in first three district basketball contests.

BY RICH SANDERS  
THE CONNECTION

When Erin Kavanagh is on her game, which is quite often, the Madison High girls' basketball team is a tough matchup for most any opponent. On Thursday night, Jan. 7, the 5-foot-10 senior guard/forward had it all working, in the first half especially. She led the Warhawks to a 60-47 Liberty District road win at McLean.

Kavanagh scored a game-high 20 points, 15 of which came in the first half as Madison built a 32-18 lead at the intermission. The versatile playmaker played a key role in helping the Warhawks, with the win, reach the .500 mark at 5-5.

"Erin had a nice [shooting] touch that game," said Madison coach Kirsten Roberts. "She was doing it all, looking to drive, shooting from the outside and getting others involved."

Madison also received good contributions from freshmen guard Megan Henshaw (12 points), junior wing Sarah Schrock (8) and junior forward Anna Jay (6).

"I think we played a very good offensive game," said Roberts who, a year ago, led Madison to the district tournament title in her first



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Madison's Carmen Mann (32) plays defense during the Warhawks' Liberty District girls' basketball game at Stone Bridge last week. No. 14 for Madison is Khristin Kylo.**

season as the Warhawks' head coach. "We're starting to really work together and play pressure defense. [On offense] we're looking to pass the ball and not shoot right away."

Kavanagh is Madison's top re-

turning player from last year's squad which, as the No. 4-seed at the postseason district tournament, defeated No. 2 Langley in the championship game. She scored 11 points in that finals win and was named to the All-Tourna-

ment Team.

This season, Kavanagh is leading Madison in scoring with 12 points per game.

Thursday's win over McLean did not come easy for Madison, which built an 18-point first half lead only to see the home team Highlanders fight back to get within four by late in the third quarter. But the Warhawks drained a pair of three-point shots in the closing seconds of the third quarter to regain the momentum, then kept McLean at bay in the final quarter.

"McLean has a lot of heart," said Roberts, the Highlanders' former head coach. "They are very quick and go to the basket. I think we figured out [in the second half] we had to play a little better on offense and on defense."

The win over Madison improved the Warhawks to 3-0 in district play. But Madison experienced its first district loss two nights later when it fell to host Stone Bridge, 51-41, on Saturday. Kavanagh tallied 20 points and Henshaw had 10 in the setback. The Warhawks' next leading scorer was Khristin Kylo (6 points), the Warhawks' senior point guard.

Madison led 9-8 after one quarter before the Bulldogs outscored their guests, 21-8, during the second quarter to take a 29-17 lead at the half. Madison outscored Stone Bridge, 24-22, in the second half but it was not enough to overcome the home team.

**OVER THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS**, Madison took part in the Bulldog Bash Tournament, hosted by Westfield High School. There, the Warhawks won their opener on Dec. 28 over private school opponent Flint Hill School, 53-49

in overtime. But Madison lost its final two games at the holiday tourney, falling to the host Bulldogs, 50-34, on Dec. 29, and then losing to Potomac High (Woodbridge), 51-39, on Dec. 30.

Three Warhawks — Kavanagh (15 points), Schrock (13) and Kylo (11) — scored in double digits in the win over Flint Hill. In the following game loss to Westfield, both Kavanagh and Jay, the latter of whom is averaging six blocks per game this season, scored 10 points, while Schrock and Kylo both had seven points. And against Potomac High, Schrock and junior forward Carmen Mann led the Warhawks with 10 points each, while Jay scored seven.

Madison's district wins have come over South Lakes, Fairfax and McLean. The Warhawks' first win of the new year came on Jan. 4 when Madison defeated visiting Fairfax in overtime, 46-44. Roberts' squad received a balanced scoring attack in that victory with Schrock (11 points) and Kavanagh (10) both tallying double figures, and teammates Kylo (9 points), freshmen guard Megan Leduc (7) and Jay (5) each contributing offensively as well.

"It's a great tournament and all the teams are very well coached," said Roberts, of the Westfield tournament.

