

# Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

NOVEMBER 24, 2011



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

## At Rehearsal

Dressed for her Arabian dance, Kaila Anderson talks to a group of angels off stage as the dress rehearsal begins Sunday afternoon, Nov. 20, at West Potomac High School for the 3rd Annual Community Nutcracker. More photos, page 3.

## Auditing the Police

Six-month audit of Fairfax Police expected soon, opening way for potential review board.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE GAZETTE

Early next year, the Fairfax County auditor will release an investigation of the Fairfax County Police Department that could be the first step in an effort to create a citizen review board. Or it could lead members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to abandon the idea altogether.

County Executive Anthony Griffin and Police Chief David Rohrer have already recommended a plan that would have no public role in oversight. Now the results of the county auditor's report will serve as a backdrop for how that recommendation is received by the supervisors.

"We'll be looking at whether incidents are fairly and thoroughly

investigated, whether they are timely and officers have the necessary training," said Chris Pietsch, director of the Internal Audit Office. "At this point, we're still at the beginning stages of this."

Back in June, the Public Safety Committee of the Board of Supervisors met with Griffin and Rohrer to hear their recommendation, which would essentially freeze the public out of any form of oversight. The move was a major setback for a group known as Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability, which has been pushing for almost two years to create a citizen review board. Now the effort has been put on hold while the auditor conducts a review of the department, which is expected to conclude in March.

**"The county is really dragging its feet on this."**

— **Nicholas Beltrante, executive director, Citizens for Police Accountability**

SEE SIX-MONTH, PAGE 18



COURTESY OF RESTON IMPACT

Sal and Anita Culosi appear on the cable access show "Reston Impact," confronting Fairfax County Police Chief David Rohrer on the death of their son.

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THIS WEEK IN MOUNT VERNON

## RECenter To Host Ice Skating Show

On Saturday, Dec. 10, experienced and beginner skaters of all ages will show off their skating skills at Mount Vernon RECenter's Holiday Ice Show. This neighborhood event from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. features skaters who practice regularly at the RECenter's indoor ice arena. The public is invited to celebrate the season with the Mount Vernon ice skating community at this fun, family-friendly show. Admission is free.

See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec/mv/mv-ice.htm>.

## New Hope Housing Seeks Donations

With the holiday season quickly approaching, New Hope Housing is reaching out to the community to assist in providing for homeless men, women and children in the area. Gift cards donations from Giant, Safeway, Shopper's and Wal-Mart through Dec. 23 are needed to provide homeless individuals and families with meals.

Gift cards can be delivered or mailed to: New Hope Housing, ATTN: Chris Bramante, 8407-E Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA 222309. For more information on how to make a difference this holiday season contact Chris Bramante at [cbramante@newhopehousing.org](mailto:cbramante@newhopehousing.org) or 703-799-2293 x22.

## Home for Holidays Extends Deadline

Reader response from the Home for Holidays response has been generous for a military unit serving in the Middle East. Contributors are providing gift cards to the vendors available at the undisclosed location. More than 125 gift cards to Starbucks, Subway, Amazon, Kentucky Fried Chicken and iTunes have been given, along with chocolates, CDs and DVDs from readers of the Mount Vernon Gazette.

Kathlyn Boykin's first grade class at Hollin Meadows Elementary School made the event a class project in which students handcrafted holiday cards and purchased gift cards from their piggy bank funds to show their support. Numerous other church and neighborhood groups and individuals have responded to the project that Alexandrian 1st Lt Emily Vernon requested in hopes of bringing her troops closer to home during the holidays while they serve in the Middle East.

The project deadline has been extended through Nov. 30. Donations of \$5-10 gift cards to Starbucks, Subway, Amazon, Kentucky Fried Chicken and iTunes, along with CDs and DVDs can be mailed or delivered to Home for the Holidays, Mount Vernon Gazette, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 for receipt on or before Wednesday, Nov. 30 in order for delivery overseas before Christmas.

## One God Ministry Opens New Church

The Rev. (Dr.) Johnson A. Edosomwan, Apostle and Trustee of One God Ministry, announced the opening of a second Northern Virginia church on Nov. 13, at 6318 Grovedale Drive, Alexandria.

The new One God Ministry Alexandria church houses a sanctuary, learning library, usher room, hospitality room, and state-of-the-art technology support systems. One God Ministry is a non-denominational, multi-racial, Bible-based

Christian Church dedicated to the spiritual growth and enrichment of individuals and families.

Worship Service is held at 5 p.m. every Sunday and Bible Study and Prayer Service is held at 7 p.m. every Tuesday. A formal official grand opening of the new church facility is scheduled for spring 2012. Visit [www.onegodministry.org](http://www.onegodministry.org) or call 703-822-9898.



PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

The young angels watch in awe as the cast moves onstage for a rehearsal of the finale of the Nutcracker.

## Preparing for Community Nutcracker

The 3rd Annual Community Nutcracker will be held from Thursday, Dec. 1 through Saturday, Dec. 3, at West Potomac High School. This holiday tradition with a modern twist features more than 100 community members performing a range of talents including ballet, pointe, tap, jazz, swing, hip hop, gymnastics and lyrical.

The performance is directed by Alexandria Dance's Jennifer Difilippo, West Potomac Dance Academy's Courtney Betzel and Adrienne Magnunson.

As community performance, participants are from all walks of life — parents, grandparents, children, teachers, business owners, a local artist, athletes, and dancers.

Local students come from local public and private schools including St. Luke's Day School, Aldersgate Preschool, Hollin Meadows Math and Science Elementary, Fort Hunt Elementary, Wayneswood Elementary, Belle View Elementary, Stratford Landing Elementary, Washington Mill Elementary, Browne Academy, St. Louis, St. Mary's, Carl Sandburg Middle School, Burgundy Farms School and West Potomac High School.

Performances are Thursday, Dec. 1, at 5 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 2 at 6:30 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 3, at 2:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. at West Potomac High School Auditorium, 6500 Quander Road, Alexandria.



Clara (Fiona Penn) greets her godfather, Uncle Drosselmeyer (Matt Stover) at the holiday party. Below, a tapping soldier talks with the little angels while the dancers take their places for the finale on stage.



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Mount Vernon community family and friends are invited to join us and welcome the holiday season in a very special way.

Ceremony includes Festival of Music by Cleve Francis, MD.

Reception follows in the cafeteria.

To honor a family member or friend, call **703-664-7260** to make a \$5 donation or for more information about the 2011 Lights of Love ceremony.

**Saturday, December 3, at 5:00 p.m.**

in the Hospital Main Lobby

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Special Guest Appearance by Santa Claus  
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Inova Health System is a not-for-profit healthcare system.

**Volunteer Jacki Tinsley sorts through some of the 2,700 coats collected for needy children throughout the region prior to distribution to schools and nonprofits Oct. 26 at Penn Daw Fire Station 11.**



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/ THE GAZETTE

# Keeping Children Warm

**Record 2,700 coats collected for area children.**

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
THE GAZETTE

**M**ore than 2,700 children in Alexandria and Fairfax County will be warm this winter thanks to a new coat made possible by the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, the Alexandria City Sheriff's Department and the national nonprofit Operation Warm.

"This is a wonderful program," said ACT for Alexandria Executive Director John Porter. "Combined this year with Operation Warm, it has exceeded all expectations in providing coats to children in Alexandria and throughout Fairfax County."

Spearheaded for several years by Capt. Willie

Bailey and members of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department, this year's coat drive collected over 2,700 new coats in a new partnership with Operation Warm.

"You have put smiles on the faces of so many young people," said Mount Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland prior to the Oct. 26 distribution of coats at Penn Daw Fire Station 11. "Not only will these children be warm, they'll have something on their back that they can be proud of and feel like they fit in."

Primo's Restaurant provided food for the dozens of retired firefighters and volunteers who gathered before dawn to sort through the coats and prepare them for distribution to representatives of 55 area schools and nonprofit organizations.

"This shows the incredible power of our community," said Mount Vernon District School Board representative Dan Storck to the firefighters and volunteers in attendance. "You see that no one is left behind. Thank you for seeing the needs of our community and addressing them."



**Fairfax County Board of Supervisors chairman Sharon Bulova and Mount Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland listen to remarks at the Oct. 26 distribution of coats collected for needy children throughout the region.**



**Retired firefighter Tim Walker, left, joins volunteers Kathleen Vorbau, Rene Chipres and Jacki Tinsley in distributing coats collected for more 2,200 children throughout Northern Virginia.**



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**Alex./Mt. Vernon \$574,950**  
**3703 Maryland Street**  
Spectacular, updated 4 BR/2.5+.5 BA Colonial w/circular driveway+dbl carport. Huge 25x13 remodeled kit: granite, maple, SS, center isle & gas fpl. Family room off kit also w/gas fpl, views & access to 2-tiered deck w/gazebo & hot tub w/fenced, private backyard. Updated baths & windows. LL w/rec rm, half bath & huge utility/storage rm. Over 130K in upgrades & renovations. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir.



**Alex./Westgate \$594,900**  
**9010 Volunteer Drive**  
A fresh look for this beautiful traditional colonial w/2 car side garage. Freshly painted exterior & interior w/extensive new landscaping on a .5 acre lot. Stunning sun room addition. Hardwood floors on main & upper levels. Gas FPL in family room, wood FPLs in living room & basement. Lovely kitchen w/corion counters, large unfinished basement w/rear entrance. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir.



**Alex./Riverside Estates \$409,900**  
**8507 Wagon Wheel Road**  
Lovely, updated, 5 BR/3 BA Split -walkout distance to elementary & high schools. Double pane windows, freshly painted interior, & beautifully refinished hdwd floors on main level. Lower lvl offers 2 spacious bedrooms, full bath, family rm w/fpl, large utility/workshop & walkout to a lovely screened porch. Great location. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir, 25 to National Airport.



**Alex./Berkshire East \$374,900**  
**5845 Berkshire Court**  
Lovely 3 BR/2.5 BA Town House - Replacement DBL pane windows, neutral beige wall-to-wall carpet on main & upper levels plus a huge family rm on lower level w/walkout to a beautiful patio & landscaped, fenced backyard. Walk to Huntington Metro, minutes to I-495, 5 minutes to Old Town, 15 minutes to Ft. Belvoir (S) & National Airport (N).



**Alex./Sulgrave Manor \$369,900**  
**4213 Adrienne Drive**  
Lovely 3BR + Den, 2.5BA Split level on a huge beautiful .71 acre lot in popular Mt. Vernon community of Sulgrave. Vaulted ceilings on main lvl, hdwd floors on main & upper lvls. Potential for a short sale & 3rd party approval. Only one trust. Selling As Is but house is in good shape. Purchasers welcome to do a home inspection. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir, 15 to Ntl Airport, 25/30 to Pentagon/D.C. Great Opportunity!! U/C, taking backups!!



