

Talent on Display

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Great Falls School of Art Director Ben Cheshire awards Begonia Morton second prize for her painting "Nautilus" at the school's second annual show Saturday, Jan. 7.



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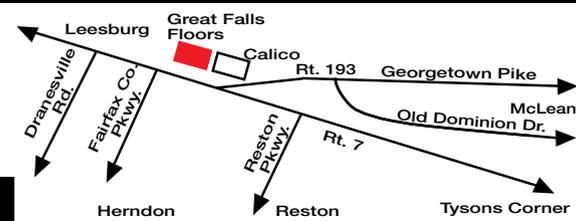




PHOTO BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

Julia Jones reminds elected officials to the Virginia General Assembly from Fairfax County of the importance that all residents, including those that may need extra assistance, have access to polling stations, access to registration and other services related to voting, especially for those living in assisted living communities. Jones is a representative of the League of Women Voters of the Fairfax area.

Citizens Appeal for Human Services

Residents share personal stories of recovery and survival.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Fretful about the impact of Governor Robert McDonnell's proposed budget cuts to social services, representatives from numerous Northern Virginia advocacy groups voiced their opinions to Fairfax County's state legislative delegation.

More than 60 residents gathered at the Fairfax County Government Center on Saturday, Jan. 7 to champion a number of causes. For nearly five hours, speakers touched on a wide range of issues - from education and the environment to transportation and no-excuse absentee voting. Many shared personal stories of survival and recovery, and the need to continue funding streams for Medicaid waivers and community-based social and mental health services.

THE ANNUAL PUBLIC HEARING gives citizens an opportunity to speak directly with their legislative representatives before each legislative session.

Lu Ann McNabb of Centreville spoke movingly on behalf of the VTV Family Outreach Foundation, created by families and survivors directly impacted by the 2007 shooting at Virginia Tech. She urged lawmakers to fight for mental health services for college students. "In the wake of the largest massacre on a college campus in United States history, the Commonwealth implemented much-needed legislative reforms,"



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31), Sen. Richard Saslaw (D-35), Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-42) and Del. David Bulova (D-37) discuss the public hearing. Each person was allotted three minutes to address the panel, which included 15 senators and delegates.

McNabb said, pointing out that funding for state mental health services has been cut to pre-2007 levels.

"We have seen the devastating impact of ignoring

SEE LEGISLATORS, PAGE 19



PHOTO BY ALEX MCVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) speaks at the Great Falls Library Saturday, Jan. 7 about her priorities for the upcoming Virginia General Assembly Session.

Comstock Prepares For Session

Delegate hosts town hall meetings in McLean, Great Falls.

BY ALEX MCVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

As the Virginia General Assembly prepares for its upcoming session, Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) held town hall meetings around her district to update constituents on her priorities, and to hear theirs. During two events at the McLean Community Center and the Great Falls Library last week, Comstock said jobs, education and transportation are at the top of her list.

"We're doing better with unemployment numbers, but we're still very focused on jobs, especially because a lot of Northern Virginia's economy is tied to the federal government and we have the threat of defense cuts looming," she said. "We want to make sure we expand our private sector economy, and technology is one of the areas that has a lot of opportunities."

COMSTOCK SAID she is especially interested in technology startups that can grow over the years while headquartered in Northern Virginia.

"We've been lucky to have companies like Hilton and Northrop Grumman, but they aren't the types of companies that will double in size over the next year," she said. "We want

the next Google, the next eBay, companies that could be startups in a garage right now, but we have the business climate to help them grow."

When it comes to education, Comstock said she hopes to reintroduce a bill that would give teachers a three percent bonus, provided they can find the savings in their own budget.

"State employees had flat salaries for about three, four years, and a year or two ago we said 'If you can find the money for bonuses, we'll give it,' and they found double the amount needed," she said. "When you incentivize employees to find savings, those are longer-term fixes that don't bust budgets."

Eric Welch of Great Falls said he hopes to see funding for to get away from the "rigid public school structure" currently used by the county.

"In the future, it would be nice if there were more options within the school system, for example, full-year schooling opportunities for low-income households," he said. "I'd say the system is working for about 75 to 80 percent of the students, but there are better options. Right now, except for Thomas Jefferson [High School for the Arts and Sciences] and some of the academies, it's sort

SEE DELEGATE, PAGE 4

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NEWS

Delegate Meets Constituents

FROM PAGE 3

of a one-size-fits-all approach.”

Comstock said she would like to see the schools pursue more public-private partnerships to be able to offer a wider variety of opportunities.

Comstock said she also planned to introduce a bill that would address Phase Two of Dulles Metrorail by preventing a Project Labor Agreement that would mandate all Phase Two labor be performed by unions.

“We’re a right-to-work state, but if we have a PLA forced upon us, we could see a lot of the Metro jobs going to people in Washington, D.C. and Maryland,” she said. “These types of agreements can raise costs by an estimated 15 to 20 percent.”

MCLEAN CITIZENS ASSOCIATION’S President Rob Jackson said he hoped Comstock would help oppose a bill from Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) that would undo

Fairfax County’s recent decision to regulate water rates. McLean has been one of the communities affected by the overcharging from Falls Church Water, which led to the county’s decision.

“We would hate to see that bill go through,” he said.

He also said he would like to see Comstock examine the fees paid by overweight trucks in the state.

“Overweight trucks cause more than \$200 million in damage to our roads, but they only pay around \$3 million in fees,” he said.

Comstock said she wants to hear from her constituents leading up to and during the session

as much as possible.

“Feel free to contact me about issues, don’t assume I know about it,” she said. “When we’re down in Richmond, it always helps to hear from home, to know what people are thinking.”

Contact information for Comstock can be found at www.delegatecomstock.com.

“When we’re down in Richmond, it always helps to hear from home, to know what people are thinking.”

— Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34)



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THURSDAY/JAN. 12

McLean Little League Spring Registration. 5-8 p.m. McLean Little League Fields, 1836 Westmoreland St., McLean. www.mcleanll.com.

Special Topics in Memoir: The Narrative Question Revisited. 8:30 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., S.E., Vienna. Class continues on Jan. 19, 26 and March 1, 8 and 15. Participants will perform in-class exercises that will provide guidance for deepening original drafts. Writers are encouraged to share works-in-progress for further feedback. \$70-\$87.50. Register at 703-255-6360 or www.viennava.gov.

Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna Open House. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. 541 Marshall Road S.W., Vienna. Register for Adventures in Learning enrichment classes. Tai Chi, bridge, Health and Wellness, book and essay group discussions, Musical Review, American History 1940-1959 and more. \$40. 703-281-0538 or www.scov.org.

McLean Historical Society. 7:30 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. With Mary Lipsey of the Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association. Refreshments provided. 703-980-0885 or paulkohl@msn.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 14

Brinker Toastmasters. 9:30 a.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.E., Vienna. Meets second and fourth Saturday of the month.

brinker.wordpress.com.
Chronic Pain: Alternative Emotional Coping Strategies. 10 a.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., N.E., Vienna. Learn to control your response to chronic pain. \$25-35. 703-281-4928, ext. 276.

Avoiding Divorce Court I: How To Negotiate or Mediate a Property Settlement Agreement. 10 a.m. The Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. Strategies and pitfalls to avoid and a general discussion of the issues commonly addressed in an agreement, from property to support and custody. Program fee may be applied to an initial mediation session. \$30-\$70. 703-281-4928, ext. 276.

MONDAY/JAN. 16

Give Together: A Family Volunteer Day. Multiple nonprofit agencies at George Mason University in Fairfax, Herndon Senior Center in Herndon and Gum Springs Community Center in Alexandria. Families with elementary school aged children are invited to participate in service projects helping homeless individuals, animal shelters, hospital patients, military personnel and more. Register at www.volunteerfairfax.org.

TUESDAY/JAN. 17

Match Your Head to Your Heart. 7 p.m. The Women's Center, 127 Park St., N.E., Vienna. Explore the factors that will help identify your strengths, consider your interests, and choose an industry and position where you can put the word "passion" back into your career plans. \$25-\$35. 703-281-4928, ext. 276.

HOW TO GET YOUR ORGANIZATION'S SPECIAL EVENTS IN THE CONNECTION

Calendar Listings

The Connection Newspapers contain a Calendar of Upcoming Events every week. While we cannot guarantee that every event we receive information about will be listed, here is the information we need for your upcoming event to be considered for the Calendar. We welcome photographs of similar events held previously, which sometimes appear with Calendar items.

