

Great Falls CONNECTION

Santa and Mrs. Claus wave to the crowd after lighting the tree in Great Falls Friday, Dec. 2.

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PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

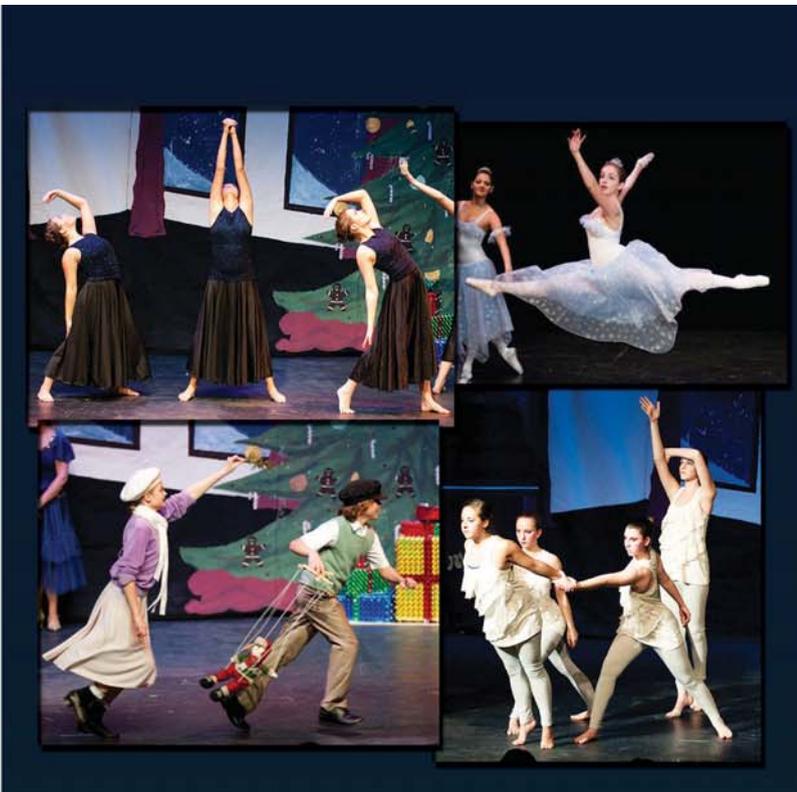
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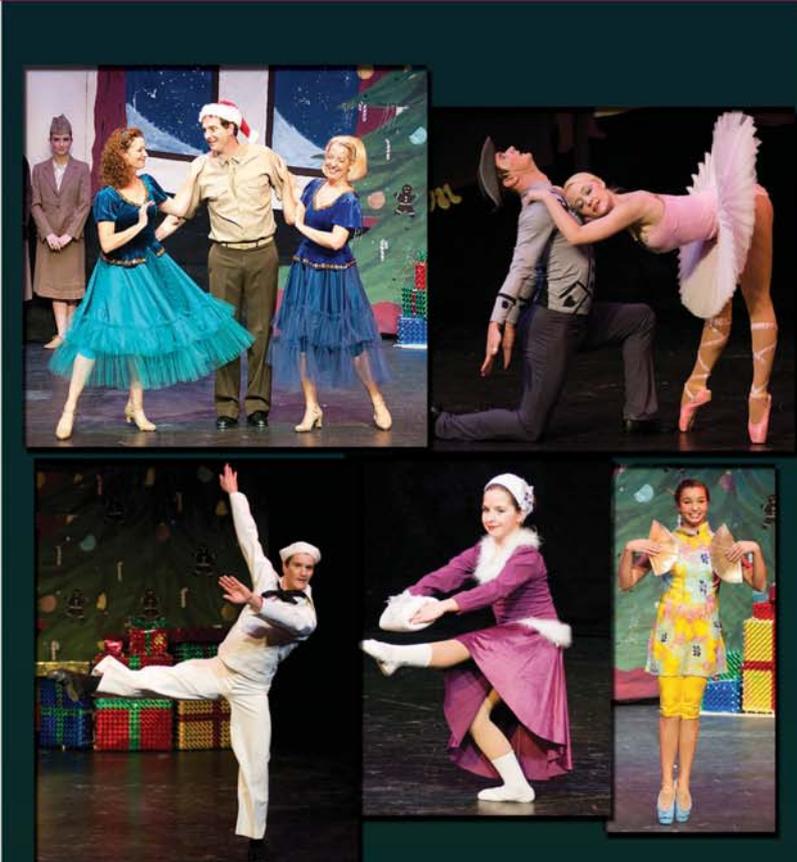
This vibrant young company is comprised of forty SOTD Upper School students, respected instructors, and working professional dancers, actors, musicians, and singers. Great Falls Dance Theater will present the sixth annual *Christmas Eve at the Nutcracker Club* this December.

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NEWS



Santa greets children who line up to meet him at the Great Falls tree lighting ceremony Friday, Dec. 2.



The Langley High School Madrigals perform in front of the Christmas tree in Great Falls, Friday, Dec. 2.

GREAT FALLS CONNECTION EDITOR
KEMAL KURSPAHIC
703-778-9414 OR
GREATFALLS@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Great Falls Holds Tree Lighting

Annual event features Santa, Langley Madrigals and petting zoo.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Robert Moore knows all about the tree that sits in the field next to the Great Falls Village Centre. When the original tree died in 1995, he was part of the group that found the tree near Wolf Trap and planted it in Great Falls. Since then, Great Falls residents have gathered around the tree every holiday season to light the tree and celebrate the season with their friends and neighbors.

"This is the first year we've used LED lights on the tree," Moore said. "This year we used about 4,500 of them, so I guess we're saving some energy."

Moore and the other coordinators of the annual tree lighting ceremony use a sky lift to wind the thousands of lights around the tree, which is more than 20 feet tall.

This year's festivities took place Friday, Dec. 2, and thousands came out to sing Christmas Carols, meet Santa and Mrs. Clause, enjoy a petting zoo and watch a live nativity scene.

"There's sort of something for everyone, and I like to make sure we get a chance to take it all in," said Allison Fulwell of Great Falls. "You get Santa, you get the nativity, but it's also just fun to come out and enjoy celebrating as a community."

Just after sundown, a brightly-lit vehicle made its way around the Executive Suites building at the Great Falls Village Centre. Several reindeer made of lights led the way for the Great Falls fire engine, which served as the official escort for Santa and Mrs. Claus.

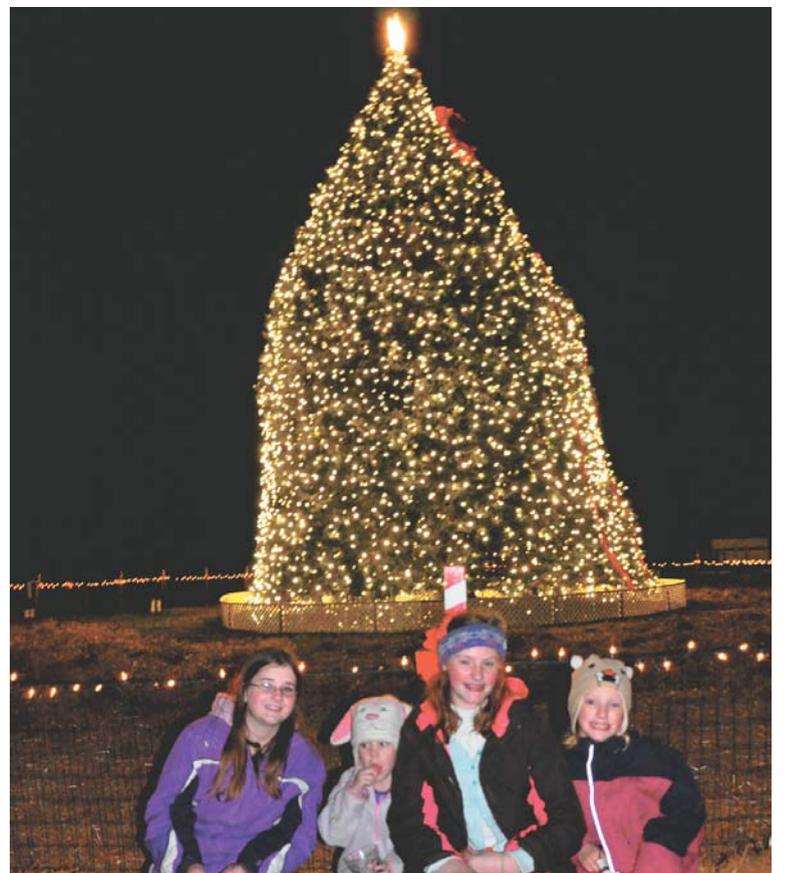
Once the tree was lit, guests could enjoy popcorn and hot cider, and listen to the Langley High School Madrigals sing old Christmas carols.