Madison is under the leadership this season of team co-captains Kavanagh and Kylo. Coach Roberts is pleased with her team's play on defense. On the offensive end, she wants to see patience and good passing in Warhawks' motion sets.

"We just have to figure out our offense a little better," she said.

Madison will be at home this Friday night against Langley.

## SPORTS ROUNDUPS

**Fairfax Adult Softball (FAS)**, the largest softball organization in the area, is seeking umpires for its adult slowpitch softball leagues in Fairfax County. Umpires are paid monthly. Net pay starts at \$25 per one-hour game. Enjoy great pay plus bonus pay opportunities. Experience is desired but ASA training is provided beginning early February. Flexible scheduling based on availability. This is a great part-time profession where one can get out of the home/office and into the outdoor environment of recre-

ational softball for a little exercise, excellent camaraderie, and fun. Contact FAS at 703-815-9007 or e-mail [office@fairfaxadultsoftball.com](mailto:office@fairfaxadultsoftball.com).

**The Vienna Little League (VLL)**, which provides baseball programs for boys and girls in the greater Vienna area, is now accepting registrations for its Spring T-ball and baseball seasons. Children born between May 1, 1997 and April 30, 2005 are eligible to participate. The VLL Web site, [www.vll.org](http://www.vll.org), has extensive information on the League's programs,

as well as comprehensive details on the VLL spring season fee schedule. All registrations must be made on-line. Vienna Little League will also have a Challenger Program, designed for children with disabilities who want to play baseball in a supportive environment at no cost to their families. Contact information is available on the Web site.

**Fire and Ice Girls Fast Pitch Teams**, ages 10U, 12U, 14U, 16U, and 18U have limited openings for experienced players on their spring travel teams. For more information call Mother Ice at 703-980-9951.

**McLean Little League Spring Registration** will take place on the following dates: Thursday, Jan. 14, 5-8 p.m.; and Saturday, Jan. 23 from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Register at McLean Little League Fields. McLean Little League boundaries include: all of Haycock, Kent Gardens, Chesterbrook, Franklin Sherman and Churchill Road Elementary School; all of Spring Hill Elementary School on the school side of the Dulles Access Road; and a portion of the Colvin Run Elementary School boundary, which includes

that part of the old Spring Hill boundary that was shifted to Colvin Run. The Spring Hill and Colvin Run School boundaries along Route 7 that are in the McLean Little League boundaries are south of Route 7 and east of Beulah Road. This includes the subdivisions of Carrington, Wolf Trap Woods, Shouse Village, Wolf Den, Lucky Estates, Beau Ridge, Mill-race Estates, Towlston Meadow, Ciara Estates and A Country Place. Please visit the McLean Little League Web site at [www.mcleanll.com](http://www.mcleanll.com).

# REAL ESTATE

To have real estate information listed in the Connection, send to [mclean@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mclean@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

**Bruce Green**, regional vice president of Weichert, Realtors announced Joyce Becker of the McLean-Old Dominion office was recognized for industry success in December. A neighborhood specialist, Becker led the region for new home dollar volume. The region comprises offices located throughout Virginia. Weichert, Realtors' neighborhood specialists can be reached in Weichert's McLean-Old Dominion office at (703) 821-8300 at 6257 Old Dominion Drive.



**Joyce Becker**

Green also announced J.D. Callander of the McLean/Dolley Madison office was recognized for industry successes in December. A neighborhood specialist, Callander led the region for resale dollar volume. The region is comprised of offices located throughout Virginia. Weichert, Realtors' McLean/Dolley Madison branch specialists can be reached at (703) 760-8880, located at 1313 Dolley Madison Boulevard.



**J.D. Callander**

**Karen Briscoe** with the Huckaby Briscoe Group, Keller Williams Realty in McLean has earned the Certified Luxury Home Marketing Specialist designation in recognition of her experience, knowledge and expertise in the luxury home market. "Karen is an example of a real estate professional who has worked to develop market knowledge and the special skills and competencies necessary to provide exceptional service in the fine homes and estates marketplace," said Institute President Laurie Moore-Moore, upon announcing Briscoe's designation.

