

Reston CONNECTION

Juniors Kaitlin Welker and Emily Lipscomb are co-editors of The South Lakes Sentinel. They, together with their adviser, Phil Dignan, and other members of the student newspaper staff, have worked over the past three years to rebuild the newspaper. Their work has paid off with a ninth place finish in a recent national student publications competition.

PHOTO BY AMIEE FREEMAN / THE CONNECTION
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NEWS

Honored Nationally

South Lakes student paper places ninth at National Convention.

BY AMIEE FREEMAN
THE CONNECTION

The South Lakes High School student paper, The South Lakes Sentinel, placed ninth in the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) Best of Show category for newspapers with 13 to 16 pages. Nine students from South Lakes High School traveled to Minneapolis, Nov. 16 to 20 to take part in the fall NSPA convention for student journalists and to receive recognition for their achievement.

"I was surprised at first. It's a big honor," said junior Kaitlin Welker, co-editor of The South Lakes Sentinel.

The South Lakes Sentinel is printed six times a year. The first edition for this academic year came out on Nov. 3. It was this edition that was submitted for the association's competition.

"After one issue, to be nationally recognized, means that what we are doing is working," said co-editor and junior Emily Lipscomb.

English and journalism teacher Phil Dignan took over as adviser of The Sentinel three years ago. The students who are now in positions of leadership were freshmen at that time. Together, they worked to rebuild the paper.

"They are a very enthusiastic group. A few are con-

sidering journalism as a career. It is a very cohesive group and a very diverse group. They have a diversity of cultures and beliefs. This diversity makes a powerful platform for a student paper," said Dignan.

The first issue of the year, which can be seen at The Sentinel's website (www.southlakessentinel.com), featured an article about a candidate forum for the then-upcoming election on the front page. Inside, there were stories about German exchange students, student thoughts about the coming Metro Silver Line, Homecoming photos and fall sports coverage.

In addition to the print edition, an online edition of the newspaper was launched last year. One to three new stories are posted online each day. The 23 students on staff, together with their adviser, are responsible for brainstorming story ideas, writing articles, taking photos, having the paper printed and posted online. Staff members meet for journalism class every other day for two hours. Section editors work about an hour after school each day, said Welker and Lipscomb. Lipscomb said she hoped this award would show people how hard they work on the newspaper.

At the convention, the staff of The Sentinel also received some critiques, which they will be working to address in future issues. Both co-editors agreed that the critiques were helpful and will help them work to continue to improve the print and online editions of the paper.

"I don't want what we have achieved taken from us. I want to keep getting better. When I graduate I don't want to leave something that I'm not proud of. I want to keep getting better," said Lipscomb.



Junior and South Lakes Sentinel co-editor Kaitlin Welker works on the upcoming second edition of the student newspaper. The first edition of the newspaper placed ninth at a recent student publications competition in Minneapolis.

PHOTOS BY AMIEE FREEMAN/THE CONNECTION



Emily Lipscomb and Kaitlin Welker discuss story ideas for the South Lakes Sentinel. The student newspaper publishes six times a year and updates its online page daily.



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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 other 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.

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

NEWS



The Board of Directors of the Dulles Corridor Rail Association at their annual meeting, Monday, Dec. 5 at the Reston Sheraton.



Patricia Nicoson, president of the Dulles Corridor Rail Association, speaks at the organization's annual meeting about the status of the Silver Line, Monday, Dec. 5.

Rail Association Gives Update

Phase One 60 percent complete, Phase Two to begin in early 2013.

there, you know why we're here tonight," Plum said.

Patricia Nicoson, president of the association, said they have spent the past year working on both phases of Dulles Rail, as well as with local organizations about future transportation planning.

"We've worked a lot on the land use issues, with

Tyson's Corner, we continue to follow that. There's a lot of issues being resolved and a lot of people working hard. We've also been involved with the Herndon Town Council as it has worked on their transportation plan," she said. "It's been an exciting year, but a fruitful one."

While Phase One is coming together, Phase Two, which would run from Wiehle Avenue to Dulles Airport hasn't gone as smoothly. Funding issues have led to doubt whether it can even be completed, but Nowakowski said MWA is "moving forward aggressively" on Phase Two.