**Alex./Woodland Park \$3,295**  
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Beautiful, updated contemporary on spectacular .84 acre wooded, waterfront lot w/shared dock. Wonderful view from a wall of double pane picture windows. Remodeled kitchen & master bath suite & newer high efficiency HVAC. Lovely sun porch addition w/gorgeous views of landscaped brick walkway, patio & water. Lg 2 car garage. Walk to Mt. Vernon Estate or GW bike path. Enjoy a scenic commute along the Potomac River. 5 mins to Ft. Belvoir, 15 to Metro & Old Town, 25 to National Airport & 30/35 to Pentagon/D.C.

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## United Community Ministries

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As we celebrate this holiday season, UCM would like to thank the Mount Vernon community for its tremendous generosity. Because of your financial support, UCM was able to accomplish so much in Fiscal Year 2011:

- 13,000 individuals from 5,000 households received services from UCM.
- UCM's Basic Needs Program served 9,400 people with emergency food, financial assistance for rent or utilities and other services.



- UCM's Workforce Development Center provided 774 individuals with job readiness training, work placements and other assistance.
- UCM's two-year transitional housing programs provided intensive counseling, case management and life skills classes to 24 families and 9 single individuals with the goal of bringing participants to independent living.



- Healthy Families Fairfax, a highly successful child abuse and neglect prevention program, served 627 families. Zero cases of abuse were found.
- More than 1,300 individuals took part in programming at UCM's Community Centers in the Sacramento and Creekside Village neighborhoods.
- Fifteen children graduated from UCM's Bryant Early Learning Center ready to start kindergarten this fall.



**Your financial support is greatly needed and deeply appreciated. Please send your year-end gift to:**

United Community Ministries  
7511 Fordson Road  
Alexandria, VA 22306

*Thank You for Your Support & Happy Thanksgiving!*



### Mount Vernon Gazette

UCM is thankful for the generous support of the Mount Vernon Gazette.

## BUSINESS

# Buying Firewood: Don't Get Burned

BY MICHAEL K. BOHN  
THE GAZETTE

Heart and home beckon as the holiday season approaches. Comforting visions come to mind — Grandma's house, family gatherings and turkey dinner. Another touchstone of the time, a crackling fire in the fireplace, is one that warms both the soul and hands.

Sorting through the pre-holiday to-do list, one can hit on a bit of seasonal bother — buying firewood.

Most everyone has a bad firewood story to tell. Paying too much for less than ordered is a favorite. Green wood, rotten wood, soft wood; vendors who dump and disappear. Pick one.

But there's some good news here. Both the Commonwealth and Fairfax County are on residents' side and their help is cause for some thanksgiving. Both governments offer assistance on buying firewood, helping to minimize problems ranging from cost anxiety to outright fraud.

**QUANTITIES.** Virginia law requires that all firewood be sold by the cord or cord fractions. A cord is 128 cubic feet of tightly stacked wood. That's a load with the pieces arranged in parallel rows that measures 8' x 4' x 4'. Since no one sells firewood in 4' lengths, visualize a stack of 18" pieces that is 4' high and 21'-4" long. A lot of wood.

It is a misdemeanor in Virginia to sell firewood by the "face," face cord," "rack," or a "bunch of wood." A half cord is fine, or even 1/16 of a cord—8 CF or a stack 2' x 2' x 2'. Retail establishments often sell small amounts that are not cord increments, but authorities rarely enforce the regulation on non-bulk sales.

For more information, visit the commonwealth's firewood website: <http://www.dof.virginia.gov/mgt/firewood.htm>

**SELLERS.** Business entities in Fairfax County that have annual gross revenues greater than \$10,000 need a Fairfax County Business, Professional and Occupational License. If Joe Bob's Tree Service meets that criteria, it needs a BPOL to sell firewood on the side.

Folks who live in Culpepper and

sell firewood door-to-door in the Mount Vernon area need a Fairfax County Solicitor's License. They must show their license if asked. See the following link for details: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/education/solicitors.htm>.

**TRANSACTIONS.** The Commonwealth requires vendors of non-bulk firewood provide the following information: Species of the wood (oak, maple, for example), quantity in terms of a cord or cord fraction, and origin. A receipt or sales ticket must reflect this minimum information. A nursery or produce stand owner who doesn't offer all of this won't see jail time, but it's the law nevertheless.

Dale Saunders, program manager in Virginia's Office of Weights Measures, reports that he has received no complaints regarding non-bulk firewood sales.

But for a homeowner accepting a bulk firewood delivery, a sales ticket is important in the event of discrepancies. The seller must provide a written invoice with company information, quantity in terms of cords, price in terms of dollars per cord, and date.

**ADVICE.** "Be cautious when dealing with 'woodchucks,'" says David Reidenbach, speaking of door-to-door firewood salesmen. Reidenbach, a Fairfax County consumer affairs official, added, "I urge consumers to first ask to see their Solicitor's License and check for a sign on his truck." If lacking, Reidenbach advises people to decline. If Chuck is legit, Reidenbach suggests then asking about the issue of cords and cubic feet. If the seller, for example, is selling a face cord for \$150, then ask what that equals in cord fractions and negotiate a price accordingly. For example, if you determine the volume equals one third of a cord (43 CF), then offer a third of an average cord price — \$250 x .33 = \$82.50. See Prices below. Don't trust, but verify.

To help consumers establish firewood amounts offered by curbside bulk sellers, Reidenbach's office offers an online firewood guide at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/education/firewood.pdf>

Among other tips, the packet explains that a full-size pickup truck (8-foot bed) will carry about a half cord neatly stacked to the

SEE FIREWOOD, PAGE 10

## BUSINESS

# Virginia Florist Hosts Trunk Show

**K**evin and Kathy Green, owners of The Virginia Florist, hosted the second of two Echo of the Dreamer trunk shows at their shop in the Belle View Shopping Center on Thursday, Nov. 17. Established in 1993, the Echo of the Dreamer jewelry line by Margaret Thurman is known for its hand-made, one-of-a-kind creations.

Guests at the trunk show were treated to a festive holiday setting at the floral and upscale gift shop while browsing through the jeweled creations.

The Virginia Florist has been a family owned and operated floral business since 1957. The shops are located at 1632 Belle View Blvd. and 7908 Ft. Hunt Road in Mount Vernon.



**Eclectic combinations of stones and precious metals are the hallmark of the Echo of the Dreamer jewelry line.**



**Virginia Florist co-owner Kevin Green greets guests in the shop showroom in Belle View.**

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

### BULLETIN BOARD

To have a notice listed, e-mail [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com). Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

**UCM's food pantry** depends on community donations and its shelves are becoming increasingly bare this summer! Canned meat and fish are greatly needed, as well as canned soups,

fruits and vegetables. You can help by dropping off food donations at UCM's main office, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria. UCM's food pantry accepts food donations Monday - Friday, from 9 am to 5:30 p.m. and the first Sunday of the month from 9:30 am to 1:00 p.m.

**UCM's Back Porch Thrift Store** is

in need of donations of furniture. UCM will pick up furniture, as well as other larger donations, or they can be dropped off at the back of the store Monday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. To arrange for pick-ups, call 703-768-7106, ext. 320. Located at the Mt. Vernon Crossroads Shopping Center at 7838 Richmond Highway, Alexandria.

# Thanksgiving



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### Good Shepherd Catholic Church

#### Mass Schedule

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5:00 pm; 6:30 pm (en Español)

#### Sunday

7:30; 9:00; 10:30 am; 12:00 Noon  
2:00 pm (en Español)  
6:30 pm Mass (Starts Sept. 11)

#### Weekdays

(Mass or Communion Service) 9:00 am (followed by Rosary)

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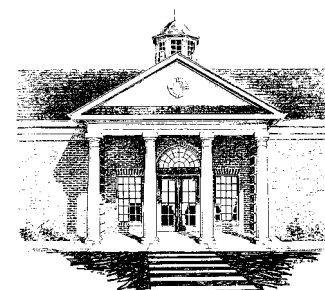
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# OPINION

## Children's Gazette

Call for student artwork and writing; deadline Dec. 9.

**D**uring the last week of each year, The Mount Vernon Gazette devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

The annual Children's Gazette is a tradition of well over a decade, and we begin getting inquiries from teachers and parents about submitting artwork and writing almost as soon as summer is over.

### EDITORIAL

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories and photographs.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or on CD. Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Please provide the submissions no later than Friday, Dec. 9.

Some suggestions:

❖ Drawings, paintings, photographs of 2-D and 3-D artwork that have been digitally photographed or scanned as .jpeg files.

❖ Short stories, poetry, essays, class-wide prompt writings.

❖ Opinion pieces about family, friends, movies, traffic, sports, food, video games, toys, trends, etc.

❖ News stories from school newspapers.

We welcome contributions from families,

public and private schools, individuals and home schoolers.

Email submissions for The Gazette to Steven Mauren at [smauren@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:smauren@connectionnewspapers.com).

To send CDs of artwork or CDs of typed submissions, mark them clearly by school and/or hometown and mail the CD to Children's Gazette, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

## Kurspahic Takes Over as Editor of Four More Papers

Kemal Kurspahic, longtime Connection managing editor, has taken the helm of the Springfield Connection, Burke Connection, Fairfax Connection and Fairfax Station/Lorton/Clifton Connection. He adds these responsibilities to his editing of the Vienna/Oakton Connection, McLean Connection, Great Falls Connection, Reston Connection and Oak Hill/Herndon Connection.

Kurspahic, who has won some of the most prestigious international awards as well as many awards for local news coverage, focuses on a well-honed local mission with a lean team of reporters, photographers and freelancers, as well as editorial assistant Amna Rehmatulla.

Kurspahic was among the 50 World Press Freedom Heroes named more than a decade

ago, honored again in Vienna, Austria in September, 2010.

In December 1988, Kemal Kurspahic was named editor-in-chief of Oslobodjenje, Sarajevo's 70,000 circulation daily newspaper, the first editor of that paper not appointed by the Communist Party. Then after the communists were ousted, Kurspahic maintained editorial independence against a coalition of nationalist parties who wished to control the press.

During the siege of Sarajevo, with snipers' bullets flying, shelling which destroyed the paper's building, no electricity and very little newsprint, Kurspahic guided the paper's multi-ethnic staff in a nuclear bomb shelter, publishing the paper, providing one of the city's only sources of information. Often its pages were filled with lists of the dead.

A U.S. citizen since 2001, Kurspahic is the author of several books, including "As Long as Sarajevo Exists" and "Prime Time Crime." He was a Nieman Fellow at Harvard, Senior Fellow at the U.S. Institute for Peace and also worked for the United Nations.

Questions? Comments? Story ideas? You can reach Kurspahic at [Kemal@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:Kemal@connectionnewspapers.com).

- MARY KIMM,

[MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](mailto:MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM);  
ON TWITTER @MARYKIMM

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## State Needs Second Job

To the Editor:

When the Virginia legislature convenes in January, lawmakers will be dealing, as usual, with many issues, quite a few of which are elements of one big issue: the budget. Some politicians compare budget cutbacks to a struggling family's belt-tightening. No, we shouldn't be spending more than we have, and — at the state level — we can't. But there is more to balancing a budget, whether household, federal, or state, than just spending less. When cuts are no longer feasible, you have to earn more income to make up the difference. At home that means taking another job or finding work that pays better. For the state, it means finding new revenue.

