

# Great Falls CONNECTION

The School of Theatrical Dance (SOTD) and its performing wing, Great Falls Dance Theatre, will present the seventh annual presentation of their original production of "Christmas Eve at the Nutcracker Club" on Dec. 8-9. Pictured, performing the Chinois Variation from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker - Page Tofil, Karsyn Lawler and Allison Maebius.

## 'Christmas Eve at the Nutcracker Club' Returns

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PHOTO BY TUAN PHAM

## Schools Using Diversity for Student Benefits

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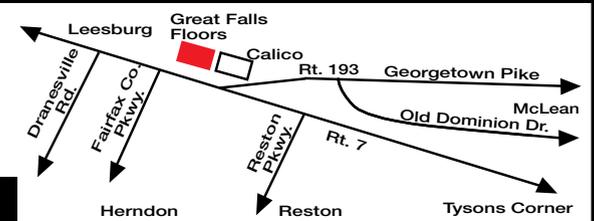
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**A portion of the report on the two white oak trees at the Georgetown Pike-Walker Road intersection by arborist Ed Milhous. Additional studies have and will be conducted to find out if the trees are a safety hazard.**

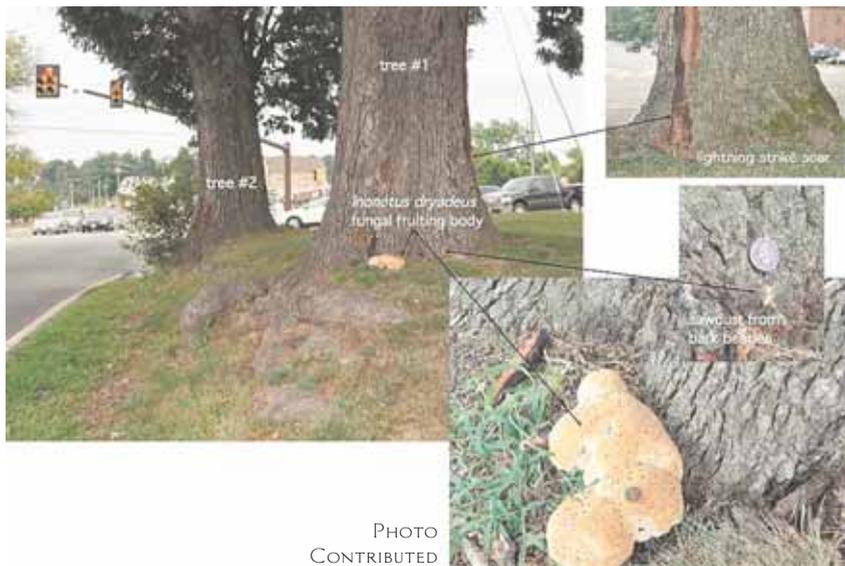


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Final Tree Decision Yet to Come

**Final tests to be run on white oaks at Georgetown Pike-Walker Road intersection.**

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he trees at the intersection of Georgetown Pike and Walker Road will be subject to at least one more test to determine if they propose a safety hazard to drivers. The Virginia Department of Transportation had decided Sept. 18 to remove the trees as part of a mass removal of potentially hazardous trees, but announced Sept. 28 that they would wait for the community to hire an arborist.

After arborist Ed Milhous performed an assessment of the trees in late September, the Virginia Department of Transportation had planned to remove the trees Oct. 1, but the Great Falls Citizens Association requested time from VDOT for additional study. This was granted, and several arborists recently examined the trees using several pieces of equipment that Milhous, who performed mostly visual and surface tests, did not.

“One arborist used a resistograph, [which detects decay and cavities], which had never been used before, another one spent four hours climbing up the tree performing an aerial assessment,” said Bill Canis, co-chair of the GFCAs environment committee. “We asked VDOT to put the arborists together, which they did in a conference call, and said there was one more step, using a piece of equipment called tomography, sort of like an X-ray machine, to see whether those trees need to be removed or not. That will be the final piece.”

Another point raised by the arborists was a rule of thumb that removing approximately 15 percent of branches can reduce approximately 40 percent of the pressure on the tree’s roots.

“One question, which hasn’t been answered yet, is perhaps one or both of the trees could be significantly pruned in a way that would remove its danger in terms of falling into the roads,” Canis said. “These trees have been here since the farm days, and we wanted to be careful about the process.”



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

**Bill Canis, co-chair of the Great Falls Citizens Association environmental committee, speaks about local tree issues during a meeting at the Grange Thursday, Nov. 15.**

Ben Herman of Great Falls, who passes through the intersection at least twice a day, every day, says he hopes whatever decision is made is the result of as much information as possible.

“I fully understand the dangers involved, especially in light of the man who was tragically killed over the summer, so I know it’s a sensitive issue. I personally like the way they look and don’t think they are a safety hazard for me personally, but that might not be how everyone feels,” he said. “But quite frankly, if we start losing trees at the commercial center, everything just becomes another strip mall, which we have plenty of in the area. So if there is a possibility they can stay, I’m all for that.”

According to Fairfax County’s Urban Forestry Program guidelines, trees are considered hazardous after community complaints are received, and only if the tree poses a threat to the public at large. Trees that threaten private property are considered civil issues.

A lot of people can assume that when we use the term ‘tree conservation,’ we’re talking about preservation,” said Mike Knapp, director of Fairfax County’s Urban Forest Management program. “But conservation is a larger concept, it involves preservation, but acknowledges that sometimes trees have to be taken out in order to satisfy human values and needs.”



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

**“Colvin Run Mill,” a painting by Hwa Crawford, is one of the featured pieces in the Great Falls Studios Winter Exhibit at the Great Falls Community Library.**

## Winter Art Exhibit Opens At Great Falls Library

**New show highlights work of 33 Great Falls artists; reception Dec. 10.**

**A**n art exhibition featuring over 60 paintings, photographs, ceramics, jewelry and other new works by Great Falls artists opened Nov. 2 and will be displayed through the end of December at the main conference room of the Great Falls Community Library. With 33 artists participating, it’s the largest show the group has ever mounted in this space.

The exhibit is sponsored by Great Falls Studios, a network of artists based in Great Falls. The group will hold an artists’ reception on Monday, Dec. 10, from 7-9 p.m. Plan to come see the show, meet the artists, and enjoy light refreshments.

“This is a terrific show highlighting the diversity of art being made in Great Falls today,” said Pat Neuman, a pastel artist who is co-chairman of the Exhibitions Committee of Great Falls Studios. “The work ranges from abstract to realistic, from photos to fiber—there’s even a piece that uses found objects woven onto a frame. Stop by and take a look at what your neighbors in Great Falls are doing.”

The event is one in a series of monthly exhibitions at the library made possible by Friends of the Library. Most feature shows by artists from Great Falls Studios. The works on display are for sale, with 10 percent of the sale price going to the Friends of the Library to support library programs.

The library is located at 9830



**“Tucked in the Curl,” a photo of a fern by Doreen Montis, is one of the artworks in the Great Falls Winter Show by an artist who is showing with the group for the first time.**

Georgetown Pike and is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 1 to 9 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. In addition to the work in the main conference room, eight pieces are located in the glass-fronted case in the main hallway.

The Winter Exhibit includes paintings in oil, acrylics and watercolor, plus photographs of local scenes and landscapes from other parts of the country. Three of the artists are exhibiting with the group for the first time.

Mark your calendars for the Great Falls Studios Holiday Art Show and Sale, to be held Dec. 8-9 at the Village Green Day School.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER BENITZ

**Ginger Mahon, the creator and driving force of The Wish List Project, continues to bring the Great Falls community together through the spirit of giving.**

# Making Wishes Come True

## The Wish List Project relies on generosity of Great Falls community.

BY JENNIFER BENITZ  
THE CONNECTION

Great Falls is a community that proves there is strength in numbers when it comes to helping those in need. Ginger Mahon agrees. As founder and coordinator of The Wish List Project, she relies solely on the good and generosity of the community to provide donations for a list of shelters and organizations in the area.

Mahon is the driving force behind the large but intimate effort. The Wish List Project began in 2000 when Mahon decided to reach out to the community and those in need after her daughter's Forestville Elementary first grade class helped at a local shelter. Not long after, she called the shelter to see how she could help. With 10 families at Embery Rucker Community Shelter in Reston in hand, she recruited volunteers to help with donations and wrapping.

Knowing the need for help never ceases, Mahon didn't stop at Embery Rucker Community Shelter. Instead, she continued to expand and reach out to others in the area, including the Fairfax County Foster Care system.

"Teenagers in foster care are the forgotten children during the holidays," she said. "Everyone wants to donate items for young kids, babies and adults, but not many people think about the teenagers."

Now in its 13th year, the Wish List Project helps 75 teenagers and 28 families through seven different shelters and organizations. Mahon begins organizing the project at the

beginning of November, collecting lists of families and individuals and their requests. She then carefully matches volunteers, or "angels" as she calls each one of them, with a family or teenager.

"The generosity of the Great Falls community is without bounds," Mahon said. "I think this project is successful because we're very much directly answering the wishes of those in need with the donations we provide."

This year the event will take place on Dec. 15 from 1-4 p.m. With live music, food and the company of neighbors and community members alike, the Wish List Project is an event many look forward to. However, there are still many families and teenagers in need of donors and a call of help to Great Falls residents to meet those needs.

"I do this because I can," Mahon said. "I know that when a family we're helping sees the bin filled with gifts, they are beside themselves with joy. I feel good giving to people in need and I know I'm part of a community effort giving back."

Contact Ginger Mahon at [gingermahon@aol.com](mailto:gingermahon@aol.com) or 703-404-8483 for more information or questions.



**Gifts are brought to Ginger Mahon's house on the day of the donation drive in December of 2011.**



**A witch gives out candy to children at the Great Falls Spooktacular on Wednesday, Oct. 31. On Saturday, Dec. 1, the Celebrate Great Falls Foundation is hosting the Celebration of Lights and the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting.**

### WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

## Celebration of Lights Kicks Off Holiday Season

Celebrate Great Falls Foundation has all the participants and volunteers of the Halloween Spooktacular this year to thank for the event's success. Even though Halloween fell only one day after hurricane Sandy, the village came together once again and over 1,000 children attended the Halloween Spooktacular.

The Celebration of Lights and the Annual Christmas Tree Lighting take place on Saturday, Dec. 1, beginning at 5:30 p.m. with Santa and Mrs. Claus arriving on the antique fire truck at 6 p.m. to light the Great Falls Tree (behind the Great Falls Post Office). They then go to Santa's house to meet all children who wish to share their holiday wishes. At 6:15 p.m., the petting zoo and pony rides provided by Old Mine Ranch open, and from 6:30-6:50 p.m., the Langley Madrigals return for more holiday caroling. At 7 p.m., the live nativity scene begins. There will be hot cider and hot chocolate provided by Fresh Catch, Teel Construction and Katie's Coffee House.

