

Great Falls CONNECTION

The Langley High School Madrigals perform at the Great Falls Freedom Memorial during an annual Veterans Day ceremony. The memorial is a site where residents gather several times each year to pay tribute to those who have fought and sacrificed for freedom.

Great Falls Looks Ahead To 2012

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Wellbeing

PAGE 10

Dulles Rail Hits 60 Percent

NEWS, PAGE 3

Keeping New Year's Resolutions

WELLBEING, PAGE 10



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Work continues in the air near Capital One in Tysons along Route 123.



PHOTOS BY CHUCK SAMUELSON/DULLES CORRIDOR METRO RAIL PROJECT

Phase 1 Hits 60 Percent

Airports Authority prepares for Phase 2 of the Dulles Rail project.

BY MARCIA MCALLISTER

Looking back on construction accomplishments that pushed Phase 1 of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project to 60 percent last year, project officials are looking forward to 2012 and envisioning completion of aerial structures to support tracks in Tysons Corner, station construction and laying track in the tunnels that connect two stations in Tysons Corner.

And, the rail team is preparing for critical steps that will lead to the start of construction of Phase 2 of the 23-mile extension of Metro's Orange Line. The project is owned and managed by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

As Executive Project Director Pat Nowakowski told attendees at a recent meeting of the Dulles Corner Advisory Committee, there has been major progress from East Falls Church to Reston. He used the latest construction photos to illustrate successes at the tie-in for the Silver Line to Metro's existing Orange Line near the junction of I-66 and the Dulles Connector Road, expansions at the West Falls Church Rail Yard, bridge construction and track work along the connector road, completions of tunnel mining in Tysons, aerial

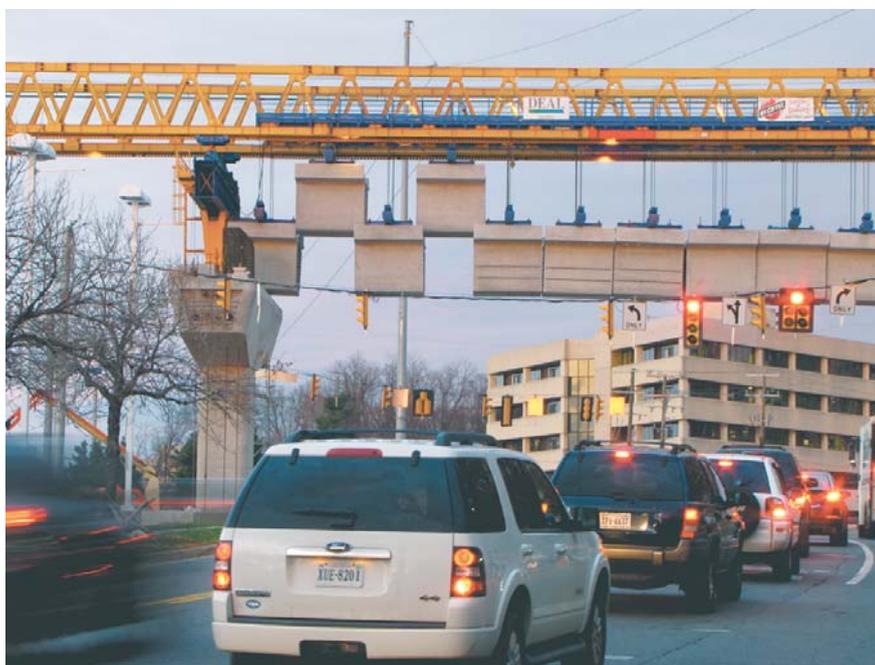
guideway construction in the Tysons area and traction power substations all along the 11.7-mile Phase 1 corridor.

Construction is well underway at all five stations. The Tysons East Station at Route 123 and Colshire Drive in Tysons and the Wiehle Avenue Station on the eastern edge of Reston, the temporary terminus of the extension, are the stations furthest along. The station canopy is visible at Wiehle Avenue and escalators have been installed.

SPECIFIC HIGHLIGHTS of the year's work included:

- Construction of the aerial guideway for track across I-495 and the near-completion of aerial guideway along Route 123. This work is being done using horizontal cranes, 366-ton pieces of specialized bridge-building equipment. In Summer 2011, three trusses were in commission simultaneously, a con

SEE DULLES RAIL, PAGE 7



A view of the construction site at the Route 7/Spring Hill Road intersection.

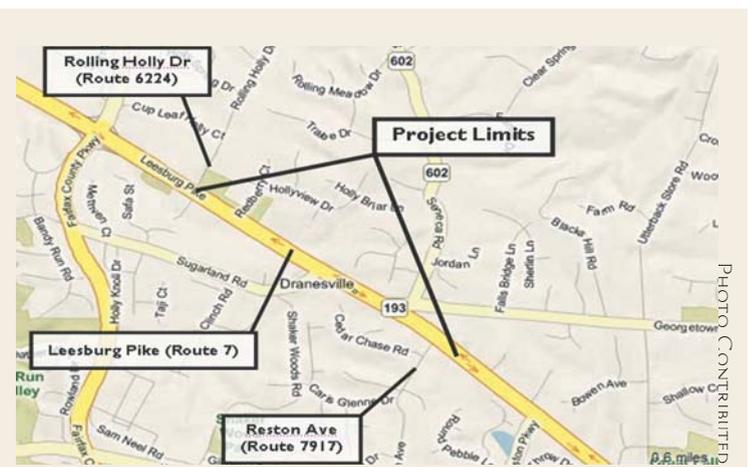


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Virginia Department of Transportation will begin relocating utilities between Reston Avenue and Rolling Holly Drive in the spring as part of the Route 7 widening.

Great Falls Looks Ahead to 2012

Leesburg Pike, Long Range Plan highlight issues for upcoming year.

BY ALEX MCVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Last year saw progress on several issues around Great Falls, issues that will affect residents for generations to come. The process of widening Leesburg Pike from Reston Avenue to Rolling Holly Drive is currently in the design phase.

The widening is part of the overall widening of the road from Tysons Corner, but since the section between Reston Avenue and Rolling Holly Drive will impact the Leesburg Pike-Georgetown Pike intersection, the Great Falls community has been especially involved in the process.

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, utility relocations including a 24-inch gas line, 12-inch water line, fiber optic, telephone and electric lines, will begin in the spring.

Major progress was made last year in changing VDOT's original plan for the intersection of Leesburg Pike and Georgetown Pike, which called for many features, including a dual-left turn lane onto Georgetown Pike, that had the community concerned.

Elected officials such as Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) and Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) worked with groups such as the McLean and Great Falls Citizens Associations to find a more acceptable solution.

AS THE PROJECT MOVES

FORWARD, Foust says he plans to spend this year pursuing funding for the entire project.

"The Route 7 widening project is something I personally had added to the comprehensive plan for Tysons Corner," he said. "Tysons will never work if the four lanes inside go to two lanes outside."

According to VDOT, Leesburg Pike carried 65,000 vehicles per day between Reston Avenue and Rolling Holly Drive, and they estimate that number will be at 103,000 per day by 2032.