Briscoe is an award-winning real estate professional who has gone through special training and met performance standards in the upper tier market. She has been in real estate since 1983. She specializes in the McLean, Great Falls, Arlington, Falls Church, Vienna, and Alexandria markets.

For current information on the local market, contact Karen Briscoe at the Huckaby Briscoe Group at (703) 734-0192 or e-mail [Homes@HBGroup.us](mailto:Homes@HBGroup.us).

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# CSI: Burtonsville



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

I think I've been watching "CSI" and "NCIS" (along with spin offs CSI: Miami, CSI: NY and NCIS: Los Angeles) too long. After an unknown neighbor cleaned 18 inches of snow off my second car (I had cleaned off our primary car myself; it was closer to the road), in an attempt to determine who unselfishly "unsnowed" my buried car and shoveled all around it as well (to provide easy access, should I be so inclined), I looked first for physical evidence of this extremely good deed and noticed boot prints in the snow. (Determining directionality was impossible given the number of intersecting boot prints.) I only wish I would have had the same materials the CSIs have on television (presumably in real life, too) in order to secure the evidence for further inside consideration and avoid any degradation. Said consideration would have included having the appropriate materials on hand to make a plaster cast of the boot print which I then could scan and run through the boot-tread software to determine a size and hopefully find a brand/tread-pattern match.

Once having learned the brand and the size, I could then call the manufacturer to inquire what stores locally carried that brand - and size - of boot. With that information, I could then contact the stores directly (in person or over the phone) to see if the specific matching size and brand had been sold recently. If any matches were found, I could ask for sales receipts to see how payment had been made. If any payments had been made with a credit card, it would enable me to quickly identify the non-guilty but so far, anonymous party. If payments had been made with cash, I could then visit the stores myself and bring pictures of my neighbors to show to whomever had sold the matching brand and size boot to further corroborate the non-D.N.A. evidence and hopefully make a positive I.D. If one of my neighbors was picked out of the photo array, I believe I would then have sufficient evidence/information to confirm who was responsible for this non-random act of kindness.

Or I could just ask.  
Nevertheless, no good deed of such caring and unselfish concern - and sensitivity to another person's less than ideal medical situation (my stage IV lung cancer diagnosis, with which the neighborhood is keenly aware) - should go unacknowledged. As such, I want to give/express my heartfelt gratitude to my neighbor/neighbors who gave so selflessly of themselves and their time to do for me what I was not so inclined/able to do for myself. And even though the "act" performed here this snow-bound Sunday was no crime, I think its commission would make Gil Grissom, Horatio "H." Caine, Mac Taylor, Leroy "Jethro" Gibbs and "C" Callen proud of their fellow man. I sure am. And lucky as well, to be living amongst such kind and considerate individuals.

It makes my future, with all its uncertainty, less uncertain. And if there's one thing, other than love and positive vibrations that a cancer patient can't have enough of, it's certainty. Of that, I'm certain.

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

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**21 Announcements** **21 Announcements**

TRUSTEE'S SALE  
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Improved by the premises known as  
1634 Hicks Drive, Vienna, Virginia

In execution of a Deed of Trust from Michael Dalakis and Tammy Dalakis, dated August 10, 2007, and recorded August 13, 2007, in Deed Book 19510 at page 1433 among the Land Records of Fairfax County, Virginia, the undersigned substitute trustee will offer for sale at public auction at the front entrance of the Judicial Center for Fairfax County, at 4110 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, Virginia, on

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the following property being the property contained in said Deed of Trust, described as follows:

Lot 6, CHAPEL, as the same appears duly dedicated, platted and recorded in Deed Book 1123 at page 56 and Outlot A of a subdivision of Lots 1, 2 and 3 and a residue of the Hicks land, CHAPEL HILL, as per Deed of Resubdivision recorded in Deed Book 1783 at page 491, among the Land Records of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Commonly known as 1634 Hicks Drive, Vienna, Virginia 22182.