"We have reached 100 percent of preliminary engineering for the entire line except for the portion to Dulles Airport, and we expect to finish that by February," he said. "We expect that we will begin the requests for qualifications for design-build teams in January, and we hope to conclude that process by the end of next year. That means we will start construction in early 2013 and it will be a four to five year project."

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

The Dulles Corridor Rail Association held its annual meeting Monday, Dec. 5 at the Sheraton Reston, and members provided updates about the progress of Phase One and updates on the status of Phase Two.

Pat Nowakowski, the project executive for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, said Phase One was moving rapidly. Phase One, expected to open in 2013, will end at the Wiehle Avenue station.

"In the design phase of the project, we're at 99 percent [completed], and at the same time we're at 60 percent of construction," he said. "The aerial structure foundations are done, all of our piers are done, most of our aerial structure is done."

Nowakowski said over the next year and a half people will be seeing a lot of station construction.

"We have a lot of systems work to do, we're starting to get substations and train control rooms delivered to the project," he said. "There's 1,700 people out there every day working on this project."

THE DULLES CORRIDOR RAIL ASSOCIATION is a nonprofit membership organization formed to advocate decision-makers on transit issues, from funding and location planning to access and implementation. Del. Ken Plum (D-36), chairman of the association, says the annual meetings are a way to gauge the progress of Dulles Rail.

"Each year at this meeting we sort of make our way farther down the corridor. When you take a look at the Wiehle station and see the progress being made



Fairfax County Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Sharon Bulova and Del. Ken Plum (D-36), chairman of the Dulles Corridor Rail Association, speak at the association's annual meeting Monday, Dec. 5 at the Reston Sheraton.

SHARON BULOVA, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, said she would like to see the Silver Line run all the way to Dulles Airport, and the board would examine Phase Two at their next meeting.

"Our board will have on our agenda Tuesday a motion to agree to a new memorandum of agreement in order to have the rail to Dulles Project Phase Two move forward," she said. "That's already been passed by the MWA board, Loudoun County has already voted, and Fairfax County will do our part tomorrow."

More information in the Dulles Corridor Rail Association can be found at www.dullescorridorrail.com.

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New And Improved: A Chanukah Message

BY RABBI LEIBEL FAJNLAND
DIRECTOR OF CHABAD OF
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Rabbi Leibel Fajnlанд

While walking through the supermarket recently I found the laundry detergent, shampoo, body soap, and even paper towels, that I have been using for years are now “new and improved.”

If they were fine for the last four decades, I wondered, why do they now need to be “new and improved?” And, scarier still, what was “wrong” with all these products, products that I have now been using for the better part of my life, that they had to be remade?

And then, as if sent from G-d to help me with my “paranoia,” comes Chanukah.

You see, one of the most unique aspects of the Holiday and its observance, is the manner in which we light the Chanukah candles on the Menorah. The Talmud teaches us, that by lighting one candle on the first night, and adding progressively each night until the eighth night, we are fulfilling the Mitzvah (commandment) in the most scrupulous and devoted way possible.

So, even though on night one, by lighting one candle, we have “raised the roof” on our Chanukah observance, when it comes to the second night, yesterday’s “top of the line” just won’t cut it. As good as last night was, tonight must be “new and improved!”

And as good as tonight might be, tomorrow must be even better.

This is a fascinating thought when taking stock in what we have accomplished, and what still lies ahead. We often feel like we have “done enough.” We are “tired,” and quite satisfied with our body of work. And, in most cases, we are well within our rights to take pride in our achievements. Yet, the Chanukah lights, like my favorite bar of soap, insist that yesterday’s “peak” must be today’s “springboard.” And that nothing less than a constantly upward climb, where every moment brings greater heights than the one preceding it,

Community Chanukah Event

Chanukah at Lake Anne: the entire community is invited Thursday, Dec. 22, 6-7:30 p.m.

Witness the lighting of the giant ice Menorah by Robert E. Simon Jr., founder of Reston. Enjoy family entertainment, live performance by the Chabad Hebrew School, prize drawings, hot chocolate, Chanukah donuts, latkes, chocolate gelt, free dreidels and lots of holiday cheer for the whole family. Free admission.

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is considered “living.”

May we all be blessed with an “illuminated” Chanukah.