Name of Event:

Day of the Week, Date and Time:

Name of the Place Event will Be Held:

Address of the Place Event Will Be Held:

Name and Phone Number for More Information:

Three Sentences Describing the Event:

Please submit your calendar information at least two weeks before your event. Clear photographs from similar previous events are always welcome. All events should be open to the public. We give first priority to free events. E-mail listings to:

greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com

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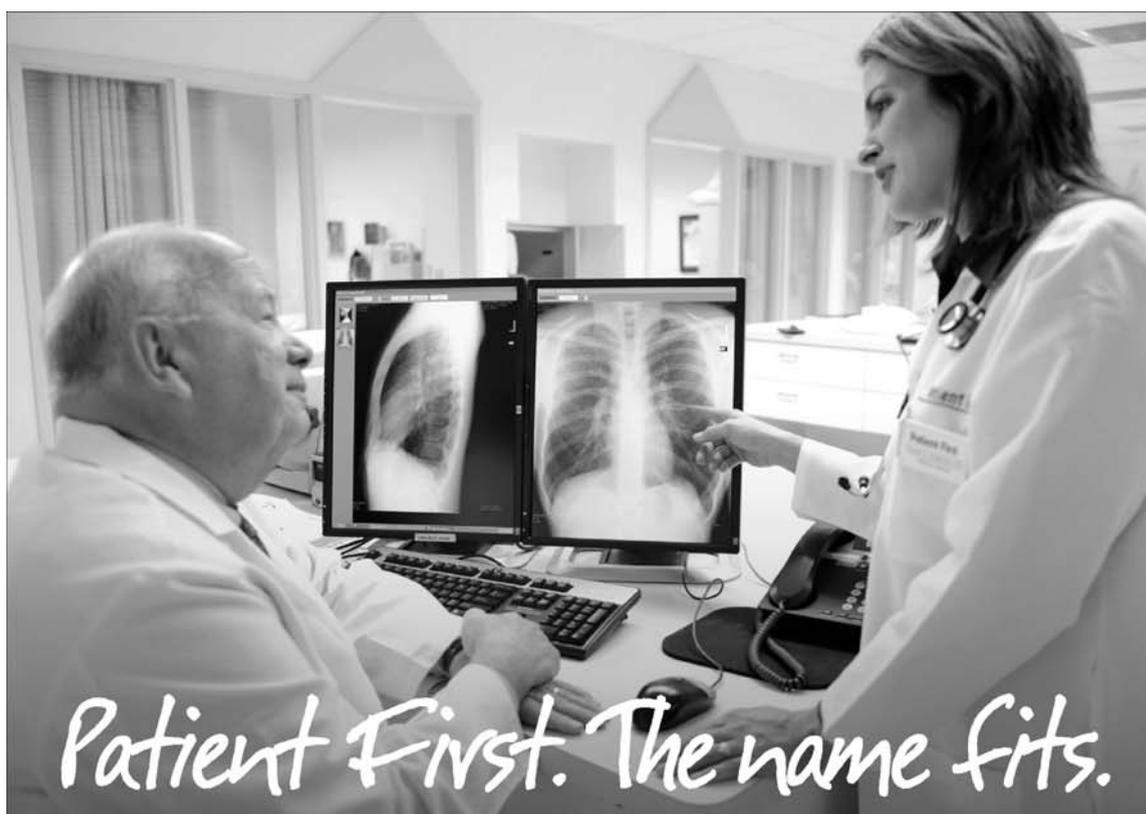
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WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

December DWI Arrests Up 12 Percent

Fairfax County Police officers arrested 358 drunk drivers as part of their Safe December 2011 efforts. Of those arrested the vast majority (150) were young adults between the ages of 21 and 29. Further analysis shows that 28 were between 15 and 20 years old,

82 were 30-39, 55 were 40-49 and 43 were 50 or older.

"Despite all our Safe December education and enforcement efforts, hundreds of drivers chose to drink and drive in Fairfax County, presenting an unacceptable safety risk to us all. Clearly, impaired driving remains a threat and our officers will continue to aggressively pursue violators," said Captain Susan Culin, Commander of the Fairfax County Traffic Division.

Wolf to Kick Off Campaign

Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10th) will kick off his 2012 re-election campaign at his biennial "Birthday Party" celebration on Jan. 26 at the Washington Dulles Airport Hilton.

The event starts at 7 p.m. and tickets are \$30 each. To make reservations, contact the Wolf for Congress Committee at 703-817-9691.

Wolf, the most senior of Virginia's 11 members of Congress, has been involved in nearly every major transportation initiative in northern Virginia over the last 30 years, including reducing HOV restrictions on I-66 and getting the full funding to complete the original 103-mile Metrorail system. He played a key role in securing the funding to replace the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and has been the driving force behind the

effort to extend rail to Dulles airport and Loudoun County. He also pushed for the additional west-bound lane on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway, which is now open, and worked to permanently open the Monument Avenue and Stringfellow Road slip ramps on I-66.

Wolf was re-elected in 2010 with nearly 63 percent of the vote.

GFFN Club Hosts Coffee, Lecture

The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Club (GFFN) is a women's club in Great falls and is the result of the most recent merger of the Great Falls Women's Club and the Newcomer's Club of Great Falls.

GFFN is hosting its very first meeting of the merged clubs on Tuesday, Jan. 17, at 9:15 a.m. at the Great Falls library and is encouraging anyone who is interested in learning more about the club to attend this gathering. The morning will kick off with a 45-minute coffee social with delicious treats followed by the first lecture series featuring Ric Edelman, founder of Edelman Financial Services and one of America's best-known financial advisers. Edelman is also an award-winning bestselling author of seven books, hosts a nationally syndicated radio show and a weekly TV show on public television.

Edelman will be speaking on "What You Should Do Now" - Greece, The deficit, recession fears, volatile stock prices. After the meeting there will be a noontime casual lunch at a local eatery. For more information contact Barbara Rabil drabil@cox.net or Julie Maher juliemaher4@aol.com.

Free Real Estate Seminar Series

The Lyons & McGuire Team of Keller Williams Realty Great Falls office will be offering a free Real Estate Seminar Series the last Sunday of January, February, March and April from 1-4 p.m. The topic for the first session on Sunday, Jan. 29 is "What Every Seller Needs To Know." This is an opportunity to get tips from a professional Stager, Home Inspector, Appraiser etc. RSVP to lyonsmcguire@TeamGreatFalls.com. Future Seminar topics will include tips for Buyers, 55+ Communities and Downsizing Lifestyle, and New Homes & Custom Building. This is a no obligation community service. Seminar location 774-A Walker Rd. Great Falls (next to Adeler Jewelers).

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NEWS

Great Falls School of Art Director Ben Cheshire awards Lori Wiseman's painting "Green Scarf" first place in the adult category at the school's second annual show Saturday, Jan. 7.



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Atelier Hosts Student Art Show

Students from Great Falls School of Art hold second annual show.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

While preparing for the Great Falls School of Art's second annual show, Director Ben Cheshire ran into one problem. "I came in a few days before the show to label ev-

erything, and I thought the artists who have studios here had taken up the walls," he said. "That's how high quality their work is."

Students from the school, which is taught at the space on Walker Road known as the "Artists' Atelier," showed off their best pieces Saturday, Jan. 7 at the school's annual show.

Vicky Wang, 16, has been taking classes at the school since October, and won second place for her painting "Human Eye Profile Study." Wang says she enjoys the personal experience she gets from teachers at the school.

"There's only two students in my class, so you get SEE CELEBRATING ART, PAGE 20

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Tune in to General Assembly

Republicans control House of Delegates and Senate; Senate has served as roadblock to many things passed by the House in the past.

The newly configured Virginia General Assembly has begun its work in Richmond, convening on Jan. 11.

By Valentine's Day, the Senate and the House will be done with their own legislation and will be considering only legislation already passed by the other chamber. In previous years, this is where the legislation passed by the Republican-controlled House often met its demise in the committees of the Democratic-controlled Senate, but this year is different.

With 20 Democrats and 20 Republicans making up the Senate, and Republican Lt. Gov. Bill Bolling able to cast the tie-breaking vote on

many issues, plus a Republican governor to sign bills passed, this year is likely to have a somewhat different flavor and outcome than sessions past.

If everything goes smoothly passing the budget and Congressional redistricting (what could go wrong?), the session will adjourn on March 10.

Some things to watch: As the Governor seeks to increase money for transportation without raising taxes, the proposed budget will reduce money for K-12 education and social services. More conservative legislation, including concerning abortion and guns, is likely to emerge. The Governor's proposals to reduce regulation will likely move freely through the assembly.

Northern Virginia residents expressed their concerns at a hearing before the Fairfax County delegation to the General Assembly last Saturday, Jan. 7. About 60 people spoke, many about the need for continuing funding for social services, help for people with disabilities, treatment for people struggling with substance abuse, and more.

Chances are excellent that the senator and delegate representing you have changed since last year because of redistricting, elections and

the retirements of several long-time representatives. New districts snake, rattle and roll around Northern Virginia in a way that makes it impossible to say simple things, like, if you live in Arlington, your senator is so-and-so. Unfortunately, if you live in Arlington or Alexandria, your senator could be one of three people. If you live in Fairfax County, it's also impossible to describe simply. You need to look it up.

The good news is that the General Assembly website is relatively user-friendly. Visit http://legis.virginia.gov/1_cit_guide/contacting_my.html to look up who your legislators are, and how to contact them. You can also track particular legislation that interests you, or browse some of the thousands of bills that have been introduced by topic.

General Assembly website: <http://legis.state.va.us/>

Follow the Virginia Senate on Twitter, @vasen and the Virginia House of Delegates on Twitter @vahouse

- MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM, ON TWITTER, @MARYKIMM OR @FOLLOWFAIRFAX

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Master Planning: Consult Citizens

To the Editor:

[An Open Letter to the Great Falls Citizens Association]

After further review of the Master Plan I have decided personally that it is was a waste of time to give input to this proposal until a more realistic plan was put forth. This current plan has not been endorsed by the Great Falls Citizens Association (GFCA). At the same time, you allowed this proposal to go under your banner. I have talked to a lot of people; few knew about it, and when they do, no one agrees that this plan has any benefits. All it is currently doing is getting people upset or else they are ignoring the plan as irrelevant.

