

# New Year,

U.S. Rep. Gerry  
Connolly (D-11) poses  
with wife Cathy,  
daughter Caitlin, and  
new dog Abigail, a  
Poodle-Bichon mix the  
family adopted from  
the Fairfax County  
Animal Shelter.

## New Dog

NEWS, PAGE 3

DINING, PAGE 6 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 10 ♦ CLASSIFIED, PAGE 13

PHOTO BY GEORGE BURKE

## Have Fun, Don't Breathe

NEWS, PAGE 3

## One Family's Tasty Tradition

PEOPLE, PAGE 4

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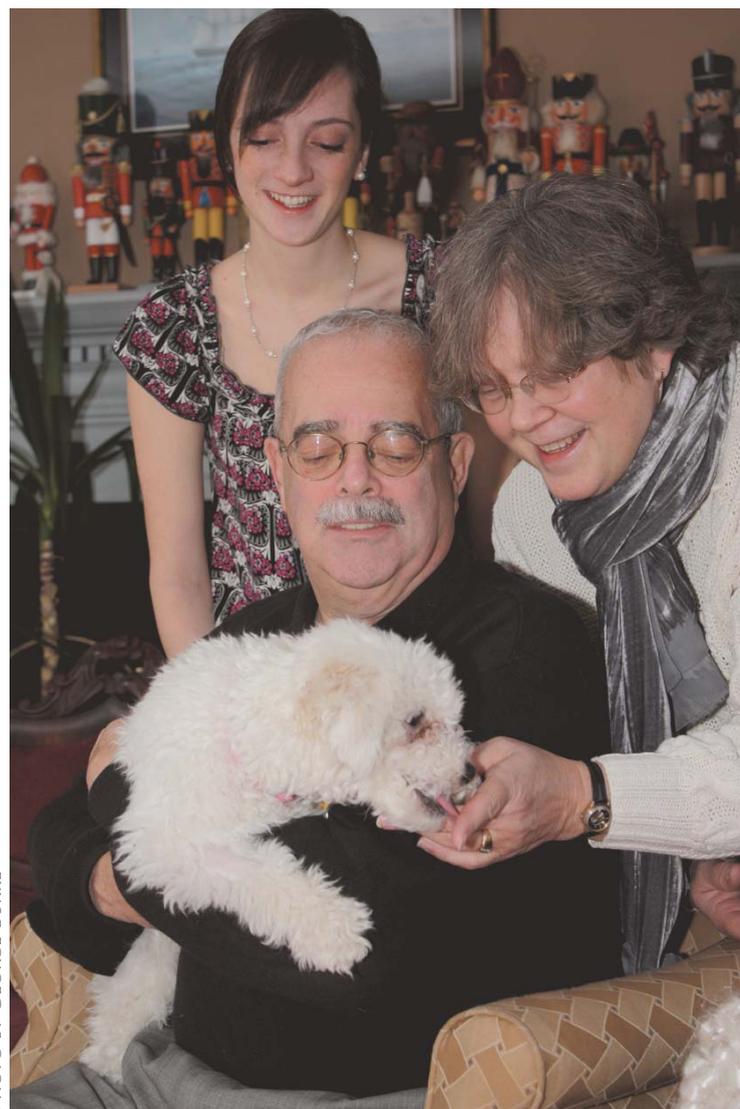


PHOTO BY GEORGE BURKE

## Political Resolutions

Local political leaders offer a variety of resolutions, some humorous, some serious, for 2011.

“My resolution is to train the very cute and loving puppy I adopted for my family from the Fairfax County Animal Shelter ... and to encourage more people to visit the shelter and its wonderful staff on West Ox Road when they are thinking about acquiring a new pet.”

— U.S. REP. GERRY CONNOLLY (D-11)

“I was grateful to receive 61 percent of the vote in November and in 2011 will be working hard to earn that level of support.”

— U.S. REP. JIM MORAN (D-8)

“My New Years Resolution is to do everything in my power to jump start the process of bringing widening, transit, and change to U.S. Route 1.”

— DEL. SCOTT SUROVELL (D-44)

**U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) poses with wife Cathy, daughter Caitlin, and new dog Abigail, a Poodle-Bichon mix the family adopted from the Fairfax County Animal Shelter.**

“I resolve to get back in shape so I can go skiing. I used to go skiing with my family every year since 1970, but as I approach 50 and have a habit of eating my 5-year-old boy's leftover happy meal french fries, I have ‘lost my edge.’ So I will be in the gym. Oh, and I need to learn ‘Stairway to Heaven’ on my guitar.”

— DEL. DAVE ALBO (R-42)

“My resolution this year for the legislative session is to do all I can to restructure the re-entry process for offenders committed to the state juvenile correctional system. This re-entry process will utilize evidence based best practice proven to be effective. By using vacancies in local juvenile detention centers for the final weeks of their incarceration, we can reduce the size of government by downsizing existing infrastructure, save money, move services closer to people, provide state of the art programming that will reduce recidivism, and bring jobs to 12 localities around the Commonwealth. I will be meeting with the governor on this soon and hope that it will become one of his New Years Resolutions.”

— SEN. DAVE MARSDEN (D-37)

## Smoking Persists A Year After ‘Ban’ Takes Effect

Several local bars still make room for smoking sections one year after ban.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE  
THE CONNECTION

**R**alph Brown and Bill Hays have been coming to Patriot's Café on Fairfax Boulevard in Fairfax a few times per month for the past 13 years.

Hays, who was wearing a Washington Capitals sweatshirt and hat during a recent visit, enjoys watching sports on the restaurant's large-screen television. Patriot's also has decent food and exceptional customer service, he said.

Over the past year, Brown and Hays have been sitting in Patriot's new non-smoking area. Patrons used to be able to smoke anywhere in the small restaurant. But now, smokers have to go into a separately ventilated room to light up.

“I'll sit in there but I don't really want to sit in there,” said Hays, of Patriot's smoking section.

Neither Hays nor Brown are smokers and both were pleased when Virginia's new restrictions on smoking in restaurants took effect last December. Now, most restaurants they visit are either smoke-free or have sizable non-smoking sections, they said.

“I have no problem with a smoking sec-

tion as long as it is away from me,” said Hays.

The friends have come across at least one restaurant that doesn't seem to have embraced Virginia's year-old limitations on smoking.

One Centreville bar technically has the state-mandated non-smoking section but it is crammed into a small corner with no access to televisions, pool tables or other forms of entertainment found in the establishment, they said.

“I refuse to go there. That isn't a non-smoking area. The smoking area is where all the entertainment is. If you want to be in a non-smoking area, they force you into this isolated room. It is a joke,” said Brown.