Newly elected State Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31) says she will be looking very closely at getting funding for the project as well, and that she will also pay close attention to any future VDOT proposals regarding Georgetown Pike.

The Great Falls Citizens Association is busy looking at the future of the rest of the community as well. They are currently in the process of drafting a Long Range Plan, which they hope to present to Fairfax County in 2013 when the county updates its own comprehensive plan.

Long Range Planning Committee co-chair Doug Cobb says that over the next few months they hope to collect ideas from people around the community about what they would like to see in the future.

At a November meeting, one possibility was presented for

SEE LOOKING, PAGE 9

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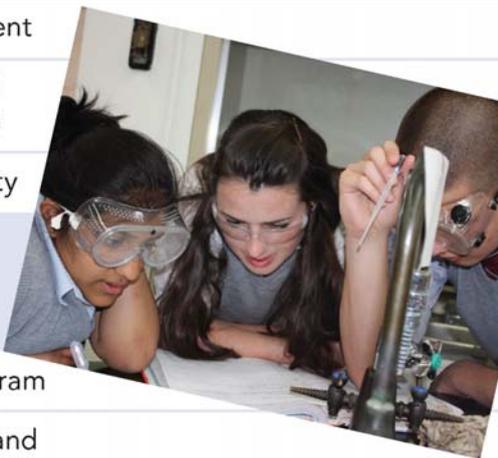
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Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls.
emarsh@delegatecomstock.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 5

Delegate Barbara Comstock (R-34) Constituent Meeting. 2 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. emarsh@delegatecomstock.com.

Financial Planning During Separation and Divorce. 6:30 p.m. The Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. All financial components of the property settlement agreement, from preparing documents for an attorney to signing agreements. \$40-\$50. www.thewomenscenter.org.

Body & Soul Strength & Flexibility Class. 12:30 p.m. McLean Presbyterian Church, 1020 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Tuesdays and Thursdays through March 29 with an ACE certified instructor. 703-847-9814 or great314dane@yahoo.com.

FRIDAY/JAN. 6

Delegate Barbara Comstock (R-34) Constituent Meeting. 12 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave., Vienna. emarsh@delegatecomstock.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 7

McLean Little League Spring Registration. 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. McLean Little League Fields, 1836 Westmoreland St., McLean. www.mcleanll.com.

Legal Aspects of Separation and Divorce. 10 a.m. McLean Government Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Learn the rights and responsibilities of parties involved in separation and divorce from experienced practicing family law attorneys, how the legal process works in Virginia courts and how to work with a lawyer. \$45-\$55. www.thewomenscenter.org.

Delegate Barbara Comstock (R-34) Constituent Meeting. 3-5 p.m. Great Falls

MONDAY/JAN. 9

Virginia General Assembly and the Environment. 7 p.m. McLean Government Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean. With Glen Besa, Director of the Va. Sierra Club, on major environmental issues to be considered during the upcoming General Assembly.

TUESDAY/JAN. 10

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

Tyson's Corner Kiwanis Club Meeting. 7:30 p.m. at George C. Marshall High School, Room 124, 7731 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Meeting is public and Individuals looking to volunteer in their community welcome. Meetings the second and fourth Tuesday of the month. www.tysonscornerkiwanis.org.

NARFE (National Association of Federal and Active Government Employees). Vienna Oakton Chapter 1116. 1:30 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. The topic will be the Hot lanes Project. Free, refreshments served. 703-281-5123.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 11

Virginia Chronic Pain Support Group Meeting. 1:30 p.m. at Kaplan Center for Integrative Medicine, 6829 Elm St., Suite 300, McLean. Group leader, Jodi Brayton, LCSW. 703-532-4892.

Multiple Sclerosis Support Group. 7 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., NE, Vienna, VA. A group for anyone with multiple sclerosis, their family and friends. Sponsored by the National Capital Chapter of the MS Society. The group meets the second Wednesday of every month. Free. 703-768-4841.



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AREA ROUNDUPS

Del. Comstock to Hold Town Hall Meetings

Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) is holding the following Town Hall Meetings in January 2012:

- ❖ Loudoun County Delegation Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 4 at 7 p.m. at the Loudoun County Government Center, 1 Harrison Street SE in Leesburg.
- ❖ Informal Constituent Meeting on Thursday, Jan. 5 at 11 a.m. at the Cascades Library, 21030 Whitfield Pl. in Potomac Falls.
- ❖ Informal Constituent Meeting on Thursday, Jan. 5 at 2 p.m. at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue in McLean.
- ❖ Informal Constituent Meeting on Friday, Jan. 6 at a 12 noon at the Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Avenue in Vienna.
- ❖ Fairfax County Delegation Town Hall on Saturday, Jan. 7 at 9 a.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway in Fairfax.
- ❖ Town Hall Meeting on Saturday, Jan. 7, at 3- 5 p.m. at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls.

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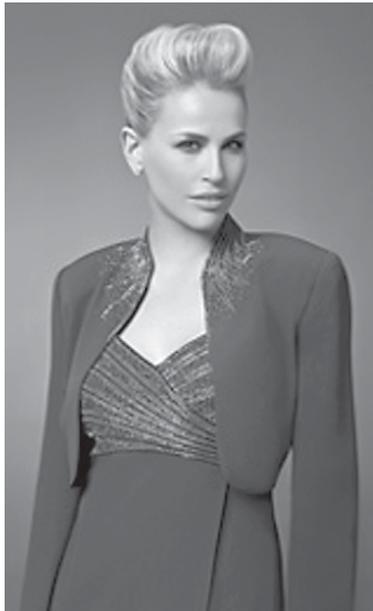
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BOWA, a home transformation company in McLean, specializing in the design and construction of luxury additions and renovations, was honored with the 2011 Designers' Choice "Hall of Fame Custom Builder" Award by Home & Design magazine. Steve Kirstein, principal of BOWA, accepted the award on Oct. 20, 2011 at the Designers' Choice Awards reception in Bethesda, Md.

BOWA prides itself on providing clients with a single-source solution to luxury home renovations. By working in close partnership with the client and assembling and managing the team of experts required for complex renovations, BOWA takes total accountability for the design and construction process and the client's overall experience.

Recipients of the Designers' Choice Award are determined by area designers and architects and are chosen for their commitment to installing signature detail and fine building. The judges consider everything from top design and professional service to kitchen cabinetry and countertops. BOWA was personally recognized by Sharon Jaffe Dan, editor-in-chief of Home & Design, for its expertise in the design and execution of luxury home renovations and additions.

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Aerial guide-way bridges coming into Tysons from Dulles Connector Road.



PHOTOS BY
CHUCK SAMUELSON/
DULLES CORRIDOR
METRORAIL PROJECT

Dulles Rail Moving to Phase 2

FROM PAGE 3

struction feat that is believed to have been accomplished nowhere else in North America. It was impossible to miss any of them as they perched atop pier structures along Route 123 near Capital One and over the beltway. In early 2012, additional bridge work will be completed near Capital One.

