

Fire Station Holds Onto History

NEWS, PAGE 3

Firefighter Karl Sallberg writes the date and other information on the newly restored bell that sits in front of the Great Falls Fire Station.

Great Falls Artists Present 'Touch of Red'

COUNTY LINE, PAGE 18

Fairfax to Richmond: Do Us No Harm

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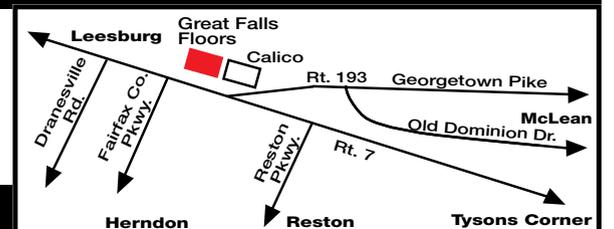
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State senators George Barker (D-39) and Richard Saslaw (D-35) and Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) listen as state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) addresses local officials during the meeting of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and the Fairfax County delegation to the General Assembly on Wed. Dec. 7 at the McConnell Public Safety Transportation and Operations Center.



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax to Richmond: Do Us No Harm

Transportation funding dominates discussion.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

The message Fairfax County Board of Supervisors delivered to legislators at its annual 2012 session was summed up in four words: Do us no harm.

“Our theme is basically ‘Leave us alone,’” said Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee), chairman of the board’s legislative committee. “We recognize it’s difficult this year, and we’re begging our legislators not to make it worse for Fairfax County. It doesn’t sound collaborative, but we know we lose in all the funding formulas, so we’re saying don’t make it any worse.”

The 2012 General Assembly Legislative Work Session, held at the McConnell Public Safety Transportation and Operations Center on Wednesday, Dec. 7, followed the Boards’ unanimous decision to support the 2012 legislative agenda at its regular meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 6.

The county’s legislative program outlines four priorities: education funding; transportation funding; restoring the decimated level of state funding; and enhancing local authority, giving the county the flexibility to “modernize” its local tax structure, particularly in areas such as taxation and land use.

“I know we’re speaking to the choir here,” Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) said to the mostly Democratic state legislators in the room. “But now is the time for the state to begin the process of rebuilding the funding partnership with local government, by providing adequate funding for core services and avoiding shifting additional state costs and responsibilities to localities.”

THE CONCEPT OF DEVOLUTION, or shifting responsibilities from the state to the county, was a heated topic during the three-hour session.

“Basically, devolution means we don’t have enough money to go around,” said Del. Ken Plum (D-36) “so we end up pushing it down to counties. We’re not living up to our end of the bargain.”

During the session, Fairfax County executives said two facts merge to make FY 2012 a difficult year



School Board member Ted Velkoff (D-At-large), Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville), state Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) and Supervisor Linda Smyth (D-Providence) at the meeting.

financially: funding shortfalls exacerbated by diminishing federal stimulus dollars and the state’s declining revenue sources.

“The pie has shrunk. The money the state has been able to send us has dropped ... some of that decrease did not feel as bad because of the stimulus,” said James J. Regimbal Jr., a consultant from Fiscal Analytics who presented a fiscal forecast of state aid to Fairfax County during the session.

Regimbal said state revenues are not rebounding fast enough after the recession, which impacts core services such as education, transportation and human services. He predicted that Medicaid and Virginia Retirement System demands will continue to outstrip the state’s general fund revenue, putting pressure on state funding for other core programs.

“Without new revenues and expecting modest economic growth, the state will continue to reduce fund

SEE COUNTY, PAGE 17



PHOTO BY ALEX MCVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Firefighter Karl Sallberg writes the date on the bell in front of the Great Falls Fire Station, which was restored by county and volunteer firefighters from the station. The bell was in front of the old station for more than 50 years.

Fire Station Holds Onto History

Firefighters repair historic bell in front of station.

BY ALEX MCVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

For more than 50 years, the original Great Falls fire station housed the men and women of the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department. Now that the new station has been built, firefighters wanted to make sure at least one piece of the old building stayed put.

The large bell that was in the front of the previous building is back on a new perch, having been restored and rebuilt by firefighters of A shift serving at the station.

Capt. Kevin Edwards said the bell was sandblasted, restored and repainted by firefighters, which took about 50 man-hours. The Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, which will maintain a presence at the new station along with Fairfax County, paid the \$750 in material costs to restore the bell.

“Historically speaking, the bell would ring when people would request services,” Edwards said. “Traditionally, it’s

also rung when a firefighter passes away, to sort of signal their last alarm.”

The bell, which staff estimated to weigh around 700 pounds, is made of cast iron, rather than the usual bronze. Firefighter Karl Sallberg did a lot of the work, repainting the bell with a bronze coat of paint and also helping restore its mount and other hardware.

“It’s part of the community’s history, and we wanted to make sure it was around for the future.”

— Joan Bliss, president of the Great Falls Volunteer

“When the crane was knocking down the old station, we saw the bell and decided to grab it. It wasn’t in good shape, but we thought we might be able to fix it up,” Sallberg said. “We guessed it’s about 80-90 years old, but I looked during the work to see if there was any sort of date stamp, and there wasn’t.”

Joan Bliss, president of the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, said restoring the bell was important to everyone at the station.

“It’s part of the community’s history, and we wanted to make sure it was around for the future,” she said.

Debating Turf Field in Great Falls

Residents voice pro and con arguments about proposed turf field at Leo Santaballa Park.

BY MARY GRACE OAKES
THE CONNECTION

On Nov. 10, the Great Falls Lacrosse Association unveiled their updated plan for the installation of a turf field at Leo Santaballa Park, a topic which has been highly contended within the community for the past year.

Located behind the Great Falls Library, Leo Santaballa serves as the home field for Great Falls' lacrosse programs, in which more than 400 families are involved. The Great Falls Lacrosse Association first announced their plans to install a turf field last October, stating a turf field would become a "community asset," allowing for "all weather, year-round playing."

However, their initial proposal to construct a "crumb-rubber" infill turf field was met with some resistance by members of the community, who were concerned that this type of field could have adverse environmental impact.

CITIZENS INVOLVED in watershed cleanup and stream restoration in the area argued that because

Leo Santaballa field is situated at the top of the Great Falls watershed, contaminated runoff from a "crumb-rubber" turf field would reach nearby bodies of water and have devastating consequences.

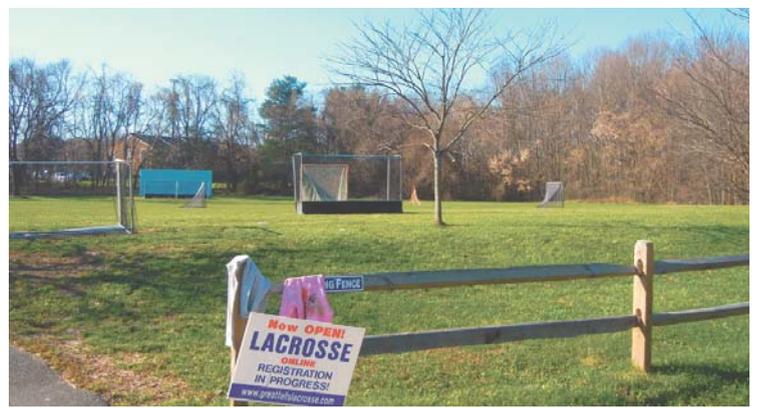
"A toxicologist working with us said that from a 350 ton field, we will receive literally tons of small particulate of plastic and silica sand into our watershed," said Amy Stephan, a Great Falls resident involved with efforts to protect the Great Falls watershed.

Residents were alarmed that the presence of these particles in the Great Falls watershed could destroy aquatic life, or contaminate drinking water, as many people in Great Falls rely on a well-water system.

One group of citizens within Great Falls were so concerned that they formed a coalition, known as "Great Falls Clean Water," with the purpose of educating the community about the risks of installing a "crumb-rubber" turf field, emphasizing that "toxins" from the field's run-off "will destroy our local aquatic ecosystem, possibly all the way from the Great Falls Library to the Potomac River."

The Great Falls Clean Water group launched a website to "clarify and voice our concerns as Great Falls citizens about the proposed artificial turf field at Leo Santaballa field." The website features a petition to "stop construction at Leo Santaballa field" and numerous links to studies which support the group's claims (<http://www.greatfallscleanwater.org>).

RESPONDING TO THE COMMUNITY CONCERN, The Great Falls Lacrosse Association worked
SEE SANTABALLA, PAGE 5



Leo Santaballa Park is located behind the Great Falls Library and serves as the home field for the Great Falls Lacrosse Association's programs. The installation of a turf-field at Leo Santaballa Park has been a topic of discussion in the Great Falls community for the past year.



If a turf-field were to be installed at Leo Santaballa Park, some residents worry that run-off from the field would reach bodies of water in the Great Falls Watershed, such as this pond located in the Innsbruck Avenue neighborhood.



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NEWS

Woman's Club Donates \$9,600 to Local Causes

The Woman's Club of McLean donated a total of \$9,600 to eight local charities and nonprofits on Tuesday, Dec. 6, presenting checks to their representatives at its monthly meeting. The recipients were the McLean Project for the Arts; Share, Inc; Alternative House; Capital Hospice; Girls' State; Fisher House; Claude Moore Colonial Farm; and the McLean Volunteer Fire Department.

The club recently completed its 45th annual Holiday Homes Tour. The tour has been an annual event providing the sole source of funds for the club's projects. All profits from the tour are turned back into the community in the form of many and varied



Woman's Club president Virginia Sandahl looks on as Bonnie O'Neill, of Share, Inc., acknowledges to club officers Kay Burnell (at left) and Helen Peterson (at right) receipt of the club's contribution to Share, Inc.

service projects. In addition, the club makes periodic donations throughout each year.