While Santa was mobbed by most children during his time at the tree lighting, Josh Zane, 4, has little to no interest in Father Christmas.

"Every year, Josh gets excited about the tree lighting, but not about the tree itself, or Santa. He loves the animals," said his father David Zane. "He'll spend his time rotating between the petting zoo and the horse rides. We don't even try to get a photo of him near the tree anymore."

Josh Zane says his decision is a practical one.

"We'll see Santa later when our family gets our picture with him somewhere else, and he's even going to stop by our house," he said. "But it's winter time, and there won't be any chances to play with animals when it's cold outside, so I need to do it now."



From left, Jessica Cuddihy, 13, Lindsey Sherry, 6, Kelsey Sherry, 12, and Colleen Sherry, 9, in front of the lit Great Falls Christmas tree.



Santa greets his adoring public at the Great Falls tree lighting ceremony Friday, Dec. 2.



From left, Chelsea, 2, Audrey, 4 and Kendall Snow, 5, examine the reindeer on the Great Falls fire truck, which brought Santa to the tree lighting ceremony.



Children pet rabbits, ducks and chickens at the petting zoo at the Great Falls tree lighting ceremony Friday, Dec. 2.

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NEWS



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Paul Strasberg of Fairfax brought his sons, Andrew, 10 and Zach, 13, to the opening of Obama's first field office in Northern Virginia on Saturday, Dec. 3.

Obama Campaign Opens Fairfax Office

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly addresses crowd of 200-plus supporters.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

President Barack Obama was not there, but U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) made sure the president's presence was felt at the opening of the first Northern Virginia field office for the Obama 2012 Campaign in Fairfax.

Connolly gave a stump speech to the 250 volunteers and supporters who crowded into the campaign office on Saturday, Dec. 3. The office is located in a strip mall on Lee Highway in Fairfax.

"If we needed living proof that President Obama is going to invest heavily in Virginia, this is it," Connolly said to shouts of "amen" and "that's right." "No president has been more vilified than Barack Obama, and throughout it all he has remained gracious, a true leader."

CONNOLLY INTRODUCED the prominent area Democrats who attended the opening, including State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41), Del. Ken Plum (D-36), Del. David Bulova (D-37), Kate Hanley, who preceded Connolly as chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, and Ryan McElveen, one of the newly-elected Democrats to the Fairfax County School Board.

Petersen predicted Virginia would be a battleground state in 2012. "The President has to do everything he did in 2008 to win across Fairfax County. In a lot of ways, the stakes are higher, because the statewide race will be closer," Petersen said, adding that the anti-Washington rhetoric doesn't play well in Northern Virginia where many people are invested in a healthy, functioning federal government.

Many local supporters who attended Saturday's

event said they volunteered for the campaign in 2008, and intend to volunteer again. "I'm working-class and he works for me," said Paul Strasberg, an economist who lives in Fairfax.

"I like President Obama because he doesn't make up all these crazy ideas," said Zach Strasberg, 13, a student at Robinson Secondary School. "He doesn't harass people, like Herman Cain does."

Latasha Gunter of Fairfax said education was a key issue for her. "I feel like the President has made a strong effort to reach across the table. He works effortlessly to support change for all Americans."

Olivia Hinebaugh of Vienna brought her 15-month-old son, Callum and husband Jason to the event. She said she supported President Obama's health care plan. "My biggest struggle after I graduated from college was getting health coverage. I was a preschool teacher. We were ready to start a family, and I couldn't get health coverage. Personally, that's why I'm a huge supporter," she said.

Organizing for America-Virginia hosted the event, and opened offices in Newport News as well as Fairfax on Saturday. Along with the campaign's statewide headquarters in Richmond, the field offices will serve as community hubs for 2012 election activities.

ON FRIDAY, DEC. 2, Democratic Party of Virginia Chairman Brian Moran joined Organizing for America-Virginia volunteers as they delivered the signatures required to put President Obama on Virginia ballots in 2012.

In order for candidates to be eligible for their party's nomination in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the state Board of Elections requires the signatures of 10,000 registered voters, including 400 from each congressional district in the state.

"Nearly three weeks ahead of the Board of Elections deadline, the Organizing for America volunteers delivered more than 15,000 notarized signatures collected through grassroots efforts in every corner of the Commonwealth," said Marianne von Nordeck, press secretary for Organizing for America.

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NEWS

Making Wishes Come True

Wish List Project for 2011 holiday season wrapping up.

By JEAN T. JIANOS
THE CONNECTION

Watching and waiting are not two verbs commonly used to describe Great Falls resident Ginger Mahon, founder and coordinator of The Wish List Project. It is, however, because she had the ability to look beyond a project sponsored by her local community school to see other challenges facing the wider community, and the patience to listen to and work with the needs of others, that has made The Wish List Project such a success for a dozen years.

Every holiday season for the past 12 years, Ginger Mahon gathers the Wish Lists from homeless families and homeless shelters in the Greater Washington, D.C., area and those submitted by teenage children who are in foster care in Fairfax County, and then watches and waits as her Great Falls neighbors and other Wish List Angels come forward to meet the holiday needs of those families and teens. In its first year, The Wish List Project helped 10 families at the Embry Rucker Community Shelter in Reston because Mahon's child, then in kindergarten at Forestville Elementary in Great Falls, had been participating in a weekly school community outreach project with the shelter. In 2010, The Wish List Project reached 26 families at two local shelters, 75 teens, and distributed gifts to three other area shelters.

The goal this 2011 holiday season is to once again benefit 75 teens in foster care in Fairfax County, and families at Shelter House in Falls Church; the Katherine Hanley Family Shelter in Fairfax; St. Ann's Infant and Ma-



Great Falls resident Ginger Mahon, Founder and Coordinator of The Wish List Project with Santa at the 2010 Drop-Off Party.

ternity Home in Hyattsville, Md.; Artemis House in Herndon; and the Embry Rucker Community Shelter in Reston.

There is still time to purchase and donate items on Wish Lists,

and gift cards from area retail stores. All contributions must be received by Saturday, Dec. 10. For more information contact Mahon at 703-404-8483 or by email at gingermahon@aol.com.

PHOTO BY SHAWN ADLER/THE WISH LIST PROJECT

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THE COUNTY LINE

Whose Road is it Anyway? County vs. State: A heated debate on who should fix area roads.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

State and local government officials agree that Fairfax County's roads are in deplorable shape, but who should fix the problem has sparked a heated political debate.

On Dec. 1, Fairfax County, along with Prince William and Loudoun Counties, issued a joint statement firmly opposing any hint of legislation from the Virginia General Assembly that would shift road maintenance responsibilities from the Commonwealth to counties, a process known as road devolution.

"Road devolution is going to be a huge issue in Richmond this year," said Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee). "The idea of local control is universally embraced, but the problem comes down to the cash, and the state is not going to give us the money we need to take over our roads."

County officials argue that devolution would lock in the state's chronic underfunding of secondary roads, and county taxpayers would be on the hook for the cumulative effects of deficient maintenance measures when the big bills come due.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has reported that more than a third of secondary roads throughout the state are in poor condition, and estimates that \$75 to \$100 million is required to bring just one percent of the states 27,166 mile lanes up to performance standards.

McKay, who chairs the Board's Legislative Committee, said the cost to Fairfax County taxpayers could be close to \$200 million.

"The start-up costs of taking this over would be significant, and my greatest fear is that we'd be pitting roads against schools and public safety," he said. He added that any additional costs associated with road devolution would necessitate a tax hike and likely take money away from projects such as new school construction and renovation of existing schools.

He compared road devolution to the state driving a new car into the ground, and then sticking the county with the repair bills.

"The biggest advocate of devolution is the state. They would like nothing more than to hand it over to us, because they've wrecked it."

IN A DEC. 2 PUBLIC LETTER, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) joined her Republican counterparts in Prince William and Loudoun County contending that road devolution is really an unfunded mandate that would likely come under the guise of transportation funding reform.

"Although we are of different political parties, we are firmly united in opposition to devolution because of the massive property tax increase it will produce for the residents and businesses of Fairfax, Prince William and Loudoun counties...The cost could



PHOTO COURTESY OF VDOT

This section of Hunter Mill Road in Reston was the first of six roads and bridges to re-open after being extensively damaged by Tropical Storm Lee on Sept. 8.