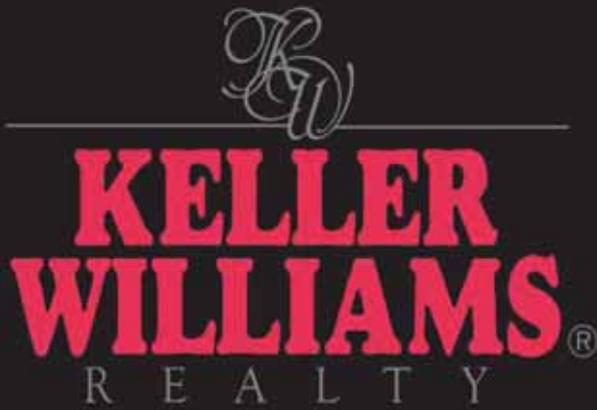
Celebrate Great Falls is starting a new tradition this year and asks all the offices and merchants to try to decorate front doors and windows by Dec. 1 for the holiday season.

We will ask the community whose entrance is most festive and the winner will receive a \$200 cash prize and will have their store front in the local paper.

For more information contact [Celebrategreatfalls.org](http://Celebrategreatfalls.org).

## AAUW to Hold Gala Holiday Luncheon

American Association of University Women (AAUW) McLean Area Branch Gala Holiday Luncheon is Sunday, Dec. 16, at River Bend Country Club, 375 Walker Road, Great Falls. You need to make your reservation as soon as possible by sending your \$30 check (which includes tax and gratuity) payable to the AAUW-McLean Branch to Aroona Borpujari at 1225 Meyer Court, McLean, VA 22101. Social is at noon and the three course luncheon will be served at 1 p.m. Entertainment is by the Madeira School's "Sweet Ti A Cappella Ensemble." You can participate in a Pirate Gift Exchange (\$20 limit) and bring a gift card for the SHARE Food Bank. All members of the public are welcome to attend. Since the final number has to be confirmed with River Bend Country Club well before Dec. 16, checks s be sent in now with a call to Aroona Borpujari at 703-556-9693 to let her know it is on the way.



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Kelly Putz



Tim Anderson



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The Old Brogue is located at the corner of Georgetown Pike and Walker Road in Great Falls.  
Call (703) 759-3309 to reserve your table at either the 5:30 or the 7:30 seating.

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# NEWS



From left, Karen Briscoe, a Lift Me Up! board member and principal Realtor® of the Huckaby Briscoe Conroy Realty Group; Kay Bellhouse, the team leader for the McLean-Great Falls Keller Williams offices; MJ Perry, co-chair of the golf tournament and a Realtor®; Derek Blain, one of the co-principals of the McLean-Great Falls KW office; Jennifer Lucier, the president of Lift Me Up! The check was presented at the Lift Me Up! "A Magical Night" Gala at BMW of Sterling on Saturday, Nov. 17.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

From left—Jennifer Lucier, president of the Lift Me Up! board of directors, Tracy Kenny, 2012 honoree and board member, and Keira Kenny. Great Falls resident Tracy Kenny, and volunteer Gordon Baker, were honored for their service to the organization.

## McLean-Great Falls Keller Williams Cares Presents Check to Lift Me Up!

A check of \$15,274.16 was presented to Lift Me Up! at their annual Gala held on Nov. 17, at BMW of Sterling. The money raised was from the third annual McLean-Great Falls Keller Williams Cares charity golf tournament.

BMW of Sterling was transformed from a car dealership to an exciting venue as gala attendees celebrated the theme, "A Magical Night." Thomas and Joyce Moorehead provided the gala setting.

McLean-Great Falls Keller Williams Cares held their third annual golf tournament on Oct. 22 at Trump-National Golf Course. Greeting players on the course was someone who looked very much like Austin Powers and the master of ceremonies of the evening event was a great stand-in for Donald Trump! All of this contributed to the event's success and allowed KW-Cares the opportunity to present big checks to the two charities selected by the McLean and

Great Falls Keller Williams offices: Lift Me Up! and My Military Kids.

Lift Me Up! is a therapeutic horseback riding program that for 37 years has been dedicated to helping children and adults with physical, mental and/or emotional disabilities improve both their physical and mental well being. The annual gala is the primary fundraiser of the year. LMU! is a 501 (c) (3) charity and an NARHA Premier Accredited Center. For more information,

visit the website: [www.liftmeup.org](http://www.liftmeup.org).

Community support is at the heart of the program's success. More than 300 volunteers comprised of area teens and adults assist the student riders and the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, NARHA certified riding instructors. Lift Me Up! serves over 100 riders with special needs in ages ranging from age three to adult. B.I.T.S, which stands for Back in the Saddle, is the latest program offered by Lift Me Up! and was developed to assist wounded warrior riders from the military.

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## McLean to Celebrate WinterFest on Dec. 2

On Sunday, Dec. 2, McLean residents will welcome in the holidays as more than 50 entries proceed down Old Chain Bridge Road for the fifth annual WinterFest parade. This year's Grand Marshal is Virginia Foley, who has contributed outstanding volunteer service to the community. The stage will be set in the center curb cut of Langley Shopping Center, with Peggy Fox from WUSA Channel 9 again calling the parade. Parade entries will begin at Fleetwood Road and proceed down Old Chain Bridge Road to Elm Street. Old Chain Bridge Road will be closed to traffic from 2:45 to 6:15 p.m. on the day of the parade.

Pre-parade entertainment begins at 3:15 p.m. and will be provided by Bob Rosenbaum, the Springhill Elementary School chorus, singer Chelsea Lee, the Franklin Sherman chorus and the Langley High School dance team. New to the parade this year will be food vendors along the route including Naked Pizza, Doug the Food Dude, Mama's Donut

Bites and French fries from Bistro Vivant. Cardinal Bank will be giving away popcorn and bottled water; Giant Foods and McLean Pharmacy will donate warm apple cider and hot coffee in the refreshment tent. Girl Scout Troop 2325 will be selling holiday tree ornaments across the street from the parade stage.

Also new this year in the parking lot of Langley Shopping Center will be an information tent about the 495 Express Lanes. The Express Lanes team will be available to provide information and answer questions about the 495 Express Lanes. Parade attendees will be able to pick up an E-ZPass or E-ZPass Flex from the 495 Express Lanes tent that they will register and activate once they're back home.

The parade steps off at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 2. Follow updates of McLean WinterFest on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/#!/mclean.winterfest> and go to [www.mcleanwinterfest.org](http://www.mcleanwinterfest.org) for more parade information.

## BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to [mclean@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mclean@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

### FRIDAY/NOV. 28

**Donate to the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce Children's Fund** to benefit the Sixth Annual Children's Holiday Party, which hosts up to 60 at-risk, homeless children, providing them with gifts from Santa, "wish list" items, and supplies for crafts for family members. 703-281-1333 or [tana@LNF.com](mailto:tana@LNF.com).

### SATURDAY/DEC. 1

#### Compass Homeschool Classes

**Registration.** Through Dec. 15, at 2705 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Save 10 percent on tuition for third quarter classes starting Jan. 9; home schoolers in first through eighth grade can enroll. The school offers music, voice, drama, art, civics, anthropology, history, trigonometry, chess, Spanish, kumdo, literature, photography, mosaics, sciences, robotics and more. 703-544-5332 or [www.compassclasses.com](http://www.compassclasses.com).

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9



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# OPINION

## Learning in a Global Community

### Students in Fairfax County speak 160 languages.

This week our ongoing series about immigration in Fairfax County takes a look at county schools, and some of the joys and challenges of having a diverse student body that speaks as many as 160 different languages at home.

Find the series compiled online at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/Immigration/>.

For the director of language acquisition in Fairfax County Public Schools, the 44 percent of students who speak a foreign language at home present an opportunity to create language immersion classes where half a kindergarten is learning Spanish or Korean while the other half is learning English.

For principals of some elementary schools where more than half of their students are not proficient in English, the need to have students meet benchmarks in a variety of subjects is a relentless process. In addition to limited English, immigrant students come from varied backgrounds, some with good basics in their

own languages and some with limited previous education in any language. The parents of these students are similarly varied.

Meanwhile, representation of Latino and African American students in Fairfax County's top instructional centers for gifted students lags dramatically.

#### EDITORIAL

FCPS is conducting two critical sets of public meetings this week and next. The call for public input is not specifically about growing diversity in the schools, but related challenges make both the possible expansion of centers for the county's most talented students and the selection of a new superintendent of schools that much more important.

A fast moving proposal to expand the number of centers to provide "advanced academic" services is the topic of meetings this week. The meetings will run from 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27, in the Westfield High School cafeteria; Wednesday, Nov. 28, in the Lee High School cafeteria; and Thursday, Nov. 29, in the Kilmer

Middle School cafeteria.

Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Jack Dale will be retiring in June of 2013. The School Board has hired a search firm, Hazard, Young, Attea and Associates, which will be gathering community input. Many of the challenges facing the new superintendent will revolve around growing diversity, and a track record of open communication and achievement in this will be key to success.

#### SUPERINTENDENT SEARCH COMMUNITY MEETINGS

- ❖ Dec. 3 - 7 p.m., cafeteria, South County HS, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton, VA 22079.
- ❖ Dec. 4 - 7 p.m., cafeteria, Langley HS, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA 22101.
- ❖ Dec. 5 - 7 p.m., cafeteria, Robinson SS, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax, VA 22032.
- ❖ Dec. 6 - 10 a.m. Gatehouse Administration Center, 8115 Gatehouse Road, Falls Church, VA 22042 Room 1600.
- ❖ Dec. 6 - 7 p.m., cafeteria, Annandale HS, 4700 Medford Drive, Annandale, VA 22003.
- ❖ Dec. 6 - 7 p.m., cafeteria, Groveton Elementary School, 6900 Harrison Lane, Alexandria, VA 22306.
- ❖ Dec. 7 - 1 p.m., Gatehouse Administration Center, 8115 Gatehouse Road, Falls Church, VA 22042 Room 1600.

#### FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

## Immigrants and Today's Faith Response

BY JOHN HOREJSI, COORDINATOR  
SOCIAL ACTION LINKING TOGETHER (SALT)

The presence of increasing numbers of immigrants is a challenge to the Fairfax County faith community commitments. The challenge is to be a faith community with open arms.

Historically the churches in the United States have been immigrant churches. Who among us cannot trace one's ancestors back to a country outside the U.S.? The church's care and concern for countless European immigrants is well known. Today, we the faith community are called to welcome immigrants with similar hospitality.

The situation of immigrants is often desperate. Entering a culturally strange and different land, and struggling financially is as scary today as it ever was in the past. Perhaps it is even more so because of the quickened pace of American life.

Those who are fortunate to connect with helpers are settled within a few years. Others remain in transition the rest of their lives as families struggle with complex adjustments. All face major problems in housing, employment, health care, legal assistance, and a difficult new language.

Immigrants frequently face the additional obstacle of cruel prejudice and racism. Non-immigrants often want to exclude them from the benefits of a free country, yet are eager to use cheap and reliable labor of immigrants.

The immigrants and other refugees keep coming, not necessarily because they want to,



but as one, fleeing from war and persecution, put it, because of "the persistent advantage of life over death."

Presently, many Hispanics from Central America are located in Northern Virginia. About 65 percent are Salvadoran, 15 percent Honduran, and 10 percent each are Guatemalan and Nicaraguan. The faith community in Northern Virginia has not been unaware of the presence and plight of these immigrant refugees.

Nationally, for more than 65 years, Catholic Charities agencies have responded to the needs of people who come to this country in search of a better life. Thousands of refugees have

been settled. Over 90 percent of Catholic resettlement services are provided through Catholic Charities, which is one of the keys to the future of migration ministry in the U.S.

