

# Herndon Dresses Up For Holidays

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From right, Barbara Glakas tells Ray and Alma Updike that they are winners in the Dress Up Herndon for the Holidays contest for their patriotic lights display, featuring red, white and blue Christmas lights.

PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION  
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This house, at 1129 Arctic Quill Road, was recognized by Herndon's Cultivating Communities initiative as having the best lights. The display is synced with holiday music playing from the house.



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

## Herndon Dresses Up For Holidays

**Cultivating Communities award best decorated houses.**

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

**E**ight Herndon households got an addition to their yards Monday night, though it might have been hard for them to notice. Members of the Cultivating Communities initiative spent two hours surveying the best and brightest in holiday decorations for the annual Dress Up Herndon for the Holidays contest.

Eight households were recognized by the group, for having the best nativity scene, most whimsical and most patriotic among others.

"We usually get a few nominations from neighbors each year, and we also just cruise around the neighborhoods looking for houses that stick out," said Barbara Glakas, one of the judges.

A few strands of lights on bushes weren't going to cut it for this group, who were looking for anything that caught their eye. Sometimes it was a house tastefully decorated in white lights that appealed to a traditional sense, and sometimes strands of lights were hung around trees in an artistic way that appealed to their avant garde tastes.

"I like the ones with bright lights and music," said judge Lynn Schumaker. "In fact, I like anything that's loud and garish."

The Odeh family on Winterhaven Place won the award for most whimsical, and their corner lot was littered with an assortment of inflatable displayed that remained standing during the high winds. But while they were all smiles after getting the award, they had an emergency of sorts earlier that night.

"Someone cut the strings of



**This house at 805 Winterhaven Drive was recognized for having the most whimsical decorations.**

lights on the side of our house earlier today," said Gabrielle Smith-Odeh. "We had to do a last minute run to K-Mart to replace them."

It was well worth it after the win though, and the screams of delight from their children could be heard even as they shut the door and the judging party moved on.

While it was fun and games for the eight winners, the judges themselves enjoyed the experience. They load up into a Town of Herndon van and make their

rounds, while each judge makes something to eat, and the group enjoys their dinner on the road.

"My favorite part is just driving around, we have a rolling party in the car," said Leigh Powell.

Glakas served as the official notifier, as she braved the cold to knock on the doors and deliver the good news. Not every household was home, but she left the award for them in an easily visible place.

"I love to be the one going up to the door and seeing their faces when they realize they've won," she said. "But not everyone knows that we do the contest, so some are just really surprised."

The winners will be officially recognized by Herndon Mayor Steve DeBenedittis at the Jan. 11 Town Council meeting, and photos of the winners and honorable mentions will be available online.

### Herndon's Best Holiday decorations

*The following eight houses in Herndon were recognized for their exceptional holiday decorations.*

- ❖ 1129 Arctic Quill Road, best lights.
- ❖ 1109 Arctic Quill Road, most Christmas card-like.
- ❖ 805 Winterhaven Drive, most whimsical.
- ❖ 922 Barton Oaks Place, best townhouse.
- ❖ 707 Main Drive, most patriotic.
- ❖ 818 Locust Street, most classic.
- ❖ 1022 Monroe Street, most elegant.
- ❖ 903 Grant Street, best nativity scene.
- ❖ Bowers Lane and Nash Street, best neighborhood.



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

**Volunteers from Dominion Power help out with winterization and improvements at the Embry Rucker Community Shelter in Reston Thursday. The volunteers were part of more than 40 Dominion workers who spend the day winterizing various buildings that are for homeless and the transitioning homeless.**

## A Heartwarming Day of Work

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

**A**s temperatures drop, most people can just throw on another sweater and turn the thermostat up a few degrees. But for those struggling to make ends meet, extra energy costs can mean the difference between being able to eat each month. It was with this in mind that Dominion Power teamed up with various local nonprofits, including Reston Interfaith, Thursday to help winterize various housing facilities for those who are homeless or transitioning out of homelessness.

The volunteers worked on the Embry Rucker Community

Shelter in Reston, as well as 45 townhomes throughout Herndon to winterize them, making them more energy efficient.

"There's been a huge change just in the last four years, with a 123 percent increase in calls for help to the county, despite just a one percent population growth," said Kerrie Wilson, CEO of Reston Interfaith. "For a lot of these folks, their housing situation isn't stable, so they're learning a lot of tools to keep costs down in future homes as well."

**HERNDON MAYOR** Steve DeBenedittis spoke to volunteers at the Four Seasons community center when they broke

SEE INTERFAITH, PAGE 13



**From left, Herndon Mayor Steve DeBenedittis, Del. Tom Rust (R-86), Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill), Reston Interfaith CEO Kerrie Wilson, Dominion Virginia Vice President of Distribution Operations P. Rodney Blevins, and Del. Ken Plum (D-36) at the Four Seasons Community Center. Blevins presented Wilson a check from Dominion for Reston Interfaith, part of the \$625,000 donated to various charities in Virginia.**

## Lane Closure, Parking and Turn Restrictions

Elden Street, between Monroe and Center streets, turning lanes onto Station and Spring Streets and on-street parking on Spring Street will be closed periodically, Dec. 14, 2010 - Jan. 15, 2011, Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. for preliminary test work for future utility relocation.

Motorists are advised to use alternate routes to avoid delays. Contact: Department of Public Works, 703-435-6853 or public.works@herndon-va.gov

Emergency: 571-246-8077.

## Cortona Academy to Host Open House

Area residents are invited from 10 a.m. to 12 noon on Friday, Dec. 17, and Saturday, Dec. 18, to see facilities, partake of sumptuous food and learn about learning opportunities available at the 14,000-square-foot new location for Cortona Academy.

Academy, now in its 20th year, serves grades 6 through 12. Students, either having difficulties in present schools or advanced and bored, can work at their own level in classes averaging four students with one master teacher. Individual enhancement sessions are available with mentors for students needing extra help.

Students and parents are invited to attend one of these open houses, and find out how Cortona sends students, even students who seem to be lagging when they first attend, to colleges such as Carnegie Mellon, American University, Harvard University, Amherst, University of Virginia, and Virginia Tech.

## Food Drive at Reston Town Center

Northern Virginia businesses are being challenged to show their holiday spirit by participating in the Holiday Food Drive at Reston Town Center, taking place Thursday, Dec. 16. Sponsored by P+R Architects, the one-day food drive aims to collect 10,000 pounds of non-perishable holiday food items to benefit Reston Interfaith, a local social services organization.

"The demand for food at our local pantries has never been greater," said Joseph Serruya, P+R Architects' Associate Principal and Director of the Eastern Region. "All of us have had to scale back in this economic climate, but this is an opportunity to help those in our community who need it most."