— LAURA SHERIDAN

Santaballa Field Debated

FROM PAGE 4

alongside the Fairfax County Park Authority to research alternative solutions. After "undert[aking] significant investigation," the Great Falls Lacrosse Association "arrive[d] at" their "current recommendation, which utilizes Target Technologies' FutrFill in-fill product along with FieldTurf's Duraspine solution." Under the new design, a turf-field would be constructed using FutrFill Duraspine, a synthetic rubber filler, and would include underground drainpipes to carry runoff away from nearby ponds and streams. The lacrosse association believes that FutrFill is not only "a great in-fill solution from a performance standpoint," but that it also "addresses the environmental concerns we have heard from members of the community" (<http://greatfallslacrosse.com/>).

Some, however, are not convinced that a FutrFill turf field will be environmentally friendly — not yet anyway. While members of the community are "very happy the GFLA has moved away from a crumbed rubber infill," they simply know "too little about this new infill," said Kelly Baxter of Great Falls. In order to make a proper assessment, citizens recently proposed a set of 40 questions to the lacrosse

association and park authority regarding the environmental safety of FutrFill.

Not all of the opposition to the construction of a turf field at Leo Santaballa is grounded in environmental reasons. There has been some conjecture that lights would also be installed at Leo Santaballa, lengthening its hours of use and increasing traffic congestion on Georgetown Pike. However, Glenn Tofil, commissioner of the Great Falls Lacrosse Association, assures that this will not be the case. "Our plan does not call for lights," he said, asserting that the lacrosse association doesn't anticipate "any change in usage patterns" and that the "GFLA and other youth sports groups with access to the field will continue to practice on the field during the week and play games, or hold club sponsored instructional clinics, on Saturday and Sundays. That is the way it currently is utilized." Tofil again emphasized that a turf field at Leo Santaballa, accessible to all Great Falls youth sports organizations, as well as Great Falls residents, "would be a great community asset."

Anyone interested in the ongoing turf field discussion can learn more about the above issues by visiting the Great Falls Land Zoning and Use Committee website at <http://gfca.org/landuse.html>.

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WEEK IN GREAT FALLS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

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.

Police Target Alcohol Violations

In an effort to keep December 2011 a safe and festive month for all, Fairfax County Police are stepping up alcohol enforcement efforts with extra DWI patrols, sobriety checkpoints and underage alcohol stings. Last December (2010), Fairfax County Police made 317 DWI arrests. Of those 252 were men; 65 were women.

Police urge residents to make their travel plans in advance of holiday parties by designating a sober driver as drunk driving continues to be a serious roadway danger. According to recently compiled Fairfax County data, there have been 546 alcohol-related crashes through October 2011, out of a total of out of 8,214. In 2010, out of 10,471 crashes, 730 of them involved alcohol.

In addition to targeted patrols, DWI checkpoints netted 46 impaired drivers in 2010. Motorists should expect to encounter checkpoints across Fairfax County this month as they are an additional deterrent and educational tool.

Despite strict laws governing underage drinking, FCPD cited 246 people under age 21 with driving after illegally consuming alcohol in 2010. Through the third quarter of 2011, there were 193 youthful offenders cited.

White House Ornament on Sale

The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors formerly The Great Falls

Newcomers and Woman's Club are selling the 2011 White House Ornament to benefit the Artemis House, a Fairfax County shelter for women and children fleeing domestic violence. The cost is \$20. They can be purchased at Great Dogs of Great Falls in the Village or at The Studio Hair Skin and Nails next to the Mediterranean Restaurant.

The front of the ornament depicts the arrival at the White House of a very jovial Santa Claus bearing presents for Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt's six children. Why all the excitement on Santa's part? There have been no children in the White House since 1897. The back reveals a different scene. Roosevelt being a conservationist would not permit a tree to be decorated in the White House. His son Archie and Quentin have hidden a small tree in the closet only to be discovered by Roosevelt and the rest of the family.

Essay Contest on Women's History

The Fairfax County Commission for Women is sponsoring an essay contest to commemorate Women's History Month 2012. The contest is open to every high school senior attending a Fairfax County public school, college bound or not, male or female. The deadline is Dec. 31. Winning essays can win up to \$1000. More information about the topic and requirements can be found at: http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/news_press_releases/2011/1107-essay-contest.htm.

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NEWS

MWAA Resists New Members U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf 'extremely disappointed.'

BY NICHOLAS HORROCK
THE CONNECTION

The Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority apparently never tires of resisting U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf and other Virginia officials from gaining more control of the authority's operations and its handling of the Dulles Rail project.

After President Obama signed into law a measure that increases Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority's membership from 13 to 17 members and called for an additional two Virginia members, Airports Authority Chairman Charles D. Snelling, wrote to Wolf that the authority did not plan to immediately abide by the law.

"Soon after the enactment of this legislation, the Airports Authority retained outside legal counsel to provide an independent legal opinion on the implementation of the legislation and, more specifically, on whether the changes made by the legislation were operative upon enactment or require an amendment to the MWAA compact in order to become operative," Snelling said.

The authority engaged Jenner & Block, one of the nation's best known and most expensive law firms, to examine the constitutionality of the law. In 22 pages of legal dissertation, the firm said it might be unconstitutional but the issue would likely have to be settled in a federal court.

Robert Yingling, a public affairs spokesperson for Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority, said he could not report on how much this legal opinion cost public funds because the bill for the work had not been submitted.

According to Snelling, the Jenner & Block opinion found that the "new legislation is

not operable until the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia approve changes to the governing MWAA compact. Accordingly, it is the opinion of our outside counsel that the legislation is best understood as authorizing Virginia and the District of Columbia to amend the MWAA compact, and not unilaterally bringing about that amendment itself."

He said Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority would not permit any new members appointed under the law to "participate in board duties until changes are made to governing MWAA compact."

Wolf said he was "extremely disappointed" that the Airports Authority "is choosing to fight bipartisan changes contained in Public Law 112-55." Wolf said the "intent of Congress could not be more clear" and there was "no need for MWAA to go the expense of hiring outside counsel." Wolf said he has asked the U.S. Transportation Department's Inspector General to find out who ordered the report and what it cost.

The role of board members acting out after expiration of their term arose when a member whose term had expired was allowed several years ago to vote from house arrest in the Ivory Coast.

Wolf said that members with expired terms will not be allowed to participate in Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority activities.

Meanwhile Virginia is where the two airports are located and where the Airport Authority is building a \$6 billion Metro line to Dulles Airport. In 2007 the cost of that Metro line was estimated at \$2.7 billion, but the cost has now doubled and Wolf has charged part of that is due to mismanagement by Metropolitan Washington Airport Authority.



There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all argument and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance. This principle is contempt prior to examination.

—Herbert Spencer



FAITH NOTES

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

St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike in McLean, has announced their Christmas Worship Services. 703-356-4902 or www.stjohnsmclean.org.

❖Sunday, Dec. 18. 9 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. A traditional service of lessons and carols with the Choirs of St. John's Church accompanied by organist Dr. John C. Wulff, and the Sunrise String Quartet with Teri Lazar and Osman Kivrak.

❖Saturday, Dec. 24. 4 p.m. Christmas Eve family service of Holy Eucharist, with Christmas music beginning at 3:30 p.m.

❖Saturday, Dec. 24. 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. A traditional service of Holy Eucharist including familiar carols. Music begins at half an hour before each service.

❖Sunday, Dec. 25. 10 a.m. Celebrate Christmas with the Holy Eucharist and carol singing.

St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, offers three Sunday services and a host of musical, educational, outreach, and fellowship ministries to enrich spiritual growth. 7:45 a.m. Worship Service without music; 9 a.m. Worship Service, Children's Chapel and Children's Choirs; 10 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Forum; and 11 a.m. Worship Service with Adult Choir. 703-759-2082.

Epiphany United Methodist Church, 1014 Country Club Drive N.E. in Vienna, will hold a Christmas Eve Family Service on Saturday, Dec. 24 at 5 p.m., featuring the Praise Band and a Christmas Children's Program. On Sunday, Dec. 25, Christmas Day worship and communion service will be at 11 a.m. office@epiphany.com or 703-938-3494.

McLean Bible Church, 8925 Leesburg Pike in Vienna, will host two free Christmas concerts at 8 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 15 and Friday, Dec. 16. "Joy: An Irish Christmas" will feature modern hymn writers Keith and Kristyn Getty, as well as artists from the McLean Bible Church staff. Doors will open at 7:15 p.m. Free. There will be sign language interpretation for the Thursday concert. <http://mcleanbible.org/christmas>.

Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean, Sunday worship services are at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for adults is at 9:30 a.m. and for children during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Youth Group for grades 7-12 meets Sundays at 6 p.m. A 20-minute service of Holy Communion is held each Wednesday at 12 p.m. 703-356-3312 or umtrinity.org.