**A YEAR AFTER** Virginia's so-called “smoking ban” went into place, local smokers still have several options if they want to light up and sip a beer at the same time in central Fairfax County.

That is because the “smoking ban” passed by the Virginia General Assembly in 2009 doesn't actually ban smoking from any restaurant or bar. Instead, it requires that es-

tablishments provide a non-smoking section and at least one entirely smoke-free entrance.

Virginia's ban is significantly weaker than similar provisions found in Maryland and Washington, D.C., where indoor smoking is prohibited outright in the vast majority of restaurants and bars.

Rather than go smoke-free, several local Virginia bars and restaurants have walled off sections of their establishments and in-

vested in new ventilation systems.

At the end of April, Fast Eddies' Sports and Billiards in Fairfax divided its space in two and made the back of its establishment, where nearly all of the pool tables are located, a smoking section.

“Nine times out of ten, the smoking area has much higher attendance than the non-smoking area. Even people who don't smoke prefer to go back there,” said Mike Rosenbaum, Fast Eddies' assistant manager.

According to Rosenbaum, Fast Eddies' smoking section is 20 to 30 percent larger than the its non-smoking section, though the smoke-free area has its own bar, a stage and a couple of pool tables.

**LOCAL BARS** with smoking and non-smoking areas generally go out of their way to accommodate patrons in both sections.

The staff at Patriot's, for example, provides table service to customers in the non-smoking section, so that those patrons don't have to enter the smoking area to place a food or drink order.

But a few local bar owners are doing the bare minimum to meet the new legal requirements. These establishments relegate their non-smoking section to the smallest, least desirable part of their floor plan possible.

**“There are a hundred other places where you are not allowed to smoke, so non-smokers can go there.”**

— **Sonny Kim, owner of Q Ball Billiards in Springfield**

SEE ROOM, PAGE 11

# What's Christmas without Dumpling Day?

One shared tradition brings this family together every year.

BY SAM "HARPER" YI

Every family has its own holiday traditions, from a ceremonial cutting of a turkey, to a Christmas pickle, to a story read to the children every Christmas Eve. For my family, our tradition is one of hard-work, hot oil, an ungodly amount of tofu-beef-bean sprout-onion-carrot-noodle-egg mixture.

For my family, Christmas Eve has another name: Dumpling Day.

Since before I can remember, my grandmother would make a huge amount of dumpling filling. Actually, "huge" is an almost blasphemous understatement. My grandmother makes enough dumpling filling to feed an island nation for a month. It fills a basin that I used to play with water in (like a kiddie pool) in the backyard in when I was little.

We go to my grandmother's house and sit around this huge basin and bust out boxes of gyoza skins (the dumpling wraps) and try to each put our own personal dent into the huge mass of meat, eggs, veggies



Raw dumplings, recently stuffed, waiting on trays for the steamer, the freezer or the fryer.

and soy. We always make at least a thousand dumplings every year. As the rest of the family stuffed and sealed each dumpling by hand, my grandma would be steaming, frying and freezing them.

These dumplings would literally last us the entire year. My grandmother and mother fry them or bake them or steam them or stew them throughout the year. And of course, we'd give plenty away to friends.

The carolers — people from my grandmother's neighborhood from ages 5 to 75 — would come by my grandmother's house every year and sing on her lawn and afterward, we'd run back inside and bring out fresh hot dumplings for them. They'd munch them hungrily and the group would tell us how much they looked forward to our dumplings all year long. They would eat some on the spot, hungry from the singing and walking through the neighborhood. Others they would stuff in their pockets, to save for later in the night and to keep their hands warm in the stinging cold.

Now our crowd is a little smaller. My grandparents moved to an independent living community for retirees, so now we don't have any merry carolers, just neighbors who run over with gifts, which she happily exchanges for our pain-staking dumplings.

Making hundreds of dumplings personally every year has taught me a lot over the years.

The first thing people would guess, and they'd be correct about this, is that I have learned about the horrors of child labor and, in addition, the food service industry. Of course, I haven't truly experienced anything horrible other than extreme repetition and soreness. But after sitting around a huge

SEE ONE TASTY, PAGE 13

## Learn To Expect Hazardous Conditions Ahead ...

... but no one said that was a bad thing.

BY ROXANNE SUTTON  
THE CONNECTION

Mark Hazard Osmun gets around. He's written three novels, was the director of public relations at Jackson Family Wines, and won a Silver Anvil from the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) for the "A Really Goode Job" Campaign he created for Murphy-Goode Winery. These are just a few of many in a long line-up of accomplishments.

For a man who has done so much in the public relations field, Osmun has a lot of information he is willing to pass on to the next generation of PR professionals.

Osmun graduated from George Mason University in 1975 with a B.A. in English. At the time, Mason did not have a Communication Department.

"In 1975, I think we only had 2,500 students," he said.

Today, George Mason has more than 32,000 students and more than 800 stu-

dents in the Communication Department.

**ALTHOUGH** Osmun's current job uses the resources that the Communication Department at Mason offers today like journalism and public relations, he said his degree in English gave him the tools he needed to succeed.

"English is about communication, writing, understanding, recognizing nuances, all essential to what I do," he said.

**"English is about communication, writing, understanding, recognizing nuances, all essential to what I do."**

— Mark Hazard Osmun

media to establish a market with the "millennial" generation. Osmun and his associates did this by holding a competition to hire someone to live the "Goode" life by tasting wine, eating food, and living in the wine country of California—all while getting paid \$10,000 a month to do it. The campaign increased wine sales for Murphy-Goode by 74 percent and created more than



Mark Hazard Osmun

800 million media impressions.

Osmun's inspiration for the campaign came over a cup of coffee one January morning. "I saw a story in the paper about Australia's 'Best Job in the World' promotion for Queensland Tourism. As I drank my coffee, I slapped the paper and said, 'That's brilliant. I wonder if we could do that for wine.'"

They could, and they adapted the idea in the U.S. before anyone else. He said that if you're going to use someone else's brilliant idea, "you'd better be able to do it well, and do it fast."

**WHEN IT** comes to advice for someone entering the burgeoning public relations, Osmun suggests a background in journalism. Many universities incorporate journal-

ism in their public relations curriculum. At George Mason University, for example, students with a concentration in public relations take journalism classes to learn to write effectively. Osmun also recommends interning for a media outlet. "A future PR pro gains invaluable insight into how the media operates and what it wants," he said.

Osmun's favorite part of his public relations career is creating a plan and then seeing it work. Public relations is especially rewarding when working with charities. There, PR professionals can see how their work makes a difference in someone else's life.

