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Holiday Gift & Entertainment Guide

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Learning
Fun**

Buying Gifts In Vienna

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Vienna Housing Market Named 5th Best in Nation

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PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ / THE CONNECTION

NEWS



Linda Mathes, CEO of the Red Cross in the National Capital region; Miss Virginia Elizabeth Crot; Brenda Blisk of The Blisk Financial Group, who chaired the event; Miss Maryland Carlie Colella; and Karen Wayne, Red Cross Community Executive in Prince William and Loudoun Counties

'In The Bag' Red Cross Auction Raises \$66,564

Brenda Blisk's "In the Bag" Red Cross auction on Nov. 4 raised \$66,564, tripling the results from last year. A sell-out crowd of 256 attended the luncheon and auction, compared with 100 attendees last year. The event filled the ballroom at the Westwood Country Club in Vienna to capacity. One hundred twenty-five pocketbooks were sold, compared with 64 pocketbooks sold at last year's auction.

Included in the auction were celebrity

bags from Ann Compton, national correspondent for ABC News; Kathie Lee Gifford, Savannah Guthrie, Hoda Kotb, Natalie Morales and Jenna Wolfe from NBC's Today Show; Former Miss America Phyllis George; actress Cybill Shepherd; Ivanka Trump, executive vice president of The Trump Organization; and former Sen. Elizabeth Dole, who served as president of the American Red Cross from 1991 to 2001.



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U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) watches election returns at the event sponsored by the Fairfax Democratic Party at The Waterford at Fair Oaks on Nov. 8.

PHOTO BY
DEB COBB/
THE CONNECTION



A Good Year for Incumbents

Democrats retain power in Fairfax County, GOP celebrates statewide gains.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

The anti-incumbent mood reflected in national polls did not express itself in Fairfax County when voters cast their ballots on Election Day.

With 99 candidates to pick from, and almost every state and local office up for reelection, voters overwhelmingly returned incumbents to office. And incumbent in Fairfax County typically means Democrat.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors remains the same, with a 7-3 Democratic majority. Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) — who first won the at-large seat in a 2009 special election — cruised to victory with nearly 60 percent of the vote over her Republican opponent Michael “Spike” Williams. Supervisor John Cook (R) held on to his Braddock District seat by a razor-thin margin, after a scathing and closely-watched battle with his Democratic challenger, Janet Oleszek.

On the 12-member Fairfax County School Board, the race that generated the most heated speculation, voters returned every incumbent, and elected newcomers who, with one exception, identified themselves as Democrats.

Although Republican hopes for more of a foothold in Fairfax County failed, GOP gains in the rest of the state effectively transferred control of the state legislature to Republicans.

The state Senate, which had a Democratic edge of 22-18, is now evenly split 20-20 between Republicans and Democrats. Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling, a Republican who was not on this year’s ballot, now wields the power to cast any tie-breaking votes. The Republicans increased their majority in the House of Delegates from 61-39 to 68-32. Republicans now control both chambers of the General Assembly and the governor’s mansion for the second time since the Civil War.

Virginia General Assembly

As the campaign signs come down, and post-election navel-gazing goes up, the question of “who



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) said he is concerned about the “inflammatory rhetoric” from state Republicans during an interview Friday in his Fairfax City law office. “The rhetoric from the Republicans right now is ‘we’re in full control.’ But the power should reflect the 20-20 split,” Petersen said.

won?” shifts to “what does it all mean?”

“I think the real question is what the Republican gains in the state Senate will mean,” said Stephen Farnsworth, a Virginia political expert and professor at George Mason University. “It’s going to be a tough time for Northern Virginia, when you look at the make-up of who controls the levers of power in Richmond.”

Farnsworth said funding for transportation and education are key issues on the table. “There’s a pretty valid claim that even though [Northern Virginia] pays more than its fair share to Richmond, there’s not going to be any attempt to equalize the resources. When Virginia goes from Democratic to Republican, the power base moves south.”

Democrats say they are not just concerned with the shift in party, but with what they think may be a

SEE FAIRFAX, PAGE 5



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) speaks about the budget to the Greater Vienna Rotary Club on Nov. 9.

The Greater Vienna Rotary Club recognized Patricia Velkoff and Woody Bentley as Paul Harris Fellows at the Nov. 9 meeting.

Connolly Speaks at Rotary Club Meeting

Congressman talks budget, working across the aisle.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) had a lot to say when he spoke to the Greater Vienna Rotary Club the day after election day. What Connolly emphasized to the large turnout was the need for Congress to come together, putting the interests of the country ahead of politics, and to apply a balance of spending cuts and revenue generation to ease the budget crisis. He pulled no punches as he described the current economic situation, how the U.S. got there, and the compromises both parties must take to alleviate the impasse. Spending cuts must be balanced with increased revenue.

“We have to look at everything,” said Connolly, who represents the wealthiest district in the United States. “Everything needs to be on the table. We can live without tax cuts.”

The biggest tax cuts in history led into ruinous economic performance, he said. Both parties have to accept some blame for the crisis.

“When I took the oath to protect the United States, it wasn’t just from outside threats,” Connolly said. “It is to be a good fiscal steward, too.”

As for cuts, Connolly said, “we need to make sure we use a scalpel and not a meat axe.”

The congressman evoked laughter when he stepped up to

the podium and acknowledged dollar bills lying there, by saying, “leaving money next to a politician is a big mistake.”

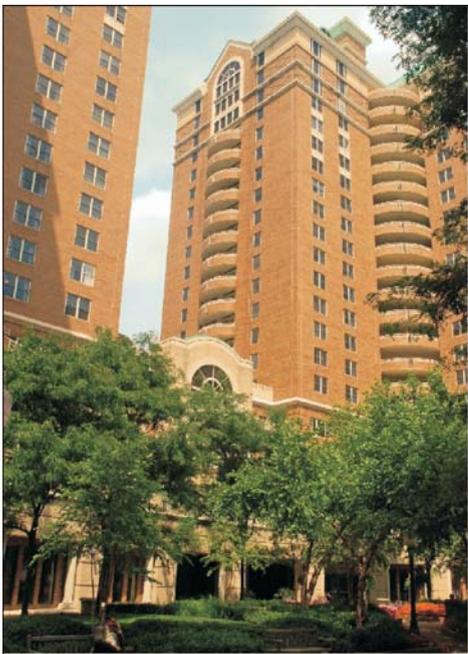
He spoke of the similarity between himself and his predecessor, Tom Davis, a moderate Republican. “We’re of the same political party,” Connolly said. “The party of getting things done.”

In a Q and A session, a guest asked Connolly if term limits would be a good thing for the country. A state’s sovereign decision — voting — takes care of that, Connolly said. To federally mandate statutory limits on public service would have negative consequences not in any one’s interest.

Regarding the durability of some lifelong elected officials, Connolly said that if the voters of a state want a 30-year elected official, that is their sovereign right, noting that “experience matters.”

If there was a single point that Connolly stressed, it was the imperative for Congress to agree to a budget balanced between spending cuts and revenue generation.

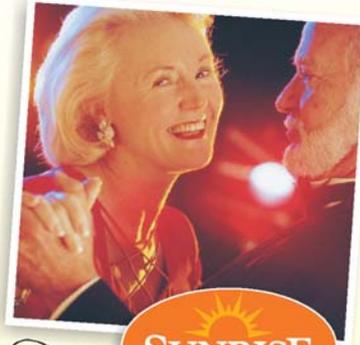
THE ROTARY CLUB recognized Rotarians Patricia Velkoff and ‘Woody’ Bentley as Paul Harris Fellows. A Paul Harris Fellow, named after the man who founded the Rotary Club, donates at least \$1,000 to the organization’s funds in a single year. Bentley is a six-time Paul Harris Fellow.



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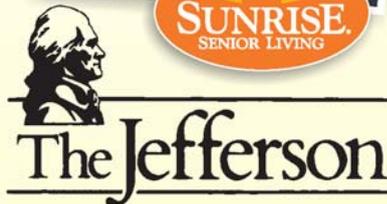


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NEWS

American Legion Hosts Veterans Day Program

Veterans, armed forces honored.

Post 180 of the American Legion honors veterans and American troops on a continuing basis, and even more so on occasions dedicated to honoring a soldier's sacrifice. In recognition of Veterans Day and Memorial Day, Vienna's Post 180 places flags on graves at Flint Hill Cemetery and posts American flags along Maple Avenue. And on Veterans Day and Memorial Day, Post 180 invites the community to the memorial programs it holds in remembrance.

On Nov. 11, at 11 a.m. Post 180 held its annual Veterans Day program in its hall. Guest speaker David Feiring, a U.S. Marine Corps pilot who flew missions in Vietnam, gave the keynote address. Feiring received the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Bronze Star. His presentation centered on the Pacific theatre during World War II.

Feiring currently is with Fairfax County Fire and Rescue and teaches fire science at local colleges.

Shirley Martin, Auxiliary Unit 180 president, laid the wreath in honor of the fallen. Honored guests included eight World War II veterans.

Guests Mayor M. Jane Seeman, Del. Mark Keam (D-35), Vienna Volunteer Fire Department



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

David Feiring, United States Marine Corps flier in Vietnam, gave a presentation on Veterans Day on the war in the Pacific during World War II.

firefighters, and Town Council members Edythe Kelleher and Carey Sienicki were recognized from the podium. Following the program, Post 180 served luncheon.

Dan Dellinger, former Vienna Town Councilman, is running for office of the National Commander of the American Legion.

"We honor those who gave their best to serve their country," Post Chaplain Bob Hatter said. "We're proud of them."

—DONNA MANZ

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Call for Annual Children's (& Teens') Connection Contributions

Every year Connection Newspapers dedicates one issue entirely to the imaginative works of our community children and teenagers. We publish artwork, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories and photographs.