In Northern Virginia, one of the responses of the faith community has been through Hogar Immigrant Services, a program of Catholic Charities. Hogar assists immigrants in participating more fully in their everyday lives. Information referrals, legal information services, and educational opportunities are just some of the aids. The aim is to help the Northern Virginia immigrant population become knowledgeable, participating individuals in society.

Yet much remains to be done, especially in and by the faith community. What are the elements of this challenge?

- ❖ Recognizing the contributions of the immigrants to the community;
- ❖ Providing a greater voice to the immigrant community in decision-making within the community;
- ❖ Supporting programs designed to improve the quality of life for newcomers;
- ❖ Serving as advocates to create a favorable public opinion out of which good things can happen; and
- ❖ Seeking to raise consciousness for solidarity with the poor and the stranger.

Our response must be to acknowledge by word and action that the spirituality of the faith community and the spirituality of the immigrant communities are interdependent. Through love, kindness, service and advocacy for each other both stand to gain.

### 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, The Connection  
1606 King St., Alexandria VA 22314  
Call: 703-917-6444. ❖ [greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com)

## Great Falls CONNECTION

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# BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 5

**McLean Children's Academy Open House.** 9:30-11:30 a.m., 6900 Elm Street, McLean. The Kindergarten Enrichment and the morning, afternoon and full-day preschool classes invite families to tour the school and register for fall 2013. 703-734-2353 or [www.childrensacademy.com](http://www.childrensacademy.com).

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 12

**Networking Breakfast—The New Downtown Coming to Tysons.** 7:30-9 a.m., at J. Gilberts Wood-Fired Steak and Seafood, 6930 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Michael Caplin, executive director for Tysons Partnership, will be speaking. \$20 in advance for members; \$25 in advance for non-members; \$5 extra at door. Register online. [www.mcleanchamber.org](http://www.mcleanchamber.org).

## SATURDAY/JAN. 19

**Oratorical Contest.** 10 a.m., at the American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street N., Vienna. Students who wish to compete should submit their names by Jan. 11, 2013 to [ronp555@yahoo.com](mailto:ronp555@yahoo.com). 703-867-1285 or <http://legion180.net/forms.htm>.

## ONGOING:

**Essay Contest,** for Third through 12th Grade. Essays answering the prompt "What freedom do I enjoy the most?" submitted to the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 180 of Vienna before March 1, 2013 will be considered in the competition. 703-242-7082.



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# Celebration of Lights

Saturday, December 1 ~ 5:30pm to 8:00pm

## Great Falls Village Centre Hill

Join us for our Celebration of Lights! Watch Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Tree. Enjoy the petting zoo, pony rides, fire pit, hot cider, hot chocolate and popcorn. And don't miss the beautiful, live nativity scene.

All activities are FREE to the public.

### NEW! - Holiday Decorating Contest for the Great Falls Merchants

Vote for your favorite store front display at our local stores.




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The Simmons Team, McLean Mortgage Corp.

5:30-5:50pm ~ The Langley Madrigals  
6:00pm ~ Santa & Mrs. Claus arrive to light the Christmas Tree  
6:15pm ~ Petting Zoo and Pony Rides  
6:30-6:50pm ~ The Langley Madrigals  
7:00pm ~ Live Nativity Scene

SHOP LOCAL! The Great Falls Center will be offering an Open House from 1:00 to 4:00pm.

For more information go to [www.CelebrateGreatFalls.org](http://www.CelebrateGreatFalls.org)



## GIFT GUIDE

# Shopping for Gifts at Village Centre

### What do shoppers, proprietors say?

“I was buying britches, jodhpurs, Christmas presents, Breyers [horse toys], and stocking stuffers for our horse and ponies. [To stuff the stockings for the horses] we’ve got here some wonderful horse treats, mostly they’re horse treats because that’s what they like. I think with the space that they have there is something for everyone. There are really nice gifts that you can buy, lovely platters, all the horse essentials that you need, they do a little bit of everything.”

—JUDY BISHOP, A SHOPPER AT THE SADDLERY

“[For the holidays people buy] Breyer horses, horse treats, jewelry, and clothing; fun clothing. I would want to buy clothing and jewelry.”

—SUE KVASNICKA, A SALESPERSON AT THE SADDLERY

“We have lots of Christmas toys and sweaters. A lot of people get beds for their dogs; beautiful, puffy beds that are soft and you’ll end up putting your head on it! Then for people we have ornaments for the Christmas trees which are awesome. We have jackets and coats, and we get extremely busy at Christmastime because everybody wants to buy their dog something. And last but not least, we have tons of treats. Treats, treats, treats, treats! We get cute little special treats... at Christmas we have (treats shaped like) stars, and Christmas trees, and bells, and all kinds of things. Those are really fun to give as a gift when you go to somebody’s house that has a dog, you can just take one of

SEE GIFT GUIDE, PAGE 11



Linda Waitkus, the proprietor at Great Dogs of Great Falls, LLC shows off some of the store’s dog toys.



Sue Kvasnicka, a salesperson at the Saddlery.



Jewelry at Adeler Jewelers.

PHOTOS BY SWETHA RAMESH/ THE CONNECTION

**SUN DESIGN INVITES YOU TO OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY REMODELED TOUR!**  
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**THE CONNECTION**  
NEWSPAPERS

## GIFT GUIDE



One of the necklaces in a black and gold combination at Adeler Jewelers.

FROM PAGE 10

those and it's really very special. Everything in our store is all holistic, I mean these (treats) are basically oatmeal cookies that you can eat."

—LINDA WAITKUS, THE PROPRIETOR AT GREAT DOGS OF GREAT FALLS, LLC

"We find that typically, people tend to want to purchase items that are complementary to what the occasion is or what the person might have in their wardrobe. They might be finishing off a suit . . . they try and complete a set. If they are purchasing a piece of jewelry that is just a fashion piece of jewelry, then they might be looking to buy something the person can wear for everyday; for the office, for work, that they can get a lot of use out of . . . an everyday piece of jewelry. It tends to be a nice colored gemstone, or a unique piece of jewelry that is not necessarily as traditional, but maybe a piece that follows some of the upcoming colors and fashion trends. I find that colors tend to change, and that they are set annually. For instance, last year's color was tangerine tango and that was a big color. We're finding this year one of the colors that is very popular is an aqua color. Also, black and gold is very popular this year. That combination of black onyx and gold is very strong this year. So we're finding that it tends to follow the fashion."

—WENDY ADELER HALL AT ADELER JEWELERS, VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING

— SWETHA RAMESH

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## Santa Picture Day

Saturday December 1, 2012  
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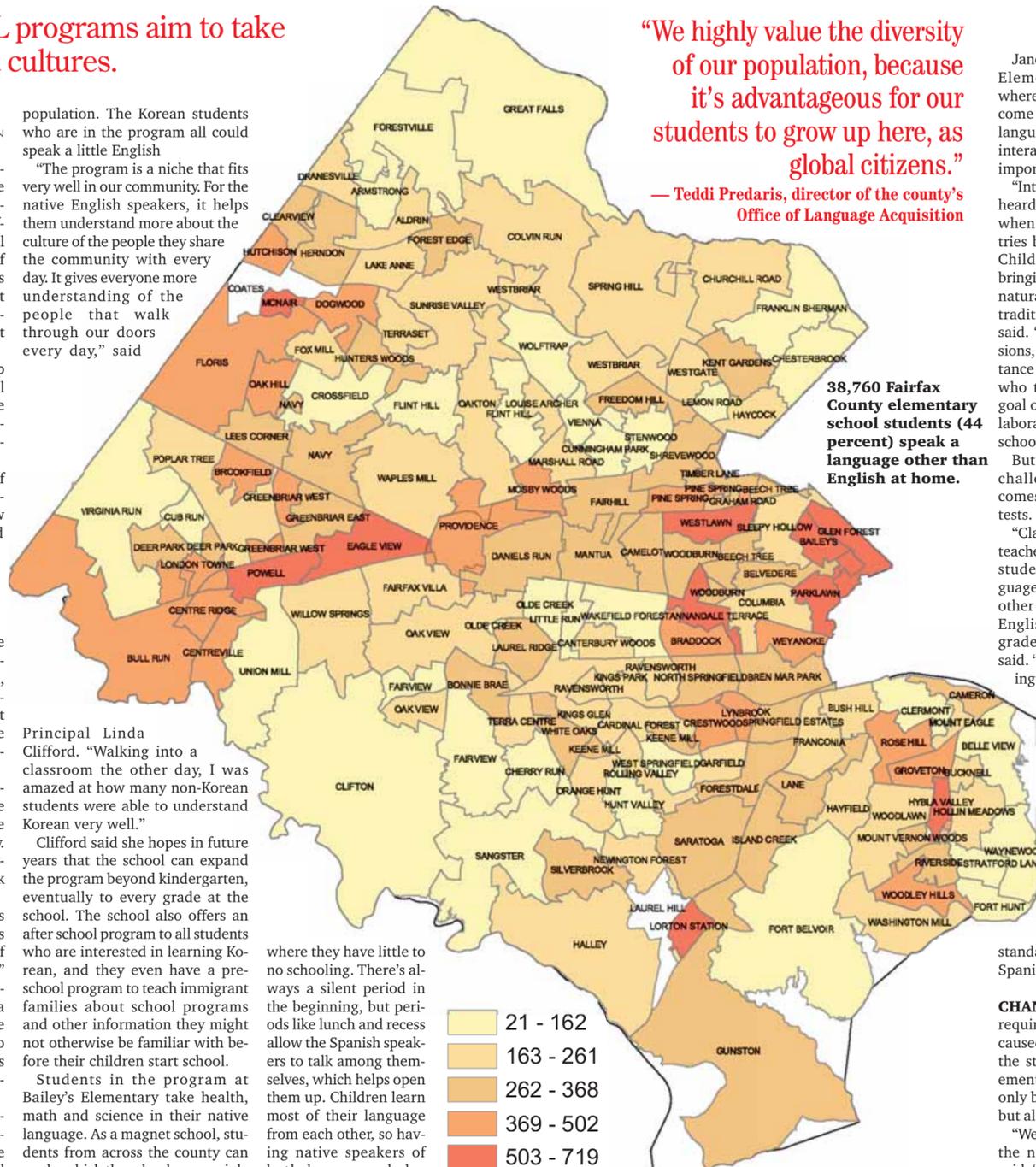
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## FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

# Schools Using Diversity for Student Benefits

Immersion, ESOL programs aim to take advantage of area cultures.

**“We highly value the diversity of our population, because it’s advantageous for our students to grow up here, as global citizens.”**  
— Teddi Predaris, director of the county’s Office of Language Acquisition



**38,760 Fairfax County elementary school students (44 percent) speak a language other than English at home.**

**George C. Marshall High School has a student population representing more than 90 nations.**



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ / THE CONNECTION

**“Marshall has an international student body from all walks of life, from the four corners of the world ... We are the face of what Fairfax County is in 2012.”**

— George C. Marshall High School Principal Jay Pearson

By ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

**A**s Fairfax County has experienced massive growth in its international population, its effects have spread to its educational institutions. Forty-four percent of the Fairfax County Public Schools students come from homes that speak a language other than English, which includes 160 different languages.

In 2006, the county came up with the goal to eventually have all graduates be able to communicate in two languages. The county currently offers 11 different languages.