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

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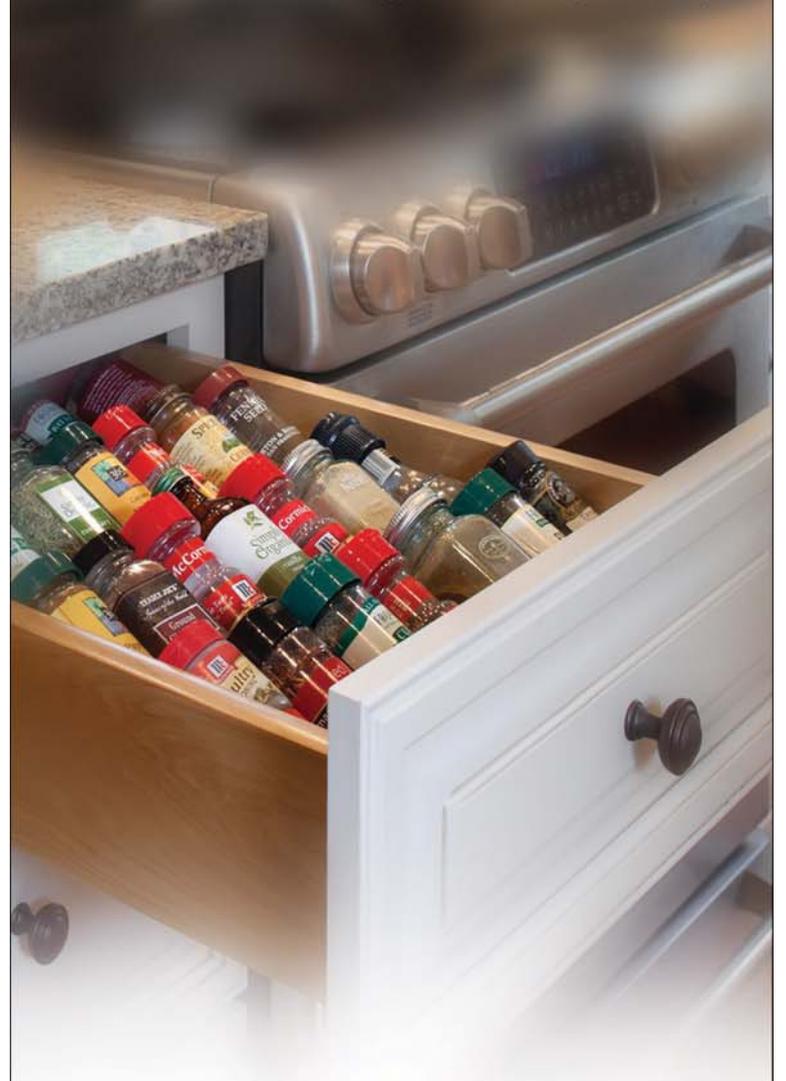
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Best Wishes This Season of Joy,
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Five Suggestions for the New School Board

Half of the School Board members are new.

On Monday, Dec. 19, the newly elected members of the Fairfax County School Board will be sworn in, marking the largest number of new members at one time in memory.

The change on the board comes from open seats with previous members deciding not to run. Fully half of the board will be new members, although most are also familiar faces.

But it was apparent from the election that voters were motivated by the school board races, turning out to have their say. It's a mistake to view the election as a vote of approval for all current policies or as a repudiation of particular policies. The level of interest and controversy indicates that it's a great moment for the new board to engage the public.

The fact that 70 percent of voters supported the school bond for county schools shows that county residents understand the importance of quality schools.

The school board consists of three at large members who represent the entire county, plus nine district members. Each voter had the opportunity to vote for four, three at large and one for their district.

Iryong Moon is the one incumbent remaining at large; Ryan McElveen and Ted Velkoff will join the board at large. District members are: Megan McLaughlin, Braddock; Janie Strauss, Dranesville; Pat Hynes, Hunter Mill; Tammy Kaufax, Lee; Sandy Evans, Mason; Dan Storck, Mount Vernon; Patty Reed, Providence; Elizabeth Schultz, Springfield, and Kathy Smith, Sully. Moon, Strauss, Evans, Storck, Reed and Smith are returning members.

EDITORIAL It's important to respect the dedication and motivation of school board members. It's hard to understand why anyone would want these jobs. The hours are never ending. The pay is symbolic. Few decisions will come without acrimony from some quarters. These are people who really are dedicated to service. That said, we offer a few suggestions, some very general, some very specific, for the new board as it steps up to serve.

1) On with campaign. Begin with a listening tour. Hold some full-board listening sessions around the county. Hold some regional listening sessions in schools and parents' living rooms. Listen in small groups and individually.

2) Fix large classes. You don't have to reduce the "average" class size. But do something about every class of 30 students or more. It's the exceptionally large classes where students don't even fit in the room that drive parents wild. It doesn't matter if it's a classroom of poor students or wealthy students or something in between, really large classes are not appropriate.

3) Are surveillance cameras really the best use of scarce dollars? No matter what the current board decides to do later this week (likely vote on Dec. 15 after Connection deadline), set the decision aside until after the listening tour.

4) Don't wait for a state law. Instruct administrators to call parents to be present if they plan to question a student about behavior that could result in serious disciplinary measures or legal action.

5) Celebrate the specific and varied successes in Fairfax County Public Schools.

Invite teachers and administrators to come out on tour with you. Don't forget to listen to teachers as well as students, parents, administrators and more.

2) Fix large classes. You don't have to reduce the "average" class size. But do something about every class of 30 students or more. It's the exceptionally large classes where students don't even fit in the room that drive parents wild. It doesn't matter if it's a classroom of poor students or wealthy students or something in between, really large classes are not appropriate.

3) Are surveillance cameras really the best use of scarce dollars? No matter what the current board decides to do later this week (likely vote on Dec. 15 after Connection deadline), set the decision aside until after the listening tour.

4) Don't wait for a state law. Instruct administrators to call parents to be present if they plan to question a student about behavior that could result in serious disciplinary measures or legal action.

5) Celebrate the specific and varied successes in Fairfax County Public Schools.

- MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Grieving the Losses

Remembering the Battle of Dranesville.

BY KATHLEEN MURPHY
PRESIDENT, GREAT FALLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Last week, John Waggoner, a local historian and member of the Church of the Brethren, presented his research on The Battle of Dranesville at the Reston Community Center, followed by comments from Jim Lewis, a local historian, author, and member of the Hunter Mill Defense League. This painful story of local fear and foraging really struck a chord with me, and I have been in deep grieving over the enormous losses sustained during the civil war era for days.

Both sides were "foraging" — they came to our local area in search of food for their troops and horses. Our fertile agricultural land was a prime target for taking food and grabbing livestock, not just on this fateful day, but throughout the entire five-year war. Imagine how unsettling this was for the locals? People in the

audience mentioned specific local houses, still standing, where generals stayed overnight, etc. The stories are really close to home and still alive in family memories.

One of the earliest skirmishes of the Civil War, the troops did not intend to engage in battle and were not prepared. Jim Lewis pointed out some interesting facts:

There were more than 250 different uniforms worn on the battlefield that day, so it was impossible to know who was on which side. Many of the losses on the Confederate side were from friendly fire.

There were ten regiments of about one thousand soldiers each who fought the battle that day. The artillery engagement involved continuous shooting of about one bullet every two seconds by each soldier. The air was filled with bullets. Yet only 50 soldiers died that day, and 250 were wounded. Why so few? Jim posits that they did not have it in themselves to kill each other. They were just shooting over each other's heads. In the war's early days, it was not a natural instinct to kill another man.

The weather was brutal. It was the coldest,

second darkest day of the year. When the battle ended, thanks to JEB Stewart's command to retreat, Stewart took his men and wagons back to Centreville filled with hay — leaving the dead and injured in the field to be recovered the next day. When they returned, it was so cold, the bodies were frozen in the exact position that they were in when they were shot — frozen stiff in place.

This coming Sunday, Dec. 18, the Great Falls Historical Society will join with the community of the Dranesville Church of the Brethren in their annual Peace Service, which remembers the name of each fallen soldier in that battle. The church has been built on the exact location of the battle, as a gesture of peace triumphing over war. Please join us in grieving the losses incurred by both sides on that fateful day. May the historic marking of the 150th anniversary of this, our most deadly of all wars — which took the lives of 620,000 men over its five years, and just over 1 million casualties — beckon us toward the skills, the art, the ways, the craft of peaceful resolution of our differences.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Taking Exception

To the Editor:

I just received the Nov. 30-Dec. 6 issue of the McLean Connections. This is usually a pleasant, respectable presentation of events — especially those involving youth of the community — and avoids

issues of poor opinion. Due to that image, I was very disappointed to see the opinion/article by a Del. Kenneth Plum (D-36) complaining about the wise and healthy stand for the protection of the life of the unborn ["Personhood Bill Introduced"]. I hope his last statement is correct, and that the passage of this Republican bill to save and value each life

"...may influence political direction for the year." The definition of a civilized society involves the protection of life — particularly the weakest and most vulnerable of that society. Those societies that don't respect all life should be defined as dangerously anti-social. If the weak in a society are not protected, no one is safe. I am surprised to see

an elder man such as Mr. Plum with such poor judgment. Anyway, I hope such ideas will never again have space in our local paper, which is known for well-presented reporting of local events. I really appreciate your good work and that of the staff.

Amanda Kelley
McLean

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~ Thank You Mrs. Ramirez ~



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Dylan Kurtz

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Bennett Volanth

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Kai Wakeman

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HOME SALES

In October 2011, 14 Great Falls homes sold between \$2,695,000-\$392,000.