We are now asking that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or on CD. Please provide the submissions no later than Thursday, Dec. 8. If you have any questions, please call Kemal Kurspahic at 703-778-9414 or email kemal@connectionnewspapers.com.

Some suggestions for submissions:

- ❖ Drawings, paintings, photographs or 2-D and 3-D artwork that have been digitally photographed.
- ❖ Short stories, poetry, essays, class-wide prompt writings.
- ❖ Opinion pieces about family,

friends, traffic, sports, food, video games, toys, trends, etc.

Images should be submitted as .jpg ATTACHMENTS to an email, not embedded in the body of the email.

All submissions should include the child's first and last name, school, grade and/or age.

Submissions for our Vienna, McLean, Great Falls, Reston and Herndon editions should be e-mailed to ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com. Subject should be school name, town and teacher's last name (or for individuals or home schoolers, the child's last name and town).

The issue will be published the week of the Christmas holiday. We will publish as many submissions as possible.

Fairfax Remains Blue, GOP Celebrates Statewide Gains

FROM PAGE 3

shift to more extreme views.

"Arizona, Mississippi, and Wisconsin will be pushed off the front pages of national newspapers as Virginia takes leadership with right-wing legislation," said Del. Ken Plum (D-36), who was first elected to Richmond in 1978 and serves as the chairman of the House Democratic Caucus.

Issues that concern Democrats include reductions in public education funding resulting from resources being diverted to charter schools, restrictions on abortion, immigration enforcement, and weakening health and safety regulations.

"The Senate of Virginia will no longer be the safeguard that it has been for the past several years to stop wacky legislation," said Plum.

"When you look at the legislative agenda, a lot of the more polarizing social issues were killed because of the Senate," Farnsworth said. "There will probably be more of these issues moving forward now."

Democratic Senators are also not willing to concede full control to the GOP. "The rhetoric from the Republicans right now is 'we're in full control.' But the power should reflect the 20-20 split," said state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), referring to control of the chamber's floor sessions and committees. "Democrats need to make sure our funding for education and transportation doesn't drop off."

But Del. Dave Albo (R-42), who was first elected in 1994 and is Northern Virginia's most senior member of the House, said the alarmist rhetoric is just party politics.

"Everybody needs to take a chill-pill," Albo said. "[Democrats] are all crying like babies about [the election]. They try to scare people into thinking that suddenly there's going to be all this wacky legislation out of Richmond. The immigration bills are not wacky at all. We allowed police officers to detain someone as an illegal alien when they get a hit on their car. We require businesses to use E-Verify. When they say it's wacky, I want to say, specifically, tell me which bill you're worried about. We are not going to be doing anything out of the ordinary," Albo said.

Albo said revenue for some transportation projects, such as road maintenance, may increase with the GOP in control.

"One of the good-news things of Republicans in the Senate is that we should be able to get something passed for more money for secondary road maintenance and improvements," Albo said. "The Democrats have never wanted to use the General Fund for revenue to pay for the roads."

Even though Republicans now reign south of the Rappahannock, Fairfax County is likely to remain blue.

"You had an optimal environment for Republicans this year. There was a lot of money sloshing around...and they just can't close the deal in this part of the state,"



Ryan McElveen, 25, of Vienna, was the youngest candidate in any of the races. Democrat-supported McElveen won one of the three at-large School Board seats.

PHOTO BY DEB COBB/THE CONNECTION

Farnsworth said.

"I was disappointed countywide," Albo said. "I doubt that Republicans will ever gain a foothold when [Republican] candidates like Bill Cooper, who was running for sheriff, or Lolita Manchino-Smoak, who was running for the School Board, can't win...Slowly but surely, Fairfax County is becoming Alexandria and Arlington."

Fairfax County School Board

The Fairfax County School Board race was the one to watch this year. It was the most talked-about, blogged-about, debated and partisan-fueled race in the board's 19-year history.

Political insiders predicted that parental anger over discipline, boundaries, class size and grading policies would sweep out incumbents and usher in a slate of candidates running as "reformers" and endorsed by Republicans.

The predictions proved wrong.

Voters returned six incumbents to the 12-member board and handed the three at-large seats to the Democrat-endorsed candidates. Elizabeth Schultz, in the Springfield District, was the only Republican-endorsed candidate to win a district seat.

"Voters didn't reject 'reform,' this was a partisan victory for the Democrats pure and simple," said Sheree Brown Kaplan, who lost her bid for an at-large seat.

But Ted Velkoff, a former PTA president from Rocky Run who won an at-large seat, said the message voters sent on Election Day was more nuanced than partisan politics.

"I don't think it was a rejection of reform, or embracing of the status quo," Velkoff said. "In the end, I think people in Fairfax County are generally happy with the schools. They said, on balance, that the school system is being run well, and voters manifested their diverse spectrum of views about issues by electing a diverse group of people."

"What the voters have rejected," said Ilryong Moon, who retained his at-large seat, "is the oversimplification of complex-

ity of governance of our school system and efforts to meet needs of all students with a few sound bites or campaign slogans."

Moon, who will be serving a fourth term on the board, said the six new board members will be facing several challenges when they meet in January, including a tight budget climate and the selection of a new superintendent.

Fairfax County Superintendent

Jack D. Dale, who steered the 175,000-student system for seven years, announced in September that he will retire when his contract ends in June 2013.

"Voters want us to continue staying on the current path, and maintain the quality of our top performing school system," Moon said.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) said he thought many of the winners, even though they were endorsed as Democrats, supported the reform message of transparency, accountability and smaller class sizes.

"A prime example is the independent auditor reporting to the School Board...This and many of the issues that finally got open and honest discussion will result in better schools," Herrity said.

Velkoff agreed that the lengthy campaign process called attention to a number of issues the new board will address, including class sizes, needs-based staffing, "21st century learning," and advocating for an independent auditor to bring more transparency to the School Board's budget. Currently, the School Board absorbs 53 percent of Fairfax County's annual budget of \$3.3 billion.

"There needs to be confidence in the budget process. We can't defend initiatives without independent confirmation of our budget from an outside auditor," Velkoff said.

"While voters in this election expressed satisfaction that the Democratic leadership provides good stewardship over our high-ranking public school system, I think voters also made it clear that they expect the school board to spend more time listening to parent and community concerns," said Rex Simmons, chair of the Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC).

Ryan McElveen, who also won an at-large seat, said he wants the School Board to be more responsive to stakeholders.

"I hope parents, teachers, school employees of all stripes, and especially students, will get in touch and share their concerns and ideas. I'm excited for the road ahead," McElveen said.

"My hope is that we move away from teaching to the test and find ways to make sure students are well-rounded and ready for college or careers," Velkoff said. "I think

it would be great if we could look back in 10 years at how Fairfax County became the model for 21st century learning."

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

With the exception of the scorched-earth battle for the Braddock District seat — which Republican Supervisor John Cook won by just 327 votes — the nine other incumbents on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors retained their seats with fairly wide margins of victory.

"With the Board of Supervisors, we're looking at a situation where the voters were less angry than in other parts of Virginia. There wasn't much voter dissatisfaction with the current board," Farnsworth said.

"The Board of Supervisors has the turnover rate of the Supreme Soviets; they only leave by death or indictment," quipped state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), who endorsed Democrat Janet Oleszek in the race to unseat incumbent John Cook in the Braddock district.

Three of the 10 supervisors were unopposed — Pat Herrity (R-Springfield), Jeff McKay (D-Lee) and Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) — while Michael Frey (R-Sully), Gerry Hyland (D-Mount Vernon), Penny Gross (D-Mason), John W. Foust (D-Dranesville) and Linda Smyth (D-Providence) faced nominal opposition and ran relatively quiet campaigns.

Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) easily won her bid for a second term, running on a solid record of accomplishments as leader of the most powerful governing body in the county. The only nail-biter was in the Braddock District, where Cook was narrowly reelected after a contentious 10-week battle with his Democratic challenger, Janet Oleszek, a former School Board member.

"I was very pleased with the win by my colleague John Cook in the Braddock District. This was a race that the Democrats made a priority and put a lot of time, energy and resources into," Herrity said.

Rex Simmons, chair of the FCDC, said voters sent a message that they were pleased with the county's quality of life, strong fiscal management and sound governance in returning incumbents to the board.

"Fairfax County has weathered the worst recession since the Great Depression with few service cuts and minimal tax increases," Simmons said. "We have great schools, major transportation improvements underway, excellent environmental protection programs, a modest affordable housing program, and well maintained parks and recreation centers... Even in tough economic times, Fairfax County has remained an economic engine for Virginia."

One critical decision facing the returning board is the hiring of a new county executive. Just two days after the election, County Executive Anthony H. Griffin announced that he will step down in April after serving 12 years in the position.

OPINION

Give Locally

The need has never been greater.

As the holidays approach, many nonprofits that provide holiday meals, food support and other services for people in need are reporting that they are overwhelmed.

More than 45,000 students in Fairfax County Public Schools are from families poor enough to qualify for free or reduced priced meals. That's more than 25 percent of students in the schools. In Arlington, 34 percent of students are poor enough to qualify for free or reduced meals. In the City of Alexandria, more than 54 percent of students are poor.

In Fairfax County, 46,000 live below the poverty line; more than 80,000 have no health insurance.

In Northern Virginia, thousands are unemployed and many more are underemployed. Among the homeless in Northern Virginia, many are working poor, families with at least one wage-earner who doesn't make enough to pay for housing for the family.

In this environment, more and more people are turning to food pantries for part of every month. And it's not surprising that many, many families will have little to offer in holiday cheer and holiday gifts for children without the help of organizations and individuals. It's hard to imagine, but there are hundreds of children in the area who would not receive a single holiday present without the help of a charitable organization.