“We highly value the diversity of our population, because it’s advantageous for our students to grow up here, as global citizens,” said Teddi Predaris, director of the county’s Office of Language Acquisition. “We believe it’s a huge asset for our students in their future endeavors.”

Approximately 28 percent of the county’s current population are foreign born, with Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Arabic, Urdu and Chinese/Mandarin being the most common languages spoken in the homes of elementary school students.

The county’s kindergarten two-way immersion program is one method used by schools to take advantage of increasing diversity. The program consists of half English speakers and half who speak the immersion language.

“In this program, the teachers and students are language models for each other, and they spend half the day working at each language,” Predaris said. “Our criteria for adding these programs is having a large enough population of the non-English speaking group to make a 50-50 mix possible. This is one of the models we hope to expand in coming years.”

The county has five Spanish kindergarten two-way immersion programs, at Bailey’s, Braddock, Lake Anne, London Towne and Rose Hill Elementary Schools. New this year is a Korean two-way immersion school at Colin Powell Elementary School in Centreville.

**THE PROGRAM AT COLIN POWELL** was designed to take advantage of the area’s large Korean

population. The Korean students who are in the program all could speak a little English.

“The program is a niche that fits very well in our community. For the native English speakers, it helps them understand more about the culture of the people they share the community with every day. It gives everyone more understanding of the people that walk through our doors every day,” said

Principal Linda Clifford. “Walking into a classroom the other day, I was amazed at how many non-Korean students were able to understand Korean very well.”

Clifford said she hopes in future years that the school can expand the program beyond kindergarten, eventually to every grade at the school. The school also offers an after school program to all students who are interested in learning Korean, and they even have a pre-school program to teach immigrant families about school programs and other information they might not otherwise be familiar with before their children start school.

Students in the program at Bailey’s Elementary take health, math and science in their native language. As a magnet school, students from across the county can apply, which the school uses mainly to fill its English-speaking requirement.

“The native Spanish speakers come to Bailey’s with a wide range of English skills, depending on where they come from,” said Assistant Principal Rachel Charlton. “Some come from very rural areas

where they have little to no schooling. There’s always a silent period in the beginning, but periods like lunch and recess allow the Spanish speakers to talk among themselves, which helps open them up. Children learn most of their language from each other, so having native speakers of both languages helps both groups immensely. Each group of native speakers gets to be the language role model for half a day, with the other students learning from them. It really boosts their confidence.”

**COUNTY SCHOOLS** also feature

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AREAS**  
Students who speak a language other than English at home

immersion programs in Japanese, German and French at elementary and middle schools.

Janet Funk, principal of Gunston Elementary School in Lorton, where approximately 300 students come from a home where another language is spoken, says everyday interaction with new cultures is an important part of early education.

“Interesting conversations can be heard in the lunchroom, especially when students from other countries bring their food from home. Children are very interested in bringing their favorite foods, which naturally flows to a discussion of traditions and celebrations,” she said. “With these informal discussions, the students learn the importance of accepting classmates for who they are. This supports our goal of cultural acceptance and collaborative interaction among our school community.”

But with such diversity comes challenges, especially when it comes to Standards of Learning tests.

“Classroom teachers and ESOL teachers work diligently to help the students learn the English language. Many of our students from other countries are still learning English and are reading below grade level expectations,” Funk said. “These students receive reading instruction in the classroom setting and the ESOL classroom. They are receiving a ‘double’ dose of reading on a regularly scheduled basis. However, when it comes time to take the SOL tests, they are required to take the test on grade level in a language in which they are not proficient.”

In Virginia, SOL tests must be taken in English, but in Texas, for example, standardized tests can be taken in Spanish.

**CHANGES** to the state’s licensure requirements this year have also caused some difficulties. This year, the state required teachers in elementary school programs to not only be licensed in their language, but also for elementary education.

“We’ve struggled this year due to the new requirement,” Charlton said. “We’ve had to use some long-term subs until as recently as two or three weeks ago before we had enough full time teachers that met qualifications. Now I think the universities are aware of the change, so it might be better in future years, but it can definitely make it difficult to find people.”

## Marshall High Is the Face of Fairfax County

90-plus countries represented by student population.

VIEWPOINTS

What was your biggest concern or fear when moving to U.S. schools?

—DONNA MANZ

By DONNA MANZ  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he schools that feed into George C. Marshall High School are the academic home to children from all over the world. It’s not surprising, then, that Marshall is an international community, a Tysons Corner United Nations, so to speak. Many of the students come from the prestigious I.B. (International Baccalaureate), but most are in the Marshall district, which embraces students from Vienna. From Italian to Swahili, there is a myriad of languages native to Marshall’s students, who represent more than 90 nations.

“Marshall has an international student body from all walks of life, from the four corners of the world,” said principal Jay Pearson. “Our kids cross so many boundaries. We don’t refer to it as ‘diversity,’” Pearson said. “For our students, this is the norm. These kids are very accustomed to moving between groups of students from everywhere, so, there aren’t ‘cliques.’ “We are the face of what Fairfax County is in 2012.”

**FIVE INVITED STUDENTS** gathered in a roundtable discussion at Marshall recently. What they agreed on is that American schools are less-intense academically, less-academically pressuring than schools outside the U.S. In other countries, it is

academics-only that define your future, a selected group of students said in the recent discussion with Pearson and an interviewer. In the U.S., the students said, you have extracurricular programs that enhance the total person. What the U.S. does not have, however, that international schools stress, is an emphasis on foreign language fluency.

English is a compulsory curriculum in many school systems the world over. Some students, such as Kasthury Paramiswaran, a Marshall senior from Malaysia, speak multiple languages, fluent in each. Kasthury’s family moved around the world as part of her father’s job, and Kasthury mastered four languages in her journeys. She said she still works very hard in her I.B. subjects, getting “A’s in every one of her classes. She is applying to colleges in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

Jia Loh, a Malaysian native who has been in the U.S. for two years, said the transition to schools here was “hard,” even though the academic environment is less intense than in Malaysia.

“I had to adjust to different cultures, so, there aren’t ‘cliques.’ “We are the face of what Fairfax County is in 2012.”

Dalila Ferrara’s family moved around Italy; her father is in the military there. In the early 1990s, he was assigned to a U.S. base in Texas and his experience there was not a good one. “He warned me not to tell people I’m Italian,” Dalila said. “He told me not to be proud

SEE CURRICULUM. PAGE 16

**Kasthury Paramiswaran, senior, Malaysia**

“I had a close group of friends there and I didn’t know anybody here,” on leaving Malaysia when she had made friends in her native high school. “I still work very hard in my [I.B.] classes.”



**Dalila Ferrara, junior, Italy**

“Actually, I was really happy to move here. My only fear was that I wouldn’t be accepted. That didn’t happen. My biggest dream is to get an MBA from Harvard.”



**Millan Mbise, senior, Tanzania**

“The cultural aspect. For example, in Tanzania there is little interaction with teachers. The teachers are strict, classes are very intense. It’s not like that here. I played varsity soccer last year and that helped me a lot with the transition to Marshall.

“I figured out what I wanted to do with my life when I moved here. I want to be a pharmacist.”



**Jia Loh, senior, Malaysia**

“My biggest fear was finding friends. Still find it hard



to join cliques. Most of my friends are international students. I’m still working on that part of the transition. My dream is to find a high-paying job I like, accounting or law.”



**Amber Holder, senior, Panama**

“My biggest fear was that I wouldn’t

have the same friends throughout my academic career. My dream is to establish a music education system that would produce more diverse, well-rounded musicians, not just musicians who are skilled in just one instrument.”

# FAITH

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to [greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

**Great Falls United Methodist Church** is providing an Advent sermon series called "A Different Kind of Christmas: Living and Giving Like Jesus," based on the book by Rev. Mike Slaughter. They will look at the celebration of Christmas and find ways to bring the focus of the season back to the reason we celebrate. Attendees will be encouraged to examine Christmas celebrations and to develop new Christmas traditions that focus on relationships and service. The series will be held on Sundays, Dec. 2, 9, 16 and 23 at the 10 a.m. service held at 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Contact information: Phone 703-759-3705 or [office@greatfallsumc.org](mailto:office@greatfallsumc.org).

**The Knit, Purl Love ministry of Vienna Presbyterian Church**, 124 Park Street NE, Vienna, which knits and sends scarves to orphans in Eastern Europe, invites knitters, and those who wish to serve to help with the ministry, which as sent 1200-plus scarves to date and will deliver several hundred more in Ukraine in December. Call 703-938-9050 or [www.metrochristianliving.com/monthly-columns/knit-purl-love-a-knitting-ministry/](http://www.metrochristianliving.com/monthly-columns/knit-purl-love-a-knitting-ministry/) to learn more.

**A Walk through Ancient Bethlehem, Dec. 8-9, 2012.** Walk through a replica of ancient Bethlehem during the time of Jesus Christ' birth. On Dec. 8 and 9, Parkwood Baptist Church of Annandale will present its 12th annual re-creation of Bethlehem. Tours conducted from 4 to 8 p.m. will feature costumed re-enactors including Roman soldiers and tax collectors, musical performances, and a nativity scene with live performers and animals. Activities and crafts for children and refreshments for all. No admission charge. 8726 Braddock Road, Annandale. Details

available at [www.bwalk.org](http://www.bwalk.org) or 703-978-8160.

**Redeemer Lutheran Church**, 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean, at the intersection with Westmoreland Street has Sunday worship with Holy Communion at 8:30 a.m., traditional style worship; 9:45 a.m., contemporary style worship; and 11 a.m., traditional style worship. Sunday School and Adult Forum is at 9:45 a.m.

**Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax**, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, offers a rich and unique Religious Exploration (RE) program for all children, from pre-K toddlers through high school seniors, emphasizing exploration of all religious traditions while developing a personal spiritual path. Registration for the RE program, which offers classes on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings, is now open by calling 703-281-4230.

**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.

**Redeemer Lutheran Church**, 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean, offers a 9 a.m. traditional service and a 10:30 a.m. contemporary service on Sundays. Also offers two services during the summer - both of which will include children's sermons. 703-356-3346.

**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](http://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](http://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](http://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](mailto:bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org).

**Vajrayogini Buddhist Center** offers ongoing classes on meditation and Buddhist philosophy, Mondays at 7 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 1625 Wiehle Ave. \$10 per class. 202-331-2122 or [www.meditation-dc.org](http://www.meditation-dc.org).

**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.

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send School Notes to [greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

The following students were named semifinalists in the 2013 National Achievement® Scholarship Program: **Taylor N. Brown** and **Zakiy S. Gharad** from McLean High School; **Margaret C. Secor** from James Madison High School; **Misa C. Mori** from Oakton High School.

