

Creating A
Downtown
Destination

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Thomas Roshak,
3, of Herndon
meets Santa Claus
Saturday night at
the Town of
Herndon tree
lighting ceremony.
Holiday Gift Guide

Ringling in the Holiday Season

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Dogtopia
Opens In
Herndon

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Happy Holidays!

Volunteers from the Herndon High School Band play at the tree lighting ceremony at the corner of Elden Street and Lynn Street Saturday night.



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Ringling in the Holiday Season

Herndon High School Band highlights annual tree lighting ceremony.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

The Fouche family recently moved to Herndon, so when Lisa brought their three kids to downtown Herndon, they weren't sure what to expect. But after an evening of holiday music courtesy of volunteers from the Herndon High School Band, and a visit from Santa Claus, they were hooked.

"I've loved living in Herndon, it's such a nice town to have events like these, and it's really a great place for kids," she said.

For her 11-year-old son Ben it wasn't completely perfect though.

"It would be cool if they had hot chocolate, it's cold out here," he said.

Dozens of Herndon residents came out to the cor

SEE TREE, PAGE 15



Alexis Doty and her daughter Kayla, 4, hold candles and wait for Santa to arrive to the annual Herndon tree lighting ceremony Saturday.

From left, Herndon High School band teacher Kathleen Schoelwer, President of the Herndon High School Band Parents Association Howard McAnany, receive a check for \$500 from Council for the Arts of Herndon member Eileen Curtis, Arts Council President and Herndon Town Councilmember Grace Han Wolf and Arts Council Executive Director Vicky Dorman.



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Melanie Stanley, a Herndon resident, artist and author, addresses the Herndon Planning Commission Monday night about the importance of amending the downtown master plan to include an arts facility.

Creating A Downtown Destination

Planning Commission amends downtown master plan to allow for multi-use arts facility.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

When the economy began slowing down, Herndon resident and guitar teacher Al Robertson found that his services were among the first to go with people struggling to make ends meet. A father of a 15-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son, Robertson and his wife struggled to afford programs to encourage the blossoming writing talent of his two children.

His daughter has already been published at a young age, and while his son is very adept at verbal communication, they recently found he had a learning disability that was hindering his writing.

"We wanted to get him in a writing program this summer, but there was nothing there," he said. "But through ArtSpace, there was a creative writing program that we were able to send him too. Because there was a program this summer, he was able to go and take a writing class he desperately needed."

It was for that reason that Robertson spoke passionately in front of the Town of Herndon Planning Commission Monday, advocating to alter the downtown master plan proposal to include an arts center where the current ArtSpace is.

THE DOWNTOWN PLAN originally called for Block E, which is the block off Center Street just southwest of the Fortnightly Library, to become residential units. But more than 20 people testified Monday night about amending the plan for a "long term land lease to a nonprofit entity for the development of an arts/associated uses public arts center."

ArtSpace, which is run by the Herndon Foundation for the Cultural Arts, currently resides in a small building on the lot, but members have grand visions of an arts center that would make downtown Herndon a premier arts destination.

Members of the Council for the Arts of Herndon, Reston League of Artists, Fairfax County Council for the Arts and other organizations shared their dreams about a space where painters, musicians, photographers, actors and other creators could use the space to further their craft.

"Being part of the art community, I have found the primary concern of artists is a place to work and to show their art," said Cheryl Parsons, president of the Reston League of Artists. "I could probably name a dozen artists right now that would rent studio space in a minute. I drive an hour a day back and

SEE ART, PAGE 15



Phil Hudson, Fairfax County School Administrator and August Frattali, principal of Rachel Carson receive a check for \$25,000 from Milestone Communications.

WEEK IN HERNDON

Milestone Donates \$25,000 To Rachel Carson Middle

Milestone Communications presented Rachel Carson Middle School in Herndon with a check for \$25,000 Nov. 23. The school principal, August Frattali, accepted the check during the stacking of the tower.

This is the first of many checks the school will receive from having a wireless tower on the school property.

Frattali said that he is using the \$25,000 to purchase new technology for the school, including laptops for teachers and students. Milestone is constructing a wireless communication tower that is designed to blend in with the existing athletic field lights on the baseball field. This will also improve wireless communication in the community.

This will be the 24th wireless facility to be built in partnership with Fairfax County Schools and will generate up to \$50,000 in annual recurring revenue. The wireless infrastructure program has generated over \$5 Million in revenue for the school system and today, generates over \$1 Million annually to supplement budget shortfalls.

Milestone Communications is based in Reston and has been planning, zoning, building, leasing, and managing wireless infrastructure for over ten years. Learn more at Milestonecommunications.com.

Delegate Rust to Host H.O.A. Forum

Del. Tom Rust (R-86) will be holding a Homeowner's Association Forum on Saturday, Dec. 11, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. The Forum will be held at the Ingram Council Chambers, 765 Lynn Street in Herndon.

The public is welcome and encouraged to attend this event to hear from professionals in the field discuss various aspects of H.O.A. management as well as to learn the latest snow removal improvements and procedures from the Virginia Department of Transportation. Attendees will be able to ask questions of the panel.

The forum will include a representative from the Virginia Office of the Common Interest Community Ombudsman, chair of the Common Interest Community Board, a community association attorney, a community association insurance representative, and a representative from the National Realty Partners, as well as a VDOT representative.

"This forum came about after several meetings that I have had with associations and the issues that they are facing, especially the small self-managed H.O.A.'s," Rust said. "We are also fortunate to have a representative from VDOT who will brief residents on the improvements they have made in response to last year's record snows."

For more information, please contact Delegate Rust's legislative office at 703-437-9400.



Recipients of the Ross Netherton Award are members of the Hunter Mill Defense League History Committee, from left, Tom Evans, Bob Eldridge, Jim Lewis, Charlie Balch and Steve Hull. The award was presented by Fairfax County Board of Supervisor Chairwoman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) and Conference Chairwoman Lynne Garvey-Hodge.

Coming Together for Historic Preservation

Sixth Annual Fairfax History Conference a success.

BY LYNNE GARVEY-HODGE
HISTORY COMMISSIONER

With more than 100 attendees, the Sixth Annual Fairfax County History Conference, Preserving Our Paths in History, Nov. 6 was a tremendous success this year.

Dedicated to the memories of local historians Nan and Ross Netherton, event was sponsored by the Fairfax County History Commission, the Fairfax County Park Authority, the Fairfax Museum & Visitors Center and Preservation Virginia.

Conference Committee members were Rob Orisson (Preservation Virginia), Dr. Elizabeth Crowell, Fairfax County Park Authority; Fairfax County History Commissioners Naomi Zeavin, Esther McCullough, Sallie Lyons, Barbara Naef, Anne Barnes, Carole Herrick, Mary Lipsey and Mike Irwin; and Susan Gray, Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center.

NINE AUTHORS AND NINE EXHIBITORS participated as well and Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) kicked off the conference reminiscing about the importance of historic preservation, by sharing the story of Ilda, an early 20th century interracial community enclave near the site of the Jewish Community Center on Route 236. The community had been long forgotten and then rediscovered when the Virginia Department of Transportation began to expand the roads at that intersection.

Bulova also presented history awards to outstanding citizens which included Lifetime Achievement Awards to Ed Wenzel, for his 22 year work preserving and protecting Ox Hill Battlefield; John McAnaw, for more than 25 years of dedicated service as a Civil War historian and protector of land in the Kings Park

area; and Michael Rieron, for more than 33 years of dedicated service with the Fairfax County Park Authority in preserving and protecting numerous county sites from Sully Plantation to Frying Pan Park.

John Browne was presented with the Beth Mitchell award for his work researching the Ravensworth estate, dating back to 1796, the original home of William Fitzhugh and land that once covered nearly an eighth of the county.

Susan Hellman received the Nan Netherton award for her outstanding research and documentation on the property called "Kenmore."