This proposal's faults are as follows:

1. No true outreach. It is true that you can't send it to all of Great Falls. However, you don't even send it out to who is directly connected to your plan (I for one, Bucks Lane residents, Columbine Road residents (that will become the new Walker Road Extended), residents of Stephanie Circle (who will get all the new density when the sewer goes in), Thunderhill Court and the members of Great Falls Swim and Tennis that will have a road go behind them, and all the organizations that will be affected by the change of field status (Leo Santabella Field just got taken away, and the Grange Field will have a road added to it).

2. Sewer. This plan is totally reliant on sewer for any of it to work. In the "Long Range Planning Possibilities" dated October 2011, you

admit there is no consensus for sewer. Therefore, why waste your time on a proposal that doesn't first address that condition. Sewer, even if the citizens agreed, is 7 to 10 years out; if we can get the money to build it at all. So wait on the Master Plan until the residents addressed that issue first.

3. Technical issues ignored. Roads that are drawn that will never get approved by VDOT, road issues, R.O.W. width, circles that need to handle fire trucks, traffic shown on 10' lane, roads going through wetlands that won't be approved, on, and on, and on.

4. Special Tax District. To achieve this plan would require, but not discussed, increased taxes for all for the eminent domain required, road construction cost and sewer construction to be built. Per

your own proposal dated October 2011, page 9, paragraph 3, usually Special Tax District adjustments are paid by increased density of some kind. And, in that same article you talk about 16% more density at the Village Center and potential over retail. But when asked, this Master Plan says there will be no additional density, but the paper generated the Master Plan (from the GFCA website) says something else (page 38).

If you put a proposal with your name on it, please take the time to think it through and vote on it before it goes before citizens. And, please engage and notify people that are directly affected.

Christian J. Lessard
Great Falls

SCHOOL NOTES

Send School Notes to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

Six McLean High School students have been named as 2011 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists: **Nana-Kwabena A. Abrefah, Daniel J. Lee, Eric R. Leimkuhler, Elizabeth McGrady, Justin Nam and Brian Tong.**

Michael P. DeSantis of the Potomac School has been named as a 2011 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist.

Michelle May of McLean has been named to the spring 2011 dean's list at The Johns Hopkins Uni-

versity. The daughter of Michael and Ivonne May is majoring in political science.

Eli Raneses of McLean has been named to the spring 2011 dean's list at The Johns Hopkins University. The son of Tom and Mary Raneses is majoring in public health studies.

Olindi Wijesekera of McLean has been named to the spring 2011 dean's list at The Johns Hopkins University. The daughter of Duminda and Devika Wijesekera is majoring in neuroscience.

Juliet Abtahi of McLean has been named to the summer 2011 dean's list at Berklee College of Music of Boston, Mass.

Write Us

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

Letters to the Editor
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FAITH

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 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.

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.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or www.havenofnova.org for schedules and registration information.

McLean Bible Church Fitness Class at Body & Soul Fitness. Balance is key, energy is renewed and strength is gained. 9:45 a.m. Mondays and Fridays. Free childcare for registered students. bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center offers ongoing classes on meditation and Buddhist philosophy, Mondays at 7 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. \$10 per class. 202-331-2122 or www.meditation-dc.org.

Epiphany United Methodist Church, 1014 Country Club Drive, N.E. in Vienna, will hold its Thanksgiving Service on Sunday, Nov. 20 at 11 a.m. The sermon topic is "Why Me, Lord." office@epiphanyumc.com or 703-938-3494.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Jewish Outreach Institute offer the Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella of free educational events and resources. Jewish rituals, ethics and the creation of a Jewish home, regular meetings and group Shabbats and holidays. Participants include Sha'are Shalom, Congregation Beth Emeth, Temple Rodef Shalom and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia. ShalomDC.org.

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A Look Back, A Look Forward

Community leaders' resolutions, picks & predictions.



Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville):

❖ **New Year's Resolution:** "Some of the things I have resolved to do in

2012 include: (a) work with County staff to ensure that numerous bike and pedestrian projects throughout my district get built; (b) work with community groups to expand playing field capacity; (c) ensure that plans to provide pedestrian, bike and transit access to stations along the Dulles Rail project move forward; (d) advocate for additional funding for widening Route 7 from Tysons Corner to Reston Avenue; (e) complete the Salona Park master plan and the transfer of Langley Fork Park from the National Park Service to the Fairfax County Park Authority; (f) move forward with plans for the new Herndon Fire Station; (g) advocate for smaller class sizes in Dranesville schools; (h) implement the utilities undergrounding project in McLean and encourage additional re-development efforts; (i) use my position as Chairman of the Board's Audit Committee to increase operational efficiencies and reduce costs; (j) as Chairman of the County's Economic Advisory Commission, work to implement the Economic Development Strategic Plan adopted by the Board in 2011; and, (k) work to ensure that the budget adopted in 2012 maximizes efficiencies to limit the tax burden on residents while adequately funding essential services."

❖ **The most significant happenings of 2011:**

"1. For decades, thousands of Fairfax County residents have been required to pay too much for water provided by Falls Church Water. In 2011, the Board of Supervisors passed legislation to resolve the overcharge issues and bring equitable water rates to thousands of County residents. The ordinance will require Falls Church Water to charge the same rates to Fairfax County residents that Fairfax Water charges its cus-

tomers, unless Falls Church Water can demonstrate to the County that a different rate is 'fair and reasonable.'

2. The County reached agreement with the Washington Metropolitan Airports Authority and several other funding partners on a plan to finance Phase II of the Dulles Rail project. The plan reduces the cost of the project by several hundred million dollars and, possibly, by as much as almost a billion dollars. The savings will benefit County taxpayers and Dulles Toll Road users who are responsible for funding a substantial portion of the project.

3. For the fourth consecutive year, the Board adopted a budget that held the line on taxes while funding public safety, schools, human services and other priorities identified by the community."

❖ **The top happenings of 2012:**

"1. The Dulles rail project is a huge transportation project and many of the issues we address over the next twelve months and beyond will relate to that project. Efforts will continue to address the financing plan for Phase II, to further reduce the burden on tax payers and toll road users. The Dulles Rail project brings the opportunity for substantial transit oriented development in Tysons Corner and throughout the Dulles Corridor. Many issues involving the infrastructure needed to serve that development and plans for financing that infrastructure will be debated and decided during 2012.

2. The area's other major transportation project, the I-495 HOT Lanes project, is scheduled to complete in late 2012. In addition to relief from the inconvenience caused by construction, completion of this project will provide significant congestion relief, especially getting into and out of Tysons Corner.

3. Again in 2012, budgets will be a challenge in the County as the economy continues its slow improvement and the State continues to reduce its support for public education and other essential services provided by the County."

SCHOOLS

Lego Robotics Champions

Master Minds win Regional Tournament, place fourth in state.

The "Master Minds" First Lego Robotics Team from Cooper Middle and Spring Hill Elementary Schools in McLean won the Division 2 First Lego League "Food Factor" Regional Tournament held Nov. 20 at George Mason University.

The Master Minds team, two eighth graders from Cooper and four sixth graders at Spring Hill, competed at the State Tournament held on Dec. 3-4 at James Madison University. The team placed fourth in the Division 2 First Lego League state tournament. Division 2 is a middle school competition level. (<http://www.vadcfll.org>)

The Master Minds First Lego Robotics team won two Division 2 trophies at the VA-DC Regional Tournament. They won the Division 2 First Place trophy for "Robot Performance" and the Division 2 Second Place "Champion's Award" for overall performance in every category including Robot design and performance, teamwork, communication and project presentation.

The Master Minds were judged in four categories including: Robot Design, Robot Performance, Teamwork, Research development and presentation of a topic related to this year's food theme which was "Food Safety."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Master Minds Team includes Cooper Middle School eighth graders Brandon Arcari and Steven Corcoran and Spring Hill Elementary School sixth graders Brad Kim, David Corcoran, Michael Arcari and Thomas Corcoran.

Master Minds Team coach and parent, Becky Corcoran said the team chose "Organic Grains in Bulk Storage" as the focus for their community research project and the presentation portion of the competition.

The public school Master Minds Team includes Cooper Middle School eighth graders Brandon Arcari and Steven Corcoran and Spring Hill Elementary School sixth graders Brad Kim, David

Corcoran, Michael Arcari and Thomas Corcoran. This is the third year the team has been invited to compete at the state tournament at JMU.

Langley Crowns Geography Bee Champion

Seventh-grader advances to next level of national competition.

Ten students in grades 4-8 at The Langley School in McLean tested their geographic knowledge during the first round of the 24th annual National Geographic Bee on Jan. 5. After the students tackled a series of challenging questions, Langley crowned its 2012 winner, seventh-grader Caroline Morin, who won the school's competition for the second straight year.

Sponsored by the National Geographic Society, the annual Geography Bee is held in thousands of schools across the country and is the first step toward naming a national champion.