Cuts alone will not resolve Virginia's current fiscal crisis. Education funding has been slashed by 15 percent, social services by 10 percent, and 12,000 people have been laid off by local governments as \$1 billion of state aid to localities has evaporated. And what have we got? Fewer teachers in the classroom, fewer police on the streets, and fewer services avail-

able to Virginia's most vulnerable citizens. In other words, balancing the budget with cuts alone is sacrificing our safety and well-being, as well as our investment in tomorrow.

Last year, the state's \$6.2 billion shortfall was closed with federal assistance (which is now gone), accounting tricks (which can't and shouldn't happen again) and massive cuts, often to programs that have a positive return on investment. We're now out of options. A combination of strategic cutbacks and increased revenue is the only responsible solution to Virginia's fiscal crisis. I will gladly pay my share.

Ron Brandt  
Alexandria

## Write

The Gazette welcomes views on any public issue.

Send to:

Letters to the Editor

The Gazette

1606 King St.

Alexandria VA 22314

Call: 703-778-9410.

By e-mail:

[gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)



## Peace Poster Contest

The Mount Vernon Evening Lions announced the winners of the Lions International Peace Poster contest held at Mount Eagle Elementary School. First prize went to Kaia Martin and second prize to La'nyke Hernandez. Both girls are sixth-grade students at Mount Eagle Elementary School. Kaia's poster will advance to the VA District 24-A competition. The theme for the contest this year is Children Know Peace.

## Mount Vernon Gazette

[www.MountVernonGazette.com](http://www.MountVernonGazette.com)

Newspaper of Mount Vernon  
@MtVernonGazette

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A Connection Newspaper





MVUC Minister Kate Walker and her husband Mark Gorman serve up another bowl of homemade soup.



Pam Koger-Jesup, owner and craft artist of a Pidge Original, finishes up a silk and wool scarf at the holiday shop.



Mary Ciske's dolls gaze out at the crafts and shoppers that filled the church at Saturday's fair.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

## 50th Anniversary For Holiday Shop

The halls and hallways of the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church were overflowing with tables of handmade arts, crafts, baked goods, preserves and more at the annual holiday shop on Saturday, Nov. 19. Celebrating its 50th anniversary, the holiday shop gave raffle tickets to shoppers for each \$5 purchase. More than 50 door prizes were given away. In the Hollin Hall House, lunch was set up with Minister Kate Walker and her husband Mark Gorman serving up homemade soup.



Kiki McDonnell and Madison Kennedy volunteered to sell raffle tickets for the handmade Ginger Bread House.

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## BUSINESS

# Firewood Buyer Beware

FROM PAGE 6

rim of the truck box, or in a jumbled pile that reaches the height of the cab top. A compact truck (6-foot bed) similarly loaded will equal about a quarter cord.

If you arrange for a vendor to deliver a cord of firewood, and it arrives neatly stacked in the truck, jointly measure the volume with the seller before dumping to confirm that you are getting a full cord. More often the wood is in a tangled pile in a truck, so consumers have to rely on the delivery invoice in order to reconcile any amount variances after stacking.

Green wood that has just been cut and split burns poorly because of its moisture content, hence the standard of "seasoned" firewood. Surface water from rain isn't the main problem, but rather moisture within the wood fibers. It takes many months for the absorbed water to at least partially evaporate. Splitting hastens the drying or seasoning process.

Seasoned firewood consumers will buy a cord the year before they need it so it can dry more. Stack in an area with good air circulation and cover the top. For more advice, see <http://www.dof.virginia.gov/mgt/firewood.htm>

**PRICES.** Neither the county nor commonwealth regulate firewood prices. Several local sellers offered their prices during the week of Nov. 7 for delivered and dumped cords, all for seasoned hardwood, mostly oak. Stacking charges are extra.

❖ Absolute Tree, 8601 Richmond Highway. \$275/cord.



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE

❖ EP Lawn and Tree, 8801 Richmond Highway. \$250/cord. EP also offers a "face cord," volume unknown, for \$100.

❖ Holly, Woods and Vines, 8453 Richmond Highway. \$375/cord.

❖ McGee Landscaping, 7835 Richmond Highway (formerly GreenSpace Garden Center). \$300/cord.

❖ Moore & Wright Tree Service, 4704 Manor Drive (wood lot is on Richmond Highway between Sacramento Drive and Old Mill Road). \$280/cord.

❖ Pinto Contractors, corner of Martha Street and Richmond Highway. \$200/cord.

**COMPLAINTS.** Virginia: Call the Consumer Protection Hotline, 800-552-9963 or 804-786-2042. Fairfax County: 703-222-8435 or visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/consumer/complaints.htm>.

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# PEOPLE



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

## Chef's Work

Former White House executive pastry chef Roland Mesnier at the Mount Vernon Estate Gift Shop signed his books through the afternoon outside the atrium. Mesnier began working on the Mount Vernon Estate gingerbread house with his staff on Nov. 14. The project will last a few weeks.



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

## Remembering Their Own

The Harmony Heritage Singers, retired men who love to sing together in the barber-shop style, performed to a standing-room-only audience at George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate in the Robert H. and Clarice Smith Auditorium on Veterans Day, Nov. 11. Above, the Sliders Quartet is joined by USA Sergeant Brian Colvin.



## Eagle Scout

Mount Vernon High School student Max Rayman has earned his Eagle Award in Boy Scouting — the highest award in the Boy Scouts. For his project, Max led a group of Boy Scouts as they constructed three "Square Foot" gardens for the three kindergarten classes at Washington Mill Elementary School. The gardens were 6x6-feet and each garden divided into nine 12x12-inch squares. Trellises and walking paths covered in mulch completed the project. The kindergarten students were excited to have a garden of their own. Max is an active member of Boy Scout Troop 680 at St. Louis Church.



## Employment Training

U.S. Rep. James Moran, Rodney Lewis, White House Fellow, Office of the First Lady, Jyll Turner, manager of the Intel Computer Club House at Gum Springs and Jennifer Connor, George Mason Student Veteran program manager, talk about the launch of Intel Veteran Employment Training program in the Intel Computer Club House at Gum Springs in Alexandria.



The Kate Waller Barrett Chapter members are, from left, Barbara McJoynt, Tina Adamson, Carol Pearce, Lee McKenna, Susan Floyd, Regent of the Chapter, Sigrid Smith and Phyllis Kelley.



PHOTOS BY PHYLLIS KELLEY

DAR and SAR members at Washington's tomb include, from left, front row, Susan Floyd, Regent Kate Waller Barrett Chapter; Floyd Ryan; Emily Elston, Children of the American Revolution member, who led the Pledge to the Flag; Don Kraft, Barbara McJoynt and Jack Shawn, and back row, Tina Adamson, Jack Coulter, Paul Briggs, Kenan Torans and Mike Elston.

# Ceremony Honors Veterans at Mount Vernon Estate

The Kate Waller Barrett Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the George Washington Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR)

greeted more than 150 veterans and active military visitors at the Tomb of George Washington on Veterans Day, Nov. 11.

The DAR Chapter has for years spent Veterans Day handing out carnations to

the military service members who visit Mount Vernon on this day of remembrance. A book of honor is kept next to the Tomb where all enlisted and veterans are asked to sign.

A ceremony is held jointly by SAR and DAR in the afternoon where two veterans place the ceremonial wreath inside the Tomb. This year the Prince William Fife and Drum performed for the crowd.



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## THEATER

# What the Dickens?

MetroStage revives 'A Broadway Christmas Carol.'



Tracey Stephens and Michael Sharp in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/THE GAZETTE  
Michael Sharp as Scrooge in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.



Michael Sharp and Tracey Stephens in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.



Michael Sharp as Scrooge and Matthew Anderson in 'A Broadway Christmas Carol' at MetroStage.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
THE GAZETTE

Oh come, all ye faithful fans of musical theater. MetroStage is once again staging the wickedly funny "A Broadway Christmas Carol," an irreverent musical take on the classic novel by Charles Dickens.

"It is absolutely drop-dead funny," said audience member Susan Kellom, who attended the Nov. 20 performance of the show. "My sides hurt from laughing."

A parody of the oft-told Dickens tale, the shameless Broadway spoof follows Ebenezer Scrooge as he is visited by the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future. Through the inventive work of creator Kathy Feininger, Scrooge is shown the error of his miserly ways through the songs of Rodgers and Hammerstein, Andrew Lloyd Webber and Stephen Sondheim.

"I came up with the idea when I was in graduate school," said Feininger, who attended the Nov. 20 show. "I was watching Mr. Magoo's Christmas show and he saw Scrooge's face in a doorknocker. I started singing 'Look at that Face' from 'War of the Grease Paint' and things just took off from there."

Feininger uses Broadway's finest to lampoon the holiday classic, cleverly creating lyrics for more

than 30 musical numbers. A talented cast of three takes on the multitude of characters with various backgrounds and personalities.

In the central role of Scrooge is Helen Hayes award-winner Michael Sharp, who also acts as director and choreographer. A versatile performer, Sharp brings his strong vocals and expert comedic timing to the vaudevillian musical numbers.

The Man Who Isn't Scrooge is the inimitable Matthew A. Anderson. Anderson tackles the roles of Bob Cratchit, Scrooge's nephew Fred, the Ghost of Christmas Past and even Tiny Tim with uproarious aplomb.

Tracey Stephens is the Woman Who Isn't Scrooge, playing the ghost of Jacob Marley (yes, as his penance he returns as a woman), the Ghost of Christmas Present, Mrs. Cratchit, Scrooge's fiancé and the woman seeking holiday donations for the poor.

The comically gifted Anderson and Stephens tackle the demanding split-second character and costume changes with astonishing ease while Sharp brings tenderness and vulnerability to the villainous Scrooge. All three have voices that soar throughout the challenging score of Broadway melodies.

Central to the acting perfor-



Tracey Stephens and Matthew Anderson as Mr. and Mrs. Cratchit.

mances is the on-stage musical accompaniment by musical director Elisa Rosman. Rosman, who dons a Phantom of the Opera mask to serve as the Ghost of Christmas Future, sets the mood and atmosphere for each scene with skill and panache.

With dozens of inside jokes aimed at theater buffs, part of the fun of "A Broadway Christmas Carol" is recognizing the songs Feininger has transformed for the show.

"Master of the House" from "Les Miserables" is now "Founder of the Feast," Mrs. Cratchit's ridicule of Scrooge and his meager salary for her husband. "Avenue Q's" "It Sucks to be Me" is hilariously transformed into "It Sucks to be Thee" and "Tomorrow"

from "Annie" stops the show when brilliantly performed as "I'm Going to Walk Tomorrow" by Anderson as Tiny Tim.

Other creative reinventions include Scrooge singing "I'm in the Money" ("42nd Street"), Anderson as Bob Cratchit jubilantly dancing to "Once-a-Year Day" ("Pajama Game") and Anderson and Stephens singing "A Real Nice Pudding," to the tune of "Carousel's" "Clambake."