Let us all resolve to, like the Menorah, constantly bring more and more light into the world around us.

May the increasing light of goodness and kindness, usher in an era of prosperity and peace for the entire world. Happy Chanukah!

To learn more about the holiday of Chanukah, its history and meaning, visit www.chabadrh.org/chanukah.

A Troubling Lack of Transparency

BY JOHN LOVAAS
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST

From 1743, when Fairfax County was carved out of Prince William County, until 1940, the only law enforcement entity in Fairfax was the County Sheriff. By 1940, the Board of Supervisors had had enough of an independently elected Sheriff. The board opted to move most law enforcement to a separate, new police department headed by a chief appointed by, and subordinate to them, in theory at least.

In the 71 years since its creation, the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) has had a checkered history. In its early years, the department was small and engaged largely in traffic policing. By the 1960s, the force’s crime solving work grew in importance but it was not very effective — its success rate was slightly below current public approval ratings of the U.S. Congress, i.e., in the low single digits. In the 1970s and ’80s, complaints of police brutality and corruption were frequent as were tensions between police and black residents. Also, there were instances of suspicious deaths of prisoners in police custody.

The frequency of reports of brutality subsided in the 1990s. But, suspicious killings by police in the line of duty in recent years are once again raising troubling questions. A lack of transparency in police operations heightens concern in the media and the community. When police are involved in killings, a curtain of secrecy envelopes the force. The Board of nominal Supervisors takes no action — although in one case, the Board Chairman directed the police

chief to promptly provide information to bereaved parents about the killing of their son. The chief did not comply. (While serving in Africa and Latin America, I had seen armed forces not accountable to the public and civilian authority, but had not expected to see it here in the United States.)

The FCPD points to Virginia’s 1968 Freedom of Information Act to justify opacity. While the FOIA sets transparency of government as its goal, it prudently, in my view, provides local jurisdictions room to make exceptions for sensitive police operations where confidentiality is deemed essential. The FCPD abuses the provision by making secrecy the rule, not the exception. The Board of Supervisors, the supposed protector of the broader public interest, is unwilling to set reasonable criteria to cover limited, legitimate circumstances for confidentiality — e.g. withholding names of minors or witnesses to violent crime.

According to press accounts, the FCPD is the “least transparent police department in Northern Virginia” (Alexandria Gazette Packet, March 18, 2010). That says quite a bit, because police departments in the region, operating under Virginia’s FOIA loophole, are well known for opacity. When the police hide information from the public, it prevents accountability to the very people who depend on them and, in fact, pay their salaries. It also means that the police are accountable only to themselves. This is not the way public safety should work in an open system of government. Secrecy is most dangerous when it conceals the use of deadly force and there is no independent civilian review as in Fairfax.

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Guest Chef - Gina Stipo 1/20 Demonstration 7-10 pm \$100 —
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Guest Chef - Gina Stipo 2/24 Demonstration 7-10 pm \$100 —
Antipasto: Bruschetta con Cavolo Nero (toasted bread with Tuscan kale); Crostini con Crema di Dragoncello (bread rounds with tarragon cream) Primo Piatto: Risotto con Zucca e Aceto Balsamico (risotto with winter squash & balsamic vinegar); Secondo Piatto: Maiale Arrosto con Semi di Finocchio (roast pork with fennel seed & pollen); Dolce: Ciostata (jam tart)

Guest Chef - Gina Stipo 2/25 Participation 2-5 pm \$95 —
Ravioli di Ricotta e Spinaci con Burro Salvia (ricotta & spinach ravioli with butter-sage sauce); Tagliatelle con Ragù di Anatra in Vin Santo (fresh egg pasta with duck-Vin Santo ragu); Agnolotti di Porcini e Tre Formaggi con Noci Moscate Burro (porcini & three cheese pasta with nutmeg & butter); Pasta di Gragnano con Cimi di Rape e Peperoncino (Gragnano artisan pasta with rapini & cayenne)

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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.

EDITORIALS

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:

- ❖ **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.
- ❖ **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 Lombardozzi 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

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>

Virginia's Unsupervised Tax Giveaways

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



COMMENTARY

I am more than a little puzzled as to why a report issued by the highly respected Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) staff last month did not make front page news throughout the Commonwealth. In its "Review of the Effectiveness of Virginia Tax Preferences," the independent, nonpartisan JLARC staff wrote that a "minority of public or tax policy preferences are subject to formal evaluation or reporting."