❖ Start of aerial guideway work on Route 7, a highlight of which is the current construction of bridges across the Gosnell/Westpark and Spring Hill Road intersections. This work will continue in 2012, with a concentration on building bridges to carry trains from Route 7 to the median of the Dulles International Airport Access Highway.

❖ The completion of the twin tunnels beneath the highest natural point in Fairfax County at the intersection of Routes 7 and 123 in the heart of Tysons Corner occurred this past fall. Both tunnels are approximately 2,400 feet in length, just shy of a half-mile. During mining operations, this team successfully excavated more than 100,000 cubic yards of dirt, which was carried by truck to Washington Dulles International Airport grounds, according to Dulles Transit Partners, the design-build contractor for Phase 1.

❖ The project's first Traction Power Substation and Train Control Rooms were moved to sites along the Dulles Connector Road and bridges were built across Pimmit Run, Difficult Run and the Washington and Old Dominion Trail. In 2012, additional facilities will be located on sites in Reston, Wolf Trap, Tysons and in the Connector Road corridor.

Looking toward Phase 2

Phase 2 of the Dulles Rail Project will run from the Wiehle Avenue Station to Route 772 in Loudoun County, with stations in the median of the Dulles Toll Road/Airport Access Highway and the Dulles

Greenway corridor at Reston Parkway, Herndon/Monroe, Route 28, Route 606 and at Ashburn/Route 772.

The board of directors of the Airports Authority has approved building the airport station above rather than below ground and preliminary engineering is expected to be completed in February 2012, according to information supplied to those attending the advisory committee meeting.

The authority recently issued a formal request for information, seeking to find out if there are potential Phase 2 contractors who would be interested and capable of helping providing some financing for Phase 2. The authority is reviewing those options. The authority will issue a request for qualifications in January and expects to solicit bids in the spring and award a contract later this year.

There are still some environmental reviews on the horizon along with evaluations by project partners, including Loudoun and Fairfax counties.

As Nowakowski said, "this is a very complicated project."

The writer is the Communications Manager for Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.



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OPINION

Resolved: Pick One Way to Get Involved

New Year's resolutions? Go ahead, let's pledge to lose weight, exercise regularly, spend less, recycle, save and read more. The turn of the calendar really does provide an impetus to make small and large changes in the way we live.

One item to add to the list of resolutions is to get involved locally. Volunteer one time for one day, or give a few hours a week to something that interests you. Pick one place where you can make a difference. The

experience will enrich you (and your family) as well, connecting you to the community in new ways. Making time for even a single volunteer effort communicates an invaluable message about your values to your children in a powerful way that words cannot match.

Most local nonprofits and church groups that provide emergency food and services for families in need are overwhelmed right now by the dramatic increase in demand for food, emergency help with rent to prevent homelessness and much more. See sidebar for some suggestions.

Volunteer Fairfax connects volunteers of all kinds to organizations in need of help, providing flexible weekend and evening opportunities including packing emergency food kits for families in crisis, tutoring adults in alternative learning programs, reading to elementary school children after school, socializing with seniors or planting trees to prevent erosion. Volunteer Fairfax will hold its annual Give Together: A Family Volunteer Day on Monday, Jan. 16, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, with focused events at the Herndon Senior Center, the Gum Springs Community Center, and at George Mason University. See www.volunteerfairfax.org.

The Arlington County Volunteer Office promotes civic engagement and active volunteer participation, coordinating volunteer opportunities from hundreds of non-profit and government agencies. Visit www.co.arlington.va.us and type "volunteer" into the search box.

Where To Help

- ❖ Volunteer Fairfax, www.volunteerfairfax.org
- ❖ Our Daily Bread has been serving needy families in Fairfax County for 25 years. www.odbfairfax.com.
- ❖ Food for Others provides free food directly to people in need in Northern Virginia. 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. 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. www.foodforothers.com
- ❖ 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. jsfreeclinic.org.
- ❖ Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia, 703-521-9890
- ❖ 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
- ❖ SHARE of McLean seeks volunteers and donations. Checks and gift cards can be sent to: 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, plus volunteers. Email Lisa Lombardo at LisaLombo@signaturecos.com. 703-437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org
- ❖ 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
- ❖ Herndon-Reston FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help), 703-391-0105
- ❖ Northern Virginia Family Service, Oakton, 703-385-3267

The Alexandria Volunteer Bureau recruits and coordinates volunteers and matches their interests, skills and availability with the needs of service-providing nonprofit organizations and public agencies. Visit www.volunteerallexandria.org.

The Literacy Council Northern Virginia is in need of volunteers who will devote several hours a week to helping adults master reading and writing skills; visit www.lcnv.org.

A Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer is a trained citizen who is appointed by a judge to represent the best interests of a child in court. CASA volunteers help children who will have their home placement determined in juvenile court. See www.casafairfax.org.

The Alexandria/Arlington Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Program has helped hundreds of children have a voice within the court system. See <http://www.scanva.org/casa.htm>

Some other suggestions:

Get involved in state and national political campaigns. If the coming campaign season is

anything like four years ago, presidential candidates will be crisscrossing Northern Virginia on a weekly basis soon. George Allen and Tim Kaine will be engaged in a very lively contest for Senate. Our U.S. representatives are also up for reelection. Volunteer for a candidate, with the League of Women Voters or with your local electoral board.

The public school or library closest to your house is also in need of volunteers. Homeowners associations need activists to learn about a variety of local issues and coordinate neighborhood response. Your church or house of worship could use a hand. In addition to their usual work, animal shelters and animal rescue groups are also over extended with families giving up pets due to the economy. Environmental groups like Audubon Naturalist Society and the Nature Conservancy offer many kinds of volunteer opportunities, as do local parks.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Competitive Bidding Reduces Costs

Introducing Fair and Open Competition in Government Contracting Act.

BY BARBARA COMSTOCK
DELEGATE, R-34

Recently, I introduced the Fair and Open Competition in Government Contracting Act (HB33). HB 33 prohibits Virginia and recipients of state funding from requiring or prohibiting contractors to enter into union agreements, such as a project labor agreement (PLA), as a condition of winning any state-assisted construction contracts.

HB 33 will keep the government neutral with respect to a qualified contractor's relationship with labor unions in all projects. Companies can still voluntarily enter these agreements, but they cannot be forced upon them. This will increase the creation of Virginia jobs, increase competition, and provide our taxpayers with more miles of transportation and infrastructure solutions for every dollar we spend.

This commonsense legislation will stretch



our tax dollars on infrastructure projects and will guarantee that free enterprise and full and open competition will determine how public construction contracts are awarded. Mandated project labor agreements have been estimated to raise costs by 10 to 20 percent or more with the most egregious example being Boston's "Big Dig" debacle.

Legislation similar to HB 33 already has been passed in 11 states as diverse as Louisiana and Michigan. This bill will ensure that the 96 percent of the Virginia private construction workforce that chooses not to join a labor union has a fair opportunity to compete for projects funded with our tax dollars.

