

It takes all hands on deck – and all hearts open – to pull off the annual Thanksgiving meal collection and distribution, as you can tell, as volunteers get ready for a previous event. Sponsored by Reston nonprofit Cornerstones, in partnership with several other organizations and agencies, and of course, all those volunteers, close to 1000 struggling families enjoy Thanksgiving – all courtesy of the generosity of hundreds who feel the spirit of the ‘season of giving.’

Herndon All Heart For Season of Giving

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Nysmith School CyberPatriots
Visit Real-World Counterparts

NEWS, PAGE 3

Creating Families
with Adoption

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PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Members from The Nysmith School's three CyberPatriot Competition teams visited FireEye cyber security company in Reston. The tech savvy students posed with FireEye staffer David Lindquist in front of the "threat map" in the company's local operations command center.



Sridhar Jayanthi, VP, Engineering was the first FireEye presenter on the agenda. Jayanthi told the group that an aptitude for computers is obviously critical, but "a passion for the field, outside-the-box thinking, and the ability to adapt to constant change" were the real keys to landing a job and succeeding in cyber security.

Nysmith School CyberPatriots Visit Real-World Counterparts

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Most school field trips take in a museum, maybe a visit to a historic house or possibly a kid-centric performance of some kind. All of these outside-the-school-walls outings are great experiences and terrific educational opportunities, but a group of students from The Nysmith School in Herndon got a real treat when they visited the Reston offices of FireEye, a leading developer and provider of cyber security products and services.

AN HOURS-LONG VISIT to an office building might not sound like a lot of fun to your average sixth, seventh and eighth graders, but these youngsters were beside themselves because all of them are members of a Nysmith CyberPatriot Team and this was a chance to see the hypotheticals that they work with come to life before their very eyes.

The CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition is part of the Air Force Association's (AFA) STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Program, aimed at encouraging interest in these areas of study and developing the skills to pursue related careers. As a school that is known for its excellence in STEM education, Nysmith has embraced the STEM curriculum, and its students have equally accepted the challenge of the competition. One of the two Nysmith teams entered into last year's competition took the Middle School National Championship – no small feat when you take into account that more than 2,150 teams were registered from middle schools and high schools from all fifty states, Canada, and DoD Dependent Schools in Europe and the Pacific.

In the competition, the team members act the part of newly-hired IT professionals tasked with finding and fixing vulnerabilities in a number of operating systems with two major ground rules: cause no further damage to the virtual systems and do not cause additional problems for the imaginary



Monica Saraf was a member of Nysmith's 2015 National CyberPatriot Championship. With all that experience, she was a natural choice to captain one of the school's three 2016 teams. Monica liked how the FireEye folks made their presentations "really fun with lots of interesting real-life stories." She also liked the small group activity to consider potential security vulnerabilities at their own school. "I really enjoy being able to use what I learn."

users. "And that's pretty much the same mission for FireEye in the real world," said David Lindquist, an Event Analyst at FireEye and one of several presenters on the Nysmith visit agenda.

"That is so cool," declared sixth grader Ilse Dubert, a first year CyberPatriot competitor. "It shows that the examples and problems we are given are real." Ilse's twin sister Annica is also a Nysmith CyberPatriot and was an attendee at the FireEye field trip.

Ilse was also pleased that their hosts "talked to us, you know, straight." She and several of her schoolmates appreciated that the FireEye gang "didn't treat us just like a bunch of kids."

"Actually," admitted Devon Kerr, a Principal Security Advisor with FireEye, "you guys make me a little nervous, like when I am standing in front of a group of CEOs. You really know your stuff. I can tell just from the questions you ask and the answers you've given." Kerr's presentation included examples of investigations he has conducted



Sixth grader Ethan Yu, a first time CyberPatriot competitor, said he learned a lot and enjoyed the field trip to FireEye. "I especially liked learning how to protect the information on your own personal devices."

for clients around the globe and had his audience head-nodding and adding corroborating stories when he described some of the vulnerabilities he has encountered. When Kerr offered a number of tips on daily computer cyber safety, pens were out and notes were being taken by the students, and their adult companions, as well. (OK. I took a few myself.)

Part of the FireEye discussion addressed the skills needed to work in cyber security. "We have a shortage of skilled people in these critical fields today," said Sridhar Jayanthi, VP of Engineering at FireEye and one of the hosts of the school tour. "Cyber attacks are a daily event at all levels, the threat is real and growing." This group might be a bit young to be considering their career options at FireEye anytime soon, but there was a definite gleam in the eyes of the two George Mason University students in attendance. Juniors Jessica Miers and Alex Handley are the mentors of the Nysmith competitors.

In a day filled with high points, the visit

to the Reston Security Operations Center (SOC) was still a real standout for the young "cyberonauts." Escorted into the "heart of threat monitoring," the visitors were corralled into one area of the room. "Sorry. This is a No-Wander Zone," Lindquist informed them. No one seemed to mind as they watched the enormous multi-screened wall map showing samples of cyber threat incidents that looked like the scene from the movie "War Games" when the sentient computer is trying out nuclear attack scenarios for potential outcomes.

IT TOOK SOME DOING to tear the group away from the SOC, but eventually they gathered once again for the last presentation of the day - and this one was no let down, even after the SOC experience. Alison Cramer, Facility Security Officer and the day's chief liaison, spoke to the Nysmith contingent about the non-cyber aspects of security. Just like the "techie" talkers before her, she brought her topic home for her audience and kept their competitive edges sharpened, breaking them into groups to work on a "daily defense" project.

"Take today's lessons. Think about your school and look for ways to improve on the different areas of security," directed Cramer. Less than five minutes later, each group was ready to make their recommendations. No doubt they will be presenting them soon to school principal Ken Nysmith.

The Nysmith School has upped their stake in this year's CyberPatriot competition, adding a third team, and six more students ready to defend their school's title against 460 other school teams registered to compete. Eighth-grader Monica Saraf, a member of last year's championship team and Team Captain of the 2016 "CyberArmour" admitted that that the challenge was a fierce one, but thought that mentors like Miers and Handley, coaches like parent Bonnie McCrystal and extras like the FireEye visit "will really help us to make Nysmith proud of our efforts."

The 2016 CyberPatriot Competition Nationals will take place on April 10-14 in Baltimore.

Quiet Riot: ‘C’mon Feel the Noise’ County passes new noise ordinance, will revisit effectiveness in 18 months.

BY KEN MOORE
THE CONNECTION

The Board of Supervisors is at peace with the county’s new Noise Ordinance.

“Believe it or not, that passes,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova.

On the Nov. 17 meeting of the Board of Supervisors, the Board adopted a new Noise Ordinance. The new ordinance becomes effective on Feb. 17, 2016.

“There were times during this process that I thought we would never get to this point. Let me tell you, there are competing needs, issues all over the place as to what is too noisy, what is not noisy, about what is needed and what is not,” she said.

In June, the Board had deferred action on the proposed changes to the county’s noise ordinance in June until Nov. 17.

“It was a very productive evolution through five cycles of revisions,” said Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville). “We negotiated this thing for so long.”

“We’re not totally where I want to be, but this is a significantly improved product and something I can vote for,” he said.

Supervisor Michael Frey (R-Sully) spearheaded the Board’s efforts and thanked county staff. “They’ve managed to grasp the things we were trying to codify,” said Frey.

The Board delayed the effective date of implementation of the new ordinance to February in order to provide time for staff training, to update County websites, and to assist staff in understanding the new regulations, according to county documents.

The Board will revisit the impact of the noise ordinance and its effectiveness in 18 months to determine what might need to be tweaked for the long run.

“I’m not happy with everything that is in here, but at this point I’m prepared to support it, but appreciate that we can revisit it,” said Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield).

Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee District) says the outcome makes the ordinance much easier to enforce.

“This turned into something entirely different from where it started. I also agree that this wasn’t intended to address every noise issue,” said McKay, “but at the end of the day it makes for better enforcement and makes it a lot more clear which made the noise ordinance difficult to enforce.”

OVERALL GOALS of the proposed Noise Ordinance is to recognize that there will always be certain levels of noise that occur in the normal course of daily living; to allow certain levels of daytime noise so that people can live, work and play during the day; and to minimize noise at night so resi-

dents have an appropriate quiet environment in their homes at night.

More than 30 speakers testified at a public hearing last May on the noise ordinance.