"The biggest advocate of road devolution is the state. They would like nothing more than to hand it over to us, because they've wrecked it."

— Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee)

exceed \$500 per household," according to the statement.

Bulova said that General Assembly created the problem by neglecting the roads, and they should be the ones to fix it.

"Once the state abandons this responsibility, it will never take it back," Bulova said. "Local governments and taxpayers should not be expected to shoulder what is now a responsibility of the commonwealth."

Although Gov. Robert McDonnell has not yet proposed specific road devolution legislation, House Republicans have been looking at ways to shift spiraling road-maintenance responsibilities back to localities for several years.

In 2005, the General Assembly directed VDOT to develop legislative recommendations, in conjunction with representatives of counties, on the process for any county that wants to assume responsibility for their secondary construction program. So far, no county has taken the state up on its offer.

Bulova noted that over the past few years the General Assembly has pushed the financial burden for more than \$1 billion in services down to local municipalities without sharing state revenues to pay for them. "Then, they claim they have not raised taxes," she said, adding that it's a "shell game" that does nothing to address the state's nearly depleted construction funding.

But not everyone agrees that devolution is a problem.

"[Local control of local roads] is a great idea," said Del. Dave Albo (R-42), who has been a member of the House since 1994

"We should be chomping at the bit to take this over; instead, we are thumbing our nose at the Governor."

— Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock)

and a key player in obtaining funding for road projects in his district, which covers Springfield and Lorton. "We would not have to ask Richmond which roads to get repaved. We could ask our county supervisors, who personally know which roads are in need of repair."

Albo said legislation, along with a reallocation of resources to pay for it, is likely this session.

"I think it's highly likely that we pass it because this is the system we currently use for cities, so we are not reinventing the wheel," Albo said.

Currently, counties do not have the same taxing authority as cities and towns. Cities, such as Arlington, have more latitude in raising revenue through other means, such as cigarette, hotel and restaurant taxes, while the majority of Fairfax County's revenue is derived from property taxes.

State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) agrees that road devolution should be a local option, but with the stipulation that adequate revenue comes with the responsibility. "There needs to be an agreed formula which holds the county harmless if it decides to maintain its own roads," Petersen said.

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock), who made "local control of local roads" his signature campaign issue, said board members should see road devolution as an opportunity instead of an obstacle.

"Virginia is not the norm. We're one of only a few states where the state has maintenance and construction responsibilities for local roads," Cook said.

THE COMMONWEALTH'S SYSTEM goes back to the Great Depression. During the 1930s, many counties struggled with road maintenance, creating uneven levels

of road maintenance and affecting commerce. In 1932, the Virginia General Assembly passed the Byrd Act, which gave VDOT all maintenance, operational, and construction responsibilities for secondary roads, with the exception of Arlington and Henrico counties.

"This is an opportunity, and the board is saying we don't even want to have a dialogue. This could be the best thing for us if it's done right, and they don't know the state is not going to change the funding formula. We should be chomping at the bit to take this over; instead, we are thumbing our nose at the Governor."

Cook said he has talked directly with McDonnell and Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton, and he sees an opportunity for Fairfax County to benefit from road devolution.

Cook said the way to make road devolution viable for Fairfax County includes having the state transfer ownership of the land and redoing the funding formula to be more in line with urban jurisdictions that control local roads.

"Don't fall for the argument that this is going to cost \$200 million," Cook said.

"That is misleading, because it only costs us if we choose to do a better job than the state. That's not an imposed cost. If we're getting at least what the state is already spending, and we have control, that's better than no control at all."

Asked what local control would look like, Cook said residents would see medians and roads mowed more frequently, potholes would be filled within a week of reporting and roads would be repaved every 10-20 years instead of 20-40 years, among other benefits.

But McKay and other board members are not so optimistic.

Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) one of the three Republicans on the board, said he generally thinks the most effective government is local government, but for Fairfax County to take over control of its secondary roads, a few others items must come with the mandate.

"The state needs to make up for years of neglect, there needs to be a guaranteed funding stream, and it needs to be at a level necessary to perform the maintenance – not the current level," Herrity said. "Otherwise the state is just transferring the burden and years of neglect onto Fairfax County taxpayers."

"There's no question Fairfax County could do a better job, but I am very suspect that the state is going to give us the tools to fix the problem. In my mind, this has to be dead on arrival," McKay said.

Fairfax County's position on road devolution is part of its 2012 legislative agenda, which will go before the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Dec. 6, for a final vote. On Wednesday, McKay chairs a joint session between board members and Fairfax County legislators during which the County's legislative agenda will be presented.

NEWS

Firefighters Collect Toys for Tots

Fire stations in Fairfax County and the City of Alexandria are accepting new, unwrapped toys for children of all ages for the annual Marine Corps Toys for Tots campaign. "All 37 stations in Fairfax County and eight in Alexandria will serve as drop off points through Dec. 19," said Capt. Willie Bailey, coordinator of the firefighters' toy drive efforts. For more information, contact Capt. Bailey at 571-641-0036 or willie.bailey@fairfaxcounty.gov.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMAN/THE CONNECTION

FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to greatfall@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

The Church of the Good Shepherd, 2351 Hunter Mill Rd. in Vienna, will host Biblical scholar David C. Hopkins on Sunday, Dec.

11 as part of its Champion of the Faith Series. Hopkins will examine the ancient poems of Isaiah and why they still speak to us. During the Advent: Hope and New Beginnings program, Hopkins will speak on different themes during 9:45 a.m. Sunday school, 11 a.m. worship and a special 7 p.m. evening program. www.GoodShepherdVA.com

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More on Giving Locally

Local organizations need your help right now to help needy families.

Organizations that help needy families and individuals in Northern Virginia have seen a dramatic increase in requests for assistance since the recession hit in 2008, and right now those organizations need your help to meet the need.

Connection reporter Victoria Ross cites the examples of Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO) and Food for Others. In 2010, ECHO assisted more than 1,472 households, an increase of nearly 30 percent from before the recession. And Food for Others delivered a record 2.7 million pounds of food to an average of 125 families a day last year.

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

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

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

Here are some suggestions about how to help, but there are dozens of other opportunities.

Where To Give

In no particular order:

- ❖ Our Daily Bread — ODB has been serving needy families in Fairfax County for 25 years. For more information on their holiday programs, including how to sponsor a family, go to www.odbfairfax.com.
- ❖ Food for Others — Food for Others is the largest distributor of free food directly to people in need in Northern Virginia, provides the assistance needed by unemployed and low-income neighbors. The non-profit provides a safety net for people who suddenly face unforeseen emergencies such as a family illness or the loss of a job or a spouse. Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. www.foodforothers.com
- ❖ Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), 703-569-9160. Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. www.echo-inc.org.
- ❖ Lorton Community Action Center operates the Act II Thrift Shop at 9506 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Sales from the shop generate funds for LCAC and clients also shop there. While donations are welcome during store hours, visitors are asked to call first at 703-339-8611 before dropping off. www.lortonaction.org.
- ❖ Comfort for America's Uniformed Services (CAUSE) — CAUSE ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. 4114 Legato Road Suite B, Fairfax, VA 22033, 703-591-4968, cause-usa.org
- ❖ National Capital Food Bank, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, 703-541-3063. www.capitalareafoodbank.org
- ❖ Western Fairfax Christian Ministries — food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive in Chantilly (near Backyard Grill and Bar). For more information or to sponsor a family, call 703-988-9656, ext. 105. To mail gift cards or send donations by check, add a note saying "food basket program" and send them to: WFCM, P.O. Box 220802, Chantilly, VA 20153. 703-988-9656.
- ❖ The Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic, 13525 Dulles Technology Drive, Herndon, VA 20171, 571-235-3577. Last year, 139 community volunteers — nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians — gave more than 1,300 hours of their time to see patients. jsfreeclinic.org.
- ❖ Alternative House — Abused and Homeless Children's Refuge, 2100 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182, 703-506-9191. www.thealternativehouse.org.
- ❖ Reston Interfaith, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, www.restoninterfaith.org. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program and the Thanksgiving Food Drive.
- ❖ SHARE of McLean seeks donations of grocery gift cards. Gift cards can be dropped off at SHARE, c/o McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Road on Wednesdays and Saturdays (except Thanksgiving week) 9:30 a.m. - noon. Checks and gift cards can be sent to: Holiday Celebration, Share, Inc. PO Box 210, McLean, VA 22101. 703-284-2179. www.SHAREofMcLean.org
- ❖ LINK, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more, needs contributions of food, coats and holiday toys for children, plus volunteers. Email Lisa Lombardozi at LisaLombo@signaturecos.com. 703-437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org
- ❖ FACETS — Information about supply donations and FACETS holiday gifts drive is available on the website at www.facetscares.org. Additionally, FACETS is always in need of volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. People who are interested in volunteering can contact 703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org.
- ❖ Committee for Helping Others (CHO), Vienna 703-281-7614
- ❖ Fairfax City Area FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help), 703-222-0880
- ❖ Lamb Center, www.thelambcenter.org, Fairfax 703-691-3178
- ❖ Herndon-Reston FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help), 703-391-0105
- ❖ Northern Virginia Family Service, Oakton, 703-385-3267
- ❖ United Community Ministries, Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, 22306
- ❖ National Capital Food Bank, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, 703-541-3063, www.capitalareafoodbank.org
- ❖ Arlingtonians Meeting Emergency Needs (AMEN), 703-558-0035
- ❖ Doorways for Women and Families, Arlington 703-522-8858
- ❖ Arlington Food Assistance Center 703-845-8486
- ❖ Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia, Arlington, 703-521-9890
- ❖ Arlington Free Clinic, 703-979-1400

Free, Safe Ride Home from Holiday Celebrations

Once again, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program will provide a safety net for those who might celebrate the holiday season with alcohol and unexpectedly need a safe ride home.