Food drive will take place at Reston Town Center (11900 Market Street) between 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. on Dec. 16. A collection station will be set up between the holiday Christmas tree and ice skating rink. Monetary donations will also be accepted.

For more information contact P+R Architects Associate Jamillah Muhammad at 571-346-7827 or by email at jmuhammad@prarchitects.com.

## Get Home Safe

The Washington Regional Alcohol Program is offering its SoberRide program through January first. People who call the number will get a free taxicab ride home, up to a \$30 value. During the 2009 holiday season, 692 people in the area took advantage of the program, up from 468 in 2008.

This past Halloween, SoberRide provided 461 rides home.

Area residents age 21 and over can call the toll-free number at 1-800-200-TAXI (8294) and AT&T users can dial #TAXI. More information about SoberRide can be found at [www.soberride.com](http://www.soberride.com).

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## NEWS



Shoppers fill The Closet in downtown Herndon Sunday night as part of a special holiday shopping event, featuring cider, sweets and live music.

PHOTOS BY  
ALEX McVEIGH/  
THE CONNECTION

# Holiday Shopping at The Closet

## Local Church teams up with The Closet for a special holiday shopping event.

**T**he Closet, a nonprofit thrift store in downtown Herndon, added a few extra hours to its usual times of operation Sunday, as they welcomed in guests from the Dranesville United Methodist Church in Herndon and shoppers from around the area to have some holiday fun.

Carolers from the church stood along Station Street starting at 4 p.m. and filled the downtown with loud caroling, attracting many local residents to the store. Since it's usually open three days a week for four hours at a time, it proved hard for some people to resist.

"It's a good place to find some unique stuff at a good price," said Ramon Santos of Herndon. "I drive by on my way back from church and saw the lights on, heard the music and saw the carolers, so we decided to stop in for a look."

Santos and the other shoppers to the store were not only greeted with carolers on the outside, but there was hot cider, panettone, and an assortment of cookies made by members of the Dranesville UMC.

"We just thought of it as another way we could serve this community during the holiday season," said Debbie Harris, director of Programs and Ministries at the church. "We had no idea we'd get this sort of turnout though."

Janet Sansalone, a member of the church choir, said she was glad to take advantage of such an opportunity to come together.

"We didn't want to come together just as a choir, we wanted the whole church to come out," she said. "We had a great time, we started out inside, but we got pre-empted by the trumpet, so we just moved outside."

**THE STORE** was filled with shoppers taking advantage of the extended hours, and Orellana Cornejo provided the music indoors, playing his trumpet along with popular tunes from several decades. He only paused when raffle numbers were read off, each customer was given tickets for a chance to win \$10 gift certificates and an American Girl doll donated



From right, Victor Navarro dances and Orellana Cornejo plays the trumpet, but they are unable to distract Allison Herrera, 3, from enjoying a pretzel at The Closet Sunday night.

by the church.

"We didn't know what to expect, but I'm not surprised we have such a good turnout," said Laura Greenspan, president of the board of directors for The Closet. "We're only open for 12 hours during the week, and we try to create a really nice atmosphere for our customers, especially for the holidays."

Store employees volunteered to work the extra shift, and manager Aaron Sawyer credited the Dranesville UMC for coming to them with the original idea.

"They wanted to carol around the neighborhoods in this area, where a lot of our customers live, but we thought it would be really nice to bring people in here," he said.

Sawyer suggested that they bring in Santa Claus to take pictures with the children, and the line to get a picture with Santa grew almost as large as the line to check out.

There are 22 different congregations that help support The Closet, which opened in 1974. Last year they gave away more than \$80,000 worth of clothing and other necessities to needy people.

**THE CLOSET** is located at 845 Station Street and is open for shopping Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and take donations on those days from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. More information can be found at [www.theclosetofgreaterherndon.org](http://www.theclosetofgreaterherndon.org), and the Dranesville UMC can be found online at [www.visitdumc.org](http://www.visitdumc.org).



PHOTOS BY MIKE MCKEE

Del. Ken Plum (D-36) remembered his earliest days working with now Sen. Janet Howell.

## Howell Launches Re-election Bid

Last Thursday night, Sen. Janet Howell (D-32) opened her bid for re-election to the Commonwealth legislature with a Holiday Party at the home of Boofie and Joe O’Gorman in Reston.

The event was attended by a large crowd of supporters, including Reston Founder Bob Simon, many of Reston’s leaders and scores of community activists. Several prominent elected officials from Herndon were also in attendance. Howell has represented the 32nd District since 1992, and before that was a community leader, a PTA President, and community association president and also



Boofie and Joe O’Gorman contributed their home as the site for Sen. Howell’s party.

Chair of the State Board of Social Services. She is currently a legislative leader in the fields of legal reform, mental health, technology law enforcement.

—MIKE MCKEE



Herndon Vice Mayor Lisa Merkel, RA President Kathleen Driscoll McKee and Herndon Town Council member Sheila Olem are all supporting the re-election of Sen. Janet Howell.

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- 10:00 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist

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## Counting Your Blessings? Don't Forget Nature

Free gifts to all in Northern Virginia from nature include drinking water from the Potomac River.

The holiday season offers many opportunities to count our blessings and give something back to those who enrich our lives. In the process, we may realize that we've been taking for granted something, or someone, very dear to us. I suspect nature often falls into that category.

From rivers winding through forests to oyster reefs rising from coastal bays, our ecosystems provide us with clean water, fertile soils, food, fuel, beauty, flood control, storm protection and many other benefits. So this year, I encourage you to join me in showing your appreciation for all that nature does to enhance and sustain our lives.

In the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region, whether a faucet runs in the White House

or in your house, that water almost certainly comes from the Potomac River. When you fill your coffeepot before breakfast or your children wash their hands before dinner, you are among more than 4 million other people in our area who depend on the Potomac River for water.

In addition to household water, the Potomac provides many other natural services. It creates habitat for fish and wildlife, offers opportunities for recreation and tourism, supplies water for irrigation, absorbs wastewater generated by communities, and supports industry and economic development.

And if we extend our view to take in the whole Potomac watershed, including tributary streams such as Turkey Run and Cabin John Creek, then we see the critical roles that forests play. While some forest benefits are obvious — wildlife habitat, recreation, wood products and forestry jobs — services such as preventing erosion and filtering runoff often go unnoticed.

Now here's the clincher. Nature's services are absolutely free.

But perhaps that fact has been part of their undoing. Many natural systems around the world, from tropical coral reefs to our own Chesapeake Bay, are seriously degraded. This

reality begs a question: If humans can't put a price tag on it, do we really value it?