There is broad opposition to PLA mandates. The attempts to mandate PLAs on Phase 2 of the Dulles Rail Project has generated broad bipartisan opposition which includes eight of the 11 members of our congressional delegation including U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf and Majority Leader Eric Cantor; the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors; the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors; the Virginia Chamber of Commerce; the Fairfax Chamber of Commerce; the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce; the Purcellville Business and Professional Association; a coalition of 13 of Northern Virginia's leading business groups and associations; the Virginia Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors; Women Construction Owners and Executives; and many of our local, state and elected officials.

A reduction of two or three bidders because of Metropolitan Washington Airports

SEE COMSTOCK, PAGE 9

Great Falls CONNECTION

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NEWS

Gilbert Exhibits at the Great Falls Tavern, D.C. and Bethesda

Great Falls artist Robert Gilbert is starting 2012 with three parallel exhibits, one of which is an exhibit with 13 paintings at the Great Falls Tavern, 9835 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls through March 1. Hours are Monday–Thursday 11 a.m.–10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 11 a.m.–11 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m.–9 p.m. The paintings are all framed, original watercolors. They range from paintings in the Solomon Island to Colorado landscapes and Italian villages.

Gilbert will also be exhibiting Jan. 1-28 at the NBC Universal Gallery at 4001 Nebraska Ave, NW, in Washington D.C., 8 a.m.-5 p.m. weekdays only; as well as Jan. 15-March 3 at the National Institutes of Health - West Gallery, Bldg 10 Rm B1, L410, 10 Center Drive MSC 1352 in Bethesda, Md., 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. on weekdays.

You can see more of Gilbert's work on his website or in his studio and gallery at 9250 Wood Glade Drive in Great Falls. Call 703-463-1369 for an appointment or send an email to robertgilbert@cox.net.



'Colorado Snow,' by Robert Gilbert

Looking Ahead to 2012

FROM PAGE 3

the future of the intersection of Walker Road and Georgetown Pike, which would re-align the road. Future meetings scheduled over the coming months will examine more community input, as well as possibilities for future traffic studies along Georgetown Pike, a performing arts center in Great Falls and a community center.

While many ideas are being considered at this point, the GFCA says anything discussed at this point is just brainstorming.

"Nothing has been voted on or decided by the GFCA, these are all just possibilities," said Jackie Taylor, president of the GFCA.

ONE THING that has been set in stone in Great Falls is the new fire station, which was constructed over the course of 2011 and went into operation a few weeks ago.

"Career firefighters spend two-thirds of their lives at their fire station, and we wanted to make sure they had a decent place," said Homer Johns, past president of the Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department.

The new station will feature more room for the



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

The Great Falls Fire Station, which was rebuilt last year, will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony in March. The new station gives the firefighters more room to hold their specialized rescue equipment.

specialized equipment used by the Great Falls Fire Department for water rescues. The Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department will maintain a presence at the new station, but it will also be staffed by Fairfax County Fire and Rescue personnel.

The station will officially open with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Saturday, March 10 at 11 a.m.

Comstock

FROM PAGE 8

Authority's PLA mandate could increase costs by hundreds of millions of dollars, depending on the final Phase 2 construction costs and put incredible burdens on our state and local budgets.

The Silver Line PLA controversy is not the first time that there have been attempts to force PLAs on Virginia workers. The Wilson Bridge project was temporarily subjected to a union-favoring PLA requirement by the Maryland Gov-

ernor in 2000. After the PLA was imposed, only one bidder responded to the RFP for the bridge superstructure contract, at a bid price more than \$370 million above the state's engineering estimates — a 78 percent cost overrun. Eventually, the Wilson Bridge contract was broken up and rebid into three smaller contracts free from mandated PLAs. Multiple bids were then received and the winning bids came in significantly below the estimates and resulted

in on-time and on-budget construction by both union and merit shop firms.

If those proponents of PLAs truly believe what they say when they claim that PLAs make the project better and can reduce costs, then those bidders who engage in free and open competition can prove that point by submitting a winning proposal. Since HB 33 provides neutrality, the market will determine who provides the best deal for taxpayers.

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WELLBEING

Keeping New Year's Resolution

A detailed plan could make all the difference, experts say.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

A recent poll by the Marist Institute for Public Opinion shows that increasing exercise, losing weight, quitting smoking and improving one's financial situation are among the most common New Year's resolutions, but more than 60 percent of people who make these promises fail to keep them. Mental health experts say impractical or undefined targets are among the top causes of resolutions without staying power.

"People set unrealistic and unattainable goals, get demoralized and give up," said Thomas N. Wise, M.D., director of behavioral services at Inova Health Systems and chairman, Department of Psychiatry at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Falls Church. Wise has studied addiction, habit change and obesity.

"Often, the bar is set way too high. You didn't become overweight overnight, so you're not going to lose the weight overnight," said Lisa Calusic, M.D., a psychiatrist at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital and Inova Behavioral Health Services in Alexandria.

A lack of specificity can derail ambitions. "People set abstract goals. [They say] 'I want to be healthier. I want to be thinner. I want to work out more.' But they don't have implementation plans," said Todd Kashdan, Ph.D., professor of psychology at George Mason University.

DONNA GRAMM practices Pilates regularly as part of her effort to stay in shape.

"I've been working out since college. It makes me feel good," said Gramm, a Potomac resident.

This month, however, she has more company in the exercise

room. Each January, people who've resolved to get in shape or lose weight flock to gyms and health clubs. Gramm is not worried about the influx of fitness aspirants. She knows most will soon be gone. Her instructor, Reina Offutt Pratt, owner of Potomac Pilates, agrees.

"In January we see the largest spike [in class attendance], but a lot of the people we see come in January don't come back in February," said Offutt Pratt. "The gung-ho nature of their New Year's resolution starts to dissipate."

So what are the secrets to making New Year's resolutions a permanent lifestyle change?

"Set small, realistic and concrete steps towards making or improving a behavior," said Maria Londono, of Chantilly, a mental health therapist with Molina Healthcare, Fairfax County Health Care Network in Alexandria, Reston and Falls Church. "For example, lose weight by eating a healthy breakfast in the morning and exercising three times a week. [Begin] with 15-minute routines and increase to 30 minutes when

"In January we see the largest spike [in attendance], but a lot of the people we see come in January don't come back in February."

— Reina Offutt Pratt, owner of a Pilates studio

[your] body is more used to exercise."

Be specific. "We have to have very clear behavioral plans for how we're going to implement [our goals]," said Kashdan who has studied and written about behavioral changes for the journal *Clinical Psychology Review*. "If you say you want to be more fit in the upcoming year, what exactly are you going to do in the course of a week?"

A **SCHEDULE** is also important.



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/THE CONNECTION
Reina Offutt Pratt teaches a Pilates class to Donna Gramm, Cyndi Hann, Carly Yoo and Nicole Krug. Increasing physical exercise is a New Year's resolution that is often made and broken.

"Keeping track of what you want to change is the essence of following through," said Wise, who lives in McLean. "It is very easy to say, 'I'm not going [to the gym] today.' Before you know it, it's been two weeks since you've exercised. Having a regular schedule where you rarely miss it is the way to keep up with any kind of behavior modification."