**WHILE** Public Relations is usually a rewarding career, like all jobs, it has its down sides. Osmun said he can relate to the TV show "Mad Men" when they say, "Love the work. Hate the clients." He said it is common to get hired by employers who will not always trust your decision-making abilities and therefore will resist your ideas.

The next step in Osmun's life might involve a little bit of Hollywood glamour. He has written two screenplays that are being reviewed in Los Angeles. More importantly, though, his future contains the relentless pursuit to remain creative in whatever he does.

"I like to take risks — my middle name was prophetic — because the only thing I'm sure of is that I absolutely will not achieve anything remarkable if I don't," he said.

# Parkway Jams this Weekend

**VDOT plans to close portions off roads beginning Friday night.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**A**ttention, motorists — anyone not wishing to spend this weekend in a huge, traffic jam is advised to stay away from the area of the Route 50/Fairfax County Parkway interchange. The Virginia Department of Transportation is warning drivers that this Saturday-Sunday, Jan. 8-9, lane closures for construction-related pile driving will cause major delays.

Weather permitting, these closures will be in effect from Friday, Jan. 7, at 11 p.m. until Sunday, Jan. 9, at 11 p.m. So people planning to travel in the vicinity of the construction should instead use alternate routes.

The work is part of the \$69.7 million Fair Lakes Parkway/Fairfax County Parkway Interchange that's being built to ease traffic congestion at the intersection of these two, heavily traveled thoroughfares.

Planned is a split-diamond, grade-separated interchange, with a free-flowing Fairfax County Parkway bridging over Fair Lakes Parkway and Monument Drive. Through traffic will be separated from local ramp traffic, with traffic signals on the ramps, not on the parkway.

**THE FAIRFAX** County Parkway will be widened from four to six lanes for 3 miles, from south of Interstate 66 to Rugby Road. Signals at Fair Lakes Parkway and Monument Drive will be eliminated. Long ramps will provide safe, separate access to and from both parkways and Monument Drive.

Once the project is finished, daily commuters will save time on their trips to work, school and shopping, as a result of the improved traffic flow on all three roads. Although work is expected to take three years altogether, VDOT officials say local residents will be able to enjoy incremental traffic improvements as various stages of the work are completed.

In the meantime, though, they'll have to be patient and sometimes take other routes to reach their destinations. This weekend, VDOT's contractor will be driving piles to add a pier to widen the Parkway bridge to three lanes over Route 50. The actual pile driving will be done both Saturday and Sunday, between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. And Fairfax County police will be staged in the work zones for safety and traffic management.

VDOT typically allows its contractors to close lanes

## To Avoid Eastbound Route 50:

Drivers heading to Fair Oaks Mall should use Interstate 66 rather than Route 50, and Stringfellow Road instead of the Fairfax County Parkway.

- ❖ Take Route 50 East to Route 28 South to Interstate 66 East or to Route 29 North.
- ❖ Take Route 50 East, turn right on Stringfellow Road and left on Route 29 North.

## To Avoid Westbound Route 50:

Leaving Fair Oaks Mall, take the Fair Lakes Parkway, turn right on Stringfellow Road and left on Route 50.

- ❖ From Interstate 66, continue west past Route 50 and exit at Route 28 North.
- ❖ Coming from the City of Fairfax, use Route 29 as an alternate route.

only at night or on weekdays between rush hours. However, this particular work requires at least 10 hours of uninterrupted construction, which wouldn't be possible on a weekday, without seriously affecting rush-hour traffic.

The work also can't be done at night because the county's noise ordinance prohibits pile driving at nighttime. VDOT postponed the work until after the Christmas holidays to minimize impacts on shoppers.

So now, here are the lane and ramp closures planned for this weekend:

- ❖ On westbound Route 50, three lanes will narrow to one lane from West Ox Road to just west of the parkway. Lanes will shift to the right through the work zone under the Fairfax County Parkway bridge.
- ❖ On eastbound Route 50, three lanes will narrow to two lanes and traffic will shift to the right approximately 300 feet prior to the Fairfax County Parkway. All three lanes will be open east of the bridge.
- ❖ Two ramps will be closed — northbound Parkway to westbound Route 50, and southbound Parkway to eastbound Route 50. Traffic headed north on the Parkway will turn left on Rugby Road to Route 50. Traffic headed south on the Parkway will be detoured left on the Fair Lakes Parkway and left on West Ox Road to Route 50.
- ❖ On the Fairfax County Parkway over Route 50, one of two lanes in each direction will be closed.

## City Police Charge Man with Felony Hit-Run

**C**ity of Fairfax Police have charged a 38-year-old Penderbrook man with felony hit and run. He is Christopher J. Patterson of 12100 block of Penderview Lane. On Sunday, Dec. 19, at 4:26 p.m., officers responded to Main and Poplar streets after learning of a traffic crash that injured a child. According to police, the child was in one of the two vehicles involved in the crash and was taken by a family member to a medical facility for treatment.

The driver of the other vehicle allegedly fled the scene, say police, but was subsequently identified following investigation and found at a home in the area. Besides the felony offense, Patterson was also charged with violating his restricted license. He was released from the Adult Detention Center, Dec. 20, on \$10,000 bond and has a Jan. 25 court date.

— BONNIE HOBBS

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## DINING

# Historic Home Gets a New Life

**Choices by Shawn is open in Historic Moore House.**

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

**W**alking across the broad front porch into the restaurant Choices by Shawn, located in the 1840 Moore Home in the City of Fairfax, diners may feel like they are entering Grandma's house for Sunday supper.

That is, if Grandma happens to be an inventive cook with flat-screen TVs hanging near historic portraits over the fireplace in her gracious antebellum home.

"I always said I wanted to own a restaurant that was similar to entertaining in my home. A lot of my patrons say that they feel like they're eating at Grandma's house, because we've created such a relaxed, homey feeling," said chef and owner Shawn Warner, who opened the restaurant last August.

With three cozy dining rooms, three brick fireplaces and comfy rocking chairs along the wrap-around porch — verandah if you're really Southern — the 1,500 square-foot restaurant serves a variety of Southern-inspired dishes, including home-style favorites such as grilled meatloaf with mashed potatoes and gravy, potato-leek soup, butternut squash and apple soup, raspberry-walnut chicken salad and coconut cake, along with lighter fare such as grilled salmon salad and crab, corn and tomato salad with

lemon-basil dressing.

Next to the hostess stand is a circa 1930s glass display case filled with a variety of decadent confections displayed on whimsical, vintage cake plates. The pies and cakes sit next to an ice-cream parlor freezer with 16 flavors of homemade ice cream, such as pumpkin pie and cotton candy.

"I like to make food look pretty, in addition to making it taste good," Warner said.

Warner also offers Sunday brunches, afternoon teas and daily lunch specials for \$6, in addition to a full "under 10" menu for children. Prices are moderate, with dinner entrees priced between \$12 to \$20.