As Langley's winner, Caroline will advance to the next level of competition, a written examination to determine state competitors. The top 100 scorers from each state on this written exam



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Students from the Langley School at the first round of the 24th annual National Geographic Bee on Jan. 5.

will then face each other in their statewide Geographic Bee, with state champions eventually competing for a \$25,000 college scholarship in the national competition in Washington, D.C. in May.

Students who participated in Langley's Geography Bee on Jan. 5 included: eighth-graders Mark

Ahari (third place) and Sofia Dragacevac; seventh-graders Allie Clarke and Caroline Morin (champion); sixth-graders Ethan Kallett and Jamie Keeler; fifth-graders Isaac Feldman (runner-up) and Shane McPartland; and fourth-graders Kornelia Mostrous and Ben Warrell.



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Demolition of the old Lewinsville Road bridge, which was replaced by this one in August, has begun, and will result in some night blasting and lane closures on Lewinsville Road and the Beltway.

Old Lewinsville Road Bridge Demolition Begins

New bridge opened in August, old one to be removed over next month.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

Demolition of the old Lewinsville Road bridge has begun, which will result in some night blasting as well as lane closures on Lewinsville Road and the Beltway. The old bridge was replaced in August by a new one, as part of the Virginia Department of Transportation's Beltway HOT Lanes project.

The demolition, which VDOT estimates will take about a month, will take place between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m., with work hours extended to 7 a.m. on Saturdays.

"Obviously we're not too crazy about the loud noises that go on, but it's something we're going to have to deal with as the old bridge is taken out," said Ross Manning, who lives in the nearby McLean Hamlet neighborhood. "But as the people who live so close to the bridge, we're able to take advantage of the new one in cars and on foot, and as long as they're not planning to add any new bridges in the next few decades, we'll bite our lip and wait for everything to be done."

The new bridge is the most northern bridge over the Beltway to be replaced, and includes pedestrian and bike lanes, as well as a new curb and gutter system. It opened last August, and it's 30 feet longer and 13 feet wider than the old bridge, which was about 50 years old.

"It is sort of nice to not feel like you're taking your life in your own hand whenever you want to go to the other side of 495 on a walk or bike ride," said Lauren Adhimi, who lives just west of the Beltway on Lewinsville Road. "I like being able to feel safer if we ever want to ride to the community center or downtown McLean."

In addition to being more pedestrian friendly, making the bridge larger will allow the Beltway to accommodate the extra lanes that are being built for the HOT Lanes project.

On the Beltway, there will be three lanes closed during the listed times from Tuesday to Saturday, as well as intermittent closings of up to 30 minutes after midnight, according to VDOT.

More information can be found at www.vamegaprojects.com or www.vahotlanes.com.

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Home Organization for the New Year

Simple solutions for achieving and maintaining an organized home.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUSAN UNGER
Vienna-based organizer Susan Unger says drawer dividers, clear plastic bins and non-slip hangers are tools for creating and maintaining an organized home.



PHOTO BY EILEEN LAGRECA
Eileen LaGreca, an organizer based in Fairfax, says that once you clear out a closet, visualize how the space will be used before re-stocking it.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The holiday season is now a festive memory, and Yuletide decorations are packed away. The New Year offers an opportunity for a fresh start and a chance to get organized.

For some, the thought of sifting through unruly closets, disheveled desk drawers and messy cabinets is overwhelming. But experts say clearing out a clutter conundrum can actually bring serenity.

"Organizing is good for the mind and emotions," said Margaret Buco, owner of Organizing-by-Margaret in Potomac. "When a home is organized, stress and chaos are lessened and are replaced by efficiency and freedom."

When faced with linen closets that hold everything from batteries to extension cords, and kitchen

drawers that are home to items ranging from hammers to toothpaste, it is difficult to know where to start. Local professional organizers say there are simple steps to home organization and believe it is wise to work incrementally.

"The best thing to do is begin with your most difficult area and break your project down into small pieces so it is not overwhelming," said Sally Reinholdt of Closets 911 in Alexandria.

DECIDE which organizational hotspots cause the most angst and tackle those first. "Let's say it is the closet," said Potomac-based organizer Nancy Atkinson Patch of Not-A-Problem. "Pull everything out and then take a good look at the space."

Once the space is empty, start to visualize the possibilities.

"Go into a room or space and really daydream about what you



want that room to be," said Eileen LaGreca, owner of Sensational Spaces in Fairfax. "What is its function? How do you use it? Then plan what you want to have happen in

that space."

Next, divide the contents of the room into categories. "Set up a sorting station," said Atkinson Patch. "Get everything in one spot,

Susan Unger, a Vienna-based organizer, says that an organized home creates serenity.

donate and those to discard. Experts say be ruthless. "This is an excellent quality to have when you are organizing," said Atkinson Patch. "Look at the items and ask, 'Have I used this in five years?' If the answer is no, it is time for the item to go bye-bye. Hang trash bags on the door knobs while you're organizing."

Create specific spaces for each object. "There is a saying: 'A place for everything and everything in its place.' Buy appropriate storage containers and label them," said Atkinson Patch. "Then think in departments. Group similar items in one place, put them in a container and call it a department. For example, the extension cords go in the electrical department. Hammers go in the tool department. Needles and thread go in the sewing department."

As you sort, you might find multiples. "Once I had a client who started organizing and discovered that she had 12 staplers because

Belongings should fall into three categories: those to keep, those to



PHOTOS BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/THE CONNECTION



One of the keys to organization is creating specific spaces for household items.

SEE ORGANIZED. PAGE 15

"Go into a room or space and really daydream about what you want that room to be."

- Eileen LaGreca, Sensational Spaces, Fairfax

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13 3423 Tilton Valley Drive, Fairfax — \$1,547,850



16 3178 Mary Etta Lane, Herndon — \$1,620,000



19 2555 Vale Ridge Court, Oakton — \$3,200,000

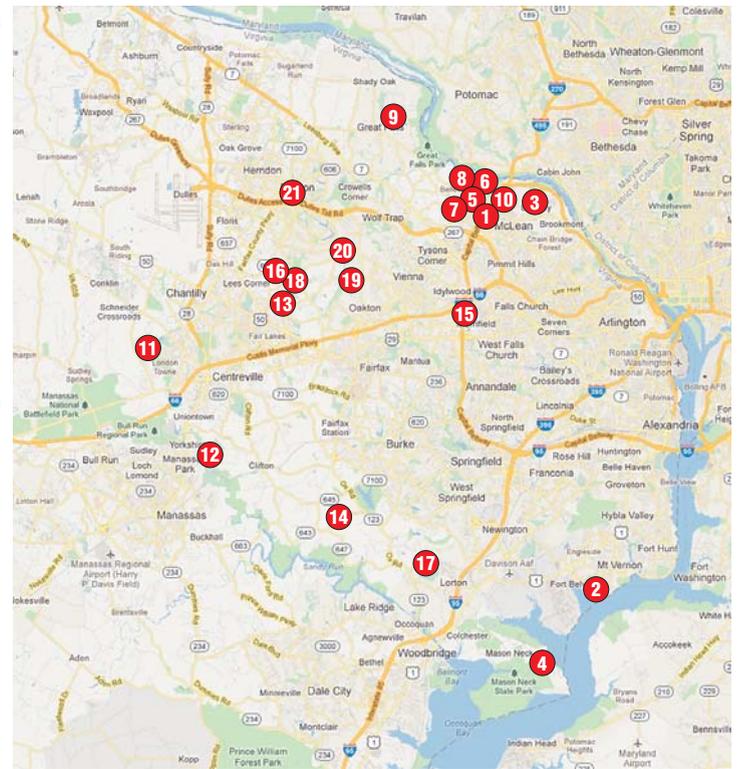
THE TOP TEN

Address	BR	FB	HB	Postal City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	Postal Code	Subdivision	Date Sold
1210 MOTTROM DR	6	7	0	MCLEAN	\$8,600,000	Detached	2.00	22101	ELMWOOD ESTATES	11/01/11
9500 FERRY LANDING CT	6	5	1	MOUNT VERNON	\$8,260,000	Detached	11.75	22309	FERRY LANDING	08/04/11
903 TURKEY RUN RD	6	7	2	MCLEAN	\$7,501,310	Detached	1.00	22101	TURKEY RUN	10/27/11
11201 GUNSTON RD	6	8	2	MASON NECK	\$6,100,000	Detached	5.13	22079	STONE MANOR ON THE POTOMAC	09/01/11
1012 FOUNDERS RIDGE LN	6	8	3	MCLEAN	\$5,975,000	Detached	0.85	22102	THE RESERVE	06/06/11
7712 GEORGETOWN PIKE	6	8	2	MCLEAN	\$5,004,000	Detached	2.61	22102	RIVINUS	06/01/11
1043 FOUNDERS RIDGE LN	6	6	3	MCLEAN	\$4,950,000	Detached	1.08	22102	THE RESERVE	06/23/11
7853 LANGLEY RIDGE RD	8	10	2	MCLEAN	\$4,250,000	Detached	5.21	22102	8000 GEORGETOWN PIKE	04/28/11
540 INNSBRUCK AVE	5	6	1	GREAT FALLS	\$3,800,000	Detached	6.17	22066	INNSBRUCK	06/01/11
7017 BENJAMIN ST	5	5	2	MCLEAN	\$3,518,814	Detached	1.26	22101	LANGLEY FOREST	01/12/11