Even professional conservationists sometimes struggle to describe all the benefits we derive from nature, much less determine an economic value. But scientists from The Nature Conservancy are working with conservation and university partners to do both through our Natural Capital Project. In the near future, we will offer practical tools for factoring natural systems into decisions about how humans interact with our world.

This we already know for certain: Nature is the life-support system for every animal, plant and person on Earth. So for all that nature has given to you in 2010, I hope you'll consider giving something back. One way you can show your appreciation is to be a good neighbor to the Potomac River. To find practical tips for protecting water quality, visit our website and download our guide to river-friendly living, the Good Neighbor Handbook: [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org) or [www.nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/maryland/files/goodneighborhndbk\\_web.pdf](http://www.nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/maryland/files/goodneighborhndbk_web.pdf)

— MICHAEL L. LIPFORD

Michael Lipford is Virginia executive director of The Nature Conservancy.

GUEST EDITORIAL

### FAITH NOTES

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

**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](http://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](http://www.dranesvillebrethren.org).

**Annual Peace Service**. Friday, Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. In remembrance of the Dec. 20, 1861 battle at Leesburg Pike, and to reaffirm a commitment to peace. The Union cannon were where the church's parking lot is now, and the Confederate forces about hundred yards behind where the firehouse is today.

**Grate Patrol to D.C.** Saturday, Dec. 18 at 2:30 p.m. Gather to put together sandwiches, soup and more. Meet up with the Salvation Army Grate Patrol Van and head out to D.C. Donations of vegetable soup welcome.

**Community of Faith United Methodist Church**, 13224 Franklin Farm Road in Herndon, has announced their upcoming events. All are welcome. 703-620-1977 or [www.cof-umc.org](http://www.cof-umc.org).

**The Longest Night Service**. Monday, Dec. 20 at 7:30 p.m. A worship service of healing, hope and encouragement.

**Christmas Eve Worship Service for Children**. Friday, Dec. 24 at 5 p.m. Designed for children first grade and younger.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**. Friday, Dec. 24 at 7:30 p.m. A traditional candlelit service.

**Christmas Eve Service**. Friday, Dec. 24 at 11 p.m. A service of Lessons, Carols and Holy Communion.

**Washington Plaza Baptist Church**, 1615 Washington Plaza in Reston, has announced their Christmas week events. All are free and open to the public. [www.washingtonplazachurch.com](http://www.washingtonplazachurch.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 mediation 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 mediation service with Rev. Elizabeth Hagan.

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**, 1133 Reston Avenue in Herndon is announcing the following Christmas services:

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24, 5 p.m. — Children's Christmas Eve program; 7:30 — Christmas Eve service of Holy Communion with traditional carols; 10 — Christmas Eve candlelight service of Holy Communion.

Sunday, Dec. 26 — One Service only at 9:30 am — Scripture Lessons and Christmas Carols.

**The United Christian Parish** will hold four services on Christmas Eve, Friday, Dec. 24 at 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston. Children's Nativity Services will be at 4 and 5 p.m., and children will have the opportunity to be

participants in the story of the birth of Jesus Christ. The services at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. will include scripture lessons, music by adult and bell choirs, and candlelight. The United Christian Parish is an ecumenical church uniting four denominations, United Methodist, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ.) 703-620-3065 or [www.unitedchristianparish.org](http://www.unitedchristianparish.org).

**The Unitarian Universalist Church in Reston**, 1625 Wiehle Avenue in Reston, will host a series of Pastoral Care forums, to provide information on topics of interest around pastoral care. The first forum will be on Hospice Care on Jan. 19, 2011 at 3 p.m., and facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Janae Moore, a Senior Counseling Educator and Chaplain from Capital Hospice. Moore will provide an overview of hospice care: what it is, what it isn't, costs and more. Free. Reserve at [Caring\\_Circle@uureston.org](mailto:Caring_Circle@uureston.org).

**St. Timothy's Episcopal Church**, 432 Van Buren St. in Herndon, presents "Journey to Adulthood", a comprehensive Christian Education for youth in grades 6-12. It uses Bible study, prayer, rites of passage, outreach ministries and both serious and playful activities to underscore its core message that adulthood must be earned.

**Bright Pond Bible Study** presents their 12th year of Bible study, a non-denominational group of women searching the Bible for God's truth. Meeting at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 1133 Reston Ave. in Herndon, starting 9:30 a.m. Sept. 22. [bbiblestudy@aol.com](mailto:bbiblestudy@aol.com).

**Floris United Methodist Church**, 13600 Frying Pan Road in Herndon, holds worship services at 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m., 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Sundays with a Latino service on Saturdays at 7 p.m. 703-793-0026 or

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

**Hope Fellowship Church** will temporarily be meeting at Woody's Golf Range, 11801 Leesburg Pike, Herndon. Sunday Worship Services for this new Southern Baptist church are at 10:45 a.m. The public is invited to join a growing Bible believing, multi-ethnic/multi-cultural congregation, with Bible-based sermons and uplifting music. 703-599-3527 or [www.hopefellowshipchurchloudoun.org](http://www.hopefellowshipchurchloudoun.org).

Knitters needed the first and third Wednesdays of the month, at 7 p.m., at **St. Timothy's Episcopal Church**, 432 Van Buren St., Herndon. The church's Shawl Ministry is offering free knitting instruction while providing shawls, blankets and other knitted items for people in need. No cost and yarn can be provided. E-mail [shawl@saint-timothys.org](mailto:shawl@saint-timothys.org) or visit the Pastoral Care page at [www.saint-timothys.org](http://www.saint-timothys.org).

**Nondenominational Christian businessmen** meet for prayer, Biblical discussion and fellowship 7 p.m. Fridays at Anita's, 1051 Elden St., Herndon and 12 p.m. Thursdays at 555 Grove St., Suite 200, Herndon. Call 703-795-1257.

**Adult Sunday school** will be held 9:30 a.m. Sundays at the Washington Plaza Baptist Church at Lake Anne Village Center. The group is studying the Gospel of Mark. Services follow at 11 a.m.

**HAVEN of Northern Virginia** offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) for schedules and registration information.

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

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# Students Spread Good Cheer

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

Some of the youngest members of the Herndon community took some time to spread holiday cheer to some of the oldest Monday morning. Students from the Montessori Peace School made the three-block trek to the Herndon Senior Center to sing Christmas Carols and visit with residents.

The students, who ranged from age three to six, performed various Christmas and other songs, complete with dancing and props. They used handheld bells for "Jingle Bells" and "Jingle Bell Rock," and handed out bells for the audience to shake as well.

"Jingle Bells" is my favorite song to sing, especially the line 'bells on bobtails ring,'" said Leila Zavala, 5. "We wanted to come and bring our smiles, our hearts, our love and our joy to the people here."