Of the 187 total categories of total tax preferences, or credits, examined for tax year 2008, the last year for which complete data are available, 131 different tax credits worth \$11.3 billion have "no formal

oversight." Of the remaining number worth \$1.2 billion, 36 are subject to reporting only and 20 are subject to reporting and evaluation. The number evaluated on effectiveness in meeting policy goals: zero! (jlarc.state.va.us)

The sheer volume of tax credits available in Virginia is itself astounding. They represented about \$12.5 billion in reduced taxpayer's liability in 2008, which is nearly 90 percent of the \$14.3 billion of the state revenue collected from the tax systems reviewed. One organization that describes itself as "a broad-based coalition of business people, local elected officials, and

nonprofit advocates and community leaders representing over 39 organizations from across the state" described the study as "detailing many of the myriad of often costly, inefficient, and ineffective loopholes, credits and breaks littered throughout the Virginia tax code." (www.betterchoicesva.org)

The subject of tax preferences is particularly relevant at this time with the state facing a shortfall of about a billion dollars in revenue for the coming biennium. Federal stimulus monies that have made major contributions to balancing the state's budget for the past couple of years are no longer available. The more than \$600 million borrowed from the employees' retirement fund must be paid back. Easy cuts to reducing the state's budget were made years ago, and the already-made reduction of \$7

billion has cut into the muscle and bone of state programs and services. In addition to simply making more spending reductions, should the state examine its tax code to see if the numerous "tax loopholes, credits and breaks" should be examined for their appropriateness and effectiveness? Sounds like the same debate that is going on at the federal level.

One thing the JLARC reports tell us is that Virginia, the best managed state in the union, has little information on tax preferences, "including which ones should be continued because they are effective, and which ones could be revised to improve their effectiveness or eliminated altogether." Agencies and organizations receiving state monies are held to strict accountability standards. Should we expect anything less from those getting a tax break?

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LETTERS

A Common Sense Measure

To the Editor:

[Re: Del. Plum's Commentary, Personhood Bill Introduced, Reston Connection, Nov. 30-Dec. 6, 2011]

Del. Marshall's recently filed House Bill 1 is a common sense measure that recognizes the scientific fact that life begins at conception, and on that basis creates a civil cause of action for the wrongful death of an unborn child. This cause of action already exists in the majority of states and is a natural complement to Virginia's fetal homicide law.

In fact, the language of Marshall's bill is taken verbatim from a statute that has been on the books in Missouri for over 25 years. The bill is legally airtight, as it was specifically left standing by the United States Supreme Court in a 1989 decision.

Nonetheless, pro-abortion advocates have already taken aim at the measure, employing a tried-and-true fear-mongering tactic. They suggest that the bill's passage will result in a parade of horrors, raising a host of allegedly unanswerable "questions." Would the law mean that abortionists are prosecuted for murder? Will miscarriages be treated as involuntary manslaughter? Will oral contraception become illegal? Of course not.

Exhibit A: the law has been on the books in Missouri for over 25 years, and none of these "sky-is-falling" predictions have come true.

Exhibit B: this isn't a criminal law. It will have no effect on the practice of abortion, which is governed by specific statutes describing how and when abortion is legal in the Commonwealth. If a pregnant woman chooses to end the life of her child, these statutes will continue to govern that choice.

What the law would do is to provide a legal remedy for parents whose beloved unborn baby is killed by the negligent or criminal act of a third party. Does anyone out there really think that is a bad idea?

Admittedly, many will think it is a bad idea to codify, for purposes of Virginia law, the fact that unborn children are human beings. But the only genuine objections to this must be argued on the basis of moral and philosophical principles. Don't fall for fear-mongering hyperbole. The "unintended consequences" questions do have answers.

Rita M. Dunaway
Rockingham County

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ENTERTAINMENT



Reston Chorale Assoc. Director Lucas Frazier, Artist Director David Lang and Board President Lloyd Kinzer just prior to the Dec. 3 Holiday Concert.