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Reston Interfaith, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, www.restoninterfaith.org

SHARE of McLean seeks donations of grocery gift cards. Gift cards can be dropped off at SHARE, c/o McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Road on Wednesdays and Saturdays (except Thanksgiving week) between 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Checks and gift cards can be sent to: Holiday Celebration, Share, Inc. PO Box 210, McLean, VA 22101. 703-284-2179. www.SHAREofMcLean.org

LINK, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more, needs contributions of food, coats and holiday toys for children, plus volunteers. Email Lisa Lombardo at LisaLombo@signaturecos.com. (703) 437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org

Herndon-Reston FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help), 703-391-0105

Northern Virginia Family Service, Oakton, 703-385-3267
 Food for Others, 2938 Prosperity Avenue, Fairfax, 22031, 703-207-9173

Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), 703-569-9160, www.echo-inc.org. Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield

Lorton Community Action Center operates the Act II Thrift Shop at 9506 Richmond Highway, Lorton.

If you're reading this paper, chances are that you are among the people at the other end of the spectrum, trying to devise methods to keep the holidays more modest. One way to do this is to help your children understand how lucky they are with a glimpse at the needs of others right here.

There are many ways to give, with some local charities connecting the donor to a specific family to provide a holiday food basket and fulfill some wishes for gifts. Many organizations encourage the donation of gift cards. Every local group seeking to help the needy right now is facing extra demand and needs both volunteer and financial help.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Sales from the shop generate funds for LCAC and clients also shop there. While donations are welcome during store hours, visitors are asked to call first at 703-339-8611 before dropping off donations. 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

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries, food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive in Chantilly (near Backyard Grill and Bar). For more information or to sponsor a family, call 703-988-9656, ext. 105. To mail gift cards or send donations by check, add a note saying "food basket program" and send them to: WFCM, P.O. Box 220802, Chantilly, VA 20153. 703-988-9656

Our Daily Bread, 10777 Main Street #320, Fairfax, 703-273-8829

Shelter House, www.shelterhouse.org, operates two homeless shelters in Fairfax County, in Centreville and Seven Corners. 571-522-6800

Committee for Helping Others (CHO), Vienna, 703-281-7614

Fairfax City Area FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help), 703-222-0880

Lamb Center, www.thelambcenter.org, Fairfax 703-691-3178

Where To Give

This is a partial list of charities helping those in need during the holidays and beyond. Let us know about other organizations not listed here.

Additional nonprofits can be found listed on the local Catalogue for Philanthropy website, <http://www.catalogueforphilanthropy-dc.org>. Click on "how to give."

Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia, Arlington, 703-521-9890

Comfort for America's Uniformed Services (CAUSE), CAUSE ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. 4114 Legato Road Suite B, Fairfax, VA 22033, 703-591-4968, cause-usa.org

Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic, 13525 Dulles Technology Drive, Herndon, VA 20171, 571-235-3577, jsfreeclinic.org Last year 139 community volunteers — nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians — gave more than 1,300 hours of their time to see patients.

Alternative House - Abused and Homeless Children's Refuge, 2100 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182,

Expect Miracles

By THERESA CORBLEY SILLER

It was 2008. I gently asked my husband of 19 years, Rich Siller, of Vienna, if his life insurance was up to date, because I honestly didn't think he would be around for long, for me, or our three daughters. At almost 300 pounds on a 5-foot-9-inch frame, having already undergone a cardiac ablation, high triglycerides in the 1600 range (160 or less is normal), and the risk of Type II Diabetes, I was scared.

After a medical discharge from the Navy Nurse Corps, in 1992, because of degenerative joint disease of the hips, Lt. Richard D. Siller felt bereft. After two total hip replacements, the intense, daily pain was gone, but he was still depressed at the loss of his military career. This depression triggered years of overeating, and dangerous weight gain.

Last New Year's Eve 2010, Rich, totally demoralized, got down on

his knees and asked God to help him get control of his weight.

On New Year's Day, out went the pizza, cake, extra helpings, and hours of nighttime noshing. In came daily exercise, and a healthy mindset. Salads, apples, oatmeal and lean proteins were the key players in the new lifestyle. The pounds started being released. We had to buy him a new wardrobe. Slowly this man worked up to biking to work, an 18 mile round trip. His new energy level astounded everyone.

One day a colleague convinced him to sign up for the Marine Corps Marathon 2011. He came home that day to tell us the news, laughing. "This should be interesting! As long as I don't embarrass myself, I'll be happy!"

After a 7-month strict training regimen, Rich Siller finished in the top third of racers. This is why I have "Expect Miracles" on my bumper. For anyone out there, struggling, there IS hope.



Rich Siller of Vienna 'before,' pictured with his wife Theresa Corbley Siller at Teddy Roosevelt Island in D.C. in 2009.

PHOTO BY
CARRIE SILLER



Rich Siller completes Marine Corps Marathon 2011.

THE CONNECTION

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

Newspaper of
Vienna & Oakton

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

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BULLETIN BOARD

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

THURSDAY/NOV. 17

Design-Build Institute of America Mid-Atlantic Region Annual Dinner and Business Meeting.

5-9 p.m. Maggiano's Little Italy, Tysons Corner Galleria, 2001 International Drive, McLean. Annual business meeting, installation of officers and networking. \$75-\$115. dbia-mar@cox.net or 703-851-6393.

Vienna AAUW Meeting. 7 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. Anne Morgan, an independent image consultant, will discuss "Suited for Change" and their mission to provide professional attire, career and life skills training and related services to low-income women. Sponsored by the Vienna Branch of American Association of University Women. Free, public invited. 703-321-7499.

Speaking Powerfully. 7:15 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., N.E., Vienna. Learn the tricks used by the most successful professional speakers, and deliver messages that sell you and your company. \$25-\$35. www.thewomenscenter.org.

Homework: A Parent's Guide. 7 p.m. The Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. The contradicting messages about responsibility for a child's academic success, the 3 Myths of parenting school age kids that makes things worse, and 5 strategies to help a child be successful. \$25-\$35. www.thewomenscenter.org.

FRIDAY/NOV. 18

VTRCC Brown Bag University.

11:45 a.m. Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, 8300 Boone Blvd., Suite 450, Vienna. With Elisabeth Schuler Russell is the Founder of Patient Navigator LLC, a full-service patient advocacy firm based in Vienna. Register at www.vtrcc.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 19

Experience the joy of Yoga and learn about the ancient practice of Meditation at the Patrick Henry Library from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. The presenters have more than 30 years of practical experience in yoga and meditation. Free.

Open Season Workshop for Federal Employees and Retirees. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Help navigating the changes in the 2012 Federal Employees Health Benefits plans, dental and vision insurance programs and flexible spending accounts. Representatives of various FEHB health plans and Medicare will be available. Sponsored by Congressman Gerry Connolly. Open Season is Nov. 14-Dec. 12. 703-256-3071 or www.opm.gov/insure/openseason/

TUESDAY/NOV. 22

November Volunteers for Change Orientation. 6 p.m. Volunteer Fairfax Office, 10530 Page Ave., Fairfax. Choose from more than 50 community service projects, including planting trees, bagging food for homeless families, tutoring adult ESL students, playing bingo with the disabled, special community-wide events throughout the year and more. Reservations required at 703-246-3895 or jkivlin@volunteerfairfax.org.

Vienna Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce TIPS Luncheon. 12:15 p.m. Shula's Steakhouse, 8028 Leesburg Pike, in the Tysons Corner Marriott. Every Tuesday. 703-862-4895.



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WEEK IN REVIEW

Fatal Motorcycle Crash in Oakton

A 32-year-old man was killed on Tuesday, Nov. 8 when the motorcycle he was riding struck a passenger car. The crash occurred on White Granite Drive near the intersection of Chain Bridge Road shortly after 2 p.m.

Darren Frederick Morrell of Valentino Drive in Oakton was operating a 2005 Honda CBR sport bike east on White Granite Drive. An 85-year-old Oakton man operating a 1995 Pontiac Grand Prix, exited a post office parking lot and attempted to turn left onto White Granite from a service road. The driver of the Pontiac apparently did not see the motorcycle and turned in front of it. The motorcycle struck the left front wheel and quarter panel of the car. Morrell was ejected from the motorcycle and struck the pavement. He was medevaced to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead a short time later. The occupants of the Pontiac were not injured.

Speed and alcohol do not appear to be factors.

No charges have been placed at this time. The crash is still under investigation.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at fairfaxcrimesolvers.org or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

Church Street Holiday Stroll Nov. 28

The annual Holiday Stroll on Vienna's historic Church Street will be held on Monday, Nov. 28, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Church Street will be closed between Lawyers Road and Mill Street, and visitors are invited to stroll amid the sights and sounds of the holiday season and visit merchants along the way.

The old-fashioned Freeman House general store, 131 Church St., N.E., the railroad station, red cabooses, Knights of Columbus (former First Baptist Church) and Vienna Presbyterian "little chapel" will be open to visitors. Santa Claus will arrive at the Freeman House at 6:30 p.m. and help Mayor Jane Seeman light the holiday tree at 6:45 p.m. Afterwards, Santa will visit with children on the front

porch of the Freeman House.

The Holiday Stroll will feature entertainment by local musical groups, a petting zoo, marshmallows for roasting at supervised "bon fires," and other festivities.

Visitors are encouraged to bring a toy to donate to the Toys for Tots collection, sponsored by Coldwell Banker.

The Holiday Stroll is sponsored by Historic Vienna, Inc., and the Town of Vienna. All activities are free of charge. For more information, call 703-938-5187.