“When babies cannot sleep, when the elderly cannot rest, when a voice teacher cannot instruct, when a family cannot share a meal together on their patio, when a homeowner has to close her windows and move to another part of the house just to make a telephone call, when a cancer patient cannot recuperate and rest in her yard because music is amplified in the neighborhood at intrusive levels, then we know something is not right with life in Fairfax County,” said Joyce Harris of McLean.

Sheila Casey, of Reston, said she can hear mowers on a nearby golf course before dawn with maintenance crews sometimes using headlights on lawnmowers before 5 a.m. “All I know is when those lawn mowers are running, I can turn on my air conditioning, I can put in my earplugs, and I still hear the noise,” she said.

Other speakers included: Greg Budnik who discussed helicopter noise from training runs at Fort Belvoir; Mark Grove of Fairfax whose wife was recuperating from cancer treatment and had to contend with music from a supermarket across the street that had permits to play music until 11 p.m.; Keith Elgin, worship director of Vine Church in Dunn Loring, who wants to create events such as outdoor

movies and concerts during the summer months; to neighbors in Reston who say they can not get relief from noise of nearby dog parks; to those who take their dogs to dog parks to spare neighbors from noise.

AMPLIFIED MUSIC from loudspeakers at schools during athletic practices and pre-game festivities took center stage.

Fairfax County Public Schools will replace loudspeakers at McLean High School with regulators to ensure that they are properly calibrated.

The school system is finalizing regulatory guidelines so athletic directors know exactly what needs to be done to keep harmony with neighborhoods in proximity with the schools.

“That’s a big deal, and let’s make sure when that agreement is formally adopted that we keep it with our noise ordinance,” said Bulova.

Other topics of major concern addressed dog parks, trash pickups from commercial shopping centers next to neighborhoods, and lawn maintenance.

Fairfax and other Virginia governments had to rewrite their noise ordinance as a result of a Virginia Supreme Court decision overturning the ordinance in Virginia Beach, according to county documents.

For more, see <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoning/noiseordinance/>



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Saturday December 5, 2015
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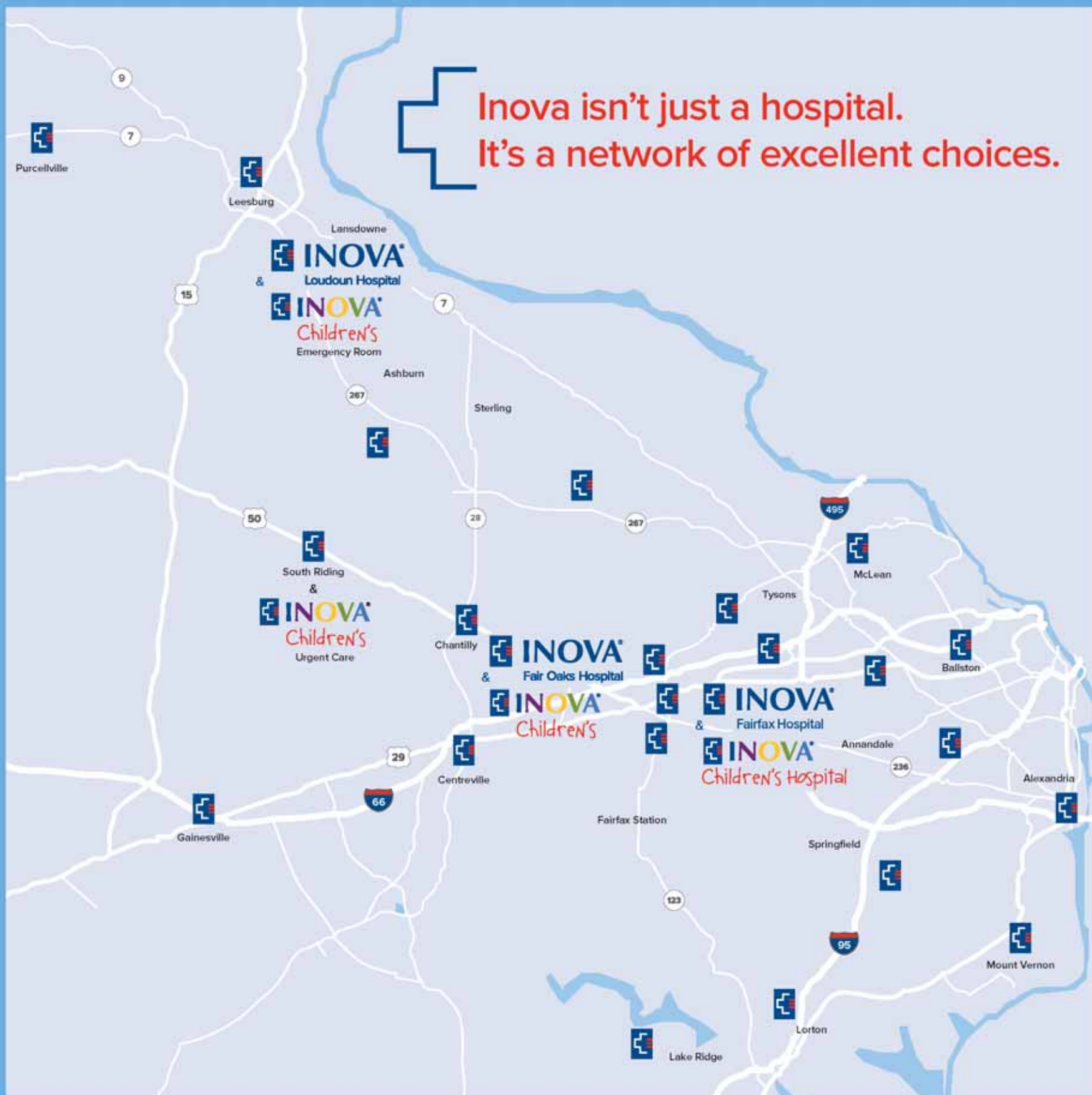
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OPINION

Celebrate, Shop, Dine Locally

Every day can be “small business day.”

There is a joy to participating in community traditions and celebrations during the holidays, from walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to shopping in local stores, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambiance available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that is otherwise unmatched.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon. An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving, also called

Shop Small. This year that day is Nov. 28.

Locally owned retail shops, services, restaurants depend on vibrant local communities to thrive, and communities depend on those businesses as well. Most small, locally owned businesses invest in community, helping to transform our towns and communities with a sense of place.

Frequently, it is the small retail person who is active in fundraising for local charities, advocating for improvements, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local retail stores, mom-and-pop stores, face tough challenges right now. Competition from big box stores and online sellers makes the holiday shopping season all the more important to locally owned retailers. But local families will literally spend millions of dollars to shop and exchange gifts during the next month in a variety of places.

Everyone will do some of their shopping at the mall. Everyone will shop online. Many will answer the call of the big box. But local shoppers should be sure to do some celebrating, shopping and dining locally. We promise it brings more joy.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

Children's Connection

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. It is a keepsake edition for many families. The annual Children's Connection is a tradition of well over a decade.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 4.

Email submissions for the Children's Connection to ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com. Subject line should be school name, town and teacher's last name (e.g. Westgate ES, McLean, Card).

The Challenge of Ending Homelessness

BY MARGI PRESTON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FACETS

COMMENTARY

Sometimes it takes a challenge to make progress. That's what happened here in Fairfax when leaders of six nonprofits serving those who are homeless decided to push themselves to do more.

With the second largest homeless population in the region, homelessness is a real problem in the Fairfax County-Falls Church community. A majority of the people who are homeless are in working families with children. Throughout the year, FACETS works in partnership with Fairfax's Office to Prevent and End Homelessness and other nonprofits to bring our community closer to a day when no one is homeless through a variety of effective programs. And in the summer of 2014, we decided to do even more by teaming up with five other local nonprofits to motivate ourselves to reach new records in moving people from homelessness to housing.

Our power team — FACETS, New Hope Housing, Cornerstones, Shelter House, NVFS and Volunteers of America-Chesapeake — kicked off a year-long Fairfax County Housing Challenge. The challenge was modeled after the successful Rapid Rehousing Challenge, which was organized by the National Alliance to End Homelessness to motivate nonprofits statewide to rapidly re-house as many families as possible within 100 days.

Rapid re-housing is a proven and cost-effective strategy used by communities across the

country to reduce homelessness. It involves helping households move into housing as quickly as possible after they enter the shelter system. Families and individuals are housed in market-rate apartments or houses in the community, and receive rental subsidies and/or services that are tailored to their specific needs, including a caseworker to help ease the transition.