Address	BR	FB	HB	...	Postal	City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision
129 COMMONAGE DR	6	5	2		GREAT FALLS	\$2,695,000	Detached	5.24	22066	SOUTHDOWN FARMS	
9330 GEORGETOWN PIKE	7	7	4		GREAT FALLS	\$2,350,000	Detached	5.43	22066	THREE SWALLOWS FARM	
11322 BEACH MILL RD	6	6	1		GREAT FALLS	\$2,335,000	Detached	2.73	22066	SENECA	
10691 CHESTERWOOD GLEN LN	5	4	2		GREAT FALLS	\$1,895,000	Detached	1.73	22066	CHESTERWOOD ESTATES	
106 FALCON RIDGE RD	5	6	1		GREAT FALLS	\$1,695,000	Detached	1.96	22066	FALCON RIDGE	
11607 ROLLING MEADOW DR	7	5	1		GREAT FALLS	\$1,200,000	Detached	1.87	22066	SENECA HUNT	
716 CLEAR SPRING RD	5	4	0		GREAT FALLS	\$1,100,000	Detached	5.16	22066	VALLEY STREAM	
704 FOREST PARK RD	6	3	1		GREAT FALLS	\$950,000	Detached	1.30	22066	HIDDEN FOREST	
10315 GEORGETOWN PIKE	4	2	1		GREAT FALLS	\$880,000	Detached	2.96	22066	FORESTVILLE	
10104 SPRING HOLLOW LN	4	2	1		GREAT FALLS	\$810,000	Detached	0.53	22066	HICKORY CREEK II	
448 SPRINGVALE RD	3	3	0		GREAT FALLS	\$708,100	Detached	5.00	22066	POTOMAC	
1064 WALKER MILL RD	4	2	1		GREAT FALLS	\$663,000	Detached	1.67	22066	OLD MILL ESTATES	
10852 MONTICELLO CT	4	3	1		GREAT FALLS	\$450,000	Detached	0.23	22066	GREAT FALLS FOREST	
10135 YORKTOWN DR	4	3	0		GREAT FALLS	\$392,000	Detached	0.25	22066	GREAT FALLS FOREST	

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REAL ESTATE NOTES

To have real estate information listed in the Connection, send to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

REACS, Inc., a minority owned commercial real estate company in Tysons Corner (Vienna) has been named the property management company for Soapstone Center in Reston and Pemberton Square Shopping Center in South Riding. REACS, Inc. is a full service commercial management company providing brokerage, property management, construction and maintenance services to commercial property owners in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington D.C. For more information contact Steve Anderson at (703) 734-0880.

Bruce Green, regional vice president of Weichert, Realtors

announced that the McLean/Old Dominion office was recognized for outstanding results and industry success in 2010. In 2010, the McLean/Old Dominion office, managed by Steve Gaskins, led the region for new homes dollar volume, sales and resales. The region consists of offices throughout Virginia. The Weichert's McLean/Old Dominion office can be reached at 703-821-8300 at 6257 Old Dominion Drive.

Harper McDaniel, associate broker with the CENTURY 21 New Millennium McLean office recently earned the CENTURY 21® System's CENTURION Producer, President's and Quality Service Pinnacle Awards again this year following her 2010 sales success.

"Harper is a leader and innovator in delivering powerful home buying and selling choices to her clients because she knows the community she serves," said Todd Hetherington, CEO and co-owner

of CENTURY 21 New Millennium. Harper McDaniel has more than 10 years of experience in the real estate industry.

"Achieving CENTURION, President's and Quality Service Pinnacle Producer status is a great milestone in my professional career and with a continued effort and focus on my clients, I hope to continue on this path of success," said Harper, associate broker with CENTURY 21 New Millennium.

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in McLean has announced its sales associates who have earned the company's International President's awards. The winners include - Individual Achievements: President's Club - Linda Knowles and Sue Jin Song.

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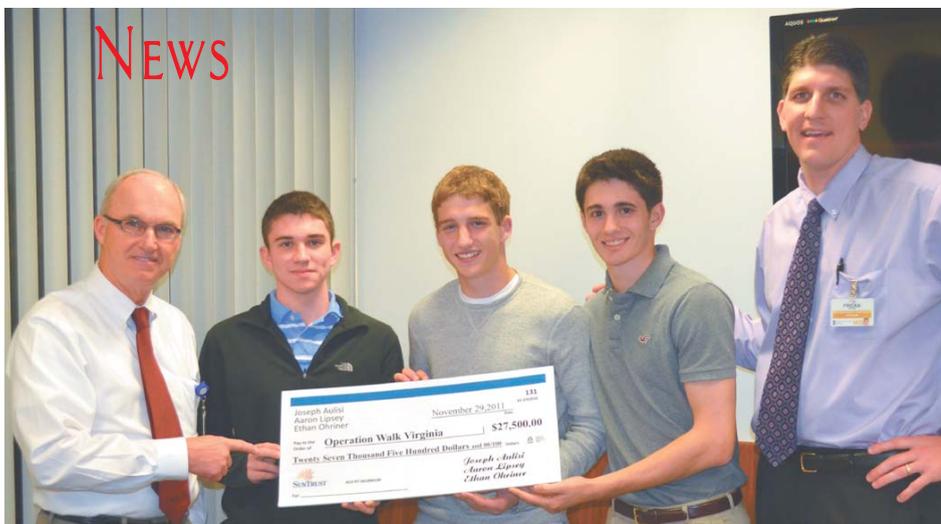


PHOTO BY DEB TROELL

Pictured left to right, are Dr. Gerald Engh, Ethan Ohriner, Aaron Lipsey, Joseph Aulisi, and Dr. Kevin Fricka at the check presentation at Mount Vernon Hospital

Operation Walk Virginia

Through a silent auction held on Oct. 28, three local high school students, Joseph Aulisi, Aaron Lipsey, and Ethan Ohriner raised \$27,500 for Operation Walk Virginia. Operation Walk Virginia, which is based at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital, is a non-profit, volunteer medical services organization which provides free hip and knee joint replacement surgery for patients with little or no access to life-improving medical care.

Ethan Ohriner, a junior at McLean High School, and Aaron Lipsey, a junior at Maret School, began raising money for Operation Walk Virginia in 2007, after Ethan's father

had a hip replacement. The boys initially raised \$2,500 through a yard sale and other fund raising activities. They held their first silent auction in 2008, raising \$6,000.

Three years ago, Joseph Aulisi, a junior at Langley High School, who wants to pursue a career in orthopedic surgery, decided to join the boys in their fundraising efforts. In mid October, the three boys, accompanied by Joseph's father, Dr. Edward Aulisi, went to Nicaragua with the Operation Walk Virginia team, which performed 48 joint replacement surgeries in five days.

The boys solicited more than 70 auction items, most from local merchants.

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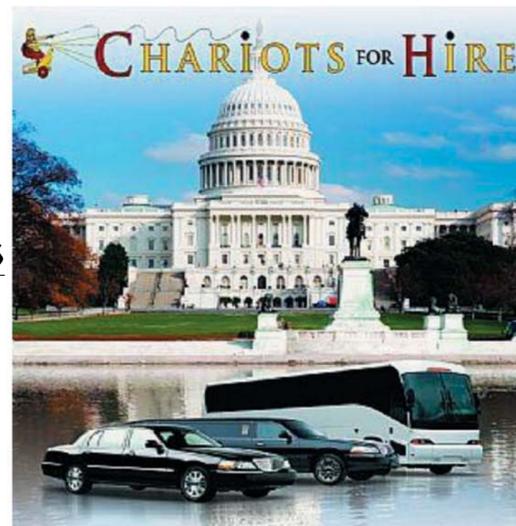
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And by the way, we now have free Wi-Fi for your convenience, and upstairs, Glamour Nails is adding a Spa that will have a special room for massage and other beauty necessities. So, please call me here at the shop so that I can schedule your appointment for you, your family and friends with your 20% Christmas saving.

Best Wishes This Season of Joy,
Cindy and Glamour Nails & Spa Staff

P.S. Don't forget, we are open on Sunday from 11 to 5 for your convenience, and follow us on Facebook@ www.facebook.com/gfglamour.

ENTERTAINMENT

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

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 14

Moscow 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.

Winter Orchestra Concert. 7 p.m. Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. A celebration of France, with music by Faure, Herold, Saint-Saens, and Bizet, poetry readings and a mime. Silent auction and refreshments. Free. smcquade2002@yahoo.com.

THURSDAY/DEC. 15

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

Buon Natale Featuring Natalie York & Friends in a benefit for Food for Others. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Book Discussion Group. 7:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call for title. Adults. 703-757-8560.

Holidays Around the World. 7 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. Cody & Bj interactive holiday music show. All ages. 703-938-0405.

FRIDAY/DEC. 16

"Parfumerie." 8 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Two Budapest shop clerks bicker by day, oblivious to the fact that they've fallen for each other exchanging anonymous love letters. Tickets \$25. 703-854-1856 or www.1ststage tysons.org.

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

Bill Kirchen's Honkey Tonk Holiday Show. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Living Nativity and Christmas Concert. Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1545 Chain Bridge Rd, McLean. The Living Nativity is from 6-8 p.m. and the Concert at 7:30 p.m. Live animals in the Manger, hot chocolate and bake sale. The Concert includes the Bell Choir, Praise Team, Traditional Choir, Youth Choir and Student Symphonic Orchestra. 703-356-3346 or redeemermclean.org.

Friday Afternoon Chess. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Players of all levels welcome. All ages. No registration necessary. 703-757-8560.

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

SATURDAY/DEC. 17

Model Railroad (HO Scale) Open House and Display. 1-5 p.m.

Historic Vienna Depot, 231 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. The layout depicts the Western North Carolina Railroad (now a portion of the Norfolk Southern) during the period of transition from steam to diesel. The Open House also features Thomas the Tank Engine and some of his friends. Free, donations accepted. www.nvmr.org or 703-938-5157.

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

5th Annual Rocknoceros Holiday Singalong at 11 a.m.; **5th Annual Rocknoceros Holiday Singalong and Happy Family Hour** at 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Christmas in Cape Breton. 8 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Cape Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster performs traditional and contemporary Celtic melodies and Christmas carols. \$25-\$50. www.gmu.edu.

"Parfumerie." 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Two Budapest shop clerks bicker by day, oblivious to the fact that they've fallen for each other exchanging anonymous love letters. Tickets \$25. 703-854-1856 or www.1ststage tysons.org.