WRAP's 2011 Holiday SoberRide program will be offered nightly from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. beginning Friday, Dec. 16, and running until

Jan. 1, 2012.

To receive a free cab ride home (up to a \$30 fare), call 800-200-8294 (TAXI). You must be 21 or older to use the SoberRide service. All requests for SoberRide service must be called to and dispatched from 1-800-200-8294. Callers will be responsible for any amount over \$30.

WRAP's SoberRide has helped to ensure lo-

cal residents have a safe way home on high-risk holidays, keeping likely impaired drivers off the roads. Since 1993, WRAP has provided nearly 53,000 safe rides home. SoberRide operates during the December/January holiday season, St. Patrick's Day, Independence Day and Halloween.

For details, see <http://wrap.org/soberride>

Tax Policy Update To Help Rebuild Schools

BY U.S. SEN. JIM WEBB AND U.S. SEN. MARK WARNER AND U.S. REP. ERIC CANTOR AND GOV. BOB McDONNELL AND GEORGE ALLEN AND TIM KAINE

America's economic recovery continues to pose tough challenges. Our citizens need good jobs, and our students need the skills to compete for those jobs in the years ahead. During a time of economic uncertainty, we need to work together on creative ideas that confront these challenges in an innovative manner. With divided government in Washington, we need solutions that both parties can support. Here's one:

Republicans and Democrats agreed in 1986 on a private capital approach to modernize America's oldest buildings. Congress authorized a federal rehabilitation tax credit, worth up to 20 percent of construction costs, for rehabilitating historic buildings. This policy has proved successful, except in one crucial category — older school buildings.

Because of a limitation on using the tax credits for tax-exempt property, public schools cannot generally benefit from this. In addition, an Internal Revenue Service rule, known as "prior use," generally prohibits private investors from

earning this credit if they renovate an older school into a more modern public educational facility.

This means that if a local school building is turned into a luxury condo, developers are eligible for federal tax credits. But if private interests invest to modernize an old school, the IRS says these tax credits are not available.

Indeed, the limitations in current law effectively force localities to use the "borrow to build" approach — based on federally subsidized local government bonds. We have an important tradition of local control of education, but by denying local schools access to private capital to rejuvenate older buildings,

SEE HELPING, PAGE 11

NEWS

Langley High Orchestra Presents French Concert

The Langley High School winter orchestra concert will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 14, at 7 p.m. in the Langley auditorium. The concert is free and the public is invited.

In collaboration with the World Languages Department, the Langley Orchestra will present a celebration of music, language, and culture of France. Musical selections will include music by Faure, Herold, Saint-Saens, and Bizet. The concert will include songs popularized by the legendary French singer, Edith Piaf, including "La Vie en Rose" and "Sous le Ciel de Paris." It will also include themes from the Pixar animated film, "Ratatouille."

Senior violinist Iris Lim will be featured in Debussy's "Girl with the Flaxen Hair." The concert will open with senior pianist Michelle Park performing "Claire de Lune" by Claude Debussy.

Members of the French Honors Society will serve as emcees in both French and English, and French language teachers Mme. Houde and Mme. Weiser will re-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Tim M. will make a special appearance in the Langley High Orchestra winter concert on Wednesday, Dec. 14.

cite poetry. Refreshments will be provided before the performance.

Special appearances will be made by a mime, Tim M. He has performed with the Washington National Opera, the Maryland Lyric Opera, and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and is a theatre/movement instructor at the Baltimore School for the Arts.

The guest conductor for the Philharmonic Orchestra is Glenn Quader, from the Fairfax Symphony. Erin Maguire will conduct the Symphonic Orchestra, and the Freshman/Sophomore Orchestra will be conducted by Dr. Scott McCormick.

During the intermission, there will be a Silent Auction to benefit the orchestra. Items on the block include gift certificates to C2Education, Georgetown Learning Center, SH Kim Taewondo, Evo Bistro, Fluffythoughts.com, Giant Food, Kazan Restaurant, McLean Cleaners, Elements of McLean, Rocco's, Starnut Gourmet, Wok n Roll, McLean Hardware, Kumon, and Marvelous Market. Special items in the auction include a birdhouse from For the Wild Birds store, a lamp from Lamps Unlimited, Perfume from the Color Wheel, and a tote bag from Georganne's Hallmark.

Hope for Africa in Great Falls

The Hope For Africa Children's Choir performed at Great Falls United Methodist Preschool last week. The preschoolers were fascinated by the animal skin drums and the rhythmic dancing. For the last song, everyone was on their feet moving to the music.

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PHOTOS BY AL REITAN

Photographer Walt Lawrence, who specializes in photographic images of Great Falls, typifies the artists at the sale. Like Lawrence, several incorporate local scenes into their work, and all live or work in Great Falls.



Painter Gail Pean at last year's Holiday Sale takes time out to demonstrate her painting technique. Creation of high-end art and crafts has become a cottage industry in Great Falls, contributing to the community's cultural and economic life.

Great Falls Art Sale Promotes Locally Made Gifts

Holiday festival, new exhibitions showcase art 'Made in Great Falls.'

The annual Great Falls Holiday Art Show and Sale, together with new art exhibitions by local artists, will give residents of Northern Virginia unprecedented access during December to the creative output of 100-plus artists and craftspeople who work in studios throughout Great Falls.

The show and sale, a free celebration of local art, will take place Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 10 and 11, at the Village Green Day School, 790 Walker Road, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. It will feature paintings, jewelry, quilts, pottery, wearable art, carved wood, paper creations, photographs, portraits, cards and holiday ornaments by 24 members of the arts group Great Falls Studios. A percentage of the sales will be donated to the Village Green Day School to be earmarked for art education.

The artists, photographers and craftspeople will offer high-end artworks for sale at prices ranging from \$1.75 for greeting cards up to more than \$2,000 for large oil paintings. Some of the works feature subject matter of Great Falls places, people, wildlife and other local symbols. All of it is "Made in Great Falls."

"This is a wonderful opportunity to acquire one-of-a-kind gifts made with tender, loving care by friends and neighbors who have helped to establish Great Falls as a regional center for the arts," said Linda Jones, a watercolor painter who organized the sale on behalf of Great Falls Studios. "We know that holiday gifts that are made locally are special and reflect the thoughtfulness of the giver as well as the creativity of the artist."



Hidden in a forest of walking sticks he has carved by hand, Mike Long is one of 24 Great Falls artists whose work will be on sale at the annual Great Falls Holiday Art Show and Sale this weekend at the Village Green Day School.

GREAT FALLS ARTISTS work in studios and other facilities scattered throughout the community. The creation of high-quality artworks by so many people in one locality has positioned Great Falls as an artful place, the art group says. The village is increasingly known for its cottage industry of artisans.

The idea of buying products made locally

is catching on nationally. ABC News reports that the average American will spend \$704 on Christmas gifts. If just one of those gifts representing \$64 were for purchases of items made in America (as opposed to China, for example), that would create 200,000 new jobs in the United States, the network said.

Locally, the Great Falls Business and Pro-

fessional Association is also promoting local shopping as a way to enhance the local economy. It is currently sponsoring a "Shop Great Falls" campaign designed to connect Great Falls merchants and residents during the holiday season. Great Falls Studios is a member of the Association.