Cora Foley was not present, but she received the first Cultural Heritage Engagement Award, Maddy McCoy, also not present, received a Distinguished Service award for her assistance on the "Kenmore" paper as well as for her work creating the African-American Slave index of Fairfax County.

Rick Castelli received the Edith Moore Sprouse award for his extensive research on Fenwick Park.

THE HUNTER MILL Defense League History Committee received the most prestigious award that the Fairfax County History Commission bestows, the Ross Netherton Award, for their work in creating the DVD "Danger Between the Lines," a documentary relating the story of the people living amid the turmoil along Hunter Mill Road during the Civil War. Tom Evans, Jim Lewis, Charlie Balch, Bob Eldridge and Steve Hull accepted the award.

The Awards committee included Commissioners Naomi Zeavin, Bob Beach, Jack L. Hiller and Lynne Garvey-Hodge, chairwoman.

"We have never received so many awards nominations as we have this year, and we are delighted with the quality of the work done in preserving the

SEE HISTORY. PAGE 5

History Preserved

FROM PAGE 4

county's history", said Hiller. Thomas Jefferson High School students, under the leadership of history teacher Larry Helm, also submitted historic papers.

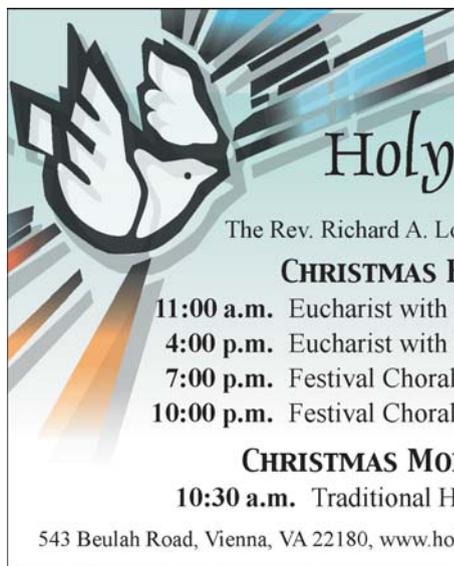
The keynote speaker was Elizabeth Kostelny, who spoke on the importance of historic preservation, even during economically difficult times. As executive director of Preservation Virginia, she spoke on "Growing Virginia's Movement - Historic Preservation in the 21st Century" and encouraged Fairfax County to continue doing good work in preserving the rich historic resources of the county and affirmed the conference as evidence of this good work.

Michael C. Rierson gave a lively, animated talk on his time with the Park Authority, "It Docent Matter - The Beginnings of a Museum & Historic Preservation Program."

Andrea Loewenwarter from the Fairfax Museum & Visitors Center shared the history of preserving the newly renovated and preserved Blenheim Mansion, "Preserving Historic Blenheim" and the county Archaeology staff was on hand to discuss their work in their offices located at the conference site, the James Lee Community Center.

Local railroad historian Ron Beavers spoke with tremendous energy and exuberance on "Fairfax County Railroads - Pre-Civil War & What is Left Today" and the final presentations of the conference reflected preservation of a number of local sites. Chuck Mauro spoke on the preservation and history of Laura Ratcliffe's home, "Merrybrook," David Goetz on John Singleton Mosby's home in Warrenton, "Brentmoor" and Mary Lipsey spoke on the good work of the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association.

The Annandale High School culinary department under the leadership of Christine Gloninger provided attendees with a delicious continental breakfast and colorful, nutritious lunch. With plenty of prizes provided from the Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center for Trivia Question winners, a sunny day, ample parking, good food and excellent presentations, the crowd left well satisfied and anxious for the Seventh Annual Fairfax County History Conference already in the planning for 2011.



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OPINION

Tough Road Ahead

State and local coffers will continue to shrink in 2011; transportation improvements unlikely.

The Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance quotes Gov. Bob McDonnell's remarks to the Dulles Area Transportation Association earlier this week. "I can't emphasize how important it is to get started now," McDonnell said, to take advantage of favorable infrastructure pricing [due to the recession] by starting to invest more in transportation.

But the Alliance, which advocates for spending on roads and highways, points out that McDonnell "provided few details as to new funding sources, but promised that specifics would surface in the weeks ahead."

Last January was the "now" to get started to take advantage of "favorable infrastructure pricing."

McDonnell has been in office a year now, and won in Northern Virginia largely because of his vigorous campaigning on transportation issues. But he allowed the first year of his tenure, including the first year's session of the General Assembly, to pass without a serious proposal on how to fund transportation im-

provements in Northern Virginia or elsewhere in the state.

Instead, McDonnell has spent the last months talking up a liquor privatization proposal as a solution to transportation. In fact, that proposal would possibly pay for one intersection or overpass improvement project in Northern Virginia before moving on to cost state funding for education, public safety and social services tens of millions of dollars a year by turning over the revenues for private companies' profit.

EDITORIAL

Meanwhile, localities in Northern Virginia received essentially zero dollars from the state for transportation improvements in past year.

More on the outlook ahead for public services from Deputy County Executive Ed Long as he prepared the budget forecast for the coming year:

❖ While home values are up for the first time in five years, the county still faces a multimillion dollar shortfall and the future of the local economy is uncertain.

❖ Government contracts are a major component of the Northern Virginia economy. In

Fairfax County alone in 2008, federal procurement contracts totaled \$17 billion. Since this is such a large component of the local economy, the discussion of cutbacks in federal contracts is a major concern.

❖ The Fairfax County budget gets less than 20 cents back from Richmond of every tax dollar it sends to the state.

❖ There are 30,000 unemployed people in Fairfax County, with the current unemployment rate approximately 4.9 percent, or close to half the national rate. Still, 30,000 people is a huge number of unemployed.

Share Your New Year's Resolutions

It's early and much of the holiday eating season is still in front of us. But most of us will engage in some soul searching and resolution making around the New Year. In the first issue of 2011, the Connection will share the New Year's resolutions of individuals and offices. Send us your resolutions, plus your tips on keeping resolutions. Feel free to offer resolutions for local officials as well.

Please include a photo with your resolutions.

E-mail to herndon@connectionnewspapers.com

LINK Churches Appeal for Community Support

More toys needed for annual toy distribution to 2,100 children at Herndon United Methodist Church.

How do you convince people and businesses to donate over 4,000 new toys when the economy is still in a slump and unemployment isn't diminishing?

LINK Holiday Basket Project Coordinator, Lisa Lombardozi said, "the goal can be achieved through faith, hard work, communication with the local media, word of mouth and believing in the generosity of our neighbors, civic organizations and businesses. Giving to neighbors in need reflects a greater appreciation of those living around us who are suffering during this holiday season."

LINK is working to make sure that the needy in the Herndon, Sterling and Ashburn area are able to celebrate the holidays. While LINK's work continues throughout the year, their support is especially important during the holidays, where there is a tradition of helping needy people.

LINK believes that assisting those less fortunate with their

most basic needs fosters hope and good will in our diverse and fast growing community. LINK, a congressional award winner, was established in 1972 as an all-volunteer, emergency support organization. It comprises 18 churches in Herndon, Sterling, Ashburn, Potomac Falls and Chantilly.

While LINK provides services throughout the year, it is perhaps best known for the Holiday Basket Program, which distributes food and winter coats at Thanksgiving and food and toys during the Christmas season.

The annual toy distribution is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 18 at Herndon United Methodist Church, while a second food distribution will occur at both Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church and Trinity Presbyterian Church.

More than 2,100 needy children are expected to receive toys during the one-day distribution event. For each child to receive 2 toys—even modest ones—more than 4,000 toys must be collected from

the community. More than 20,000 pounds of food is still needed to support the Christmas food distribution.

The LINK toy program allows local residents, businesses and organizations to provide Christmas gifts to needy children in their neighborhoods. Sometimes people can get overwhelmed with the great need in their community and feel they are too small to do anything about a need so great. LINK provides everyone an opportunity to do something to touch the life of a single family with the simplest and purest of all acts. While the thought of distributing toys to needy children and what this simple act can mean to a child does warm the heart, it should be remembered that donations are still needed for the event to be successful.

