

Reston CONNECTION

Patrolling For Safe December

NEWS, PAGE 8

Officer Kyle Proffitt performs an administrative search of a vehicle Sunday morning. The driver was found asleep at the intersection of Sunset Hills Road and Reston Parkway. Proffitt is one of many Fairfax County Police officers who are on increased patrols this holiday season looking for intoxicated drivers.

A Heartwarming Day of Work

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Differing Visions For Future

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PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

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NEWS

Reston 2020 co-chair Terry Maynard presents his group's alternative vision for the future of Reston Town Center to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force Dec. 7 at the Reston Community Center Lake Anne.



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH

Differing Visions for Future

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

The Reston 2020 committee, part of the Reston Citizens Association, presented an alternate vision for the future of Reston Town Center Dec. 7 at the weekly meeting of the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force. Their vision was meant to be an alternative to the report presented by the Reston Town Center subcommittee Nov. 5.

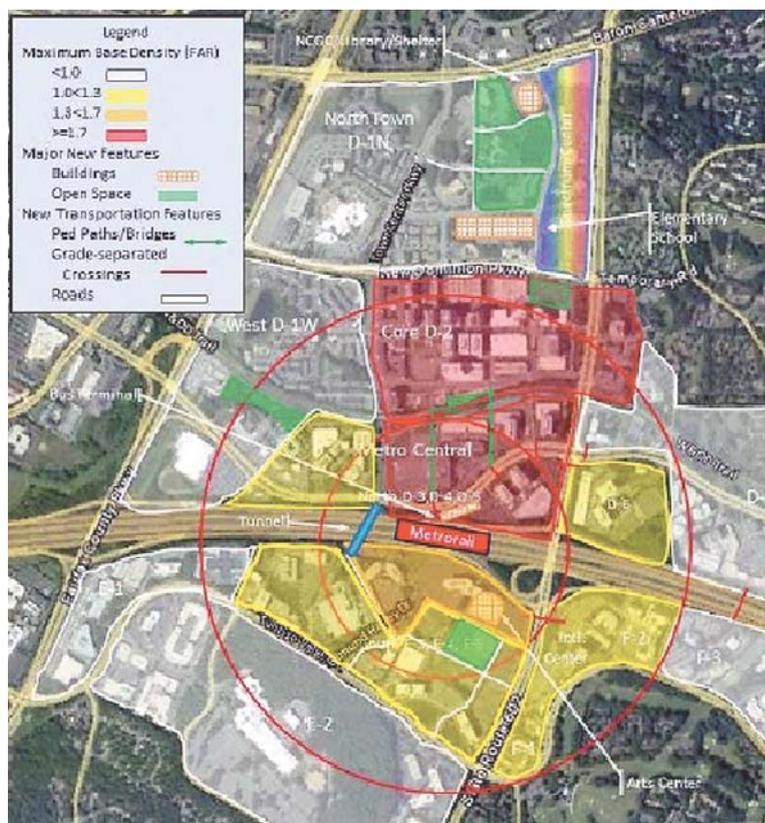
The Reston Town Center subcommittee placed a priority on expanding the existing urban core to get it closer to the proposed Reston Parkway Metro stop. Reston 2020's report suggested that the subcommittee's report is lacking in several fields.

"The Town Center Subcommittee report recommends excessive development and understates requirements for robust internal infrastructure and key quality of life amenities," the report reads. "[We] need a vision and plan for Reston Town Center that meets three key objectives: meets future economic growth expectations, opportunities and restraints, sustains multifaceted world class planned community in an urban setting and abides by [transit oriented development] principles and best practices."

THE REPORT recommends a population-driven 20-year plan that balanced the various populations — residential and workforce — with Reston's quality of life in an urban setting.

"We see this as a standalone report, but it can be used with the subcommittee's report, which had good ideas and also as a source that can be used to generate new ideas," said Terry Maynard, the co-chair of the Reston 2020 committee who presented the report to the task force.