"Whether you are looking for a gift or just want to purchase quality art for yourself, buying in Great Falls makes sense," Jones said. "At the Holiday Show and Sale, you'll find museum-quality work at a fraction of what it would cost at a gallery, and you'll be supporting the arts in your home town."

In addition to seeing art at the sale, residents can view and purchase art, including pieces by local artists not represented at the sale, at a variety of new exhibitions that have been mounted for the holiday season. These include:

- * A Great Falls Studios all-member show at the Great Falls Community Library, through the end of December.

- * A juried exhibition by members of Great Falls Studios through Jan. 8 at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. The show is called "A Touch of Red."

- * An on-line exhibit in Great Falls Studio's "Virtual Gallery" through December at www.GreatFallsStudios.com. The show is called "Holiday Gifts."

INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS also display their works on a rotating basis at other venues established through partnerships between Great Falls Studios and local businesses. Display venues include Katie's Coffee at The Old Brogue Irish Pub, Seneca Hill Animal Hospital Resort & Spa, the Tavern, and Keller Williams Real Estate in McLean. Local art is also on display at the Artist's Atelier, administered by the Great Falls Foundation for the Arts, 1144 Walker Road, Suite G where a December display of "big and small works" will be accompanied by a reception Dec. 17 from 2 to 4 p.m. Art at all these venues is for sale as well.

COMMENTARY

Helping Rebuild Schools

FROM PAGE 8

we are increasing local costs. Those increased costs mean fewer local education dollars are available to improve classroom instruction and ensure our children have the educational resources they need.

These restrictions are preventing major — and much needed — renovations at a time when the average K-12 facility is considered obsolete, built for a 20th-century curriculum when our children need a 21st-century education. It is time we improve those schools by fixing this policy. In Virginia, we've seen firsthand what this change can do.

A few years ago, Richmond couldn't afford to borrow the money to turn a deteriorated, Depression-era high school into a modern K-12 facility. But local leaders and the Richmond City Council devised a novel solution. If the private sector rehabilitated this city high school into a regionally operated, high-tech high school for the top students in central Virginia, this could technically be seen as a "new" use. The IRS agreed. Using the 1986 law, this formerly run-down school is now home to one of the highest-ranked U.S. public high schools.

With that in mind, we all support the Rehabilitation of Historic Schools Act, legislation that would eliminate this roadblock to school renovation and allow local governments to use the historic building rehabilitation tax credit. The legislation isn't a silver bullet. But it is the only proposal before Congress to leverage private capital to help modernize our public schools.

The national interest — not to mention the best interests of parents, children and teachers — is not served by allowing obscure provisions of current law to cost jobs and opportunities for students and private investors. This is a bipartisan jobs bill that could help make America more competitive while also expanding our economy. We hope our colleagues and the White House agree.

Sen. Jim Webb (D-Va.) serves on the Joint Economic Committee. Sen. Mark Warner (D-Va.), a former governor, sits on the Senate Budget Committee. Rep. Eric Cantor (R-Va.) is the House majority leader. Bob McDonnell is the governor of Virginia. Former Virginia Govs. George Allen and Tim Kaine are now running for the Senate.



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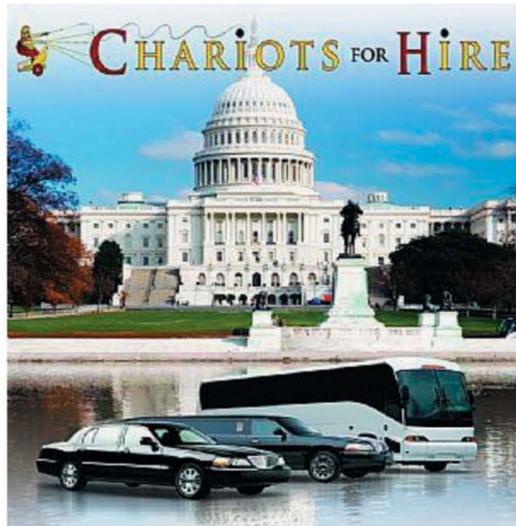
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All information is required; Winners will be announced at the January 2012 GFBPA meeting.



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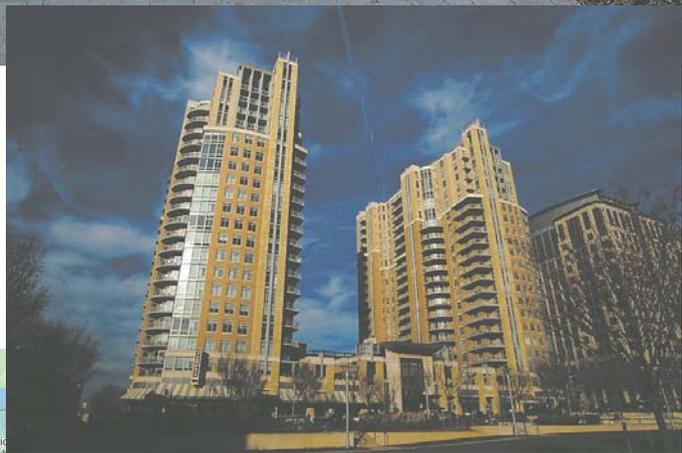
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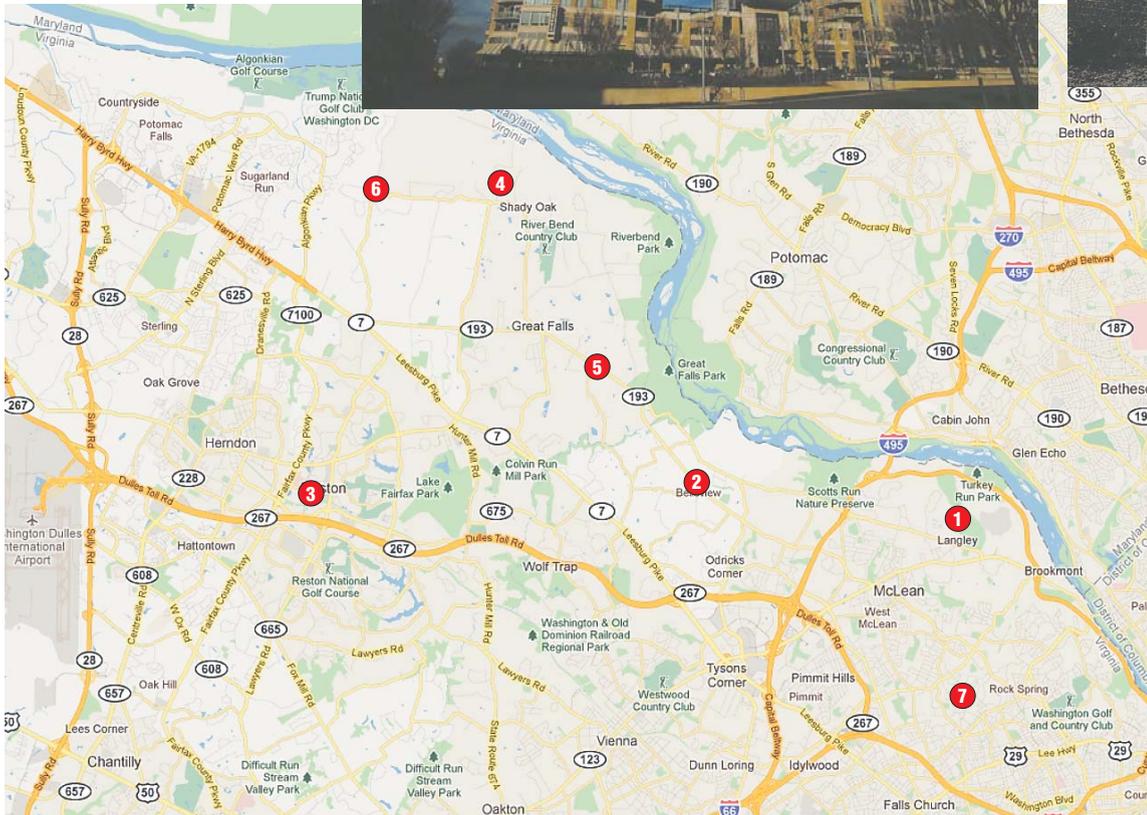


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Home Life Style

Creating the Holiday Table

Local designers offer suggestions for dressing a festive table and caring for guests.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

A festive holiday table requires more than prime rib and plum pudding. From incorporating natural elements to maintaining a consistent theme, local entertaining and design gurus dole out advice for creating a table as enticing as the food it holds.

Candlelight creates a warm ambience, but Ann O'Shields, owner of The Nest Egg in Fairfax suggests skipping tall tapers.