Our housing challenge showed the real benefits of collaboration. Together we set and met quarterly ambitious goals to find homes for even more people who were unstably housed and homeless. We brainstormed and found new ways to get people out of homelessness and into safe and secure housing. And it worked. At the end of the challenge, nearly 500 single adults and more than 220 families now have a home of their own and services to help them remain housed.

As important as it is to get people into housing right away so they can start the transition back to a stable life, we all recognize that preventing homelessness is the top priority. Like our nonprofit partners, FACETS relies on help from volunteers and partnerships with the faith and business communities to prevent homelessness throughout Fairfax County by offering a full spectrum of services, such as basic needs and financial assistance, career counseling and outreach, educational enrichment programs, and permanent housing.

With the cold temperatures approaching, we have begun to gear up for our Hypothermia

Prevention and Response Program. Through a partnership with over 40 faith communities, this program enables FACETS to offer refuge from the bitter cold to over 200 individuals in our community who are homeless each year. The success of the Fairfax Housing Challenge has inspired us to remain motivated in helping even more people come in from the cold this winter and ideally keep more from ever having to experience the cold at all. We are up for the challenge ... and I know our community partners are too. That's a win for the whole community. To learn more, visit us at www.FacetsCares.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Entering Into the Arena

To the Editor:

Theodore Roosevelt once said that the credit belongs to those who are in the arena. Craig Parisot should be commended for stepping into the arena in what he knew would be a tough fight. Northern Virginia is becoming increasingly polarized and competitive and, as a result, the cost, both financially and personally, of running for office here is exorbitant. Respected incumbents declined to run for reelection this year, no doubt in part because of this strain. Craig knew what he was walking into, but he did it anyway out of a desire to serve his community. Thank you Craig Parisot for entering into the arena. I hope you are not done fighting.

Priscilla M. Griffith
McLean

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COMMENTARY

More on Session Agenda

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



The General Assembly will convene for its regular session on Jan. 13. Major work in the even-numbered years is passage of a biennial budget. With some recovery in the Virginia economy it should be possible to pass a required balanced budget without program or staff cuts, but it will not be possible to fund all the budget requests or pent-up demand from the dire budgets of the past decade. Budget deliberation will be controversial, however, because of the refusal to accept federal funds for Medicaid expansion that would free up about \$350 million of state monies that could be used for other purposes.

Many of the issues that concern me will face an uphill battle. We should fully fund the state share of public education, but there are those who will resist those efforts. I support expanding Medicaid to provide health insurance for the working poor. I am also concerned that Virginia's lax gun laws can lead to more gun violence. We need to expand background checks for all gun sales. We should take action to keep guns out of the hands of persons against whom protective orders have been issued by a court. Likewise, commonsense laws should be passed to keep guns out of the hands of children. Looking to the next round of legislative redistricting we need to pass a constitutional amendment to require independent, nonpartisan drawing of legislative boundaries. A constitutional amendment would permit the people to vote on it.

Last week the Republican majority was reported to have announced its priorities

for the upcoming session. I understand that in public education their priority is passage of a constitutional amendment to allow for the establishment of charter schools. Such an amendment passed the General Assembly last year and with passage this year would go to the voters for approval. With public schools already having

the power to establish alternative schools; magnet schools; and vocational, gifted, and special education centers it is difficult for me to see the value or need for charter schools that would drain resources from public schools.

Although the misleading campaign against tolls on I-66 had little impact on the outcome of recent elections, the majority intends to propose legislation to prohibit tolls on I-66. Their bill can lead to a full discussion of the tolling proposal. They can explain to single-occupant car drivers why they oppose access to I-66 during the rush hour if a driver is willing to pay a toll. Or, how they will raise the money to widen I-66 without toll revenue. Or why other roads will continue to have tolls.

A perennial favorite with the majority party is to pass bills and resolutions to say that Virginia does not have to comply with federal law. This year the aim is the clean air regulations issued by the federal Environmental Protection Agency. There also apparently will be a further attempt to tighten voter registration that will also make it more complicated and may discourage registration.

Republicans called their priorities "a broad, bold agenda." Others may find their session agenda to be too confrontational and controversial.

DHL Opens New Service Center in Herndon

DHL, an express services provider, opened a new service center in Herndon that will serve the area of northern Virginia known as the Dulles Corridor. The \$1.5 million investment was driven by the company's current and forecasted shipment growth from the region's technology, public sector and small- to medium-sized businesses.

The new 18,000-square foot facility can process more than 2,500 shipments per hour. It is located at 13978 Park Center Road, Herndon. The facility complements the operations of existing DHL

service center facilities in downtown Washington, D.C., and at the Baltimore-Washington International Airport.

"The Dulles Corridor is a booming market for international commerce and has strong growth potential for years to come," said Greg Hewitt, DHL area general manager, Northeast U.S. "This new facility will not only support customer shipment growth, but will allow for earlier delivery times and later drop-off cut-off times for international importers and exporters."

The facility will initially employ more than 40 local staffers.

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27

8 AM
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GINGERBREAD MAN MILE RACE FOR KIDS

8 AM - 11 PM
ICE SKATING PAVILION

11 AM
25TH ANNUAL RESTON HOLIDAY PARADE

12:30 PM - 4:30 PM
VISITS & PHOTOS WITH SANTA & MRS. CLAUS

MINI-TRAIN RIDES

5 PM
"FROSTY FOLLIES" PERFORMANCE

6 PM
TREE LIGHTING & SING ALONG

6:30 PM - 10 PM
HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES

WEEKENDS

SUNDAYS
12 - 4 PM
Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, 20
MINI-TRAIN RIDES

SATURDAYS
4 - 9 PM
Dec. 5, 12, and 19
HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES

THROUGHOUT DECEMBER
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Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON WATER RATE AND PROPOSED 2016 BUDGET

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2015, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges and its proposed 2016 Budget. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes to the Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, to be effective April 1, 2016, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$3,950 to \$4,100†.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$9,750 to \$10,240.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,090 to \$1,150†.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from \$36 to \$37.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$9.80 to \$10.10†.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.55 to \$2.68 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.55 to \$3.80 per 1,000 gallons of water.
8. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$50 to \$52.
9. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
10. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 110% to 104%.
11. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Materials from 25% to 16%.
12. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$45 to \$46.

†Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is proposing a \$170.4 million budget for calendar year 2016*. Revenues are expected to be \$170.4 million in 2016. Water sales are expected to provide \$147.3 million. Approximately \$23.1 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2015	2016
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 53,891	\$ 55,581
Power and Utilities	10,677	10,750
Chemicals	6,335	7,857
Purchased Water	6,717	6,090
Supplies and Materials	4,985	5,113
Insurance	1,017	1,050
Fuel	781	880
Postage	637	664
Contractual Services	9,930	10,422
Professional Services	1,146	1,046
Other	2,363	2,447
Sub-Total	98,479	101,900
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,669)	(9,616)
Total	\$ 88,810	\$ 92,284

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$41,417,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$24,131,000

*Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates and the 2016 budget can be viewed on our Web site at http://fairfaxwater.org/current/public_hearing_2015_12_17.htm. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Mr. Ken Lasso at 703-289-6194. Interested parties also may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, December 16, 2015** to be included in the record of the public hearing.



The Bargain Loft Thrift Store at 336 Victory Drive in Herndon is run under the auspices of nonprofit Herndon-Reston FISH – Friendly, Instant, Sympathetic Help. Co-manager April Elliott said to ‘come on in next Tuesday, Nov. 24 for the Grand Opening of the 2015 Bargain Loft Christmas Shop.’

Herndon All Heart for Season of Giving

Where to give, how to help in Herndon area?

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Last year in this special “season of giving section” we introduced you to “Arleta,” a Herndon mother of 8-year-old twins who had lost her husband to cancer earlier in the year. Arleta had given up her fulltime job to care for her husband before his death and could only find part-time work after his passing. That job was enough to keep the family in a new, smaller apartment, “but we had food. I was paying the bills,” said Arleta. Still, she admitted that she was “a little sad” that she couldn’t afford the Christmas gifts that she knew her youngsters wanted. One had his eyes on a Hot Wheels remote-controlled car set, while his brother had hopes that a special Lego set would be waiting under the tree on Christmas morning. Arleta had prepared her sons. This year it would be the practical new shoes and jeans that both sorely needed.

When a friend suggested that she look for just that bit of extra help from one of the community service organizations that serve the Herndon and Reston areas, Arleta didn’t think that she would qualify for any assistance and felt she didn’t deserve to “take away from people who really need it. I know people who have it worse than we do.” But, thinking of those boys, she made a call and thanks to Cornerstones, the Reston-based nonprofit, this family that hadn’t had a Thanksgiving or Christmas the year before due to the father’s illness and the bills needing to be paid, suddenly was looking forward to a turkey feast with all the trimmings.