While the alternative vision was in favor of less development than the subcommittee's report, Reston Town Center Subcommittee co-chair Robert Goudie said his report wasn't as much about excessive



CONTRIBUTED

Reston 2020's alternative vision for Reston Town Center includes a tunnel under the Dulles Toll Road, a new elementary school, a large park at Reston Town Center North and a fine arts center, among other things. Reston 2020 presented their alternative vision to the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force at their Dec. 7 meeting.

development as it was keeping options open, they planned for what they wanted to achieve, not what they wanted to avoid.

"We didn't want a [floor area ratio] limitation to drive the vision, we wanted it precisely the reverse — let the vision and good projects that fit the vision drive the FAR [density], so long as the infrastructure can handle it," he said. "We wanted to set a FAR limit high enough that it would both incent developers to achieve the vision we want, which in all cases is going to require tearing down existing and in many cases profitable buildings, and not interfere with that vision, which is going to require robust commercial and residential to build a TOD friendly downtown, and residential doesn't exist currently in the three land

bays we focused on."

Goudie went on to explain that they would have preferred to not get into matters such as FAR, but the county requires them for planning purposes, hence the high number.

Reston 2020's report also named several "must haves" when it comes to amenities around the town center. A tunnel going underneath the Dulles Toll Road and a widened Reston parkway were among the transportation needs, and other infrastructure such as a new elementary school and updated library was also included.

It also proposed 25 percent open space overall, and a large park in Town Center North, which could include fields, playgrounds and a water feature. A performing/fine

SEE 2020, PAGE 5



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

As 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.



PHOTOS BY MIKE MCKEE

Supervisor Hudgins addresses the crowd.

Hudgins Hosts Open House

Fairfax County Supervisor Cathy Hudgins held a Holiday Open House at the North Government Center on Wednesday. County officials, Police leadership, Reston Founder Robert E. Simon, Jr., RA President Kathleen Driscoll McKee and many others attended the event.



Kathleen Driscoll McKee, RA President, discusses holiday plans with Fairfax County Police Capt. Deborah Burnett and Maj. A.J. Hurlock.

WEEK IN RESTON

Toy Drive at South Lakes High

Area residents are invited to show their community and holiday spirit by bringing a new, unwrapped toy to South Lakes High School on Friday, Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m.. The South Lakes High School Student Government Association is sponsoring a toy drive for children in need during the Varsity basketball game against Herndon. Those who can't make the game can drop off their toys at the school anytime on Friday.

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.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

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.

Moms Club of Herndon. 10 a.m. at Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Monthly meeting and annual holiday party with holiday crafts, storytime and toys for children. All are welcome. herndon_moms_info@yahoo.com.



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

From left, South Lakes freshmen Kacey Hirshfield, Olivia Wolfe and Hannah Becker are trying to organize a triathlon in memory of their friend Amy Boyle, who died of a brain tumor three years ago.

In Memory of a Friend

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Amy Boyle, Kacey Hirshfield, Olivia Wolfe and Hannah Baxter were best friends. The four of them attended school and played sports together. Three years ago, Boyle died from a brain tumor, and her friends formed "Amy's Amigos," racing in the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life, raising more than \$24,000 since then.

The group, whose motto is "Be Amy-zing," won the top youth fundraiser prize at last year's Relay For Life. Their Amy's Amigos shirts also have the acronym "Amazing athlete, Marvelous Smile, Yes to a cure."

Now, the trio are freshmen at South Lakes High School, and the memory of their friend is inspiring them to go even farther. They're trying to organize a triathlon for the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation, with help from the Reston and South Lakes community.

"She was a really athletic person, so we thought it would be appropriate to get people involved that way," Wolfe said. "We chose the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation because they aim to treat and cure the same type of tumor that killed Amy, which is the most common childhood tumor. It's neat to know we're doing something that could help lead to a cure."

"Reston doesn't really have a kids triathlon, while there's runs and bike races, we have a lot of

"Hopefully we'll get people involved for the years we have left here, and it will be strong enough to continue."