The following students were named semifinalists in the 2013 National Merit Scholarship Program: **Patrick F. Sanguinetti** from Flint Hill School; **Katherine Fowler**, **Benjamin Haines**, **Thomas F. Lomont**, **Atussa Mohtasham**, **Jeremy K. Park**, **Amanda N. Rones**, **Abigail C. Skwara**, **Anna E. Stone** and **Faith C. Tetlow** from James Madison High School; **Bridget J. Bauman**, **Melissa C. Chang**, **Ambareesh Gorle**, **Tamera R. Lanham**, **Irene S. Lee**, **Andrew R. Seastram** and **Stewart C. Silver** from Oakton High School; **Paul Bernstein**, **Ryan W. Cheng**, **Aimee A. Cho**, **Christie S. Goddard**, **Eunyoung C. Kim**, **Gene Kim**, **Margaret R. Mahoney**, **Yasmeen K. Mushtaq**, **Praveena Mylvaganam**, **Nadejda S. Nikolova**, **Kelvin Nui**, **Caitlin A. Rose** and **Mujtaba M. Wani** from Langley High School; **Taylor N. Brown**, **Shannon Chen**, **Maia D. Foster**, **Joshua D. Higbee**, **Annemieke L. Janssen**, **Vivek V.**

**Kunnath, Lewis C. Milholland, Madelyn S. Paquette, Polina V. Tamarina, Nivetha Vijayakumar** and **Cedric Whitney** from McLean High School; **Stacey Y. Chiu**, **Charlotte A. Ferenbach**, **Julia L. Keller**, **Nicholas M. Kensinger** and **Caroline J. Resor** from Potomac School.

**Harrison Voslow**, of Great Falls, has been named a semifinalist in the 2013 National Merit Scholarship Program. He is among four students from Landon School and among 16,000 semifinalists nationwide. The National Merit will announce finalists in February.

**Sabrina Caldwell** of McLean has been awarded a J. William Fulbright grant, and will travel to Germany for an English Teaching Assistantship. An International Studies and German major with a minor in BC's Faith, Peace and Justice Program, Caldwell graduated cum laude from Boston College.

Air Force Airman **Pague A. Richards** graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Tx. She completed intensive, eight-week training in military discipline and studies, Air Force core values, physical fitness, and basic warfare principles and skills. Richards is the daughter of Patty and James Richards of Noble Drive, McLean, and a 2011 graduate of McLean High School.

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<p><b>Assembly of God</b> Vienna Assembly of God ... 703-938-7736 Washington Christian Church...703-938-7720 Cristo Es Mi Refugio...703-938-7727</p> <p><b>Baha'i</b> Baha'i Faith for Northern Virginia ... 703-821-3345</p> <p><b>Baptist</b> Global Mission Church ... 703-757-0877 Peace Baptist Church ... 703-560-8462 Bethel Primitive Baptist Church ... 703-757-8134 Cartersville Baptist Church ... 703-255-7075 Fellowship Baptist Church ... 703-385-8516 First Baptist Church ... 703-938-8525 The Light Mission Church ... 703-757-0877 Vienna Baptist Church ... 703-281-4400 New Union Baptist Church... 703-281-2556</p> <p><b>Buddhist</b> Vajrayogini Buddhist Center...202-331-2122</p> <p><b>Church of the Brethren</b> Oakton Church of the Brethren ... 703-281-4411</p> <p><b>Catholic</b> Our Lady of Good Counsel ... 703-938-2828 St. Athanasius Catholic Church ... 703-759-4555 St. Mark's Catholic Church ... 703-281-9100</p> <p><b>Charismatic</b> Christian Assembly ... 703-698-9777</p> <p><b>Church of Christ</b> Berea Church of Christ ... 703-893-7040</p> <p><b>Disciples of Christ</b> Antioch Christian Church ... 703-938-6753</p> <p><b>Episcopal</b> Church of the Holy Comforter ... 703-938-6521</p>	<p>Church of the Holy Cross ... 703-698-6991 St. Francis Episcopal ... 703-759-2082</p> <p><b>Jehovah's Witness</b> Jehovah's Witnesses ... 703-759-1579</p> <p><b>Lutheran</b> Emmanuel Lutheran Church...703-938-2119 Christ The King Lutheran Church...703-759-6068 St. Athanasius Lutheran Church... 703-455-4003</p> <p><b>Methodist</b> Andrew Chapel United Methodist ... 703-759-3509 Church of the Good Shepherd ... 703-281-3987 The Vine Methodist Church ... 703-573-5336 Epiphany United Methodist ... 703-938-3494 Great Falls United Methodist... 703-759-3705 Oakton United Methodist ... 703-938-1233 Vale United Methodist ... 703-620-2594 Smith Chapel United Methodist ... 571-434-9680 Wesley United Methodist ... 703-938-8700</p> <p><b>Non-Denominational</b> Celebration Center for Spiritual Living ... 703-560-2030 Christian Assembly Church ... 703-698-9777</p> <p><b>Presbyterian</b> Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church ... 703-560-6336 Korean Central Presbyterian ... 703-698-5577 Vienna Presbyterian ... 703-938-9050</p> <p><b>Quaker</b> Langley Hills Friends...703-442-8394</p> <p><b>Seventh-Day Adventist</b> Northern Virginia Christian Fellowship ... 703-242-9001 Vienna Seventh Day Adventists ... 703-938-8383</p> <p><b>Unitarian Universalist</b> Congregation of Fairfax ... 703-281-4230</p>
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# GIFT GUIDE

**Joe Reasoner, woodcrafter of the Ride-n-Rocker, on display, at Grandmother's Back Room.**



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

**This handcrafted, numbered, custom created wooden Ride-n-Rocker, can now be seen at Grandmother's Back Room. Orders are being taken for Holiday issue Ride-n-Rockers.**

## Something New at Grandmother's Back Room

### Special custom woodwork rocker for holiday season.

Grandmother's Back Room in The Great Falls Village Center has announced a new handcrafted gift item for this holiday season. For over 15 years this children's shop has been

bringing the finest handcrafted children's knit goods to the Northern Virginia area. The small shop is full to the beams with fun gifts and clothing for boys and girls from birth to first or second grade.

In 2012, a new gift addition is a

handcrafted wooden rocking motorcycle locally made by Joe Reasoner, in Hamilton, Va. Each Ride-n-Rocker is unique, and can be custom crafted in many variations. Reasoner is a US Veteran, and creates each rocker by hand—

no two are identical, and each rocker is numbered.

In addition, Grandmother's Back Room would like to thank the community for efforts following Hurricane Sandy, to bring children's and other goods to those in need. Clothing, blankets, toys, toiletries, and other equipment were delivered, before Thanksgiving, to a

very appreciative organization distributing items as needed, just outside of Philadelphia, Pa.

Grandmother's Back Room is located at 756 E Walker Road, Great Falls, Tel: 703-759-2680. Shop hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and the store will be open 12 to 5 p.m. Sunday, beginning in December.

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## Be a Part of CHILDREN'S (& TEENS') CONNECTION

Every year between Christmas and New Year's, The Great Falls Connection turns its pages over to the contributions of local students. We are seeking artwork, photography, poetry, opinions, short stories and reflections. We welcome contributions from public schools, private schools and students who are home schooled.

E-mail to: [ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com), or mail (.jpg and text files on disc only) by Dec. 5, to 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Please be sure to include the student's name, age, grade, school and town of residence along with each submission. For information, call 703-778-9410.



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# We Are the World, at Garfield

Teachers discuss challenges of teaching English as a Second Language.

BY MICHELLE KAIN  
THE CONNECTION

**G**arfield Elementary School in Springfield, like all of Fairfax County, has a population that reflects a wide range of backgrounds. With 33 languages spoken, the school's ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) program has had to expand. The school has a first grade class of 60 students, 58 of whom are ESOL students ranging from levels one through four.

Jane Cofie-Raczko, who has been a teacher for the past 13 years, teaches one of three first grade classes in which all 20 of the students have English as a second language.

The majority of these students are from Hispanic or Middle Eastern backgrounds and common languages include Spanish, Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, Korean, Chinese and Vietnamese. The challenges involved with teaching these students depend on their proficiency with the English language.

"For students who speak almost no English, it can be difficult to communicate to the students that you want them to succeed and that you are there to help them. It can also be difficult to get the students to ask for help, mostly due to their lack of confidence in their speaking ability. For students with a better knowledge of the social language, it can be tough to give them a similarly strong academic language. Add the already difficult material to learning English for the first time and it can be very challenging," said Cofie-Raczko.

"The success of the students with the curriculum and their preparedness for middle and high school depends on the schooling they received in their home country as well as when they enrolled



Jane Cofie-Raczko gives her first grade class the details regarding their upcoming test.

at Garfield," said Rozi Khakpour, an ESOL teacher at Garfield Elementary.

Students who have attended Garfield from the start get the opportunity to develop oral language at an early age through programs such as Lunch and Bunch in which kindergartners with English as a second language meet twice a week to have lunch and practice this important skill.

The program, along with others, have proven to be successful as "students who have been at Garfield since kindergarten often exceed in high school and earn positions on the honor roll," Khakpour said.

"Another thing that has proven to be helpful," said Kirsten Howard, another first grade teacher, "is Garfield's social curriculum." This social curriculum, which concentrates on teaching students cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control, has given students a greater awareness outside themselves and has helped them in middle in high school as demonstrated by their willingness to take on leadership positions.



**Mariana Del Cid-Quintanilla, Spanish, Parents from El Salvador**



**Anmul Jan, Pashtu, Born in Pakistan**



**Michael Opuni, Akah, Parents from Ghana (Michael born in US)**



**Yusuf Ouanina, Arabic, Morocco**



**Tracy Huynh, Vietnamese, Vietnam**



**Mohammed (Jafar) Abdulridna, Arabic, Iraq**

PHOTOS BY MICHELLE KAIN/THE CONNECTION

## FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

# 'Hidden Curriculum'

FROM PAGE 12

of being Italian." Dalila carried that warning with her when she entered Marshall. The dire warning turned out to have no basis at her new school. "When I tell people here I'm Italian, they say, 'oh, I love Italy' and then, I'm so relieved. Yes, I am proud to say I'm Italian here."

In Italy, it was always school and studying through late evening, Dalila said. She had no social life there.

"When I came here, it was such a relief," she said. "I was so happy I finally had time for myself."

Millan Mbise, from Tanzania, was pleasantly surprised by the degree of interaction between students and teachers. Teachers are less approachable than in the U.S. Millan, whose native language is Swahili, grew up speaking English,

up their native language.

"Studies show that bilingual students do better academically."

Bloom said the school helps newly-immigrated students to transition by embracing the families as they enter the school. Relationship-building is how he refers to the partnership. "When you establish that relationship with new families from other countries, you get rid of a lot of hurdles. When you do that, the families feel valued and a part of the Freedom Hill family. We have students learning from one another simply from their exposure to each other."

The children of Freedom Hill Elementary School are so accustomed to establishing relationships within the classroom, they don't recognize barriers, Bloom said. "It's a representation of the world."

Bloom refers to the school's di-

**"There's so much value in having a school where children from all over the world can come together."**

— Scott Bloom, Freedom Hill principal

as well. English is compulsory in the schools, and, Millan calls it the "unofficial" language of Tanzania.

Millan is bused from Marshall daily to Falls Church High School for a class in "pharmacy technology." He learned what he wanted to do with his life while living here and attending an American school. He wants to be a pharmacist some day.

**FREEDOM HILL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL** feeds into the Marshall pyramid. Like Marshall, Freedom Hill is the world in microcosm. There are more than 42 languages spoken in the students' homes and the children of Freedom Hill represent more than 53 countries. Some Freedom Hill students are from diplomatic families, already bilingual or multilingual with English exposure. Others are new to English. The school, through its many ESOL levels, works with these students to help them adapt to English.

"Within the realm of school, the kids are held accountable to communicate in the English language," said first-year Freedom Hill principal Scott Bloom. As the kids interact with their peers, they pick up English.

"I like to think we also recognize the importance of kids having that dual-language skill," Bloom said. "We want them to learn English, but, we don't want them to give

versity as a "hidden curriculum."