Toy Donations will be accepted from Dec. 13 through 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Herndon United Methodist Church. For more information on toy donations, contact Lisa Lombardozi at 703-973-4444 or Lisa Fagan at 571-331-5626.

Volunteers will also be needed at Herndon UMC from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the same time period to collect and sort toys. For more

information on volunteering, contact LINK at 703-481-2524.

On Nov. 20, LINK served 712 families comprising 3,560 people (1,602 adults and 1,958 children), with 95 percent of the families living in the immediate community. Each family received five days of non-perishable groceries. Forty-three direct-to-home deliveries were made to residents who were home-bound. \$19,000 in grocery gift certificates were provided to families to buy perishable items. 1,170 gently-used winter coats and sweaters were also distributed. Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church in Sterling, Sterling United Methodist Church and Trinity Presbyterian Church in Herndon hosted the events.

The 650 volunteers collected and pre-staged the food and clothes at the three area Churches. Volunteers coordinated the whole event, contacting schools and social workers, comparing recipient lists with other agencies, scheduling guest appointments, managing the ever changing volunteer shifts, staffing the guest registration desk and providing Spanish translators.

More information on LINK is available at www.linkagainsthunger.org.

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NEWS

Al-Kareem Foundation Hosts Free Family Feast

Supervisor Foust hosts Resource Fair at Hutchinson Elementary.

On Saturday, Dec. 4, Al-Kareem Foundation hosted its second Free Family Feast at Hutchinson Elementary, providing nutritious meals to hundreds of families that signed up for the event or noticed the activity and walked in to enjoy a hot meal. This year's event featured cuisine by Chef Pandolfi of Great Falls, Chef Khalid of Leesburg, and Chef Khan of Ashburn.

The event included a Resource Fair hosted by Supervisor John Foust (D- Dranesville) to provide families with information about the resources available such as food stamps, medical care and job placement opportunities. Foust participated in the event, enjoying a hot meal with the many families and encouraging the Al-Kareem volunteers.

"Our goal for the event was to provide a healthy meal and educate families about the great resources Fairfax County social services provides. We could not have made this event successful without the help from our generous volunteers," said Aliyah Pandolfi, Founder of Al-Kareem Foundation.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
Aliyah Pandolfi, Founder of Al-Kareem Foundation (right) with volunteer Farah Saima and Momina Khan, Co-founder.

Al-Kareem is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving people's lives, providing basic necessities such as food, clean water, and clothing to families in need; and education, training, and employment so people can lead independent lives free from poverty. Al-Kareem regularly hosts food programs for the homeless and hungry in Fairfax and Loudoun counties as well as Washington D.C. emphasizing nutrition, balanced meals, and use of locally derived produce. The Free Family Feast, open to all families in need, has become an annual event sponsored by Al-Kareem Foundation.

OBITUARY

Local Doctor Owen Clay Shull, 77, Dies

Owen C. Shull, 77, a family practice physician in Herndon for 39 years, died Monday, Nov. 29, in Berryville of esophageal cancer. Born in Washington D.C., Dr. Shull was a Fairfax County native, living in Herndon and later in Reston. He graduated from Virginia Episcopal School in Lynchburg, Va. in 1950, attended Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va. for two years, and then graduated from the University of Richmond in 1954 and Medical College of Virginia in 1958. He interned there at MCV; then, following his father's death, he returned home to carry on his father's medical practice in Herndon in 1959. He was a member of the Fairfax County Medical Society.

He retired Jan. 1, 1998. Dr. Shull served seven years with the Washington D.C. National Guard 115th Evacuation Hospital rising to the rank of Major and Chief of Surgery. He was an active member of the Herndon Rotary Club and served



Dr. Owen C. Shull

as president before heading up the project to start a Rotary Club in Reston. Dr. Shull served as the first president of the Reston Rotary Club in 1970. Dr. Shull, a charter member of Reston Golf and Country Club (now Hidden Creek Country Club), served as vice president on the original board and enjoyed

playing golf and Redskin Football. He watched the Redskins play in all three stadiums and attended all five of their trips to the Super Bowl.

He was preceded in death by his sisters Joan Elizabeth Shull Warren and Sally Lynn Shull Long. His marriage to Joan Beverly Drake ended in divorce. He is survived by his sister, Nancy Hancock Shull White of Scottsdale, Ariz., daughter Susan (Shull) Gaudin Hickman of Berryville, son Robert Owen Shull of Herndon, daughter Linda Shull Heater of Harrisburg, Pa., and 15 grandchildren.

The family received friends on Friday, Dec. 3, at Adams-Green Funeral Home, 721 Elden St. in Herndon, followed by private services. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Dr. Owen C. Shull's name to the Rotary International Foundation www.rotary.org/foundation. Condolences may be mailed to PO Box 646 Berryville, VA 22611 or may left at www.adamsgreen.com

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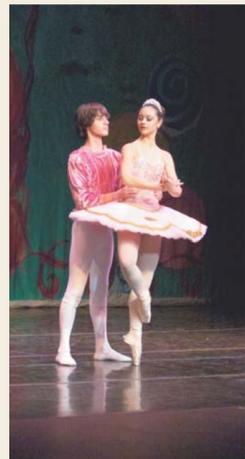
Cravens Nursery & Pottery

Herndon High School sophomore Georgina Greenleaf gracefully enchants audiences as the Sugar Plum Fairy in the Conservatory Ballet's production of "The Nutcracker."

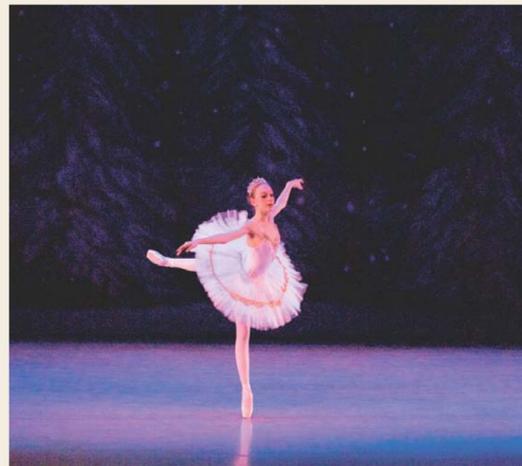


Conservatory Ballet Presents 'Nutcracker Ballet'

A Herndon-based Conservatory Ballet presents the "Nutcracker Ballet" performances at Reston Center Stage at 2310 Colts Neck Road in Reston from Wednesday, Dec. 8 to Sunday, Dec. 12, featuring young area dancers. Tickets are \$22 for adults and \$17 for children 12 and under. For Sunday's 11 a.m. shortened performance, aimed at captivating young audience, tickets are \$20 and \$15. Call 703-476-4500 ext 3; Visit: www.ConservatoryBallet.com.



Sugar Plum Fairy Georgina Greenleaf, Herndon High sophomore, and her Cavalier Adrian Lamoureux, South Lakes High sophomore, weave fairy tale magic on area residents in the Conservatory Ballet's production of "The Nutcracker."



South Lakes freshman Rebecca Mattern performs the Snow Queen in Conservatory Ballet's annual production of "The Nutcracker."

ENTERTAINMENT

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

THURSDAY/DEC. 9

"Nutcracker Ballet." 7 p.m. at Reston Center Stage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Presented by Conservatory Ballet. \$22 adults, \$17 age 12 and under. 703-476-4500 or www.ConservatoryBallet.com.