There is no better way to kick off the holiday season than with "A Broadway Christmas Carol." The inside Broadway references are clever enough for the theatre cognoscenti but thoroughly entertaining for anyone looking for a lively alternative to traditional holiday entertainment.

"A Broadway Christmas Carol" is playing now through Dec. 18 at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. For tickets or more information, call 703-548-9044 or visit [www.metrostage.org](http://www.metrostage.org).

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# ENTERTAINMENT

## NOW THROUGH DEC. 19

**Tavern Toddlers.** Mondays between 10:30 a.m. and noon. Cost is \$7/group of three. A five-visit pass is \$30. A weekly open playtime and a new craft activity each week. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal St., Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-746-4242 or visit [www.gadsbystavern.org](http://www.gadsbystavern.org).

## THURSDAY/NOV. 24

**36th Annual Turkey Trot 5-Miler.** 10 a.m. George Washington Middle School, 1005 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Flat, fast, USATF-certified course, starts and ends at George Washington Middle School. Conducted by the DC Road Runners Club. Chip Timing with Chronotrack. Prizes and awards in all age groups. \$5-\$25. [www.alexandriaturkeytrot.com](http://www.alexandriaturkeytrot.com).

## NOV. 25, 26, 27, DEC. 3, 4, 10, 11

**St. Aidan's Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale.** 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Fresh-cut Fraser Fir Christmas trees and wreaths. All proceeds benefit the under-served in our community and day school education. At St. Aidan's, 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria. Call 703-360-4220 or [www.staidansepiscopal.com](http://www.staidansepiscopal.com).

## FRIDAY/NOV. 25

**Wee Ones Storytime.** 10:30 to 11 a.m. Free. Explore the exciting world around us with some of our favorite stories and songs! For ages 2 and under. At Hooray for Books, 1555 King St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-4092.

**Alexandria Black Friday Sale and Festivities.** 6 a.m. and all day. Free parking at meters and in City-owned garages and parking lots, plus early bird hours and deep discounts at dozens of locally owned stores. Shop as early as 6 a.m. and warm up with a hot beverage and breakfast from some of Old Town's charming cafés. Stay for the City's Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at 7 p.m. Call 703-746-3301 or visit [VisitAlexandriaVA.com](http://VisitAlexandriaVA.com).

**Tree Lighting Ceremony.** 7 p.m. Free. Entertainment features a visit from Santa, a performance of Santa's Frosty Follies by the Metropolitan Fine Arts Center, caroling and a community sing along. At Market Square, 301 King St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-3301 or visit [www.visitAlexandriaVA.com](http://www.visitAlexandriaVA.com).

## NOV. 25 TO DEC. 18

**Mount Vernon by Candlelight.** 5 to 8:30 p.m. recurring weekly on Sunday, Saturday. "Mrs. Washington" hosts an enchanting evening of candlelit tours, fireside Christmas caroling, and hot cider and ginger cookies. The Mount Vernon by Candlelight tour includes the first and second floors, featuring characters from the Washingtons' world guiding visitors through the home and adding ambiance and authenticity to a traditional Christmas evening at Mount Vernon. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Admission: Adults: \$20; Children 11 and under: \$14. Visit [www.MountVernon.org](http://www.MountVernon.org) or call 703-780-2000.

## NOV. 25 TO JAN. 6

**Christmas at Mount Vernon.** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. recurring daily. Holiday visitors will enjoy themed decorations (including 12 Christmas trees), a gingerbread replica of the Mansion created by former White House pastry chef Roland Mesnier, chocolate making demonstrations, and a rare opportunity to tour the third floor of the Mansion. In 1787, George Washington paid 18 shillings to bring a camel to Mount Vernon for his guests' enjoyment. During Christmas at Mount Vernon, visitors can meet Aladdin the camel. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Christmas at Mount Vernon admission is included in SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 16

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## Enjoy festive holiday events at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, and don't forget your holiday shopping list!



**Holiday Open House**  
Thursday, Dec. 1st • 6-9pm • Free Annual Bash  
Add a little Aloha to your holidays! Wear your favorite Hawaiian outfit and enjoy live music by the Aloha Boys, refreshments, and holiday shopping in studios and galleries.

**Artfest 2011 • Dec. 2nd • 6-9pm • Free**  
The Art League's Madison Annex, 305 Madison St.  
The Art League kicks off the holiday season with its annual open house and holiday party, featuring live music, demonstrations, libations, and more!

**Ornament Decorating Workshop**  
Saturday, Dec. 3rd • 1-4pm • Free  
Families are invited to make a memorable keepsake at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum.



**2nd Thursday Art Night: Decadent December**  
Thursday, Dec. 8th • 6-9pm • Free  
Celebrate the season with two holiday staples, chocolate & shopping! The evening will feature holiday shopping, indulgent treats, gallery receptions, a wine tasting, and DIY ornament making.

**Holiday Gift Guide:** From handmade ornaments and playful scarves to small sculptures and elegant jewelry, there's something for everyone!

**Give Back!** Donate to our food drive benefitting Carpenter's Shelter and our toy drive benefitting Community Partners for Children.

[www.torpedofactory.org/happenings](http://www.torpedofactory.org/happenings)



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Thursday, November 24, 2011 from 11am-3pm

### BUFFET INCLUDES:

SALADS WITH SPICED SHRIMP  
INTERNATIONAL CHEESE & FRUIT TRAY  
STEAMSHIP ROUND OF BEEF, HONEY CURED HAM, OVEN ROASTED TURKEY, TENDERLOIN OF BEEF WITH MADEIRA SAUCE, CHICKEN MARSALA, BROILED FLOUNDER  
AN ARRAY OF TRADITIONAL HOLIDAY SIDES  
EGGS BENEDICT, APPLE FILLED PANCAKES, SCRAMBLED EGGS, BACON & SAUSAGE  
ASSORTMENT OF PASTRIES, PIES & FRUIT TARTLETS  
CHAMPAGNE TOAST (LIMIT ONE PER PERSON)

Reservations: 703-960-3400 X 1120  
Seating times: 11am, 1pm & 3pm  
All Inclusive Buffet:  
\$32.95 - Adults  
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FREE - Children under 3  
Price does not include tax or tip

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*Continue the Tradition... and join us!*

Friday, Dec. 2 – Saturday, Dec. 3

Scottish Walk Parade  
A Taste of Scotland  
Heather & Greens Sales

Holiday Designer Tour of Homes  
Deck the Halls with Santa  
A Christmas Marketplace

*Parade: Saturday, Dec. 3rd at 11:00 a.m.*

For tickets and more information visit  
[www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com)



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## ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 15

general admission: \$15/adults; \$7/  
youth. Call 703-780-2000.

### SATURDAY/NOV. 26

**Holiday Open House.** 4 to 6 p.m.  
Holiday items and gifts include  
ornaments, table top trees, angels,  
scarves, jewelry, books, frames,  
stationery, bath and body products,  
books and gifts. At Contessa's  
Garden & Gift, 1906 Mount Vernon  
Ave., Alexandria.

**Wee Ones Storytime.** 10:30 to 11  
a.m. Free. Explore the exciting world  
around us with some of our favorite  
stories and songs! For ages 2 and  
under. At Hooray for Books, 1555  
King St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-  
4092.

### TUESDAY/NOV. 29

**Eat Smart, Stay Healthy.** 11 a.m.  
Hollin Hall Senior Center Hosts "Eat  
Smart, Stay Healthy." With Jolanta  
Coleman, an avid health and  
nutrition advocate. At 1500  
Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Call  
703-765-4573.

### WEDNESDAY/NOV. 30

**DJ Dance Party.** 9 to 11 p.m.  
Admission is \$6. With DJ Dabe  
Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642  
South Pickett St., Alexandria.

**Kirkin' O' The Tartan.** 7 p.m.  
Bagpiper and Scottish Music. 7 p.m.  
At St. Andrew & St. Margaret of  
Scotland Anglican Church, 402 E.  
Monroe Ave., in Alexandria.  
[www.standrewandstmargaret.org](http://www.standrewandstmargaret.org) or  
703-683-3343.

**Free Group Vocal Lessons.** 7 p.m. The lessons  
will be conducted by Ozzi Mask, master director of  
Potomac Harmony Chorus, Sweet Adelines  
International. Held at The Hermitage in Northern  
Virginia, 5000 Fairbanks Ave., Alexandria. To  
reserve your spot, call 703-764-3896 or visit  
[www.potomacharmony.org](http://www.potomacharmony.org).

**Author Talk.** 7:30 p.m. Free. Willis Gidney will  
discuss his book, *Steal the Show*. At Duncan  
Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria.  
Call 703-746-1705.

### THURSDAY/DEC. 1

**Hawaiian-Themed Holiday Bash.** 6 to 9 p.m.  
Free. Wear your favorite Hawaiian outfit and enjoy  
refreshments and live music by the Aloha Boys as  
you shop for one-of-a-kind gifts in studios and  
galleries. A Holiday Gift Guide will be available for  
visitors with unique gift ideas from Torpedo  
Factory artists and galleries for everyone on your  
list. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N.  
Union St., Alexandria. Visit  
[www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org); 703-838-4565

**NOVA Community Chorus.** 7:30 p.m. Winter  
Concert. NOVA Community Chorus, Dr. Mark  
Whitmire, Director, will perform Sergie  
Rachmaninoff's *The Liturgy of St. John  
Chrysostom*, for mixed chorus a capella. At the  
Schlesinger Concert Hall, 3001 North Beauregard  
Road, Alexandria. Contact Dr. Whitmire at  
[mwhitmire@nvcc.edu](mailto:mwhitmire@nvcc.edu) or 703-845-6097.

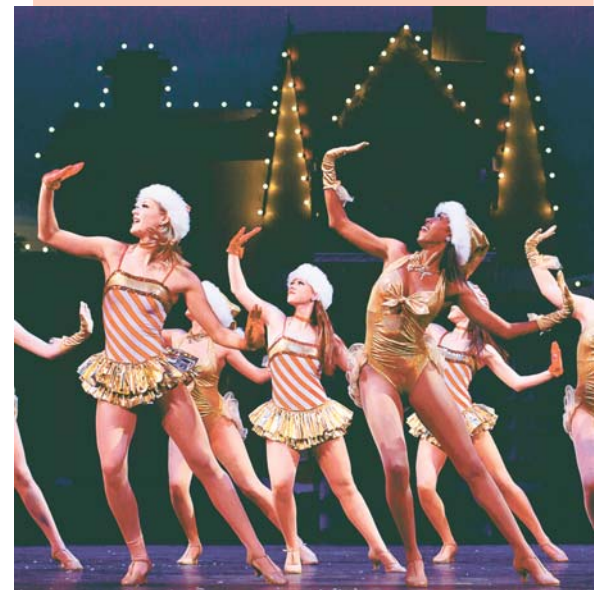
**Dundee (Scotland) School Concert.** 8 p.m. Free.  
Dundee Schools' Music Theatre and the Lord  
Provost of Dundee. The performers are part of a  
20-member delegation that has traveled from  
Dundee to participate in the 41st Annual Scottish  
Christmas Walk, including the Lord Provost of  
Dundee. At the Minnie Howard School  
Auditorium, 3801 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria.