Candlelight Tour: Civil War Christmas. 4:45-7 p.m. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Hear 19th century

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 15

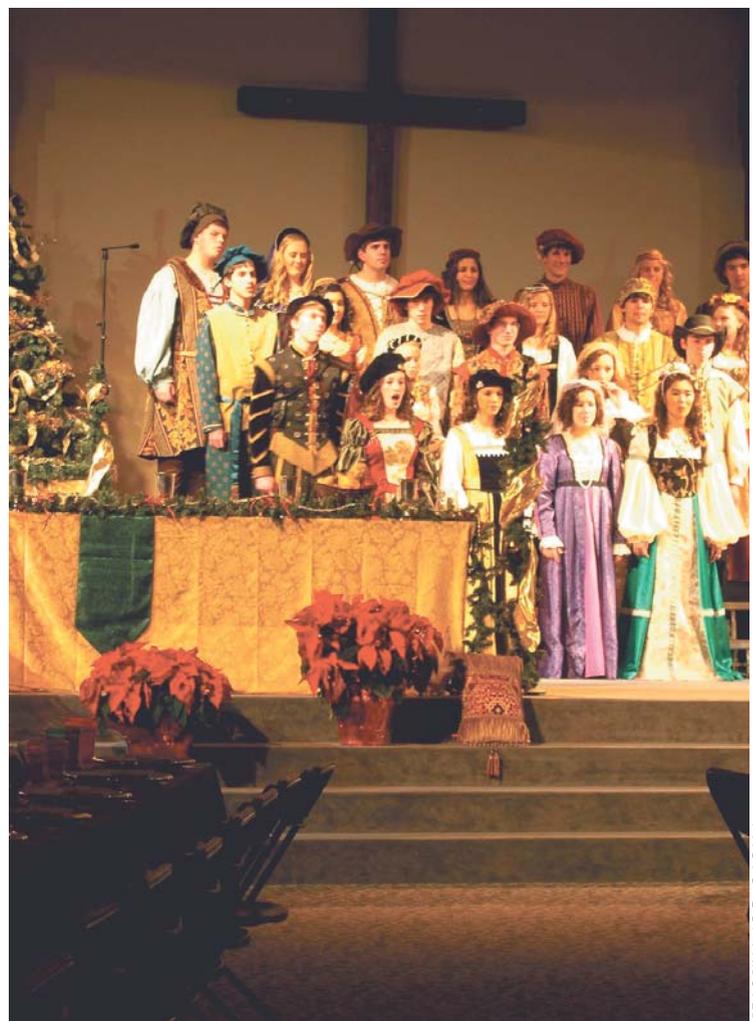


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Langley High School Madrigals will perform in the Sounds of the Season Winter Concert on Tuesday, Dec 20, 7:30 p.m. at Langley High School Auditorium, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. In addition, all of the LHS choirs will perform selections. Free admission. smayman@verizon.net or 703-283-1697.

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- 10:00 Sunday School and Adult Forum
- 11:00 Worship Service – *Healing Prayers on December 18*

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

- 3:30 p.m. – Worship and carols for young children
- 5:00 p.m. – Family worship with children's choir
- 8:00 and 11:00 p.m. – Worship with choir and brass

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- 11:00 a.m. – Worship with carols, guitar, and fiddle

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 14

fiddling by Michael McDonnell. Witness Confederate officers dining at Sully as JEB Stuart's cavalry did in December 1862. See what goes into the Christmas box being packed for soldiers in the field. Ladies make their own holiday decorations. Watch members of the 28th Virginia Infantry cook Christmas dinner in the yard. Tour the 1794 home in the glow of 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.

Northern Virginia Country Western Dance Association. Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Rd., Falls Church. Attendees are encouraged to bring new, unwrapped toys for the Marine Corps' Toys for Tots campaign. The line dance lesson at 7:30 p.m., couples specialty dance lesson at 8 p.m. Open dancing 8:30-11 p.m. Couples and singles welcome. Admission \$5-\$12. www.nvwcda.org or 703-860-4941.

Book Talk: Your Emotional Type. 1 p.m. Books-A-Million, 1457 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Author Michael Jawer on emotional types and susceptibility to chronic illnesses. Assessment survey provided. Free. mjawer2001@yahoo.com.

Movie Day at the Library. 1 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Call for title. Adults. 703-790-8088.

Holiday Pancake Breakfast. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St. South, Vienna. All you can eat pancakes, bacon, sausage, eggs, and more. Santa will make an appearance at 11 a.m. \$8 adults, \$7 seniors, \$6 age 5-12, free age 4 and under. www.vvfd.org.

Piano Recital. 1 p.m. Steinway Hall, Tysons Corner Center, McLean. With students of the Elite Piano Academy. 202-674-0499.

SUNDAY/DEC. 18

Yosi and the Superdads Rockin' Hanukkah Concert. 3 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. \$10-\$15. www.mcleancenter.org.

Sesame Street Live: Elmo Makes Music. 1 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Elmo, Abby Cadabby, Big Bird and more take to the stage to share their love of music. Tickets \$15-\$75, available at ticketmaster.com or 703-573-SEAT.

Mariachi Los Camperos de Nati Cano: Fiesta Navidad. 4 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400

University Drive, Fairfax. Fiesta Navidad mixes traditional Mexican and American holiday songs with dancing, authentic, costumes and an audience sing-along. \$23-\$46. www.gmu.edu.

"Parfumerie." 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Two Budapest shop clerks bicker by day, oblivious to the fact that they've fallen for each other exchanging anonymous love letters. Tickets \$25. 703-854-1856 or www.1ststagetysons.org.

Candlelight Tour: World War II, Christmas on the Homefront. 4:45-7 p.m. Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. The 51st Engineers Battalion set up camp in front of the house. Listen to holiday radio broadcasts of Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. See how Fairfax families celebrated a homemade Christmas and helped the troops, and how Christmas dinner was enjoyed in spite of rationing. Enjoy cider and cookies, have their photos taken on an antique sleigh. Tour the 1794 home in the glow of 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.

MONDAY/DEC. 19

Preschool Storytime. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Stories, fingerplays and activities. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-757-8560.

TUESDAY/DEC. 20

Sounds of the Season Winter Concert. 7:30 p.m. Langley High School Auditorium, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The LHS Madrigals will perform Renaissance holiday music in elaborate period costumes. In addition, all of the LHS choirs will perform selections. Free admission. smayman@verizon.net or 703-283-1697.

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.

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

Mystery Book Discussion. 6:30 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Call for title. Adults. 703-790-8088.

Practice Your English. 6:30 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Conversation group for adults learning English. 703-790-8088.



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7:00 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist
10:00 p.m. Festival Choral Eucharist
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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25:
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
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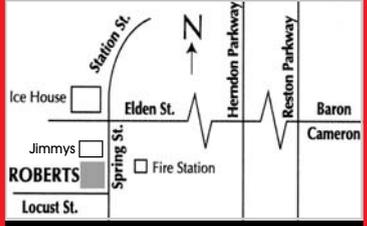


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Getting into 'Right Fit' Private School

Experts explain how to navigate admissions process for area's most elite schools.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Each year, parents who opt out of their neighborhood public school in favor of an independent school must sift through the long list of the Washington area's independent schools to find one that meets the needs of their child.

They must then navigate the lengthy application required by most schools, and hope that their efforts are deft enough to gain acceptance in a competitive environment. Some schools report receiving as many as nine applications for each available slot.

Even for prospective pre-kindergarten students, the independent school admissions process often includes a written application, admissions tests, parent statements, student interviews, parent interviews, playdates, school visits, transcripts and teacher recommendations.

"What we're trying to do is get a whole picture of a child and look at information from a variety of different sources," said Christina Tait, director of admission and financial aid at The Langley School in McLean.

THE APPLICATION PACKETS provide insight for both the school and the applicants. "We have a fairly detailed process so that we get to know the girls and they get to know us," said Pilar Cabeza de Vaca, head of the Madeira School in McLean. "Our goal is to find girls who are the right fit for our school and for whom our school is the right fit."

The role of each component of the application varies depending on the age of the applicant. "The admission [process] for young children is especially complex and difficult because we have to use both explicit and intuitive measures because we have less data," said Diane Dunning, director of admission and financial aid at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School in Alexandria. "If you were looking at a ninth grade [admissions] folder, you would have eight years of report cards and maybe four years of standardized testing. You are also able to interview [older applicants] in a different way than when you are interacting with the young children."

Why is so much probing necessary?

"Schools are looking for consis-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE MADEIRA SCHOOL

The Madeira volleyball team recently won the Independent Student League title.

teny in grades, attitude, testing and recommendations," said Lindsay White, educational consultant with the School Counseling Group in Washington, D.C. "[For example] If there is a huge difference between a [teacher] recommendation and what they are seeing on the grades, that is going to be a red flag."

Most schools want prospective applicants to spend time on campus. "The [school] visit is important to us. It gives the boy and his family a chance to experience the Heights first hand," said Richard Moss, director of admission at the Heights School in Potomac, Md. "On the flip side, it gives us a chance to really get to know the boy. How is he interacting with his peers? Is he friendly? Is he courteous? Does he have a good, firm handshake? Does he look the teachers in the eye when he greets them in the morning?"

Most applications ask parents to answer questions describing their children. Here are two questions from the Langley School's application: What do you believe is your role as a parent in your child's education? What qualities do you consider to be most

"Our goal is to find girls who are the right fit for our school and for whom our school is the right fit."

— Pilar Cabeza de Vaca, head of the Madeira School in McLean

important for your child's education?