"Low candles set a really nice glow on the table and give it a really nice feeling as well," said O'Shields. "I always recommend doing unscented candles so they don't interfere with all the fragrances from your holiday meals."

Vienna-based design consultant Denise Willard of Décor by Denise suggests choosing a color scheme, but limiting the palette.

"A simple way to give your holiday decorations a designer look is to stick to two or three colors at most," said Willard. "This year the silver and green color combination is hot."

O'Shields agrees that simpler is better. "Whether you want to decorate with blues and browns and silver or go more traditional and use red and gold, keep your palate at a minimum for really high impact."

Let the colors of your room inspire you, especially when choosing flowers.

"Pick a color scheme that goes in your environment," said Evelyn Kinville, lead floral designer for Behnke's Florist Shop in Potomac. "If it is neutral, then you want to add in other colors. Choose colors that go in the room, maybe the colors of the linens. Sometimes people will bring in the china [and try] to pick [the colors in the pattern]."

Bring the outdoors in by using elements from nature, even from your own property, on your table.

"The outdoor, woody, organic feel is really popular right now," said O'Shields. "You can incorporate [things] from your own backyard, whether it is pinecones or holly. [You don't have to purchase] brand new decorations every year. You can freshen up what you have by using new elements from outside."

Rustic floral centerpieces are

also popular.

"Woody [arrangements] are well-received in Potomac," said Kinville. "There is a [plant] called angel vine. It looks almost like grapevine except that it is very, very fine. Add it to a fresh centerpiece to give it a woody look."

But remember that when you're creating concepts for the table, height matters.

"When setting your table for a dinner, keep in mind the height of things that you're putting together and how many people will be at the table," said O'Shields. "You don't want it to be so high that you can't see the person across from you."

For the most polished look, choose a theme and keep it consistent.

"I always think that if you pick a theme and do it well throughout and don't falter, you'll be satisfied whether you spend a lot of money or not," said Michael

Corrado, owner and head designer at Devers Design Group in Arlington. "If your theme is candy cane, for example, and everything you do [is] red, white and candy cane oriented, it is going to be very successful looking. If you start faltering, that is when your event looks mish-mashed and not well organized."

Don't be afraid to break tradition. Holly and mistletoe are holiday mainstays, but O'Shields says sometimes it is wise to mix old and new. "If you have plates that you like that were passed down to you, you can use them and add in some new, modern elements, like mercury glass pieces," she said. "A good way to keep your decorations current is by adding in modern elements."

FOR YOUR GUESTS

Use care in choosing a menu, keeping in mind possible dietary restrictions of your guests.



Place cards can put guests at ease during a dinner party. These ceramic place cards come with a dry erase marker so they can be reused.

"Make sure you understand all of your guests' needs and are doing your best to make sure that you have food for everyone so that no one feels overlooked or left out," said Scott Hoffner, corporate chef for Main Event Caterers in Arlington. "Keep in mind that the dietary restrictions of the average person are much different than [they were] even just a few years ago. There is a huge turn to vegetarianism and veganism, and you have gluten issues and religious factors in terms of pork or shellfish."

Hoffner believes a menu with farm-to-table fare will make a memorable meal.

"Find food that is local, fresh and in season," said Hoffner. "At the end of that day, that is what is going to give you the best result."

A little planning can make your guests more comfortable.

Place cards can ease anxiety especially when guests don't know each other.

"They put guests at ease," she said. "If you see the table and you see that there is already a place for you, there are not awkward [moments] of looking for a seat [and trying to determine] who you should sit by. They take the anxiety out, especially if guests don't know each other."

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To add your FREE Realtor represented Open House to these weekly listings, please contact Salome Gaibler at 703-778-9421 or salome@connectionnewspapers.com All listings are due by Monday at 3 P.M.

HomeLifeStyle

Top 10 Things To Know Before You Remodel

BY JOSHUA E. BAKER

There are very few decisions that can impact your family life, and the value of one of your biggest assets than selecting the right remodeler. Why not approach this as you would when hiring a lawyer, investment advisor, or even a physician?



Baker

1 Seek an Advocate: Unless you're an expert, and have an enormous amount of time, you will need someone who is able to assemble and manage team of professionals to work together on your behalf. Complex projects require input from numerous players, and may include an architect or designer, various engineers, landscape designer, lighting expert and others. Having one party who takes accountability and manages the entire process while looking after your interests is key to a successful remodeling experience.

2 Plan Early Government regulations and the permitting process for home remodeling are becoming increasingly restrictive and challenging. An experienced professional who understands the ever-changing requirements can help you to navigate through this process will be invaluable during the early stages of your project.

3 Find a Good Match Ensure that your contractor has a track record of success with projects similar to your own. Ask specifically about projects of comparable complexity, magnitude and level of finish, or requiring special areas of expertise, such as green remodeling, or historical restoration.

4 Get First-Hand Info Check the remodeling company's current references and visit recently completed projects to see firsthand if you are satisfied with the caliber of work. The best remodeling firms will be able to provide you with a list of raving fans who will welcome you into their homes.



BOB NAROD PHOTOGRAPHY

Before you undertake a project like this kitchen renovation in Great Falls, be sure your contractor has a track record of success with projects similar to your own. Ask specifically about projects of comparable complexity, magnitude and level of finish.

5 Explore Options "Paper is cheap." Take as much time as you need to make sure that the design addresses all of your priorities. It is better to invest in design which is relatively inexpensive, vs. having missed opportunities or costly changes during the construction process. Look for cost-effective ways to increase your home's value, such as using durable materials and investing in green technologies that will pay off over time.

6 Be Wise Beware of offers and deals that appear too good to be true. Remodeling remains one of the most reported industries at the Better Business Bureau. Understanding exactly what you are getting for your investment and taking steps to ensure the remodeler will be able to provide service in the long-term is essential. Asking for bank references, researching employee tenure, and confirming that subcontractors have been paid on time can help you evaluate a company's financial stability.

7 Prevent Stress Especially for larger or more complex projects, insist on a full-time onsite project supervisor to orchestrate the entire process and all

the players involved. This will help to keep your project on schedule and surprises to a minimum.

8 Be Firm Insist that a detailed production schedule be tied to your contract, and hold the builder accountable for these deadlines. While it's not commonly provided, ask for a written schedule guarantee with a penalty clause to ensure your satisfaction.

9 Double Check Warranties can vary greatly from one remodeler to another, so make sure you understand exactly what your builder will cover and for what duration after the completion of the project. Also ask about what resources are available to provide service if problems arise in the future.

10 Take Advantage Now is a great time to remodel. Compared to a few years ago, subcontractors are more readily available and their costs are significantly lower, enabling contractors to produce projects more efficiently and deliver greater value.

Joshua E. Baker is founder of BOWA Builders.

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Manny Smith and the Centreville Wildcats will be playing Oscar Smith High of Chesapeake for the Div. 6 Virginia state football crown this Saturday at the University of Virginia.



South County running back Peter Basnight rushed for 64 yards in the Stallions' state playoff win over Hanover last Saturday in Lorton.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Two Northern Region Football Teams in State Finals

Centreville, South County set to play in respective title games this Saturday in Charlottesville.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

Behind an outstanding game from lefty-throwing quarterback Shane Foley and an offensive line which dominated play in the trenches, the South County Secondary football team soundly defeated Hanover High (Mechanicsville), 38-22, in a Div. 5 Virginia State AAA semifinals football playoff game last Saturday evening. The postseason contest, which began at 4 p.m., took place at South County's home field in Lorton.

With the win, South County continued what has been as dramatic a turnaround season as has perhaps ever been seen from a Northern Region football team. The Stallions began the season with three straight losses — to Hayfield, Oakton, and West Potomac — but have since won 11 straight and now find themselves preparing for this Saturday afternoon's state championship game against annual Div. 5 power Phoebus High (Hampton). The title game is scheduled to be played at the University of Virginia's Scott Stadium in Charlottesville beginning at noon.

Following that state finals clash, the Div. 6 (larger schools) title game will take place between local Northern Region team Centreville versus Oscar Smith High (Chesapeake). That game, set for 4:30 p.m., will also be played at Scott Stadium.

SOUTH COUNTY'S 11-GAME WIN STREAK following its tough start has been fascinating to watch. The Stallions, under new head coach Gerry Pannoni this fall season, had never before, in the school's relatively short seven-year history, won any type of postseason football title before this season. Following the 0-3 start, South County won all seven of its remaining regular season games to make its record 7-3, earning the Stallions a part of the Patriot District title along with West Potomac and Lake

Braddock.