Community Center to Host Open Mic Nights

Open Mic Night is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 19 and Dec. 17, 2011 and Jan. 14 and Feb. 18, 2012 from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, S.E. Admission is free.

Performers must pre-register by calling Jim Dowell at 703-286-3427 (day) or 703-207-0030 (evening). Open to all ages and all levels of talent. For more information, call the Vienna Parks and Recreation Department at 703-255-6360.

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HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Buying Gifts in Vienna

By DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

From memory-making experiences to treasured trinkets and toys, there are gifts made-to-order right in Vienna for every recipient on your “happy holidays’ list.” Think about what gives your loved ones the most joy when buying a present.

Here’s some ideas, all of which can be purchased right in the community.

For all the grandmas — and grandpas — out there who love to read to their grandchildren, recordable books from Hallmark can read to the grandkids, in your voice, even when you’re not there to do so. The books, from a timeless “I love you” story to seasonable ones, are on sale at Hallmark Tysons Galleria for approximately \$20 per book with the purchase of any other item in the store.

The recordable books are also sold at stores that sell Hallmark products. The selection at Hallmark at Tysons Galleria included “The Night Before Christmas,” “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” “Santa Claus is Coming to Town,” and the story of the nativity.

What’s Vienna cooking up now? At Culinaria, they’re cooking up everything and teaching students from throughout the region to duplicate the dishes at home. Why not give a home chef or food lover a gift certificate to one of Culinaria’s classes? The cooking school, on Pleasant Street, is open to the public for single classes or a series, and gift certificates are available for both.

Culinaria even offers child and parent classes and ladies lunch classes for a special girls’ day get-together.

If you can eat it, Culinaria can teach you how to make it. Knife skills are invaluable and Culinaria features classes on that on a regular basis.

Culinaria Cooking School, 110 Pleasant St. NW, e-mail info@culinariacookingschool.com or call 703-865-7920; for a brochure of classes, go to www.culinariacookingschool.com/ClassSession.aspx

If you’re thinking of giving a family member, who happens to be planning a trip out of the country, cash, why not surprise them with currency for the country they’re visiting? It’s a helpful take on the old cash standby but with a twist. A stash of pre-trip foreign currency eliminates the need to rush to the nearest money exchange at the foreign airport, wasting time and conversion rates. Both American Express at Tysons Galleria and AAA on Old Courthouse Road sell foreign currency. Because AmEx’s conversion rates fluctuate daily, it typically has a good rate of exchange. At AAA, you buy a pre-packaged amount with set pricing.

FOR UNIQUE GIFTS and those with an old-fashioned touch, no place in Vienna beats Freeman Store, administered by Historic Vienna, Inc. (HVI).

From Vienna-logo pottery crafted in Pennsylvania, to preserves made in Virginia and to toys and puzzles reminiscent of an earlier time, the shop, anchoring historic Church Street, is as much a visual delight as

SEE GIFTS, PAGE 10



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

What little girl would not like a pumpkin carriage trinket box, with horses and accoutrements included? Hinged trinket boxes available at Freeman Store for less than \$7.

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Free Remodeling & Design Seminars!

Sat., Nov. 19th — 10am-2pm

Where: 5795B Burke Centre Pkwy, Burke, VA 22015

Thinking of remodeling? This event is the perfect opportunity to take advantage of free expert advice with no obligation. Learn about the hot topics you should consider when remodeling.

Saturday's Seminars:

- 2012 Color Trends
- 10 Tips for a Stress-Free Remodel
- Reinventing Your Home for Today's Lifestyle

Seminars run from 10am-Noon. Lunch to follow. Please arrive at 9:45am for check-in.

Seating is limited. Call Sara at 703.425.5588 to reserve your seats!

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HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Gifts for Every Taste Found in Vienna Stores

FROM PAGE 9

it is a community store. Wood plank floors, a pot-bellied stove and an antique post office sorter harken back to the turn of the century.

HVI's 2011 Christmas card and hand-painted collectible ornament, no. 12 in a series of Vienna buildings, are now on sale at Freeman Store. The ornament, featuring the Vienna Town Hall, is available for \$19.50. All previous ornaments are also available, in limited quantities, at \$19.50 each. The Historic Vienna, Inc. Christmas Card features a winter photograph of the Little Library. The card is available in packages of ten cards and envelopes for \$8.50.

The Pennsylvania-made pottery starts at \$15, and Graves Mountain preserves start at \$2 for a mini-jar. Windup music boxes for children — great for stocking stuffers — sell for \$6.99 each. One hard-to-find toy, a windup train, sells at Freeman Store for less than \$10. Jars of "penny" candy — no longer a penny but still pretty inexpensive — line the candy counter.

Historic Vienna, Inc. members get 10 percent off the price of merchandise. For more information on Historic Vienna, Inc. and Freeman Store and Museum, see www.historicviennainc.org

Does the aroma of pumpkin pie or pumpkin bread stir thoughts of cold weather comfort food? Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control takes pumpkin spices a step beyond the ordinary with its seasonal pumpkin pie liqueur. At less than \$10 for a 750 ml bottle, it's a warming holiday party gift. A customer

in the Vienna ABC buys it often during the holidays. She said it tastes great over vanilla ice cream.

NEED TO BRING A DISH to a party? What about an edible arrangement that doubles as a centerpiece? Edible Arrangements, at Center Street and Maple Avenue, creates arty fruit designs that appeal to grown-ups and kids. The store makes more than 60 designs that can be customized with appropriate themed accessories, from festive bowls to balloons and stuffed toys.

Prices start at \$27 for a small arrangement which can be made up on the spot in five minutes. Larger arrangements require an hour of work by staff. To pre-order, call 703-255-5599. To see designs, go to EdibleArrangements.com.

Want to give someone the world? Buy a gift card with a trip's worth of cash on it, designating it specifically for the vacation someone has on a bucket list. Your Vienna banks and drug stores sell American Express and Visa gift certificates. Include the names of Vienna-area travel agencies with the gift certificate.

Stocking stuffer gifts for grown-ups add pizzazz to an adult's Christmas or Hanukkah morning.

Bazin's on Church offers a wine club with products selected by Julie and Patrick Bazin. For a wine lover, a wine club membership tingles the palate.

Coffee aficionados will welcome gift certificates from their favorite coffee shops. Vienna has several, from locally-owned coffee shops such as Caffe Amouri and Plush,



Grandmas and Grandpas alike can read to their grandchildren any time, any place, with recordable story books. Hallmark at Tysons Galleria has a seasonal selection on sale for about \$20.



Virginia ABC sells a seasonal delight, pumpkin pie cream liqueur, for under \$10 a 750 ml bottle.

to national chains such as Starbucks.

It's fun to make a gift certificate more festive-looking than leaving it in an envelope. Wrap the certificate in a big wrapped box and keep the theme if you decide to add an accessory. A coffee mug could hold a coffee shop certificate. Wine club gift certificates are at-home in a wine glass. For a cooking class, ceramic measuring cups make an engaging home.



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Why give just any cash when you can give foreign cash to a family member with international travel plans. American Express at Tysons Galleria and AAA on Old Courthouse Road are good places to pick up a gift any tourist would love to have.

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

THURSDAY/NOV. 17

Potluck Thanksgiving Brunch for Seniors. 10:30 a.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., S.E., Vienna. Bring a favorite dish serving at least eight. The brunch will include a sing-along, and participants are invited to talk about things for which they are thankful. Free. Advance registration is required at 703-255-6360 or www.viennava.gov.

SATURDAY/NOV. 19

Turkey Trot 5K Race. 4 p.m. Herndon Centennial Golf Course, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. A 3.1 mile cross country style race held on the golf course. Sponsored by the Herndon Parks and Recreation Dept. 703-787-7300.

30th Annual Pre-Turkey Quarter Horse Show. Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Riders compete and showcase their abilities. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/fpp/fpp/equest.htm.

11th Annual Enchanted Forest Holiday Extravaganza. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. The Westin Tysons Corner, 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Meet chef Lorraine Wallace, have cupcakes and cocoa with the Snow Fairy Princess or breakfast and a photo with Santa. Cooking demonstrations, children's crafts, gifts and decorations for purchase, silent auction and evening gala celebration. Sponsored by the Junior League of Northern Virginia. Admission \$11. 703-442-4163 or www.jlrv.org.

SUNDAY/NOV. 20

Mill Run Dulcimer Band Thanksgiving/Christmas Concert and Holiday Party. 2-4 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. 703-759-2771.

30th Annual Pre-Turkey Quarter Horse Show. Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Riders compete and showcase their abilities. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/fpp/equest.htm.

11th Annual Enchanted Forest Holiday Extravaganza. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The Westin Tysons Corner, 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Meet chef Lorraine Wallace, have cupcakes and cocoa with the Snow Fairy Princess or breakfast and a photo with Santa. Cooking demonstrations, children's crafts, gifts and decorations for purchase, silent auction and evening gala celebration. Sponsored by the Junior League of Northern Virginia. Admission \$11. 703-442-4163 or www.jlrv.org.

TUESDAY/NOV. 22

Cooking Club: Turkey Sandwich and Thanksgiving Sides. 4 p.m. Club Phoenix Teen Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Enjoy a pre-Thanksgiving meal. 703-255-6360 or www.viennava.gov.

FRIDAY/NOV. 25

Frying Pan Farm Park Presents "A Thanksgiving Story." 11 a.m. Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. An interactive retelling of the Thanksgiving Story. Admission \$4. Children must be accompanied by registered adult. 703-437-9101.

Reston Holiday Parade. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. With Macy's-style balloons, musicians, dancers, antique cars and more along Market Street will welcome the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse-drawn carriage. Free admission, donations requested for carriage ride, children 5 and under free with adult. Ice Skating Pavilion open all day. 703-689-4699 or restontowncenter.com.