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13761 BALMORAL GREENS AVE	5	4	1	CLIFTON	\$2,225,000	Detached	7.98	20124	BALMORAL GREENS	05/25/11
3423 TILTON VALLEY DR	5	5	1	FAIRFAX	\$1,547,850	Detached	2.04	22033	TADDEO ESTATES	07/22/11
11102 DEVEREUX STATION LN	7	7	2	FAIRFAX STATION	\$1,600,000	Detached	5.00	22039	DEVEREUX STATION	09/16/11
7927 SHREVE RD	0	0	0	FALLS CHURCH	\$1,625,000	Detached	2.10	22043	FALLS PLACE	07/15/11
3178 MARY ETTA LN	4	5	2	HERNDON	\$1,620,000	Detached	0.85	20171	SHADETREE ESTATES	08/03/11
8932 KHALSA CT	5	4	1	LORTON	\$1,095,574	Detached	0.83	22079	YORKSHIRE	11/09/11
3182 MARY ETTA LN	7	7	2	OAK HILL	\$1,682,000	Detached	0.83	20171	SHADETREE ESTATES	08/22/11
2555 VALE RIDGE CT	5	7	2	OAKTON	\$3,200,000	Detached	1.74	22124	BLACKSTONE AT VALE RIDGE	06/30/11
11990 MARKET ST #2112	2	3	1	RESTON	\$2,700,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		20190	MIDTOWN AT RESTON TOWN	10/04/11
2124 POLO POINTE DR	7	6	1	VIENNA	\$2,585,000	Detached	5.00	22181	POLO PLACE	08/15/11

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Organized in a New Year

FROM PAGE 13

when she couldn't find one she would go out and buy another one," said Susan Unger, an organizer and owner of Clutter SOS in Vienna.

Work gradually until a home or space is organized. "Do it in small, manageable chunks," said Jody Al-Saigh, owner of Picture Perfect Organizing in Arlington. "Perhaps 15 or 20 minutes per day and perhaps one day out of the week. Make manageable goals that you can achieve because you are going to get frustrated if you don't. If you can't do a whole room in one day, maybe do a drawer one day and another one the next day until the room is finished."

ORGANIZERS say resist the urge to purchase organizing tools until you assess your needs. "First start by using things you already own before buying new things," said Buco.

Drawer dividers, non-slip hangers and clear plastic containers are among organizers' top weapons in the battle against chaos.

"[One] client had a lot of necklaces and bracelets that she never wore because they were in a drawer and she couldn't see them," said Unger. "I found these great Lucite jewelry hangers that we attached to her closet, and now she sees them and wears them all the time."

"One main organizational problem is a lot of junk drawers," said Atkinson Patch. "Everybody has them. They hold everything from bills to throat lozenges. You're allowed to have one junk drawer in



Some shelving and clean bins transform a basement.

PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/ THE CONNECTION

your house. Put everything else in the proper place."

Another source of clutter is unsorted mail. "Stand next to the trashcan and go through the mail when you first get it," said Atkinson Patch. "Throw out or recycle things you know you don't want or need. Ask yourself, 'Do I have money to give to this charity right now?' If the answer is no, throw it in the trash. You don't need to save these things. You can go online to give to charity and order from catalogs."

To help eliminate excess paper, scan documents and store them electronically whenever possible. "For important things like passports and birth certificates get a fireproof box so you can keep them safe and access them quickly," said Bucco.

With the proper organizational gadgets, crowded closets become more spacious. "One way to make more room in closets [is to buy] hangers with several clips so you can hang multiple clothing items on one hanger and use your lateral space more efficiently," said Reinholdt. "You can piggyback your hangers and hang maybe four or five things in the same space. I am also big on using over-the-door shoe pockets for not only shoes but for storing all kinds of things like scarves, jewelry [and] small items like socks and underwear."

When organizing a child's space, techniques such as labeling containers with pictures instead of

words makes it easier for young children to put belongings in the proper space. "If there is a bin for blocks, put a picture of blocks on the front," said Buco. "Keep like items together. Dolls with dolls, crayons with crayons."

Buco organized the playroom in her grandchildren's Centreville home using the same tools that she uses for adult spaces. "What is important for children is that they can see everything clearly and that everything is in arms reach," she said.

Take inventory of children's spaces quarterly. "Go through playrooms and children's bedrooms four times each year to organize and assess toys and clothing," said Buco.

Once a home is tidy and everything is in its proper place, what is the secret for keeping it that way? Experts say it takes discipline. "There is a maintenance routine where for 10 minutes every day you go around your house and put things back where they belong," said LaGreca.

The "one in, one out" rule is golden in the world of organization. "If you're buying something new, that might mean getting rid of something else to make room for it," said Al-Saigh. "When you buy something, you need to be thinking first about where it is going to go in your home. If an item doesn't have a home, it should not be coming into your home."

OPEN HOUSES

SATURDAY/SUNDAY, JANUARY 14 & 15



9960 Vale Road, Vienna • \$1,075,000
Open Sunday 2-4 • Donna Henshaw,
Avery-Hess, 703-801-9000

When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in this Connection Newspaper. For more real estate listings and open houses, visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com & click the Real Estate links on the right side.



Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times.



Fairfax Station

5921 One Penny Dr.....\$485,000....Sun 1-4.....Marguerite Roland.....RE/MAX..703-577-4538
 7514 Wilderness Way.....\$830,000....Sun 1-4.....Marguerite Roland.....RE/MAX..703-577-4538
 9524 Oak Stream Ct.....\$559,900....Sun 1-4.....Dan Mleziva.....RE/MAX..703-380-9915

Great Falls

11769 Hollyview Dr.....Call Agent....Sun 1-4.....Glynis Canto.....Keller Williams..703-395 2355
 9123 Maria Ave.....\$1,425,000....Sun 1-4.....Dianne Van Volkenburg...Long and Foster...703 980 4553

Herndon

11668 Gilman Ln.....\$749,900....Sun 1-4.....Jacqueline McMahon.....Long & Foster..571-722-2601
 12124 Eddyspark Dr.....\$499,000....Sun 1-4.....Scott Pearson...RE/MAX Allegiance..703-795-4146
 13373 Hungerford Pl.....\$244,900....Sun 1-3.....Jodi Spelbring.....Century 21..703-790-1850

Kingstowne/Alexandria

6050 Estates Dr.....\$459,900....Sun 1-4..Tracy Jones/Dee Dee Phillips.....Acquire..703-690-1174

Leesburg

18944 Woodburn Rd.....\$489,900....Sun 1-4.....George Azzouz....Samson Props..703-728-0843

McLean

4054 41st St, N.....\$1,410,000....Sun 1-4.....Heather Bennett.....RE/MAX..703-508-5442

Potomac Falls

20603 Cutwater Pl.....\$539,900....Sun 1-4...Cathy & John McCambridge....Samson Props..703-906-7067

Reston

1830 Fountain Drive #304...\$679,900....Sun 1-4.....Min & Jimmy O'Burns.....Long & Foster..703-437-6110
 2070 Cobblestone Ln.....\$525,000....Sun 1-4.....Stephanie Randall.....Long & Foster..703-989-4577

South Riding

25725 Howerton Dr.....\$709,000....Sun 1-4.....George Azzouz....Samson Props..703-728-0843

Springfield

8301 Covington Woods Ct...\$849,900....Sun 1-4.....Patrick Kessler.....Keller Williams..703-405-6540
 8305 Covington Woods Ct...\$849,900....Sun 1-4.....Leah Bradshaw.....Keller Williams..703-282-7740

Sterling

20295 Water Mark Pl.....\$900,000....Sun 1-4.....Sheila Cooper.....Weichert..703-759-6300
 20451 Swecker Farm Pl.....\$560,000....Sun 1-4.....Dina Azzam.....Re/Max..703-547-1449
 20626 Bridgeport Ct.....\$599,000....Sun 1-4.....Sheila Cooper.....Weichert..703-759-6300

Vienna

1014 Aponi Rd, SE.....\$1,359,000....Sat 1-4.....Fariba Ferdowsi.....Weichert..703-893-1500
 825 Ninovan Rd.....\$429,000....Sun 12-3.....Jamil Mourtaza.....Weichert..703-472-3819
 9960 Vale Rd.....\$1,075,000....Sun 2-4.....Donna Henshaw.....Avery-Hess..703-801-9000
 9203 Talisman Dr.....\$624,999....Sun 1-4.....Dianne Van Volkenburg...Long and Foster..703-980-4553

Woodbridge

1410 F St.....\$419,900....Sun 1-4.....Tim Crews/Patrick Kessler.....Keller Williams..703-288-2339

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

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9TH ANNUAL MCLEAN
MLK
DAY CELEBRATION

Embrace the Dream
Celebrating our youth
of tomorrow

Sunday, Jan. 15
3-5 p.m.



\$5 adults
\$3 age 10 and younger

Guest Speaker:
Dr. Ed. Jackson,
Executive Architect,
Washington, D.C. Martin
Luther King, Jr. National
Memorial Project
Foundation, Inc.

Performances by **Richmond Boys Choir** and African
dance troupe, **Taratibu**; A reception will follow.



The McLean Community Center
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101
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To register or for more detailed information,
visit www.mcleancenter.org/special-events.