Develop a support network. "Choose friends who respect the fact that you want to change.

Choose people who look like what you want to become," said Kashdan who lives in Centreville.

Find ways to make behavioral changes enjoyable. "We encourage clients to exercise with friends," said Offutt Pratt. "Make it about friendship and socializing."

Create a plan that fits one's lifestyle. "Find something that is convenient and that you can do on a regular basis," said Wise. "If you work long hours, a complicated workout probably makes no sense, but jogging around [your neighborhood] might make sense."

Set up reminders and measure progress regularly. "Post notes for yourself," said Wise. "Let's say there is an outfit you want to fit into. Don't put it in the closet behind your other clothes. You put it in front to remind you."

Set short-term goals. "I encourage clients to set weekly goals rather than monthly or yearly goals and make themselves accountable on a weekly basis," said Offutt Pratt. "For example, 'I'm going to attend two classes on a weekly basis rather than saying, 'I'm going to attend 10 classes next month.'"

Shifts such as spending less money, decreasing debt, giving up smoking or limiting alcohol intake require the admission of a problem. "You can't change what you don't acknowledge," said Calusic, who lives in Arlington. "Unless someone decides for themselves that they have an addiction or habit that they want to change, it is not going to happen. Other people wanting them to change doesn't work."

Find substitutions for unhealthy habits. "If someone is used to drinking every day, there is a reason why," said Calusic. "Alcohol is providing a crutch. You can't take it away unless you have something to replace it with [like] a hobby [such as] art, tennis or anything that can distract from the negative habit that they are trying to break."



PHOTO COURTESY OF INOVA HEALTH SYSTEMS
Thomas N. Wise, M.D., of McLean, director of behavioral services at Inova Health Systems, believes that impractical or undefined goals lead to New Year's resolutions that fail.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
Lisa Calusic, M.D., of Arlington, a psychiatrist at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital and Inova Behavioral Health Services in Alexandria, says that behavior changes require the admission of a problem.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOLINA HEALTHCARE
Maria Londono, of Chantilly, a mental health therapist with Molina Healthcare, Fairfax County Health Care Network in Alexandria, Reston and Falls Church says that setting small, realistic goals is key to making permanent lifestyle changes.

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COMMUNITY



Peter Barid, 3, talks with Santa while waiting for his picture to be taken.



Peter Goyette, eager to meet Santa, arrives at the party dressed like him.

PHOTOS BY SYDNEY KEE

Santa Comes to St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church

On Dec. 20, St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church held their annual children's Christmas party. Children were able to create Christmas crafts, have their pictures taken with the one and only Saint Nick, and enjoy a delicious hot dog dinner. The evening started with the children creating crafts sponsored by the parish's Women's Association while the Knights of Columbus prepared the mouth-watering menu items.

As anticipation grew with every tick of the clock, Santa finally arrived to cheers, squealing and sleigh bells ringing. He discussed the true meaning of Christmas and noted how blessed St. Catherine's is to have so many good girls and boys. After asking each of the sixty children for their first names, Santa proceeded to lead the children in singing a Christmas carol.

All the children who attended had the opportunity to have their picture taken with Santa, and afterward received a treat bag. Not only children, but entire families had their picture taken with Santa, creating a memoir from the evening. The Knights of Columbus sponsor a number of events in support of St. Catherine's parish including a free pancake break-

fast served with bacon and muffins every second week of the month after the 8 and 10 a.m. masses. Find out more about the Knights on the parish website, <http://saintcatherineschurch.org/>.

— GARY LANZARA AND SYDNEY KEE



Catie O'Shea, 7, is one of the first in line to have her picture taken with Santa.

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Emmy Monier, 10, chooses from the many Christmas crafts brought in by the Women's association.



The Goyette family poses for a picture with Santa, bringing home a memorable Christmas photo.

HOME SALES

In November 2011, 10 Great Falls homes sold between \$1,925,000-\$475,000.

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9612 TACKROOM LN	6	6	2	GREAT FALLS	\$1,550,000	Detached	0.92	22066	DEEP GLEN
600 KENTLAND DR	5	5	2	GREAT FALLS	\$1,300,000	Detached	2.14	22066	SUGARLAND RUN
11207 ELMVIEW PL	5	5	1	GREAT FALLS	\$1,270,000	Detached	1.72	22066	OLD SAYBROOK
11660 GREAT FALLS WAY	4	4	2	GREAT FALLS	\$975,000	Detached	1.72	22066	GREAT FALLS WEST
1042 HARRIMAN ST	4	2	2	GREAT FALLS	\$870,000	Detached	0.69	22066	OLD MILL EST SHOTWELLS
945 HICKORY RUN LN	3	4	0	GREAT FALLS	\$861,500	Detached	3.73	22066	OFFUTT HOME TRACT
9900 GOLDEN FALCON ST	5	2	0	GREAT FALLS	\$565,000	Detached	0.51	22066	OLIVER ESTATES
10707 SUGAR MEADOW DR	4	3	1	GREAT FALLS	\$475,000	Detached	0.24	22066	GREAT FALLS FOREST

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FAITH NOTES

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

Charles Wesley UMC will open its labyrinth to the public on Saturday, Jan. 14, 4-7 p.m. in the church's Fellowship Hall, 6817 Dean Drive in McLean.

A labyrinth is a path which leads, via a circuitous route, to the center of an intricate design and back out again. Unlike a maze, a labyrinth is easy to navigate and it's impossible to get lost within one.

Visitors can walk the labyrinth at their own pace and for their own reasons. They can walk in contemplation, in search of guidance, in remembrance, in grief, in thanksgiving, to work on their balance, or simply to try something new.

For more information call 703-356-6336 or contact charleswesleyumc@verizon.net. www.charleswesleyumc.org

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 with

out 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.

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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Disciples of Christ

Antioch Christian Church ... 703-938-6753

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Church of the Holy Comforter ... 703-938-6521

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St. Francis Episcopal ... 703-759-2082

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

THURSDAY/JAN. 5

Artist Talk and Exhibition Closing Reception. 7-9 p.m. McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Artist Roberto Bocci will talk about his exhibition Streams, Consciousness and Spaces in Between. There will also be a closing reception for Imaginary Botanicals by Elizabeth Whitely in the Atrium Gallery and the McLean Art Society Juried Exhibition in the Ramp Gallery. Free and open to the public. www.mpaart.org or 703-790-1953.

FRIDAY/JAN. 6

The Michael Clem Trio: Michael Clem Birthday Show. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.
"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 Tysonson.org.

Friday Afternoon Chess Group. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Players of all ages and all skill levels welcome. 703-757-8560

SATURDAY/JAN. 7

Bandits & Beggars CD Release at 7 p.m.; **Feed God Cabbage, Dub City Renegades and Carry The One** at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

"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 Tysonson.org.

Student Art Show. 5-8 p.m. Great Falls Foundation for the Arts, 1144 Walker Road, Suite D, Great Falls. Enjoy artwork created this fall by the students of the Great Falls School of Art. www.greatfallsfoundationforarts.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 8

United States Marine Band. 8 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Free, non-ticketed. www.gmu.edu.

Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Adoption Event. 1-4 p.m. PetSmart, 8204 Leesburg Pike, Tysons Corner. Adoption events every Sunday. <http://lostdogrescue.org/> and click on Adoptions.

"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.1ststage Tysonson.org.

Young Soloists Recital. 3 p.m. Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. With pianists Wiley Skaret, 9, and Sarah Barham, 17; flutist Elena Anne Olshin, 16; and violinist John Kirchenbauer, 16. Free. 703-620-9535.

Old Dominion Chrysanthemum Society. 2:30 p.m. Falls Church Community Center, 223 Little Falls St., Falls Church. Program with question and answer session, reviewing "Photos of the 2011 NCS Longwood Gardens Mum Exhibition",



PHOTO COURTESY OF 1ST STAGE

From left, Amal Saade and Joshua Dick in the 1st Stage production of "Parfumerie." [Performances Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Jan. 6-8]

"Potomac's Best of Show Mum winners" and the 2011 new Exhibition Mums from King's Mums. Open to the public. Free admission and refreshments. 703-560-8776.

MONDAY/JAN. 9

Tiny Tot Time. 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Songs, rhymes and activities. Age 13-23 months with adult. 703-356-0770.

TUESDAY/JAN. 10

Book Discussion Group. 7 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Call for title. Adults. 703-356-0770.

Tuesday Storytime. 10:30 a.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Stories, songs and activities. Age 1-2 with adult. 703-790-8088.

Personalized Internet Training. 2:30 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. A 45-minute one-on-one Internet training session with a technology volunteer. Call for appointment. 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. Adults. 703-790-8088.

Genealogy Databases. 2 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Search for your ancestors using the library's genealogy databases and other free Internet databases. Adults. 703-293-6227.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 11

Speakers Forum with Dr. David Applegate. 10 a.m. Ernst Cultural Center, NVCC Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The latest scientific research on earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis and floods with Dr. David Applegate, associate director for natural hazards at the United States Geological Survey. Social hour 9:30 a.m. Sponsored by Lifetime Learning Institute of Northern Virginia for adults over 55. Free admission, garage parking \$1 per hour. <http://lli.nova.org> or 703-503-0600.

Castles and Dragons. 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Royal stories and activities. Age 3-5 with adult. 703-356-0770.

Great Falls Historical Society. 7 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. With Julia Runnels on the history of the 1709 Land Grant of 2292 acres from Lord Fairfax to Captain Daniel McCarty on the Potomac River, including Lowe's Island and the stone home built about 1750; and Ken Garrett, photographer with the National Geographic, on his research into the Seneca Falls Canal, which was built by George Washington's Patowmack Canal company in 1790. www.gfhs.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 13

Family Skate Night. 6:30-8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. Admission \$1. Bring your own roller skates or inline skates (no scooters) and safety equipment. Parents required to stay with their children. 703-255-6360 or www.viennava.gov.

Friday Afternoon Chess Group. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Players of all ages and all skill levels welcome. 703-757-8560.

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

SATURDAY/JAN. 14

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax.

With cellist Sergey Antonov. Glazunov's Chant du Ménéstrel, Haydn's Cello Concerto in C Major, and Shostakovich's Symphony No. 11, "The Year 1905." Free pre-concert discussion for ticketholders at 7 p.m. Tickets \$25-\$55. info@fairfaxsymphony.org.

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. Free, donations accepted. www.nvmr.org or 703-938-5157.

Pat Sommers' Rock Shop. 1:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Irresponsible, Shinobi Ninja and Square Trio. 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. \$10 advance, \$13 at the door. www.jamminjava.com.

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

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

TUESDAY/JAN. 17

Personalized Internet Training. 2:30 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. A 45-minute one-on-one Internet training session with a technology volunteer. Call for appointment. Adults. 703-790-8088.

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. Adults. 703-790-8088.

Evening Book Discussion. 7:30 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. House of Mirth by Edith Wharton. Adults. 703-293-6227.

COMMUNITY



PHOTO BY DEAN SOULELES

“Gibbon River Morning.”

‘Yellowstone Winter’ at Katie’s Coffee House

“Yellowstone Winter” — Spectacular winter scenes of nature and wildlife in America’s first and most beloved national park will be on display during the month of January as part of an exhibition by Great Falls photographer Dean Souleles at Katie’s Coffee House, 760 Walker Road in Great Falls. Artist’s reception will be held on Saturday, Jan. 7 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Souleles is a commercial and fine art photographer living in Great Falls. He is a member of Great Falls Studios, a consortium of over 100 artists in Great Falls. He started his photographic journey over 30 years ago as a television news photographer in Los Angeles.

After a hiatus of many years he picked up his camera again in 2007 and began capturing landscape and nature images. His subjects include Yellowstone National

Park, Maine lighthouses, fall colors in Shenandoah National Park, Great Falls National Park, and St. Michaels on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. His work is featured in the “Guide to Shenandoah National Park and Skyline Drive” and in numerous exhibitions.

His full service commercial studio offers portraiture, special events, advertising, product and editorial photography. www.dsoulphoto.com 571-214-2669.



PHOTO BY BRANDON MEGORDAN
Dean Souleles



Salvation Army Singers Serenade Great Falls Shoppers

Shoppers at Great Falls Safeway were in for a treat on Dec. 20, as they were serenaded by Salvation Army volunteers. Ken Yotsukura, Sumie Yotsukura, Pat Ward, Jackie Amthor and bell ringer, Dylan Riihimaki are members of St. Francis Episcopal Church.



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The Capitol Steps

Friday, Jan. 13, 8 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 14, 2 p.m.
\$45/\$35 district residents



Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration

Sunday, Jan. 15, 3 p.m.
\$5 adults; \$3 children up to age 10



@ The Alden

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

Wednesday & Thursday, Jan. 18 & 19, 8 p.m.
\$45/\$35 district residents

Family Fun Bingo

Friday, Jan. 20, 7-8:30 p.m.
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SPORTS



PHOTO COURTESY OF SOUTH LAKES VOLLEYBALL

Cheri Hostetler's South Lakes' volleyball team enjoyed an outstanding 15-win season this past fall.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Coach Greg Miller's Herndon High baseball team experienced a winning season for the second consecutive year in 2011.

Area Coaches Discuss Their New Year's Resolutions

Amanda Bates, head coach girls' basketball, Langley High School

New Year's Resolution: "My New Year's resolution is to communicate better with my players. Sometimes I forget that this group has gone through several coaching changes during their high school careers, so they are still adjusting to having someone new in charge. I want to do a better job making sure that the girls understand what I'm asking of them, and my staff and I are doing all that we can to bring the best out in them."

Most significant happenings of 2011: "For the team, one of the most significant happenings would be the South Lakes game [in mid-December]. It was the first game we scored over 40 points, and it was the closest we've been to playing a complete game. We learned a lot from that game on the importance of taking care of the ball and valuing every possession, and that it takes 32 minutes of solid play to win."