FRIDAY/DEC. 10

Waverly Consort's "A Christmas Story." 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. In the spirit of the medieval church dramas and mystery plays, eight singers and five instrumentalists play reproductions of medieval instruments. \$21-\$42, youth through grade 12 half price. Tickets available at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

"Nutcracker Ballet." 7:30 p.m. at Reston Center Stage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Presented by Conservatory Ballet. \$22 adults, \$17 age 12 and under. 703-476-4500 or www.ConservatoryBallet.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

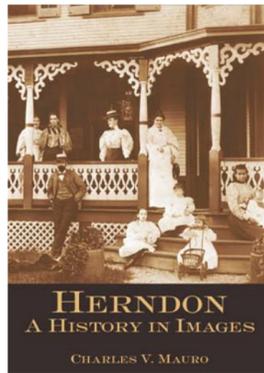
Family Friendly Irish Set & Ceili Community Dance. 7 p.m. at Frying Pan Park Visitors Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Live music by the Bogwanderers Ceili Band & Friends. \$12-\$35. www.ccepotomac.org or 703-521-4340.

Synergy Brass Quintet: "Christmas in Brass." 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Brass arrangements of Bach's choral works, Handel's triumphant "Messiah" and a selection of classic Christmas carols. \$22-\$44, youth through grade 12 half price. Tickets available at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

Holiday Recital. 4 p.m. at The Music Loft, 1141 Elden St. Suite 212, Herndon. Holiday and classical pieces performed by Music Loft students. Refreshments served. www.TheMusicLoftOnline.com.

Local Civil War Authors Book Signing. 6-8 p.m. at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern, on the corner of Elden and Spring Streets in Herndon. With local authors Eric Buckland, Don Hakenson and Chuck Mauro. 703-435-5467.

Make A Winter Wreath. 10:30 a.m. Walker Nature Education Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Making festive wreaths for your home. Listen to seasonal music, enjoy mulled cider and cookies. All supplies provided. \$15 per wreath for Reston Association members, \$20 per wreath for non-members. Open to all ages, but reservations required at 703-476-9689 or naturecenter@reston.org.



"Herndon in Images" by Charles V. Mauro

Book Signing at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern

Three local Civil War authors will have a Book Signing on Saturday, Dec. 11, 6-8 p.m. at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern, on the corner of Elden and Spring Streets in Herndon. Eric Buckland will sign "Mosby's Keydet Rangers" (second edition), the booklet "Charles Broadway Rous: Mosby Ranger, Millionaire, Philanthropist" and "Mosby Men," a CD containing well over a thousand photos of Mosby Rangers and Ranger guides. Don Hakenson will sign "This Forgotten Land II: Biographical Sketches of Confederate Veterans Buried in Alexandria, Virginia", "This Forgotten Land: A Tour of Civil War Sites and Other Historical Landmarks South of Alexandria, Virginia", and his Mosby Vignettes. Chuck Mauro will sign "A Southern Spy in Northern Virginia: The Civil War Album of Laura Ratcliffe", his books on Herndon, and the Civil War in Fairfax County. 703-435-5467.

"Nutcracker Ballet." 11 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at Reston Center Stage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Presented by Conservatory Ballet. Tickets \$15-\$22. 703-476-4500 or www.ConservatoryBallet.com.

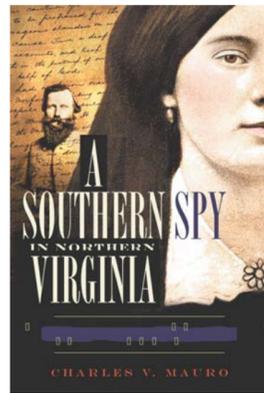
Winter Holiday Open House. 10 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Enjoy traditional holiday treats served by the Friends of Oakton Library. All ages. 703-242-4020.

Holiday Open House. 11 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join the staff and Friends of the Reston Regional Library for a holiday open house. Enjoy live music and refreshments. Children can enjoy Chuck's balloon hats and more. 703-689-2700.

The Wonder of the Nutcracker. 3 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Dancing snowflakes, little mice, a sugar plum fairy and more characters read in storybook form. Crafts. Age 3 & up with adult. 703-689-2700.

SUNDAY/DEC. 12

The Holidays at Mason: Believe in Miracles. 7 p.m. at George Mason



"A Southern Spy in Northern Virginia" by Charles V. Mauro

www.voce.org/tickets or 703-277-7772.

Alternative Giving Event. 2-4 p.m. United Christian Parish, 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston. Children's Christmas shop as well as alternative gifts offered by the Missions Ministry, including a Heifer International (www.heimer.org) Project, a Haiti Housing project and Opportunity International (www.opportunity.org). www.unitedchristianparish.org.

"Nutcracker Ballet." 12 p.m. and 3 p.m. at Reston Center Stage, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Presented by Conservatory Ballet. Tickets \$15-\$22. 703-476-4500 or www.ConservatoryBallet.com.

TUESDAY/DEC. 14

ESL Advanced. 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Practice English in a group with a volunteer facilitator. Adults. 703-689-2700.

Preschool Storytime. 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Stories and activities. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-689-2700.

Read to the Dog. 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Read aloud to a trained therapy dog. Call or sign up online for a 15-minute session. Age 6-12. 703-689-2700.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 15

Senior Movie Day. 9:15 a.m. at the Reston Town Center Cinemas. The Reston Association presents "Meet Me at the Movies". Refreshments are provided and door prizes. Movie titles posted at www.reston.org or contact Ashleigh@reston.org or 703-435-6577.

ESL for Jobs. 6:45 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. English conversation and job skills. 703-689-2700.

All Aboard! 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. A family celebration of the 25th Anniversary of The Polar Express. All ages. 703-689-2700.

THURSDAY/DEC. 16

Sesame Street Live: Elmo's Healthy Heroes. 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$15-\$28, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035.

Natural Holiday Crafts for Children. 10 a.m. Walker Nature Education Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. For ages 3-5 years

accompanied by an adult. \$5 per child for RA members and \$8 for non-members. All supplies included. Reserve at 703-476-9689 or naturecenter@reston.org.

OK Book Discussion. 7 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. The Art of Racing in the Rain by Garth Stein. Adults. 703-242-4020.

Terrific Twos. 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Storytime. Age 2 with adult. 703-689-2700.

FRIDAY/DEC. 17

Sesame Street Live: Elmo's Healthy Heroes. 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$15-\$28, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035.

2010 Graduating Artist Showcase. 6-9 p.m. George Mason University Art and Design Building, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Fall 2010 Senior Exhibition Reception. Exhibits of over 60 graduating artists including paintings, sculpture, animation, graphic design, drawing and more. Live music and refreshments available. Free admission. 703-993-8898 or hmiller@gmu.edu.

Fire Side Fables. 7:30 p.m. at the Walker Nature Education Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Gather around the Nature House hearth to listen to stories of the season. Sip hot cocoa and sample seasonal treats. \$5 per person RA members, and \$8 per person for non-members. Reserve at 703-476-9689 or naturecenter@reston.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 18

Holiday Youth Musical Café. 2-4 p.m. ArtsSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Holiday singing and musical presentations. Free, donations accepted. 703-956-6590.

Holiday Celebration at Reston Museum. Reston Museum, 1639 Washington Plaza, Reston. Holiday Recollections from Around the World at 3:30 p.m., Holiday Lights Walk at Lake Anne at 5 p.m. 703-709-7700 or www.restonmuseum.org.

Sesame Street Live: Elmo's Healthy Heroes. 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$15-\$28, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035.

Vienna Boys Choir. 8 p.m. at George Mason University Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Holiday

music from Gregorian chant to favorite Christmas carols. \$24-\$48, youth through grade 12 half price. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

SUNDAY/DEC. 19

Sesame Street Live: Elmo's Healthy Heroes. 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$15-\$28, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035.

Vienna Boys Choir. 4 p.m. at George Mason University Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Holiday music from Gregorian chant to favorite Christmas carols. \$24-\$48, youth through grade 12 half price. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

MONDAY/DEC. 20

Winter Wonderland Preschool Storytime. 11 a.m. Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Boost early literacy skills with this storytime about winter. Age 2-5 with adult. 703-437-8855

TUESDAY/DEC. 21

One-on-One Computer/Internet Tutoring. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn the basics of the Internet, Word and Excel. Adults. 703-242-4020.