◆Parade: "Storybook Magic." 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

◆Photos with Santa. 12:30-4:30 p.m.

◆Tree Lighting and Sing-along. 6 p.m.

◆Carriage Rides. 6:30-10 p.m.

MONDAY/NOV. 28

Annual Church Street Stroll. 6-9 p.m. Church St., between Lawyers Road and Mill St., Vienna. The Freeman House general store, the railroad station, red caboose, Knights of Columbus (former First Baptist Church) and Vienna Presbyterian "little chapel" will be open to visitors. Santa Claus will arrive at the Freeman House at 6:30 p.m. and help Mayor Jane Seeman light the holiday tree at 6:45 p.m. Afterwards, Santa will visit with children on the front porch of the Freeman House. Entertainment by local musical groups, a petting zoo, marshmallows for roasting at supervised "bonfires" and more. Visitors are encouraged to bring a toy to donate to the Toys for Tots collection. Sponsored by Historic Vienna, Inc., and the Town of Vienna. All activities free. 703-938-5187.

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Saturday, November 19, 2011, 10am - 5pm
Sunday, November 20, 2011, 10am - 3pm
Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run

- A Two Day Indoor Show with over 200 juried crafters and gourmet food vendors.
- Admission - \$5 per day, \$8 for a two day ticket. Under 18 years free.

For more information: 703.385.7858 www.fairfaxva.gov

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Vienna Ranked 5th in Nation

Bloomberg Businessweek includes Vienna-area zipcodes.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

Vienna's housing market, with its combined zipcodes, was ranked the fifth-best in the nation by Bloomberg Businessweek last week, and several local realtors shared their thoughts on that news.

Businessweek referenced Zillow Home Value Index with its data for Vienna. According to Zillow, as quoted by Bloomberg Businessweek, the median home value in the city was \$638,500 in August, and the median sale price was \$645,400 as of Aug. 31. The increase in 2011 from 2010 was 12.8 percent.

Included in the evaluation were areas outside Vienna town limits that have Vienna zipcodes, which include Wolf Trap and Meadowlark Gardens, and estate houses off Beulah Road.

Why is Vienna doing so well in this economy?

"I think it's a spin-off from Tysons Corner and the growth happening there," said Vienna Long & Foster realtor Barbara McHale. "You get more house for the money here in Vienna than in McLean and Great Falls."

PEOPLE COME to this area for the jobs, McHale said, and Vienna profits from that because of its community spirit and proximity to employment centers. People want to live in Vienna, she said.

McHale emphasized the sense of community that people who live in Vienna share. "Generally, people here are doing well. There's a consistency in education and income. We have a lot of people from many different cultures who live together happily."

Ask someone who lives in Vienna what drew them to it and they will likely tell you it's the "small-town feel," the sense and spirit of community, the schools, special events, the youth sports programs, and, not surprisingly, Vienna's close-in access to Washington, D.C. and Tysons Corner. Realtors who live in Vienna feel that way, as well.

Vienna Long & Foster realtor Debbie Earman has lived in Vienna since 1961, raising three daughters in Vienna who have children of their own. They all still live in Vienna.

She said she has watched the small town grow and get squeezed between the Vienna Metro that opened in the '80s and the booming Tysons Corner area where another much-needed metro rail is under construction.

"Families that grow up in Vienna tend to want to stay in Vienna and raise their kids here," said Earman. "It is a sacrifice because just going out a few miles, you can get so much more house for your money."

Vienna, Earman said, has a nice "mix of incomes" and a wide range of home prices.

"Since 1986, builders have been tearing down the smaller homes and building beautiful 'craftman-style' homes that bring the old charm back to the town," said Earman. She said that the most popular desire of buyers right now is to be able to walk to town, making many of the homes within a two-mile radius



George Creed, Vienna, realtor with RE/MAX Xecutex in Oakton, shared data on Vienna-area housing market.



Vienna Long & Foster realtor Debbie Earman has lived in Vienna since 1961.

of the town center "very desirable."

"It still has small-town charm that most towns would lose with the growth we have encountered," said Earman. "The kids can ride their bikes to town and to their dentist appointments."

"The night before [the Halloween parade] there are blankets and chairs put down to save places because of the huge crowds, with tailgating and partying going on from 5 p.m. on. This is a family tradition for us, along with many others, that we never miss."

Earman identified the Church Street corridor, with its old-time street lamps, and the caboose that's a Vienna icon, as one of Vienna's visual strong appeals.

George Creed, a Vienna realtor with RE/MAX Xecutex in Oakton, noted that there were 68 residential building permits issued by the town last year, almost all of which are being built "on-spec." An on-spec house is constructed by a developer who is betting that someone will buy the house.

THE NUMBER of housing closings in 2010 was 865, with an average sales price of \$665,952. While the number of closings 2011 year-to-date is down to 651, the average "sold" price was a bit higher at \$670,909.

Creed broke down YTD sales by zipcodes. TYD sales in 22182 number 230, with an average closing price of about \$802,000. Zipcode 22181, with sales of 177, averaged just under \$588,000. Zipcode 22180, which embraces the Town of Vienna essentially, had 243 sales, with an average closing price of \$607,700. "I firmly believe our market is going to remain constant over the short-term," said Creed. "In my opinion, the law of supply and demand will address price changes."

"I also believe that there is some pent-up emotion for people who want to buy a new home. It wouldn't surprise me to see some of that demand unleashed this spring. It depends on financing abilities."

Vienna Mayor M. Jane Seeman said she was "not too terribly surprised" by the Businessweek ranking.

"When I drive around Vienna, there are new houses going up almost overnight," said Seeman. "However, no matter how many new houses are built, we must keep the small town quality of life that is drawing families to Vienna."

Supply and demand dictates pricing, the agents agreed, not a ranking. What the media recognition will do, however, is encourage people moving into the Washington, D.C. area to consider Vienna.

"We are certainly far luckier here than many other areas," said McHale. "We have a sense of security here. We have jobs, and economic security boosts an overall sense of security."



Grace Rooney, Oakton, was selected by the Vienna Arts Society as its "Artist of the Year."



VAS publicity chair Dore Skidmore at the 2010 Treasury of Art Show and Sale.

Treasury of Art Returns to Vienna

Three-day exhibition showcases the best of area artists Nov. 18-20.

Vienna's biggest juried art show and sale returns to the Vienna Community Center on Nov. 18 in the 42nd Annual Treasury of Art Juried Show and Sale. The three-day exhibition, sponsored and hosted by the Vienna Arts Society (VAS), features more than 125 pieces of art selected by nationally-recognized artist and juror Jonathan Linton. Entries come from the Washington, D.C. metro area and beyond. Linton will judge the submissions the day before the show opens.

"The juror selects the art hung in the show," said former VAS president Donna Grone, who noted that Linton is highly-respected in the art world.

The Serenada String Quartet plays at the awards reception on Friday, Nov. 18, 7 to 9 p.m. Light refreshments are offered. Show hours are Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.

Several hundred art pieces are submitted each year, and between 100 and 150 pieces, in all price ranges, are selected by the juror to be hung in the show. While the juror selects the "Best in Show," visitors to the show select the "People's Choice Award." An artist may submit no more than three pieces for judging.

Unframed "bin" pieces are popular purchases among the public, as are the raffle tickets.

The VAS selection committee voted Oakton watercolorist Grace Rooney the 2011 Artist of the Year. Rooney is known for her high-quality artwork and for her dedication to the Vienna Arts Society.

"Grace is a prolific artist," said

Grone. "She's not afraid to try new things with her media. She's consistent with creating and exhibiting her art with VAS."

Rooney said she is inspired by the environment, looking at trees, sun and shadows, all of nature. "I probably paint things as I see them, not necessarily as they are," said Rooney. She keeps a camera at-hand when she travels and takes photos of birds, trees and beaches. Every season is beautiful, she feels. When time runs out and she cannot finish a painting where she is, she photographs the scene and finishes the painting from it at home. To create her compositions, she combines scenes from different photos. She may want the agitated surf on a stormy day but not the dark clouds.

"Even in today's economic climate, people still buy Grace's artwork," said VAS publicity chairman Dore Skidmore. "She's not just successful winning awards from jurors, people want to take her artwork home."

Grace, said Skidmore, is the youngest member ever to win "artist of the year."

"She's going to be active for a long time," said Skidmore. "Grace always has a smile on her face, and she has given her heart and soul to the Vienna Arts Society."

Treasury of Art show hours are Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., and Sunday, noon to 4p.m. Held at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. For more information on the show, call 703-319-3971 or go to www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

— DONNA MANZ

NEWS

Mayor Jane Seeman and several members of the Vienna Town Council were on hand to help owner Hirut Fiseha (right) cut the ribbon on her new boutique.



C&T Boutique Opens in Vienna

The Town of Vienna has gotten a little international flair this fall with C&T Boutique, which opened its doors in October at 302 Maple Ave West # 2.

Mayor Jane Seeman and several members of the Vienna Town Council were on hand to help owner Hirut Fiseha cut the ribbon on her new boutique, which features fashion designers from around the world with a focus on her native country of Ethiopia.

The boutique is located above Burke and Herbert

Bank. The owner is hoping to attract shoppers who want one of a kind ensemble that are rare in this area, as she is offering special occasion dresses, bags, and alterations in addition to casual wear and evening gowns for women of all shapes and sizes.

The shop also offers custom tailoring and a wide array of jewelry options.

The shop offers the latest fashion trends from around the world, including handmade scarves and accessories.