**TERMS OF SALE:** A deposit of \$60,000.00 or ten percent (10%) of the sale price, whichever amount is less, in the form of cash or its equivalent will be required of the purchaser at the time and place of sale; the balance of the purchase money being due and payable within fifteen (15) days after sale, time expressly being of the essence, with interest at the rate of 7.75 percent per annum from date of sale to date of settlement. Provided, however, that if the holder of the secured promissory note is the successful bidder at the sale, no cash deposit shall be required, and part of or the entire indebtedness, including interest and costs, secured by the Deed of Trust, may be set off against the purchase price.

Any defaulting purchaser shall forfeit the deposit and stand the risk and cost of resale.

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Sale shall be made subject to all existing easements and restrictive covenants as the same may lawfully affect the real estate. Sale is further subject to mechanic's and/or materialman's liens of record and not of record. The property will be sold subject to all conditions, covenants, restrictions, rights of redemption of federal lienholders or encumbrances, and agreements of record affecting the same, if any.

In the event the undersigned trustee is unable to convey to the purchaser good title, then purchaser's sole and exclusive remedy shall be in the refund of the deposit paid at the time of sale.

The subject property and all improvements thereon will be sold in "as is" condition without warranty of any kind. Purchaser shall be responsible for any and all building and/or zoning code violations whether of record or not of record, as well as for all unpaid and enforceable homeowners' or condominium owners' association dues and assessments, if any. Purchaser also shall be responsible for obtaining possession of the property at his/her expense. Purchaser shall assume the risk of loss and shall be responsible for any damage, vandalism, theft, destruction, or the like, of or to the property occurring after the time of sale. Conveyance will be by special warranty deed. Conveyancing, recording, transfer taxes, notary fees, examination of title, state stamps, and all other costs of conveyance are to be at the expense of purchaser. State and local taxes, public charges, and special or regular assessments, if any, shall be adjusted to the date of sale and thereafter shall be assumed by the purchaser.

The undersigned trustee unconditionally reserves the right: (i) to waive the deposit requirement; (ii) to approve or disapprove the creditworthiness of any bidder and/or purchaser; (iii) to withdraw the property from sale at any time prior to termination of the bidding; (iv) to extend the time for bidding; (v) to reject any or all bids; (vi) to postpone or set over the date or time of sale; and (vii) to extend the period of time for settlement hereunder.

Additional terms and conditions of sale may be announced at the time of sale.

DAVID N. PRENSKY  
Substitute Trustee

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:  
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**OBITUARY**

**Roger Jacob Chavez** passed away on December 29th at his home in Millwood, Virginia surrounded by his loved ones.

There are no immediate plans for a service. We will gather in the spring to celebrate Roger's life. As for now, raise your glass to a printer, a tinkerer, a farmer, a dreamer, a visionary in Clarke County who made his dream real.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Clarke County Historical Association, P.O. Box 306, Berryville, VA 22611.

**21 Announcements 21 Announcements**

**LEGAL NOTICE**

AT&T intends to file an application to construct a cellular telecommunications tower at 2505 Cedar Lane, Vienna, Fairfax County, Virginia 22180. AT&T is publishing this notice in accordance with Federal regulation 37CFR1.1301 et seq, the National Environmental Policy Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation 36 CFR 800. The project referenced as "Maple Avenue" will consist of the construction of a new telecommunications compound which includes the installation of a 115-foot tall monopole on which 12 telecommunications antennas will be mounted, AT&T and T-Mobile equipment areas on raised platforms, and a ground level mesa cabinet and power back board. An 8'x 115'x 35' wood fence and landscaping will surround the compound. Parties interested in submitting comments or questions regarding any potential effects of the proposed facility on Historic Properties may do so in writing by contacting Carolyn Mitchell, AT&T, at 7150 Standard Drive, Hanover, Maryland 21076 or [michael.wolf@atcassociates.com](mailto:michael.wolf@atcassociates.com)

**THURSDAY/JAN. 14**

**Vienna-Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce.** 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Board Installation Luncheon at Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar. 1960 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. [www.vtrcc.org](http://www.vtrcc.org).