ESL Advanced. 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Practice English in a group with a volunteer facilitator. Adults. 703-689-2700.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 22

One-on-One Computer/Internet Tutoring. 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn the basics of the Internet, Word and Excel. Adults. 703-242-4020.

ESL for Jobs. 6:30 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. English conversation and job skills. 703-689-2700.

TUESDAY/DEC. 28

One-on-One Computer/Internet Tutoring. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn the basics of the Internet, Word and Excel. Adults. 703-242-4020.

Hungry Thing Preschool Storytime. 7 p.m. Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Stories and rhymes about eating. Age 2-5 with adult. 703-437-8855

FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to herndon@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday.

Minister Regina Boyd, M.Div. will lead an Advent Discussion Group Sunday, Dec. 14 at 7 p.m. at Panera Bread, 460 Elden St., Herndon. The topic will be "Locating Our Theological World in Preparation for the Coming Christ." Contact 703-758-0527 or capucc21@gmail.com.

Floris United Methodist Church, 13600 Frying Pan Road in Herndon, presents "A Service of Light and Hope for the Christmas Season" on Thursday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. Receive Holy Communion, hear the gift of music, and light a candle to celebrate the peace that Christ offers the world. 703-793-0026 or www.florisumc.org.

Dranesville Church of the Brethren, 11500 Leesburg Pike in Herndon, is collecting soap, toothbrushes and tooth paste, washcloths or hand towels, deodorant, combs and brushes, shampoo, tissues, lotion, hand sanitizers, safety razors and large socks to assemble 150 personal hygiene kits for the homeless. Size XL or larger t-shirts and coats, scarves, hats, gloves, and sweaters also needed. 703-430-7872 or www.dranesvillebrethren.org.

Washington Plaza Baptist Church, 1615 Washington Plaza in Reston, has announced their Christmas week events. All are free and open to the public. www.washingtonplazabaptistchurch.com

Christmas Concert. Saturday, Dec. 18 at 4 p.m. A reception will follow in the church's Plaza Room. Canned food will be collected for local food pantry Reston Interfaith.

Service of Light and Dark. Sunday, Dec. 19 at 6 p.m. Prayers, special hymns and thoughtful meditation about grieving led by Rev. Amy Butler of Calvary Baptist, D.C.

Christmas Eve Service. Friday, Dec. 24 at 6 p.m. A candlelight, communion and meditation service with Rev. Elizabeth Hagan.

SCHOOL NOTES

Sarah Freeman, Ian Gildea, and Hannah Glass of Herndon High School; **Kristin Gavin** and **Summer Perez** of Oakton High School and **Christine Comer** of South Lakes High School (alternate) were selected to perform in the 2010 Virginia Honors Choir, at the Virginia Music Educators Association (VMEA) convention Nov. 20 in Norfolk.

Oak Hill Elementary School is one of nine schools nationwide chosen to participate in the American Heart Association's (AHA) Teaching Garden program, to teach elementary and middle school students the importance of healthy eating and physical activity.

David Wheeler of Herndon has been named to the 2010 dean's list at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Mass.

Herndon High School students **Patrick Miller** (viola), **Zach Ward** (string bass), **Ryan Little** (French horn) and **Caitlin Williams** (trumpet) have been named to the Senior Regional Orchestra for instrumentalists. Herndon High School students **Sean Quaresima** (trumpet), **Matt Larson** (trombone) and **Kevin Hopkins** (oboe) have been named as alternates. Miller, Ward, Little and Williams will be auditioning for All-Virginia Band and

Orchestras at JMU in February.

Alexander Bent of Herndon is one of more than 300 students recognized for academic achievement at the 2010 Thiel College Honors Convocation.

Ashley Jensen, a 2009 graduate of Herndon High School, was named to the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference All Academic Team. Jensen is a sophomore Fashion Design major at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and is a member of the school's cross country and track teams.

Herndon residents **Jenna George, Jeff Dera, Robert Smith, Thomas**

Patchan, Kyle Poulsen and **Michelle Gervasio** have gained membership to the Marching Virginians at Virginia Tech. George is a sophomore, majoring in music in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences who plays the alto sax and is a band section leader. Dera is a freshman, majoring in psychology in the College of Science who plays the trumpet. Smith is a junior, majoring in electrical engineering in the College of Engineering who plays the trumpet. Patchan is a freshman, majoring in general engineering in the College of Engineering who plays the trumpet. Poulsen is a junior, majoring in computer science in the College of Engineering

who plays the baritone. Gervasio is a junior, majoring in materials science and engineering in the College of Engineering who twirls the flag.

Herndon residents **Casey Menish**, a sophomore majoring in marketing management in the Pamplin College of Business, and **Lauren Pinkston**, a junior majoring in accounting in the Pamplin College of Business, are now serving as Hokie Ambassadors for Virginia Tech. Hokie Ambassadors primarily provide tours for prospective undergraduates. The Hokie Ambassadors exemplify what it means to be a Hokie through dedication and service.

THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS
If you do not get *The Oak Hill/Herndon Connection* delivered to your home...
FIRST CLASS MAILED SUBSCRIPTIONS are now available for the first time with timely postal carrier delivery: \$30 for six months.
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Call 703-778-9426 (or -9427) or e-mail circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

COOL CRAFTS
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Sugarloaf Crafts Festival
DEC 10, 11, 12, 2010
Dulles Expo Center
Chantilly, VA (RT 28 AT WILLARD RD.)
Fri. & Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5
Admission \$7 online, \$9 at the door - good all three days.
Children under 12 and parking are FREE
DISCOUNT TICKETS, show info, exhibitor lists, directions and more at:
SugarloafCrafts.com
SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN WORKS, INC. • 800-210-9900

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SMS Unisex Hair
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With this ad • Expires 12/31/10
Mon-Fri: 9:00-8:00
Sat: 9:00-6:00
Sun: 10:00-5:00
Salome, Maria & Sue
1141 Elden St., Suite #101
Herndon, VA 20170
571-299-4242

OPEN HOUSES

Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 11th & 12th



218 River Park Dr., Great Falls • \$1,100,000 • Open Sunday 1-4
Carol Ellickson, Weichert, 703-862-2135

When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in this Connection Newspaper. For more real estate listings and open houses visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com, click the Real Estate links on the right side.

 **Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times.** 

Great Falls

218 River Park Dr.....\$1,100,000...Sun 1-4....Carol Ellickson.....Weichert.....703-862-2135

Vienna

1511 Gingerwood Ct.....\$624,950...Sun 1-4....Eugene Curtin.....Weichert.....703-856-3416

408 Adahi Rd.....\$639,000...Sun 1-4....Casey Samson.....Samson.....703-508-2535

9411 Cello Ct.....\$739,500...Sun 1-4....Heather Embrey.....McEneaney.....571-236-2616

117 Locust St. SW.....\$1,200,000...Sun 12-3...Susan Fadoul.....Long & Foster.....703-402-1717

Sterling

20512 Blue Heron Terr.....\$314,900...Sat 1-4....Vicky Noufal.....Century 21.....703-402-5416

703 Riverview Ct.....\$450,000...Sun 1-4....Sloan Wiesen.....Weichert.....703-869-4825

Gainesville

8793 Ellis Mills Dr.....\$455,000...Sun 1-4....Leslie Thurman.....Thurman & Assoc.....703-895-6000

To add your Realtor represented Open House to these weekly listings, please call Karen Pechacek-Washburn at 703-778-9422 or E-Mail the info to kwashburn@connectionnewspapers.com All listings due by Monday at 3 pm.

NEWS

Becky Reece stocks some treats on Dogtopia's opening day.



Dogtopia Opens in Herndon

Helping dogs 'have a nice day.'