Be a Part of CHILDREN'S (& TEENS') CONNECTION

Every year between Christmas and New Year's, The Vienna/Oakton Connection turns its pages over to the contributions of local students. We are seeking artwork, photography, poetry, opinions, short stories and reflections. We welcome contributions from public schools, private schools and students who are home schooled.

E-mail to: ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com, or mail (.jpg and text files on disc only) by Nov. 30, to 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Please be sure to include the student's name, age, grade, school and town of residence along with each submission. For information, call 703-778-9410.



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Fairfax Station

9524 Oak Stream Ct.....\$575,000...Sun 1-4.....Dan Mleziva.....RE/MAX..703-380-9915

Herndon

12007 Meadowville Ct.....\$754,900...Sun 1-4.....Irene Schiffman.....Weichert..703-593-7848

Leesburg

43672 Augusta National Terrace..\$575,000...Sun 1-4..Cathy/John McCambridge...Samson Props..703-906-7067

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1519 Pathfinder Ln.....\$1,249,900...Sun 1-4.....Monica Gibson...Keller Williams..703-944-3434

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1709 Landon Hill Rd.....\$1,120,000...Sat 1-4.....Carmen Perry....Long & Foster..703-938-4200

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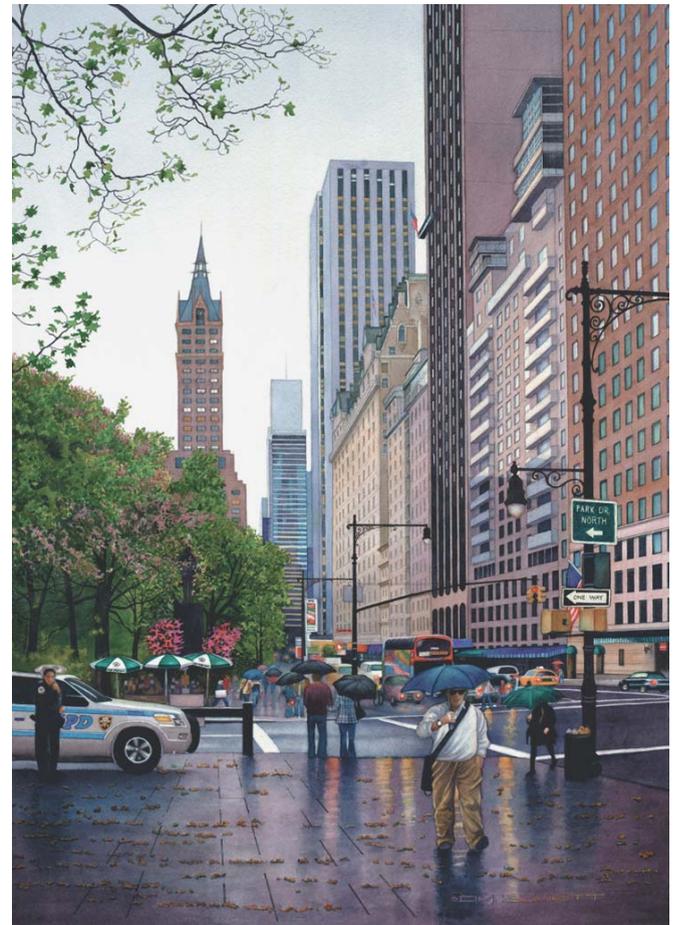
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at 703-778-9420, or donpark@connectionnewspapers.com

All listings are due by Monday at 3 P.M.

ENTERTAINMENT

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



“Central Park South” by Debi Elliot. The 42nd Annual Treasury of Art Show and Sale will be at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. in Vienna from Nov. 18-20, with a Reception on Friday, Nov. 18 at 7 p.m. the show will be open Nov. 18-19 from 10 a.m.-9 p.m. and Nov. 20 from 12-4 p.m. Meet the artists. Enjoy the Serenada String Quartet and light refreshments at the Reception. 703-319-3971 or www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

James Madison Drive, Vienna. Shakespeare's story of love, jealousy, greed, and deceit. \$8 online, \$10 at the door. www.madisondrama.com.

Blackie and the Rodeo Kings at 7:30 p.m.; **The Bastard Suns, Murphy's Kids and Feed God Cabbage** at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

18th Annual Christmas Craft Show. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Oakton Church of the Brethren, 10025 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Hand-crafted gifts, jewelry, stationery, baby items, kitchen accessories, Thanksgiving and Christmas décor, fresh-baked pies and cakes, fabric and notions and more. Lunch available for purchase. Free admission. 703-281-4411 or www.oaktonbrethren.org.

English Conversation Group. 10 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. English conversation group. Adults. 703-938-0405.

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

Friday Flicks. 10:30 a.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Join us for a movie. Call for title. All ages. 703-790-8088.

Catie Curtis With Meg Hutchinson. 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Folk-rock. \$22. www.wolftrap.org.

National Acrobats of The People's Republic of China- Direct from Beijing. 8 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Centuries ago, performers in China combined folk arts using common household objects as props,

to create an acrobatic art unique to their culture. In 1950, the government established the National Acrobats of the People's Republic of China to preserve and carry on the art form. \$24-\$48, youth through grade 12 half price when accompanied by adult. 1-888-945-2468.

42nd Annual Treasury of Art Show and Sale. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. Meet the artists. Enjoy the Serenada String Quartet and light refreshments at the 7 p.m. Reception. 703-319-3971 or www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

Artist's Reception. 5-9 p.m. Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road N.E., Vienna. “Coastal Reflections” with Donna Turgeon. The exhibit will be open through November. 703-281-2350.

SATURDAY/NOV. 19

An Evening with Andre Rieu. 8 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Accompanied by the 60-piece Johann Strauss Orchestra. Tickets are \$49-\$143, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT. www.andrerieu.com.

Comedy Tonight! A Studio Rep Production. 8 p.m. Alden Theater, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. An evening of PG-13 comedy. \$12. sabrina.anwah@fairfaxcounty.gov.

“The How and the Why.” 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tyson's Corner. On the eve of a prestigious conference, an up-and-coming evolutionary biologist wrestles for the truth with an

SEE ENTERTAINMENT. PAGE 15



At the end of the evening, the audience dubbed senior Danielle Wertz “McLean Idol.”

Danielle Wertz Wins ‘McLean Idol’ Competition

McLean High School (MHS) students competed in McLean's own Burke Theatre, Oct. 27-29, in the first annual “McLean Idol.” In a joint Drama Club and Choral Department production, Directors Amy Poe and Linda Martin presented this competition showcasing student talent and providing a means of funding club and departmental activities.

Prior to the competition, the department held auditions, scouring the school for the most distinguished vocal talent. After careful deliberation, 24 students were selected to perform, twelve each on Thursday, Oct. 27 and Friday, Oct. 28 with the top contestants from each night proceeding to the finals on Saturday, Oct. 29. Each student chose a song to best demonstrate his or her vocal capability and took the stage to give their chosen

song a unique twist.

From Adele to Rick Astley songs, the student performances pleased both the audience and the guest judges, Karen MacNamera, Zach Roberts, Brent Stone and Lonnie Bickel. After audience voting over two nights, the final round on Saturday featured twelve finalists: junior Kate Lyn Broom, sophomore Sunny Dunn, junior Wolfe Glick, junior Max Johnson, junior Damian Leverett, freshman Lily Lord, junior Madelyn Paquette, sophomore Nancy Pruet, sophomore Cara Schaumberg, freshman Alex Stone, senior Nick Stone, senior Danielle Wertz. At the end of the evening, the audience dubbed senior Danielle Wertz “McLean Idol” with freshman Alex Stone recognized as first runner up and sophomore Nancy Pruet as second runner up.



First Runner-Up, freshman Alex Stone.

THURSDAY/NOV. 17

“The Merchant of Venice.” 7:30 p.m. Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. Shakespeare's story of love, jealousy, greed, and deceit. \$8 online, \$10 at the door. www.madisondrama.com.

Potluck Thanksgiving Brunch for Seniors. 10:30 a.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., S.E., Vienna. Bring a favorite dish serving at least eight. The brunch will include a sing-along, and participants are invited to talk about things for which they are thankful. Free. Advance registration is required at 703-255-6360 or www.viennava.gov.

Russell Brand. 8 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$25-\$45, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT. www.russellbrand.com or www.patriotcenter.com.

Ryan Montbleau Band and Sister Sparrow & The Dirty Birds. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

18th Annual Christmas Craft Show. 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Oakton Church of the Brethren, 10025 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Hand-crafted gifts, jewelry, stationery, baby items, kitchen accessories, Thanksgiving and Christmas décor, fresh-baked pies and cakes, fabric and notions and more. Lunch available for purchase. Free admission. 703-281-4411 or www.oaktonbrethren.org.

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

Book Discussion. 7 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. The Comedian by Graham Greene. Adults. 703-242-4020.

E-book /E-Reader Instruction. 7:30 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn about library eBooks and how to access them with your compatible device. Call for an appointment. Adults. 703-242-4020.

Patrick Henry Book Club. 1 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Book Discussion. “I Remember Nothing” by Nora Ephron. Adults. 703-938-0405.

Melissa Manchester. 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Award-winning singer/songwriter. \$35. www.wolftrap.org.

Screenings of the Documentary “Happy.” 12 p.m. and 6 p.m. George Mason University Johnson Center Cinema, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A feature-length documentary in search of the keys to happiness and fundamental issues facing modern society. Free. cct.gmu.edu/events/happy.html.

FRIDAY/NOV. 18

Comedy Tonight! A Studio Rep Production. 8 p.m. Alden Theater, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. An evening of PG-13 comedy. \$12. sabrina.anwah@fairfaxcounty.gov.

“The How and the Why.” 8 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tyson's Corner. On the eve of a prestigious conference, an up-and-coming evolutionary biologist wrestles for the truth with an established leader in the field. Tickets \$25. www.1ststage Tyson's.org or 703-854-1856.