Looking ahead to 2012: "Some key things that our team will look to improve on in 2012 is becoming a stronger offensive team. We dedicated a great deal of time early on developing our defense, but now it's time to balance out our game and put more points on the board. We will work on perfecting our offenses and getting lots of shots up at practice."

Greg Miller, head baseball coach, Herndon High School

New Year's Resolution: "To win a [Concorde] District Championship and get our team back to the regional playoffs."

Most significant happenings of 2011: "Having our second winning season in a row, especially with such a young team. We only started one senior."

Looking ahead to 2012: "We return eight

starters from last year's team so we are expecting big things. We have a group of hard working kids who want to be successful and who are working hard in the offseason. I think we are all excited for the season to get underway."

Cheri Hostetler, head girls' volleyball coach, South Lakes High School

New Year's Resolution: "Our New Year's Resolution for the South Lakes volleyball program is to make it to regionals in 2012! We plan to work hard in the pre-season through workouts and camps. We have always done off-season workouts but due to the new VHSL rule, the coaching staff can have some contact with the athletes which is exciting."

"All players will have the opportunity to get court time, not just the players that play club volleyball."

Most significant happenings of 2011: "The highlight of the 2011 season was improving the team's regular [season] record to 15-10! It was a great year because they worked well as a team. The team spirit was at an all-time high mainly because they were all so supportive of each other."

Looking ahead to 2012: "The 2012 season looks promising. The team will have a lot of returning players because we only graduated four seniors. There is a lot of talent coming up from the JV and freshmen teams also. We expect a lot of exciting play from the team in 2012 to build on the momentum from 2011. There is a group of three players that has been on the team for a couple of years so we look for Cloe Traylor, Annemarie Bresson and Dory DeWeese to really lead the team. They will all be seniors and have had a lot of impact on the program during their tenure."

Kevin Simonds, head football coach,

Fairfax High School

New Year's Resolution:

"It's hard to keep resolutions so I try to see what I can improve on or continue to do better at. For the coming year I hope to continue building on a strong football program by attending coaching clinics and working with my staff and players in the weight room in order to be a force in the Liberty District/Northern Region."

Most significant happenings of 2011:

"Just building on the success from 2010 was great. We started the season 4-0 and for the first time in our history we faced the mighty Westfield Bulldogs with the same record at the midpoint of the season. We also won our first game of the season, homecoming and we secured a spot in the regional playoffs before the final game of the regular season. The Rebel football program is growing and we are getting better each season. I am excited to see what we will do over the next three years as our freshman team shared in the Liberty District title."

Looking ahead to 2012:

"We are challenging them to finish. Often we battled but in the games we lost we were not able to play a solid four quarters. We did not finish drives and we did not finish tackling. This year we aim to finish what we start. We will have a solid core group of seniors with a solid group of juniors that will make for a very competitive team in 2012."

Mike Barbee, head boys' basketball coach, Fairfax High School

New Year's Resolution: My personal New Year's Resolution is to find more time to go to the gym to work out in basketball sea-

son. As a coach it is always hard to find the time to do it with everything that goes into the work with the team.

Most significant happenings of 2011: Most significant events of 2011 for me were getting named the boys' basketball coach at Fairfax High School and leaving Woodson High School after being there for seven years. This completely changed my life and I have enjoyed every moment of it.

Looking ahead to 2012: Key things to look for from the Fairfax boys' basketball team in 2012 are how we grow into our offensive system as a program. I feel we have become a tough team on the defensive end of the floor with our man to man defense but we have plenty of room to grow on the offensive end. I expect to see a team much more familiar and comfortable with the new sets that we are running in 2012 than we have seen so far in 2011.

Jim Poythress, head football coach, Lake Braddock Secondary

New Year's Resolution: My focus is on health - lose 30 pounds, stretch more often.

Most significant happenings of 2011: We played one of the toughest schedules in the state. We could not run the ball [but] we did not collapse. We won a share of the [Patriot] District. We continued to improve. We were a final four team for the third straight year.

Looking ahead to 2012: Can we find offensive balance? Will our underclass play at a high level? Will we stay healthy? Can we continue to improve week to week, and will we play as a team? If the answer to these questions are yes, we could be a contender. Somebody needs to step up as a leader.



PHOTOS BY JOE ROMEO

The new Route 7 overpasses take shape over the Capital Beltway.

Looking north from Tysons Corner, the Westpark Drive access ramp and the Dulles Metrorail dominate the scene.

A Hot Year for HOT Lanes

Many overpasses completed, work continues in 2012.

BY MIKE SALMON

Last year was a big hurdle for the I-495 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes. Throughout 2011, drivers and residents along the highway saw many of the overpasses completed and traffic shifted over to the new spans.

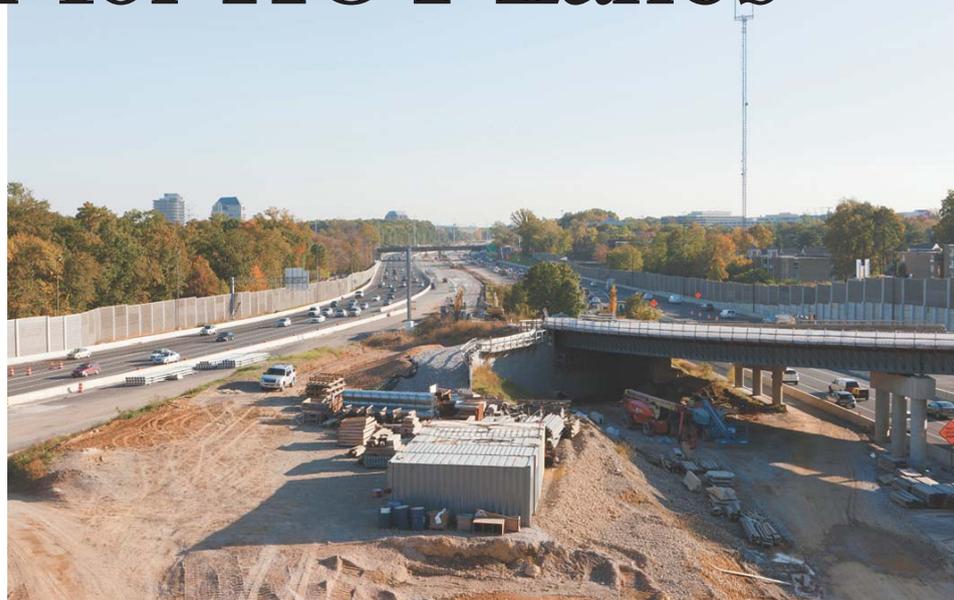
This occurred at Lewinsville Road, Leesburg Pike, Idylwood Road, I-66, Gallows Road, Little River Turnpike and Braddock Road. These new overpasses are wider, with sidewalks and bike lanes that the old overpasses lacked, so it was a welcome addition to many Fairfax County residents.

At the Dulles Toll Road and I-495 interchange more than 17 bridges are under construction and last summer crews closed the far left lane on the eastbound Dulles Toll Road to complete pier work. After the initial congestion increased, crews restriped the area to provide smoother traffic flow before the left lane was restored completely in late December.