**FRIDAY/JAN. 15**

**Republican Club of Greater Reston Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers.** 7:30 p.m. Lake Anne Community Center. 703-406-9740.

**SUNDAY/JAN. 17**

**NAACP Fairfax County Youth Council Meeting.** 4 p.m. at the George Mason University Johnson Center, Robeson Room, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Meetings are open to youth ages 10-20. [restonbell7@gmail.com](mailto:restonbell7@gmail.com).

**TUESDAY/JAN. 19**

**Virginia Liberty Project Meeting with Walter Williams.** 6 p.m. The Waterford at Fair Oaks, 12025 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. Free. Reserve at 703-286-5241.

**SATURDAY/JAN. 23**

**League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area General Meeting.** 10:30 a.m. at Country Club of Fairfax, 5110 Ox Road, Fairfax. 'A New Tysons: Vision or Pipe Dream?' with Clark Tyler, Chairman of Tysons' Land Use Task Force. The discussion is free, reservations for lunch following are required. Reserve at [www.lwv-fairfax.org](http://www.lwv-fairfax.org).

**Town Hall: Senator Janet Howell, Delegate Jim Scott, and Delegate Barbara Comstock.** 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Little Theatre at Longfellow Middle School, 2000 Westmoreland St., Falls Church. [DelJScott@house.state.va.us](mailto:DelJScott@house.state.va.us) or 804-698-1053.

**Town Hall: Senator Mary Margaret Whipple and Delegate Jim Scott.** 1-3 p.m. at Falls Church Community Center, 223 Little Falls Street Falls Church. [DelJScott@house.state.va.us](mailto:DelJScott@house.state.va.us) or 804-698-1053.

**26 Antiques 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements**

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## Puzzles of Life and Death

FROM PAGE 7

Kiki," said Slan. "They love that she's not beautiful but ordinary."

Kiki has generated crop parties where participants dress up as characters from the books, sharing recipes and scrapbooking.

Like Kiki, Slan majored in journalism. Like Kiki, Slan rescued a dog.

Besides Kiki's daughter, Anya, a rescued Great Dane shares Kiki's life. Slan trained Great Danes while she was in college. "I couldn't conceive of life without a dog, so I couldn't conceive of a book without a dog," Slan said. By including a rescue dog in her series, Slan hopes to do some good for homeless or unwanted animals.

Slan said she was always attracted to storytelling. She grew up loving mysteries. "There's something about mysteries, pitting right against wrong, life against death," she said.

When creating her story line, Slan begins with her characters and what compels them. From there, she decides on a crime and to whom it would happen, then it's how and why. She develops clues, scenes and plot points. "Because mysteries are puzzles, I try to assemble all the parts first and then proceed so I don't back myself into a corner," Slan said.

Slan started her writing career contribut-

ing to the "Chicken Soup" book series when her son was young. As her interest and expertise in scrapbooking matured, she concentrated on books dedicated to that craft. It was only when her son moved through high school that she turned to mystery writing.

Joanna Slan and her husband, David, moved to Vienna in September from St. Louis. David Slan took over the D.C. Steinway piano franchise, the Steinway Piano Gallery, opening his store at Tysons Corner Center. The store's pianos have been used at the White House State Dinner in November and the Kennedy Center honors.

The Slans' son Michael is now a 20-year-old college student.

**THE THIRD BOOK** in the Kiki Lowenstein series, "Photo, Snap, Shot," is scheduled for a May 2010 launch. Is it a coincidence that May is National Scrapbooking Month? That mystery takes a darker turn as it explores death during a celebration of the real-life secret society, the Veiled Prophet. A fourth Kiki Lowenstein, tentatively called "Make, Take, Murder" is planned for delivery in May 2011. A fifth, "Ink, Red, Dead" is in the planning stages.

To learn more about Joanna Slan, her books and scrapbooking resources, see <http://joannaslan.com/>.



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