Consultants say schools look at the way parents answer questions. "There are a lot of parents who regurgitate the school's mission statement and all the language that is used on the school's website. Schools can see right through that," said educational consultant Clare Anderson, of Chevy Chase, Md. "They want to know that the family is in line with how [the school] works with students and [their] approach to education."

Schools also pay attention to a parent's evaluation of their child. "Red flags go up when everything is just perfect and they've never encountered a setback or difficulty," said Anderson. "[Schools] are looking for honest, candid responses. Obviously parents are going to frame it in a positive light, as they should."

Most schools require admissions tests. Depending on the age and grade of the child, these tests include the Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI-III), Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) and the Secondary School Admission Test for (SSAT).

"Testing often creates the most anxiety," said Dunning, of St. Stephen's & St. Agnes.

THE TESTS are used differently depending on the age of the applicant. "Tests for [young children] are used as standardized tools to give an overall picture of a child's learning profile. These are not predictors for academic

success. They give broad overviews of how a child learns," said Anderson. Tests given to middle and high school applicants are more meaningful. "Those tests measure how well your child has done with the information he or she has learned in school. If they see an eighth grader who has only average grades, but remarkable SSATs, they are going to ask, 'Is this an underachiever? Why is this child not excelling in the classroom?'"

Should children prepare for tests? When it comes to young children, most consultants say no. "It is unethical and makes your test scores invalid," said Anderson. "You are going to shoot yourself in the foot [if you prep your young child]. Your child will be the first to announce it either in the tester's office or at the school on the playdate. Then the scores are invalid."

The scenario is different for those applying for slots in middle and upper school. "I've had students who've taken [admissions tests] without prep, and then I worked with them and their scores [went] up considerably," said Christa Abbott, an Arlington-based independent test prep tutor.

Anderson agrees. "Just like you preheat your oven, you've got to get your child ready for the test. Just knowing the format of the test can really help," said Anderson. "But I caution parents about [taking expensive test prep classes]. There has to be a primary concern that something is going to get in the way of your child being able to show what he or she knows."

Some parents hire educational consultants like White or Anderson, hoping to get a competitive advantage. Consultants say their role is to guide families through the process. "The number one mistake that I think parents make is thinking that hiring an educational consultant is going to give them an advantage at a very competitive school," said Mark Sklarow, executive director of the Independent Educational Consultants Association in Fairfax. "That is just not the way the system works. Consultants don't have a secret handshake that they can use with an admissions director to help get a student in. The reason you hire an educational consultant is to find a good fit between a student's needs and a school's strengths. A consultant's role is to [identify] a school where a child is going to thrive."

So what can parents do to make sure their child's application shines in a pool overflowing with many attractive applicants?

"It is always nice to think about what is special about your child," said White. "What is the one special strength or talent your child might have, whether it be academics or an extracurricular interest? What is the potential for your child to contribute to the school?"

Anderson says she encourages parents to view admissions procedures as multi-pronged. "My hope is to help parents understand the process and see that there really is a method and [schools] are looking to get the best from your child."



St. Stephen's & St. Agnes Upper School students Isabella Norton, Leah Joseph, and Ulises Giacoman with Upper School Science Teacher Julie Krane.

County Sends 'Hands Off' Message to General Assembly

FROM PAGE 3

ing for locally-administered, but required programs in the 2012-14 budget. The Governor is going to have to balance the budget. Think about what he might do," Regimbal said.

County Executive Anthony Griffin said Fairfax County's budgetary shortfall is expected to be about \$114 million in Fiscal Year 2013, and the county is taking several steps — including looking at fee increases and analyzing agency cuts of up to 5 percent — to bridge the financial gap.

"Quite frankly, we're running out of places to make reductions. This is a struggle now, and it's going to continue to be a struggle for my successor," Griffin said, alluding to his retirement in April 2012.

Griffin said there was some good news. Job growth in Northern Virginia has continued to grow each month since April 2010, and Fairfax County's unemployment rate remains stable at 4.6 percent (which is about 28,000 unemployed residents), compared to 6.4 percent across the state and 9 percent in the nation.

ALTHOUGH GOVERNOR Robert McDonnell (R) 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.

Fairfax County leaders have been unequivocal in their opposition to any prospect of road devolution, saying it's tantamount an unfunded mandate that would force the County to increase property taxes.

"It's a major concern for anyone who cares about transportation, but frankly anyone who cares about anything else localities have to keep up because all those elements would be affected," said McKay. "My greatest fear is that [with road devolution] we would be pitting roads against schools and public safety."

Tom Biesiadny, director of Fairfax County's Department of Transportation, estimated that Fairfax County would have to make a one-time investment of up to \$208 million to take local control of local roads, which would mean a property tax increase of about \$479 for the average household.

He said that localities that maintain their own roads typically spend about 25 percent more than what the state allocates. For example, he noted that in Fiscal Year 2010, Arlington spent \$18 million, while the state spent \$15 million.

"Counties in Northern Virginia already spend millions of dollars a year to mitigate the effects of state underfunding of road construction, which has created some of the worst traffic in the nation," Biesiadny said.

Bulova added that if counties are required to maintain their secondary roads, the resulting disparity in road conditions will affect Virginia's ability to attract business.

During the roundtable discussion, Del. Mark Sickles (D-43) agreed the county's roads are in terrible shape.

"At some point we have to act," he said, suggesting a referendum asking voters to decide whether to increase certain taxes, similar to a 2002 failed referendum on the sales tax, in order to pay for transportation costs.

State Sen. Richard Saslaw (D-35) told the elected officials not to "punt the damn ball." "I can tell you this: It ain't gonna happen with my vote ... I will not ever, ever, ever, if I have anything to say about it, allow taxes to be put to a referendum. That's what the voters elected you to do. If they don't like what you did, they will show you the door the next election. We have no business putting revenue-raising measures to a referendum. Plain and simple."

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) said he thought road devolution was viable if done correctly.

"It's not going to be pain-free, but there are ways to do it," Cook said. "If we're going to have the responsibility, we ought to own the streets. And if we're going to own them ... we ought to have the mechanisms to raise the money we need to raise," Cook said.

"Would you be supportive of raising taxes to do it?" Bulova asked. Cook did not respond.

ON THURSDAY, DEC. 8, the Governor outlined his transportation policy and funding plans for the upcoming 2012 General Assembly session. Speaking to more than 700 industry and transportation agency professionals during the 2011 Governor's Transportation Conference in Norfolk, McDonnell called for changes in laws governing the allocation of future surpluses to transportation, dedicating portions of revenue growth attributable to transportation infrastructure projects to transportation and increasing the portion of sales tax dedicated to transportation.

Several legislators, including state Senators Chap Petersen (D-34), Dave Marsden (D-37), Janet Howell (D-32) and Del. Ken Plum said they will hold Governor McDonnell to his promise of a dedicated source of revenue for a transportation bond package passed last session.

"There's a fundamental disconnect," Marsden said. "Any transportation solution is not acceptable if it doesn't come with money ... What we were promised was a funding stream and not the transfer of responsibility to localities. I think we need to let the governor know this is not acceptable."

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Guests browse the pieces at Herndon ArtSpace's "A Touch of Red" exhibit during the artists' reception Wednesday, Dec. 7. The exhibit features 28 artists from Great Falls Studios who work in a variety of media.

Artists Present 'Touch of Red'

ArtSpace in Herndon hosts Great Falls Studios artists exhibit.

BY ALEX MCVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Great Falls Studios and Herndon ArtSpace will combine efforts for the next month, as ArtSpace hosts "A Touch of Red" exhibit until Jan. 8. The exhibit features 28 artists from Great Falls Studios.

"We're excited, it's our first group exhibit, and this a fantastic gallery space," said Cindy Griselda, a quilter who also chaired the show. "As a group, we tried to make sure we represented as many mediums as possible, and the artists were really excited for that."

ArtSpace was able to organize the pieces according to a few different themes. One wall was the "water wall," featuring aquatically themed paintings. Another section, the "fun room," featured more abstract works and sculpture.

"The New Day," an acrylic painting by Mary Ellen Mogee, is a white canvas mostly taken up by a large red circle, while photographer Walt Lawrence's "Cold and Gray" features a stark gray landscape with only a touch of red, a bird on a swing set.

"I was very pleased to get into this exhibit, Great Falls Studios and ArtSpace both have a reputation

for high quality shows," said Mogee, who has been a Studios member for about nine months.

The simplicity of the theme allowed for a variety of pieces. ArtSpace's Les Zidel said that was their hope for the exhibit.

"We've got the holidays coming up, so red is appropriate, but it's not too restrictive," he said. "We're always trying to touch base with local artists, and host exhibits with a lot of artists, and this fits both. It's been a long time coming."