— Hannah Becker

swimmers here too," Hirshfield said. "But there are a lot of people that do triathlons, so maybe we can attract them and their kids."

THE PLAN is for runners to race around the South Lake High School track, use the nearby Ridge Heights Pool and ride bikes along South Lakes Drive. The group plans to have different age groups that will do different lengths of running, biking and swimming, and they'll keep them separate so the younger students have opportunities. They hope to have groups of six to eight year olds, nine to 12 year olds and 13 to 15 year olds.

The group is currently trying for a weekend in May, but most details have to be fleshed out.

"Finding dates that might work has been the hardest part, there's a lot that goes on around here during the weekends," Hirshfield said.

The girls are currently submitting paperwork to become an official school club at South Lakes, which will help them recruit the

volunteer support they need. Their ultimate goal is to create a lasting event to honor their friend that lasts long after they have graduated.

"We want it to be a part of the school community after we graduate," Becker said. "Hopefully we'll get people involved for the years we have left here, and it will be strong enough to continue."

The girls felt it was important to get high school students involved so they would take a sense of ownership in putting such an event together.

"We want the kids to get some help from parents, but the kids are going to do a lot, not just let their parents take everything," Becker said. "We did an online survey to find out if people were interested, and we got more than 100 responses."

THE GIRLS are hoping to have 150 participants for their triathlon, which would allow them to raise a decent amount of money without making the cost to participate too high.

Wolfe said "we're serious about getting it together, but we want to make it a fun event so people will come back in future years."

The girls admit that it's hard to find time to get the club together and work with the necessary groups around Reston, but it's something they want to make time for.

"When you're dedicated to something, it's not work, so you find the time," Hirshfield said.

Envisioning Reston 2020

FROM PAGE 3

arts facility was also high on the list.

"We believe that the south side, which is less densely developed than the north is the logical place to put it as a cornerstone of an entertainment district in Reston Town Center," Maynard said.

Task force member Arthur Murphy suggested that while a fine arts center sounds good, it might not be practical given the location.

"I'm not against a fine arts center, but I would remind people of competition. You've got Wolf Trap, Patriot Center, Strathmore, Verizon Center, Kennedy Center and all the rest of downtown," he said. "The Reston Community Center can't sell out ... so I think you've got to be considerate of the competition around and whether or not it's going to be functional."

RESTON FOUNDER Robert Simon spoke at the meeting, and voiced his support of a park in Town Center North.

"We should have a central park north of Town Center. A central

park is a great economic engine and it's a great social engine," he said. "What we could do is have a group of people define the central park. We could have water, nature and high-rise buildings, and absorb the kind of density we should be absorbing in Town Center without specifying FARs."

Patty Nicolson, chair of the task force said that they would examine the alternate vision against the subcommittee's report going forward.

"I think as we shape how we're going to put forth our recommendations, obviously there were two different approaches," she said. "I think that will be part of how we lay out what is presented to us, and how do they compare. We should do a full comparison so people can understand."

Reston 2020's alternative vision report for Reston Town Center can be found at www.reston2020.blogspot.com, and the task force subcommittee's report and other reports and task force information can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz.reston.

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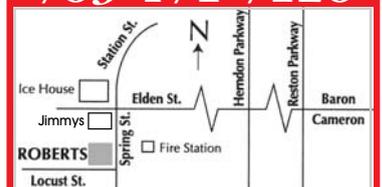
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OPINION

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.

**GUEST
EDITORIAL**

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 or www.nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/maryland/files/goodneighborhndbk_web.pdf

— MICHAEL L. LIPFORD

Michael Lipford is Virginia executive director of The Nature Conservancy

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Awesome Opportunities

To the Editor

The Winter-Spring Program Guide distributed by the Reston Community Center, in combination with Reston Association's publication, the 2010 Winter Edition of "Reston," form a truly awesome display of what is available in our community to make for a rewarding life for each of us from cradle to grave. It took a little patience for me to ferret out the multifarious opportunities that are offered in these two publications for me, for my wife Cheryl and for her family consisting of Adam, her son, his wife Lynn and their two

children aged four and almost two. But it was well worth the time it took. The list of these opportunities for each of the six of us was long, including several of which I had not previously been aware.