Every good hostess knows that making guests feel comfortable and welcome is essential, and Warner is particularly proud of her many gluten-free offerings, which include breads, pastas and desserts.

"Our gluten-free choices are what make us truly stand out," she said.

"A few months ago, we had a family come in with their 8-year-old son, who had never eaten at a restaurant because of his severe food allergies, but he was able to eat our gluten-free chicken nuggets. Another boy and

**"I always said I wanted to own a restaurant that was similar to entertaining in my home."**

— Shawn Warner

**A whimsical cake plate from the 1930s holds homemade berry tarts.**



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Shawn Warner, chef and owner of Choices by Shawn, shows off her display of cakes and pies on vintage cake stands.**

his family came all the way from Maryland, and he had his first hamburger, because all of our bread is gluten-free and made in a gluten-free kitchen. Nothing gives me a better feeling than seeing families able to eat together," Warner said.

Warner's passion for entertaining began nearly 20 years ago, when she and her husband hosted neighborhood parties at their Fairfax home. Their annual luaus and holiday brunches became neighborhood traditions. Her daughter, Leah, often helped with the cooking, while her best friend and neighbor, local decorator Laura Gunson of Boo Designs, helped decorate their home.

SEE OLD HOME, PAGE 11



**Krystal Ward, a sophomore at George Mason, stands next to the Nelly Custis portrait in the main dining room. Ward is a server and the restaurant's 'babysitter' on Date Nights.**

## Choices by Shawn Offers Date Night

**S**ince November, Shawn Warner has started "date night" at the restaurant by providing patrons with babysitting for children 9-months to 10-years old.

"We will entertain your children while you have some quality time with each other," Warner said. So far, the concept has been a success. She said she offers videos, movies and dinner for children, all supervised by her server Krystal Ward, a George Mason student. The price is \$5 per child, and reservations are required.

"Mom and Dad must spend \$30 minimum, and every family we've had has been happy with the service and the babysitting," Warner said. Vienna resident Sandra Williams, who has two children, Bennett, 4 and Alina, 7, said she is a fan of the service.

"It was so nice to just arrive at the restaurant

and have a built-in sitter right there," she said, adding that she's already reserved two nights for the new year.

"My husband and I enjoyed great food and a quiet meal by ourselves while our children were in the next room enjoying kid's meals, videos, homemade ice cream, and the company of a nice staff member who was supervising them. In addition, the atmosphere was charming and a nice change of pace from chain restaurants," Williams said.

Choices by Shawn is located at 3950 Chain Bridge Road. Restaurant hours are Monday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, call 703-385-5433 or go to [www.choicesbyshawn.com](http://www.choicesbyshawn.com).

# CALENDAR

To have community events listed, send to south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416 with questions. Deadline for calendar listings is two weeks prior to event.

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 5

**Brian Huber Full Band**  
"Imagination of Ourselves" CD Release, Gringo and Dimstore.  
7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

## THURSDAY/JAN. 6

**Elizabeth and The Catapult, The Last Monarchs and Cecelia Jeffrey.** 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

**Batty Encounters.** 10:30 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Stories and activities about bats. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-644-7333.

## FRIDAY/JAN. 7

**The Michael Clem Trio and Peyton Tochterman.** 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

**U.S. Navy Concert Band.** 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Free. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

**Professional Bull Riders Tour.** 7:30 p.m. at the George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$20-\$65. Age 2-12 years old and excluding top price seats \$10. Available through www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

## SATURDAY/JAN. 8

**The Independent EP Release and The Wave Exchange** at 6:30 p.m., Pandamonium Dance Party with Dirty Steeve, Santi and Ypset at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

**U.S. Navy Band Commodores.** 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Free. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

**Professional Bull Riders Tour.** 7:30 p.m. at the George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$20-\$65. Age 2-12 years old and excluding top price seats \$10. Available through www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

**Singer-songwriter Tom Chapin.** 7:30 p.m. Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. \$22. www.wolftrap.org.

**Read to the Dog.** 1 p.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Read aloud to a trained therapy dog. Age 6-12. Reserve at 703-644-7333.

## SUNDAY/JAN. 9

**Meet The Doggetts "The Sweet Retreat."** 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

**U.S. Marine Band.** 2 p.m. at the George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Free. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

## MONDAY/JAN. 10

**Jammin' Java's Mid-Atlantic Band Battle IV.** 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

**Book Buddies.** 4 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Beginning readers practice their reading skills with a young

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 9

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# OPINION

## Resolved: Pick One Way To Get Involved

### How about helping others in the New Year?

New Year's resolutions? Go ahead, let's pledge to lose weight, exercise regularly, spend less, recycle, save and read more. The turn of the calendar really does provide an impetus to make small and large changes in the way we live.

One item to add to the list of resolutions is to get involved locally. Volunteer one time for one day, or give a few hours a week to something that interests you. Pick one place where you can make a difference. The experience will enrich you (and your family) as well, connecting you to the community in new ways. Making time for even a single volunteer effort communicates an invaluable message about your values to your children in a powerful way that words cannot match.

Most local nonprofits and church groups that provide emergency food and services for families in need are overwhelmed right now by the dramatic increase in demand for food, emergency help with rent to prevent homelessness and much more. See sidebar for some suggestions.

Volunteer Fairfax connects volunteers of all kinds to organizations in need of help, providing flexible weekend and evening opportunities including packing emergency food kits for families in crisis, tutoring adults in alternative learning programs, reading to elementary school children after school, socializing with seniors or planting trees to prevent erosion. Volunteer Fairfax will hold its annual Give Together: A Family Volunteer Day on Monday, Jan. 17, 2011 at George Mason University, an opportunity to work on service projects with your family. See [www.volunteerfairfax.org](http://www.volunteerfairfax.org).

The Arlington County Volunteer Office promotes civic engagement and active volunteer participation, coordinating volunteer opportunities from hundreds of non-profit and government agencies. Visit [www.co.arlington.va.us](http://www.co.arlington.va.us) and type "volunteer" into the search box.

The Alexandria Volunteer Bureau recruits and coordinates volunteers and matches their

interests, skills and availability with the needs of service-providing nonprofit organizations and public agencies. Visit [www.volunteeralexandria.org](http://www.volunteeralexandria.org).

The Literacy Council Northern Virginia is in need of volunteers who will devote several hours a week to helping adults master reading and writing skills; visit [www.lcnv.org](http://www.lcnv.org).

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer is a trained citizen who is appointed by a judge to represent the best interests of a child in court. CASA volunteers help children who will have their home placement determined in juvenile court. See [www.casafairfax.org](http://www.casafairfax.org).