At Route 123 in the Tysons Corner area, all the lanes of the beltway that were routed on one overpass in 2010 were rerouted back to the original highway path across a new bridge span over Route 123. Plus the left lanes along Route 123 were reopened along with the exit from Route 123 north to I-495 north. Wider beltway overpasses were also built at Arlington Boulevard.

Motorists are now traveling on newly paved lanes in many areas along the beltway as well. These lanes are outside of the original configuration so crews can work on the actual HOT Lanes in the middle of the beltway.

At I-66, the left exit from the northbound lanes of the beltway to I-66 west was closed permanently. That exit has been a congestion point in years past, so it was closed and motorists heading to I-66 west are now using the two-lane, right exit. That left exit will be a HOT Lanes exit in the future. Also at I-66, a new flyover ramp was opened in late December from I-66 east to I-495 north bringing northbound traffic down to the



PHOTOS BY JOE ROMEO

Looking south from the I-66 ramp, the HOT Lanes configuration takes shape.



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/VIRGINIA MEGAPROJECTS

From the new, unopened section of Rolling Road, the ramps to the Franconia-Springfield Parkway are part of the Fairfax County Parkway's last phase.

right side on the beltway eliminating the left merge across the roadway to access Routes 7 and 123.

Other Megaprojects

Other Megaprojects underway include the Telegraph Road interchange with I-95/495 in Alexandria and the Fairfax County Parkway extension through the Fort Belvoir North area, formerly known as the Engineer Proving Ground.

The Telegraph Road interchange is the last part of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project. By the end of 2011, all the new ramps were completed and in use. In the coming year, the through lanes in the center of the beltway will be completed and bridges over Cameron Run and the railroad tracks in Alexandria will be open. The project is expected to be completed in the late 2012-early 2013 timeframe.

The Fairfax County Parkway passed a milestone in July 2011 with the opening of the Boudinot Drive loop, providing a direct connection to Fullerton Road. A few months later, parts of Rolling Road were restored and the intersection at Donegal Lane was partially closed.

In spring 2012, the Rolling Road overpass will be completed and the Donegal Lane intersection will be completely closed. This overpass is the last part of the Fairfax County Parkway extension, although a commuter lot is planned for a space near the Barta Road-Rolling Road intersection. This 535-space lot is being added as a suggestion by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation, and is scheduled to open in September 2012.

Last July, the ribbon was cut on the I-95 Widening Project, which was the first Megaproject that is officially completed. This project added another lane on both sides of I-95 through a six-mile stretch of highway from the Fairfax County Parkway overpass to Occoquan.

The writer is a Public/Community Outreach Specialist for Virginia Megaprojects.

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Obituary



ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA – A funeral service for Katherine Mary Horn, 85, was celebrated on Tuesday, December 27, 2011, at 11 a.m. at the Old Post Chapel at Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, with interment to follow. After the ceremony, the family received friends in a reception at the Fort Myer Club adjacent to the cemetery.

Mary Horn passed peacefully Thursday, October 27, 2011, at Wake County Hospice, Raleigh, North Carolina. Born July 22, 1926, in Spring Lake, New Jersey, Mary was the youngest of three daughters of Everard Stokes and Phyllis Beavis Stokes. She was married to the late Charles Samuel Horn (Colonel, U.S. Army retired) for 41 years. Together with four children, Irish wolfhounds, cats, and even a guinea pig, she travelled the United States and Europe never missing an opportunity to plan a fun, educational site-seeing excursion from New York City to Athens, Greece. An avid equestrian, Mary loved her horses which she bred and trained from the family's New Trafford Farm in Madison County, Virginia. She also loved the ocean shore, where she rode her horses and walked her goats as a young girl, as well as the Duck, North Carolina, beach house which was the gathering point of many a memorable family summer vacation. Her vitality and love of life, as well as her enduring smile and good humor, will remain a source of joy to her family and friends.

Surviving are her children: Mrs. Margaret A. Nordt of Raleigh, North Carolina; Ms. Katherine Mary Horn of Hamilton, Virginia; Dr. (Colonel, retired) Charles S. Horn of Springfield, Virginia; and Colonel (retired) Carl W. Horn of Prosperity, South Carolina. She was equally proud of her surviving 14 grand children and 5 great grand children.

The family would greatly appreciate memorials be sent to the Wounded Warrior Project at <http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/> or to any other preferred charitable organization. Online condolences may be made to www.apexfuneral.net

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"Scanxiety"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

(With attribution to Ember Garrett from the San Diego, California Weber Shandwick satellite office.) The meaning being: the anxiety one feels waiting for, and awaiting the results of, a diagnostic scan. My particular cycle now occurs every four months for the CT Scan (of my upper torso/lungs) and every 12 months for both the full body Bone Scan (lung cancer spreads to the bones) and MRI of the brain (where the highest percentage of lung cancers' spread, 30 percent, most often goes).

Perhaps I don't know what I'm supposed to be feeling or am too clueless or naive about what symptoms I'm experiencing – or lack thereof, but diagnosis-to-date, I have felt very little that ever gave me pause. However, given the fact that I was basically asymptomatic immediately preceding my biopsy and subsequent diagnosis/prognosis, and a life-long nonsmoker to boot born into a family with no cancer history; not feeling anything one might consider worrisome: coughing, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, etc. has not been as reassuring as some might think. In my case, nothing actually turned into something (my philosophy in life has always been: "It's nothing until it's something"). Ergo my discomfort. The less I feel, the more I worry. That's how this all started. Why/how can I expect it to finish any differently?

Now don't let me lead you completely astray; feeling something would be worse, presumably. But having felt very little so far, I can't say for sure how feeling something would compare. Maybe feeling something would provide an odd sense of comfort – and possibly even a sense of cause and effect. Feeling nothing however, contributes very little to the understanding of why and how an otherwise healthy, middle-aged male who never smoked a cigarette, cigar or pipe, never chewed tobacco, inhaled secondhand smoke or was exposed to asbestos or radon, was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer, the leading cause of cancer deaths, with nearly 160,000 annually, 85-percent-plus of which are attributable to these causes.

So whatever is, or is not happening to me, becomes diagnostically clear only when a radiologist reads my scan and issues a report. Until I know those results, approximately two to three days after the actual scan occurs (and weekends don't seem to count), anxiety is the emotion of the day – and night, too. In this context, what you don't know does in fact hurt you – emotionally. And unfortunately, the longer you (I) live and the more frequently you experience this interminable wait, the easier it does not get. Familiar? Yes. But this kind of familiarity does not exactly provide comfort or relief. Nor does it – for me, breed contempt, as the old saying goes. It is what it is. I accept my circumstances. I accept the process. I understand there's no fault involved. It's simply what patients have to endure.

Ironically though, you want to endure this process for a long time. Because it means you're still alive – and kicking. But to think it gets any easier over that time would be, at least in my three years of living it, wrong. "Scanxiety" will be with you for the rest of your scan-taking life (women waiting for the results of their mammograms are well-acquainted with this feeling). I may get used to it, but I'll never get over it. Life-changing events are funny that way.

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

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