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ENTERTAINMENT

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

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 11

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 in-
line 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-



"Yellowstone in Winter, Photography by Dean Souleles"
will be on display at **Katie's Coffee House, 760 Walker
Road, Great Falls, through Jan. 31, with winter scenes of
nature and wildlife.** www.dsoulphoto.com or 571-214-
2669.

Pimmit Regional Library, 7584
Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Call for
movie title. All ages. 703-790-8088.

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.

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

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 17

FAITH NOTES

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

Charles Wesley UMC will open
its labyrinth to the public on Satur-
day, 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 rea-
sons. They can walk in
contemplation, in search of guid-
ance, in remembrance, in grief, in
thanksgiving, to work on their bal-
ance, 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 without music; 9
a.m. Worship Service, Children's
Chapel and Children's Choirs; 10
a.m. Sunday School and Adult For-
um; and 11 a.m. Worship Service
with Adult Choir. 703-759-2082.

**Trinity United Methodist
Church,** 1205 Dolley Madison
Blvd., McLean, Sunday worship ser-
vices 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 Sun-
days 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 emo-
tional, social, and physical challenges.
www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia of-
fers a variety of free bereavement
support groups, meeting on a weekly
basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or
www.havenofnova.org for schedules
and registration information.

**McLean Bible Church Fitness
Class** at Body & Soul Fitness. Balance
is key, energy is renewed and strength
is gained. 9:45 a.m. Mondays and Fri-
days. Free childcare for registered
s t u d e n t s .
bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center of-
fers ongoing classes on meditation and
Buddhist philosophy, Mondays at 7 p.m.
at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill
Road, Oakton. \$10 per class. 202-331-
2122 or www.meditation-dc.org.

**Epiphany United Methodist
Church,** 1014 Country Club Drive, N.E.
in Vienna, will hold its Thanksgiving
Service on Sunday, Nov. 20 at 11 a.m.
The sermon topic is "Why Me, Lord."
office@epiphanyumc.com or 703-938-
3494.

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church,
1830 Kirby Road in McLean. The third
Sunday service every month at 10:15
a.m. allows children to play active roles
in the music and as greeters and ushers.
Traditional services are every Sunday at
8:15 and 10:15 a.m.

Vienna Presbyterian Church,
124 Park St. in Vienna, presents the 12-
week program "Passages," for those
experiencing separation or divorce. The
DivorceCare series meets Tuesdays at 7
p.m. Cost of materials \$20, scholarships
available. 703-938 9050 or
Passages@ViennaPres.org.

Vienna Assembly of God has
a ministry to children on Wednes-
days, 7-8 p.m. at the corner of Center
N and Ayr Hill Avenue, N.E. Children's
Church on Sundays also
available. 703-938-7736 or
www.ViennaAG.com.

**Vienna Christian Healing
Rooms,** every Saturday, 1-5 p.m., at
8200 Bell Lane. A team of Christians
is available to anyone requesting
prayer. Free and open to the public.
703-698-9779 or
www.viennachristianhealingrooms.com.

**Chesterbrook United Meth-
odist Church** is at 1711 Kirby
Road, McLean. Worship service is at
11 a.m. Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m.
for adults and children. Rev.
Kathleene Card, Pastor. 703-356-
7100 or
www.ChesterbrookUMC.org.

A Centering Prayer Group
meets Fridays, 9:30 a.m. at Andrew
Chapel United Methodist Church,
1301 Trap Road, Vienna. The hour
includes a brief reading related to
Centering Prayer, followed by a 20-
minute prayer period. E-mail Martha
Thomas at
mmthomas211@hotmail.com or call
the church at 703-759-3509.

**The Jewish Federation of
Greater Washington** and the
Jewish Outreach Institute offer the
Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella
of free educational events and re-
sources. Jewish rituals, ethics and
the creation of a Jewish home, regu-
lar meetings and group Shabbats and
holidays. Participants include
Sha'are Shalom, Congregation Beth
Emeth, Temple Rodef Shalom and
the Jewish Community Center of
Northern Virginia. ShalomDC.org.



House in Yellow by Terri Parent



House in Blue by Terri Parent

“Multiples” Show at Great Falls Library

Digital cameras and digital imaging software has revolutionized the world of photography and Great Falls photographer Terri Parent is mesmerized by the countless alterations that can be made to one image. “Multiples” is a look at the endless variations one can create from a single photograph. A beautiful nature scene can be transformed into a print that is in the Warhol style of art or painted to resemble

an oil or watercolor painting.

The Multiples show is on view at The Great Falls Library during the month of January. Parent will host a reception to talk about digital imaging on Saturday, Jan. 14, 2-5 p.m. To view more of her work, visit her website www.terriparentphotography or follow her blog www.everydaygiftsbyterriparent.com.

ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 16

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.

SUNDAY/JAN. 15

Breakfast Buffet. 8 a.m.–12 p.m. Vienna American Legion, 330 Center St. N., Vienna. Adults \$8, children \$3. Omelets, scrambled eggs, blueberry pancakes, bacon and more. Open to the public. 703-938-6580.

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.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 18

International Guitar Night. 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Acoustic guitarists Adrian Legg, Lulo Reinhardt, Marco Pereira, and Brian Gore. \$25. 1-877-965-3872 or www.wolftrap.org.

Kittens and Mittens. 10:30 a.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Stories and activities. Age 2-3 with adult. 703-356-0770.

Book Discussion Group. 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Call for title. Adults. 703-757-8560.

Hot Tips for Today’s Job Market. 1 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Resume Writing, mastering the interview process and how to expand contacts and network. Adults. 703-790-8088.

Model Investment Club of Northern Virginia. 7 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Learn more about investing following an investment club model. Adults. 703-790-8088.

Student Volunteer Training

Session. 7 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Students receive training from library staff and sign up for volunteer hours. Age 12-15. 703-293-6227.

THURSDAY/JAN. 19

Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc. Chapter 227. 7:30 p.m. Neighbor’s Restaurant, 262D Cedar Lane, Cedar Lane Shopping Center, Vienna. Leonard Ignatowski will discuss the road building of QL-20 in South Vietnam and his return to QL-20 in

July 2011. The general public and all veterans are invited. Free admission. 703-255-0353 or www.vva227.org.

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

Christine Lavin. 8 p.m. Barns at Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Folk music. \$20. www.wolftrap.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 20

“Circle Mirror Transformation.” 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. Comedy-drama about four New Englanders in a six-week drama class. \$11-\$13. 703-255-6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.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.

Red Molly. 8 p.m. Barns at Wolf Trap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Folk music. \$20. www.wolftrap.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 21

“Circle Mirror Transformation.” 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. Comedy-drama about four New Englanders in a six-week drama class. \$11-\$13. 703-255-6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

The Songwriters’ Association of Washington Concerts. Open Mic 7-8 p.m., Main concert 8-10 p.m. New Life McLean, 1988 Kirby Road, McLean. Songwriters and Americana artists Ruthie Logsdon (Ruthie and the Wranglers) and David LaFleur will be the featured performers. www.goosecreekmusic.com/ruthie-and-the-wranglers.

FAMILY FUN BINGO



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

\$10/\$5 McLean district residents
Children 36 months and
younger admitted free.
Advance registration is required.

Vertical, horizontal, diagonal or
picture frame—whatever your
strategy, join us for this family
fun-filled afternoon of bingo!



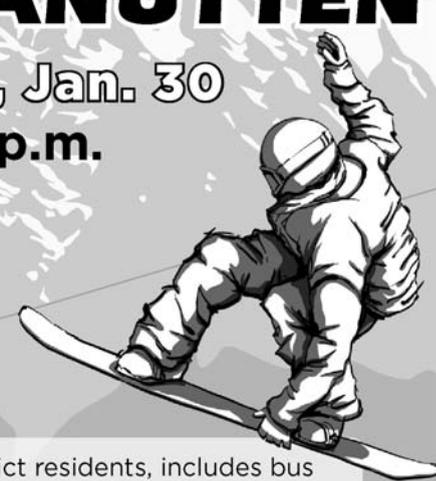
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www.mcleancenter.org



*Elevate your child’s Teacher Work Day off with
an invigorating trip just for 5th-9th Graders!*

SKIING AT MASSANUTTEN

**Monday, Jan. 30
8 a.m.-7 p.m.**



\$125/\$100 district residents, includes bus
transportation, ski rental and lift ticket.
Discount rates available for those who bring
skis. Please bring money for food and other
incidentals. Enjoy an exciting day of skiing
in beautiful western Virginia with the Old
Firehouse Teen Center staff.

Register now at www.mcleancenter.org,
Activity No. 8303.312.



The McLean Community Center
1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101
703-790-0123/TTY: 711
www.mcleancenter.org



SPORTS

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

Langley, in recent high school ice hockey action, defeated Paul VI High (Fairfax), 6-1, in a Friday night contest in Reston. Paul VI jumped out to an early lead when the Panthers scored off a screened shot. But Langley goalie Ryan Framinan would not allow another goal.

Langley tied the game shortly afterwards when Sam LaFuria backhanded the puck into the net off a perfect pass from Kevin Diner. Next, Griffin Boedicker's slapshot was expertly deflected into the goal by Atte Happonen, giving Langley a 2-1 lead. Additional goals were scored by Evan Sterling, Diner, Conor Maddry, and Happonen, with assists coming from Mike Adams, Zach Shames, and Colin Dibble.