Nuri Songer-Johnson, 5, said his favorite song was "Jingle Bell Rock," because of the dances they got to do with the song.

"I like when we get to jump up when we sing 'riding on a one-horse open sleigh,'" he said.

Logan Francis Lee, 5, also said he liked that song, "especially when we can gallop."

Only a few seniors were present when the students arrived in the ballroom, but many more came once the singing began. The sound of singing and bells proved to be an irresistible lure.

"It's fun just being with the kids, I always enjoy being around young children," said Marilyn McAll, one of the audience members. "They were right in there rocking out, and it was really cool to see. 'Jingle Bell Rock' is one of my favorite songs, and they did a great job with it."

The Montessori Peace School is a relatively new addition to the Herndon community. Founded by teachers with years of experience in Montessori teaching, they opened in September in Herndon's historic Harding Hall.

In addition to regular subjects, students can also take classes in yoga, peace education, organic gardening and weekly music classes.

Sunder Cheng, one of the founders of the school, said she wanted to get the students involved in their community for the holiday season and beyond.

"We want to make connections in the neighbor-



Children age three to six from the Montessori Peace School in Herndon perform at the Herndon Senior Center Monday. The students performed a variety of holiday-related songs, and even brought bells so the seniors in attendance could participate.



Students from the Montessori Peace School perform Christmas carols and other songs at the Herndon Senior Center Monday. The school, which opened in September, has been looking for opportunities to reach out to their neighbors in Herndon.

hood, and hopefully we'll be able to come here a few times a year," Cheng said. "We really want to make connections with this community, especially the senior community."

More information on the Montessori Peace School can be found at [www.montessoripeaceschool.com](http://www.montessoripeaceschool.com).

PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

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

## 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](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035. [www.sesamestreetlive.com](http://www.sesamestreetlive.com).

**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](mailto: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.

**Reston Interfaith Food Drive.** 11 a.m.-8 p.m. at the Pavilion at Reston Town Center. Presented by P+R Architects to benefit Reston Interfaith. Each 10 lbs. of canned goods and non-perishable food items or \$10

donation earns the donor a raffle ticket for one of five prizes. 571-346-7827 or [jmahammad@parchitects.com](mailto:jmahammad@parchitects.com).

## 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](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035. [www.sesamestreetlive.com](http://www.sesamestreetlive.com).

**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@gnu.edu](mailto:hmiller@gnu.edu).

**Fireside 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](mailto:naturecenter@reston.org).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 18

**Holiday Youth Musical Café.** 2-4 p.m. ArtSpace 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](http://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](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035. [www.sesamestreetlive.com](http://www.sesamestreetlive.com).

**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](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

**14th Annual Christmas Party for Kids.** 12:30-3:30 p.m. Jimmy's Old Town Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. Santa, souvenir photos, coloring and crafts, holiday dance

party, sing-a-long and more. \$11.95 per child accompanied by adult. Reserve at 703-435-JIMS or [www.jimmystavern.com](http://www.jimmystavern.com).

## 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](http://www.ticketmaster.com) or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035. [www.sesamestreetlive.com](http://www.sesamestreetlive.com).

**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](http://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.

**Photos with Santa.** 4-6 p.m. at the Herndon Depot Train Station in downtown Herndon. Donations benefit the Herndon/Dulles Visitors Center. 703-HERNDON.

## 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 Thring 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

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 29

**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.

## FRIDAY/DEC. 31

**New Year's Eve at ArtSpace.** ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. 703-956-6590.

♦ **New Year's Eve Bonfire.** 9-10 p.m. Family-friendly. Free, open to the public.

♦ **New Year's Eve Musical Cafe with Al Robertson and Friends.** 10 p.m.-1 a.m. Live music, coffee and dessert bar with a champagne toast at midnight. \$45-\$50. Call for tickets.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 15

**Weekend Bluegrass Concert Series: The Fitzmaurice Band.** 7:30 p.m. at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. Progressive and alternative country music. \$12. 703-435-8377 or [www.fitzmauriceband.com](http://www.fitzmauriceband.com).

## SATURDAY/JAN. 22

**Art Jam: The Ultimate Mini-Conference for the Arts.** ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Presented by Artists Underground. 703-956-6590.

## THURSDAY/JAN. 27

**The Big Guise.** Jimmy's Old Town

Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. A Herndon-based rock band. [www.thebigguiseband.com](http://www.thebigguiseband.com). 703-435-JIMS or [www.jimmystavern.com](http://www.jimmystavern.com). 703-242-4020.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 29

**Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie.** 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The German State Philharmonic, conducted by Philippe Entremont on its first tour of the U.S., performing Strauss' "Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche" and Brahms' Symphony No. 4, Op. 98. Entremont also joins Sebastian Knauer on piano for Mozart's Concerto for Two Pianos, No. 10 in E-Flat major, K. 365. Tickets are \$30-\$60, available at 888-945-2468 or [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

## FRIDAY/FEB. 11

**"Six Characters in Search of an Author".** 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Luigi Pirandello's surrealistic tragicomedy, presented by Aquila Theatre of New York City. 888-945-2468 or [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

## FRIDAY/FEB. 18

**The Virginia Opera: Wagner's "The Valkyrie."** 8 p.m. at George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. \$48-\$98. 888-945-2468 or [www.tickets.com](http://www.tickets.com).

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# Getting Drunk Drivers Off the Streets

By ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

The holidays are filled with festive gatherings with family, friends and co-workers, but it's also a time when driving can be more hazardous than ever. Free-flowing alcohol at parties combined with early winter freezes can make for a dangerous combination.

The Fairfax County Police Department started their Safe December campaign last week, which means increased DWI patrols, checkpoints and police presence on the roads. According to the Fairfax County Police Department, they have arrested 2,493 drunk drivers in 2010, and have investigated 660 crashes involving impaired driving.

Historically, December DWI arrests have been as much as 78 percent above average for the rest of the year.

Officer Kyle Proffitt is one of the officers who has been assigned to DWI patrol during the midnight shift for the Reston Police District. Officers on that patrol are trained to search for signs of drivers who might be impaired.

"We're trying to be more vigi-

lant, to get our eyes on as many cars as possible," Proffitt said.

Officers are on the lookout for the slightest sign that a driver might be intoxicated. A slight swerve, uneven acceleration or an especially wide turn could all be enough to catch the attention of an officer. Once they see the first sign, the officers will often follow along to look for further signs.

**JUST AFTER 10 p.m.** Saturday night, Proffitt witnessed a car making a right turn from a left turn only lane onto Fairfax County Parkway from the Dulles Toll Road. As the cars pull over, Proffitt is watching everything from the way they pull over to what the driver does while waiting for the officer to approach.