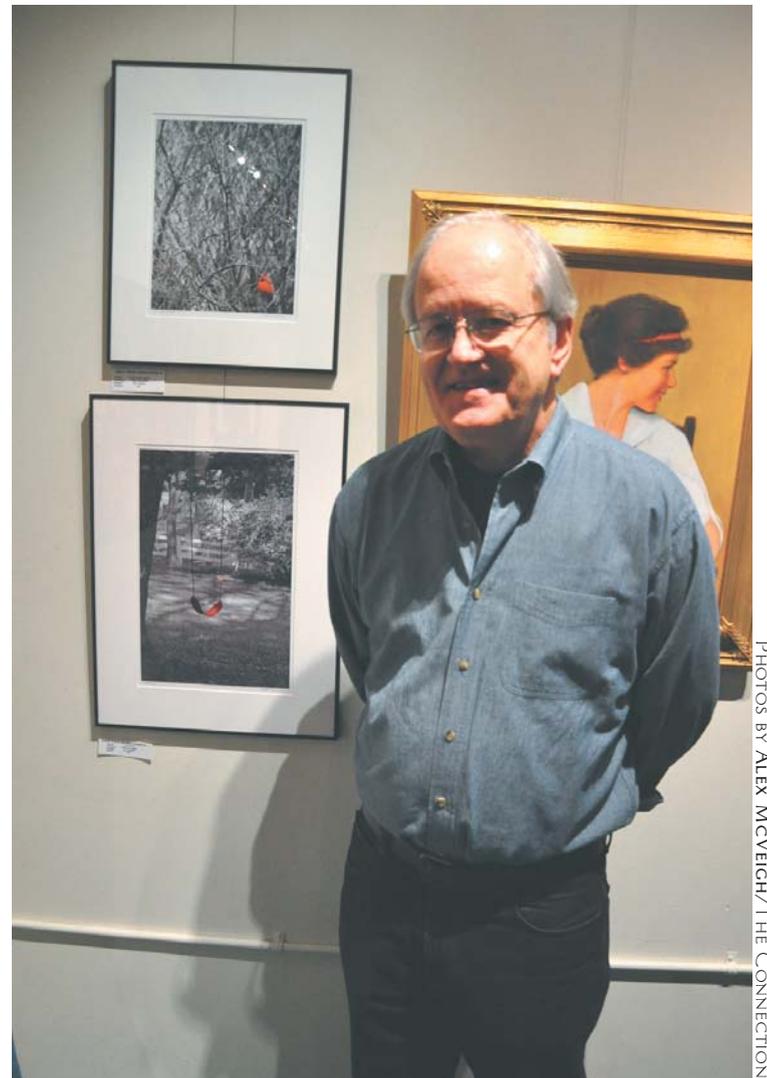
Griselda said the artists also enjoyed having such latitude with the theme.

"We had quite a lively discussion about what 'A Touch of Red' meant to all of us, we knew it gave us a lot to work with," she said.

Shane McIntire of Herndon, who often stops by ArtSpace with her children after visits to the nearby Fortnightly Library, said the show was one of the best ones she's seen at ArtSpace.

"I really like how it's sort of a statement by all these artists on what the 'A Touch of Red' means to them. They're such creative people, you know they're going to give it their best when given a challenge, and they certainly did here," she said. "The fact that it was simply a color that united this piece really tied it together from a visual standpoint when you take in the room as a whole."

Great Falls Studios is a collective of artists who live or work in Great Falls, and can be found at www.greatfallsstudios.com. ArtSpace is located at 750 Center Street in Herndon, and can be found at www.artspaceherndon.org.



PHOTOS BY ALEX MCVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Photographer Walt Lawrence at the Herndon ArtSpace Exhibit "A Touch of Red," next to photos "Waiting," (bottom) and "Cold and Gray" (top). The exhibit features 28 artists from Great Falls Studios, and is open until Jan. 8.



From left, Melanie Staley, Mary Ellen Mogee and Marie Wright at the artists' reception for the "A Touch of Red" exhibit at Herndon ArtSpace Dec. 7. Mogee, who mostly paints in acrylic, was featured in the show, one of 28 artists from Great Falls Studio.



Guests explore the "fun room" section of the "A Touch of Red" exhibit at Herndon ArtSpace, which features 28 artists from Great Falls Studios.

SPORTS

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

The Madeira School women's varsity swim and dive team opened its 20th anniversary season with a 96-90 win over defending Independent School League (ISL) champion Georgetown Visitation on Dec. 1.

Event winners for Madeira included seniors and captains Ann Griffin (200 IM) and Brittany Jansen (100 fly); juniors Maddie Alagia (200 free) and Grace Johnson (100 free); and freshman Farrin Saba (100 back). Freshman diver Carly Yosaitis took first in the 1-meter diving event.

Madeira, which is under the direction of head coach Rod Montrie, took first place in the 200 medley relay. The winning relay team was made up of Griffin, Jansen, Alagia, and Saba. Also, Madeira's foursome of Jansen, Alagia, Johnson, and Saba teamed up to take first in the 400-free relay.

Senior Captain Kat Pfleeger had a strong meet, scoring crucial points in the 200 IM.

On Dec. 6, Madeira, nicknamed the Snails, met private school opponent Flint Hill School in a meet competition. Madeira came out on top with a 121-58 victory to improve to 2-0 on the young season.

Madeira won the 200-medley relay with the team of Griffin, Alagia, Johnson and Saba. Event winners for Madeira included senior and captain Jansen (200 free); senior Caroline Peterson (100 breaststroke); Alagia (200 IM); and Saba (100 fly). Carly Yosaitis took first in dive.

"Caroline Peterson had a great meet winning the 100 breaststroke," said coach Montrie. "Also, senior Melanie Brown posted a season personal-best in the 500 free. First year swimmers Marta Corvinos, Aerryn Rees, Gianna Duda, Rachel Tate, and Kelsey Compton turned in good performances as well."

Courtney Cross, a Great Falls resident and a current senior at Bishop O'Connell High School in Arlington, signed a National Letter of Intent on Nov. 14 to play Div. 1 women's lacrosse at Villanova University. Cross has played lacrosse within the Great Falls youth program since she was in second grade. She has been a varsity starter for the past three years at Ireton and a team captain for two years. Along with excelling in soccer, Cross is a member of both the National Honor Society and French Honor Society. She is set to graduate from O'Connell in May of 2012.

The Langley Saxons' ice hockey team defeated Herndon, 10-0, in a recent district contest, which took place in Reston. Before an enthusiastic crowd of more than 100, all three lines of the Saxons' squad racked up points against a much thinner Herndon bench. Drew Schneider led the Langley pack with a hat trick (3 goals), and goals were also scored by: Kevin Diner (2), Evan Sterling, Atte Happonen, Colin



PHOTO COURTESY/MADEIRA SCHOOL

The Madeira High girls' volleyball team won the Virginia state private school championship by defeating Liberty Christian Academy in the finals. Pictured, left to right, are: seniors Claire Karakozoff, Nicole O'Donnell, Bre Atkinson, and Catherine Humphrey. The seniors led Madeira to its first state championship in history. O'Donnell (setter) and Atkinson were selected to the all-tournament team, with Atkinson earning MVP honors. Also selected to the all-tournament team was sophomore middle hitter Paige Humphrey.

Framinan, Lizzy Weingast, and Zach Shames. Mikey Adams had four assists on the night, while seven other Langley skaters — Framinan (2), Shames, Schneider, Happonen, Peter Nam, Derick Paxton, and Colin Dibble — contributed assists to the rapid fire scoring effort. The Herndon goalie defended 25 shots from Langley, while Saxon goalie Ryan Framinan stopped 10 Herndon shots and recorded his first shut-out of the season.

Pro boxer Jimmy Lange, a Great Falls resident, will return to the Patriot Center on Saturday, Feb. 11, 2012 for another world-class fight card featuring top area boxers. Considered one of the mid-Atlantic region's premier boxing showcases, the event is scheduled to host three world championship title fights, headlined by junior middleweight Jimmy Lange's first title defense of his World Boxing Union (WBU)



PHOTO COURTESY OF BISHOP O'CONNELL ATHLETICS

Courtney Cross of Great Falls signs her collegiate letter of intent to play women's lacrosse at Villanova.

154-pound championship belt. His opponent has not yet been determined.

Lange (37-4-2, 25 knockouts), who has headlined all 13 previous Patriot Center boxing shows since returning from his participation on 'The Contender' TV series, captured the WBU title last September by knocking Raul Munez down three times en route to his 25th victory by knockout. The Great Falls fighter continues to draw large, enthusiastic crowds from across the region while advancing the ranks in the junior middleweight division.

The Feb. 11 boxing card will include: Michelle Garland Nelson (5-0-1) of Ashburn in a World International Boxing Association middleweight championship; Zain 'Tiger' Shah (6-0) of Chantilly, who will meet Tony Jeter (12-2-1) of Stevensville, Md. in a six-round

middleweight contest; and undefeated, rising welterweight prospect Todd 'White Lightning' Wilson (11-0) of Fairfax.

Doors will open at 6 p.m., with the first fight scheduled to begin at 7. Tickets will be available for purchase through all Ticketmaster outlets, including the Patriot Center box office and by phone at 703-573-SEAT.

The Marshall High School Boosters are once again sponsoring the Christmas Tree Lot this holiday season. Trees, garland, wreaths, White House Ornaments, and spirit wear will be available. The lot opened on Saturday, Nov. 26 and will be open daily through Dec. 18. Hours of operation are 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Monday through Friday), and 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Customers can pre-purchase trees this year with a credit card as long as they bring a receipt. Go to: www.gcmhsboosters.org, and hit the link.

Purchases at the lot will again be check/cash only. All proceeds from the Tree Lot will go directly into the Marshall High students' activities account, which sponsors 21 teams. Proceeds will go towards the purchase of uniforms and equipment; field maintenance, capital improvements, and trip expenses; as well as a variety of clubs and activities on campus.

Both the Flint Hill School men's and women's swim teams won their winter season openers against Georgetown Day this past week, by scores of 107-43 and 92-65, respectively. Double-event winners for Flint Hill included Rob Ikeda, Rachel Swarts and Natalie Brendsel. Single event winners included Jonah Chang, Allison Kennedy, Zach Thornburg, Sam Shorris, Brian DeMocker, Aaron Frederick, and Alana Suter.

Fairfax Adult Softball (FAS) held its elections for the expiring terms of the FAS President, 1st Vice President (Umpires), and Treasurer at its Board of Directors meeting on Monday, Nov. 14. Carl Ey of Alexandria

begins his first term on the executive committee as Treasurer. Incumbents John Carney, of Clifton, and Scott Semmler, of Centreville, were re-elected by acclamation as President and 1st Vice President (Umpires). They begin their new term of office in January 2012.