The Langley defensive lines controlled the puck throughout the game, holding PVI to just six shots, while the PVI goalie bravely faced 38 shots. Langley, with the win, improved to 3-2 on the season. The team will be back in action against South Lakes at Reston on Friday evening, Jan. 20 at 6:10.

In an earlier season game, Langley lost a close contest to Chantilly, 4-2, in Ashburn. The Chargers jumped to an early lead with a pair of goals over the first four minutes. Langley, despite outshooting the Chargers 22-14 and controlling the puck well the rest of the game, was never able to recover from the early deficit.

Langley's Drew Schneider scored unassisted to end the first

period, pulling Langley to within 2-1. Neither team would score again until the third period due to solid defensive play on both ends of the ice. The pace of the game was incredibly fast despite the late hour.

The Chargers went ahead 3-1 in the third period, but Langley soon answered when Peter Nam assisted Evan Sterling for a score that got the Saxons within 3-2. Langley then pulled its goalie and created several good scoring opportunities. But Charger goalie Dylan Harris (21 saves) never allowed the equalizer.

Langley's defense did an excellent job of controlling the league's top goal scorer, Chantilly's Chris Howland, until he scored on an open net shot during the last seconds of the game to end the contest at 4-2.

MCLEAN YOUTH SOCCER (MYS) Spring 2012 Registration has begun on MYS's website at www.mcleansoccer.org for all returning and new families to the area. MYS offers various programs for children ages four through 18, including Recreation, Travel, McLean Premier Soccer Travel, U5 for Pre-K players, and TOP Soccer for children with special needs. The season will begin the week of March 26 and extend through mid-June. Be sure to register no later than Jan. 31 to take advantage of the early discounted registration fees. Please contact the

MYS Club Administrator at admin@mcleansoccer.org if you have any questions or call the MYS Office at 703-506-8068.

VIRGINIA SPECIAL OLYMPICS' first-ever FANQUEST is set to take place on Saturday, Jan. 28 at Oakton High School. Special Olympics basketball teams from Oakton and McLean High Schools will play an all-star game beginning at 7:10 p.m. The festive night will include prizes, relays, and other fun crowd participation activities - all in support of the Virginia Special Olympics. Members of the community are invited to 'volunteer to cheer' at the event. Sign up at www.volunteer2cheer.com. Check-in will be at the 'Volunteer to Cheer' tables at the gym entrances. Whether cheering for the Cougars or the Highlanders, fans will be given materials to make posters and signs, and everyone who comes out to cheer will get free 'cheer sticks.' FANQUEST, presented by Booz Allen Hamilton, is one of many events offered year round by Special Olympics Virginia. For more information on the 2012 FANQUEST, please contact Holly Claytor at hclaytor@specialolympicsva.org, or call 804-726-3025.

THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION (NVGSA) is holding on-line registration for the 2012 spring season (www.nvgsa.org). Registration can also be completed at the



PHOTO BY CRAIG STREIBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

McLean High senior forward Thomas Van Wazer (33), and his Highlander teammates, carried an impressive 11-1 record going into this week's play. McLean, winners of Westfield High's Bulldog Bash tournament over the holidays, will be at home this Friday night at 7:30 for a Liberty District game versus Fairfax High.

NVGSA table during the West Saturday, Jan. 14 and Saturday, Springfield Little League registration from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Jan. 21 at Keene Mill Elementary School (6310 Bardu Ave.).

Langley Girls Handle Liberty Foe Fairfax, 57-47

Saxons, despite tough record, playing hard and showing improvement.

BY RICH SANDERS
THE CONNECTION

The Langley High girls' basketball team opened 2012 up with a victory on Tuesday, Jan. 3 when the Saxons defeated visiting Fairfax High, 57-47, in a Liberty District game played early last week.

The win was the third of the season for Langley (3-9) and second in a row. The Saxons, later in the week, lost a district game at Stone Bridge, 52-44, last Friday night.

Langley lost eight of its first nine games this season but had won two of its next three contests going into this week's play. Saxon head coach Amanda Bates likes the makeup of her squad and believes the team will get better and better as the season moves on. Langley was scheduled to play district home games this week against Madison (Tuesday, Jan. 10) and Marshall (Friday, Jan. 13).

"This is a really special group of players,

and when they come ready to play for 32 minutes we are a tough team to beat," said Bates. "We're going to take the rest of the season one game at a time and work to get a good seed for the district tournament."

In last week's win over Fairfax, three Langley players - junior forward Jessica Stewart (19 points), junior guard Alexis Biggs-Garcia (12), and junior guard Jennie Kleinknecht (11) - scored in double figures. The Saxons, in the win, jumped out to an 18-4 lead after one quarter. Fairfax played a good second quarter and was within 26-19 at halftime. The Rebels (5-5) played Langley fairly even in the second half but the Saxons prevailed for the much needed victory. Fairfax received a huge outing from Liz McNaughton, who scored a game-high 27 points.

Langley rebounded the basketball particularly well in the win over Fairfax, with Stewart bringing down a game-high 18 boards.

"Going into Tuesday's game against Fairfax, I challenged the players to do a better job controlling the boards and we really did a fantastic job on the glass," said Bates. "Jessica Stewart was unreal."

Later last week, Langley fell behind the Bulldogs of Stone Bridge, 20-10, after one quarter. The Saxons outscored the home team from Ashburn over the following three quarters but lost by eight points. Langley's top scorers in the game were junior guard Grace Goettman (12 points) and Stewart (9). Catie Chaudhry, a senior guard, added six points for the Saxons and Biggs-Garcia scored five. For Stone Bridge (10-1), Murielle Teirnan scored 22 points.

OVER THE HOLIDAYS, Langley competed at the Pohanka Classic at Chantilly High School. There, the Saxons went 1-2 overall. Langley, in its first game of the tournament on Dec. 27, lost 66-35 to a talented Georgetown Visitation team in a game which began at 9 a.m. They lost to Robinson the following day, 53-38, but came back strong on Dec. 29 in their final game at the Classic, defeating Jefferson High 64-27.

Langley showcased a balanced scoring

attack in the win over Jefferson as seven Saxon players scored at least six points. Langley's top scorer in the win was Stewart with 14 points. The winners also received nine points from junior guard Kaelin Testa and eight apiece from both Goettman and Kleinknecht. Three Langley players - Biggs-Garcia, Chaudhry, and senior forward Blair Stuhlmuller - each scored six points, and junior forward Hayley Soutter scored four.

In the tournament opener loss to Georgetown Visitation, Stewart and Goettman scored 11 and 10 points, respectively, for the Saxons. And in the setback to the Rams of Robinson (8-3), Langley's top scorers were also Stewart (17 points) and Goettman (10). Robinson's top scorer was Megan Green (13 points), with Ram players Jenna Lamb, Noelle Martinson, and Christie Michals each tallying eight points.

"We played a very talented Georgetown Visitation team in our first game," said Bates, summing up her team's play at the Classic. "We played hard against Robinson but came up a bit short down the stretch. We ended the tournament with a solid victory over Thomas Jefferson, giving us a lot of momentum going into district play."



PHOTOS BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

Frank Blechman spoke on behalf of the Alliance for Human Services. He was one of more than 60 Fairfax County residents representing their own cause or an organization to voice their opinions and concerns to their elected officials.

Topics of discussion ranged from funding for social and welfare services to environmental concerns, and more. The public hearing is held each year and gives residents an opportunity to have a direct connection to their elected officials.

Legislators Urged to Restore Funding for Human Services

FROM PAGE 3

mental health issues of our young people, from the gunning down of two police officers at the Sully District Police Station...to the five beautiful young women who died on April 16, 2007," McNabb said. "Each and every day, families are devastated by mental illness. We can no longer bury our head in the sand..."

Carmen Clark and Daniel Ing talked about the mental health and addiction services they received from the Fairfax-Falls Church County Community Services Board (CSB).

"Frankly, without these services, I would be dead," Clark said to the panel. "Using and abusing drugs and alcohol is a way to cope with mental illness, so we need to have services that get to the core issues."

"People with mental illness can be productive," Ing testified "But only if we have access to these services. As a community, we are only as strong as our weakest points," Ing said.

Del. Vivian Watts (D-39) said she noticed more people willing to talk about mental health issues. "That's a shift from previous years," Watts said. "We've heard more from those advocating for the mentally ill, not only substance abuse or autism, but a wide range of needed services."

She said it was encouraging that more people are willing to acknowledge the impact that mental illness has on families and the community. "We need to support and fund these services, because many of these programs, as we've heard today, are critical in helping people with mental illness to be functional," Watts said.

Kari Warren of Mount Vernon brought her two young daughters with her to the podium. "We are here to put a face on domestic violence, because we are survivors." Speaking on behalf of the Commission for Women, she thanked the delegation for passing anti-stalking legislation last year, and urged lawmakers to support more shel-

ters for victims of domestic violence.

"Everyone has the right to be heard," said Sen. Richard Saslaw (D-35), who presided over the annual forum. "These are people who don't have high-powered lobbyists to speak for them in Richmond. I never get tired of hearing from them."