My hearty recommendation to my fellow Restonians is to take the time to scan every page of each publication. I would be surprised if the result didn't uncover, for you and yours, one or more opportunities to add to your pleasure at living here.

Bob Simon
Reston Founder

Hard to Bamboozle

To the Editor:

Delegate Plum indulges in last week's issue ["It Will Take More Than Magic," Reston Connection, Dec. 8-14] in a little lame wordplay involving his own expertise as a magician and Governor McDonnell's transportation-funding "tricks." He quotes some VDOT "career professional:" "VDOT does not have the money to do its job." Could this be the same VDOT that a recent audit (Cherry, Bekaert & Holland)

found to have over \$1 billion in unspent money?

Delegate Plum disingenuously says the governor's "tricks" (off-shore drilling, selling ABC stores) have been "shown not to be viable," whatever that means in the context of the Obama administration slapping a job-killing seven-year ban on drilling off Virginia's shores. Who or what are harmed by mere exploratory drilling, for

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 7

Session Preparation

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



Everyone's list of things to do in December is long: holiday purchases, parties, winding up the year. For legislators the list is even longer: submit bill drafting requests, meet with constituents, plan the move to Richmond. The legislative session begins each year on the first Wednesday after the first Monday; this year it begins on Jan. 12. While legislative preparation continues throughout the year, the crunch time is in December.

Beyond getting ready for the legislative session there are the practical considerations involved in moving your place of residence for the six-week session. While hotels are readily available as a place to live, they can get pretty boring. For most of the years I have been in the legislature I lived in hotels with Linden Row Inn being one of my favorites. I shared apartments during several sessions with the late Delegate Mitch Van Yahres until his retirement from the House of

COMMENTARY

Delegates. For the last three sessions I lived in an apartment that was one floor of a private home near St. John's Church on Church Hill in Richmond. I had hoped to return there in January, but the current

tenant will not be leaving in time for me to do that. I will be checking out options on my business trips to Richmond this month.

Getting one's legislative package together takes place year round with ideas coming from needs identified by constituents and/or organizations. Closely following issues results in identifying the need for legislation. Public hearings provide a great source of ideas and suggestions. I will be having a public hearing with Sen. Mark Herring on Wednesday, Jan. 5, 7:30 to 9 p.m. at Fox Mill Elementary School, 2601 Viking Drive, Herndon, and with Sen. Janet Howell on Thursday, January 6, 7:30 to 9 p.m. at Reston Community Center at Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road,

SEE PLUM, PAGE 7

**THE
CONNECTION**

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Planning Herndon-Monroe Area Lags

By JOHN LOVAAS
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST



INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

The Master Plan Special Study Task Force is about to have its first birthday.

As we end 2010, I was thinking, what do we have to show for a year of meetings of the Task Force and its four subcommittees? I think the answer is a very mixed bag, with some genuine highlights and some disappointments.

Here is what the action elements of the Task have accomplished to date:

❖ The Reston Town Center Subcommittee completed its work in September.

This group had a head start in a sense, with an established urban framework. But, the subcommittee focused narrowly on maximizing density/profit per land unit. The result, I believe, was a lack of imagination. The densities proposed exceed what infrastructure can support and leave out the amenities needed to make it an exciting special place. Fortunately, the citizens' organization, Reston 2020, has prepared a full-blown alternative, which addresses major failings. Check out this readable alternative at www.reston2020.blogspot.com

❖ The Wiehle Avenue Subcommittee submits its final report this week.

Their more participatory process led to a more comprehensive report, more thought given to making it an interesting, community friendly place. It has one striking failure - avoidance of the issue of infrastructure essential to making the area viable. The station opens in 2013 surrounded by already failing intersections, yet no solutions to alter the existing near gridlock are planned before 2035.