The Alexandria/Arlington Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program has helped hundreds of children have a voice within the court system. See <http://www.scanva.org/casa.htm>

Some other suggestions:

Get involved in state and local political campaigns. Every seat in the Virginia General Assembly, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and School Board and many other state and local offices are about to enter campaign mode, with some races hotly contested. Volunteer with a candidate, with the League of Women Voters or with your local electoral board.

The public school or library closest to your house is also in need of volunteers. Homeowners associations need activists to learn about a variety of local issues and coordinate neighborhood response. Your church or house of worship could use a hand. Animal shelters and animal rescue groups are also over extended with families giving up pets due to the economy, in addition to their usual work. Environmental groups like Audubon Naturalist Society and the Nature Conservancy offer many kinds of volunteer opportunities, as do local parks.

— MARY KIMM

[MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](mailto:MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

### Obscuring Truth

To the Editor:

I'm a resident of Fairfax County. Given that it's lauded as among the best run, among the wealthiest, priding itself in the service provided to its residents, I am totally taken aback at the questionable behavior of some members of the School Board in regards to the future of our community schools. It is neither an emotional reaction nor an emotional issue. The county's taxpayer base owns the schools they let the School Board run and therefore a sense of school ownership by the taxpayer is only appropriate.

How does a School Board allow and tolerate the unethical behavior of a member of its cadre is begging to be addressed? What is hap-

pening to our communities, our governance, that so many people can witness breach of public trust and arrogantly turn their backs hiding in a curtain of fabricated, limited and skewed information and behind the skirts of sympathetic politicians? Allowing a member to deliberately obscure the truth, insist in rationalizing and justifying a vote rooted on deceit before Fairfax County's citizenry can only be categorized as appalling and demoralizing.

This comment is not a shot in the dark nor does it qualify as irresponsible. The incongruence of a vote to close a Governor's Award of Excellence community school vis-à-vis the solutions presented in the Southwestern Regional Plan-

ning Study as well as the information provided in multiple hearings raised suspicions of an agenda behind an agenda.

An informed public with the responsibility and power to vote can and will take care of this situation. Let FCPS know that they as well as the School Board work for U.S., the Fairfax resident.

Lin-Dai Kendall  
Fairfax Station

### Major Change For Schools

To the Editor:

The Fairfax County School Board is considering a proposal to delegate authority to the superintendent to establish the length of

the school day. The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area spoke against this policy change at the Dec. 2 School Board meeting. This is such a major change that it should have been discussed widely and received more public attention. The League supports well defined channels for community input and review for FCPS policies. Setting the amount of time that students will be in school is a fundamental responsibility of local school boards: this decision should not be delegated to the superintendent or any other employee.

Virginia Fitz Shea  
chairman  
Schools Committee  
League of Women Voters of the  
Fairfax Area

### Places To Volunteer

- ❖ Western Fairfax Christian Ministries, food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive in Chantilly, 703-988-9656.
- ❖ Shelter House, [www.shelterhouse.org](http://www.shelterhouse.org), operates two homeless shelters in Fairfax County, in Centreville and Seven Corners, 571-522-6800
- ❖ Northern Virginia Family Service, Oakton, 703-385-3267
- ❖ LINK, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more, 703-437-1776 [www.linkagainsthunger.org](http://www.linkagainsthunger.org)
- ❖ Reston Interfaith, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, 571-323-9555, [www.restoninterfaith.org](http://www.restoninterfaith.org)
- ❖ SHARE of McLean, 703-284-2179, [www.SHAREofMcLean.org](http://www.SHAREofMcLean.org)
- ❖ Herndon-Reston FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help), 703-391-0105
- ❖ Food for Others, 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, 22031, 703-207-9173
- ❖ United Community Ministries, Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, 22306
- ❖ Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), 703-569-9160, [www.echo-inc.org](http://www.echo-inc.org), 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield
- ❖ Lorton Community Action Center operates the Act II Thrift Shop at 9506 Richmond Highway, Lorton, 703-339-8611. [www.lortonaction.org](http://www.lortonaction.org)
- ❖ FACETS, 703-352-5090
- ❖ National Capital Food Bank, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia. 703-541-3063, [www.capitalareafoodbank.org](http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org)
- ❖ The Campagna Center in Alexandria 703-549-0111
- ❖ Arlingtonians Meeting Emergency Needs (AMEN), 703-558-0035
- ❖ Doorways for Women and Families, Arlington, 703-522-8858
- ❖ Arlington Food Assistance Center, 703-845-8486
- ❖ ALIVE (Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically) [www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org)
- ❖ Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia, Arlington, 703-521-9890
- ❖ Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic in Herndon, [www.jsfreeclinic.org](http://www.jsfreeclinic.org)
- ❖ Arlington Free Clinic, 703-979-1400
- ❖ Fairfax City Area FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help), 703-222-0880
- ❖ Lamb Center, [www.thelambcenter.org](http://www.thelambcenter.org), Fairfax, 703-691-3178

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# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 7

adult volunteer. Age 5-9 with adult. 703-293-6227.

**Marvelous Mittens!** 11 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Stories and activities about mittens and winter weather. Tickets distributed 30 minutes before program begins. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-249-1520.

**Animal Tales.** 10:30 a.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Stories and fun about animals. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-978-5600.

## TUESDAY/JAN. 11

**Jammin' Java's Mid-Atlantic Band Battle IV.** 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. jamminjava.com.

**Genealogy Databases.** 2 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Search for ancestors using the library's genealogy databases and other free Internet databases. Adults. 703-293-6227.

**English Conversation Group.** 7 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-293-6227.

**Paws to Read.** 4 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Practice reading with Ralph, a trained therapy dog. 6-10 with adult. Register at 703-978-5600.

**Let's Hear It For The Girls.** 7 p.m. Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. All girls book discussion group. Scat by Carl Hiaasen. Age 9-12 with adult female. 703-978-5600.

**Kid Science: Some Like It Hot.** 10:30 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Stories and activities about hot and



Violinist Chee-Yun

The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra will be performing on Saturday, Jan. 15 at 8 p.m. in the George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The concert will feature violinist Chee-Yun and works by Bernstein, Walton and more. Tickets \$25-\$55, available at 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

cold, and how temperature changes things. Age 4-6 with adult. 703-644-7333.

## WEDNESDAY/JAN. 12

**Robinson DECA Fifth Annual Fashion Show.** 7 p.m. Robinson High School, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. A fashion show based on music. Tickets \$5 in advance, \$10 at the door. 703-426-2303 or SNHinkhouse@fcps.edu.

**Jammin' Java's Mid-Atlantic Band Battle IV.** 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna.

jamminjava.com.  
**Things That Go.** 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Stories and activities. Age 2-3 with adult. 703-293-6227.