CORNERSTONES looks out for neighbors all year long through a wide variety of programs and in partnership with many other organizations, government agencies and faith communities and with a dedicated staff and an army of volunteers and generous supporters. The Thanksgiving meal distribution that they organize brought a happy holiday to Arleta and her boys last year, and

they will do the same for close to another thousand struggling families this year.

Cornerstones also sponsors a seasonal Gifts for Kids Drive. That Hot Wheels car and that Lego set that Arleta’s boys wished for but were prepared not to receive found their way to their Christmas tree courtesy of that happiness-producing program. There were even a few other “just plain fun, not stuff we just needed real bad” presents that came along with their original wishes, reported the “older” twin with delight. This drive may already have closed so that preparations for delivery can be made, but it’s certainly worth contacting www.cornerstonesva.org to see what else people can contribute and how else they may assist.

If it’s still toys you want to donate, Toys for Tots, the US Marine Forces Reserve program that collects thousands of gifts for children around the country, has a strong presence in the neighborhood, and a number of local businesses and schools have signed on as drop-off sites. The Nysmith School for the Gifted is one location, at 13625 EDS Drive in Herndon, open for donations from 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. National Realty Partners at 365 Herndon Parkway, Suite 106, is a longtime supporter and drop off center open Monday–Thursday from 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Fridays until 1 p.m. Verizon Wireless at 13340-E, Franklin Farm Road in Herndon has extended hours, most days from 9 a.m.–8 p.m. and The Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel at 13869 Park Center Road in Herndon can accept donations 24/7. There are even drop-off boxes located in building lobbies at Reston Town Center (RTC). The Marines will visit RTC for a kick-off event on Dec. 1. Locally, the drop off spots cover all corners of the Herndon/Reston regions. Most accept donations through Dec. 12. For a complete list of sites, or how to request toys from the program, visit their website at www.toysfortots.org.

Toys are tops, no doubt, but as Arleta told us last year, making sure that the family is fed is the top priority for many, and sadly, not a given. A number of organizations spearhead programs and food pantries, and not just during the “season of giving.” LINK is one such group that services needful



FAITH – The Foundation for Appropriate and Immediate Temporary Help – runs a Thrift Shop right in the Herndon Historic District at 795 Center Street, among their many community outreach and assistance programs. Donations are always welcome, but certainly during the busy ‘season of giving.’

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



It takes all hands on deck – and all hearts open – to pull off the annual Thanksgiving meal collection and distribution, as you can tell, as volunteers get ready for a previous event. Sponsored by Reston nonprofit Cornerstones, in partnership with several other organizations and agencies, and of course, all those volunteers, close to 1000 struggling families enjoy Thanksgiving – all courtesy of the generosity of hundreds who feel the spirit of the ‘season of giving.’

neighbors all year long. They state that they are “all set” for the Thanksgiving deliveries, but that there is still a need for donations and for volunteers to help out during the Christmas distributions from Dec. 14–19. Visit www.linkagainsthunger.org. Food donations are always welcome. The folks at LINK have been able to count on many local businesses and schools, like the Garden Group at Herndon Middle School, who not only donated to the food pantry, but grew their donations themselves.

Thanksgiving and Christmas food baskets are also offered by Herndon-Reston FISH,

providing Friendly, Instant, Sympathetic Help, and they still need your help to continue achieving their mission, especially during the busy holiday season. Local grocery stores and several local Boy Scout Troops have been much-appreciated supporters of the FISH food drives. If assisting with the December food drive and distribution could enhance your season of giving, contact them by email at Holiday@herndonrestonfish.org. There’s lots of other volunteer opportunities or ways to help or donate so don’t hesitate to make contact or call them at 703-391-0105. You might even consider a shopping trip to their volunteer-run Bargain Loft at 336 Victory Drive in Herndon. Call 703-437-0600 to check on hours or for more information.

FAITH – the Foundation for Appropriate and Immediate Temporary Help – stays busy all year long, as well, and could always use the helping hands of the open-hearted residents of Herndon. In addition to food programs and a thrift shop located at 795 Center St., Unit 2 in Herndon’s Historic District, the folks at FAITH offer programs to help mentor and support orphans, young refugees and other children in need and offers them workshops, field trips and opportunities to learn and grow despite disadvantages. To add FAITH to your “season of giving” list, call them at 571-323-2198 or visit www.faithus.org.

Although this is just a sampling of some of the services that so many generous people and organizations in our community offer to our neighbors in need, the needs around us are great enough to keep them and all the others looking for your support. Now is the time, this “season of giving,” when Herndon really shows its heart.

* **Just a note:** Arleta and her now 9-year-old twin sons are proud to report that they have donated to the Thanksgiving meal collection that served them only one year ago – and the boys picked out items for other children to receive through the Gifts for Kids Cornerstones program that made them so happy last Christmas. “Things aren’t always easy, but they are a lot better,” Arleta said with a smile. “Now it’s our turn to help somebody else.”

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CALENDAR

Send announcements to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline is the Friday prior to the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

Art/Craft Programs. 10 a.m.-noon. Saturday/Nov. 28. Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza, Reston. Nov. 7-Colorful fall leaves. Nov. 14-Marshmallow sculpture. Nov. 21-Paper bag turkeys. Nov. 28-Holiday decorated snack plates. Ages 3-11. www.restonartgallery.com.

"A Touch of the Orient." Through Dec. 3. Reston Art Gallery and Studio, Lake Anne Village Center, 11400 Washington Plaza W, # B, Reston. Chinese brush paintings in the traditional style on rice papers by artist Lassie Corbett. Artist demonstrations from 2-4 p.m. on Sundays in November.

Ethereal and Natural Reactions. Through Sunday, Dec. 6. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Ethereal is series of abstract, contemporary art paintings by artist Anne Cherubim. In Natural Reaction, sculptor Brian Kirk reshapes and twists steel into new forms using blacksmithing techniques that focus on the beauty of rust as a surface treatment. Free. <http://www.artspaceherndon.com/ethereal-and-natural-reaction>. 703-956-6590.

Seussical the Musical. Dec. 4-20. Times vary by performance. NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Bring the whole family along for this musical spectacular featuring all your favorite Dr. Seuss characters! The cast of Seussical features local young actors in 3rd through 11th grades. \$25. 866-811-4111.

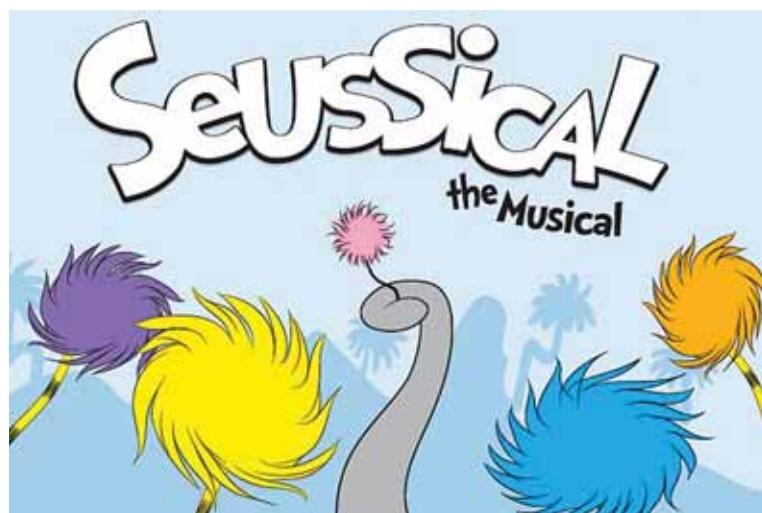


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Seussical the Musical will be at the NextStop Theatre in Herndon from Dec. 4-20. Bring the whole family for the musical spectacular.

boxoffice@nextstoptheatre.org.

Gingerbread Village at Hyatt Regency Reston. Saturday, Dec. 5 through Thursday, Dec. 31. The Hyatt Gingerbread Village is a holiday tradition presented annually since the hotel's opening in 1990. The sweet, whimsical, classic holiday village scene is on display in the main lobby. reston.hyatt.com.

Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides. Saturdays, Dec. 5, 12 and 19. 4-9 p.m. Departures on Market Street in front of Talbots at Reston Town Center. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free. All proceeds benefit local charities. www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

Mini-Train Rides. Sundays, Dec. 6, 13, 20. Noon-4 p.m. Pick up on Market Street in front of Talbots at Reston Town Center. Donated proceeds benefit local charities.

www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

All-comers' Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. For more information, call 703-689-0999 or visit <https://potomacriverrunning.com>.