### FRIDAY/DEC. 2

**Del Ray Tree Lighting.** 6 p.m. Come out and enjoy  
the luminaries along Mt. Vernon Avenue; sing  
holiday carols led by Kate Moran Band; enjoy hot  
cider or hot chocolate; have a photo taken with  
Santa. Events are at the Del Ray Farmers Market,  
corner of Mt. Vernon Ave. and East Oxford Ave.  
Volunteers are needed to help decorate the Avenue  
on Nov. 26 at 1 p.m. and Dec. 2 at 2 p.m., to  
distribute the luminaries along Mt. Vernon Ave., 5  
p.m. to light them, and at 10 p.m. to extinguish  
and pick them up. To help, contact Pat Miller at  
[pmiller1806@comcast.net](mailto:pmiller1806@comcast.net).

**Heather and Greens Sale.** 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.  
Shop a selection of Boxwoods, Balsams, Noble Fir,  
Eucalyptus, Magnolias, ribbons, ornaments and  
more. At the George Washington Masonic  
Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria.

**ArtFest 2011.** 6 to 9 p.m. Open house and holiday  
party. Check out where the most hands-on classes  
are taught while enjoying a variety of artist demos,  
2D/3D exhibits, holiday ceramic and jewelry sales



### DEC. 10 TO 18

**ETAP Holiday Musical Extravaganza.** Santa's Special  
Delivery is a family-friendly show suitable for all ages, written  
by Scott Dees and directed by Raynor van der Merwe, featuring  
the ETAP company members and special guest performers Tina  
and Dan Delafield. At the Richard J. Ernst Theatre, 8333 Little  
River Turnpike, Annandale. Performances are Saturday, Dec.  
10 at 1 p.m., 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Dec. 11 at 1 p.m.  
and 4 p.m. Closing weekend: Friday, Dec. 16 at 8 p.m.;  
Saturday, Dec. 17 at 1 p.m., 4 p.m., and 8 p.m.; and Sunday,  
Dec. 18 at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Tickets are \$15 to \$25; visit  
[www.ensemble-tap.org](http://www.ensemble-tap.org) or 703-222-5511.

(held throughout the weekend), live music by Rew  
Smith Band, food and drinks. At The Art League's  
Madison Annex, 305 Madison Street, Alexandria.

**Christmas Marketplace.** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free  
admission. A collection of unique vendors under  
one roof, including Haute Papier, Discovery Toys,  
Silver Star Collection, and more. At the George  
Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan  
Drive, Alexandria. Visit  
[www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

**Taste of Scotland.** 7 to 11 p.m. Patron Pub opens  
at 7 p.m.; General Admission 8 to 11 p.m. A  
tasting featuring a vast number of scotches to  
entice each guest. Heavy hors d'oeuvres, ales, and  
wine also served. Patron tickets \$175/person;  
\$275/couple; \$100 general admission. At George  
Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan  
Drive, Alexandria. Visit  
[www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

### DEC. 2 AND 3

**Friends of the Library Book Sale.** 10 a.m. to 4  
p.m. Hardcover \$3 and paperbacks \$2. At the  
Alexandria Library, Barrett Branch Library, 717  
Queen St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-1703.

**Christmas Boutique.** Heritage Presbyterian Church  
is hosting a "Made by the Bell" Christmas Boutique  
on Friday, Dec. 2 from 5 to 8 p.m.; and Saturday,  
Dec. 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Handmade Christmas  
décor, ornaments, hand knitted items, baked  
goods, and unique gifts are among the items for  
sale. Heritage Presbyterian Church is at 8503 Fort  
Hunt Road. One hundred percent of the proceeds  
go to support Heritage Presbyterian Women's  
outreach programs for children and women. Call  
703-360-9546.

**Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend.** Includes a  
parade through Old Town, holiday festivities, a  
marketplace, heather and green sales, Holiday  
Designer Tour of Homes, a scotch tasting — the  
Taste of Scotland. Patsy Ticer is the Grand  
Marshall. Sponsored by the Campagna Center, The  
St. Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C., and the  
Scottish Government. Visit  
[www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

### DEC. 2-4

**ArtFest Weekend.** Ceramic and Pottery Show and  
Sale; Jewelry Show and Sale; Retrospective show  
and sale of work by Nancy Reinke, featuring  
prints, drawings, paintings, rugs. Friday, Dec. 2  
from noon to 9 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 3 from 10  
a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, Dec. 4 from noon to 5  
p.m. At The Art League's Madison Annex, 305  
Madison Street, Alexandria.

**The Nutcracker.** Presented by BalletNova (formerly  
The Center Dance Company/Arlington Center for  
Dance). Performances are Friday, Dec. 2 at 7:30  
p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 3 at 1 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.;  
Sunday, Dec. 4 at 11 a.m.; Sunday, Dec. 4 at 1

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 17

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# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 16



## SATURDAY/DEC. 3

**Holiday Boat Parade of Lights.** Free. Festivities at 4 p.m.; Boat Parade at 6 p.m. Alexandria's harbor lights up when more than 50 illuminated boats cruise the Potomac River at the historic waterfront. Festivities begin at the Alexandria City Marina behind the Torpedo Factory Art Center at 4 p.m. with live performances and Santa arriving by fireboat at 4:15 p.m. At the Alexandria City Marina, One Cameron St., Alexandria. Visit [AlexandriaVA.com](http://AlexandriaVA.com); 703-746-3301.

p.m. At Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria. Because of the limited availability of the theater, BalletNova presents a series of "Petite Performances" at both Bishop Ireton High School and the BalletNova Center for Dance Studios. These shorter 45-50-minute mini-performances include a narrative of the story, and highlights from Act II - The Kingdom of the Sweeties and are especially appropriate for the 3 - 5 year old crowd. To date the schedule is: Sunday, Dec. 4 at 11 a.m. at Bishop Ireton High School; Saturday, Dec. 10 at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. at BalletNova Center for Dance Studios, 3443 Carlin Springs Road, Falls Church. Tickets are \$13 to \$35. Petite Performances are \$5 to \$20. Visit [www.BalletNova.org](http://www.BalletNova.org), or call 703-778-3008.

**Holiday Market.** Free admission. 16th annual Del Ray Artisans Holiday Market offers handmade work from 20 local artists and bake sale to benefit Rebuilding Together Alexandria. Dec. 2 from 6 to 9 p.m. (reception); Dec. 3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Dec. 4 from noon to 4 p.m. At the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org/HolidayMarket](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org/HolidayMarket)

## SATURDAY/DEC. 3

**Virginia Grand Military Band.** 8 p.m. Adults \$20. Loras John Schissel, music director; Major Allen Crowell, guest conductor; Scott Shelsta, trombone soloist. Performing works by Grainger, Alford, Elgar and Wagner. At Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Rd., Alexandria. Call 703 426-4777 or visit [www.vgmb.com](http://www.vgmb.com).

**Alexandria Scottish Dancers.** 2 p.m. Donation of \$3 requested. A benefit for the Campagna Center with special participation for spectators. At The Durant Center, 1605 Cameron St., Alexandria.

**Oldies But Goodies.** Cocker Spaniel Dog Adoption Show. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Dogma Bakery, 2445 N. Harrison St., Arlington.

**Book Signing Event.** 2 to 4 p.m. With author S.E. Simpson who will sign copies of her book, *Ginger & the Bully*. At Grounded Coffee Shop, 6919 Telegraph Road, Alexandria.

**41st Annual Scottish Walk Parade.** 11 a.m. Over

100 Scottish clans, pipe and drum bands, Scottish dancers, Scottie dog groups, and, Santa will march through the streets of Old Town. Brought to you by the Junior Friends of The Campagna Center and the Saint Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C., with support from the City of Alexandria. The Parade Grand Marshal is the Hon. Patsy Ticer. Visit [www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

**Ornament-Decorating Workshop.** 1 to 4 p.m. Sponsored by the Alexandria Archaeology Museum. On the third floor of the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, #327, in Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-746-4399 or visit [www.alexandriaarchaeology.org](http://www.alexandriaarchaeology.org).

**Holiday Designer Tour of Homes.** 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets are \$30/advance; \$35/day of tour. Stroll through seven historic properties in Alexandria, which are dressed up for the holidays. Featured properties: 206 Wolfe St.; 716 Wolfe St.; 408 Prince St.; 103 Prince St.; 430 S. St. Asaph St.; 228 S. Pitt St. (St. Paul's); 418 S. Washington St. (The Campagna Center). Visit [www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

**Heather and Greens Sale.** 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Shop a selection of Boxwoods, Balsams, Noble Fir, Eucalyptus, Magnolias, ribbons, ornaments and more. At the Campagna Center, 418 S. Washington St., Alexandria.

**Craft and Vendor Fair.** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Featuring 30 crafters/vendors. Proceeds benefit the children of Angelus Academy. At St. Lawrence Church Parish Center, 6222 Franconia Road, Alexandria.

**Virginia Grand Military Band.** 8 p.m. A Salute to Ernest S. Williams and Arthur Pryor with special guest conductor Major Allen C. Crowell. Admission is \$20. At the Rebecca S. Wilburn auditorium at Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. Call 703-426-4777 or visit [www.vgmb.com](http://www.vgmb.com).

**Holiday Children's Book Fair.** 1 to 5 p.m. The fair features Usborne Books, publisher of educational books for children, as well as a craft activity area for kids. Shoppers will also have the opportunity to donate a book to the Alexandria Tutoring Consortium, dedicated to tutoring Alexandria's kindergarteners and first-graders in literacy skills. At The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St., Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-746-4994 or visit [www.alexandriahistory.org](http://www.alexandriahistory.org).

## SUNDAY/DEC. 4

**Messiah Sing-Along.** 4 p.m. Tickets are \$8/door. With G.F. Handel, Messiah (Part I and Hallelujah Chorus). At Fairlington United Methodist Church, 3900 King St., Alexandria. Visit [www.fairlingtonumc.org](http://www.fairlingtonumc.org) or call 703-671-4057.

**Tennis Workshop.** 2 to 5:30 p.m. This USTA QuickStart Workshop shows you how to teach tennis to juniors up to 18 years old, with an emphasis on kids 10 and Under tennis. Admission \$5. Learn to coach Kids Tennis. At the Mt. Vernon Athletic Club, 7950 Audubon Ave., Alexandria. Contact Lee Ellis, PlayTimeTennis.org. Call 203-433-2533.

**The Milk Carton Kids.** 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25. With *Over the Rhine*. At The Birchmere in Alexandria.