"There's so much value in having a school where children from all over the world can come together," Bloom said. "You set the stage for the children to share their history, backgrounds, culture, and experiences. "There's so much power in bringing all these different cultures together that I think it's justified to call it a hidden curriculum."

"The kids don't even know they're learning from this diversity."

Marshall's roundtable students eager to discuss their new lives all said that school life is more pressured in their native countries with little opportunities within the school system to learn nonacademic things. Schools do not promote extracurricular activities as they do here.

"Students are pushed by their parents to excel academically in Malaysia," Kasthury said. "Many of these kids commit suicide. They're told, 'if you're not the best, you'll never succeed.'"

Amber Holder has found a multitude of extracurricular activities to engage in. In Panama, there was only a single option. Here, she said, she's involved with the marching band, the literary magazine and other programs. "In Panama, you have to find one place to fit in. But, here, you can fit in in many places."

# ENTERTAINMENT

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

## WEDNESDAY/NOV. 28

**Dialogue & Friendship Dinner: Education for Peace.** 6:30 p.m., Tysons Corner Marriott, 8028 Leesburg Pike, Tysons Corner. The American Turkish Friendship Association and the Rumi Forum Fairfax bring officials, leaders and representatives from faith communities, businesses, media and academia together for dinner and speakers on education for peace. 703-267-5751 or [rsvp@atfa.us](mailto:rsvp@atfa.us).

## THURSDAY/NOV. 29

**Tysons Regional Annual Holiday Mixer.** 5:30-7:30 p.m., at the Bank of Georgetown, 1850 Towers Crescent Plaza, Suite 100, Vienna. New member of the Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce, Bank of Georgetown, kicks off the holiday season at their new location in Tysons Corner; food from Dutch Mill Catering, networking and holiday cheer included. \$15, members; \$20, non-members.

**Opening Receptions.** 7-9 p.m., McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. In the Edges and Grids exhibit in the Emerson Gallery is five artists' work which incorporates elements of edges and grids; in the Atrium Gallery is Ellyn Weiss's Primordial Soup Kitchen, full of paintings which evoke early forms of life with tar; the Ramp Gallery exhibit shows Ron Paras' photographic works entitled Silent Symphony: A Photographic Composition in Four Movements. 703-790-1953 or [www.mpaart.org](http://www.mpaart.org).

## FRIDAY/NOV. 30

**30th Annual McLean Holiday Crafts Show.** 11 a.m.-7 p.m., at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. The show features fiber arts, wood, ceramics and pottery, jewelry, glass, holiday decor, items for children, gourmet foods, paper art, photography, soft sculpture, paintings and drawings. \$2, adults; \$1, ages 13 and under. <http://www.pimmithills.org/pimmithills-events>.

**Altar Boyz.** 8 p.m., at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A cheeky, pop-rock musical comedy about a boy band of singing dancing heartthrobs from Ohio on the last night of their national tour. \$30; \$15, students. 703-854-1856 or [www.1ststage.com](http://www.1ststage.com).

**Eileen Ivers & Immigrant Soul.** 8 p.m., at The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Irish fiddle prodigy Eileen Ivers joins bandmates playing world music and traditional and contemporary music. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 1

**The Chamber's 16th Annual Reindog Pageant.** 8-9:30 a.m., at Langley Shopping Center, on Chain Bridge Road between Old Dominion Drive and Dolley Madison. At the pet event of the season, dogs parade in holiday or creative attire for contest prizes while music, vendors, photo opps and Santa surround. A dog adoption event occurs simultaneously. 703-356-5424 or [www.members.mcleanchamber.org](http://www.members.mcleanchamber.org).

**30th Annual McLean Holiday Crafts Show.** 10 a.m.-6 p.m., at McLean Community Center, 1234

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 18

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## Here's What's Happening at MCC

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*Theatreworks USA's production of*  
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Saturday, Dec. 8, 2 p.m.  
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**Ball in the House**  
Saturday, Dec. 15, 8 p.m.  
\$20/\$15 MCC district residents

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**"Some Like it Hot"**  
Wednesday, Dec. 19, 10 a.m.  
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**The McLean Community Center**  
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FROM PAGE 17

Ingleside Ave., McLean. The show features fiber arts, wood, ceramics and pottery, jewelry, glass, holiday decor, items for children, gourmet foods, paper art, photography, soft sculpture, paintings and drawings. \$2, adults; \$1, ages 13 and under. <http://www.pimmit-hills.org/pimmit-hills-events>.

**Gingerbread House Decorating Class.** 10 a.m., 1 p.m., at the Ritz-Carlton Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Children ages 3-12 can explore the life-size gingerbread house at the hotel, then make their own sugary homes in a decorating class taught by the pastry chefs; includes all ingredients as well as a souvenir. \$70 per child. [www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons).

**The Nutcracker Tea.** 10 a.m., 1 p.m., at the Ritz-Carlton Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Enjoy the Nutcracker Ballet with afternoon tea and treats while members of the Creative Dance Center put a contemporary twist on the beloved classic and the pastry team tantalizes palates with tea sandwiches, pastries and sweets. \$75 (includes nutcracker doll for all children). [www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons).

**Djembe Drum and 50 Quilts for AIDS-Orphaned Children.** 1:30-3:30 p.m., at Falls Church Episcopal, 115 East Fairfax St., Falls Church. View the first 50 quilts crafted by members of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, made for South African children orphaned by AIDS; refreshments and live music by Kofi Dennis, djembe drummer. [stpeterslovequilts@gmail.com](mailto:stpeterslovequilts@gmail.com).

**Altar Boyz.** 2 p.m., 8 p.m., at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A cheeky, pop-rock musical comedy about a boy band of singing dancing heartthrobs from Ohio on the last night of their national tour. \$30; \$15, students. 703-854-1856 or [www.1ststage.com](http://www.1ststage.com).

**The 44th Annual Wolf Trap Holiday Sing-Along.** 4-5:30 p.m., at the Filene Center, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Bring your brightest candle, your shiniest bell, a Toys for Tots gift and a grand holiday spirit; the president's own United States Marine Band and 400 voices from top area groups lead the audience in traditional holiday songs. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Christmas with FCS: Carols Through the Ages.** 5 p.m., at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park Street NE, Vienna. Share Christmas with the Fairfax Choral Society; 300-plus voices belt out popular and unusual carols from Christmases past. \$25, adults; \$15, students (in advance, adults are \$30 at the door). 703-642-3277 or [www.fairfaxchoralsociety.org](http://www.fairfaxchoralsociety.org).

**Great Falls Celebration of Lights.** 6-8 p.m., at the Great Falls Village Centre Hill, off State Route 681/Walker Road, Great Falls. The 22nd annual tree lighting ceremony has not only a host of lights, but also a petting zoo, pony rides, Santa Claus with his old-fashioned sleigh bell, a live nativity, music from the Langley Madrigal Singers, hot cider and an open house featuring shops with treats, cookies, hot chocolate and coupons.

**South African Gala.** 6:30-9:30 p.m., at Falls Church Episcopal, 115 East Fairfax St., Falls Church. An evening of South African music, a buffet of selected wines and foods, a raffle of craft items and remarks from Deputy Chief of Mission Johnny Moloto of the Embassy of South Africa; the event benefits the AIDS-orphaned children of South Africa. \$50. [stpeterslovequilts@gmail.com](mailto:stpeterslovequilts@gmail.com).

**Big Sam's Funky Nation.** 7:30 p.m., at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. A general admission dance

with "Big Sam" Williams and his troupe of urban jazz musicians. \$22. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Ballroom Dance at Colvin Run Community Hall.** 9-11:30 p.m., Colvin Run Community Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. DJ Bill Powers and TJ play ballroom dance music from the 1930s to today; includes light refreshments. \$4. [www.colvinrun.org](http://www.colvinrun.org).

## SUNDAY/DEC. 2

**Gingerbread House Decorating Class.** 10 a.m., 1 p.m., at the Ritz-Carlton Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Children ages 3-12 can explore the life-size gingerbread house at the hotel, then make their own sugary homes in a decorating class taught by the pastry chefs; includes all ingredients as well as a souvenir. \$70 per child. [www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons).

**30th Annual McLean Holiday Crafts Show.** 11 a.m.-4 p.m., at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. The show features fiber arts, wood, ceramics and pottery, jewelry, glass, holiday decor, items for children, gourmet foods, paper art, photography, soft sculpture, paintings and drawings. \$2, adults; \$1, ages 13 and under. <http://www.pimmit-hills.org/pimmit-hills-events>.

**The Princess Tea.** 11 a.m., 2 p.m., at the Ritz-Carlton Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Disney princesses, treats and a special teatime make it a magical day; holiday gift bag and photo with princesses included. \$75. [www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/tysons).

**Alternative Gift Market and Secret Angel Shoppe for Children.** Noon-3 p.m., at McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Hosted by the Women's Ministry of McLean Baptist Church, gifts from around the world and a light lunch will be available with all proceeds benefitting various causes. Lunch \$5. [www.mcleanbaptist.org](http://www.mcleanbaptist.org) or 703-356-8080.

**Santa at the Freeman Store.** 1-3 p.m., 131 Church St., N.E., Vienna. Assisted by his elves, Santa sits upstairs in his traditional chair beside the Christmas tree, happy to talk to children and smile with them for a photo. The Ayr Hill Garden Club provides fresh greens and decorative arrangements. 703-938-5187 or [www.historicviennainc.org](http://www.historicviennainc.org).

**Altar Boyz.** 2 p.m., 7 p.m., at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A cheeky, pop-rock musical comedy about a boy band of singing dancing heartthrobs from Ohio on the last night of their national tour. \$30; \$15, students. 703-854-1856 or [www.1ststage.com](http://www.1ststage.com).

**Messiah Sing-A-Long.** 4 p.m., at Saint Luke Catholic Church, 7001 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The sopranos, mezzo-sopranos, tenors and baritones of Music in McLean invite you to sing along in Handel's reflection on nativity, passion, resurrection and ascension at their 20th anniversary celebration concert. \$15; students 18-and-under, free. 703-356-0670.

**McLean WinterFest Holiday Parade.** 4 p.m., from Fleetwood Road to Chain Bridge Road to Brawner Street. Free water, popcorn, coffee and warm cider with food vendors selling treats and dinner, a parade along a longer route than last year's and the traditional tree lighting immediately following the parade. [www.mcleanwinterfest.org](http://www.mcleanwinterfest.org).

**Christmas Concert.** 5 p.m., at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 10550 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. A choir, soloists, handbell players and instrumentalists join together for familiar carols and choral works by Rutter, Darke, Handel, Holst and others. <http://www.gflutheran.org>.

## Carol of the Bells.



PHOTOS BY TUAN PHAM AND VIHAO PHAM

# 'Christmas Eve at the Nutcracker Club' Returns

The School of Theatrical Dance (SOTD) and its performing wing, Great Falls Dance Theatre, present the seventh annual performance of their original production of Christmas Eve at the Nutcracker Club, a fanciful yet reverent sketch of Christmas Eve, set in a 1940s USO Hall, in the imaginary town of Rockwell.

Christmas Eve at the Nutcracker Club, conceived and directed by Theresa D'Alessandro, features the talents of SOTD youth and advanced dancers, as well as guest artists and singers. The show contains a variety of classical ballet, tap, jazz and modern dance; and a range of music from Tchaikovsky to Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman to Mannheim Steamroller.