“The Merchant of Venice.” 7:30 p.m. Madison High School, 2500

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 14

established leader in the field. Tickets \$25. www.1ststage Tysonson.org or 703-854-1856.

Holiday Craft Boutique & Family Funfest. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. George Mason University Field House, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Craft vendors, entertainment, play zone, scavenger hunt, silent auction and more. Proceeds benefit Belvoir Officers' Spouses' Club programs and scholarships. \$4, \$6 families, age 6 and under free. Boscfundraiser@gmail.com or www.belvoirosc.org.

"The Merchant of Venice." 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. Shakespeare's story of love, jealousy, greed, and deceit. \$8 online, \$10 at the door. www.madisondrama.com.

Holiday Bazaar. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Wooden bowls and carvings, pottery, hand painted floor cloths, knitted hats, glass plates, jewelry, jams and more. 15% of all sales support UUCF. Free admission. melarkins@verizon.net.

Action Item, Burnham, Megan & Liz and Hollywood Ending at 5:30 p.m.; Beer N Black and DJ RBI at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

18th Annual Christmas Craft Show. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Oakton Church of the Brethren, 10025 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Hand-crafted gifts, jewelry, stationery, baby items, kitchen accessories, Thanksgiving and Christmas décor, fresh-baked pies and cakes, fabric and notions and more. Lunch

available for purchase. Free admission. 703-281-4411 or www.oaktonbrethren.org.

Yoga and Meditation Demonstration and Lecture. 10 a.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. The speaker has more than 30 years of practical experience in meditation. bkhush@hotmail.com.

Northern Virginia Country Western Dance Association. Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Road, Falls Church. Line dance lesson at 7:30 p.m., couples dance lesson at 8 pm. Open dancing 8:30-11 p.m. Two step, waltz, line, swing, cha cha and more. Couples and singles welcome. Admission \$5-\$12. Snacks and drinks available. www.nvcwda.org or 703-860-4941.

What's Cooking Around the World. 2:30 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Stories from Japan, Australia, Ireland, Africa and South America. All ages. 703-790-8088.

National Acrobats of The People's Republic of China- Direct from Beijing. 8 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. \$24-\$48, youth through grade 12 half price when accompanied by adult. 1-888-945-2468.

Flutopia. 8 p.m. George Mason University Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. 703-993-1380 or www.music.gmu.edu.

English Country Dance. 7:30 p.m. St. Francis Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. All dances are called, as in square dancing, to live music. Dances are taught, new dancers welcome. \$10 admission.

TheLeesburgAssembly.org or 703-757-8648.

42nd Annual Treasury of Art Show and Sale. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. Meet the artists. 703-319-3971 or www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

11th Annual Enchanted Forest Holiday Extravaganza. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. The Westin Tysons Corner, 7801 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Meet chef Lorraine Wallace, have cupcakes and cocoa with the Snow Fairy Princess or breakfast and a photo with Santa. Cooking demonstrations, children's crafts, gifts and decorations for purchase, silent auction and evening gala celebration. Sponsored by the Junior League of Northern Virginia. Admission \$11. 703-442-4163 or www.jlnv.org.

SUNDAY/NOV. 20

Puppet State Theatre Company from Scotland: The Man Who Planted Trees. 3 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. \$10-\$15. www.mcleancenter.org.

"The How and the Why." 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tyson's Corner. On the eve of a prestigious conference, an up-and-coming evolutionary biologist wrestles for the truth with an established leader in the field. Tickets \$25. www.1ststage Tysonson.org or 703-854-1856.

Holiday Bazaar. 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Wooden bowls and carvings, pottery, hand painted floor cloths, knitted hats, glass plates, jewelry, jams, artwork and more. 15% of all sales support UUCF. Free admission. melarkins@verizon.net.



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Fellowship Baptist Church ... 703-385-8516

First Baptist Church ... 703-938-8525
The Light Mission Church ... 703-757-0877
Vienna Baptist Church ... 703-281-4400
New Union Baptist Church... 703-281-2556

Buddhist

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center... 202-331-2122

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

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

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SPORTS

Andy Boone, an Oakton defensive back, runs with the football during the Cougars' home playoff loss to Lake Braddock last Friday night.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALBERT JACQUEZ

Members of the state title winning James Madison High girls' lacrosse team were presented with championship rings during halftime ceremonies of the recent Marshall versus Madison High football game on Friday, Nov. 4. Last spring, the Madison girls experienced a perfect 22-0 season, capped by their state finals game win over local rival Oakton.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Last Friday morning, Nov. 11, Megan Bisson, a member of the James Madison High girls' lacrosse team, signed a National Letter of Intent to play Div. 1 collegiate women's lacrosse at George Mason University next school year. Bisson, at the celebratory signing event, was surrounded by family and friends. This past spring, she had made an early verbal commitment to play the sport at GMU.

A key member of Madison's state title winning girls' lacrosse team last spring season, Bisson has overcome injury struggles during her high school career as a student-athlete. As a sophomore, she underwent knee surgery. Thereafter, she worked hard in rehabilitation as well as in the classroom where she continued to earn good grades.

Her hard work has paid off and given her the opportunity to play the sport she loves at the college level. This fall, Bisson was a member of Madison High's varsity field hockey team which qualified for the region playoffs.

Currently, she is continuing to work hard in her studies in anticipation of graduating next spring as well as working hard with her Warhawk teammates in preparation for Madison's upcoming lacrosse season.

Oakton High held ceremonies celebrating the signing of collegiate national letters of intent by several of its athletes last Wednesday morning, Nov. 9 in the school's

lecture hall. The Cougar student/athletes who signed letters of intent were: Caroline Coyer (Villanova University women's basketball); Katherine Coyer (Villanova University women's basketball); Ty Carroll (James Madison University baseball); Carly Palmucci (University of Connecticut women's lacrosse); Alex Revel (James Madison University women's lacrosse); Jackie Rupp (University of Florida women's lacrosse); and Matt Dunwoody (Tampa University men's lacrosse).

Prospects Baseball Academy, located on Tyco Rd. in Vienna, held its Inaugural Diamond Club Gala, 'A Night at the Ballpark,' this past Saturday evening, Nov. 12.

The event, a fundraiser for the Academy, recognized the organization's star players who have recently signed collegiate letters of commitment to play Div. 1 collegiate baseball. The special night also included the recognition of various sponsors; special guests (scheduled to be Hall of Fame pitcher Bert Blyleven and former Oriole Bill Ripken); food and beverages; a silent auction; and entertainment for the entire family. Many of those who attended wore baseball attire.

The Academy Principal is Troy Allen. Prospects Baseball Academy is located at 8500B Tyco Road, Vienna, Va. 22182. Their phone number is 571-765-4702.



PHOTO COURTESY OAKTON AD OFFICE

Last Wednesday was a special day for Oakton High athletics as several student-athletes signed their official collegiate letters of intent.

Season Over for Madison, Oakton Football Teams

Both locals lose first round region playoff games.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

Vienna-area high school football teams Madison and Oakton both saw their seasons conclude last Friday night with Northern Region quarterfinals round playoff losses.

Oakton, in its Div. 6 home game versus Lake Braddock, lost 50-21 to conclude the season with an 8-3 record under first-year head coach Jason Rowley, a former Oakton assistant who took over as the team's head coach after Joe Thompson stepped down this past offseason.

Friday's game was tied at 14-14 before the Bruins, the two-time defending region champions and members of the Patriot District, outscored the Cougars 14-0 in the third quarter and 22-7 in the fourth quarter.

Lake Braddock (7-4) will play a semifinals game this Friday night at Centreville High.

Oakton quarterback Tuck Masker completed 18-of-33 passes for 234 yards. He threw a pair of touchdown passes (7 and 21 yards) to Ryan Santoro (8 catches, 102 yards). Oakton's other touchdown came on a two-yard run by Kelly Brooks-Muse. Mike Wandey was Oakton's leading rusher with 77 yards. Kyle Downer caught five passes for the Cougars.

Lake Braddock's offense was clicking as quarterback Tyler Quigley connected on 29 of 44 passes for 384 yards, and six touchdowns. Tanner Quigley (10 catches, 188 yards) caught four of the aerial touchdowns, while Justin Um and Austin Wolfe both caught scoring passes as well. Ron Renzi scored on a 50-yard run for the Bruins.

Lake Braddock was 3-4 at one point this season but won their final three regular season games to gain a three-way tie of the Patriot District title and gain momentum going into the postseason. The Bruins were clicking against Oakton.

"We were motivated to prove we were a good team," said Lake Braddock head coach Jim Poythress.

"It was one of those nights when everything went right. We concentrated on winning the individual battles, taking one play at a time."

Oakton began the season 7-0 as members of the brutally tough Concorde District. The Cougars struggled near the end of the season with lopsided district losses to both Westfield, 35-10, and Centreville, 42-14.

Oakton's final win this season came at Robinson, 42-8, in a week nine game. Other wins for the Cougars this season came over Madison, South County, Woodson, Annandale, Lee, Herndon, and Chantilly.

MADISON HIGH lost two of its first three games this season under first year head coach Lenny Schultz before going 6-1 the rest of the way to conclude a successful 7-3 regular season and a second place finish in the Liberty District standings. But the Warhawks went up against an even hotter team in their Div. 5 quarterfinals round region playoff game at South County last Friday night.

The Stallions, members of the Patriot District, began the season 0-3 under head coach Gerry Pannoni before winning seven straight entering the playoffs. Against Madison, South County continued to roll in a 31-0 win which ended Madison's season and advanced South County to a region semifinals meeting versus Stone Bridge this week.