**Women's Art and Shopping Holiday Show.** 1 to 5 p.m. More than 30 female artisans will sell their work at the 14th annual Women Artists' Show, sponsored by the Alexandria Commission for Women and the Friends of the Commission. Jewelry, pottery, hand-crafted clothing, scarves, purses, crafts and much more will be available. Proceeds will benefit the Alexandria Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Programs. This is also a collection site for new, unwrapped toys and gift cards for the Battered Women's Shelter Holiday Party. At Charles Houston Recreation Center, 905 Wythe St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-3123 or <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsofAlexWomen>

## MONDAY/DEC. 5

**Christmas Dinner.** 6:30 to 9 p.m. The Samuel Cooper Chapter #105 of the Military Order of the Stars and Bars (MOS&B) and the R.E. Lee Camp #726, Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV), and will hold a Christmas dinner and celebration catered by The Royal Restaurant at the American Legion Post 24 Hall at 400 Cameron Street at S. Royal St. behind Gadsby's Tavern. BYOB, and the cost to attend the dinner is \$25 per person. RSVP to Mr. J.J. Smith at 703 299-1725. Checks should be made out to R.E. Lee Camp #726 and mailed to 401 Wilkes St., Alexandria, VA 22314, and must be received by Dec. 2. Payment at the door is \$30/person. Visit [www.leecamp.org](http://www.leecamp.org).

## TUESDAY/DEC. 6

**Evening of J.S. Bach.** 7:30 p.m. Free. The National Chamber Players, with guest Kenneth Slowik, will perform Bach's Sonata No. 1 in C Major (BMV 1037), Concerto in C Minor for Two Harpsichords (BMV 1060) and Cantata No. 62, "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland" (with the Episcopal High School choir) in Pendleton Hall at Episcopal High School, 3800 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria. Before the concert, at 6:30 p.m., there will be an opening reception for the gallery exhibition "Ted Aub: Selected Works." Call 703-933-4135, email [vdv@episcopalhighschool.org](mailto:vdv@episcopalhighschool.org), or visit [www.episcopalhighschool.org/Arts/ncp\\_ehs](http://www.episcopalhighschool.org/Arts/ncp_ehs)

**Sisters in Crime.** 7 to 8:30 p.m. Free. Alexandria Library sponsors "Sisters in Crime" for an evening with six local mystery writers: Donna Andrews, Ellen Crosby, G.M. Malliet, Katherine Neville, Alan Orloff, and Sandra Parshall. At Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street. Call 703-746-1702.

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 7

**DJ Dance Party.** 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$6. With DJ Dabe Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

**Children's Magic Show.** 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Free. Sponsored by the Ring 50 of the International Brotherhood of Magicians. Bring a canned good or toy that will be donated to the Salvation Army's Alexandria Citadel Corps. At the Holiday Inn, 2460 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-960-3400.

**Musician Raul Malo.** 8 p.m. Tickets are \$29.50. At The Birchmere, 3702 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria.

**Holiday Open House.** 2 to 4 p.m. Celebrate the holidays with Virginia's premier "Village," Mount



Kate Campbell

## SATURDAY/DEC. 3

**Country/Folk Singer Kate Campbell.** 7 p.m. With special guest Charles Williams. Tickets are \$18/general; \$15/advance. Presented by Focus Music in Mount Vernon. At St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road in Alexandria. Visit [www.focusmusic.org](http://www.focusmusic.org).

Vernon At Home. Meet members and volunteers who help our community residents age in their community. Open to the public, light refreshments will be served. At Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-303-4060.

**"Children's Holiday Magic Show"** 7:15 to 8:30 p.m. Sponsored by I.B.M. Ring 50 — featuring four of Washington's finest children's magicians. Free with donation of can of food or toy for local charity. At the Holiday Inn, 2460 Eisenhower Ave, Alexandria. For details: [president@ibmring50.org](mailto:president@ibmring50.org) or call Danny Selnick, call 704-347-5540.

## THURSDAY/DEC. 8

**Musician Jack Bond.** 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Part of Second Thursday Music. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) or call 703-548-0035.

## DEC. 9 TO 17

**"School House Rock - Live!"** Presented by Mount Vernon High School. Friday, Dec. 9 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 10 at 3 p.m.; Friday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 17 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5/children; \$7/students; \$10/adults. At Mount Vernon Little Theater, located at Entrance 4. The ensemble cast includes Bryan Azucena, Kodie Badolato, Logan Beveridge, Vanessa Blake, Desha Brown, Lizzy Craine, Jerry Halstead, Courtney Kramer, Jonathan Leonard, Christopher Lisle, Jessica Merkman, David Parces, Aylana Randall, Chris Rohe, and Emily Whitworth. Call Trenea Weiss-Null at Mount Vernon High School at 703-619-3100.

## FRIDAY/DEC. 9

**Seasonal Poetry Presentation.** 11 a.m. By "Tuesdays at Two" Writing Group. Join Peter Lattu as he leads a presentation by the "Tuesdays at Two" Writing Group at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Call 703-765-4573.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 10

**Holiday Ice Skating Show.** 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Free. Skaters of all ages will show off their skating skills. At Mount Vernon RECenter's ice arena, 2017 Belle View Blvd., Alexandria. Contact Carl Kirtley at 703-768-3224.

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**Claire Stern displays her glazed dishes at the bazaar.**



**Debra Greenwalt shows some of her new arrival holiday snowmen and snowwomen at the fair.**



**Stained glass artist Pat Rowell laughs while reminiscing in front of some of her light catching creations.**



**Lisa Adams knits up another scarf while visitors wander around the booths.**



**Potter Bruce Ciske displays one of his recent creations.**



**Barbara Craley and Adina Russell relax for a moment in their chairs. Both are glass craftsmen and represent the Alexandria Glass Artists.**

## Holiday Bazaar

Aldersgate Church held its annual Holiday Bazaar Saturday, Nov. 12, in the church complex. Vendors sold a multitude of wares and goods including pecans and nuts, alpaca hiking and walking socks, crocheted throws and wraps, children's gifts, pottery and handmade dolls. A lunch of vegetable soup, barbeque, pie and sandwiches and more was available in the fellowship hall of the church.



**Rag dolls by Mary Ciske.**

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

# Six-Month Audit of Police Department Expected Soon

FROM PAGE 1

"The county is really dragging its feet on this," said Nicholas Beltrante, executive director of Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability. "Most importantly, their audit is lacking the most important element — a role for public involvement."

**THE AUDITOR'S REVIEW** of the Fairfax County Police Department was ordered in June, although the initial meeting didn't happen until the fall. Even then, staff members were not assigned to the project until two weeks ago. Pietsch said his office is now conducting a survey of how the department conducts investigations and how other jurisdictions operate as well as best practices nationwide. Once that's concluded in December, the auditor's office will start conducting fieldwork to get a sense of how the department's policies are implemented in specific scenarios.

"We'll look at the risk that investigations aren't complete or aren't fair," said Pietsch. "Are the officers properly trained? Are there trends in misconduct?"

Pietsch said that the final review will be released to the public, which he expects to happen in March. Members of the Fairfax

County Board of Supervisors will be briefed on the findings of the report, although it's not yet clear if that briefing will take place in public or in a closed-door executive session. The release of the report is expected to reopen the discussion of whether or not a citizen review board is needed to investigate allegations of police misconduct. Several supervisors have already indicated an inclination to make sure the public plays no role in investigating allegations of police misconduct.

"The citizen review, from my standpoint, happens at a minimum every four years when they can review the Board of Supervisors and make their own determinations," said Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay (D).

**ONE INCIDENT** that continues to haunt the Fairfax County Police Department was the January 2006 killing of Salvatore Culosi Jr., a 37-year-old optometrist who was under investigation for running a gambling operation. A Fairfax County SWAT team was sent to arrest Culosi, a botched operation that led to Culosi being shot and killed. The police later concluded his death was an accident, and the family later settled a wrongful death lawsuit. Last week, Culosi's par-

ents confronted Rohrer during the videotaping of the public-access show "Reston Impact."

"This thing screams for a civilian review board," said Salvatore Culosi Sr. "There's a lot going on here for an independent review committee to look at."

An internal police investigation determined that the shooting was caused when a car door bumped the officer as he exited a vehicle. The Culosi family said that there was no reason to send a SWAT team to arrest a man who police should have known had no weapons. They also raised concerns about not being able to receive documents relating to the investigation of the shooting, eventually filing a lawsuit to gain access to the kinds of documents that are widely available in other states but shielded from public view in Virginia. Ultimately, Rohrer said, what happened in the Culosi case should not have taken place.

"I'm so sorry for what happened," Rohrer told the Culosis in the televised panel discussion. "I wish I could go back and undo that."

**THE MOVEMENT** to create a civilian review was prompted by a series of police-

involved shootings, culminating in the 2009 incident in which a Fairfax County officer named David Ziants shot and killed an unarmed driver named David Masters. Starting in May 2010, a coalition of organizations and individuals began meeting at the Sherwood Regional Library and formed the Citizens Coalition for Police Accountability.

"The police need us, and we need the police," said Beltrante during its inaugural meeting. "However, no one is above the law."

Since May 2010, the group has been pushing the county government to create a citizen review board that would have the power to investigate allegations of police misconduct. After the county manager and the police chief outlined their plan to have the county auditor review investigations this week, several members of the Board of Supervisors wanted to make sure that the process would not be open to members of the general public to lodge complaints. None of the members expressed any support for creating a panel of citizens to review cases.

"We're not going to give up," said Annie Whitehead, secretary of the coalition. "We're going to continue to fight to get a citizen review board."

# HOLIDAY GUIDE

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## NOV. 25 TO DEC. 18

**Mount Vernon by Candlelight.** 5 to 8:30 p.m. recurring weekly on Sunday, Saturday. "Mrs. Washington" hosts an enchanting evening of candlelit tours, fireside Christmas caroling, and hot cider and ginger cookies. The Mount Vernon by Candlelight tour includes the first and second floors, featuring characters from the Washingtons' world guiding visitors through the home and adding ambiance and authenticity to a traditional Christmas evening at Mount Vernon. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Admission: Adults: \$20; Children 11 and under: \$14. Visit [www.MountVernon.org](http://www.MountVernon.org) or call 703-780-2000.

## NOV. 25 TO JAN. 6

**Christmas at Mount Vernon.** 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. recurring daily. Holiday visitors will enjoy themed decorations (including 12 Christmas trees), a gingerbread replica of the Mansion created by former White House pastry chef Roland Mesnier, chocolate making demonstrations, and a rare opportunity to tour the third floor of the Mansion. In 1787, George Washington paid 18 shillings to bring a camel to Mount Vernon for his guests' enjoyment. During Christmas at Mount Vernon, visitors can meet Aladdin the camel. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Christmas at Mount Vernon admission is included in general admission: \$15/adults; \$7/youth. Call 703-780-2000.

## THURSDAY/DEC. 1

**NOVA Community Chorus.** 7:30 p.m. Winter Concert. NOVA Community Chorus, Dr. Mark Whitmire, Director, will perform Sergie Rachmaninoff's The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, for mixed chorus a capella. At the Schlesinger Concert Hall, 3001 North Beauregard Road, Alexandria. Contact Dr. Whitmire at [mwhitmire@nvcc.edu](mailto:mwhitmire@nvcc.edu) or 703-845-6097.