Then, in the eight-team Div. 5 region playoffs, the Stallions continued their red-hot play with victories over three quality opponents — Madison, 31-0; defending Div. 5 region champion Stone Bridge, 25-3; and previously unbeaten Yorktown, 37-13, the latter victory over the Patriots (National District) coming in the region finals.

That earned South County its first-ever trip to the state playoffs.

"The past 11 weeks, it's really been unexplainable," said South County senior running back Jake Josephs, who both caught a touchdown and threw for one as well — on a halfback option play. "Everything has worked. 'If something goes wrong [in a game], the next play works. ...When we were 0-3 we all got together and said, 'That's it, no more losses or we're done.'"

Hanover, the Div. 5 Central Region champion, had no answers for slowing down South County's rolling offense on Saturday as Foley, the Stallions' southpaw quarterback, behind ample protection from his offensive line, smoked the Hawks by connecting on 13-of-16 passes for 200 yards and three touchdowns. The signal caller threw no interceptions and was not sacked.

His biggest target was senior wide receiver Mike Ferguson, who caught three touchdowns on pass plays of 27, 11, and 13 yards. Ferguson, the team's kicker, also converted a 29-yard field goal.

The Stallions (11-3), who led 24-0 at half-time, utilized an impressive running attack in the win to bring balance to the offense. South County, in all, rushed for 162 yards, the top ball carrier being senior running back Peter Basnight (15 carries, 64 yards).

"We've been playing football [together] since we were in the seventh grade, so to get to the state championship game is awesome."

—Centreville receiver Chase Walter

"The past 11 weeks, it's really been unexplainable."

—South County running back Jake Josephs

CENTREVILLE HIGH, meanwhile, edged home team Hermitage High (Richmond), 10-9, in a Saturday afternoon Div. 6 state semifinals game. The Wildcats (13-1), champions of the Concorde District, will play in the state title game this Saturday afternoon at 4 p.m. versus Oscar Smith (Eastern Region) in Charlottesville.

Centreville, under second year head coach Chris Haddock, went 9-1 over the regular season, its lone loss coming against district opponent Westfield in overtime. In the playoffs, the Wildcats defeated Fairfax, 42-19, defending Div. 6 champion Lake Braddock, 21-18, and Westfield, 27-24. The region title game win over Westfield avenged the regular season loss and gave the Wildcats their first region crown since 2000.

Last week against Hermitage, Centreville — with the score tied at 3-3 — took the lead for good in the third quarter when quarterback Mitch Ferrick, on the final play of a 50-yard scoring march, connected with receiver Chase Walter on an eight-yard fade route pattern in the back of the left side of the end zone. Jared Rondeau, who had tied the game with a 20-yard field goal in the

second quarter, converted the extra point kick to give the Wildcats a 10-3 lead.

"I had a one-on-one on the outside," said Walter, a senior, of the TD play. "Mitch told me he would throw it up and I said, 'fine.' We work on that play every day. I beat my guy — he was behind me — and Mitch threw it up. It was a well thrown ball and I just caught it."

Hermitage scored a touchdown in the fourth quarter to get within 10-9 but the extra point kick failed. Ferrick said a Wildcat player might have tipped the ball on the conversion try.

"We knew [from watching game films] that we'd have a great chance to block field goals or extra points," said Ferrick. "It was a high snap and our guys went in hard at it. I would think it likely their kicker was nervous [with the game on the line]."

Later in the fourth quarter, with Hermitage threatening, Centreville's fierce pass rush forced a poor pass from QB D'Vonta Derricott, resulting in an interception by Connor Coward at the Hawks' 30-yard line.

Shortly after that, with time running out and Hermitage with the ball at its own 25, the Wildcats, on third and fourth down plays, got sacks from Ken Ekanem and Ryan Sepulveda to put the game away. In all, Centreville's defense accounted for 10 sacks, with Ekanem, a senior linebacker, accounting for four-and-a-half.

"I think we did real good on defense," said Ekanem. "We wanted to prove we were a better defense than Hermitage. We threw some blitzes at them and their linemen couldn't pick them up."

Centreville star running back Manny Smith led the Wildcats' ground game with 50 hard fought yards on 20 carries.

The Wildcats, this week, will be looking for their first state crown since winning it all in 2000.

"It's very exciting," said Walter. "We've been playing football [together] since we were in the seventh grade, so to get to the state championship game is awesome."

ENTERTAINMENT

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

THURSDAY/DEC. 8

Emerson Hart (lead singer of Tonic). 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

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

James Barney: "The Genesis Key." 7 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. McLean author Barney's thriller about nuclear engineering and chemistry. 703-356-0770.

FRIDAY/DEC. 9

Graham Colton (full band) and Steve Moakler. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Choralis Christmas Concert. 8 p.m. Falls Church Presbyterian Church, 225 E. Broad St., Falls Church. Children's choirs, Classical Brass Quintet and audience sing-along. \$5-\$45. Age 12 and under free. www.choralis.org or 703-237-2499.

Steak Dinner at Vienna American Legion. 5:30-8 p.m. American Legion Post 180, 330 Center St., N., Vienna. Grilled rib-eye steak, baked potato and salad, \$10. 703-938-9535.

Friday Afternoon Chess. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Players of all levels welcome. All ages. No registration



"Sunset on the Gibbon" by photographer Dean Souleles. Great Falls Studios presents the Annual Holiday Art Show and Sale Dec. 10-11 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Village Green Day School, 790 Walker Road in Great Falls. The show includes paintings, pottery, photographs, jewelry, collage, quilts, weaving, woodcarving, gifts and cards. A drawing for four \$50 "Art Bucks" door prizes will be held Saturday at 5 p.m. A portion of the proceeds will go to the school. Free admission. 703-442-9251.

necessary. 703-757-8560.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Mill Run Dulcimer Band 35th Anniversary and CD Release Concert. 7 p.m. Friendship Church, 3527 Gallows Road, Falls Church. Free. www.AppalachianDulcimers.com. **WMQ Winter Fest with Rodney**

Atkins. 5:30 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Also with Kellie Pickler, Thompson Square, David Nail, Josh Thompson and Ashton Shephard. \$30-\$99, available at www.ticketmaster.com and 703-573-SEAT. Accessible seating available for patrons with disabilities

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 19

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The Light Mission Church ... 703-757-0877
Vienna Baptist Church ... 703-281-4400
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Oakton Church of the Brethren
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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 18

at 703-993-3035.

www.patriotcenter.com.

Michael Tolcher. 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Great Falls Studios Holiday Art Show and Sale. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Village Green Day School, 790 Walker Road, Great Falls. Paintings, pottery, photographs, jewelry, weaving, woodcarving and more. Free admission. 703-442-9251.

Sugarloaf Crafts Festival. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Pottery, sculpture, glass, jewelry, fashion, wood, metal, furniture, home accessories, photography, and fine art. Gourmet candy, bread, syrup, olive oil and more. Live demonstrations of iron forging, papermaking, copper spinning, stone sculpture and other media. Live music and an interactive puppet theater. Adults \$7 online, \$9 at the door. Under age 12 free. www.sugarloafcrafts.com or 800-210-9900.

Visit from Santa Claus. 1-3 p.m. The Freeman Store, 131 Church St. N.E., Vienna. Assisted by his elves, Santa will be upstairs in his traditional chair beside the Christmas tree. Free and open to the public. 703-938-5187 or www.historicviennainc.org.

Holiday Bake Sale. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. St. Luke Serbian Orthodox Church, 6801 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Holiday baked goods, including walnut rolls, poppyseed rolls, apple strudel and fresh baked breads. 703-893-1759.

Rani Arbo and daisy mayhem. 8 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Folk, blues, swing, Cajun and more. \$18-\$25. 703-790-0123.

Choralis Christmas Concert. 8 p.m. Falls Church Presbyterian Church, 225 E. Broad St., Falls Church. Children's choirs, Classical Brass Quintet and audience sing-along. \$5-\$45. Age 12 and under free. www.choralis.org or 703-237-2499.

"It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play." 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. James Lee Community Center Theater, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Tickets \$15. www.providenceplayers.org or 703-425-6782.

Family Art Workshop: Mandalas. 10 a.m. McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. For age 4-8 and their parents. Tour the MPA galleries and create artwork to take home. \$10 per family. www.mcleancenter.org/classes.

Candlelight Tour: Christmas during the Federal period (1794-1820). 4:45-7 p.m. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. With the Fairfax County Carolers, sea songs by Mike Bosworth of Ship's Company and members of the 1st Virginia Regiment. Tour the 1794 home by natural candlelight, hear seasonal music, make holiday ornaments and sample sugar cookies. \$10 adults, \$7 seniors and children. Reserve at 703-437-1794 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/sully/calendar.htm.