BY SEAN MCCALLEY
THE CONNECTION

Dogtopia has opened a new location in Herndon, offering the town a place to allow their dogs to enjoy some comfort and pampering.

"People just love their dogs," said Amy Nichols, founder and CEO of the Dogtopia. "Northern Virginia is super dog friendly."

This is a business that caters to people that want to help their dogs have a nicer day. People can drop their dogs off on the way to work and leave them with trained caretakers. The dogs can then enjoy a day playing with other dogs, eating freshly cooked food and taking a bath.

The Herndon location is the 23rd to open across the country. There is something about this particular one that makes it different from all the others: this Dogtopia is connected to a veterinarian's office.

Cameras situated in every room



Burton enjoys his day at Dogtopia.

allow owners and staff to monitor the dogs without disturbing their antics and fun.

"We share business with the vet," said Nichols. "We help the office with its boarding needs, and it adds validity to us."

All dogs are evaluated for friendliness and health before allowed admittance to the facility. Qualifications include social skills, up-to-date vaccinations and being spayed or neutered. After passing the evaluation, the dogs are allowed access to all Dogtopias in the nation.

Being connected to the veterinarian's office also allows owners to correlate appointments with the day care.

"This job is not as easy as people

think," said Becky Reece, a Dogtopia employee. The Herndon facility can hold up to 60 dogs, meaning constant labor by the staff to feed, supervise and clean after plenty of demanding canines.

Its location provides many benefits for the business. A Herndon resident herself, Nichols will use the local store to try new strategies to possibly be replicated across the country. From front desk design to forming the vet partnership, the Herndon version will act as a Dogtopia guinea pig.

"It's really nice to have a Dogtopia in my backyard," said Nichols. "What we have here, we can try things to spread across the country."

With large windows overlooking the town, the dogs can look over the community while the busy world rolls on.

"I find [working here] great. It's in a convenient spot, and if you love dogs, you'll do well," said employee Brandon Dransfield.

Dogs of all sizes, shapes and colors wander around the place wagging their tails and barking happily. Whether they need spa treatment, gourmet treats or a new friend, Herndon's Dogtopia has them covered.



Some relaxed boarders at Dogtopia.

Three Years Prison for Gold Thefts

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

For almost an entire year, a New York couple victimized dozens of residents here, breaking into their homes and stealing nearly \$600,000 worth of gold and other valuables. Now one of the culprits, Melinda Marie Soto, 34, of the Bronx, N.Y., has been sentenced to three years in federal prison.

Authorities said she and her husband, Dagoberto Soto-Ramirez, 27, plus another man, targeted the homes of South Asians, whom they believed kept large amounts of gold in their residences. Ultimately, they burglarized 37 homes total in both Fairfax and Loudoun counties.

"The defendants didn't just steal gold and gems; they stole irreplaceable heirlooms," said Neil H. MacBride, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. "No sentence can replace those valuables, but the outstanding work of law-enforcement officers has brought some justice to the victims in this case."

Soto pleaded guilty Sept. 17, in U.S. District Court in Alexandria to conspiring to transport stolen property in interstate commerce. According to court documents, from January to November 2009, she and her husband, plus Francisco Gray, also of New York, agreed to travel to Northern Virginia for the purpose of burglarizing residences belonging to South Asians.

Figuring that people of this ethnic group would have a great deal of gold jewelry, coins and religious icons in their homes, the trio conspired together to steal it and then transport the stolen property back to New York, where they would sell it.

According to authorities, at least six times during 2009, the three drove to Northern Virginia, where they rented a room at the Landmark Comfort Inn in Alexandria. From there, they would drive to the vicinity of a targeted residence and then telephone that particular house to determine whether anyone was

home.

If no one answered the telephone calls, they would drive to that residence, and Ramirez-Soto - dressed in a blue uniform of a workman - would knock on the front door. If someone answered, Ramirez-Soto would claim to be responding to a service call, apologize and leave. They would then go to a second targeted residence.

If no one answered, Ramirez-Soto and Gray would use a large screwdriver or pry bar to break into the home through a back or basement door or window. Once inside, they'd search for gold items or other easily transportable property, such as laptop computers, cameras, watches and other jewelry.

Meanwhile, Melinda Soto would remain in the vehicle and monitor the police radio communications for the police district in which the home was located. Because she and Ramirez-Soto maintained telephone contact, she could warn him and Gray if she heard any police communications that indicated officers were on the way.

They got away with their crimes for quite awhile, before they were all arrested, last summer. Then in July, they were indicted by a federal grand jury and later entered guilty pleas.

Soto returned to federal court in Alexandria last Friday, Dec. 3 and, at that time, U.S. District Court Judge Leonie M. Brinkema sentenced her to three years behind bars, followed by three years of supervised release. Soto was also ordered to pay \$590,860 in restitution.

Ramirez-Soto pleaded guilty to conspiracy, Sept. 21, and is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 11, 2011. Gray was deported to Peru prior to the start of the federal investigation.

The Fairfax County Police Department, Loudoun County Sheriff's Office and the FBI Washington Field Office's Violent Crimes Task Force investigated this case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael E. Rich and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul Rosen prosecuted it.

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to herndon@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

GFWC International President
Carlene Garner.
www.herndonwomansclub.com
703-444-4511.

THURSDAY/DEC. 9

Lupus Support Group. 12 p.m. at Reston Hospital Center, The West Wing, 1850 Town Center Parkway, Reston. lh@ascendcomm.com or www.lupusgw.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Delegate Tom Rust (R-86) to Host Homeowner's Association Forum. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Ingram Council Chambers, 765 Lynn St., Herndon. Hear professionals in the field discuss various aspects of H.O.A. management and learn the latest snow removal improvements and procedures from VDOT. 703-437-9400.

MONDAY/DEC. 13

NARFE Dulles Chapter 1241 Luncheon Meeting. 1 p.m. Amphora Diner, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. Installation of 2011 officers. Music by pianist Ernest Smith and The Chorus of Old Dominion. 703-435-3523.

Herndon Woman's GFWC Virginia Club Meeting. 7 p.m. Dranesville Elementary School, 1515 Powells Tavern Place, Herndon. With speaker

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 15

The Advisory Board of the Northwest Center for Mental Health Services. 7-9 p.m. at Northwest Center for Community Mental Health, 1850 Cameron Glen, Reston. Volunteers are needed to serve and act as advocates for women's shelters, homeless shelters, etc. The Board meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month. Contact Cleveland at 703-435-0868 or leaderwilliams@gmx.com.

Learn About Reston Association Elections. 7 p.m. in the Reston Association offices at 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive. Seats are open for the Hunters Woods/Dogwood district and for one at-large seat. All members of the association, including those who rent, are eligible to run. In the spring of 2011, Restonians will elect two members to the Reston Association Board of Directors, which represents the interests of the 62,000-member community association. Representatives serve three-year terms and are eligible to be elected to one additional term. cate@reston.org or 703-435-6512.

THURSDAY/DEC. 16

Committee for Dulles Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. Hyatt Dulles, 2300 Dulles Corner Blvd., Herndon. Dulles Airport Manager Chris Browne's annual update. \$45-\$60. www.committeefordulles.org.

FRIDAY/DEC. 17

Republican Club of Greater Reston Meeting. 7 p.m. Lake Anne Community Center, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. 703-829-5384.

MONDAY/DEC. 20

Assistance League of Northern Virginia. 9:30 a.m. at the Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. A nonprofit, volunteer organization promoting literacy and well-being for women and children through community based programs, such as Operation School Bell: New Clothes for Kids and Weekend Food for Kids. Meetings are the third Monday of every month. 703-878-1928.

THURSDAY/DEC. 23

Lupus Support Group. 12 p.m. at Reston Hospital Center, The West Wing, 1850 Town Center Parkway, Reston. lh@ascendcomm.com or www.lupusgw.org.