## FRIDAY/DEC. 2

**ArtFest 2011.** 6 to 9 p.m. Open house and holiday party. Check out where the most hands-on classes are taught while enjoying a variety of artist demos, 2D/3D exhibits, holiday ceramic and jewelry sales (held throughout the weekend), live music by Rew Smith Band, food and drinks. At The Art League's Madison Annex, 305 Madison Street, Alexandria.

**Christmas Marketplace.** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission. A collection of unique vendors under one roof, including Haute Papier, Discovery Toys, Silver Star Collection, and more. At the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Visit [www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

**Taste of Scotland.** 7 to 11 p.m. Patron Pub opens at 7 p.m.; General Admission 8 to 11 p.m. A tasting featuring a vast number of scotches to entice each guest. Heavy hors d'oeuvres, ales, and wine also served. Patron tickets \$175/person; \$275/couple; \$100 general admission. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Visit [www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

## DEC. 2 AND 3

**Christmas Boutique.** Heritage Presbyterian Church is hosting a "Made by the Bell" Christmas Boutique on Friday, Dec. 2 from 5 to 8 p.m.; and Saturday, Dec. 3 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Handmade Christmas décor, ornaments, hand knitted items, baked goods, and unique gifts are among the items for sale. Heritage Presbyterian Church is at 8503 Fort Hunt Road. One hundred percent of the proceeds go to support Heritage Presbyterian Women's outreach programs for children and women. Call 703-360-9546.

**Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend.** Includes a parade through Old Town, holiday festivities, a marketplace, heather and green sales, Holiday Designer Tour of Homes, a scotch tasting — the Taste of Scotland. Patsy Ticer is the Grand Marshall. Sponsored by the Campagna Center, The St. Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C., and the Scottish Government. Visit [www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com](http://www.ScottishChristmasWalk.com).

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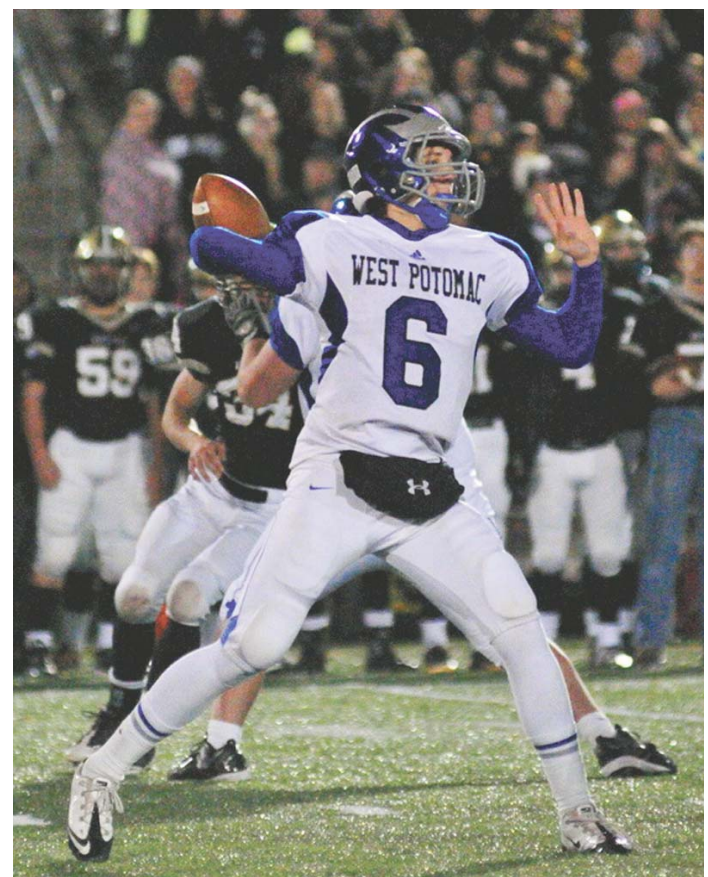
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PHOTOS BY RICHARD MAPLE

**West Potomac sophomore quarterback Caleb Henderson is a key part of the Wolverines' future.**

**West Potomac's Brandon Johnson wrapped up his career as a three-year varsity starter with a loss to Westfield in the Division 6 Northern Region semifinals on Nov. 18.**

## West Potomac's Season Ends with Semifinal Loss

**Wolverines finish 2011 with 8 wins, share of district title.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE GAZETTE

**T**he West Potomac football team survived adversity during the 2011 season, including questions about who should play quarterback and having one of its best athletes leave the team for a week. On Nov. 18, the Wolverines nearly survived a postseason matchup with the best team in the Northern Region.

West Potomac, seeded fourth in the Division 6 regional playoffs, lost to No. 1 Westfield 42-34 in the semifinals at WHS, ending its season. Entering the contest, no team had scored more than 14 points against the undefeated Bulldogs and only one team — Centerville — had lost by less than 15. West Potomac lost its regular season meeting with Westfield, 31-10.

On Friday, however, the Wolverines scored 24 points by halftime and led by three entering the locker room. By game's end, West Potomac's point total more than doubled the previous high allowed by Westfield, but it wasn't enough.

"Offensively, I think we're the only team to score 34 points against them," West Potomac head coach Eric Henderson said. "They played some really low-scoring games and they have one of the best defenses we've

seen."

Henderson said playing Westfield earlier in the season eliminated any thoughts of the Bulldogs being invincible.

"The kids," Henderson said, "were confident they could score points against them."

Scoring points was nothing new for West Potomac and its potent spread offense. In 12 games, the Wolverines averaged nearly 34 points. They scored at least 30 points nine times and reached 40 on five occasions. The Wolverines lit up scoreboards despite questions at quarterback early in the season. Sophomore Caleb Henderson rotated with a senior signal caller through the first four games of the season, during which West Potomac went 2-2. Henderson took over as the full-time starter in week five against Annandale on Sept. 30 and the Wolverines won six of their final eight games, losing only to Westfield.

West Potomac running back Brandon Johnson missed two games, including the Annandale contest after he left the team for family reasons. He also missed the regular season finale against T.C. Williams on Nov. 5 while recovering from a concussion.

Despite adversity, West Potomac finished the season with an 8-4 record and a share of the Patriot District championship. The Wolverines beat fifth-seed Chantilly 35-7 at home during the opening round of regionals on Nov. 11 before giving undefeated Westfield a run for its money.

"We [experienced] a tremendous amount of adversity and the kids motored through it and kept winning," Eric Henderson said. "It's a testament to them."

According to stats from the Washington Post Web site, Caleb Henderson completed 25 of 42 passes for 348 yards, two touchdowns and was intercepted once against Westfield. He also carried eight times for 31 yards and a score. For the season, he completed 61 percent of his passes for 2,403 yards and 23 touchdowns. He was intercepted seven times. He also rushed for 528 yards and four touchdowns while averaging better than 5 yards per carry.

Henderson will enter next season as the unquestioned starter.

"I think it settles him and now he's able to concentrate on being a better quarterback and a better leader and a better teammate," said Eric Henderson, Caleb's father. "I told him [after the season] nothing for two weeks. He's not allowed to touch a weight, he's not allowed to run, he's not even allowed to touch a football. I want him to decompress and focus on grades and then attack it."

West Potomac will also return versatile sophomore DeMornay Pierson-El, who played primarily slot receiver but can also play running back. He caught 10 passes for 128 yards and a touchdown against Westfield. He finished with 49 receptions for 781 yards and 19 rushes for 121 yards and 15 total touchdowns. Against T.C. Wil-

liams, Pierson-El had five receptions for 168 yards and three touchdowns and also returned a kickoff 99 yards for a score.

West Potomac will return three members of the offensive line: junior left tackle Hunter Dennis (6-foot-4, 300 pounds), sophomore left guard Darien Pickett (5'11," 240) and junior right tackle Dan Murray (6'2," 240).

"All of those kids," Eric Henderson said, "were outstanding this year."

The Wolverines will lose several key contributors, including Tyrone Jenkins (WR/DB), Joseph Marinelli (WR), Kofi Adom (LB) and Tamaric Wilson (DB).

Jenkins caught seven passes for 148 yards and a touch-

down against Westfield and finished with 53 receptions for 1,060 yards and 13 scores. Marinelli had 500 receiving yards on the season, Adom was the team's leading tackler and Wilson made 32 starts at the varsity level.

Eric Henderson said West Potomac's success in 2011 should make it easier to get the Wolverines to believe in themselves in the future.

"I think it sets a standard," he said. "I think it's a bar that we've met. The kids know they can achieve that standard. I fully expect a great offseason."

**"We [experienced] a tremendous amount of adversity and the kids motored through it and kept winning. It's a testament to them."**

— West Potomac head football coach Eric Henderson

# SPORTS

## Preparing for District Title Defense

**Mount Vernon Girls have sights set on competing for region championship.**

By JON ROETMAN  
THE GAZETTE

**W**ith her right hand bandaged and her hair pulled back in a pony tail, Mount Vernon sophomore Samantha Porter grabs an offensive rebound in front of an opponent roughly five inches taller and 70 pounds heavier during a scrimmage against Potomac on Nov. 19. Porter immediately goes back up with the ball and draws a foul.

Later, Porter drives to the basket against a different Potomac player with a height advantage and once again earns a trip to the free-throw line. In later action, she keeps a possession alive by tipping the ball to a teammate, who buries a jump shot.

Porter says she stands 5 feet 9. Head coach Courtney Coffey said the sophomore could be 5 feet 10. Regardless, Porter is one of the tallest players on a vertically-challenged Mount Vernon girls basketball team. The Majors had the speed, skill and athleticism necessary to capture the 2011 National District championship, but life isn't easy for Porter, who is left to play the role of "big girl" despite looking more like a small forward.

While battling taller opponents in the paint isn't a

simple task, Porter's quickness and max-effort approach allow her to thrive in the role.

"You have to want it more," Porter said about being an undersized rebounder.

Coffey said Porter is adept at using her quickness to maneuver around bigger players in order to grab rebounds. Offensively, Coffey said Porter is skilled enough to knock down perimeter shots.

"Sam only knows one way to play and that's hard all of the time," Coffey said. "At times we have to slow her down because she only knows one speed. But because of that she's always beating kids to the spot for rebounds. ... If you told her to run through that wall of bricks [to] get a rebound, she would do it. She wouldn't ask any questions."

Multiple Majors will need to hustle like Porter if Mount Vernon is to achieve its goal of a Northern Region championship during the 2011-12 season. Coffey, in his second season as Mount Vernon head coach, said in order to compensate for a lack of height, the Majors need to play with speed, quickness and great anticipation on defense, as well as being in great shape.

"We know we're small," Coffey said, "but we believe — the kids and coaches — in basketball it's all about the size of your heart and not how tall you are."