Rebecca Kamen: Continuum. Dec. 1-Feb. 13. Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston. Kamen. Informed by research into cosmology, neuroscience, history of science, and philosophy, Kamen's abstract sculptures and paintings connect common threads across various scientific fields to capture and re-imagine what scientists see.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

DECEMBER

12/2/2015.....Wellbeing
12/9/2015.....Holiday Entertainment & Gift Guide II
12/9/2015.....HomeLifeStyle; Home for the Holidays
12/16/2015..A+ Camps & Schools; Holiday Entertainment & Gifts Pages
12/23/2015.....Special Issue – Safe for the Holidays
12/30/2015.....Children's Connection

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Enough with all the snowflake ties and reindeer sweaters, too. This year, there are lots of great ways to give and give back at the same time. Now you can donate to any of these Fairfax County nonprofits in honor of anyone on your gift list. It makes shopping easy and offers you a nice tax deduction. But best of all, it helps those organizations succeed in bringing goods and services to those who need them most at this special time of year. Learn more at givefairfax.net



To request reasonable ADA accommodations or information in an alternative format, call 703.324.5171 TTY 711 | Concept and design by Williams Whittle.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

restonarts.org. 703-471-9242.

Portrait and Figure Painting with Jordan Xu. Wednesdays, Nov. 4-Dec. 23. 7-10 p.m. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Come and learn how to paint portraits and figures in oil, acrylic or pastel from a live model. In this class you will gain the knowledge of basic painting concepts and techniques such as value, color temperature, composition and transition. Step-by-step instructions will take you through the entire process of a painting. Fee: \$250. Registration required at <http://www.artspaceherndon.com/portrait-and-figure-painting-with-jordan-xu/>. For more information, call 703-956-6590.

THURSDAY/NOV. 26

Annual Reston Thanksgiving Day Family Bike Ride. 9 a.m. South Lakes Shopping Center 11120 South Lakes Drive, Reston. Join the South Lakes Village Center ride to Reston Town Center or organize your own neighborhood ride. All rides converge at Starbucks at Reston Town Center. Free. Contact cyclinginreston@gmail.com or call 703-966-6182 for information.

FRIDAY/NOV. 27

Holidays at Reston Town Center. 8 a.m.-11 p.m. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Stores, restaurants, skating pavilion open early. Gingerbread Man Mile Race. Holiday parade. Dancing. Tree lighting and sing along. Carriage and min-train rides. And, Santa.

SATURDAY/NOV. 28

Jimmy Gaudreau and Orrin Star. 7:30 p.m. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. Bluegrass musicians who have been with some of the top bands in the genre over their 20 plus years in the music business. Jimmy is a master mandolin player and Orrin is a champion flat picking guitar player. Together they blend voices, instruments and sense of humor that make for a great night of music and fun. \$15, free to children under 12. 703-435-8377.

SUNDAY/NOV. 29

Bluegrass Series Season Pass. 7 p.m. Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Support the Bluegrass Barn by becoming a season pass holder. The series at the park's Visitor Center is sponsored by the Friends of Frying Pan Park, Vienna Hardwoods and Eastman Guitars and Mandolins in cooperation with Fairfax County Park Authority. Doors open at 6 p.m. Artists include Valerie Smith and Liberty Pike, Tom Mindte and Patuxent Partners and more. Season pass: \$128. 703-437-9101.

THURSDAY/DEC. 3

Community Holiday Performances. 6:30 p.m. Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Musical performances by community group from Sunrise Valley Elementary.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 3-6

2015 Annual Holiday Mini Sale. Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, 1-4 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Gift-quality books, gifts, and surprises to delight readers of all ages. Cash or checks only.

Narnia at Herndon High School. 7:30-9:45 p.m. Sunday, 2 p.m. Herndon High School, 700 Bennett St., Herndon. CS Lewis' "The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe," dramatized by Joseph Robinette. \$10, \$12. 703-401-0428. www.herndondrama.org.

FRIDAY/DEC. 4

Community Holiday Performances. 6 p.m. Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Musical performances by community group from River Bend Middle School, Raven Jazz, River Bend Jazz and River Bend Chamber Music.

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

Community Holiday Performances. 2 p.m. Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Musical performances by Rhythm Street Dance.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Larry Stephenson Band plays at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Herndon, Saturday, Dec. 5.

Jingle on Lake Anne. 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Lake Anne Plaza (Waterfront), 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. Variety of festive activities ranging from the ever popular special visit from Santa (arriving on a lake barge), strolling carolers, music, wine tastings, merchant specials, children's crafts, cookie and ornament decorating, holiday arts and crafts market, holiday entertainment and much more. Santa arrives at noon. Tree lighting at 6:30 p.m. Free. www.lakeanneplaza.com.

The Wonder of the Season: Around the World. 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. Reston Community Center, 213 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Celebrate the holidays with beloved carols from around the globe, plus Daniel Pinkham's Christmas Cantata, featuring the Washington Symphonic Brass Quintet. Adults/\$25, Seniors/\$20, Military/Free and Youth 17 and under/Free (with adult/senior ticketholder). www.restonchorale.org.

Alternative Gift Market. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Church of Reston, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston. The 2015 Alternative Gift Market and Craft Fair offers more than 60 gift opportunities from nearly 30 local and international organizations. Details and a complete list of available gifts can be found at <http://www.uureston.org/agm>. Free.

The Larry Stephenson Band. 7:30 p.m. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. Multi-award winning bluegrass vocalist with one of the finest high tenor voices in the business. He has been entertaining folks for well over two decades with the very best in traditional bluegrass and bluegrass gospel music. His band has also been a multi-award winning group over the years and the harmonies they attain are absolutely stellar. \$15. Free to children 12 and under. For information or to reserve 703-435-8377.

SUNDAY/DEC. 6

Holiday Arts and Crafts Show. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Avenue, Herndon. A variety of handcrafted items and fine art will be on sale including wreaths, quilts, jewelry, Christmas ornaments, decorations, original artwork, photography, stained glass and more. Visit www.herndonva.gov.

Run with Santa 5K. 8:30 a.m. Reston Town Center, 11911 Democracy Drive, Reston. Word on the street is he's been training like a champion. Are you ready to Run with Santa? Register at <http://www.prraces.com/runwithsanta>.

Holiday Caroling in the Closet. 4-6 p.m. The Closet, 845 Station St., Herndon. Listen to carolers, shop, enjoy free hot chocolate and cookies, and more. Santa will pose for pictures with kids of all ages. Please join the fun and bring a canned or boxed nonperishable food item to support the Western Fairfax Christian Ministries Food Bank. Free. www.theclosetofgreaterherndon.org. www.dranesville.org.

WEDDINGS

Meredith Klein and Drew Dudzik Married

Meredith Klein and Drew Dudzik were married on June 20, 2015 at St. John Neumann in Reston. The bride is a 2007 graduate of Chantilly High School and a 2011 graduate of James Madison University. She completed her Master in Education at James Madison University in 2012 and taught for the past three years at Oak Hill Elementary. The groom is a 2006 graduate of Centreville High School and a 2010 graduate of James Madison University. He completed a Master in Sports Leadership in 2011.

The bride is the daughter of Bruce and Doreen Klein of Oak Hill. The groom is the son of Michael and Sally Dudzik. Cousin of the bride, Kerrin O'Connor, served as Maid of Honor. Bridesmaids were Kristen Klein (sister-in-law of the bride), Anna Brunswick, Kimberly Resua, Jessica Fuller, Stephanie Passino, Katie Dudzik (sister of the groom), Allison Butler, Chelsea Goff and Shelley Newman. Matt Goff, best friend of the groom, served as Best Man. Grooms-men were Jason Klein (brother of the bride), Steven Klein (brother of the bride), Bill Nay (cousin of the groom), Dave Hill, Jason Dosh, DJ Mangus, Cameron Dohse, Aaron Butler and Charlie Newman.

Following the wedding ceremony, a reception with dinner and dancing was held



Oak Hill's Meredith Klein marries Centreville's Drew Dudzik in Reston.

at The Ritz Carlton in Tysons Corner.

The couple honeymooned in St. Lucia and are now residing in Raleigh, N.C. The bride is employed as a marketing specialist with Lionsbridge Technologies and the groom is employed with the Duke University Football Program as an assistant offensive coordinator.