**Book Bingo.** 7 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Gently used book prizes to treasure. Age 6-12. 703-293-6227.

## THURSDAY/JAN. 13

**International Guitar Night.** 8 p.m.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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Members of the Robinson girls basketball team huddle around head coach T.J. Dade during a break in the action on Dec. 30 during the championship game of the Bobby Miller Bulldog Classic in Potomac, Md.

## Rams Capture Bulldog Classic

Robinson girls improve to 8-2 with wins in Maryland tournament.

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

Robinson head girls' basketball coach T.J. Dade rubbed his bald head in disbelief after watching the Rams miss another layup. Moments later, Dade crossed his arms and stared down at the floor in frustration after his team committed a foul at the defensive end.

Early in the fourth quarter of the Bobby Miller Bulldog Classic championship game against host Churchill, a Robinson team with superior talent led by just two. Thankfully for Dade, the Rams' effort during the final 6 minutes allowed him to laugh at the team's sub-par performance.

Robinson outscored Churchill 13-2 down the stretch and the Rams defeated the Bulldogs 48-35 to capture the tournament title on Dec. 30 in Potomac, Md. After a convincing 19-point win against Seneca Valley (Germantown, Md.) in the preliminary round on Dec. 29, Robinson struggled with botched layups and missed free throws (the Rams made three of 13 attempts) against Churchill. But the Rams and their aggressive defense pulled away in the fourth quarter to improve their record to 8-2.

"We had some real bad moments," Dade said. "I don't think we played smart. I did see in the second half a little more determination. In the fourth quarter, I saw a desire to win. I saw that they said, 'We're not going to lose this game.' ... We've really got to work on our game. There were a lot of mental breakdowns. We're not that young. We've got juniors that

played last year. There's really no excuse for that."

Mention of Dade's sideline displays of disapproval brought a humorous response.

"We've got to fix missed layups, good gracious," Dade said. "That's why I have no hair."

While Dade wants Robinson to improve moving forward, the two-day tournament experience had positives, as well. The Rams played dominant defense against Seneca Valley and led 17-4 at the end of the first quarter. Dade assigned junior point guard Megan Green to guard Seneca standout Bridget Rotherth, who entered the contest averaging more than 20 points per game. Green held Rotherth to 11 while leading the Rams with 13 of her own.

Against Churchill, Green led Robinson with 14 points and helped a defensive effort that held the Bulldogs scoreless in the first quarter. For her efforts, Green earned tournament Most Outstanding Player honors.

"She's really, really stepping up in a leadership role and handling point guard" duties, Dade said. "A lot of times we put her on the other team's best player. That takes a lot out of a player when they have to go that hard on the defensive end and then come down and try to run the offense. She's making strides in the positive direction."

Robinson opens Concorde District competition on Jan. 7 at home against Chantilly. Green said it was good to

face teams during the holiday tournament the Rams aren't used to seeing.

"It's a great win for us because we've been shaky so far — we haven't been that good," Green said. "Winning this tournament, hopefully, will give us momentum into districts. ... It's good to see different teams. When we go back home, we play every team twice so we don't really see a difference in ... style of play."

Brigitte Kuter, who was named to the all-tournament team, scored 11 points against Churchill. Dhyamond Crenshaw added 10.

**"In the fourth quarter, I saw a desire to win."**

— T.J. Dade

## Room To Smoke, Not Breathe

FROM PAGE 3

restaurants in the area were simply breaking off a small section of space near the front door and not trying to accommodate a non-smoking path to the restroom. He decided to do the same thing. A few weeks ago, the vast majority of Kim's business reverted to smoke-filled pool hall it was before the new restrictions went into place.

"There are a hundred other places where you are not allowed to smoke, so non-smokers can go there," said Kim, who has owned his business for 16 years.

In Q Ball, the non-smoking area takes up about one-tenth of the overall floor space. No pool tables or televisions are located in the non-smoking section and Kim said he is trying to relocate the two dartboards in that section to the smoking area.

"Only one or two people a week go into [the non-smoking section.] They usually go in there to use the phone because it's quieter. That is the only reason I go in there," said Kim.

In the months where Kim had a relatively small smoking section, he lost regular customers to other bars with bigger, more accommodating smoking areas, he said.

"If they wanted to ban smoking, they should have just banned it everywhere," said Kim.

**BUT SEVERAL** restaurants and bars did make the decision to do away with smoking altogether when the Virginia's new law went into effect a year ago. PJ Skidoos and Artie's in Fairfax went totally smoke-free at that point, said staff at both restaurants.

"Obviously, business has dropped off a little bit. You get complaints from some customers because they are inconvenienced by having to go outside ... You are also having to fight other businesses in the area that have it," said Milton Gerosideris, a manager at PJ Skidoos.

Gerosideris said his restaurant never seriously considered trying to create a smoking section because the owners thought it would disrupt the flow of the establishment.

## Business Owner Faces Embezzlement Charges

City of Fairfax Police have charged a city business owner with embezzlement for allegedly failing to pay nearly \$26,000 in City of Fairfax meals tax collections. Cindi Azzouz, 35, owns Pizzarama at 9639 Fairfax Blvd., and police contend that she owes meals taxes collected at her business between Dec. 12, 2006 and June 28, 2010.

As a result, they charged her with five felony counts of embezzlement. She was taken into custody at the restaurant on Dec. 17 and was later released on \$20,000 bond. Each charge represented a six-month period during which Azzouz had reportedly not remitted the meals taxes. During the execution of a search warrant at the restaurant on Nov. 5, 2010, police seized \$4,000 in cash, which will revert to the city.

The Criminal Investigations Division began an investigation on June 28, 2010 following a complaint from the City of Fairfax treasurer that — despite repeated notices from the City — Azzouz had made only sporadic payments of the City meals tax her restaurant was required to collect.

Reports of meals taxes collected are required to be submitted to the city, along with the funds, on a monthly basis. State law specifies that collected taxes are held in trust by the seller until remitted to the city, and the theft of such funds constitutes embezzlement

## DINING

# Old Home, New Business

FROM PAGE 6

In fact, Gunson helped Warner decorate the restaurant, adding period touches such as 19th-century portraits and vases and paint colors popular in the 1800s. During the holiday season, the restaurant is festively decorated with lights, garland and ribbons over every fireplace, and Warner's fanciful collection of snowmen and Christmas trees in various nooks and crannies.

"My passions were entertaining and cooking, and I thought running a restaurant would be like constant entertaining," she said.

Warner's husband encouraged her to go culinary school seven years ago when she was 48. "My daughter was in middle school, and I thought 'why not?' I went to culinary school at Stratford in McLean with the intention of opening my own restaurant."