The story begins as Sergeant Kristopher bids farewell to his beloved wife to report for duty. Snowflakes swirl gracefully to Tchaikovsky's classic score; and the fanciful snowmen that dot the landscape dance to "Let it Snow." Partygoers arrive for the Christmas Eve party at the Nutcracker Club. They are entertained by the Rockwell Dance Theater, featuring classical variations from the traditional Nutcracker Ballet; and treated to a medley of 40's songs by officers attending. Admiral North shares the classic, "What is Santa Claus?" with the children. When left alone, Sergeant Kristopher thinks of his girl back home.

At the end of the evening, the guests exchange gifts, and leave the hall to the quiet of the glowing "Candelabra."

At the end of the evening, the guests exchange gifts, and leave the hall to the quiet of the glowing "Candelabra."



## When and Where

**When:** Saturday, Dec. 8, at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 9, at 1 p.m.

**Where:** The Waddell Theater on the Loudoun Campus of Northern Virginia Community College.

**Tickets\*:** Early ticket purchase, \$20; general admission, \$22; groups of 10 or more, \$15; veterans, military families, children under 12 and seniors, \$10; scouts and chaperones, \$5; special olympic families and volunteers, free.

\*Please call 703-759-5652 or e-mail to [Tdance.inc@verizon.net](mailto:Tdance.inc@verizon.net) today to reserve your seats and to let us know if any wheelchair accommodation is necessary.

But once the candles are out the real fun begins! Mischievous elves scurry to fill the stockings, to Benny Goodman's, "Sing Sing Sing." And the ornaments, toys and decorations come to life. Act II includes the spicy Gingerbread Cookies, the Tinsel dance to "It Don't Mean a Thing, If it Ain't Got That Swing," as well as a powerful modern work to Mannheim Steamroller's, "Carol of the Bells." Finally, "Standing with Angels," a choreographic tribute to the men and women of the armed services, who have sacrificed so much.

Joining the dancers are artists, faculty members and alumni Ashley O'Banion and Florian Rouiller, who have danced with Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Ohio Ballet, Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, Milwaukee Ballet and Goteborg Ballet, among others. Joining for a third season is Michael Stokes, finalist "So You Think you Can Dance." New to the cast is the local a capella group "Retro."

# Author Examines Life by the Letter

Joe Reynolds publishes collection of letters on variety of topics.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

In an era of e-mails, text messages and tweets, the art of writing a letter hasn't been lost on McLean resident Joe Reynolds. It's something he was raised on, his father and grandfather wrote him letters while he was at college, a tradition that he continued while his three children were away at school.

"Our kids are about four years apart, so I had a good 12 years of writing them letters at least once a week or every other week," he said. "This eventually evolved from what I did over the week, which got dull, to my reaction on certain things. My kids found it amusing, and they said they would read them aloud to their friends."

After all three graduated, Reynolds found it wasn't a habit he wanted to drop, so he found himself expanding on standard thank-you notes and other correspondence. After the responses to his letters grew, he decided to ask if people wanted to subscribe to his letters, all typed on his computer but sent on paper through the mail.

"I had about 40 people respond to the initial note, and it eventually grew to more than 100 people, some of which I didn't even know, they were just friends of friends, that sort of thing," Reynolds said. "I like the idea of a letter, because I think it's an art that's being lost. Unlike an e-mail, a letter is something you sit down and compose, it feels more permanent, because it's on paper, it comes to your house. And people like getting letters. So much of mail is bills, ads or junk, it's fun to get a letter from someone you know."

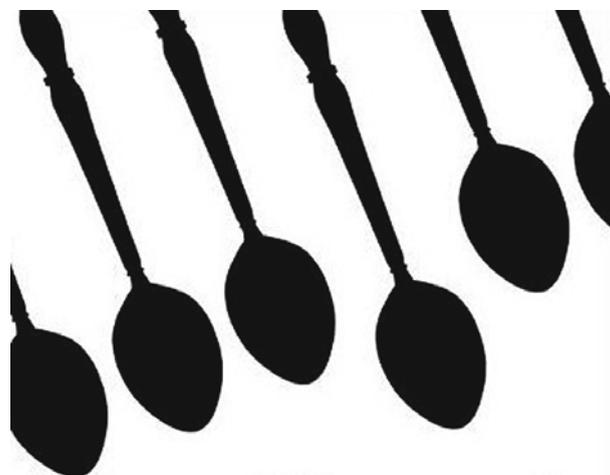
**AFTER HIS RETIREMENT**, he began to toy with the idea of putting together a collection of his letters, aiming to compile 20 of his favorites. He ended up with 22 letters, which form his first book "Measured Out in Teaspoons."

On the surface, the letters cover topics such as a bathroom renovation or a camping trip, but they contain deep musings on concepts such as marriage, aging, the existence of God and friendship.

Reynolds, despite describing himself as an "overly serious fellow for most of my life," has infused the letters with his dry, humorous takes.

"Over the years, I've come to believe more and more that life is comedy. If you can laugh, that's a good thing, if you can laugh at yourself, it's a better thing and if you can share that joke with someone else, it's better yet," he said. "These letters are all about sharing the joke, and writing them has helped me appreciate the comedy in my own life."

Each letter is about 2,000 to 3,000 words, and most start with a normal life event before detouring into deeper territory. A trip to the grocery store turns into a reflection on capitalism, an observation on his lack



## Measured Out In Teaspoons

A Selection of Martingale Letters

JOSEPH REYNOLDS

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Local resident Joe Reynolds has released "Measured Out in Teaspoons," a collection of letters featuring his take on many life events.**

of fashion sense into how suits foster a sense of anonymity.

"The letters usually start with an idea, and that idea gets tossed around my head while I'm driving or trying to sleep and eventually it gets written down," Reynolds said. "I sit down and write it, then polish it, each letter is revised about 10 times before it goes out. I'm always checking to make sure I've used the right word, or that I've captured an image the way I wanted to."

**REYNOLDS HASN'T LIMITED** his letter writing to his book either. He writes a yearly letter to his grandchildren on their birthdays, letters that they can open when they turn 21.

"My grandfather wrote a genealogy of our family, and there was an entry about someone who died falling in a well. But there was nothing else. I found myself asking about what happened. Was he drunk? Was it an accident? There was no information. These letters are meant to be information along with the color and flavor of our culture and community," Reynolds

said. "When they open the letters on their 21st birthday, it will be a sort of outline of parts of their lives that they may have little or no memory at all. And it's entirely possible that in 21 years they'll be reading about a mention of movies or computers and say 'What's a movie? What's a computer?'"

"Measured Out in Teaspoons" is available on Amazon.com, and information can be found at [www.facebook.com/MeasuredOutInTeaspoons](http://www.facebook.com/MeasuredOutInTeaspoons).

**"I like the idea of a letter, because I think it's an art that's being lost."**

— Joe Reynolds

## THIS IS "HOWARD"



Stop the presses...Howard needs to get his picture on the front page so he can show the world how adorable he really is. This incredible fella is long, low and a total loverboy. He loves everyone and is gentle enough for even a baby to cuddle with. He's 5 years young and still loves a game of fetch...though you may be the one getting the most exercise! His ears alone will have you under his magic spell, and his soulful expressions will seal the deal. Come and meet the best pal you'll ever have!



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## Be a Part of CHILDREN'S (& TEENS') CONNECTION



Every year between Christmas and New Year's, The Great Falls Connection turns its pages over to the contributions of local students. We are seeking artwork, photography, poetry, opinions, short stories and reflections. We welcome contributions from public schools, private schools and students who are home schooled.

E-mail to: [ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com), or mail (.jpg and text files on disc only) by Dec. 5, to 1606 King St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Please be sure to include the student's name, age, grade, school and town of residence along with each submission. For information, call 703-778-9410.



## OPEN HOUSES SATURDAY/SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1 & 2

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](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com) and click on the "This Week in Real Estate" link. Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times

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14018 Marleigh Ln.....\$595,000.....Sun 1-4.....Ed Duggan.....Century 21..703-989-7735  
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### Falls Church

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### Gainesville

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### Great Falls

650 Keithley Dr.....\$1,395,000.....Sun 1-4.....Kathy Bradburn...Samson Props..703-437-9459

### Manassas

9800 Grant Ave.....\$159,000.....Sun 1-4.....Veronica Kressel...Samson Props..703-819-9804

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### Woodbridge

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

## Oakton Football Wins Northern Region Championship

**Cougars beat Westfield for first region title since 2008.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**A**fter a 6-0 start, the Oakton football team's 2012 season nearly derailed during a four-game losing streak. Doubt started to creep in after a 49-28 defeat against Centreville in the regular season finale on Nov. 2. The Cougars finished fifth in the six-team Concorde District and went a month without tasting victory. Oakton managed to qualify for the playoffs, but how long would the Cougars last?

"To be honest, we did lose the faith," Oakton senior Andy Boone said. "I think we lost the faith when we lost to Centreville, because that was such a heart-wrenching loss. . . . They just ran all over us [and] we couldn't do anything in the second half on offense. It felt like some of the guys were down and we just didn't know what to do. Some of the kids were getting ready to go back to basketball season."

Oakton would enter regionals as a low seed, meaning the Cougars would face a tough opponent in the quarterfinals.

"First, we thought we were going to play Westfield and all the kids on the team were bummed," Boone said. "We thought we were going to be out of the playoffs."

Instead, No. 7 Oakton was matched against No. 2 Lake Braddock, the team which knocked the Cougars out of the 2011 playoffs. With a chance for revenge as motivation, Oakton won, 20-13, on Nov. 9—the Cougars' first win in 35 days. The following week, Oakton edged No. 3 Centreville, 14-13, in the semifinals on Nov. 16.

On Nov. 24, Oakton traveled to face top-seed Westfield with the region title on the line. While the Cougars might have been intimidated by the undefeated Bulldogs at the start of the postseason, a confident Oakton team took the field on Saturday and brought home a banner.

**OAKTON DEFEATED WESTFIELD**, 23-16, in the Division 6 Northern Region football final at Westfield High School, continuing a considerable turnaround for the Cougars. Oakton rebounded from a four-game losing streak to beat the top three seeds en route to the Cougars' first region championship since 2008.

"Just looking back on our season," quarterback Kyle Downer said Saturday, "it's amazing how we got here."

Downer had another big game for Oakton, carrying 18 times for 119 yards and a touchdown, and completing four of 10 passes for 53 yards and two scores. He also intercepted a pass on defense. Downer's three-yard touchdown run with 37 seconds remaining in the second quarter gave the Cougars a lead they would not relinquish.

Oakton led 13-7 at halftime and, after a scoreless third quarter, took a two-possession lead on Brian Burns' 31-yard field goal with 9:08 remaining in the fourth. Burns missed an extra-point attempt earlier in the game, but head coach Jason Rowley didn't lose faith in his kicker, saying the missed PAT was a result of the wind.

"I've got all the confidence in the world in Brian," Rowley said. "He did a great job today."

Burns' field goal gave Oakton a 16-7 lead. Westfield fumbled on its next offensive play and Oakton's



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Oakton quarterback Kyle Downer threw two touchdown passes and ran for a score against Westfield in the Division 6 Northern Region football final on Nov. 24.**

Daniel Mansfield scooped up the ball and returned it to the Bulldogs 10-yard line. Four plays later, Downer connected with Boone for a four-yard touchdown on fourth-and-goal, helping give the Cougars a 23-7 advantage with 6:31 remaining. Westfield would score a touchdown and add a late field goal, but it wasn't enough.