Pianist George Winston. 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. \$21-\$42. <http://cfa.gmu.edu/calendar/178/>

Holiday Music Service. 4:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. "Magnificat" by John Rutter with Chorale and Orchestra. www.uucf.org.

Holiday Bazaar. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. McLean High School, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. Food vendors, live entertainment by the McLean High School Band, Orchestra and Choral groups and more than 80 vendors. Raffle and silent auction. Sponsored

by the McLean High School Athletic Boosters. mcleanbazaar@gmail.com.

Memories of Supreme Court

Justice Tom C. Clark. 2 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Mimi Gronlund will discuss her book about her father, an associate justice on the Warren Court. Adults. 703-356-0770.

Saturday Storytime. 11 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Stories, songs, and activities. Ages 2-3 with adult. 703-757-8560.

Holiday Open House. 11 a.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Join the staff and Friends of the Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library for music and childrens' crafts. 703-790-8088.

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

NoVA Lights Chorale Winter

Delights Concert. 4 p.m. Arlington Presbyterian Church, 3507 Columbia Pike, Arlington. A variety of holiday music, including traditional carols, jazz renditions of holiday classics, and seasonal music from around the world. Free, wheelchair accessible, reception to follow. www.novalightschorale.jigsy.com or 703-346-3512.

Great Falls Studios Holiday Art

Show and Sale. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Village Green Day School, 790 Walker Road, Great Falls. Paintings, pottery, photographs, jewelry, weaving, woodcarving and more. Free admission. 703-442-9251.

Sugarloaf Crafts Festival. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly Shopping Center, Chantilly. Pottery, sculpture, glass, jewelry, fashion, wood, metal, furniture, home accessories, photography, and

fine art. Gourmet candy, bread, syrup, olive oil and more. Live demonstrations of iron forging, papermaking, copper spinning, stone sculpture and other media. Live music and an interactive puppet theater. Adults \$7 online, \$9 at the door. Under age 12 free. www.sugarloafcrafts.com or 800-210-9900.

McLean Symphony. 3 p.m. Alden Theater, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Conducted by Dingwall Fleary. Violinists Marc Ramirez and Olivia Hajioff perform the Martinu Concerto for 2 Violins and principal cellist Julia Goswick performs with the Symphony Festival Singers. Join in the Annual Singalong. 703-356-0089.

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Messiah. 7 p.m. George Mason University Center For The Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Adults \$10, students and seniors \$5. 703-993-1380 or <http://music.gmu.edu>.

Vienna Community Band Holiday

Concert. 3 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Traditional holiday selections for all ages. Free.

www.viennacommunityband.org.

Choralis Christmas Concert. 5 p.m.

Falls Church Presbyterian Church, 225 E. Broad St., Falls Church. Children's choirs, Classical Brass Quintet and audience sing-along. \$5-\$45. Age 12 and under free. www.choralis.org or 703-237-2499.

"It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play." 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. James Lee Community Center Theater, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Tickets \$15. www.providenceplayers.org or 703-425-6782.



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Show and Tell



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Regularly, my wife or I receive an invite/query for something or other from friends, family and/or miscellaneous past, present and future business acquaintances, so that they can “see Kenny.” Concerned and courteous – and caring though it may be, it makes me feel peculiar, sort of, like I’m something of a “bearded lady.” “Come see the lung cancer patient as he continues to live against all medical odds.” And apparently, thought I don’t really feel it – and certainly don’t acknowledge it, I am a bit of an oddity, as I have been all my life. But now, near death – in terms of statistical presumption, I need to be seen; not to be believed, but to be congratulated, encouraged, embraced: “The Amazing Kenny,” as the barker might shout it to grab your attention.

Now I’m not about to charge admission or set up a 900 number to answer questions about my life-with-cancer experiences, but people do want to “see me” like I’m the adult version of the baby on the Seinfeld episode when the new mother whined over the phone to Jerry: “Jerry, you gotta see the baby!” (Do you remember the mother described the baby as “breathtaking?”) Well, I don’t think I’m breathtaking – or worth whining about, but I am still taking breaths, which apparently, is worth noting. Moreover, my living and still breathing is interesting to some, as if my continuing to do so provides some sort of wisdom.

I don’t see my continuing to live as any kind of wisdom, however, although I do have a bit of a story to tell. I think it’s more plain dumb luck – without characterizing myself too disparagingly. Sure, I’ve been “compliant,” the term most often used to describe one’s adherence to doctor’s orders. I’ve showed up for all my appointments and scans. I’ve taken all my medications as instructed and prescribed. In addition, I’ve tolerated my treatment with minimal complications. Whatever blips (abnormal labs) which have appeared in my weekly, every-three-week/now every-four-week lab work have always returned to acceptable levels within a reasonable time, which has enabled my treatment to proceed. In summary, I’ve been an excellent patient. As Curly Howard of The Three Stooges said: “I seen my duty and I done it.”

Does this behavior make me some sort of freak? How does one not adhere to medically-instructed protocols (if you believe in that sort of thing) when you’re given a death sentence? “I can treat you,” my oncologist said after a biopsy confirmed a malignancy in my lungs, “but I can’t cure you. Radiation is not an option. You have too may tumors. They’re like weeds.” (My wife, Dina, still hasn’t gotten over that last description.) To me however, it was all sort of amusing, considering that I was basically symptom-free and a lifelong non-smoker. As serious as all of it was – and is, and likely will continue to be, somehow, I’m able to not take it too seriously. Is that wisdom? I think it’s probably more like self-preservation.

As a result, I guess I am fairly well-preserved, given my circumstances. I wouldn’t say I’ve aged like fine wine or a bottle of single malt scotch, but I’m still able to walk (slowly though, the neuropathy and edema in my legs and feet – side effects, are a problem) and talk. And in so doing, I seem to be a sort of curiosity, maybe even a source of bemusement to people. Which bothers me not at all. I’m happy to still be in the game. Seeing is believing and showing can be telling. I don’t think I have too many answers, but maybe the fact that I’m available for questions matters more.

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



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Members of the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Club hosted the ninth annual Bridge Jamboree at Christ the King Lutheran Church Thursday, Dec. 1. The event raises money for the club’s scholarship fund, which helps women over 25 who are attending for the first time or returning to college.

Friends and Neighbors Host Bridge Jamboree

Event raises funds for women’s scholarships.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors hosted their annual Bridge Jamboree Thursday, Dec. 1 at Christ the King Lutheran Church. The club, which was created when the Great Falls Women’s Club and Newcomer’s Club merged earlier this year, has held the event for the past nine years.

“We had two groups that were doing pretty much the same thing, and one day we woke up and said why don’t we combine our efforts,” said Barbara Slaybaugh of the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors. “We worked for about 18 months to make sure we would have synergy and the ability to hold joint events, and we made it official June 1 of this year.”

Players played seven rounds of bridge throughout the day, and also brought gifts, which were used as door prizes for other players.

Other club members who aren’t bridge players didn’t play, but instead served as “kitchen angels,” making lunch for the players and helping put out desserts and drinks.

“I don’t play bridge, but it’s an event that we’re all happy to support, so we do our work in the kitchen,” said Joan Bliss, one of the “angels.” “The other ladies get to play bridge, which helps raise money, and it’s important for us to help as well.”

The money raised goes to the club’s schol-



Bridge players compete at the ninth annual Bridge Jamboree, held by the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Thursday, Dec. 1 at Christ the King Lutheran Church.

arship fund, which provides for women over 25 in the area who are returning to college or going for the first time later in life. The scholarships are awarded to George Mason University or Northern Virginia Community College.

“Our original concern was that women who didn’t go to college right out of high school didn’t have the same scholarship opportunities that graduating seniors might have, they needed all the extra support they could get,” said Mary Stout, president of the fund.

THE GREAT FALLS WOMEN’S CLUB started doing the jamboree nine years ago when members found that the investments they made couldn’t sustain the amount of

scholarships they wanted to award.

“The board members would collect donations and invest them, which we did since we were founded in 1980,” said Karen Magley, chair of the event. “But when the economy started to slow down about 10 years ago, we started the jamboree as a way to raise more money, and it’s working well so far.”

Official White House ornaments were also sold at the event, and the profits were donated to Artemis House, a shelter for victims of domestic violence.

The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors currently has about 230 members. Those interested in learning more about the club should e-mail membership chair Carol Kaninsky at ckisok@yahoo.com.

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