**IN MARCH 2009**, she and her lunch buddy, Gunson, began scouting locations. Warner's daughter, Leah, would be graduating from high school that June, and she felt she was ready to tackle the challenge of opening a restaurant.

"We stopped in what was then The Sweet Life Cafe. We looked at each other and both had the same thought. 'This would be the perfect spot for a restaurant,' We kept thinking of ways to decorate it," Warner said.

But the restaurant wasn't for sale, and Warner started looking at other locations in Fairfax. The spaces were either too big or too small.

"Laura and I kept coming into The Sweet Life Café, and saying that it has such potential. I really wanted this space," Warner said.

In May 2009, Warner learned that the owners were thinking about selling the restaurant. "I called my

broker to investigate, and then I thought there was no way I would get that space. But it worked. I think it was meant to be," she said.

In some ways, Warner has restored the home to its original state, a place for entertaining. In the 1930s, R. Walton Moore, an attorney and assistant secretary of state under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, owned the home. Moore was one of the few Virginia politicians to embrace the New Deal, and he frequently entertained local celebrities, including President and Mrs. Roosevelt, and former President William Howard Taft.

However, there were some unwelcome "parties during the home's colorful history.

During the Civil War, the Union army occupied many homes in the City of Fairfax, and the Moore Home was one of them.

In March, 1863, Confederate Commander John Mosby seized three high-ranking Union officers during a daring raid at the Fairfax County courthouse. That same day, the "Gray Ghost" — so-called because of his ability elude Union pursuers — took a side trip to the Moore home, in a futile search for mercenary Union Col. Percy Wyndham, who had insulted him by calling him a horse thief. After Walton Moore's death, the Moore House was occupied by Mary LeGrand (Donohoe) McCandlish. Mary's mother was Moore's sister, Susan Lindsey, and her father was Roszel Donohoe, the editor of The Fairfax Herald. During his lifetime, Donohoe also served as the state senator for Fairfax County, the same seat currently held by his great-great grandson Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34).

"The home clearly has a unique and interesting history," said Warner. "I hope we can continue making it a warm, inviting place for guests for many years to come."

## CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

**Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts**, 1624 Trap Road, Vienna. With Clive Carroll, Alexandre Gismonti, Pino Forastiere and International Guitar Night (IGN) founder Brian Gore. \$25. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Things That Go**. 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Stories and

activities. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-293-6227.

**Tales for Twos: HiBURNnation**. 10:30 a.m. Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Stories and activities about animals in winter. Age 24-35 months with adult. 703-644-7333.

**FRIDAY/JAN. 14**

**The OK Corral CD Release**. 6:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave.

E., Vienna. [jamminjava.com](http://jamminjava.com).

**SATURDAY/JAN. 15**

**Fairfax Symphony Orchestra**. 8 p.m. at the George Mason University Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. With violinist Chee-Yun and works by Bernstein, Walton and more. Tickets \$25-\$55, available at 888-945-2468 or [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

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8230 Catbird Cir, #201	\$215,000	Sun 1-4	Jenny Ko-Martin	Weichert	703-380-8825
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5918 Cove Landing Rd, #204	\$209,000	Sun 2-4	Claude Labbe	Coldwell Banker	202-362-5800
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To add your Realtor represented Open House to these weekly listings, please call Karen Washburn at 703-778-9422 or E-Mail the info to [kwashburn@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kwashburn@connectionnewspapers.com) All listings due by Tuesday at 3 pm.

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## OPINION

# No Room for More Spending

## State asking its employees to take a pay cut.

BY SEN. CHAP PETERSEN  
D-34

The governor announced in December that state employees would need to start contributing the 5 percent match to their Virginia Retirement System (VRS) account. He will propose legislation this year to make that happen.

For those who don't work for the state, one of the main perks is the VRS pension system which — prior to July 1, 2010 — was fully subsidized by the state. As a part of that system, the state historically contributed the employer's share (usually 7 percent of the paycheck amount), as well as the employee's share (capped at 5 percent).

Upon retirement, state employees could draw their VRS pensions under a formula that matches their years of service with their income for the past three years. It's a system that pays off on the back end, especially if your earnings increase over time. That's one reason why state lawmakers who make approximately \$30,000 on their W-2 for annual "salary" will often retire to take a six-figure position as an agency head.

The "double contribution" system, which was implemented in 1983 in lieu of a pay raise, was popular with state employees and worked well. But, as a "defined benefit" plan, it is getting increasingly costly as retiree life spans increase.

In the 2010 session, the General Assembly took two steps that affected VRS. First, the Assembly took a loan from the system in order to balance the state budget without raising taxes. That had been done

before and is legal, if not desirable. Second, the Assembly limited the benefits for new employees by requiring those hired after July 1, 2010 to pay their own 5 percent contribution. That was the first time the Assembly avoided the "double contribution" model in order to cap future costs.

In November, the Assembly's investigative arm (JLARC) issued a report that stated that VRS is underfunded by \$17 billion in order to meet its actuarial assumptions. Clearly, the system needs an overhaul. The governor has now made a recommendation to do that, which the Assembly will address in January.

This is a serious discussion and all sides are engaged. What's less serious is the proposal to spend new money in Richmond while we owe a loan to our own pension system and are essentially reducing salaries for long-term employees.

In mid-November, the governor informed us that Virginia would spend "its surpluses" on improving transportation. But we don't have surpluses, when we are borrowing \$700 million from VRS. So let's not pretend that there is extra money here. There's not.

The governor also announced initiatives on Dec. 17 to spend an extra \$50 million on higher education, \$30 million on economic development and more money on behavioral health in 2011.

Are these worthy goals? Of course. But these new spending items cannot be separated from our VRS shortfall.

We are asking our state employees to take an effective pay cut on the VRS issue. Our roads are in disrepair. The House will oppose any tax increase, even increases in user fees dedicated for transportation. We are behind on our current obligations.

We are not in a position for new spending programs in Richmond.

## FAITH NOTES

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

**Jubilee Christian Center**, 4650 Shirley Gate Road in Fairfax, will have a new Bible Study on Tuesdays, Jan. 11-March 8 at 9:45 a.m. entitled "Discovering Who We Are in Christ." \$15. Child care available. Register at 703-383-1170 or www.jccag.org.