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to north@connectionnewspapers.com by the Friday prior to the following week's paper.

MONDAY/NOV. 30

Board Operations Committee Meeting. 6-10 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. The primary task of the Board Operations Committee is to set the agenda for the Regular Meetings of the Association's Board of Directors. Join in and contribute your ideas and suggestions during the member comment period. 703-435-6530.

TUESDAYS/DEC. 1, 8, AND 15

Design Review Board Meeting. 7-9 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. The Design Review Board (DRB) is responsible for reviewing all additions and alterations to many different types of Reston properties. To assist in the review process, the DRB develops Design Guidelines and review procedures, and establishes design standards for clusters. 703-435-6530.

TUESDAY/DEC. 1

Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting. 7-9:30 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. The Environmental Advisory Committee advises the Board on the ecologically sound management of the association's environmental resources, including its water, natural areas and wildlife. Come join in to share your thoughts and ideas. 703-435-6530.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 2

Legal Committee Meeting. 6-8 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Reston Association's Legal Committee is responsible for recommending to the Board of Directors proposed enforcement actions, the imposition of sanctions and the filing of legal proceedings. 703-435-6530.

New and Prospective Member Orientation. 8-10 a.m. Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, 1886 Metro Center Drive, Suite 230,

Reston. New to the chamber? Interested in joining? The Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce invites your business to get engaged in our thriving community and the center for future business growth. Meet the chamber staff and learn from committee participants on how membership benefits both nonprofit and for-profit companies of all sizes. Free. Registration at <http://www.restonchamber.org/events>.

2015 Tax Planning Seminar. 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. CPA Dan Gilliland will offer tax planning strategies to help you reduce your 2015 taxes. For both individual taxpayers and small business owners. Register for this event at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/.

InnovateHER Reston. 6-10 p.m. South Lakes High School-Lecture Hall, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston. InnovateHER Reston is the initial round of the national InnovateHER Challenge presented by the SBA in partnership with Microsoft. The SBA is looking for innovative products and services that help impact and empower the lives of women and families. The top 10 finalists of InnovateHER Reston will receive the opportunity to pitch live to our panel of judges on Wednesday, Dec. 2. Free. www.InnovateHERReston.com.

THURSDAY/DEC.3

Coffee and Contracting: GovCon Networking. 8-9:30 a.m. Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, 1886 Metro Center Drive, Suite 230, Reston. Join the Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce and Dempsey Fontana, PLLC for Coffee and Contracting, an informal networking breakfast for government contractors with guest speakers Kevin Boshears of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Jim Fontana of Dempsey Fontana. Cost: \$10/member; \$20/future member. Registration at <http://www.restonchamber.org/events>.

THANKFUL FOR ADOPTION

Consider adopting a child from foster care. In Virginia, there are more than 860 children waiting and hoping to be adopted. Many of those children are listed on the Adopt US Kids website which you can find at: adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx

Creating Families with Adoption

Adoptive parents described: 'Grateful. Generous. Awesome.'

BY JOAN BRADY
THE CONNECTION

November is National Adoption Awareness Month. With that in mind, meet two families expanded through adoption; two families whose kids describe their family as "awesome."

The Hagens of Vienna are a family of two parents, Kelly and Scott; three boys, two adopted and one biological; and two family dogs. Appreciative is the word that comes to mind listening to the Hagens talk about their family.

Lewis, 17, describes family priorities. "Somehow we find time to do stuff together. Like eating dinner. I've heard some families don't do that. That's very sad to me."

Spencer, 16, talks of how his brother, James, influences his life. "I know there are a lot of experiences that I get to have because James is so outgoing."

James, 11, appreciates time spent with his dad. "I like working outside with my dad. And, I like that he pays me for it."

Lewis loves having brothers. "You have people who are always there. I play Xbox with them. We talk. We listen to music. It's like having friends that are always there AND they are family." Would be different with sisters? Spencer says, "Well, they would probably make it all about them."

For parents Kelly and Scott Hagen, appreciation extends outside of their immediate family. "We have a lot of special issues in our family and that has made us more open minded about people," says Kelly. "We make fewer assumptions and we listen more."

Meet the Connelly Family

The Connelys have an immediate family that includes two parents, five sons — two



Hagen Family: Scott, Spencer, James, Lewis and Kelly of Vienna

biological, two adopted from Fairfax County foster care, and one foster son — and two cats. They hope to add a therapy dog in the next few months.

Jackson, 8, likes the commotion that a large family brings. "I like having brothers. It's interesting living with a lot of people. It's very loud, which means I'm never bored and I learn a lot about how to be nice."

Anthony, 17, has a deep appreciation for his parents, "Not every family would take in so many kids and do so much for them. My parents make sure to keep things fair and show us a lot of love."

Ben, 15, recognizes all that it means to be a family, "If you are looking for a family, you will find everything and more from the family right here. We are everything you would expect; the good and the bad. We are a real family."

Hunter, also 15, might complain about the noise, and apparently does, all of the time, but he wouldn't change a thing, "When we are at home and I'm trying to get work done and everyone's doing their thing around my area, it drives me crazy. But I wouldn't trade

them in for peace and quiet."

Scott and Megan Connelly have been foster parents to many kids over the years. According to Scott, the "spectacular" success of the foster children they have had over the years, many now grown, as well as the success of their biological and adopted boys is simple. "We make sure they know that we love them, unconditionally, and that we are going to hold them accountable. It takes a few weeks, but then they settle right in."

Megan adds: "One of the things that helps makes our household work is that the kids are flexible and giving. Each time we have added someone new into the mix, they follow the example set and pretty quickly, it's like they were always there."

Nicholas, the Connely's 10-year-old foster son describes his foster parents this way: "They are grateful. They are generous. They are awesome."

Megan Connelly is one of 12 kids, 10 of whom were adopted. Megan says that with their current four, they are only just getting started.

Photos and bios provided by Fairfax County Department of Family Services

Adame, an energetic 6-year-old boy has a big smile and big heart to match. Keeping Adame engaged will help him remain on task and minimize anxiety for him. A two-parent household, with one parent primarily in the home available to attend to Adame's needs would be ideal, Adame is resilient and would thrive in an adoptive family of his own.



Tim, an active 16-year-old, loves to keep busy. His favorite thing to do is go fishing. He would like a family who is active and loving. He gets along well with young children and has a good sense of humor. He hopes to one day attend a trade school to become a plumber because he feels this would be a great way to become financially stable.



Damon, a kind and thoughtful 14-year-old young man enjoys eating out, watching movies and going to the park. He has discovered rock-collecting and can identify many different kinds of rocks. Damon likes school; he is energetic and loves sports, especially basketball, rollerblading and riding his bike.



Summer, a 15-year-old young lady enjoys hiking and biking outdoors, and loves music and reading. She is self-taught on piano and guitar and can play songs by ear. She would like a family that has a love for music and enjoys being active in the community.



All 860

BY JOAN BRADY

Parental rights terminated. Available for adoption. Floundering in an imperfect system. These words describe many children who are currently living in foster care in Virginia. In Fairfax County, these four children are hoping that this will be the last Thanksgiving spent in foster homes.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe wants those children who are currently available for adoption, adopted into loving homes, and he isn't messing around.

"Let's make it a goal — all of us in this room — that one year from today all 860 of these children will be adopted," McAuliffe recently charged a room full of adoption and foster care professionals at the Connecting Hearts Summit.

Focusing on Virginia is a good start. More than 26,000 young people across the United States age out of foster care each year to futures more likely to include homelessness and hunger than jobs and careers that will pay the bills. All of those young people were once children like the 108,000 currently languishing in foster care. Children who hoped, in vain, that someone would come forward and



Connely Family: Hunter, Jackson, Ben and Anthony (Foster son, Nicholas, not pictured).



Scott and Megan Connelly.

THANKFUL Adoption

FROM PAGE 12

choose them for adoption.

In 2014, McAuliffe elevated the priority of foster care adoption by appointing Debbie Johnson as Virginia's Adoption Champion. An adoptee herself, one of her achievements to-date has been to create Connection Hearts. www.connectingheartsva.org. With Ericca Facetti at the helm, Connecting Hearts works with the Virginia Department of Social Services, local departments of social services as well as local businesses to engage and educate the public about children in foster care who are waiting for adoptive families.

One of Ericca's immediate goals is to get as many of those children as appropriate included in the Adoptuskids/Virginia listings. Currently, of the 860, just 180 are listed. www.adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx

According to the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG), there are 259 children in the DC metro area waiting for adoptive homes. Child Welfare Program Manager, Kamilah Bunn, works tirelessly to bring visibility to foster care adoption in our region. COG's adoption efforts include Wednesday's Child, The PicMe Project, Regional Adoption Events and the Regional Adoption Exchange.