COMMUNITIES OF WORSHIP



**GOOD SHEPHERD
LUTHERAN CHURCH**
Making more and better disciples of Christ
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For Wrestling Enthusiasts, It's a Classic

NOVA Classic wrestling meet set for this weekend at Fairfax.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

One of the yearly highlights of the early high school winter sports season is the annual Northern Virginia (NOVA) Wrestling Classic, the large showcase extravaganza that is hosted by Fairfax High School and includes most of the public schools from across the Northern Region as well as other public and private schools from the metropolitan area and further out.

The Classic has been one of the most successful and longest-running booster-sponsored events in the region. This year's Classic, the unofficial starting point of the local prep school wrestling season, is believed to be in its 23rd straight year, although that fact is a little fuzzy to event coordinators.

"We were trying to do a countdown and we think this is the 23rd year," said Tim Gordan, Fairfax High's Director of Student Activities, in a recent e-mail regarding the event. "But our memories are fading!"

THE CLASSIC will be held this Friday, Dec. 10 and Saturday, Dec. 11 at Fairfax High. The action will begin at 10 a.m. on both days.



Fairfax High will, once again, be hosting the annual early season Northern Virginia Wrestling Classic this Friday and Saturday.

Thirty-one teams are expected to participate in this year's Classic, including local schools such as Herndon and South Lakes.

Last year's top five team finishers at the 2009 NOVA Classic were champion Westfield, second place Fairfax, third place Woodbridge, fourth place Annandale and fifth place Potomac Falls of the Dulles District.

Robinson Secondary won the team title in 2008 and Westfield took the crown in 2007. (Robinson is participating at another tournament this weekend in Annapolis).

HERNDON COACH Mike

Gonzalez is looking forward to seeing how his team does at the NOVA Classic.

"I'm looking forward to seeing where our new guys stand in the region," said Gonzalez. "I'm expecting three to four placers. I'm hoping our new guys win at least one to two matches. Last year, we surprised everyone when we placed ninth [at the Classic]."

But the coach said the 2009 Hornets may have peaked a little early.

"Looking back, we were going a little too hard in practice too early, and by the end of the year, we finished 28th in the region," he said.

"After having a top 10 finish in the NOVA, the end of our season was extremely disappointing. I think we peaked way too soon. This year, our conditioning and practices will be a little more gradual, and a couple active rest days inserted here and there to keep our guys fresh."

Herndon has a large team roster this season, but not a whole lot of experience.

"We have a young wrestling program this year," said Gonzalez. "I'm happy with the numbers we have in the room. However, we don't have that many varsity-caliber wrestlers this year. In the past,

I would have inserted JV guys in the line-up so we wouldn't have any forfeits. However, I have learned from experience, that it is better to develop the young wrestlers rather than feeding them to the wolves. It keeps their confidence level up and gives them a chance to learn. I anticipated not having a full line-up this year, so I geared our schedule to more individual tournaments, rather than dual meets. That way our returnees can get good competition, and the new ones won't get worn down by the grind of a long season."

Herndon hoisted its own four-team meet last week, the guest teams being Langley, South Lakes and Washington-Lee.

Herndon wrestlers to watch include: junior Gabe Pike (112-division), a two-time district place finisher; senior Ramon Reyes (119), who placed fourth in the district last year; and freshman Bassam Estwani (130).

Gonzales commented on the threesome.

"Gabe is looking for a ticket to the state tournament this year," said the coach. "He will be competing for a district and region title. Ramon had trouble maintaining his weight last season so he is bumping up a weight class. He will be contending for a district title and a trip to the state tournament. Bassam, only a freshman, has a couple years of experience with the Herndon Rattler Youth Program. He will make some freshmen mistakes here and there, but he is tough, and a competitor, and by the end of the year, we hope to get him to the regional tournament."

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

D.J. Christian, a junior forward on the South Lakes High boys' basketball team, converted two free throws with 1.9 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter to break a tie game and lift the Seahawks to a 56-54 season-opening win over visiting Yorktown on Dec. 3.

South Lakes, under new head coach Andrew Duggan, overcame a 10-point, first half deficit in earning the non-district victory.

South Lakes rallied in the final quarter to win, getting a huge emotional boost when junior point guard JD Wallace scored on a breakaway dunk shot. Ultimately, Christian, with his two late free throws, helped put the Seahawks into the victory column. Christian finished the game with 21 points.

Fairfax Adult Softball (FAS) hosts

a bowling tournament each year, benefiting Northern Virginia Special Olympics and Fairfax County Park Authority field improvements. The 11th annual tournament will be held on Jan. 30, 2011 at the Bowl America Shirley in Alexandria. It is time for Fairfax Adult Softball to solicit raffle prizes and tournament sponsorships in hopes of raising the maximum amount of funds for the Special Olympians.

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

Two types of sponsorships are available to choose from: Raffle prize/Goods Sponsorship - FAS conducts a big prize raffle auction at the event. Do you have college or professional sports team tickets, restaurant gift cards, movie tickets or concert tickets you would be gracious enough to donate? FAS would love to have them! The more raffle items FAS receives, the more tickets are sold and the more money is raised for the special Olympians.



D.J. Christian converts his clutch free throws to lift South Lakes to its season-opening basketball win over Yorktown.

COURTESY PHOTO

"Bank Error in My Favor"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I received a \$25 check in the mail today. It was sent to me by my bank, the bank with whom I've had a long-standing (through their name-changing) relationship. A bank however, with whom I've had minimal interaction, other than maintaining a checking account and being the recipient of any number of direct mail solicitations. I have no savings account, no money market account, no IRA account, no home equity and/or second trust and no personal loans; I may have a credit card (that I don't use) but it serves as a back-up/overdraft account which I most definitely have. Although, with the passage – and implementation recently of the new banking legislation, I'm not exactly sure what it is I still have, and/or what it is I'll be charged the next time a check presents itself without proper support. So you can imagine my surprise (or perhaps you can't), when I received a plain white business envelope from my bank which contained this mystery money and a brief explanation for its being sent – to me: some refund of a fee I don't remember paying and/or even caring about.

My reaction was to say aloud something like: "The bank made an error in my favor? Wow! That never happens." As soon as I said that 'bank error' line, I was transported – figuratively speaking, since I wasn't in a hot tub at the time, back some 45 years to those youthful days of playing board games, "Monopoly," specifically, on our back porch on Athelstane Road in Newton Centre, Ma., where my brother and I would play for hours on end (I always chose the dog, he chose the iron) until one player had all the money and/or all the property and the other player was unable to pay for landing on their Hotel/Utility/Railroad.

There I was, "Taking a 'Chance' on 'Community's Chest' (as I always intentionally mispronounced them) to see what fortune – or misfortune – would befall me: "Advance Token to Boardwalk," "Take a Ride on the Reading," "Elected Chairman of the Board, Pay Each Player \$50," "Pay School Tax of \$150," "You Have Won Second Prize in a Beauty Contest, Collect \$10," and of course, "Bank Error in your Favor, Collect \$200;" that was as much "found money" as there was in "Monopoly." Granted, the check I received in the mail was only for \$25, but collecting money out of the blue like that, when you're not expecting any and having done nothing to deserve it, made that \$25 feel like \$200. It was as if "Community's Chest" had advised me to "Advance To Go" and "Collect \$200," or even better, I had landed on "Free Parking" and collected the "kitty," as we called the money paid to the game/placed in the center of the board.

As much as anything though, receiving that \$25 check and remembering "Monopoly" and the simpler, much less complicated days of my board game-playing youth, brought a smile to my face and a slew of wonderful memories to my mind. I had a happy childhood and it all came rushing back to me when I read the explanation for the check: "Bank error," a refund of a fee or overcharge, or something to that effect. It was a warm and fuzzy moment, that's for sure; one which always included milk and cookies because if my brother and I were in the house playing a game like that, there was always milk and cookies; my mother saw to that.