Chorale Holiday Concert a Success

The Reston Chorale's Saturday night performances of their annual Holiday Concert represented many faiths and languages. Singing in Latin, French, Hebrew and English, they were joined by the Amadeus Orchestra and even the audience, as

they joined in for a few carols. The concluding number was "A Musical Journey" that portrayed 12 periods of music, from ancient chant, down through the ages to current times. Both the 6 and 8 p.m. audiences gave the Chorale a standing ovation.

— MICHAEL MCKEE



At the conclusion of the Reston Chorale concert, Reston Founder Robert E. Simon Jr. congratulates Tordis Fahringer, keyboard artist.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MCKEE / THE CONNECTION

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

THURSDAY/DEC. 8

The Nutcracker. 7 p.m. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Performed by the Reston Conservatory Ballet. \$17-\$22. 703-715-8366 or www.conservatoryballet.com.

Preschool Storytime. 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Storytime and activities. Age 4-5 with adult. 703-689-2700.

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.

Bedtime Storytime. 7:30 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Stories and songs. All ages. 703-242-4020.

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

FRIDAY/DEC. 9

Disney's "Beauty and the Beast." 7:30 p.m. Herndon High School Auditorium, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. Tickets \$10. www.herndonrama.org.

Voice Chamber Singers of Northern Virginia. 7:30 p.m. John Neumann Church, 11900 Lawyers Road, Reston.

A concert of holiday favorites. Toys for Tots collected at the door. Adults \$23, seniors \$18, age 24 and under \$8. 703-277-7772 or www.voice.org.

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.sugarloafcrafter.com or 800-210-9900.

The Battle of Dranesville. 7 p.m. Reston Community Center-Lake Anne, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. John Waggoner and Jim Lewis present a program on The Battle of Dranesville, a combat that was fought on Dec. 20, 1861, the strategic significance of Leesburg Turnpike, and what happened to the area of Dranesville and Reston during and after the war. 703-709-7700 or www.restonmuseum.org.

The Nutcracker. 7:30 p.m. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Performed by the Reston Conservatory Ballet. \$17-\$22. 703-715-8366 or www.conservatoryballet.com.

Herndon Drama. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Herndon High School Auditorium, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. Tickets \$10. www.herndonrama.org.

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SEAT. Accessible seating available for patrons with disabilities at 703-993-3035. www.patriotcenter.com.

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Holiday Open House. 11 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join the staff and Friends of the Reston Regional Library for a holiday open house. Live music and refreshments. 703-689-2700.

Holidays Around the World. 2 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Sing a-longs and dancing with Cody&Bj. 703-689-2700.

Holiday Open House. 11 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Share the winter holiday season. Music, crafts and refreshments. All ages. 703-242-4020.

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

Master Singers of Virginia: A Festival of Lessons And Carols. 7 p.m. Church Of The Epiphany, 3301 Hidden Meadow Drive, Herndon. Pre-concert led by director Erik Jones at 6:15 p.m. Music and stories based on the Festival from King's College in Cambridge, England, Paul Mealar's Ubi Caritas, plus an opportunity for the audience to join in singing carols. Light refreshments. \$18 adults, \$15 students and seniors in advance, plus \$2 at the door. www.msva.org or 703-829-6782.

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.

The Nutcracker. 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Performed by the Reston Conservatory Ballet. Additional shortened performance suitable for young audiences at 11 a.m. \$17-\$22. 703-715-8366 or www.conservatoryballet.com.

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

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Herndon Drama. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Herndon High School Auditorium, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. Tickets \$10. www.herndonrama.org.

Holiday Model Train Show. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Herndon Depot Museum open for tours 12-3 p.m. Free. 703-956-6590.

The Nutcracker. 3:30 p.m. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Performed by the Reston Conservatory Ballet. Additional shortened performance suitable for young audiences at 12 p.m. \$17-\$22. 703-715-8366 or www.conservatoryballet.com.

Symphony Orchestra and Combined Choirs Sing-Along 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>.

Holiday Music Service. 9:15 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. "Magnificat" by John Rutter with Chorale and Orchestra. www.uucf.org.

Christmas Cantata. 8 a.m., 9:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. Floris United Methodist Church, 13600 Frying Pan Road, Herndon. "The Winter Rose" will be performed during Sunday worship services by the Floris UMC choirs and full orchestra. Traditional carols and newly composed anthems. 703-793-0026 or www.florisumc.org/cantata.