"You pay attention to the reaction time from when I turn my siren on. Often times a drunk driver will go for miles without even noticing me behind him, siren and everything," he said, and recalled someone who took more than a mile along Route 7 to even notice the officer behind him.

Proffitt notices that the driver pulled over for the illegal turn hits the sunroof button while attempting to turn on the dome light, which he notes as he makes his approach. As he speaks to the driver, he is looking for bloodshot eyes, the smell of alcohol, in addi-

## Get Home Safe

The Washington Regional Alcohol Program is offering its SoberRide program through Jan. 1. People who call the number will get a free taxicab ride home, up to a \$30 value. During the 2009 holiday season, 692 people in the area took advantage of the program, up from 468 in 2008.

This past Halloween, SoberRide provided 461 rides home.

Area residents age 21 and over can call the toll-free number at 1-800-200-TAXI (8294). More information about SoberRide can be found at [www.soberride.com](http://www.soberride.com).

tion to other signs.

"Usually you can smell alcohol, but it could always be someone else in the car, so you watch for slurred speech, you see if they have trouble finding their registration or license, anything that might be a tip that they're not fully sober," Proffitt said.

This particular driver appeared sober, had no smell or slurred speech, and seemed to be coherent. Proffitt determines that the driver is telling the truth when she says she is in an unfamiliar area.

As the patrol continues, Proffitt swings into parking lots that should otherwise be empty on a weekend night, such as parks. He also responds to calls if need be. On this night, his patrolling is interrupted a few times by a fight, a call for pursuit and a tripped secu-

urity alarm.

In each case, other officers respond or the incident is deemed to be no threat. But Proffitt says that's all part of the duty.

"Sometimes that's the way it goes, you just sort of run and gun all night," he said.

Proffitt also goes to assist other officers who have pulled over drivers for suspected DWIs. This is a common practice for officers, he says, because of special circumstances that leave an officer vulnerable.

"When you're explaining the steps for the field sobriety test, or watching someone perform the test, you're not paying full attention to everything around you, you're watching for the driver to stumble, or do something that would otherwise indicate they are intoxicated," he said. "That's why we like to have other officers around to keep their full attention on the suspect."

The three field sobriety tests that are admissible in court in Virginia are the ABC test, where the subject slowly and purposefully says the entire alphabet, the one-leg stand, where the subject stands on one foot and extends the other leg out and counts and the walk-and-turn, where the subject walks heel-to-toe in a straight line, turns around and comes back.

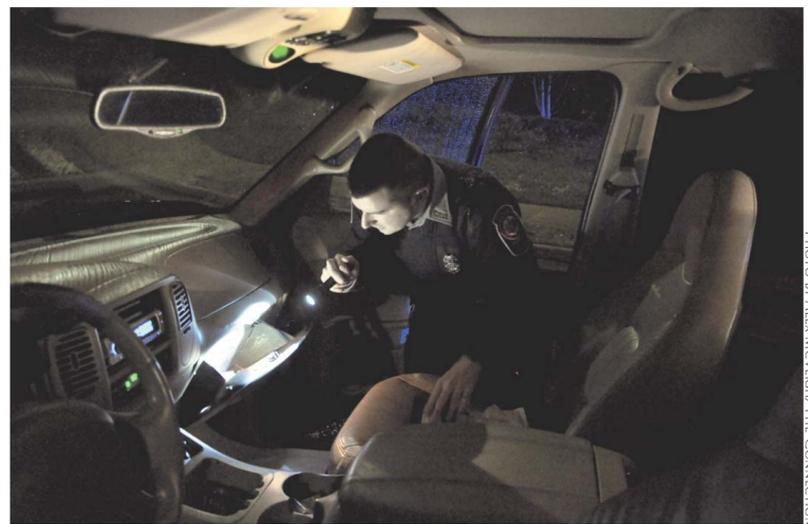
**"I don't care about getting arrests. I care about making sure people are getting home safe."**

— Officer Kyle Proffitt

Throughout each test, the officer is watching the subject's performance and taking notes. If the subject looks questionable on the test, the officer will ask the subject to take a preliminary breath test, which measures the blood alcohol content. "If they are sober, but fail the field tests, the PBT can prove that they're not intoxicated, and they can go," Proffitt said.

One driver earlier in the evening failed the field tests, but only blew a .02, less than the .08 level that is considered intoxicated, so he was not arrested.

**JUST AFTER LAST CALL,** Proffitt comes upon a car at the intersection of Sunset Hills Road and Reston Parkway. The car is on the west side of the intersection on Sunset Hills Drive. It is halfway between the right-turn lane and the adjacent lane, with the right



Officer Kyle Proffitt conducts an administrative search of a car after finding the driver asleep at the intersection of Sunset Hills Road and Reston Parkway early Sunday morning and placing him under arrest for suspicion of DWI.

turn signal flashing. But the light soon turns green, and the car does not move. Proffitt waits for a cycle of the light to go by, and the car still does not move. He turns on his lights and approaches the vehicle.

He can see vomit going down the driver's side door and the driver appears to be asleep in the drivers' side seat. After speaking with the driver and conducting a field sobriety test, Proffitt has deemed the subject to be intoxicated. After the

driver refuses a breath test, Proffitt places him under arrest.

After conducting an administrative search of the vehicle, Proffitt takes him to the Adult Detention Center in Fairfax for processing. Suspected drunk drivers are taken to the Alcohol Testing Unit.

The Alcohol Testing Unit has several Intoxilyzers, which are the breath machines used to make the official BAC reading. The room itself is filled with statistics on drunk driving, as well as photos of people

— usually teenagers — who have been killed or maimed by a drunk driver.

After the suspect has been processed — he blew a .14 — it's the end of shift for Proffitt. And though it's his job to get drunk drivers off the road, he says it's not about writing tickets or padding statistics.

"I don't care about getting arrests," he said. "I care about making sure people are getting home safe."

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## HOLIDAY

# Holiday Champagne and Sparkling Wine

From \$10 to \$85, some excellent suggestions for the holidays.

BY MIKE POTASHNIK AND DON WINKLER  
INTERNATIONAL WINE REVIEW

The Holidays are the time for Champagne and sparkling wine and what incredible

choices. In France alone there is Champagne, of course, but also another 38 regions producing sparkling wines in the Loire, Burgundy, Alsace and elsewhere. Italy makes Prosecco and Asti Spumante. Spain produces Cava. In the US, excellent sparkling wines are made in California, New Mexico, and Virginia. Canada even makes really exotic sparkling icewine. And we've tasted excellent sparklers from Australia, New Zealand, Greece, and South Africa.

We've selected what we think are sparklers of excellent value and then organized our recommendations by price level: Inexpensive (around \$10), Moderately Priced (under \$30), and Luxury Cuvées (above \$30). We've limited our recommendations to mostly, very dry Bruts, and included some rosé sparklers.