**During the month of January, the Rev. Dr. Beth Braxton of Burke Presbyterian Church** will be speaking on Sundays about the Christian faith as seen through the lens of other world religions. Braxton spent time visiting the worship services of four religious groups: Hindu, Buddhist, Islam and Judaism and has interviewed each of the clergy of those faith communities. In her sermons she will have video clips of those interviews. Between the 8:30 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. services will be an education hour at 10 a.m., in which leaders from these four faith communities will answer questions about their theology and practices. The services are Jan. 2 – Hinduism; Jan. 9 – Buddhism; Jan. 16 – Islam; Jan. 23 – Judaism; and Jan. 30 – Christianity. Burke Presbyterian Church is located at 5690 Oak Leather Drive in Burke adjacent to the Kohls department store. Visit www.BurkePresChurch.org or phone the office at 703-764-0456.

**Muslims For Peace**, in conjunction with Clifton Presbyterian Church, is sponsoring an interfaith discussion, Saturday, Jan. 15, from 1-4 p.m., at the church (behind Trummer's in the Town of Clifton). The event is titled, "God & Science," and its academic purpose is to examine the compatibility of the belief in God, in light of modern scientific discoveries and advances. Another goal is to promote interfaith discussions and establish and maintain relationships among a variety of religious communities.

Speakers will represent Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. A potluck lunch will be served at 1 p.m.; those wanting to bring a dish are asked to contact the organizers in advance, to coordinate, (but a dish is not required to come). To RSVP or for more information, contact Jalal Malik, outreach director, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Northern Virginia, at 202-670-1588 or amc.nva@gmail.com or Jen Dunfee, associate pastor, Clifton Presbyterian Church, at 703-830-3175 or Jennifer-cliftonpc@vacoxmail.com.

**The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax**, 2709 Hunter Mill Road in Oakton, offers services on Saturdays at 4:30 p.m., in addition to Sunday services at 9:15 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. www.uucf.org.

**The Parkwood Baptist Church**, 8726 Braddock Road in Annandale, Bible Study Fellowship will study of the

Old Testament Book of Isaiah. The Day Women's Class meets at 9:30 a.m. Wednesdays, and offers a children's program for ages 6 weeks-6 years. rdmarotto@cox.net.

**Interested in the Catholic Faith?** Classes will be held at St. Leo the Great Catholic Church in the Guadalupe Room in the Parish Center, 3700 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax, 7:30 p.m. every Wednesday. Contact Carolyn Smith at 703-273-5369.

**Congregation Adat Reyim**, an independent Jewish congregation, offers services Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and Wednesday at 7:40 p.m. Hebrew School is Sundays at 9:30 and Mondays at 5:30 p.m. Hebrew High is Sunday at 5:30 p.m. Preschool is Monday-Friday at 9:30 a.m. Adat Reyim is located at 6500 Westbury Oaks Court in Springfield. For more information, contact us at 703-569-7577 or visit www.adatreyim.org.

**One God Ministry Church**, 4280/4282 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, now has a Web site with news, events, training, conferences, fellowship programs and more. Sunday School is at 10 a.m., Sunday Worship Service at 11 a.m., and Wednesday Prayer Service at 7 p.m. Women, Men, and Youth Bible Studies are on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. A Spiritual Gifts Service is the first Friday of every month at 7 p.m. www.onegodministry.org.

# One Tasty Family Tradition

FROM PAGE 4

basin stuffing dumplings for five to 10 hours once a year, every year, I know enough to know that child labor is a great injustice to children, and the food service industry is tougher than just cooking things all day.

The more important things I've learned, however, are good things that have come out of these dumpling days — the importance of family, tradition, hard work and pride in even the most menial tasks.

Even in a task as simple as making a dumpling, there are points of pride. My grandfather used to make the loveliest dumplings. He could stuff them to their maximum, but not overstuff.

Dumplings are sealed by a mixture of egg yolks and water that the gyoza skins are skimmed across. Over-filling has the double consequences of both an ugly, undesirable, misshapen dumpling and the possibility of being responsible for a content spill: when a dumpling opens in the hot oil and all those yummy fillings are scattered in the oil, impossibly overcooked and difficult to recover in the bubbling mess.

Under-stuffing, of course, also carries two consequences: a less tasty dumpling and slowing down production/efficiency.

We don't leave until the job is done, no matter how much filling my grandmother has made, therefore, efficiency is important. My grandfather, and later my father, mastered the balance between these two. They are also very careful in sealing a dumpling. Failure to properly pinch the edges leads to content spills which wastes time and food.

Dumpling making takes skill and patience, and I've learned, it also takes pride. My father and grandfather take pride in what they do, and that is why they are good at it. No matter how small a task is, you



PHOTO BY SIDNEY YI

**A photo of some of the Yi family's steamed dumplings taken by the author's younger sister.**

can always make it something worth doing.

Now, that's not to say that what we do every Christmas Eve is a small task. We spend hours scooping, stuffing, folding and sealing dumplings one by one. But somehow the task is made smaller by our banter, our storytelling and our laughter. Family has always been something I have had complicated feelings about, but one thing I know is that it is important. No matter what, I always have something I can learn from them, and I will always have a reason to try to respect them.

I think that for us, Christmas Eve is a more important bonding experience than even Christmas. Sitting around stuffing and seal-

ing dumplings seems to bring us closer together every year than gift giving.

No matter how bored I get by the repetition of scoop, stuff, seal, repeat, I will never tire of the most memorable tradition in my family. These dumplings are something that is always there for me, even when I forget about them. They are always — and I mean *always* — in my freezer. Even when I leave home for college next year, leaving my family (and my freezer) behind, I know that one year from now, I will return home, drive out to my grandmother's house, and sit for hours stuffing hundreds of dumplings with my family.

*Sam "Harper" Yi is a senior at Fairfax High School.*

## Troop 187 Receives Birthday Recognition

### Scouts accept Park Board resolution.

**A**t a Sept. 22 meeting of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board, Fairfax Boy Scout Troop 187 accepted a resolution from the board honoring the Boy Scouts of America in celebration of the group's 100th anniversary.

Established prior to World War II, Troop 187 is sponsored by the Fairfax United Methodist Church in the City of Fairfax and is one of the oldest troops in Northern Virginia. The troop has produced more than 100 Eagle Scouts, and all the boys in attendance are scheduled to reach that rank before they turn 18. Troop 187 participates in high adventure programs such as hiking in the Rockies, sailing in the Bahamas, or canoeing in the boundary waters between Canada and United States. They also perform a number of service projects in the parks each year.



**Pictured from left are Troop Leader David Meyer, Timothy Farr, John Andrew Carter, Elliot Meyer, Ryan Brennan, Joe Talbert, Kevin Carney and Assistant Scout Master Julia Farr.**

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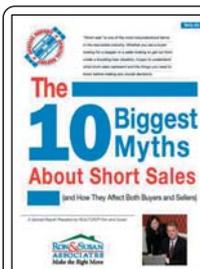
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**Fairfax \$509,900**

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**Fairfax \$329,900**

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