Read to the Dog. 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Read aloud to a trained therapy dog. Call/sign up online for a 15-minute session. Age 6-12. 703-689-2700.

One-on-One Computer Tutoring. 3 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.

Money Matters. 7:15 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Monthly group discussion focuses on personal finance and investing. Adults. 703-242-4020.

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Winter Woodpeckers. 10 a.m. Walker Nature Education Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Learn about woodpeckers and other birds who peck on trees. Look for their homes and make a craft. For age 3-5 with adult. \$5 child RA members, \$8 child non-members. Reserve at 703-476-9689 or naturecenter@reston.org.

English Conversation. 10:30 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. English practice for non-native speakers. Adults. 703-242-4020.

TUESDAY/DEC. 13

The Reston Chorale: Messiah Singalong. 7:30 p.m. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 1133 Reston Ave., Herndon. Admission \$10, rental scores \$3. lindacke@verizon.net.

Moscov Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker. 7:30 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets \$28-\$122, available at ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

Read to the Dog. 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Read aloud to a trained therapy dog. Call/sign up online for a 15-minute session. Age 6-12. 703-689-2700.

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Local REAL ESTATE

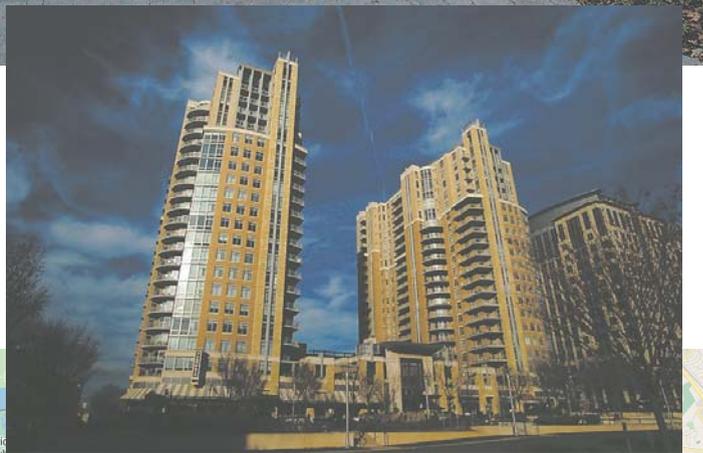
PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/
THE CONNECTION

Top Sales in October

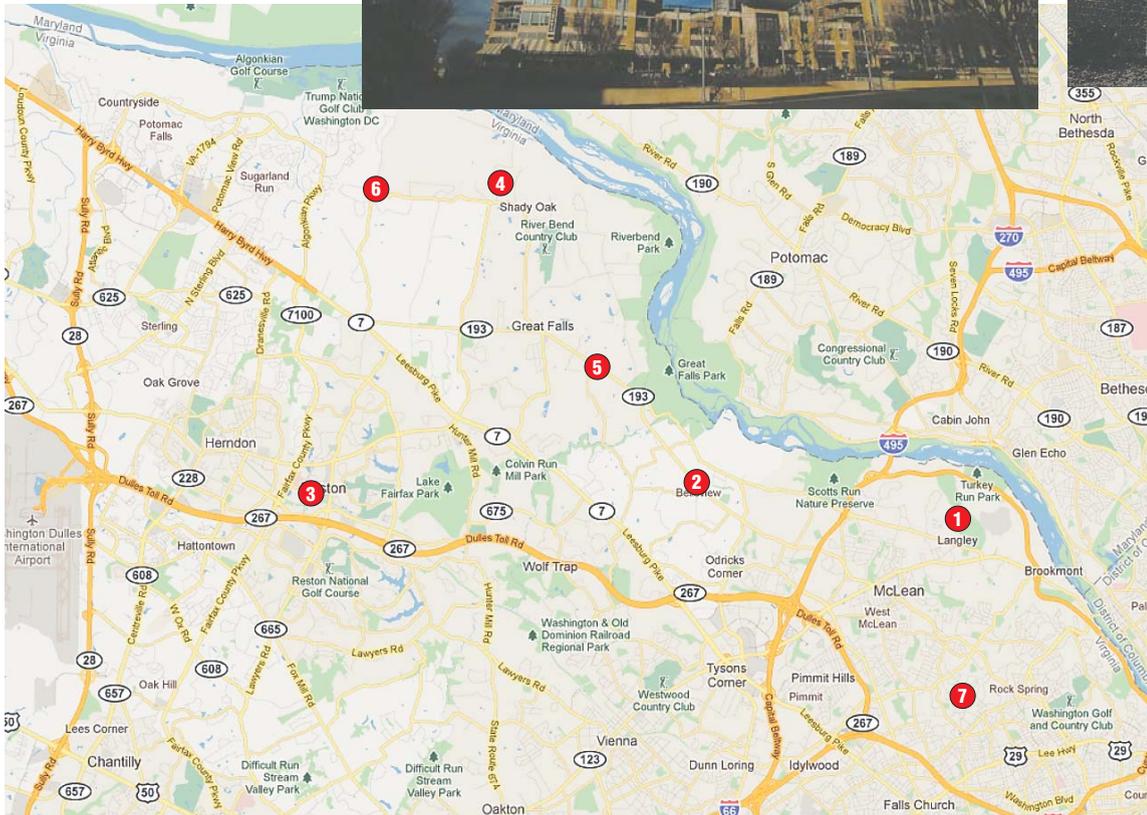
1 903 Turkey Run Road,
McLean — \$7,501,310