**INEXPENSIVE.** We suggest you stick to Spanish Cavas, Italian Prosecco and Asti, and American Sparklers. Many of these wines are non-vintage or produced in a way that minimizes year-to-year variations in quality. Most have a lovely mousse with good fruit flavors and are lively and crisp. Some widely distributed Cavas we recommend are **Conde de Subirats NV Brut Cava** (\$13), **U Mes u Fan Tres NV 1+1+3** (\$16) and the **Cristalino Brut Cava** (\$9). Italian Prosecco is made from the Prosecco grape grown just north of Venice. We recommend **Bisol**, **Canella** and **Zardetto**. Asti comes from the Piedmont, and we like those spritzzy wines made by **Cinzano Moscato d'Asti**.

Finally, if you wish to buy American, we would especially recommend the sparkling wines of Gruet, which come from, of all places, New Mexico! Look for the **Gruet Demi-Sec** (\$14) if you prefer an off-dry wine.

**MODERATELY PRICED.** Since there is such an abundance of moderately priced sparkling wines from all over the world, we limit our recommenda-



Mike Patashnik and Don Winkler of International Wine Review recommend champagne and sparkling wine for holiday season.

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tions to those you may not know. As with inexpensive sparklers, the vintage date isn't important on most of these wines. We recently returned from Austria and found some excellent Champagne-style wines made from Austrian varietals like Grüner Veltliner and Welschriesling. One that is widely available is the **Steininger NV Grüner Veltliner Sekt** (\$24). We also recently tasted some French sparkling wines made outside Champagne that we especially like. From Burgundy and made with Pinot Noir grapes in an elegant creamy style are the **Domaine Michel Sarrazin Crémant de Bourgogne** (\$25)

SEE SPARKLING, PAGE 18

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

HOLIDAY

# Sparkling Holidays

FROM PAGE 17



and **Charles Duret's Crémant de Bourgogne Rosé** (\$20). From Alsace there is the powerful and lush Wolfberger **Crémant d'Alsace Brut** (\$20). From America we highly recommend a superb sparkling wine from Virginia called **TJ Virginia Fizz** (\$23). It is a crémant style wine made from 100 percent Chardonnay by the talented team of Claude Thibaut and Manuel Janisson in Charlottesville. It has fresh apple aromas and flavors with a yeasty creamy palate filled with fruit and has a long finish. Finally, if you'd like try something from the Southern Hemisphere, we recommend an attractive rosé sparkler showing pretty light red berry fruit, the **Graham Beck Brut Rosé** (\$19).

**LUXURY CUVÉES.** There are a lot of wonderful wines to choose from in this category. Champagne usually heads the luxury list, but in fact, there are lots of other top quality sparklers you can enjoy. It is hard to go wrong with Champagne; it's not really all a matter of taste, and the price you are willing to pay. We like non-vintage and vintage **Pol Roger, Henriot, Champagne Roland Champion, Champagne Trouillard, and Tattinger**, to name but a few.

The **NV Champagne Roland Champion Blanc de Blancs** (\$66) is a rich yeasty wine offer-

ing attractive lemon citrus aromas and flavors. Tattinger is recognized worldwide for producing some of the finest Champagnes available. The

**Tattinger Brut La Française** (\$35) is an attractive, rich tasting blend of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier, while the **2004 Brut Millesimé** (\$80) raises the bar in term of complexity, elegance and refinement. There are many outstanding sparklers produced outside of Champagne in California, Italy, and Austria. These are equal in quality to Champagne and are made using the same *méthode champenoise*, but they cannot be called Champagne because they are not made in the Champagne region of France. Argyle Winery in Oregon produces some of the finest sparklers in the United States. Their sparklers sell at all price levels, but if you want something very special, try the refined and elegant **Argyle 2000 Extended Triage Brut** (\$80). Much harder to find, but worth the effort are the Austrian Sekts of Willi Bründlmayer. His **NV Sekt Brut** (\$44) and **NV Sekt Brut Rosé** (\$44) are relatively expensive, but outstanding in quality.

Finally, there are no finer sparklers from Italy than the refined and delicate Bellavista Franciacortas. Try the **Franciacorta Brut Cuvée NV** (\$52) or the **Franciacorta Gran Cuvée Satèn** (\$80).

See Champagne and sparkling wine special reports by the International Wine Review at [www.i-winereview.com](http://www.i-winereview.com). Read about the 170 year old Champagne discovered on the Baltic Ocean floor at [facebook.com/iwinereview](http://facebook.com/iwinereview).

## Toll Road Rates Change

25¢ increase at Main Toll Plaza; Tolls at on/off ramps remain the same.

Effective Jan. 1, 2011, toll rates on the Dulles Toll Road will increase by 25 cents at the main toll plaza to \$1.25. Toll rates on the on/off ramps will remain 75 cents.

A three-year schedule for new toll rates was approved by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Board of Directors in November 2009 after conducting a series of public hearings. At that time, the Board also approved a toll rate increase that took effect on Jan. 1, 2010, the increase for 2011 and a third toll rate increase that will be effective Jan. 1, 2012.

The toll increases are necessary for the Airports Authority to fulfill its commitment to operate and maintain the Dulles Toll Road and to construct the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project. That com-

mitment is contained in agreements with the Commonwealth of Virginia and local governments in Northern Virginia, and is based in substantial part on the parties' agreement that funding for the Metrorail Project is to come from Dulles Toll Road revenues, as well as contributions by the federal government, the Commonwealth, Fairfax and Loudoun Counties, and the Airports Authority.

Under its agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Airports Authority has assumed the responsibility to operate and maintain the Dulles Toll Road for a 50-year period beginning in 2009.

For more information about the Dulles Toll Road and the process the Airports Authority follows before setting new toll rates, please visit our website at [www.mwaa.com/tollroad](http://www.mwaa.com/tollroad).

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# SPORTS

## Seahawks Edge Hornets in Girls Basketball

**Herndon boys, meanwhile, defeat South Lakes in early season, cross-town rival action.**

BY RICH SANDERS  
THE CONNECTION

**L**ocal rivals Herndon and South Lakes met up for an early season girls'-boys' double-header night of high school basketball last Friday, Dec. 10 at Herndon High School.

In the girls' game, South Lakes edged Herndon, 49-47. Gabby Schultz led the Seahawks with 18 points while teammate Abby Rendle finished with 11 points and a game-high 13 rebounds. Nia Wardlaw added six points and eight rebounds for South Lakes.

Herndon's top scorer was Deborah Headen, who scored 16 points. Brandi Delgado and Ariana Tolbert both scored 10 points for the Hornets, who played South Lakes, the defending Liberty District regular season champions, tough the entire game.