SPRINGFIELD MOTHER Carrin Brandt, whose 10-year-old daughter, Bailey, has profound intellectual and developmental disabilities with uncontrolled seizures, which resulted in the removal of half her brain, told lawmakers how important continued funding of Medicaid waivers is to her family. In addition to Bailey's anti-seizure medications, which can cost thousands each month, Medicaid helps pay for a full-time aide, allowing Bailey to live in the community with her family and friends instead of being institutionalized.

"These are not frivolous things we're asking for," Brandt said. "If we lost Medicaid, it would jeopardize her life and health; my husband and I would not be able to work or maintain our community relationships." Brandt is also president of the ARC of Northern Virginia, and said there are 7,000 families "who live in daily crisis because they receive no services as they remain on the waiting list for a Medicaid waiver."

Brandt, who is a licensed marriage and family therapist, said that while Bailey's medical and developmental challenges can be overwhelming, the joys of raising her are also great.

"Bailey is a human being, and she adds value to this world. Bailey is our greatest teacher. ...I don't want you all and our community to miss out on the opportunity to learn from Bailey."

Marta Conner of Centreville also spoke about the challenges of raising a child with disabilities, and the critical support and intervention services she received from The Infant & Toddler Connection of Fairfax-Falls Church (ITC), a program under the um-

brella of the CSB. Conner told lawmakers that her daughter, Caroline, was diagnosed with severe developmental delays at 10 months, and her pediatrician suggested she contact the ITC.

"They helped us determine that she had significant delays in all areas of development, and gave us strategies to help her," Conner said. "We are learning that we can expand our child's horizons through therapies and individualized education." She urged legislators to ensure sustainable funding to continue services "for all Virginia families who need them."

"This is a tough budget environment with difficult decisions, and, unfortunately, most of the cost-cutting comes from social services," said Del. Mark Sickles (D-43), who was elected caucus chairman in November. "One thing that stuck out today was hearing that CSB lost 19 acute care beds. We need to work to get those back."

Greg Brandon of McLean said he supported the parental notification of school investigations and beginning school before Labor Day. He also asked legislators to support the Child Care Assistance and Referral program, "a gateway into education for our most vulnerable children." Brandon said the program plays a crucial role in preparing at-risk children for kindergarten.

"Unfortunately, people in Richmond are fiddling with the CCAR program that will increase the waiting list for families most in need of child-care help," Brandon said.

David Baldacci of Arlington and Bob Stewart of Chantilly testified for SALT - Social Action Linking Together - in support of a number of social justice issues, from increasing welfare payments to Virginia families, banning the practice of shackling pregnant women in Virginia's prisons and promoting work-sharing, which enables businesses to avoid layoffs.

Del. Ken Plum (D-36) said the hearings give legislators a chance to hear from the most vulnerable citizens. "What we see are

the real lives of people impacted by issues beyond their own capacities and beyond their own blame...It's critically important that government has to be in part about helping the most vulnerable. It sends a message to the delegation that we need to step back and remember the people who are hurting, aged, intellectually disabled, or suffering from a mental illness."

Del. David Bulova (D-37) said prioritizing the state's limited resources will be the most important task facing legislators this session.

"The big take away is how important the budget is in terms of reflecting our community's values," Bulova said. "It also highlights why it is so important to develop new, sustainable sources of revenue for transportation, rather than simply taking money from our already stressed general fund that supports public education, safety, health and human services, environmental protection, etc."

THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET - a two-year \$85 billion plan - is weighted in favor of transportation and higher education. But many of the speakers said they are concerned about the hundreds of millions of dollars in proposed cuts to social services. For example, McDonnell's budget proposes slashing \$81 million from the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), which pays for preschool programs for low-income families in Northern Virginia.

Plum said he and other members of the Fairfax delegation will be pressing the governor to take crucial "incremental" step in providing funding for social services. "There are still 5,000 people on waiting lists. The governor's budget does not progress us on that need. We need to step it forward," Plum said.

The Virginia General Assembly will meet for its 2012 session on Wednesday, Jan. 11. "We predict that over 2,000 bills will be introduced. There's a lot to watch, especially on human services," said John Horejsi of Vienna, founder of SALT.



Works by the students of the Great Falls School of Art adorn the walls of the Great Falls Artists' Atelier Saturday, Jan. 7 during the school's second annual show.

Celebrating Art in Great Falls

FROM PAGE 7

a lot of attention," she said. "They've really helped me develop."

Begoña Morton won three awards, two honorable mentions, and second place in the adult category for her painting "Nautilus." Morton has been a student for two years, and she says it's good to have such a vibrant art community in a small town like Great Falls.

"I got a late start in art, I was an economist in Brussels for years. Art was always something that was with me, and now I feel so lucky to be able to do something that's my passion," she said. "I'm thankful for the teachers, especially Jill Banks, this is as

much her prize as it is mine. We're lucky to learn from artists who are professionals, and they give everything they have to the students."

This was the second major show from the school, which held one last year. Banks, one of the teachers and a painter herself, says she hopes this will be part of an upward trend for the school.

"Last year was the biggest event we had, and this year the art has improved a lot, and hopefully it will continue to," she said.

The winning styles ranged from everything from oil paintings to manga. More information on the school can be found at www.greatfallsfoundationforarts.org.



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Vicky Wang, 16, stands in front of her painting "Human Eye Profile Study," which won second place in the youth category of the Great Falls School of Art's second annual show Saturday, Jan. 7

Student Winners

The following students of the Great Falls School of Art were recognized at the school's second annual show Saturday, Jan. 7.

Adult Category
 First Place- Lori Wiseman, "Green Scarf"
 Second Place- Begoña Morton, "Nautilus"
 Third Place- Mary Beth Gaiarin, "Persimmons and Copper Pot"
 Honorable Mentions

Begoña Morton, "Portrait of Livia"
 Begoña Morton, "Message Bottles"
 Nancy Keane, "Ahmed's Pitcher"
Youth Category
 First Place- Delaney Jones, "High Tech Girl"
 Second Place- Vicky Wang, "Human Eye Profile"
 Third Place- Katie Ledford, "Carly"
 Honorable Mentions
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Write From The Heart



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Obviously I find comfort in writing. Obviously I have some need to put down on paper that which is in my head. In fact, evidence suggests that cancer patients who write about their feelings have some kind of improved quality of life and/or longer life expectancy. Let's hope so because I have those feelings and I certainly am writing about them. As it relates, the date on which I'm hand-writing this column is the date three weeks out approximately, before I'm scheduled for my every-four-month CT Scan and every-12-month Full Body Scan. I'll know exactly how I'm doing - after the oncologist advises me of my scan results. Saying or doing anything now, assuming any facts not yet in evidence, hardly seems like a prudent course of presumption. Yet here I sit, pen in hand; with cats on the table.

As much comfort and companionship as "The Boys" (Biscuit and Chino) provide, they can't eliminate my cancer thoughts, especially the thoughts now, during those final weeks leading up to the scans, when the rubber will really hit the road, when an inanimate piece of technology will determine my immediate future. Nor will the technician assisting me that day play any part in the outcome. Although it doesn't stop me from asking for a good result. Usually I'll receive a smile and a thumbs up in response. Joking with the staff seems to put me at ease and soothes the savage beast in me that is working like crazy to maintain the healthy (all things considered) status quo that has characterized the preceding 34 months.

But there's only so much pretending one can do. The scan will ultimately tell the tale. Hopefully it won't be a tale of woe because woe is me is not how I operate, which is good since my tumors (stage IV) are inoperable. In fact, stage IV means inoperable, I believe. Synonymous seems too innocent a word to attach to such a life-changing and serious diagnosis/prognosis, but if the shoe fits (which it doesn't anymore because of the edema in my feet, a side effect of the high blood pressure medication I take in an attempt to meet the levels mandated by the manufacturer of the targeted treatment drug, Avastin, which I'm infused with monthly), I suppose at this stage (pun intended) I should be happy to wear it.

And I most definitely am wearing it, a larger size though. But to not admit that all of this cancer stuff wears on me would be a lie. And since, generally speaking, I don't like to lie, and I have this need to vent and the space to vent it (and from all indications and feedback, a fairly receptive and interested audience on whom to vent), I am writing this column about the betwixt and between that a cancer patient (who's terminal) feels waiting for words to live by, words which have never been promised, are not guaranteed, subject to change and totally out of my control: "All stable. No growth and/or movement." Positive (meaning good) scan results.

All I can do is wait. When I know, you'll know. There's not much else to say really, but I've tried to say it anyway; except, the longer I'm a patient, the less patient I seem to become. I'm not losing it yet, but I'd sure like to find it. A cure would be nice, but I'll settle for more encouraging/stable scan results. It is said that "Good things come to those who wait." I only wish it were that simple.

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

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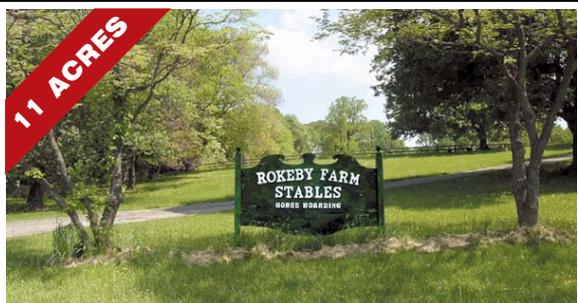
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