3 11990 Market Street
#2112, Reston —
\$2,700,000



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2 8537 Old Dominion Drive, McLean — \$2,950,000



4 129 Commonage Drive, Great Falls — \$2,695,000



6 11322 Beach Mill Road, Great Falls — \$2,335,000

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal	City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	PostalCode	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 903 TURKEY RUN RD	6	7	2	22101	MC LEAN	\$7,501,310	Detached	1.00	22101	TURKEY RUN	10/27/11
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3 11990 MARKET ST #2112	2	3	1	20190	RESTON	\$2,700,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors	20190	20190	MIDTOWN AT RESTON TOWN	10/04/11
4 129 COMMONAGE DR	6	5	2	22066	GREAT FALLS	\$2,695,000	Detached	5.24	22066	SOUTHDOWN FARMS	10/06/11
5 9330 GEORGETOWN PIKE	7	7	4	22066	GREAT FALLS	\$2,350,000	Detached	5.43	22066	THREE SWALLOWS FARM	10/07/11
6 11322 BEACH MILL RD	6	6	1	22066	GREAT FALLS	\$2,335,000	Detached	2.73	22066	SENECA	10/11/11
7 1932 FRANKLIN AVE	6	5	1	22101	MCLEAN	\$2,315,000	Detached	0.32	22101	FRANKLIN FOREST	10/21/11

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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 tablescape as enticing as the food it holds.

Candlelight creates a warm ambience, but Ann O'Sheilds, 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'Sheilds. "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'Sheilds 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'Sheilds. "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 tablescape for a dinner, keep in mind the



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.

height of things that you're putting together and how many people will be at the table," said O'Sheilds. "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'Sheilds 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."

SEE CREATING, PAGE 12

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Vienna

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2311 Stryker Ave.....\$549,900.....Sun 1-4.....Dave Lloyd & Assoc.....Weichert..703-593-3204

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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.



PHOTO BY GWIN HUNT PHOTOGRAPHY

An outdoor living room by BOWA overlooks a pool and guest house in Vienna. Major renovation projects require extra communication.

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.

Creating the Holiday Table

FROM PAGE 11

FOR YOUR GUESTS

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

"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."



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).

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."

"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

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 many 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-served, 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.

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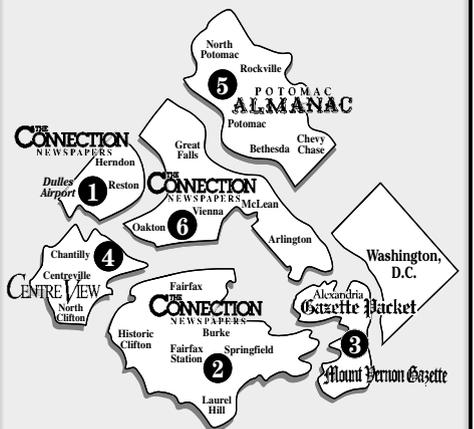
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