It was the first win of the season for the Seahawks (1-3), who had opened up the schedule with losses to St. John's (Wash., D.C.), Paul VI (Fairfax), and T.C. Williams of Alexandria.

Herndon, a member of the Concorde District, fell to 2-2 with the loss. The Hornets opened the season with a setback to Edison before winning consecutive games over Potomac Falls (Dulles District) and Lake Braddock.

In the boys' nightcap game on Friday, Herndon defeated the visiting Seahawks, 79-64. The Hornets (3-1) received a game-high 26 points from Austin Hamilton. Right behind him in the scoring column was Jonathan Beltran with 21 points. Patrick McLaughlin and Raleigh McKenzie both added 12 points for the Herndon squad.

South Lakes, under new head coach Andrew Duggan, had big games from D.J. Christian (18 points) and Mitchell Dempster (15). J.D. Wallace scored eight points and both Darius Smith and Jordan Francis contributed seven.

Herndon took control of the game in the first quarter when it outscored South Lakes, 28-12.

Another girls'-boys' double-header between the local rivals will take place again this Friday night, Dec. 17 at South Lakes. The girls' contest will begin at 5:45, followed by the boys' game.

**THE HERNDON BOYS** are playing good ball early on this season. The Hornets lost their season opener to visiting private school opponent, Middleburg Academy, 73-67, on



**Herndon's Deborah Headen (3) releases a shot in the lane as South Lakes' Abby Rendle (23) defends during last Friday night's girls' basketball game at Herndon High School.**

Dec. 3. But since then they have wins over visiting Briar Woods (Dulles District), 74-62, on Dec. 4; host Lake Braddock, 68-40, on Dec. 7; and South Lakes.

"We are playing well for it being early in the season," said Herndon coach Chris Whelan. "The guys are playing extremely hard which is making us a difficult team to play against."

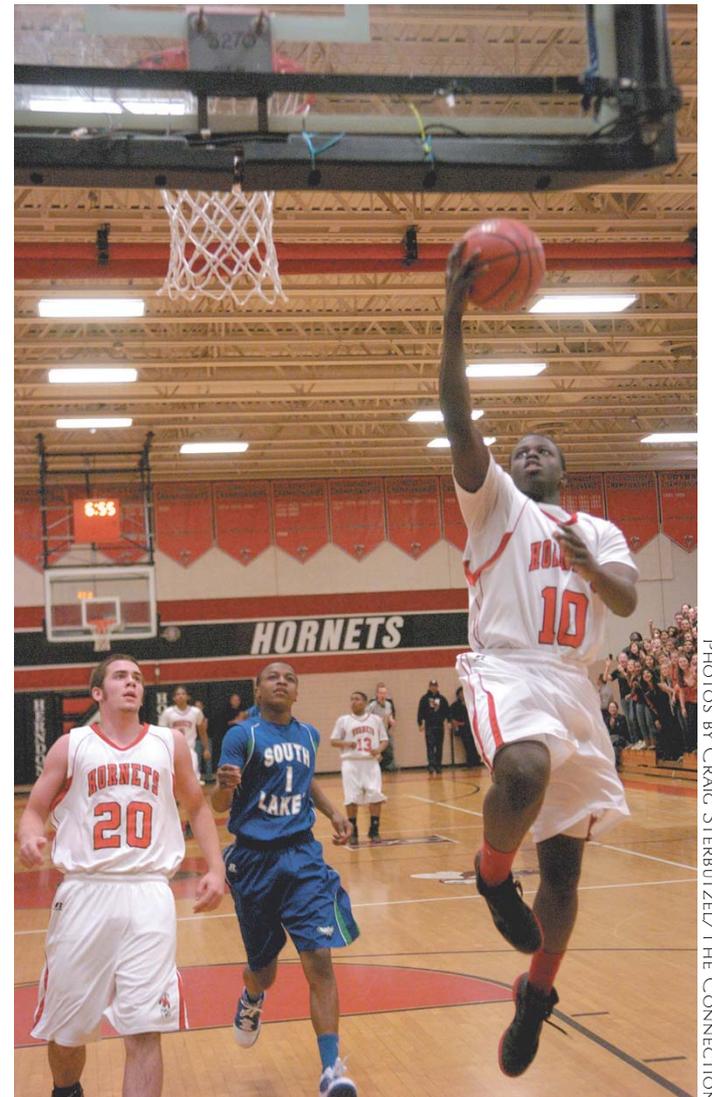
Herndon will be traveling to Hilton Head (Bluffton, S.C.) for a tournament over the holidays.

**THE SOUTH LAKES BOYS** are 1-2 thus far. The Seahawks opened the season with a win over visiting Yorktown before losing games at Westfield and Herndon.

Coach Duggan, in his first year as the Seahawks' head coach, said his team is moving in the right direction.

"Our coaching staff and the players are getting to know each other as we implement a new system," said Duggan. "It has been a challenge, but we have been making progress. We believe we can be competitive in the Liberty District."

South Lakes has just four returning varsity players on its roster this winter in Joe Daye, Darius Smith, D.J. Christian and Brendan Galbraith. They are mixing in with



**Herndon's Austin Hamilton goes in for a layup against South Lakes. No. 20 for the Hornets is Patrick McLaughlin.**

some younger players. Christian, a junior forward, has been playing particularly well through three games.

South Lakes, over the holidays, will compete at the Glory Days Grill Tournament of Champions, hosted by Lake Braddock Secondary School Dec. 27-29. The eight-team field will consist of Middleburg Academy, Robinson, Madison, Hylton (Woodbridge), South Lakes, Osbourn (Manassas), Woodbridge and the host Bruins.

Four first round games will be played on Monday, Dec. 27 at Lake Braddock: Middleburg Academy versus Robinson (2:15); Madison versus Hylton (4); South Lakes versus Osbourn (5:45); and Woodbridge versus Lake Braddock (7:30).

**THE OAKTON HIGH COUGARS** opened the season with a pair of wins - victories over visiting Marshall, 77-39, on Dec. 1, and at host Stuart, 33-30, on Dec. 3 - before losing consecutive road outings at South County, 59-45, on Dec. 7 and

Washington-Lee, 70-55, on Dec. 10.

Oakton (2-2) was scheduled to play non-district home games this week against Jefferson on Tuesday, Dec. 14, and Vienna-area rival Madison on Friday night, Dec. 17. Next Tuesday night, Dec. 21, the Cougars,

who are coached by David Brooks, will play a game at Lee High in Springfield.

Over the holidays, Oakton will be competing in the annual Mount Vernon Christmas Tournament from Dec. 27-29.