❖ The Vision Subcommittee is attempting to address shortcomings in station area plans and offer a framework with character for the corridor.

Its chances for success are limited by attacks on its work by leaders of two station area subcommittees, while developers have boycotted the Vision meetings.

❖ Still stalled at the gate is the Herndon-Monroe Subcommittee. Having partially drafted their report, they inexplicably stopped meeting two months ago. While this area faces constraints to attracting residential growth and achieving successful transit-oriented development, it is not without potential. Limiting factors include: a narrow strip of land to work with on the south (Reston) side of the station; the Sunrise Valley wetlands which the committee rightly marked for protected status; and, the Town of Herndon north of the toll road. Herndon thus far opposes station-related development on their side—not even a kiss-and-ride or a bus stop! The subcommittee to date refuses to complete its vision describing character, recommended mix of uses, densities, or transportation links to assure connectivity either externally or internally. It claims it cannot do so without: 1) knowing Herndon's future plans; and, 2) additional data from county staff. Once they have these "data points", they say they will finalize a report. Commercial developers may see an advantage to simply leaving the area as suburban office park, and a parking lot for future metro. They did agree on one thing—changing the new station's name from Herndon-Monroe to Reston West-Herndon. That'll show Herndon! This committee gets the coal in the stocking award. Happy Holidays to all!

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

heaven's sake? Here comes \$3 gas again.

And, aside from peddling liquor, what other commodity sales does Delegate Plum consider the proper business of government: cigarettes, condoms...?

Mr. Plum's magic tricks may or may not baffle little children, adults will be somewhat harder to bamboozle.

Plum

FROM PAGE 6

Reston. I hope you will come and participate or just come to hear the suggestions of others. Also, my annual Constituent Survey will come to your home this month in a newsletter from me. Complete it and mail it back or go on my website, www.kenplum.com, and complete it electronically. It is avail-

able on my website now.

I hope you and your family have a great holiday season. I will be enjoying the season with children, grandchildren, family, and friends. In between, I will be hurrying to get ready for the legislative session. I am not complaining. I am very honored to serve you, and I feel very blessed at this holiday season.

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4:00 p.m. Eucharist with Children's Living Crèche
7:00 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist
10:00 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist

CHRISTMAS MORNING:

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Episcopal)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26:

10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

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RESTON CONNECTION ❖ DECEMBER 15-21, 2010 ❖ 7

ENTERTAINMENT

Send announcements to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit www.connectionnewspapers.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 or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035. 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.

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 jmhahm@parchitects.com.

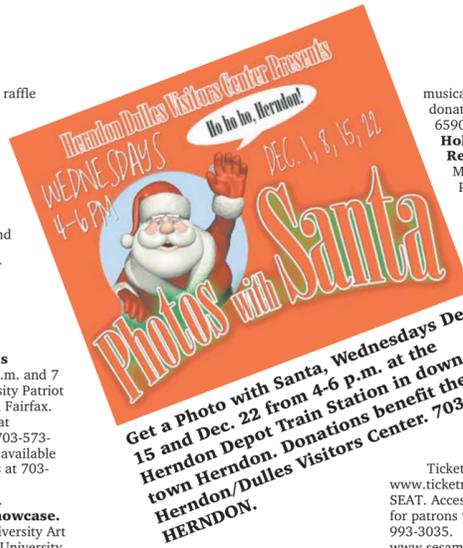
Holiday and Christmas Party. 7 p.m.-2 a.m. Jimmy's Old Town Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. Casino games, photos with santa and Mrs. Claus, DJ and dancing, prizes and more. Proceeds will benefit Fisher House. 703-435-JIMS or www.jimmystavern.com.

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 or 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035. 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@gmuedu.edu.

Fireside Fables. 7:30 p.m. at the Walker Nature Education Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Gather around the Nature House hearth to



Get a Photo with Santa, Wednesdays Dec. 15 and Dec. 22 from 4-6 p.m. at the Herndon Depot Train Station in downtown Herndon. Donations benefit the Herndon/Dulles Visitors Center. 703-HERNDON.