The Majors return nine athletes from a team that beat defending champion Edison in the district final and defeated McLean in the opening round of regionals before losing in the quarterfinals. Mount Vernon has only two seniors on the roster, but sev-

SEE MAJOR AIM, PAGE 23

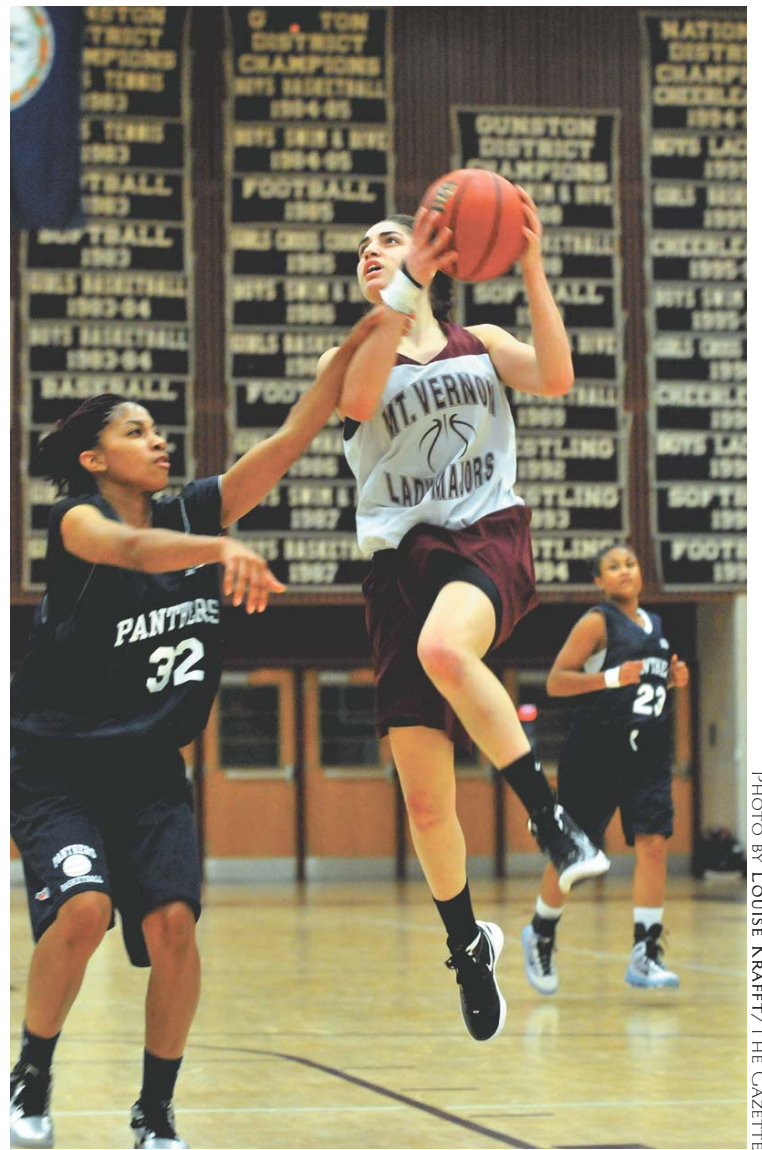


PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

**Mount Vernon sophomore Samantha Porter is one of the Majors' tallest players despite standing 5' feet 9".**

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# Majors Aim for Region Championship

FROM PAGE 22

eral of the Majors have played at the varsity level since they were freshmen.

“Last year, the expectation was to win a district title,” Coffey said. “I think our goal was to win at least one regional game and then once we won that regional game, we kind of felt good about ourselves and we wanted to actually go to the regional championship. We fell short of that goal, so this year, definitely, the goal is to win a second district championship — especially with having everybody back and adding some pieces to it — and we definitely want to win a region championship. Honestly, we want to play in the state tournament.”

Junior guard/forward Kelly Loftus is a three-year varsity player who led Mount Vernon in scoring last season at 15 points per game. Coffey said Loftus is being heavily recruited and, after spending a lot of time around the perimeter as a sophomore, has become more aggressive in terms of attacking the basket.

Junior point guard Taylor Dunham is also a three-year varsity player and one of the Majors' top ball-handlers. She sat out Saturday's scrimmage with an

ankle injury but should return in the near future. Five-foot-10 senior forward Titi Gray sat out of the scrimmage with a shin injury. Coffey said Gray improved her game during the offseason but might be out until December, depending on the severity of her injury.

Junior guard/forward Tiffany Webster and senior Elizabeth Owusuwaa were also contributors last season. Juniors Deja Wanzer (guard), De'Asia Turner (guard) and Brianna Ragland (forward) and sophomores Morgan Kuhns (guard), Erika Irving (forward) and Chanel Shannon (guard) will compete for playing time.

Mount Vernon will face a difficult first-half schedule. After opening with a home game against West Potomac at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 29, the Majors will travel to Chesapeake to face Coffey's alma mater, Western Branch, on Dec. 3. Western Branch finished 25-3 last season and returns

the majority of its roster.

Mount Vernon will host Oakton on Dec. 6 and will travel to face Robinson on Dec. 20. The Majors will participate in the Boo Williams Christmas Classic in Newport News from Dec. 27-29. Mount Vernon will open National District competition on Dec. 13 with a home game against Hayfield.

“If we play as a team and come together, I feel like after the district championship [game] we will go far,” Loftus said. “We've always talked about really wanting to go to states this year.”

**“If you told her to run through that wall of bricks [to] get a rebound, she would do it. She wouldn't ask any questions.”**

— Mount Vernon head coach Courtney Coffey about Samantha Porter

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send announcements to the Mount Vernon Gazette, by e-mail to [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Photos are encouraged. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

**The Mount Vernon High School Athletic Booster Club** is taking orders for Fraser Fir or Cannaan Fir trees. The trees will be available for pick up at MVHS on Dec. 3 and 4, and orders are due by Nov. 23. Proceeds will directly support MVHS Athletics. Contact Michael Gailliot at 571-485-0070 or [michael.gailliot@C21nm.com](mailto:michael.gailliot@C21nm.com).

**Maggy François**, West Potomac Academy Fashion Design instructor, is one of 15 individuals from non-profit organizations featured in Shoot for Change's black and white photo exhibition at the L2 Lounge in Washington, D.C. Featuring photographs by Walter Grio — who has been working with West Potomac Academy Fashion Design students for the past few years to build their professional portfolios — the show featured nonprofit leaders who have been transformed to look like classic movie stars. Each of the participants has also written an essay on what inspires him or her to do what he or she does and to keep doing it.

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**George Washington's Mount**

**Vernon** will welcome more than 200 fourth-grade students from Fort Belvoir Elementary School for a special program and tour on Tuesday, Nov. 29 to unveil the students' interpretations of various Mount Vernon buildings constructed in gingerbread. Designed and built by the students as part of their STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) curriculum, the gingerbread houses will be on display at Mount Vernon through Jan. 6 as part of the Estate's Christmas at Mount Vernon program.

**Yevgeniy N. Maksimov**, a

resident of Alexandria, has earned a Bachelor of Science from Excelsior College.



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Nancy Dunning was my friend. Thirty years ago, she envisioned Del Ray as a community full of active citizens, thriving businesses and excellent schools. Not only did she work tirelessly over the years to help create this community, but she inspired many of us to join in her effort. For those of you who did not know Nancy, read this beautiful tribute written by her daughter, Elizabeth. For those of you who did, join me in remembering her contribution to Del Ray and Alexandria.

—Jack Taylor, Alexandria Toyota



*Nancy  
Dunning*

# The Best Mom In The World

*A Eulogy for Nancy Dunning written and read by her daughter, Liz*

A lot of people, I think, have moments when they imagine that they have the best mom in the world. I was lucky enough, however, to be absolutely certain – for a long time – that I actually did. My mom was my best friend. We talked just about every day. And, anyone who knows her, knows a couple of things about my mom, one of which was that she was more or less always right. When I was a teenager, that pissed me off sometimes. I mean, seriously, when you're sixteen and supposed to be going through that phase where you know everything, it puts a crimp in it to live with someone who actually does.

But, another thing that you must know if you met my mom was that she wasn't smug about her omnipotence. Like any good superhero, my mom used her powers for good, not evil. To make other people – not just herself – feel good and be better. She taught my brother and I how to do that, too. I hope we were paying attention. I'm pretty sure we were.

My mom also taught me just about everything I know about optimism and joy. Those were things at which she excelled. It started, when my brother and I were kids, with crazy names for things. I bet that you thought that playground on Old Dominion was just the Beverly Hills Co-op. Nope. It was the Super Deluxe Playground. And, back when the Mt. Vernon school playground was that log-thing which is probably now illegal in most states, a trip to the Super Deluxe Playground was an adventure indeed. Every day was an adventure. Whether we were sneaking food into movies when I was younger, or she was singing hilariously bad opera while she made breakfast, my mom made clear that every day had something good in it, something to be happy about. Even if it was just that they'd just started selling Christmas Blend at Starbucks. These small events and details weren't small – they were big. They warranted a phone call. So did a great song on the radio. So did anything that made her smile. These were great calls to receive. Random, sometimes, but great. I mean, who doesn't want to know that she busted the person next to her at the last traffic light picking their nose in the car? Who didn't want to hear her joyful voice, her laugh? She loved to laugh and there isn't a better feeling than making my mom laugh. Because, if you really got her going – and there are lots of ways to do this – she'd just get to that level where she's crying because she's laughing so hard. That's when you know that you've really won. Bonus points are given if you do that while one of you is driving.

Her gift with joy, with optimism, gave her part of her gift with people. She had, what I jokingly called, her secret decoder ring. That was our short-hand – and there is always short-hand – for her ability to listen, really listen, to people when they talk. And, more than that, to understand what they're really saying and, who they are and where they're coming from. That's why she wasn't just people's neighbor, or real estate agent, or neighborhood activist, or columnist, she was their friend. It didn't take much to be my mom's friend. She didn't make you jump a lot of hoops. Or wear overalls and a baseball cap with the same aplomb that she did. (And thank god, because really? Who can pull off overalls and a baseball cap like my Mom? Nobody.) She wanted to learn more about people and know more people. So she lit people up when she talked to them.

And, as a consequence, people mostly did what my Mom wanted them to do, or what she asked of them. Because her ideas were smart. They were filled with the energy and the joy that she carried with her all the time. And they reflected an understanding and awareness of the thoughts and values of everyone involved. So, if you did what she wanted you to do, you were also doing the right thing.

But, mostly, she wasn't a superhero – complete with secret decoder ring – to me. She was my Mom. She was better at that than anything else. She told my brother, and me, and my Dad that she loved us at the end of every phone conversation. That's what our family does. And so, individually, knowing that the last words we said to each other were, "I love you," helps.

There wasn't a day of my life – and there won't be one – when I wasn't sure that my mom loved me, that she believed in me, that she was proud of me. And with or without a secret decoder ring, a cape, or a phone booth to change in, it truly takes a superhero to, in this crazy messed up world, love people so well and so much. So perfectly. It takes all that to be what I have – the best mom in the world.

*On December 5, 2003, Nancy Dunning was murdered in her home in Alexandria, VA. Nancy's family, friends and co-workers have not forgotten her and celebrate her life daily. We will not give up and believe that the person who murdered her will be caught and prosecuted.*

*A \$100,000 reward available for the individual who comes forth with information leading to the arrest and conviction of this murderer.*

*If you have any information, we urge you to please call the Alexandria Criminal Investigations Section at 703-838-4711 or e-mail them at <http://alexandriava.gov/dunning>.*