In the season opener win over Marshall, the Cougars had three players score in double figures - senior guard Steele Shemeld (18 points), senior center Adi Hajrovic (15), and senior guard Abdi Barre (10). Oakton's balanced scoring attack also included good contributions from senior guard Jonathan Morris (9 points), senior forward Zach Fabian (7), and senior center Marshall Dressler (6).

Marshall's top scorers in the loss were Aaron Aggen (10 points), Shelton Hardy (7) and Mo Samantar (6).

Hajrovic, a senior captain, has been Oakton's most consistent player through four games. He scored 25 points in the loss to South County and 20 in the setback to the Generals of Washington-Lee.

"He is really our only player who has been putting up consistent numbers," said coach Brooks.

Oakton, in the game at Washington-Lee, led 17-13 after one quarter before the Generals outscored the Cougars 24-6 in the second quarter to gain control of the game.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

# Interfaith Provides Hope

FROM PAGE 3

for lunch. He thanked the workers for helping others achieve what so many take for granted.

"For many in our community unfortunately, escaping from the cold weather into a warm home can be difficult. This week's cold snap underscores the importance of the work done today," he said.

Improvements included better window insulation, new electrical fixtures, programmable thermostats, duct work, caulking and even some gutter cleaning and yard work while they were at it. The volunteers were only supposed to do a few townhouses, but they were able to get so much done that they went out and tackled more. "I'm fortunate enough

to have a good job with a good company, so I really wanted to get out there and help out my neighbors and community," said Jesse Jewell, a project designer for Dominion. "The people we helped were very gracious, and I think my co-workers enjoyed the experience as well."

Kenny Wilkins, a construction manager with Dominion, said the

part of the day that sticks out the most to him wasn't even on the inside of a real building.

"We were working on the playground behind the Embry Rucker shelter, and we installed a window in one of the kids' playhouses. One of them didn't have a window, and we thought of the kids playing in a house with no window, so we wanted to fix it," Wilkins said. "I just wanted to give back to the community today, but it really was a phenomenal experience."

Alison Kaufman, an energy conservation specialist for Dominion, said that when crews went into houses in the morning, some of the houses were so poorly insulated that there was visible condensation on windows.

"Air leaks in a home can account for 15 to 30 percent inefficiency, and when you think that heating and air conditioning accounts for 40 percent of your bill, making sure that conditioned air doesn't escape is really important," she said. Deborah Johnson, senior manager for State and Local Affairs for Dominion, said that keeping the energy costs low is essen-

tial for families on a tight budget.

Del. Ken Plum (D-36) said that energy saving techniques are important not only for those who have limited financial resources, but for everyone as the demand for electricity grows in the future.

**IN ADDITION** to helping maintain their transitional housing, Dominion Power also presented several groups around the county with checks, part of a \$625,000 grant from the company. P Rodney Blevins, vice president of Distribution Operations for Dominion Virginia, said he was glad the money could go to these types of community-based groups, such as Reston Interfaith.

"For 40 years, Reston Interfaith has worked to help those that society often forgets. Every year the organization provides 20,000 individuals and families in Reston, Herndon and western Fairfax County with services such as housing, a child development center and financial assistance," Blevins said. "But more importantly, the organization provides what people need most: hope."

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## Not So Much "Fun" Anymore



By **KENNETH B. LOURIE**

Closer to "Minis" or "Bite Size" is more like it - and I don't like it, if you want to know my candy-eating truth. To what am I referring, specifically? I am referring to the "snack size" candy bars ("Items not for sale," in bags) most of us know and love, especially before, during and after Halloween and on through to the next Halloween when the eating/buying frenzy continues unabated to infinity (at least it does for me). Has anyone noticed the shrinkage in the size of M&M/Mars' brand "Fun Size" Milky Ways, Three Musketeers, Snickers and M&M varieties (my brand-area of expertise)? The "Fun Size" as they are still labeled, used to require two bites to finish - when I was in mixed company; alone, they were gone in just one bite, in my mouth, anyway. Now, however, one bite is sufficient - alone or in mixed company (and the ounces are less, too).

And as disappointing and inevitable as that shrinkage is, it's certainly not unique to M&M/Mars or "snack-size" candy bars. It appears to be a relatively common/recurring phenomenon among many pre-packaged items with which I'm familiar (not that I've done a study but I know what I buy): Half gallons (64 oz.) of Breyers ice cream are now 48 oz., bags of Utz potato chips have shrunk from 11.5 oz. to 10 oz., jars of the Classico pasta sauce have been reduced from 26 oz. to 24 oz., cans of Bumble Bee tuna fish I buy for my wife are now 5 oz. instead of 6, the 1 lb. bag of M&Ms are now 11.4 oz give or take (depending on the specific variety), bags of Oreo cookies (my formerly long-time favorite) which used to be 21 oz. are now as low as 15.25 oz (again depending on variety) and on and on. Moreover, not only is there shrinkage in the package/volume itself; where applicable, the individual items in those packages have been reduced as well. However, I wouldn't say this shrinkage has led to any reduction/discount in price. Hardly. From what I'm buying, mostly, I am definitely getting less and paying more.

But I am consuming less calories as a result; 80, to be specific (like it's a good thing, not an obfuscating thing), per this product anyway: according to the starburst featured prominently on the bag of Milky Way "Fun Size" candy bars whose recent purchase has inspired this column. So I really and truly am getting less for more. And why don't I consider that lower calorie number "Fun"? Because I consider it spin: telling me I'm consuming less calories; not because of any Earth-shattering, sugar-reformulating breakthrough but because there's less actual candy bar to eat (than in previous "Fun Size" bags). As Danny Glover ("Mal") said in Lawrence Kasdan's classic Western, "Silverado": "That ain't right. I'm tired of things that ain't right."

Consuming fewer calories, though, is not the reason I'm eating Milky Ways (or any number of other "Fun Size" bars with which I'm familiar). So no, it doesn't make me happy - or induce me in any future Milky Way-buying way. It's merely an attempt to veer me off my how-much-is-this-bag-of-candy-really-costing-me course. And, of course, I'm paying attention; I'm paying money, aren't I? I just don't eat indiscriminately without realizing how much - or how little of what's actually in the bag, is going into my mouth. This reduction in calories is, strictly speaking, nothing more than a reduction in value. And reduction in value during a struggling economy is hardly the thing from which legends - and new business are spawned, especially when most of us need more, not less. It's into this environment that M&M/Mars, among many others is instead providing the exact opposite: less for more.

Just remember, Mr. Manufacturer, consumer's dollars don't grow on trees anymore than sugar cane does (it's a "tall grass," actually; who knew?). And trying to sell me less value for more money is definitely going to reduce my calorie intake - to zero! From your products, anyway.

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

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