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. 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.

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. 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.

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.

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. 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.

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 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

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.

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. 703-435-JIMS or www.jimmystavern.com.

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.

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.

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.

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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.

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



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

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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20389 Water Valley Ct.....\$679,900...Sun 1-4...Gina Tufano.....Keller Williams.....703.574.3478

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NEWS

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 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

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



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

PHOTOS BY MIKE MCKEE



FAITH NOTES

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

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

❖ **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 mediation service with Rev. Elizabeth Hagan.

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.

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 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.

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. bpbiblestudy@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.

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.

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.



Supporting Children

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Reston recently presented a check for \$500 to Vecinos Unidos Neighbors United, which provides outreach to local communities by educating children through homework assistance, mentoring and enrichment activities that assist them in meeting the challenges of growing into adulthood. Pictured from left to right are Vicky Robertson, the sales associate from Coldwell Banker Reston that requested the donation; Mary Bellamy; Barbara Sorenson, President of Vecinos Unidos Neighbors United; and Mark Pergerson, Branch Vice President of Coldwell Banker Reston. For more information about buying or selling a home in the Greater Washington, DC area and to view listings, visit www.cbmove.com.

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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

Local 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.

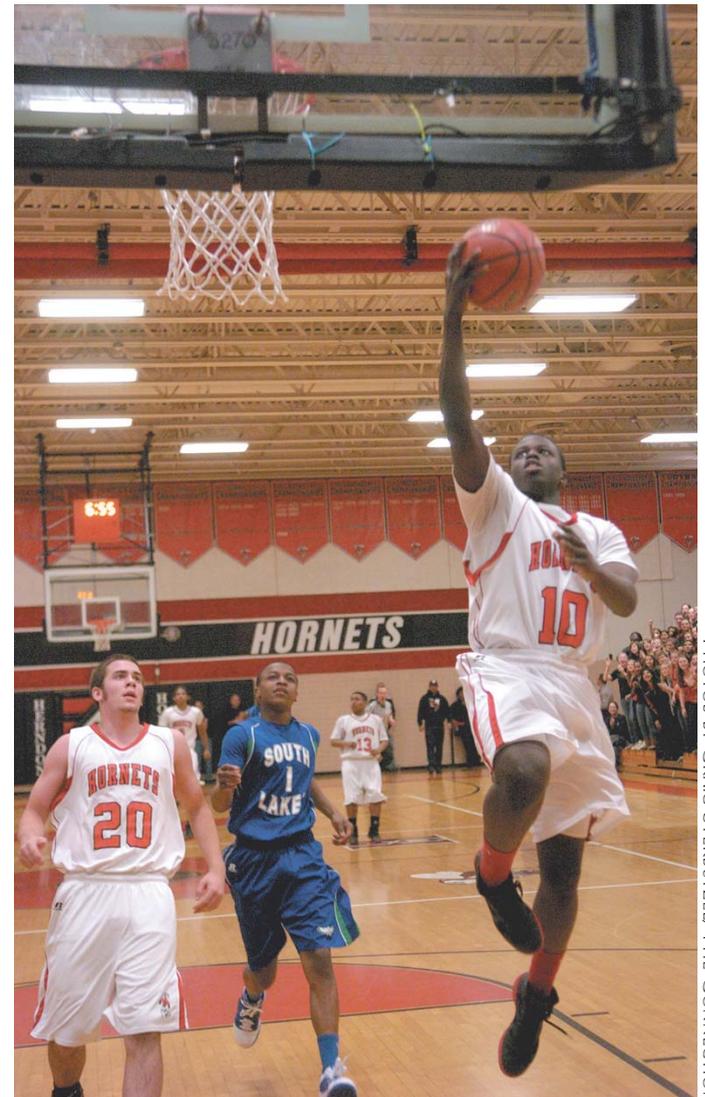
Herndon took control of the game in the first quarter when it outscored South Lakes, 28-12.

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.



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

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

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

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.

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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