Many children have no problem advocating for themselves. Perhaps one of the more memorable self-advocates was a 10-year old twin, who grabbed his brother, hopped on a stage in downtown DC, grabbed a mic and belted out to the cheering crowd, "WE NEED A FAMILY." Other children are not so forthcoming; They are embarrassed by circumstances that are no fault of their own. They have been disappointed by adults who have said they loved them, but who then turned away. They fear further rejection.

Social workers and other professionals like Kamilah Bunn and Ericca Facetti all work together to protect each child, as they work tirelessly to match children successfully with a small pool of potential adoptive families.

Adoption Expo

What: 2015 Adoption Expo will educate, inspire and celebrate families formed through adoption. Prospective adoptive parents can meet adoption professionals as well as current adoptive and foster parents to learn about foster care adoption and foster parenting.

Cost: Free

When: Dec. 5, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Where: 801 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20001

More: adoptionfosterexpo.org

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

SPORTS



Eric Kirlew and the South Lakes football team lost to Westfield 24-13 in the 6A North quarterfinals on Nov. 20 at Westfield High School.



PHOTO BY WILL PALENSCAR

South Lakes quarterback Devin Miles throws a pass against Westfield in the 6A North quarterfinals on Nov. 20 at Westfield High School.

South Lakes Football Falls to Westfield in Quarterfinals

Seahawks finish season with 9-3 record.

BY WILL PALENSCAR
FOR THE CONNECTION

The No. 3-seed Westfield football team overcame a fourth-quarter deficit to defeat No. 6 South Lakes 24-13 on Nov. 20 in the 6A North region quarterfinals at Westfield High School.

The Bulldogs led 10-6 entering the fourth quarter. The Seahawks answered with a 3-yard touchdown pass from

quarterback Devin Miles to Marvin Grunshie. Khalil Dover's extra point gave South Lakes the advantage at 13-10. However, Westfield's Tavon Greene returned a punt 70 yards for a touchdown and quarterback Tyler Scanlon rushed for his second score of the game with 6:19 remaining to close out scoring.

Westfield will travel to face No. 2 Lake Braddock in the region semifinals at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 28.

Westfield opened up scoring in the second quarter when quarterback Scanlon ran for his first of two scores. The first touchdown was a 22-yard burst which came with 29 seconds left in the second quarter. After Brian Delaney's extra point, Westfield was up 7-0.

In the third quarter, a Westfield punt was downed at the South Lakes 1-yard line. On the next play, South Lakes sophomore quarterback Miles took the snap and fired the ball to receiver Eric Kirlew,

who took the ball 99 yards for the score. After a missed South Lakes extra point, Westfield held a 7-6 edge.

Kirlew finished with four catches for 114 yards.

With 5:15 left in the third quarter Westfield's Delaney kicked a 32-yard field goal to give the Bulldogs a 10-6 lead heading onto the 4th quarter.

South Lakes ends its season with a 9-3 record. Westfield improved to 11-1.

Langley Senior Duenkel Signs with JMU

Langley High School's Halle Duenkel on Nov. 13 signed a National Letter of Intent to play lacrosse at James Madison University.

A four-year starter, she is closing in on the all-time leading scoring records at Langley High School with 112 goals and 53 assists. Duenkel was an offensive weapon on the 2013 Saxon team that went to the state finals. She was named to the Brine All-American team in 2014, and was a Washington Post All-Met honorable mention in 2015. A 6A/5A North All-Region selection in Virginia for lacrosse, she was also first-team all-conference for the past two years.

Duenkel looks to complete her high school career with 13 varsity letters. She is a regional finalist long jumper and all-region field hockey player for the Saxons. She is the president of the Spanish National Honor Society, has a 4.1 GPA, and was a U.S. Lacrosse Academic All-American in 2015.

Outside of school, Duenkel is the founder of the faith-based nonprofit, Compassion in Actions, where she has helped to donate over 540 cubic feet of gently used sporting equipment to poverty-stricken nations. She plans to major in business for James Madison University and contribute to a perennial top 20 Division I lacrosse program.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Langley senior Halle Duenkel on Nov. 13 signed a National Letter of Intent to play lacrosse at James Madison University. Pictured from left: Langley lacrosse coach Maggie Kovacs, Duenkel, Principal Fred Amico and DSA Geoff Noto.

All Four It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

In fact, it was my idea (and I do think much of it), as it has been previously, but this time, my oncologist felt – to quote my late father: “The idea had merit.” And so, infusing forward, I will be visiting (I use that word loosely), the Infusion Center every four weeks instead of three. A change nearly seven years in the making. Now whether it hastens my demise or simply improves the quality of my life, I certainly don’t know. All I know is what little I know. Nevertheless, given my amazing good fortune to still be alive so many years after my original prognosis “prognosed” otherwise: “13 months to two years,” (as stated by my oncologist on 2/27/09), I suppose I’m living proof that cancer works in mysterious ways and not always according to medical expectations. Thank God!

Perhaps the future – and maybe even the present, is what I make of it. And though it’s difficult – but not impossible – to do so, among the rather grim tales that one hears in the lung cancer/cancer-in-general world, there are success stories, many of which I’ve actually heard. And the more of these stories I hear, the more I feel empowered and realize that even though we have not won the war on cancer, we are winning battles, not just skirmishes. Lung cancer patients are living longer, as I have been fortunate to do; now we’re going to try and improve the quality of that “living longer.”

Not that you readers can’t sort it for yourselves, but extending my infusion schedule by one week from three to four is not merely a 33 percent increase in that interval, it’s an exponential increase in my head; meaning it feels way more significant than one week. It almost seems as if I can breathe normally again (not that I have any cancer-related difficulty breathing other than climbing stairs, lifting heavy objects or otherwise over-exerting myself); the sensation now, the expectation now, is that I have control of my life for an extra week EVERY SINGLE MONTH that I’ve not had for almost seven years. I don’t want to go commercial here, but can you spell relief? For me, it’s not a product, it’s a lifestyle.

However, as relieved as I am, this decision/possibly even accommodation from my oncologist, is not because I’m cured, in remission or cancer-free. No. It’s because I asked and my most recent PET Scan answered by indicating that I was “stable,” according to my oncologist. News, I like to joke, with which I can live. But news which hardly extricates me from “Cancerville.” Rather, news that allows/enables my oncologist to consider some options that many cancer patients are unable to consider. For the record, though: this is unlikely to be permanent and guarantees are not being made. Still, to invoke Hubert H. Humphrey: “I’m pleased as punch.”

As a long-time salesman, I’ve heard many technique advisories. One I will mention here: “Don’t be afraid to take ‘yes’ for an answer.” Well, I’ve learned my lessons. I am going to take “yes” for an answer. I’m not looking for trouble. If my oncologist is happy to oblige/agree with the four-week interval, then who am I to question it? Question it is the last thing I’m going to do. I’m going to embrace and enjoy it. Besides, I deserve it. I only wish there hundreds/thousands of other “terminal” cancer patients receiving similar results and subsequent improvement in the quality of their lives. And though it may be temporary (until the results of my next CT Scan in January, that is), for the time I’m still being: “Oh, what a relief it shall be!”

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

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FAITH

Finding Oil

BY RABBI LEIBEL FAJNALND
DIRECTOR CHABAD OF RESTON - HERNDON

In a world darkened by violence and despair, candles will soon light up the night. From Alaska to Zaire, the gloom and chaos of our planet, will be replaced by the bright luminescence of millions of Menorahs. Society, desperate for some light, will welcome the festival of Chanukah.

Across our community, and the world at large, countless millions will join hands and make a statement; that if a small candle can banish the dark of night, then surely the light and inspiration generated by our acts of goodness and kindness, can, too, illuminate our world.

Regarding the flames of the Menorah, tradition tells us, its purpose is to tell the miraculous story of the cruse of oil - the last bit of oil, undefiled by the ancient Syrian Greek army, that miraculously burned in the Temple's great Menorah for eight days. Because of the miracle it evokes its flames are sacred, and one may not make use of them for personal benefit - save for gazing at them, thus affirming the supremacy of Divine power over physical limitations.

What is the lesson to be learned?