South County led 7-0 after one quarter, 21-0 at halftime and 31-0 after three quarters. Shane Foley, the Stallions' QB, tossed two touchdown passes in the win. South County's stalwart defense held Madison to less than 100 total yards.

"Playing sound defense, creating turnovers, executing on special teams all were major reasons we were successful," said Pannoni, the South County coach, of his team's win over Madison. "Offensively, we have to be more consistent in the run game if we are to advance."

South County rushed for 130-plus yards in the win but no Stallion ball carrier gained more than 30 yards.

Despite the loss for Madison, it was still a terrific season for the Warhawks, who saw their wins this fall come over Woodson, McLean, Langley, Jefferson, South Lakes, Fairfax, and Marshall.

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Notification is hereby given that HSBC Bank USA, National Association, 1800 Tysons Boulevard, Suite 50, McLean, VA 22102, will file an application with the Comptroller of the Currency on Thursday, October 27, 2011 as specified in 12 CFR 5 for permission to establish a limited service branch at 1600 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 807, Arlington, VA 22209. Any person wishing to comment on this application may file comments in writing with the Director for District Licensing at 340 Madison Avenue, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10017-2613 or NE.Licensing@occ.treas.gov within 30 days of the date of this publication.

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

21 Announcements

Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED 2012 BUDGET

Fairfax County Water Authority (Fairfax Water) is proposing a \$141.3 million budget for calendar year 2012¹. On Thursday, December 15, 2011, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed 2012 Budget in its offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax. The public hearing will begin at 6:30 p.m. A copy of the proposed budget can be viewed on our Web site at <http://www.fairfaxwater.org/>. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed budget should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017. Revenues are expected to be \$141.3 million in 2012. Water sales are expected to provide \$121.9 million. Approximately \$19.4 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2011	2012
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$44,812	\$46,934
Power and Utilities	10,813	11,802
Chemicals	5,958	7,463
Fuel	822	862
Postage	407	416
Insurance	1,211	1,175
Supplies and Materials	3,891	4,044
Contractual Services	8,569	8,480
Professional Services	1,112	1,151
Other	2,130	2,224
Sub-Total	79,725	84,551
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,391)	(9,559)
Total	70,334	74,992

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$40,798,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$13,629,000

¹ Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

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A Predicament



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that I'm stressing about having cancer – too much (really?), but I wish there were an off switch. A figurative button to press that would stop the flow of cancer-induced, cancer-related cancer consumables: information, concern, anxiety, focus, orientation, predisposition, etc. And if I were to attempt to delude myself into saying that I don't think about having cancer all the time – consciously, then I suppose I would admit to it being top of mind (bottom of mind, too) sub-consciously, whether I like it or not – and of course this column is about not liking it.

But as Popeye the Sailor Man so often said: "I yam what I yam." And what I am is a cancer survivor, still surviving 32 months post-diagnosis, after being given a "13-month to two-year" prognosis back in late Feb., 2009. And as much as I want to look forward – and presumably it is much healthier, anecdotally speaking to do so, it is difficult – for me, to not consider the past as some sort of prologue, with a premature end hopefully not in sight, and one whose epilogue has yet to be determined. This preordained time line, indeterminate though it may actually be, wears on me. Not that I want to know what the future holds, but something inside me almost needs to know. Unfortunately, if I were to be realistic though, given my diagnosis, the future is not exactly my oyster. Certainly it's there for the taking, it's simply impossible to know if I'll be alive for the receiving.

Considering that I'm a planner and that I live today for tomorrow instead of living today like there's no tomorrow (ironic given my diagnosis/prognosis), I'm always thinking about what's next and what I have to do to get from point "A" to point "B." Being diagnosed and "prognosed" as I have, my thought processes have been turned upside-down and inside-out. I still know my left from my right, but so many other presumptions about life/the future are no longer what I thought they were or anticipated they would be. If I had to hazard a guess/offer an explanation about the topsy-turvy world in which I now try to exist – normally, I would rationalize it and say: a terminal diagnosis will do that to you.

But I don't want it to do it to me. Yet it does. It's almost as if I've been rewired. All the connections, all the pathways, all the familiar/functioning routes that I understood/took to get through the past, present and future are all jumbled up and not nearly as clear as one would have lived 57 years expecting them to be. All bets are off, as they say. From now on, my life is one big gamble, a risk few players would likely take.

But if I don't take any risks, I may very well succumb to that what ails me. Living like I don't have a future is probably the surest way to not have one. For me to do so, however requires a complete reversal of who I am, how I think. The problem is, I like who I am, who I've become. Nevertheless, continuing to be this person, living and thinking as I do, might be counter-productive (counter-intuitive for sure) to fending off my cancer.

Whatever I decide to do, however I'm able to change, being unhappy and negative about the choices that I make is also counter-productive. I don't exactly want to die young and leave a good-looking corpse (as James Dean is alleged to have said – or a derivation thereof), but nor do I want to be miserable for the rest of my life. I need to find a compromise somewhere/somewhat, some way to live for today – and tomorrow.

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

Where Science and Business Collide

New master's degree programs address employer demand for more science and math knowledge.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Some call it the new MBA. Others say it is one of the keys to employability in a difficult economic environment. Meet the professional science master's degree, a relatively new, two-year graduate degree that combines advanced training in science or math with business skills often desired by employers.

Professional science master's degrees are designed to address what forecasters say is a future of economic growth and job creation driven by advances in science, bringing a new emphasis in science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] education at many levels.

"A master's degree in a STEM field often offers a clear pathway to professional employment and career success ... even in a difficult job market," said Debra Stewart, president of the Council of Graduate Schools. The Council of Graduate Schools conducted a study of graduates with professional science master's degrees and found that 82 percent were employed. More than 55 percent of those were earning \$50,000 or more.

Like many other professional master's degree programs, PSMs are structured to meet the needs of working adults.

"Most of our graduate students are part-time students," said Michelle Marks, associate provost of Graduate Education for George Mason University, and an Oakton resident. "There is a market of students who are interested in graduate school ... and are working full time and don't want take a break in their careers to go to graduate school."

The concept of designing graduate degrees around needs of working professionals is not new. "The motivation for a lot of these programs is access," said Carol B. Lynch, senior project director, Professional Master's Programs Council of Graduate Schools. "When you look at the ads that you see on the Metro and in the newspapers, they are really targeting people who are working and want to advance but don't have the luxury to take time off to go to a more traditional program."

According to the National Professional Science Master's Association (NPSMA), schools in the Washington, D.C., region offering PSM degrees are George Washington University, University of the District of Columbia, American University and University of Maryland University College. Georgetown University and Virginia Tech formed a partnership and created a PSM program in Biomedical Technology Development and Management.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Students study at George Mason University's Arlington Campus. Many professional master's degree programs are structured to meet the needs of working adults.

"[George Mason] is currently developing programs that will likely be PSMs that combine science courses with management [and] workplace skills," said Marks.

PSM programs, which often include internships and training in workplace skills, are generally developed in coordination with employers, including nonprofit organizations, businesses and government agen-

"A master's degree in a STEM field often offers a clear pathway to professional employment and career success ... even in a difficult job market."

— Debra Stewart,
Council of Graduate Schools

cies. Both George Mason University and George Washington University offer professional studies classes at their Arlington campuses.

"We do a lot of market research, and we also have advisory boards and professional groups that we talk to about what is actually needed [in the workplace]," said Kathleen Burke, Ph.D., dean of the College of Professional Studies at George Washing-

ton University. "Then we can create programs based on what we know are specific needs."

Unlike traditional graduate science programs, PSM programs are generally terminal; they do not lead to a Ph.D.

"[Part-time] programs are really geared towards people achieving a breadth of business knowledge and then moving into the workforce," said Marks, "as opposed to a more traditional master's program where people may very well move onto a Ph.D."

Are professional degrees like the PSM less rigorous than their traditional counterparts? Just because the courses are offered nights and weekends doesn't mean that the program is less strenuous, university officials said.

"Our programs are very high quality. They are selective," said Burke. "They have admissions requirements and standards that are very comparable to other graduate programs. ... We don't admit very many students into our programs."

While the overall enrollment of new students at U.S. graduate schools fell 1.1 percent in 2010, according to the annual CGS Survey of Graduate Enrollment and Degrees, the number of students entering science and engineering programs grew as much as 8.6 percent.

Marks adds, "I don't think there is a rigor difference, certainly not at George Mason, between [traditional] programs [and those] that are offered on the weekends or evenings or in a format that appeals to students who have full-time jobs."

Graduate Open Houses

Learn more about professional studies programs at one of the following information sessions. Reservations are required.

George Mason University Graduate Admissions session and tour, Sunday, Nov. 20, Presentation at noon (Johnson Center Bistro, lower level); followed by tour at 1 p.m.; <http://admissions.gmu.edu/rsvp/registercampustoursgrad.asp?event=campusToursGrad&tourType=GR&dateSelected=11/20/2011>.

Wednesday, Dec. 14, Tour at 6 p.m.; followed by presentation at 7 p.m. (Johnson Center Cinema, lower level).

Thursday, Jan. 5, 2012 Presentation at 1 p.m. (Johnson Center Cinema, lower level); followed

by tour at 2 p.m.

George Washington University Arlington Campus

Saturday, Nov. 19, 2-4 p.m. Arlington Education Center, 950 North Glebe Road, 6th Floor, Arlington.

George Washington University Virginia Science and Technology Campus

Engineering Management, Accelerated M.S. Tuesday, Nov. 21 or Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m. Exploration Hall, 20101 Academic Way, Ashburn, Call 703-726-8253.

Electrical Engineering, M.S.E.E. (Thursday, Nov. 17, 6:30 p.m. Exploration Hall, 20101



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