Boone finished with four receptions for 53 yards and two touchdowns. He also had 22 rushing yards on three carries.

"It feels like a relief," Boone said of winning the region title. "I've been in probably nine championships in my life and I've never won one before, so just to win a championship feels amazing — just that weight lifted off your shoulder."

Westfield defeated Oakton during the regular season, 28-14, on Oct. 19. The Cougars totaled 401 yards of offense, but had trouble finishing drives. Oakton ran 19 plays after reaching the Westfield 30-yard line, but managed just one touchdown. The Cougars' other score came on a 35-yard run.

**ON SATURDAY**, Oakton scored four of the five times it had the ball inside the Westfield 30, including three touchdowns.

"It was all about finishing drives," Rowley said. "It felt like in the first time we played them that we could get the ball to the 30 and then we'd get stifled and couldn't put the ball in the end zone. Since that game, we've really talked about finishing drives on offense."

After a scoreless first quarter, Oakton took the lead when Downer hit Boone with a 21-yard touchdown pass with 7:30 remaining in the second. Trailing 7-0, it didn't take Westfield long to respond. Devon Burns returned the ensuing kickoff to the Oakton 30-yard line and running back Dalaun Richardson carried the ball into the end zone on Westfield's next play from scrimmage.

Oakton countered with an 11-play, 80-yard drive, capped by Downer's 3-yard touchdown run. Westfield wouldn't score again until quarterback Chris Mullins crossed the goal line on a 1-yard sneak with 1:31 remaining in the fourth quarter.

Richardson rushed for 117 yards and a touchdown for Westfield.

With the victory, Oakton advanced to the state playoffs. The Cougars will host L.C. Bird at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 1 in the semifinals. L.C. Bird, the Central Region champion, is undefeated.

### SPORTS BRIEFS



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Marshall's Mackenzie Haight, seen at the VHSL state meet, competed at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships South Regional on Nov. 24.**

### Marshall's Haight Competes in Regional Championships

Marshall junior Mackenzie Haight, who earned all-state this year, competed at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships South Regional on Nov. 24 in Charlotte, N.C. He finished 49th with a time of 15:46 in the seeded boys' race. The top 10 finishers qualified for nationals on Dec. 8 in San Diego.

Haight finished 10th at the VHSL state meet with a time of 15:52 on Nov. 17 at Great Meadow.

Chantilly senior Sean McGorty won the Foot Locker regional meet with course-record time of 14:28.

In the girls' race, three Northern Virginia harriers qualified for nationals. Lake Braddock senior Sophie Chase won the event with a time of 17:05. West Springfield junior Caroline Alcorta placed eight with a time of 17:19 and Oakton sophomore Allie Klimkiewicz was ninth with a time of 17:29.

Athletes from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia competed in the meet.

### Herndon Field Hockey Players Honored

Herndon sophomore forward Sofia Palacios earned first-team All-Northern Region honors for the 2012 season. Senior defender/midfielder Sarah Betti and sophomore midfielder Taylor Stone were named second team all-region.

Betti, Palacios and Stone also received first-team All-Concorde District honors for the 2012 season.

Junior midfielder Rachel Delmontagne, senior defender Annie Kelley and junior goalkeeper Sarah Suter and junior midfielder Katherine Wilson were named to the second team.

### Herndon Boys' Basketball Home Opener

The Herndon boys' basketball team will face West Potomac in its home opener at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 30.

### Langley Boys' Basketball Season Opener

The Langley boys' basketball team will face Centreville for its season opener at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 29 at South Lakes High School. The following night, Langley will face Oakton at 5:30 p.m. at South Lakes. The Saxons' home opener is Dec. 14 against South Lakes.

### South Lakes Boys' Basketball to Open Season

The South Lakes boys' basketball team will open the 2012-13 season with a home game against Oakton at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 29. The following night, the Seahawks will host Centreville at 7 p.m.

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# CLASSIFIED

## Pay Now, Bye Later



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Contrary to last week's column, if I do pay for it now (things I can't afford), then I'll be so in debt later that I may end up saying "bye" anyway – from the stress of it. And if that were to happen; dying with a smile on my face, so to speak, would I be truly better off now anticipating that later was not going to be my problem? Do I want to be a modern day version of George Raft, the American actor from the 1930s and 40s best known for his portrayals of mobsters, who said about his Hollywood money: "I must have gone through \$10 million during my career. Part of the loot went for gambling, part for horses and part for women. The rest I spent foolishly."

My problem is that I don't want to spend my money foolishly, just in case I continue to outlive my original prognosis. There's plenty of things I can afford to do without, but money unfortunately is not one of them. The real question, to me, is: do I want to take responsibility for my own actions (lifestyle choices, purchases, miscellaneous financial commitments) and live within my means, or do I want to spend selfishly, live my life and let the chips – or rather bills, fall where they may? After all, eventually (if you know what I mean?), payment may be difficult to collect. And given the fact that as a stage IV lung cancer patient, I am considered "terminal," which means my best years may be behind me, don't I have enough problems at present whereby I shouldn't worry too much about what happens later (somebody else's problem by then)? Then again, if I do pay now, surely there would be a sense of satisfaction/sense of accomplishment, but would paying for any of it (or all of it) now compromise my future? Need I be overly concerned about later when the ship I'm presently steering is listing and taking on water?

Stress hardly provides aid and comfort when imposed on a cancer patient and more so than on an able-bodied, non-terminal man or woman. Finding that balance between what I need today to get me to tomorrow, versus what I need tomorrow to get me through today, is the axis on which that bane of my existence turns. Do I indulge myself? Do I deprive myself? Do I live like there are plenty of tomorrows? Or do I live like tomorrows are in short supply? Do I reach for the brass ring (on the Merry-go-round of life, metaphorically speaking) or do I saddle a real horse and ride off into the sunset? Is time on my side or is it running down my leg?

Unfortunately, there's nothing that I can do today to guarantee me a tomorrow. I have cancer. However, living recklessly, irresponsibly, selfishly may in an awkward way get me through today easier than if I towed the typical Kenny-type line (I'm funny, but I'm not fun). Nevertheless, I keep coming back to an emotional instinct I have: I don't want to give up on myself or my future and paying now assures that I won't. I do plenty of pretending but I'm not going to pretend that I'm the reincarnation of George Raft (besides, he was also an excellent dancer, which I'm not). He may have known what he was doing; I'm not really sure I do.

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

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the following property being the property contained in said Deed of Trust, described as follows:

Lot 9, Resubdivision of Parcel 1A, Foster Subdivision, as the same appears duly dedicated, platted and recorded in Deed Book 11178 at page 1032, among the Land Records of Fairfax County, Virginia.  
 Commonly known as 8894 Windy Ridge Way, McLean, Virginia 22102.  
**TERMS OF SALE:** A deposit of \$100,000.00 or ten percent (10%) of the sale price, whichever amount is less, in the form of cash or its equivalent will be required of the purchaser at the time and place of sale; the balance of the purchase money being due and payable within fifteen (15) days after sale, time expressly being of the essence, with interest at the rate of 7.125 percent per annum from date of sale to date of settlement. Provided, however, that if the holder of the secured promissory note is the successful bidder at the sale, no cash deposit shall be required, and part of or the entire indebtedness, including interest and costs, secured by the Deed of Trust, may be set off against the purchase price.  
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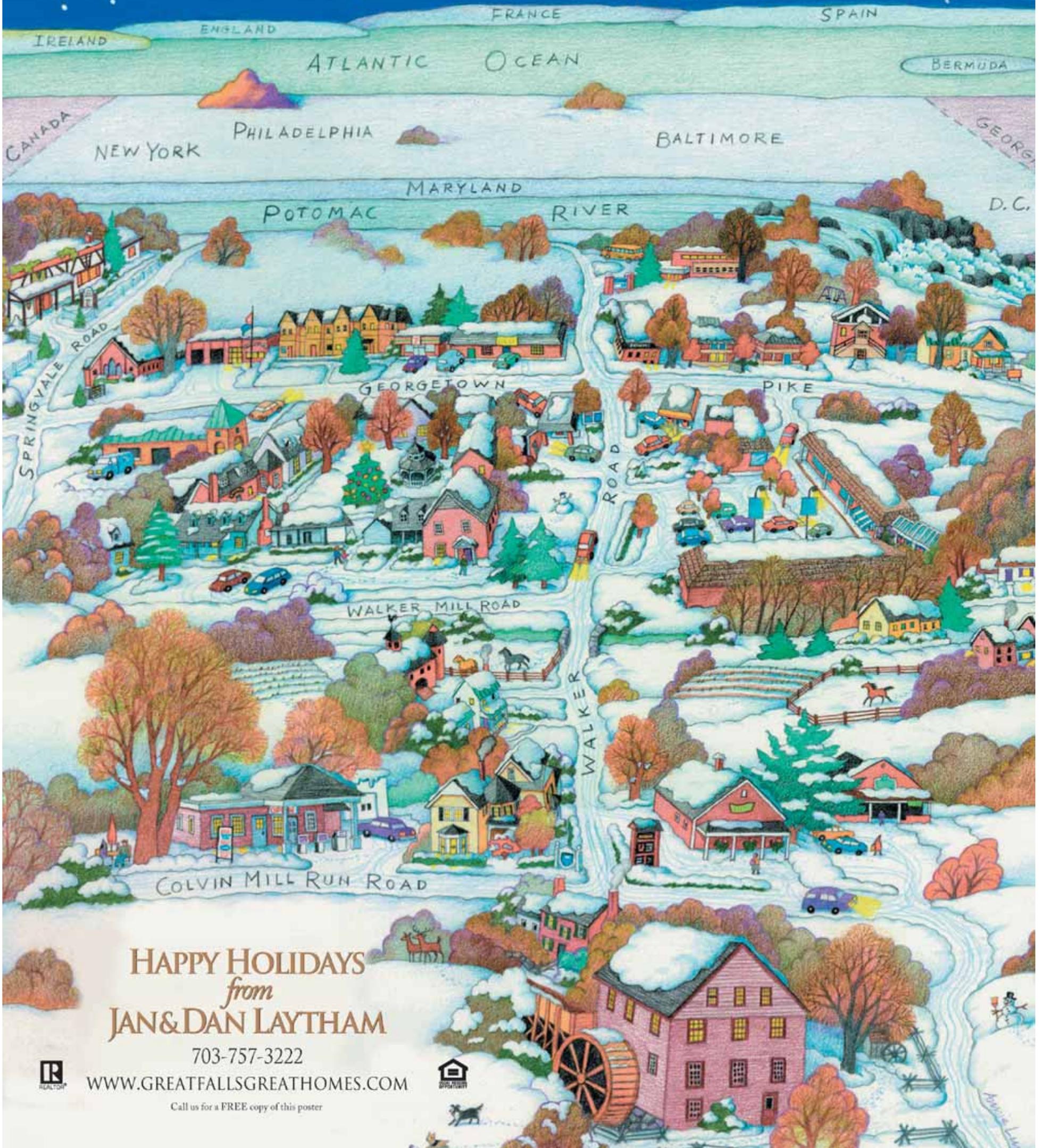
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