Man's mission is to harness the "light of day," goodness and decency, in order to "illuminate the night;" we strive to cultivate all that is good and G-dly in our world, and direct these positive resources to overcome and transform the negative "dark side" of the world in which we live. This process was exemplified by the lighting of the Temple Menorah: kindled before day's end in the Temple's inner sanctum, the Menorah radiated its Divine glow beyond the Temple to the dark world outside.

But there are times when the darkness invades the Divine lighthouse, dimming the Menorah and defiling its oil. Times when we no longer feel empowered enough, or capable of, or perhaps even interested in illuminating the madness and menace of our world's ills.

In such times, we must search for the hidden "single cruse of pure oil," the undefilable essence of good that is in every single one of us. We must dig below the surface realities of "day" and "night" to unearth the enormous power that we all have, and transform the ugliness that has surrounded us and seemed unbeatable.

Placed where it can be seen from the street, the Chanukah Menorah teaches us to spread that light to all our surroundings.

FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday.

Trinity Presbyterian Church, 651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery and childcare are provided and youth and adult Sunday school classes are held prior, from 9:40-10:45 a.m. 703-437-5500 or www.trinityherndon.org.

Hope Fellowship Church will temporarily be

Community Chanukah Events:

Reservations can be made at www.chabadrh.org.

MENORAH WORKSHOP

Bring your family and friends for a fun pre-Chanukah experience at the Home Depot. Craft your own Menorah with tons of different materials. Release that little Van Gogh hiding inside of you. Enjoy Latkes, donuts, Dreidels, chocolate Gelt, chanukah music, and much more.

When: Sunday, Dec. 6, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Where: The Home Depot, 1651 Reston Parkway, Reston

Fee: Gratis.

\$50 Menorah Sponsorship

\$100 Event Sponsor

CHANUKAH AT LAKE ANNE

Bring family and friends for an evening of Chanukah fun at Lake Anne.

Change the World with your Good Deed! Bring kosher canned food of all sizes, and add it to the Menorah of Kindness later to be donated to the needy.

An exciting holiday celebration, jam packed with activities for the whole family - lots of fun and surprises for all ages. Giant Outdoor Food Cans Menorah - to later be donated to feed the homeless, face painting, salad bar, sizzling latkes, delicious donuts and chocolate gelt, free dreidels, and lots of holiday cheer for the whole family.

When: Tuesday, Dec. 8, 5:30-7 p.m.

Where: Lake Anne Waterfront and the Reston Community Center, 1609 Washington Plaza N # A, Reston

Fee: Gratis.

Event Sponsorship:

Dreidle Sponsor, \$50

Menorah Sponsor, \$100.

Macabee, \$180

CHANUKAH ON ICE

Join us and enjoy... Ice-skate to lively Chanukah music with family and friends. Grand Menorah lighting. Hot latkes and donuts. Dreidels and Chocolate Gelt for all. Grand Raffle and more. Pre-ordered boxed dinner (hot dog, snack, juice box) available for purchase \$3.50

When: Sunday, Dec. 13, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Where: Reston Town Center Ice Skating Rink, 11900 Market Street, Reston

Admission: FREE. \$10 to skate/\$12 at the door.

Event Sponsorship:

Dreidle Sponsor, \$50

Menorah Sponsor, \$100

Macabee, \$180

Lit at nightfall, it reminds us that even in our darkest moments, our deepest light can be brought to the fore and shine brightly enough for all "still outside" to see and be inspired. Redemption can come to the world with just one more flame.

For more information on the above, email Rabbi Leibel Fajnalnd at rabbil@chabadrh.org.

meeting at Woody's Golf Range, 11801 Leesburg Pike, Herndon. Sunday worship services for the Southern Baptist church are at 10:45 a.m. The public is invited to join a Bible believing, multi-ethnic/multi-cultural congregation, with Bible-based sermons and uplifting music. 703-599-3527 or www.hopefellowshipchurchloudoun.org.

Nondenominational Christian businessmen meet for prayer, Biblical discussion and fellowship 7 p.m. Fridays at Anita's, 1051 Elden St., Herndon and 12 p.m. Thursdays at 555 Grove St., Suite 200, Herndon. Call 703-795-1257.



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Demonstrating their signature sign. From left: Touching Heart board member Marina Amat, program manager Michelle Taillon, co-founder Helen Yi, executive director Stacey Gimbert, and curriculum advisor and coach Meg Chow at the Floris ES Touching Heart graduation ceremony.



The Floris Elementary School Touching Heart young philanthropists pose with the posters they made to describe their experiences in the workshop where they made contact with orphans in Kenya, made sandwiches for the homeless and scarves for kids in foster care in Fairfax County. Coach Meg Chow [back row] tried, but things get a bit hectic at the end and the spell-out of "Kids on a Mission" just a bit jumbled - but still good-hearted.

Touching Heart Sows the Seeds of Philanthropy at Floris ES

Floris students complete 8-week young philanthropists workshop.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

At 8:15 a.m. on a drizzly Thursday morning, fifteen youngsters from the fourth, fifth and sixth grades at Floris Elementary School in Herndon gathered in the school's "Little Theater" to receive certificates for the successful completion of their 8-week Touching Heart (TH) young philanthropists workshop. Before that ceremony, however, they made a presentation to a proud audience of parents, siblings, school officials and even the co-founder of their program and staff and board members of Touching Heart.

The program is the educational arm of Kids on a Mission and was started by Helen Yi and her daughter Taylor. The news may be filled with stories of bullying and in-school violence, but Yi believes that children are basically "good at heart when they are taught just how impactful their thoughts and actions are. They are especially generous when they get a glimpse of other children less fortunate and are given opportunities to help and see the end result of their kind actions."

During the before-school class the children are gently guided to experience a view of the world around them beyond their own daily lives. "I didn't know that so many kids lived without the good things that I have," was the comment of one young TH participant. With their dedicated coaches, the young leaders are introduced to the situations of other, less fortunate children, both locally and around the world. Working as a group, they choose their projects and learn to fundraise, create a budget, plan and do the work hands-on, and then "experience the joy of giving," said Yi.

AT THE EVENT, the Floris gang showcased their projects by each sharing a poster col-



After their presentation, each of the Touching Heart after-school program members received congratulations, certificates and a souvenir bookmark to mark the occasion.

lage that he or she had made to illustrate what they had done and learned, taking a few minutes to describe their projects. Each child also shared what their favorite project was, the word that most describes Touching Heart for them, and what charitable activity they would choose to do next if they could. There was a pretty even split vote among the projects. Making 195 sandwiches for the Embury Rucker Homeless Shelter in Reston was the favorite of some. Making scarves for Fairfax County children in foster care was named "best project" by quite a few others, while some said their favorite activity was supporting an orphanage in Nairobi, Kenya and actually having a Skype call with some of those children.

Some of the words that the graduates chose to describe their Touching Heart experience included "empathy," "kindness," and "amazing." Some of the projects they would like to organize in the future ranged from a carnival to benefit the homeless to a fun run for the orphanage with which they had connected. One young gentleman kept his next plans simple: "We helped a lot of people in this class. Tomorrow I would like to fundraise to help thousands of people."

Before the certificates were handed out, Helen Yi and a few other adult guests addressed the gathering, agreeing that "empathy" was a very important word and pleased that it made the list of words to describe Touching Heart. "All the informa-

tion in the world is almost overwhelmingly available to us. What we need now is perspective and to view the people in that world with empathy."

Floris ES PTA president David Whiting also spoke about empathy and the need to help children become more well-rounded. Whiting noted that sometimes parents become "singly focused on the aspects of education that lead to a financially rewarding future. It can become all about STEM classes, electronic devices, etc." Whiting and others referred to studies and examples of employers lamenting the lack of empathy and more global perspectives in many of today's young workforce. Touching Heart, in the eyes of Whiting, is just as important a part of their children's upbringing "as any traditional subject matter."

FLORIS ES served as the pilot program for Touching Heart, being the first school to offer a supported program. Retired Floris teacher Meg Chow (who actually taught Touching Heart co-founder Taylor) re-entered the world of education to become the curriculum advisor to bring consistency and transferability to the effort. She coached this second round of Touching Heart at Floris. Flint Hill Elementary and Dranesville Elementary are gearing up to offer the philanthropic workshops. "It's great to see this grow and spread," said Touching Heart board member Marina Amat, who was present at the ceremony.

Visit the website www.touchingheart.com to learn more about this effort to grow compassion and empathy, where Chow says "the required community service in later school years is given a wonderful foundation based on real meaning." On the website, children can find out how they can get involved through the companion program Kids on a Mission, in groups or as individuals. We are looking forward to following these Floris kids as they continue of their mission of compassion.