FAS depends heavily on volunteers and is always looking for new personalities to share ideas. Directors meet monthly throughout the year to review and establish policies and rules for the operation of the program, to provide direction concerning financial and administrative operations, and, in November, to elect the officers of the corporation. These officers comprise the Executive Committee which meets monthly to direct the FAS program. The Executive Committee includes the President, 1st Vice President (Umpires), 2nd Vice President (Rules), Secretary and Treasurer. They serve staggered two-year terms to provide for corporate stability.

Go to FairfaxAdultSoftball.com for more information on the organization.

Local Northern Region high school cross country runners Sophie Chase (Lake Braddock Secondary), Ahmed Bile (Annandale High), and Sean McGorty (Chantilly High) each placed in the top 10 at the Foot Locker Cross Country South Regional Championships, held Saturday, Nov. 26 at the McAlpine Greenway Park in Charlotte, N.C. By finishing among the top 10, the three local student-athletes qualified to compete in the Foot Locker Cross Country Championship National Finals, set for Saturday, Dec. 10 at Morley Field, Balboa Park in San Diego, Calif. Chase, a junior at Lake Braddock, finished second at Saturday's South Regionals in Charlotte with a time of 17:06, qualifying her for Nationals for the second straight year. In the boys' race, Bile, a two-time National Finalist, claimed second place in 14:38.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LANGLY HIGH ATHLETICS

Langley High girls' lacrosse player Kelly Martins, shown here with Saxon head coach Richard Desomma, recently signed her letter of Intent to play collegiate women's lacrosse at William & Mary next school year. Martins, this upcoming spring, will be playing her fourth season with the Langley varsity.

Abstract or Intact



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

How does one not become consumed with something that is all-consuming? Moreover, how does that same one take certain information in stride that potentially is anything but stride-worthy? And if one were not to be all-consumed by the information that, disturbing as it was, was in fact taken in stride, how does that one not feel guilty and/or responsible about neglecting to act – if there was even anything to be done about the unsettling news that may have spawned this initial paragraph?

I don't. I can't. I won't. Somehow. Not that I received any news of late that was particularly jarring or life-abbreviating but, as a terminal patient, so far as I know (and how far do I really know, since I've never been a terminal patient before), information that is not positive is negative (almost by definition) and the fine line of life upon which I straddle every minute of every day becomes that much more difficult to sustain, especially if the negative begins to overtake the positive. I have equated the sensation to taking the first few curious steps across a newly frozen pond – in winter, each step more precarious than the last, waiting for the cracking – or not, and the associated fear. You want to go forward, but not at your own peril. Yet going backward seems equally ill-advised. I mean, you've been there and done that. Backwards represents the past. Forward represents the future. Personally, I don't want to live in the past. I want to live in the present/future. Receiving results which prevent you from going forward – which may stop you in your tracks, are not so much safe as they are insecure. For me, it's all about momentum. I don't want to lose what progress I've gained, nor do I want to retrace my steps. However, survival may be about knowing when to redirect those energies/treatment, to rest and/or retreat (to fight another day) and to work with your body, not against it.

But who knows? For a terminal patient, changes in anything are disproportionately significant. It could mean anything. It could mean nothing. Objectivity disappears the day your oncologist tells you have an incurable disease. Accordingly, it's extremely difficult to shrug off any abnormal medical findings. How do I not think that the beginning of the end starts at the end of the beginning? The point at which my body begins to weaken and reveal indicators that reflect a body in distress and one whose underlying diagnosis is starting to assert itself and break down all the barriers that have been constructed (metaphorically speaking) over the previous 34 months?

In summary, how do I interpret change? For the better? The worse? Meaningful? Meaningless? As a cancer patient who has now outlived his original prognosis ("13 months to two years") by a rather significant amount of time, how do I remain objective about lab work, urine specimens, diagnostic scans, etc.? I can't. However, worrying about any or all of it likely produces no real tangible benefit either, whereas not worrying about it, not stressing about it might, anecdotally speaking, anyway. Unfortunately, worrying and stressing are not simply emotions I can switch off, especially when you're consumed by a terminal disease, whether figuratively or worse, literally.

Diagnosis to date, my cancer-related problems have been figurative, mostly. Nevertheless, it's difficult to not react negatively when results are changing right before your eyes, literally. Yet somehow, I have to. If I don't, I'll likely make matters worse. And given my underlying stage IV lung-cancer diagnosis, I probably don't need to go out of my way to cause any more trouble. It's already found me.

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

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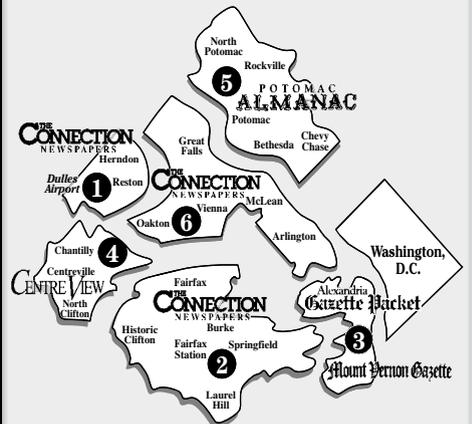
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 Public Notice - Environmental Permit
 PURPOSE OF NOTICE: To seek public comment on a draft permit from the Department of Environmental Quality to limit air pollution emitted by a facility in Arlington, Virginia.
 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: December 15, 2011 to January 17, 2012
 PERMIT NAME: State Operating Permit to Operate Issued by DEQ, under the authority of the State Air Pollution Control Board
 NAME, ADDRESS AND REGISTRATION NUMBER OF PROPOSED PERMIT HOLDER: Vornado/Charles E. Smith, 1901 S. Bell Street, Arlington, VA 22202; Registration Number: 73980
 PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Vornado/Charles E. Smith has applied for a State Operating Permit for their facility located at 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington, Virginia. The facility is a commercial office building that has (1) emergency generator rated at 1050 kW.
 HOW TO COMMENT: DEQ accepts comments by e-mail, fax or postal mail. All comments must include the name, address and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by the DEQ within the comment period. The public may request a public hearing. The public may review the draft permit and application at the DEQ office named below. The draft permit is also available on the DEQ web site at www.deq.virginia.gov. To request a public hearing, written comments must include: 1) the names, mailing addresses and telephone numbers of the requester and of all people represented by the requester. 2) The reason a hearing is requested, including associated air quality concerns. 3) A brief, informational statement regarding the extent of the interest of the requester, including how the operation of the facility affects the requester.
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Emily Kile, 11, asked Santa to bring "science things" while her sister Annika Kile, 5, asked for a fairy doll and a unicorn.



Clara Wrazen, 6, learns how to make her own pipe cleaner candy cane as her sister Evie, 2, watches.

PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Christmas at Colvin Run Mill

Park hosts Santa, carolers and crafts for children.

Colvin Run Mill returned to an earlier time in Virginia when it hosted Santa Claus at the mill, complementing Santa's visit with a roaring bonfire, carolers from the Virginia 49th Infantry and their families, crafts for children and marshmallow roasting.

Luminaria lined the path from the general store to the miller's house where Santa Claus sat in the miller's office, warmed by a fire blazing in a brick fireplace. A Victorian-decorated Christmas tree welcomed families.

Hot chocolate waited for cold hands and, inside the general store, old-fashioned gifts, including a variety of puzzles for children and adults, lined the shelves of the rustic shop. Teen volunteers guided children's craftmaking activities inside the barn. Snowflake design and pipe cleaner candy canes were big hits.

Families came from throughout Northern Virginia for the holiday celebration at Colvin Run Mill, many saying that they come often to events there.

"This is a nice atmosphere to see Santa," said Alexandria mother Sarah Wrazen, in the barn with husband David and their children, Evie, 2, and Clara, 6. "There's crafts and carolers, people singing along. It feels like Christmas here."

The Kile sisters, Emily, 11, and Annika, 5, along with Santa, shared what it is that they like the most about Christmastime. For Annika, it's snow and making a snowman. Emily said that what she likes most about the season is "time off from school."

And Santa said he likes getting a chance to bring things to boys and girls, to bring some joy into the world.

COLVIN RUN MILL PARK, still with a working mill, celebrated its 200th anniversary this year. Throughout the year, the Fairfax County Park Authority sponsors programs for all age groups, from maple syrup boil-downs to ice cream making and wood carving. On Dec. 3 and 4, Colvin Run Mill

hosted children's shopping days where children shopped for family members at the general store.

The park features a G-gauge holiday train layout on Saturday, Dec. 17, and Sunday, Dec. 18, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For details, call 703-759-2771. There's no charge to watch the model trains chug through a replica western town.

— DONNA MANZ



The Virginia 49th Infantry Regiment, CSA, and their families gathered around a bonfire to lead guests in a holiday sing-along.

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Great Falls \$2,190,000



McLean \$6,950,000



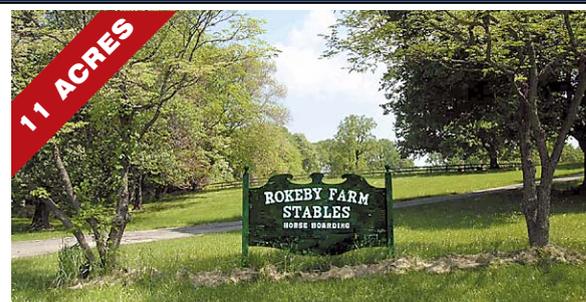
Great Falls \$1,750,000



Great Falls \$1,850,000



Great Falls \$899,000



McLean \$10,000,000



Great Falls \$1,050,000



Great Falls \$1,395,000



McLean \$1,695,000



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