She (I can still hear my father admonishing my brother and I: "Don't call your mother 'she'") was determined to make sure my brother and I drank our eight glasses of milk every day; the medical prescription in the 50s and 60s to guarantee children consumed enough calcium in order to develop strong bones. And to make sure we drank our milk, we needed to eat something for it to wash down and cookies were the obvious choice: Oreos (before there was "Double Stuf"), Chips Ahoy or some other kind of chocolate chip cookie and Keebler's Fudge Town or Fudge Stripes; these were the most popular, there were others. And though it was a board game we were playing, we weren't bored. We were "Monopolized." It made us happy and it made our parents happy. No wonder it's a fond memory, everybody was happy and the living was good, so far as we knew.

Ah, the innocence of youth. There's no recapturing it, but it was sure nice remembering it.

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

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21 Announcements

21 Announcements

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AT&T intends to file an application for the collocation of new antennas on the building located at 10700 Parkridge Blvd., Reston, Fairfax County, Virginia 20191. 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 "Wolftrap" will consist of the collocation of antennas on the roof of the building. In addition, flex conduit will be run from the antennas to the existing RAYCAP. 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 Carol Blitz, AT&T, at 7150 Standard Drive, Hanover, Maryland 21076 or c/o theresa.scarlato@atccassociates.com

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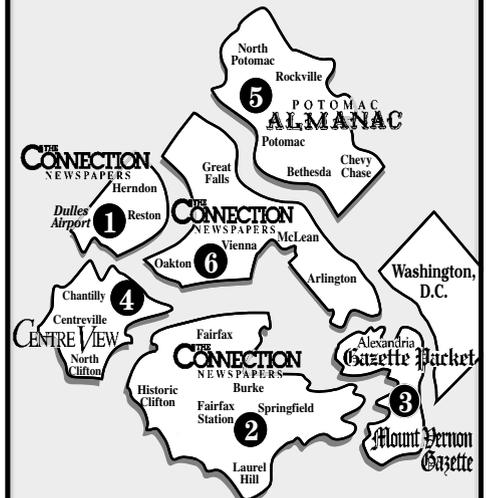
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NEWS

Tree Lighting Celebrated

FROM PAGE 3

ner of Elden Street and Lynn Street to watch the tree lighting. The music was provided by students who took their own time to come out and help usher in the holiday season for their community.

"I love being in the band, so I'll take any opportunity to play," said freshman Veronica McGrath. "We did a different Christmas thing in middle school, but this was really cool, and I'm glad I came."

Kathleen Schoelwer, the band director at Herndon High, said she was blown away by how many students volunteered to come out on a Saturday night.

"They're a group of dedicated, really talented kids who are really interested in showing the community what they can do," she said. "A lot of them keep their copies of the sheet music and lead caroling and other performances in their own neighborhoods."

Herndon Town Council members Sheila Olem and Grace Han Wolf thanked the group for their efforts by presenting the Herndon High School Band Parents Asso-

ciation with a \$500 check on behalf of the Council for the Arts of Herndon.

After the band wrapped up, distant sirens could be heard coming from just north of the Fortnightly Library. As the sirens grew louder and seemed to be making their way to the corner of Elden Street and Lynn Street, the crowd grew a little restless, thinking perhaps something was wrong.

Sure enough, an ambulance and fire truck stopped right near the Herndon visitor's center, sirens still going. But instead of something wrong, it was just an escort for the featured guest: Santa Claus, fresh from the North Pole.

He took the time to greet the assembled children, posing for photos and listening to at least a few present requests.

Though the event missed some of the snowy weather that has happened a few times in recent years, at least one member of the band made a commitment to come back.

"As long as it doesn't snow dramatically in the next three years, I'll be out here," McGrath said.

Arts Oasis in Downtown

FROM PAGE 3

forth to Lorton, I would love to have a place that's five minutes from my house."

The commission voted unanimously to amend the plan to include the arts center, which residents called a good move from the financial and artistic sense.

"For every dollar in tax revenue that is received in residential use, the town has to spend approximately \$1.20 to \$1.30 on services," said Herndon resident Barbara Glakas. "For every dollar received in commercial use, the town will only have to spend about 30 cents on services."

Melanie Stanley, an artist, educator and author from Herndon, has taught a class at ArtSpace, and described herself as being "enamored with ArtSpace." She expressed hope that a venue such as the proposed center would give artists a place to stay in business.

"We do not want artists to become an endangered species in the face of today's economics," she said.

Evan Hoffman, who grew up in Herndon and now lives in Arlington, cited numerous examples of downtrodden areas being revived by a thriving arts community. He named 14th Street and H Street in Washington, D.C., the Shirlington neighborhood in Arlington, and Staunton, Va., whose Shakespeare theatre draws more tourists annually than there are people in the town.

MANY RESIDENTS have been waiting for such a venue for a long time. Nancy Myers, who lives off of Herndon Woods Court, says she has been "eagerly anticipating" an art center in Herndon for the 18 years she has lived here.

Les Zidel, a volunteer at ArtSpace, said that the arts community is not looking for

a handout from the town. Rather, they are looking for a way to contribute to the town and the community as a whole.

"This town has been looking for people who would invest their time and resources and design buildings which would help create a destination in the downtown," Zidel said. "We're not looking for a handout. We're going to put value in this downtown."

Linda Sullivan, president of the Arts Council of Fairfax County, praised the ArtSpace community for coming up with such an appealing and feasible plan.

"They're doing all the right things. They didn't just build [ArtSpace] and hope that they will come, they have developed programs, participants, profiles and that's a smart way to start an art center," she said. "It will be a nice high-end, upscale contributing facility for the town."

Planning Commissioner Kevin J. East was one of the more vocal supporters on the commission for the center.

"Aside from the fact that I believe an arts center would be a terrific economic impetus, not only for Herndon, but would address the lack of an arts-related facility in western Fairfax County, I am persuaded that the Herndon Foundation for the Cultural Arts can bring their plan to fruition without any cost to the town," he said.

Robin Carroll, president of the board of directors for the Herndon Foundation for the Cultural Arts, said they are looking forward to being a partner in a successful future for Herndon's downtown.

"We're not looking for the town to hand us a lavish facility," she said. "Rather than being a drain on the town, the art associated use center would be a driver of economic development, by contributing funds to the shared public parking that it so vital for downtown growth."

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Green to your Holidays:

GIVE YOUR HOME A TREE:

Fairfax County is in need of more trees planted on residential properties. This holiday season - before the ground freezes - plant a tree on your property. If you plan on purchasing a live Christmas Tree, you might also consider purchasing a tree - with the root ball intact - to plant after the holiday. Trees can provide many benefits to your home. For details on tree planting and benefits, contact the Fairfax County Urban Forester at 703-324-1770, TTY 711.

USE CARE WITH LIGHTING:

When using festive lighting arrangements, be sure to carefully inspect wires for fraying and other damage. Also, be sure to follow manufacturer's instructions when connecting lights in sequence, using power strips or connecting to outlet adapters - overloading a circuit can overheat wires and cause fires. Use caution when using open flames such as candles and food warmers.

CONSERVE ENERGY:

Using LED decorative lights and timing devices can save on energy usage during the holiday season. Never leave lights on overnight.

CAN THE GREASE:

You can prevent sewer backups and overflows by pouring grease into used cans, adding an absorbent (like kitty litter or a paper towel) and disposing of it in the trash when full.

RECYCLE PACKAGING AND GIFT WRAP:

Cardboard boxes and packaging, all gift wrap (with the exception of foil wrap) and holiday cards, can be recycled through your normal curbside paper recycling collection.

RECYCLE YOUR LIVE CHRISTMAS TREE:

All Christmas Trees less than 8 feet tall can be recycled at the curb in Fairfax County during the first two weeks in January at no additional cost. Please remove tree stands, ornaments, tinsel, lights and tree toppers. For larger trees, contact your trash collector for collection details.



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FAIRFAX COUNTY

**Department of Public Works
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www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes

