



That's What Friends Are For

Firefighters and Friends annual toy drive to help 4,000 area children.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

For 45 Head Start preschoolers, Christmas arrived a week early when they entered Penn Daw Fire and Rescue Station 11 Dec. 18 to select a toy of their choice from the thousands that had been collected as part of the 2012 Firefighters and Friends annual toy drive.

"For the first time we are letting a few of the kids pick out their own toys," said Capt. Willie Bailey, founder of the drive. "Words don't describe the way the kids' faces light up when they see a toy and realize it's theirs to keep."

Following the visit from the Gum Spring area students, representatives from a record number of organizations set about collecting toys for the children they serve.

"We have over 70 schools, shelters and nonprofits from Alexandria and Fairfax County participating in this year's drive," Bailey said. "I can't believe all the schools and nonprofits that reached out to us this year. You hear on the



AFD Captain Thurston McClain helps a Gum Springs Headstart student find a toy.

news that the economy is rough — this is proof."

Now in its 16th year, the annual drive collected 4,000 toys with the help of local businesses and indi-

viduals, including students from St. Stephen's and St. Agnes middle and upper schools.

SEE WILLIE BAILEY, PAGE 4



Kappa Alpha Psi Alumni Chapter members Charlie L. Price, Charles Parker Jr., Stanley Lamb and Leonard Askew volunteer to help with the distribution on Tuesday morning.



Toy drive organizer Captain Will Bailey welcomes Margaret Panik and Steve Greensburg of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers.

Stable Unstable

Future of Woodlawn Stables in doubt now that feds have decided on southern bypass.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

From the top of the hillside graveyard at Woodlawn Baptist Church, Pastor Travis Hilton looks out over the cars rushing by on the highway below. For months, families at his church have been worried that about 100 of these graves might have to be exhumed to widen Richmond Highway. Now that the Federal Highway Administration has entered into a programmatic agreement with the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Travis says God has answered the prayers of his congregation.

"That's something that we can celebrate this Christmas is that we

will not have to have concern about the graves at Woodlawn Baptist Cemetery," said Hilton. "So that is a relief."

A few miles to the northeast, however, prayers have not been answered. Sitting in her office at Woodlawn Stables, owner Cynthia Mitchell says she does not know what the future holds for her business. She says she's confident she will carry on the business somehow — even if it means moving away from Fairfax County, which she says has become increasingly hostile to horses. For now, she says, the expectation is that Woodlawn Stables will close when its lease with the National Trust for Historic Preservation ends.

SEE SOUTHERN, PAGE 3

A Loaded Debate

Mass shooting in Connecticut to spotlight gun legislation in upcoming session.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

Last week's mass shooting at an elementary school in Connecticut has already prompted a debate about gun control in Virginia, where the upcoming session of the General Assembly is likely to feature a number of bills on both sides of the issue. Advocates for gun control will seek to force individuals to report stolen firearms within 24 hours of the theft and limit the number of bul-

lets that are allowed in ammunition clips. Advocates for wider availability of guns are likely to push to allow concealed weapons on college campuses and in airports.

"Democrats have felt a lot more emboldened to talk about limiting access to certain kinds of guns and certain kinds of ammunition," said Kyle Kondick, analyst with the University of Virginia Center for Politics. "It does seem like the pro-

SEE LEGISLATION, PAGE 5

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Members of the Mount Vernon Chapter of the DAR come to place wreaths at the Alexandria national Cemetery each year to honor the four civilians lost when chasing John Wilkes Booth. This DAR chapter is the third oldest in the state of Virginia.

Wreath Laying at Alexandria National Cemetery



Spec. Rachael Shilakes, from the Wounded Warrior Unit at Fort Belvoir, was selected to place the POW/MIA wreath at the Dec. 15 ceremony. Escorting her is Judge Advocate Chuck Terio from Post 609.



Sgt. Justin Sutherland and his daughter place the wreath for the Army. Sutherland was also selected from Fort Belvoir's Wounded Warrior Unit.

PHOTOS BY RENÉE RUGGLES/THE GAZETTE



The graves for the four civilians lost when chasing John Wilkes Booth, after Lincoln's assassination, are in a special section of the cemetery.

Southern Bypass Decision Impacts Woodlawn Stables

FROM PAGE 1

"We have spent the better part of the last 30 years building relationships within this community, and had multiple generations of students work here, ride here, show their horse here," said Mitchell. "It's a huge loss to the community, not just the horse world."

THE CLASH between the National Trust and Woodlawn Stables began when U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) secured a \$180 million appropriation to widen the road as a result of the Base Closure and Realignment Commission changes that have added thousands of new daily commuters to Fort Belvoir. Part of the agreement struck last week includes money for the National Trust to construct a new horse barn — if the organization can find an operator for it.

"This agreement is great news for the commuters along the already crowded Route 1 corridor," said Moran in a written

statement. "This is a good outcome following a thorough process — everyone with something at stake was able to arrive at a compromise."

An attorney for the National Trust acknowledged the agreement included money for the organization to build a horse barn, but he was quick to add that that didn't mean the organization would do so. Some of the details about how the project will work have yet to be ironed out, and the National Trust has a number of properties it needs to protect. In addition to the historic plantation house known as Woodlawn, the National Trust also owns a house not open to the public known as Grand View as well as a Frank Lloyd Wright house that was moved to the property during the construction of Interstate 66. Leaders at the National Trust say threading that needle has been a difficult task.

"We are not in favor of the road. However, we know that it's going to go in," said Ross Bradford, an attorney who represents

the National Trust. "And in order to be good neighbors, we supported an alignment that would minimize impact to the national historic landmark, which is our primary focus at Woodlawn."

FOR SUPPORTERS of Woodlawn Stables, the idea that horses would not be a part of the community has been a worrisome development. That's why a group formed and began calling itself Save Woodlawn Stables, whose founders took part in the negotiations leading to the programmatic agreement. They say the language in the agreement about the Federal Highway Administration contributing money to the National Trust for a horse barn is a "placeholder" — essentially keeping the idea alive whether the operator is Woodlawn Stables or another investor.

"I wouldn't be surprised to see a number of potential investors come forward when the lease runs out," said Shelly Kazel, co-founder of Save Woodlawn Stables. "We

hope the trust will see this is what the community wants on the property."

The agreement sets out a plan that would demolish the existing barn to make way for a new commuter bypass. It would be replaced with a new barn, which would be located on the far end of the property near where an outdoor arena is currently located.

"Like most residents and supporters of Save Woodlawn Stables, we are devastated with the decision to choose a road design that forever changes the landscape of Woodlawn Plantation and the home of one of the area's most popular and cherished equestrian facilities: Woodlawn Stables," said Castle in a written statement. "SWS has no doubt that the entire Woodlawn property would be a promising multi-use property where a riding facility can successfully co-exist and greatly contribute to the sustainable future of Woodlawn Plantation and the needs of the National Trust for Historic Preservation."

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PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE



Volunteers from the Sheriff Department Second Lt. R. Morse and First Lt. Jamie Popik with Captain Will Bailey.

Redskin cheerleaders Lindsay and Truly are welcomed by Michael Johnson and AFD Captain Thurston McClain.

Willie Bailey Toy Drive 2012

FROM PAGE 1

"We got the entire school community involved," said eighth grade history teacher Karen Ruberg. "Willie came and spoke to the middle school students and explained how older kids are often forgotten so we encouraged them to collect toys they would like themselves."

In addition to toys, more than 130 new bikes were collected for what has become known as Distribution Day along with cash donations that allowed Bailey to purchase gift cards for older teens.

"Every local company we reached out to for help

didn't turn us away," said Bailey, who was presented with checks from Caldwell Banker Brokerage and the Fairfax-Arlington Elks Lodge just prior to the distribution of toys. "It's sad that the need is still out there but good that the citizens and business community step up and support it."

As has become custom, Primo Family Restaurant donated pizza and food for the dozens of firefighters and volunteers helping sort and distribute toys for children in need.

"We're going to be able to help a lot of kids with all the donations that came in," Bailey said. "We don't want a kid to go without a toy if we can help it."



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PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

Story of the Raven

The 7th graders at Burgundy Farm Country Day School rehearse the Native American story of the Raven on Tuesday morning. The students will perform the Raven as part of the annual Festival of Lights Celebration on Thursday morning.

PEOPLE



Vennells To Celebrate 50th Anniversary

Charles (Ben) and Gloria (Ann) Vennell were married on Jan. 1, 1953 in Harrisburg, Pa. Ben Vennell created, owned and operated the Hollin Hall Variety Store and also The Treasure Chest and The Needle and Thread Shop in the Alexandria area.

Ben and Ann Vennell owned the Variety Store for over 50 years and although they retired, the store is still a fixture in the community.

The Vennell's have two daughters, whose families, along with their grand-children also live in the area.

Spotlight on Upcoming Gun Legislation

FROM PAGE 1

gun rights people have not been as vocal as the anti-gun people, at least not yet."

But the gun-rights lobby has traditionally had a very strong lobby in Richmond, especially now that Republicans are in control of both chambers and the governor's office. Last year, for example, the newly elected Republican assembly overturned a longstanding ban preventing individuals from purchasing more than one handgun a month. Many Northern Virginia Democrats say they often feel frustrated by the tone in Richmond.

"It's really hard to predict what the thinking is of some colleagues who would like to see a more heavily armed society," said state Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-30).

VIRGINIA HAS STRONG LAWS protecting the rights of its citizens to carry and use guns, a tradition that dates back to English common-law instituted when the commonwealth was a British colony. The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence gives Virginia a score of 11 out of 100, describing the commonwealth as having "weak gun laws that help feed the illegal gun market, allow the sale of guns without background checks and put children at risk." But many Republicans say no change to the law could have prevented the mass shootings that happened last week.

"Just because you pass a law doesn't mean you're going to stop it. I mean, there's millions and millions and millions of guns in America," said Del. Dave Albo (R-42). "So when somebody wants to pass a law that says no one can have a gun, does any rational person think that would work?"

One issue that comes up again and again each year is the so-called "castle doctrine," sometimes known as "stand-your-ground" legislation, that would pro-

tect individuals from being sued if they fatally shoot an intruder. That hasn't passed, but other measures increasing the availability of guns have been successful. One overturned a longstanding ban against individuals purchasing more than one handgun a month. Another successful bill allows local government employees to bring concealed weapons onto government property.

"I've been very surprised by what I've seen in Richmond," said Del. Scott Surovell (D-44). "We'll find out this session whether people have changed their point of view about this."

THE COMING SESSION is likely to see legislation that would require Virginia to give reciprocity to out-of-state concealed weapons permits. Legislators are also likely to debate a measure that would make it a Class 5 felony to provide false statements on a criminal history background check. Yet another potential bill would provide information from the background check to the U.S. Attorney General for a National Instant Criminal Background check. And more legislation is in the works.

"In light of last Friday's events, I feel morally compelled to introduce concrete legislation in the General Assembly Session in January," said state Sen. Donald McEachin (D-9). "Over the coming weeks, I will consult with my fellow legislators and announce specific plans that will help stem this horrific tide of gun violence."

But the debate won't be limited to guns.

"To me, the one common problem in most of these cases you've seen recently, which is the guy who shot the congresswoman, the guy who was in the movie theater, the guy in Connecticut, was that they all had severe mental health problems," said Albo. "Is the reason we are seeing more of these because more people are being mainstreamed? I don't know, and I think that's a question that needs to be asked."



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Teaching Health and Holiday Culinary Traditions

Nutrition experts say moderation, not deprivation, is key.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

The holidays start with a saucepan of mushrooms — usually portabella, crimini or oyster — sautéing in olive oil. Next, sliced onions sizzle in a bath of bubbling butter and wine until they're caramelized.

This is how Bonita Lillie starts her yuletide feast. Under the guidance of her deft hands, such rank and file produce become mushroom soup. Fresh minced pork and cheddar cheese become a re-creation of her mother's sausage rolls. She doesn't measure ingredients, count calories or add flavor-depleting substitutes. Only real food makes the cut in her Alexandria kitchen.

"I go with my gut and what feels right. I don't use recipes," said Lillie, a registered dietician and nutrition instructor at Marymount University in Arlington. "If you're cooking a family dish that you look forward to every holiday and you substitute a fat-free version of something, it won't taste right and you won't satisfy your



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/THE CONNECTION

memory of that dish."

During a time of year when it is not uncommon to wash down Bûche de Noël with eggnog or to pile one's plate with slices of crown roast beef drizzled with merlot cream sauce, Lillie and other local nutritionists, food enthusiasts and health gurus say don't engage in self-deprivations. They emphasize that moderation, minor modifications and keeping it real are the keys to main-

taining family traditions in ways that are healthy.

"Fat, per se, is not evil," said Nichole Ferrigno, culinary director for Tiny Chefs in Great Falls, Alexandria, McLean, Oakton, Springfield, Arlington and Potomac. "It really becomes about the type of fat one is consuming. When we think of ... eggnog, peppermint cake and gingerbread, I would tell folks to have just a little bit of the real thing. I do not ever, ever recommend substituting real foods with processed look-alikes."

READ LABELS and examine the contents, say experts, or better yet, buy foods that don't require labels. "[I]t is definitely better to eat real food," said Joel Martin, Ph.D., a professor of kinesiology at George Mason University in Fairfax. "Our bodies have been used to eating real food for thousands of years and only recently have artificial ingredients been introduced into our diets. In the long run, regularly eating these substitutes may cause numerous undesirable effects."

Ferrigno, a former restaurant chef, suggests swapping imitation for moderation. "Even when it comes to holiday indulgences, one can partake and still do so within the parameters of a healthy diet," she said. "The key ... is to stick with whole,

unprocessed foods. By consuming the real thing, your body is satiated with just a small amount. When we consume artificial ingredients, it takes much, much longer and many, many more calories to reach the same level of satiety."

Replacing one natural ingredient with another is a flavor-preserving option. "You could substitute ... an alternative sweetener like honey or agave nectar" for sugar, said Lenora Lawson, a chef instructor at The Art Institute of Washington's International Culinary Schools in Arlington.

In fact, minor ingredient tweaks can pack powerful taste bud punches. "When you're baking a cake, sometimes you can replace oil with applesauce in some cakes, and often it tastes better," said Lillie. She cautions, however, that "when you take out the fat in any dish, you have to replace it with herbs or other seasonings so that you don't lose the taste."

Most importantly, when faced with a dizzying array of yuletide treats on a tray or table, think before making a choice. "Be mindful, be appreciative and aware of what you are eating," said Jennifer Kay Nelson, director of clinical dietetics and an associate professor of nutrition at the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine. "Mindlessly grabbing cookies, candy, nuts here-there-everywhere often end up in unexpected pounds."

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NEWS

Trees For Sale

Bob Lombardy and Ed Perez help put Mick McKeown's tree into the trunk of his Lexus. West Potomac High



School Athletic Boosters Club and Crew are selling holiday trees, wreaths and garlands through Dec. 22 at the Carl Sandburg Middle School. Members of the high school athletic teams are volunteering to help daily with the sale. Hours are Monday - Friday 5 - 8 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday noon to 5 p.m.



Kimberly Todd shows one of the taller trees still available for sale at the Mount Vernon High School sale. The Mount Vernon Majors Booster Club is selling trees and swags in the lot by the school stadium. Last day of sale is Wednesday, Dec. 19 from 3 - 8 p.m. if inventory is depleted. Otherwise volunteers will be out this weekend. Proceeds benefit the athletic programs at the school.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

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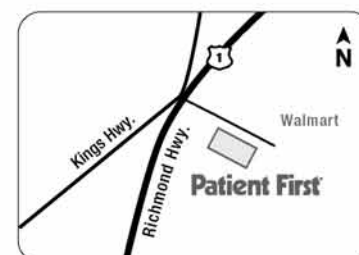
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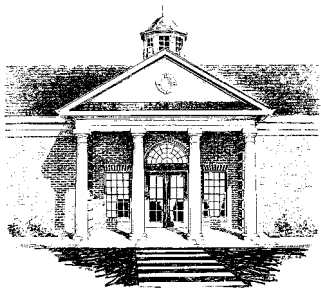
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OPINION

Reminder: Shop Locally, Give Locally

Supporting the community.

With less than a week before Christmas, many people have not completed their shopping, and so we remind you of the importance of spending a significant portion of your shopping budget locally. At this point in the season, the high cost of expedited shipping might also serve as an incentive to shop in locally owned stores.

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 ambience available by shopping in the heart of a

EDITORIAL

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 no chain can. Frequently, it is the small retail person who is active in fundraising for local charities, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local retail stores, mom-and-pop stores, continue to face tough challenges. Competition from big box stores and online sellers makes the holiday shopping season all the more important to locally-owned retailers.

With less than two weeks to go before the end of the charitable giving year, we also remind you of the critical local needs that are filled by a variety of local nonprofit organiza-

tions. With suggestions from readers, we have updated our lists. We welcome suggestions as we continuously update our local lists of community organizations. You can find a complete list on our website, www.connectionnewspapers.com

Last News Issue of 2012

This is the last regular edition of the Connection for 2012, and it includes the last of our 2012 series on immigration. Next week, delivered shortly after Christmas, is the Children's Connection, devoted to the artwork and writing of area students.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Where To Give Locally

The Fairfax County Office of Public Private Partnerships has put together a list of 12 ways to support nonprofit partners that are in need of contributions to carry out their mission. Visit www.fairfaxcountypartnerships.org

❖ Support services for aging in place through Life Circle Alliance www.lifecirclealliances.org/donate.htm

❖ Shop online "Gifts that Give Hope" Alternative Gift Fair for Fairfax County atwww.giftsthatgivehope.org/fairfax providing links to buy gifts that support more than 20 Fairfax County nonprofits including Alternative House, Herndon-Reston FISH, FACETS, Stroke Comeback Center, and more.

❖ Honor the memory of a relative or friend or recognize a birthday, wedding, anniversary,

retirement or other special event by donating a bench to a park through the Fairfax County Park Foundation <http://fairfaxparkfoundation.org/support/benchtree.htm>

❖ Buy a book to fulfill the Library Foundation's Wish List http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/registry.html?pf_rd_p=002-9627810-1915264?pf_rd_r=2P3AKWX1F9FO

❖ Donate the gift of trees through Reforest Fairfax of the Fairfax County Restoration Project <http://www.fcrrp3.org/reforestfairfax/>

❖ Give the gift of Art to benefit the Arts Council of Fairfax County, <http://artsfairfax.org/donate>

❖ Protect a child's smile and health by donating to Project Pearly Whites from the MCCC Foundation, mccpfoundation.org/news/mccp_foundation_launches_project_pearly_whites/

❖ Help end homelessness through the Office to Prevent

and End Homelessness, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/opeh.htm>

❖ Give the gift of your time and become a mentor for BeFriend-A-Child, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/childrenyouth/befriendachild.htm>

❖ Provide for a family for the holidays through A Way Forward and donate care packages to those who need it most, <http://www.awayforward.org>

Other Fairfax County organizations that need your help to keep helping others:

❖ **United Community Ministries**, Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, 22306 <http://www.ucmagency.org/>

❖ **Literacy Council of Northern Virginia**, 703-237-0866, www.lcnv.org, Teaches adults the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking and understanding English. Offers one-to-one tutoring programs for adult learners as well as beginning-level ESOL and Family Learning adult programs.

❖ **Computer C.O.R.E.** 703-931-7346, www.computercore.org, Adult Education, Computer Training and Career Development, with classes in Alexandria, Fairfax, Herndon and Annadale

❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, 703-541-3063. www.capitalareafoodbank.org

COMMENTARY

Legislating Against Texting and Driving

BY SCOTT A. SUROVELL
STATE DELEGATE (D-44)

At 10:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 15, 2011, 18-year-old Kyle Rowley was driving home from his summer job down Route 7 near the Fairfax County line when his car ran out of gas. He pulled his car into the right-hand lane, turned on his flashers and got out to push his car off the road.

Behind him, Jason Gage approached from

the west. About 20 feet from a break in the curb, Gage's car struck Rowley and his car from behind, throwing Rowley to the middle of the road where another car ran him over. Both cars flipped and rolled. Gage was rendered unconscious, had no recollection of what occurred. No one witnessed the collision.

Gage had 2,000 feet of straight, level pavement on a lit road to see

SEE TEXTING, PAGE 17

LETTER TO THE EDITOR Cost of Social Services Programs

To the Editor:

The Obama administration actions have been increasing dependency instead of creating jobs, upward mobility and self sufficiency. Food stamps alone have increased by 17 million more recipients. Therefore, the cost of social programs have increased. Many able bodied persons receive free or subsidized housing, food stamps and free health care. These three items represent the most cost of a working person's budget Such government benefits discourage persons from working and increases dependency.

Social service costs represent about 50 percent of the income taxes collected by government. The government doesn't sell products to earn income but rather collects taxes from hard working taxpayers. To find out what your contribution to social services are, obtain the 2011 taxes paid and multiply that amount by 50 percent and then divide that result by 12 months to obtain your monthly contribution to help pay for free or subsidized housing, food stamps and free health care. You then can decide whether it is better to create jobs to help persons become self sufficient or continue on the path of dependency. Any action taken is up to you.

Frank Medico
Mount Vernon



Showing They Care

In response to the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Girl Scout Daisy/Brownie Troop 185 of Alexandria made cards during their troop meeting on Friday, Dec. 14. During the meeting, the girls discussed the incident and their feelings about incident. They will be mailed to Sandy Hook Elementary School for distribution to its staff and families.

Mount Vernon Gazette

www.MountVernonGazette.com

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FirstNightAlexandria.org



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Monday, December 24

*Live animals available before and after
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3 pm & 5 pm

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with Communion (nursery available)

7 pm

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9 pm

Candlelight Worship Service with Communion

11 pm

Candlelight Worship Service with Communion
Special Music by Jazz Quartet "Summey"

*We hope to see you, your family, and
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This Christmas Eve, the sermon will be told in a series of vignettes that will bring the pageantry of
the Journey to Bethlehem to our Christmas Eve celebration. Come enjoy biblical characters,
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The builder also offers three other construction options to choose from, so you can have the waterfront home of your dreams.

5101 Burke Drive Alexandria, VA 22309

Spacious and Comfortable



Southern colonial with all the bells and whistles. 6+ BRs, 5.5 baths, 3 car garage, swimming pool, over 7000 sq ft on 1/2 acre. Wide plank HW on main/upper levels. Cooks kitchen w/ gas 6 burner stove, 3 ovens, 2 sinks and 2 dishwasher, pantry & breakfast bar. Main + Upper level master large play/bonus room. Custom millwork throughout ~ \$1,295,000



1604 River Farm Drive Alexandria, VA 22308

Charm and History



Charming stone cottage in pristine condition on 1/2 acre. Fully Renovated and modernized while maintaining all the historical features. Featuring a new chef's kitchen, master retreat with stone bath. Wood and stone floors throughout. Three bedrooms, 2.5 baths, new 2 car cedar carport, lush landscaping and two flagstone patios. ~\$875,000



8316 Fort Hunt Road Alexandria, VA 22308

European Luxury on the Water



Resort Living on a bluff overlooking the Potomac River from every room! Idyllic for relaxation with all the luxurious modern touches. Grand entertainment areas inside and outside w/ pool and cabana. Impressive bedroom suites, sun filled morning room and spa inspired lower level. 5 bedrooms, 5.5 baths. \$2,950,000. Adjacent parcel of .34 acres also available for \$1,050,000.



9326 Old Mansion Drive Alexandria, VA 22309

May the joys of the season fill your home with many happy memories.

During the holiday season, my thoughts turn to those who make my business possible. A sincere thank you for trusting me with your real estate needs for the past 27 years.

photo by: molly30

Peaceful Hunting Creek Waterfront



New construction by Boucher Builders to be built along peaceful Hunting Creek with boating access to the Potomac River. Lot size of .35 acres with water frontage of over 98 feet. Several floor plans to choose from. Four bedrooms, 3 full and 2 half baths, with two car garage. Upper level features study, loft space and wet bar leading out to deck which overlooks the water. Customize your dream home ~ starting at \$1,350,000



8728 Thomas Stockton Pkwy Alexandria, VA 22308

History and Luxury



Dating to the 1700's but converted to condos in 2008, the remodeled General Washington Club combines chic city living with historic character. This unbelievably unique residence presents colonial era materials coupled with elegant modern finishes on over 3,800 square feet on three levels. Three bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths and a 2 car detached garage. ~ \$1,495,000



555 S. Washington St #101 Alexandria, VA 22314

Wellington Prestige



Prestigious street with custom colonials. Over 4600 finished square feet. 4 bedrooms, 4.5 baths on 3 fully finished levels sited on a half acre. Large kitchen opens to family room and spacious private deck. 2 car attached garage, brick on 3 sides, formal living and dining rooms + office. 3 fireplaces. Priced below assessment! ~\$1,099,000



7733 Lee Avenue Alexandria, VA 22308

Olde Belhaven Towne



Lovely sunlit brick townhome located across the street from the Belle Haven County Club. Four bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths, 2 fireplaces, large brick patio, fully fenced in front and back. Just steps to the Mount Vernon Bike Trail, 5 minutes to Old Town and only 20 minutes to DC ~\$585,000



6308 Barrister Place Alexandria, VA 22307



HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS
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IN SUPPORT OF



During this holiday season, with so much to be grateful for, we ask you to join us in helping those less fortunate. In our efforts to make a long term difference, we have chosen two projects: We are collecting new and slightly used coats for infants and children in need up to eighteen years old. These may be dropped off until December 22nd.

We are also collecting toys for infants to age eighteen for the Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders/Children's National Medical Center. The toys need to be new unless they are slightly used books or DVDs. Wrapping is not necessary. Toys can be dropped off at our office anytime until January 4th.

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7720 Schellhorn Rd
\$449,000
Renovated Rambler!
Rare large Rambler on gorgeous 1/2 acre lot in prime Mt. Vernon location. Home has huge potential with 4 BR on main level including master with private bath. Other features include fireplace with marble surround, oversize two car garage, hwd flrs & huge lower level. Home needs a little TLC & is priced accordingly. Exceptional Value!



8704 Greystone Pl
\$455,000
Spectacular Sunroom!
Great Value! Spacious home on quiet cul-de-sac in prime Mt. Vernon location. Fabulous features include: bright, open floor plan. Enhanced by high ceilings and glass gable in major rooms, stunning sunroom, multi-tiered deck, private yard, garage and finished lower level. Hardwood under carpet on main level. Excellent price!



4002 Belle Rive Terr
\$798,500
Classic Colonial Near River!
Unique opportunity to purchase river view home in prestigious Belle Rive for under \$800K! Fabulous custom all-brick colonial on cul-de-sac with stunning views of Potomac River! Gorgeous kitchen featuring all SS appliances, farmhouse sink and carrera marble counters. Hardwood floors and plantation shutters abound. Recently finished walk out lower level. New Pella doors.



9317 Old Mansion Rd
\$859,000
Stunning Colonial in Riverfront Community!
Classic colonial tastefully expanded and landscaped. One of area's most distinctive properties! Fab features: opening to sunroom and elevated stone terrace overlooking garden. MBR with dual granite vanities, separate shower & whirlpool tub. 4BR, 3.5BA, 2FP and 2 car garage. Community path to river access.



8614 Camden St
\$525,000
Spacious Contemporary! One Level Living!
One of Stratford's largest contemporary models featuring striking open floor plan with 4-5 bedrooms & exceptionally large room sizes. Numerous updates include roof, thermal windows, water heater & electrical. Features include large deck with hot tub, private rear deck & covered parking.



2406 Wittington Blvd
\$599,000
Updated Charming Colonial!
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We would like to extend our gratitude for your patronage and continued support this past year and toward a successful partnership in 2013.

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to our Agents & our Community for your generosity toward the charities we supported this year! Your contributions of gifts, time, and donations (for food certificates) provided 53 "Giving Tree" children & their families a very

Merry Christmas, as well as those served by the "Toys for Tots" program.



"The Giving Tree"



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FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

How the Powerless Access

Immigrants make significant gains in influencing political system.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE GAZETTE

Final part of the series.

On Election Night Nov. 6, Keisy Chavez's nerves were frayed.

The Fairfax single mom had been campaigning hard for Democrats since the official launch of Latinos for Obama last April.

She filmed a commercial for Senate candidate Tim Kaine in September, worked phone banks, door-knocked during 104-degree heat, stuffed envelopes, delivered yard signs, and seized every opportunity to talk to friends, neighbors and strangers about the importance of the 2012 election.

Her daughter, Cinthya Qureshi, 24, likes to tease her mom about her willingness to talk to anyone when it comes to politics.

"If my mom is pumping gas, and sees someone next to her, she will start a conversation about politics," she said.

"I've been organizing for President Obama and Governor Kaine since the launch of their campaigns, and everyone I talk to in the Latino community gets fired up to help spread the message of everything they have done for us," said Chavez.

Chavez was ecstatic over of Kaine's and Obama's victories in Virginia. "It was such a powerful feeling. I can't really describe how happy and relieved I felt," she said. "It shows that you can make a difference. It's a big motivation to realize that you can have an impact on something bigger than you, something that touches so many people."

Like many Latinos this election cycle, Chavez made certain her voice was heard. According to exit polls, recent immigrants, not just Latinos, voted overwhelmingly, 73 percent, for Obama in Northern Virginia.

Data from the Pew Research Center also shows that Asian Americans have shifted more to Democrats since 2008 than any other minority group. Representing just 3 percent of the national voting population, they are the fastest growing demographic in the United States, and their influ-



Keisy Chavez, a Latino activist with Latinos for Obama, and daughter Cinthya Qureshi at their business in Herndon.

ence is being felt beyond traditionally blue states, like California, Hawaii, New York and New Jersey, into swing states like Virginia and North Carolina.

"This area, particularly Fairfax County, is teeming with immigrants, from South America, India, Vietnam, South Korea and elsewhere," said Frederic Bemak, director of the Diversity Research and Action Center at George Mason University. "I can't imagine many of them swooned at Romney's incessant China bashing, or talk of self-deportation for the undocumented."

"The tectonic plates are shifting on immigration," said Frank Sharry, a McLean resident and executive director of America's Voice, an advocacy group for immigrants. "The fact that leading conservative voices are joining Republican leaders in calling for immigration reform that includes relief for the 11 million undocumented immigrants in America is a major development that will open up space

for the GOP to do the right thing and help pass sensible reform legislation."

Sharry said political leaders should consider the response from 2012 voters to this question asked in the network exit polls: "Should most illegal immigrants working in the United States be offered a chance to apply for legal status or deported to country they came from?"

"By a whopping 65-percent-to-28-percent margin, Americans support the 'apply for legal status' option," Sharry said.

Chavez said the 2012 election was a "reality wake-up call."

"I think it has finally hit some Republican politicians and policymakers that if you don't embrace immigration you will go nowhere. If you really want your party or your candidate or issues to be addressed, you need to embrace the mix of people in this country. Everyone has something to bring, regardless of whether you're Latino, Asian, or Irish."



Brian Moran, former chairman of the Democratic Party of Virginia with U.S. Rep. James Moran (D-8) and Fred Shwaery of Vienna, a member of the Arab American Democrats of Virginia, at the 24th annual Arab American Candidates' Night Dinner held at the Tysons Corner Marriott on Sept. 30.

Voting: How the powerless begin to access power?

Political affiliation aside, research shows that immigrants, especially when they organize and vote, are influencing the political discussion overall, not just electing Democrats.

According to immigration experts, the right to vote is a key motivating factor when immigrants choose to become citizens, instead of just holding on to their green card.

Andrew Eade, who grew up in England, has been working in the U.S. for 16 years. In May, Eade was one of 75 new citizens who took the Oath of Allegiance during a special naturalization ceremony at the Fairfax County Government Center.

A resident of Herndon for 16 years, Eade said he wanted to become a citizen so he could "fully participate in the system and vote."

"I've been paying taxes for all these years, and I thought it was time to vote. You want to feel like you are getting your voice heard," he said.

Tam-Anh Lam, 23, called Tammy by her clients at the Four Seasons Nail Salon in Oakton, pulls out a creased photo of her 4-year-old daughter, Leah-Anh, to show a client.

Lam came to the United States

with her parents when she was 2 years old. Lam lives with her parents in Reston, who help take care of her daughter.

She became a citizen when she turned 18, but did not vote until this year. Lam said she wants her daughter to grow up with self-confidence and the higher education she lacks.

"I never paid much attention, but this year there was so much in the news that concerned me," Lam said news about immigration, education and healthcare struck a chord with her, and she decided she would vote this year.

"I wanted to vote because it gives you power. It's the American way. . . . I wanted my daughter to know that we're Americans too, and she can do anything. If I can't do it, maybe she can. Who knows, she could be a doctor someday," Lam said.

Community-based organizations, according to a 2009 Urban Institute study, play a key role in encouraging immigrants to enroll in citizenship programs so they can participate in the electoral process.

"A significant aspect of immigrant integration is civic participation," said Richard Eldridge, the Citizenship volunteer manager at Hogar Immigrant Services, a Fairfax County program of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington. "We have a strong component of helping people become new citizens, of empowering immigrants through the benefits of

Power



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE GAZETTE

Andrew Eade, wife Stephanie and son Greyson, 21 months, of Herndon. Eade, from England, was one of 75 candidates who took the Oath of Allegiance during a special naturalization ceremony May 25 at the Fairfax County Government Center.

citizenship."

"Our goal is for immigrants to achieve self-sufficiency and participate fully in the greater community," said Brooke Hammond Perez, education services and group manager. Hogar, which was founded in 1981, offers a combination of legal consultation, English-language instruction and citizenship classes.

While the majority of Hogar's immigrant clients live below the poverty level, their determination to become engaged, active citizens is inspiring, Hammond Perez said.

But few have touched Hammond Perez personally as much as client Alhaji Alpha Bah, an 82-year-old immigrant from Sierra Leone. In 1992, Bah was a shop-keeper in the West African nation when civil war broke out. During a decade of brutal civil war, when tens of thousands of people died, Bah was forced from his home, living as a refugee in Guinea for seven years before coming to the United States in 2003.

"He was accompanied to the U.S. by four of his nine children," Hammond Perez said, adding that his other children had to stay behind in Guinea and Sierra Leone. "Even now, he doesn't know the whereabouts of three of those five children."

Bah came to Catholic Charities in 2010. He did not have any formal education, did not speak English and was not able to find consistent work. Despite these obstacles, Bah, accompanied by Hammond Perez, was officially sworn in as a U.S. citizen on Oct.

14, 2011. When asked what he wanted to do as a new American, he said he wanted to register to vote as soon as possible. "I feel proud. I feel big. You are a citizen. Welcome to America," Bah said in video interview discussing his experiences. (To see the video, visit hogarimmigrantservices.org.)

Immigrants Gaining Political Influence

In Virginia and at the national level, immigrant voters are changing the political landscape in unprecedented ways, and hold increasing influence across the political spectrum.

"From a political perspective, the way the demographics are shifting, those who would demonize and attack new immigrants and Latinos do so at their peril," said Del. Alfonso Lopez (D-49), the first Latino Democrat elected to the Virginia General Assembly.

Latinos have a long history of political involvement through organizations which give them access to elected officials, according to the Urban Institute.

In contrast, the Urban Institute study says, Asian and African immigrant communities are newer and lack long-serving, established leaders to spearhead and encourage participation and advocacy. While Asians comprise 17.4 percent of Fairfax County's population, compared to 15.6 percent

SEE IMMIGRANTS, PAGE 16

PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE GAZETTE



Del. Mark Keam (D-35)

Immigrant Success Story

Delegate Mark L. Keam.

Del. Mark Keam (D-35) is the first Korean American and the first Asian-born immigrant to serve in the Virginia General Assembly. In November 2009, Keam was elected to an open seat in the House of Delegates and re-elected in November 2011. Keam, 46, currently serves on the House Education and Finance Committees, and is co-chair of the Legislative Tourism Caucus. Keam sat for a series of interviews with Connection reporter Victoria Ross in his Vienna office in December. Here is Keam's story, mostly in his own words.

For new Americans, life is hard, but once they overcome those barriers, they are stronger, and they contribute so much because they fought so hard to get here. I'm proud of my background. The policies I advocate for are from the perspective of an immigrant, something which is sorely missing in Richmond. As an immigrant who came here with nothing, I'm able to have everything I ever wanted, to give my children incredible opportunities.

Let me put it this way, unlike most people whose immigration stories are fairly simple, (for example, they move from one country to another country), I lived in four different countries and several different cities. I guess you could say I was the result of global circumstances beyond my control.

My parents met in the late 1950s. They had lost their parents during the war, so I didn't know any of my grandparents. My mother had an older sister, who was a devout Christian. She didn't like my father.

My parents were like street kids after the Korean war. My mother didn't finish school and my father was sort of a rogue. The only way my aunt would let him approach my mother was to prove he was upstanding citizen, so he became a minister.

In 1961, there was mandatory conscription in the military, so Keam's father was sent to Vietnam as a chaplain.

My father would come back at least once every two years. My brother was born in 1962, my sister was born in 1964 and I was born in 1966. In 1969, he came back to Seoul, and he wanted to set up a church. But Korea was still very run-down post war. Imagine Afghanistan, imagine that scenario. Korea was like Afghanistan times two. No running water, all the buildings were bombed, everything was devastated, being run by dictators. It's only 50 miles from DMZ. That was the world I was born into.

THE WAR IN VIETNAM was at a standstill, a lot of countries started establishing ties in South Vietnam, so they asked my father, who had studied Vietnamese language and culture, to establish a Korean church and community center. We lived in the church, and I remember the building well.

This goes directly into how I got into politics. From the time I was 4-years-old, I can't remember one meal we had with just the five of us. Our meals were with whoever was at the church. For the 5,000 Koreans who lived in Vietnam in the 70s, every one of them came to our church because it was also the only community center. It was the hub of all Korean activities. From the time I woke up until I went to bed, there were always people around us.

When I was a small kid, I freaked out because we had caskets. I remember there'd be a wedding in the morning, a funeral in the middle of the day, and another wedding at night. You'd see the same people dressed up for a wedding and then back for a funeral, because they knew each other. I lived in that world with the idea that community helps each other. It was ingrained in me such a natural way that I think, to this day, that's the core of my being. What made me who I am and what made me think the way I do and act the way I do every single day was molded in my childhood. More importantly, because of my father, I saw it was incumbent upon us to be leaders in our community. Family is important, but community is just as important. So that has led me to do what I'm doing today.

When Keam was 9-years-old, in April of 1975, he recalls his family fleeing the church compound during what historians call the Fall of Saigon. The capture of Saigon by the People's Army of Vietnam and the National Liberation Front, marked the end of the Vietnam War and the start of a transition period leading to the formal reunification of Vietnam into a communist state. The fall of the city was preceded by the evacuation of almost all the American civilian and military personnel in Saigon, along with tens of thousands of South Vietnamese civilians associated with the southern regime. The evacuation culminated in Operation Frequent Wind, which was the largest helicopter evacuation in history.

That's the most traumatic thing that's ever happened to me. We were playing in the room, and I just remember my mother coming in saying we have to pack up and go.

We had seen a lot of things. Whenever I see war-

SEE BARRIERS, PAGE 16

FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

Immigrants Gain Influence in Virginia

FROM PAGE 15

who are Latino, Asians speak many different languages and come from a wide variety of cultures, making it more difficult to politically mobilize the population as a whole.

Regardless, political leaders are increasingly tuned in to the concerns of immigrants, and the number of immigrant community-based organizations is increasing. In 2000, according to the Urban Institute, there were 90 such organizations in Fairfax County; in 2009, the number was up to 149.

"The number of organizations devoted to the interest of members of the immigrant community has been increasing just as the number of immigrants has been increasing," said Del. Ken Plum (D-36). "I try to attend as many meetings of groups with immigrant members to demonstrate to them that they can have a say in government and that there are those in elective office who value the contributions."

At the 24th annual Candidates' Night Dinner, hosted by the Arab American Republicans and the Arab American Democratic Caucus of Virginia on Sept. 30, nearly every Fairfax County Democrat running for office was there, courting voters, including Kaine, U.S. Rep. James Moran (D-8) and U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11). Former U.S. Rep. Tom Davis, (R), who served eight terms in Congress, was Mitt Romney's surrogate.

Launched in 1987 by the Arab American Institute (AAI), the event is a forum for campaigning politicians, and a place where the Arab-American community can engage in the political process.

"Candidates' Night, by admission of most politicians attending the forum, has been praised as one of the best ethnic political forums," said event co-chair Saba L. Shami. "It's become an institution, bringing candidates together with the Arab American community as an integral part of the American political process."

Del. Mark Keam (D-35), the first Korean American and the first Asian-born immigrant to serve in the Virginia General Assembly, said Asian immigrants are beginning to see unprecedented growth in both population and political clout.

"In 2000, I was the convention chair of the National Asian American Bar Association. It was held in D.C., and we broke all records. We had 500 lawyers getting together in the same town, and we had a budget of over \$300,000. We thought that was big time," Keam said.

"In 2012, same town, same convention, but this year the event drew 1,700 lawyers and had a budget of \$1.6 million," Keam said. "What that tells you is something about both the physical growth and the economic clout of Asians, because of the money spon-



Del. Alfonso Lopez (D-49) at the Democratic Committee Headquarters in Annandale.

sors were willing to spend targeting our community."

Lopez pointed out that since 2000 Latino voter participation in the Commonwealth of Virginia has gone up between 1 and 3 percent every election cycle. Currently, there are 683,000 Latinos in Virginia, and approximately 183,000 of those are eligible voters, according to the State Board of Elections.

According to the 2010 decennial census, between 2000 and 2010, Latino voter registration increased by 75 percent in Virginia, one of highest increases in country.

"This is something that really blew me away," Lopez said. "The average age of the Latino citizen is 15 years old. Think about what that means in two years and four years and eight years. You're going to see a huge increase in Latino registered voters."

Lopez said the increasing percentage of Virginia's Latinos and immigrant voters make him hopeful that the political polarization regarding immigration reform will diminish.

"There's something huge about what's happening in the Commonwealth," Lopez said. "The demographic shifts coming to Virginia will wipe out the effects of the short-sighted anti-immigrant politicking we see now."

Chavez said it's just smart—politically and economically—to create a pathway to citizenship for young immigrants. "We're relying on their talent and skills. It's not just a Latino concern. . . . It helps the economy and makes America stronger for everyone."

"Like the program says 'it's the new normal.' Get used to it. Embrace it," Chavez said.

Overcoming Barriers

FROM PAGE 15

torn scenes of Libya or Syria, it brings back flashes of memory. I never saw actual tanks roll in, but we heard bombs going off. There were times when we would go through the markets of Vietnam, and we had seen Buddhist monks self-immolating in political protests—just awful.

After seeing things like that, it wasn't real to us until that day my mom said pack up.

The families at the compound got in the cars, and drove to this little airport. As we're leaving in the helicopter, we look back and I see my dad standing behind the chicken-wire fence.

KEAM SAID HE EVENTUALLY reconstructed what happened to his father through relative's stories and his father's testimony.

My father was stranded on the rooftop, and he was arrested by the Viet Cong. He had two marks against him. One was that he was a religious leader in a communist country. Another mark was that he served in the South Korean military, even though he was a chaplain.

We were taken back to Seoul, and there were so many rumors. We heard that my father was killed, or that he was in prison, or that he made it but he's not coming back. We had absolutely no way to understand this. . . .

When we arrived back in Korea, we had zero, nothing. No one was doing well. My mother found a one-bedroom apartment in Seoul. My mom had never finished high school let alone college. As a woman, she had no way of having meaningful employment, being a single mother with three kids. . . . So my mother went to churches and to ex-military friends and it was those people who supported us, not the government. I never asked her, and she never talks about it, but I believe the only way she fed us every single day, is that she begged and went to charities and welfare groups. That was the year I became an adult and lost my childhood innocence.

KEAM SPOKE ENGLISH AND FRENCH, but not much Korean. Back at school in Seoul, he was bullied and treated as a special-needs student. He said that terrible year transformed him in ways that make him the person he is today.

I preach this all the time, discrimination is discrimination no matter who is doing it to whom. My life's mission is to fight against discrimination. I am also passionate about literacy. I serve on the board of Virginia Literacy Foundation, a nonprofit founded by former Virginia First Lady Jeannie Baliles to ensure that everyone has essential reading and writing skills they need to succeed.

After what Keam considers the worst year of his life, assuming his father was never coming home, feeling out of place in his native country, his family got another surprise. His father returned home, showing up on their doorstep out of the blue.

"That's a story for another time, how we eventually got here," Keam said.

THE REST OF THE STORY, ABRIDGED: After reuniting with his father, Keam's family then moved to Australia, where his father established another church before eventually moving to California.

Keam received a political science degree from the University of California at Irvine, and had a chance to live in Falls Church while working as a college intern. After receiving a law degree from Hastings College of the Law, Keam returned to Virginia where he met and married Alex Seong Keam, also an attorney. The Keams have two children, Tyler, a Cub Scout, and Brenna, a Brownie. Both children attend Mosby Woods Elementary School in Fairfax.

As a part-time citizen-legislator, Keam, who is known as the most prolific member of the General Assembly on Twitter @markkeam, maintains a year-round office in Vienna in addition to his Richmond office. When the General Assembly is not in session, Keam serves as senior advisor for strategic affairs at Verizon; he has worked at Verizon since 2007. Before that, for six years, he served as chief counsel to the Assistant Senate Majority Leader Dick Durbin on the Senate Judiciary Committee. Before working on Capitol Hill, Keam worked at the Small Business Administration, and had also served as an attorney with the Federal Communications Commission's Wireless Bureau.

Texting

FROM PAGE 8

Kyle's vehicle. There were no skid marks. A forensic analysis of his mobile phone revealed that he sent or received text messages within 15 seconds of the time stamp on the 911 call reporting the collision.

I represented Kyle Rowley's family in his wrongful death action. A Fairfax County General District Court Judge found Gage not guilty of reckless driving after noting that the Commonwealth could not prove any driving behavior beyond a reasonable doubt, except for possibly the texting on a hand-held electronic device. Because the maximum punishment for texting while driving under Virginia law is a secondary non-reckless infraction, the judge dismissed the charge, as required under Virginia Law. Jason Gage has never been punished by the state for the death of Kyle Rowley and cannot be under our current laws.

Del. Ben Cline and I believe that Virginia's laws should be changed and we are introducing a bill in the General Assembly next month. In 2009, a Virginia Tech Transportation Institute study found that texting while driving takes a driver's eyes off the road for an average of 4.67 seconds. At 65 miles per hour, that's equal to driving with your eyes closed for 1.5 football fields.

The same study found that texting while driving increases the chances of a safety-critical driving event by 23.24 or 2,300 percent. By comparison, eating while driving increases the chances by 1.01, smoking 0.97, talking on a phone hands-free 0.44 and talking on a handheld phone 1.04. In other words, while many behaviors while driving are unsafe, texting while driving is exponentially riskier than other behaviors.

In Virginia today, the maximum penalty for texting while driving is \$25 for a first offense and \$50 for a second offense. No one can be stopped solely because an officer sees him or her using a phone.

Delegate Cline and I are proposing changes. Delegate Cline is a Republican from Lexington, a prosecutor and chairman of the Conservative Caucus. Some say we are a political odd couple, but as legislators and attorneys we have been discussing the problems with the existing law for the last six months. We each understand the current law's deficiencies from different points of view, and believe that there is a need to change current law to make our roads safer.

We have several objectives. First, using a phone for anything other than a phone call should be a primary traffic offense. Second, if such use of a phone is a proximate cause of an accident or injury to person or property, it should be classified as reckless driving. Third, Virginia needs to send a clear message that use of a phone for anything other than a voice call while driving is dangerous behavior that needs to stop.

This legislation will no doubt be modified as the General Assembly works its will. We have already received requests to create exceptions for global position systems (GPS) functions, playing music and law enforcement. We are both hopeful that something will finally happen this year.

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Obituary



Geraldine C. Hager of Alexandria, Virginia formerly of Ft. Myers Beach, FL and Highland Falls, NY, left us to join her husband, father, and mother early in the morning on December 13, 2012.

Gerry, or DeeDee as she was known to her family, was born May 27, 1925 in West Point, New York. DeeDee was the only child of Eleanor and Paul Taneyhill. She grew up and went to school in Highland Falls, NY. DeeDee was the high school prom dancing partner for the famous actor Charles Durning, and she never lost her dancing chops.

It was in Highland Falls that she met and married John Hager, the love of her life, in 1948. Her husband worked as a contractor in New York before they retired to Florida in the late 1960s. Although she and Johnny were unable to have children of their own, after she retired from her federal job with the Social Security Administration, DeeDee enjoyed being able to take care of the Yancey grandchildren.

In 2006 DeeDee Hager moved to Alexandria to live with her cousin Phyllis Yancey. In the neighborhood she was known for baking a mean apple pie, an incredible key lime pie, a wicked dump cake, and for writing prolific thank you notes. Around town she was everyone's favorite patron, spreading kindness and laughter to workers at her bank, doctors' offices, dry cleaners, and hair salon.

DeeDee was a devoted member of St. Rita's Catholic Church. She is survived and will be desperately missed by her cousins Phyllis Yancey, Pat Aller, Bill Engle, Fred Engle, Bill Yancey, Annette Allgood, Mary Jo Morgan, their spouses and children, and her Beverley Hills neighborhood.

There will be a Mass of Christian Burial for Mrs. Hager at 2pm on December 22, 2012 at St. Rita's Catholic Church in Alexandria, Virginia. Funeral arrangements are being handled by Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home. Mrs. Hager will be laid to rest in Southern Palms Memorial Gardens Cemetery, in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

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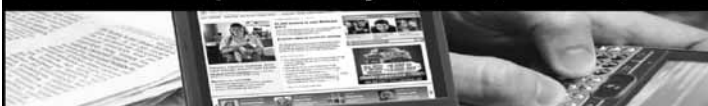


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Fireworks: midnight

Visit firstnightalexandria.org for the complete schedule of shows and activities and to buy admission badges. Plan your visit to Alexandria at www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com.

Admission is \$20. Additional fee of \$10 for reserved seating for Bonnie Rideout show. Children 12 and under and active military are free. See website for ticket sales locations or purchase online.

PHOTO BY VICTOR WOLANSKY PHOTOGRAPHY

A fireworks display over the Potomac River will ring in the New Year as the grand finale of First Night Alexandria, the New Year's Eve bash that takes over Old Town. The city's most musical evening features Argentinean tango, New Orleans funk, traditional Irish music, rocking rhythm and blues, classic country, acoustic folk, and jazz violin, to name just a few of the 116 acts found

at 21 indoor venues on Dec. 31, 2012. With these performances, plus children's entertainment, new afternoon activities and the all-ages, brain-teasing Fun Hunt, First Night Alexandria is the largest family-friendly and alcohol-free New Year's Eve event in the region. A First Night badge gives the wearer access to entertainment and activities at spots all around Old Town.

Afternoon Fun

Fourth Annual Fun Hunt. Clue sheets can be picked up at either the Torpedo Factory Art Center (105 N. Union St.), or Durant Arts Center (1605 Cameron St.). Completed clue sheets must be returned to the Durant Arts Center by 5:30 p.m. to be eligible for prizes. 2012 First Night Alexandria admission badge must be presented to pick up a clue sheet. 2-5:30 p.m.

Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. T.C. Williams Choir, 2-4 p.m.; The George Washington Middle School Chamber Orchestra, 4-6 p.m.

Jefferson Houston School, 1501 Cameron St. Moon bounce and

interactive games for children 12 and younger. 4-6 p.m.

King Street Garden Park at King Street and Diagonal Road. Pro Feed Pet Nutrition Centers in partnership with the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria presents Whisker Wonderland activities for children. There will also be treats and activities for dogs. 2-5 p.m.

Embassy Suites Hotel, 1600 Diagonal Road The T.C. Williams Chamber Orchestra. 2-4 p.m.

Hooray for Books, 1555 King St. Storytelling by Miss Megan. 2, 3 and 4 p.m.

Olio Tasting Room, 1223 King St. Taste a variety of decadent treats made with Olio oils and vinegars, and take home a recipe. 1-4 p.m.

Sugar Cube, 1218 King St. The Sugar Cube will offer "Countdown to Midnight" free cookie decorating (one cookie per child). 2-5 p.m.

Ten Thousand Villages, 915 King St. The story of Galimoto will be read every hour on the hour, for those 3-8, and light refreshments. 2-5 p.m.

Morrison House Hotel, 116 S. Alfred St. T.C. Williams Jazz Quintet "Autumn Chill." 2-4 p.m.

The Paper Source, 118 King St. Free demonstrations including stamping, heat embossing, envelope making and kit making. 2-5 p.m.

Torpedo Factory Art Center, Art League Gallery and Alexandria Archeology Museum, 105 N. Union St. Art activities for all ages. 2-5 p.m.

throughout the night, including face painting, moon bounce, clowns doing balloon sculptures, and interactive games. Visit the Seaworthy Small Ships activity and sail model boats for free, or buy and build one. Join Hooray for Books' own Miss Megan for an evening of stories and songs. Visit the How-To Cowboy Joke Fest, sing-along and rhythm instruments with Mr. Don, and more. Alcohol-free venues keep it fun for all ages.

Headquarters & Free Trolley. This year's First Night headquarters is the Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron Street, just blocks from King St-Old Town Metro Station. The Free King Street Trolley will operate until 1 a.m., and a dedicated trolley will make a continuous loop from the King St-Old Town Metro, to First Night headquarters at the Durant Arts Center, then to the George Washington Masonic Memorial and back to the Metro.

venues in Old Town. Stroll Alexandria's historic streets among venues, or hop on and off the free King Street Trolley to catch favorite acts. Museums, public buildings, and retail shops showcase regional and national talent. Dance the night away at the Torpedo Factory Art Center and the George Washington Masonic Memorial, or catch intimate concerts at venues including the Lyceum, Indus Imports and Imagine Artwear. New musical acts include: Bonnie Rideout makes a one-performance-only appearance. Patrons can purchase a special ticket that includes reserved seating (available with online purchase only) for her show. Janine Wilson Band will have listeners dancing to an assortment of roots rock. Nicole Belanus is a singer/songwriter with acoustic and folk-rock influences.

Family Fun. This family-friendly event is full of activities for children

Guitarist Pete Farnum will lead blues and rockabilly group Rose Between Thorns in their farewell concert at the American Legion Post 24 ballroom, 400 Cameron St., during First Night Alexandria festivities. Together since 2006, members are retiring and moving away, making this their farewell show.

Anna, 3, takes the mic for her impression of a cow during an open mic session at the Jefferson Houston School during Alexandria's 2011 First Night celebration.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/THE GAZETTE



BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

2011 First Night-goers Bryan, Rob, April and Austin Olesky set out together on their evening from the Jefferson Houston School.



BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Christmas Music At St. Elmo's

Doris Justis, who is a regular at St. Elmo's Coffee Pub in Del Ray, will have a family-friendly Christmas Carol themed gig, from 8-10 p.m. on Dec. 22. Visit www.dorisjustis.com. She will also appear at St. Elmo's Jan. 25, Feb. 22, March 23, April 26, and May 25, 8-10 p.m.



PHOTOS BY RENÉE RUCCLES/THE GAZETTE

Doris Justis, a part of the Metro D.C. folk scene for more than three decades, returns to St Elmo's on Dec. 22, to play Christmas songs, from 8-10 p.m. This will be a family friendly set and children are welcome.



St. Elmo's is ready for the holidays. Their trademark cups and clouds are surrounded by colorful lights and snow-flakes.

CALENDAR

E-mail announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos and artwork are encouraged. Deadline is Thursday at noon.

ONGOING

Occupied City: Life in Civil War Alexandria Exhibition. At The Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum, 201 South Washington Street. Open daily, through September 2013, this exhibit traces life in Alexandria following Virginia's decision to secede from the Union in May 1861. See how Robert E. Lee's hometown was transformed literally overnight from a prosperous commercial port into a supply, hospital, and transportation center for the Union Army, and find out why Alexandria became a destination for African Americans seeking freedom. Explore the experiences of Alexandrians and others who lived here during this tumultuous time, through their own words, as well as in period photographs and collections items. The Lyceum is open Monday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, from 1-5 p.m. Suggested admission is \$2. Visit www.alexandriahistory.org or call 703-746-4994.

Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery will host the juried show **"Bedecked and Bedazzled"** through Jan. 6 at Studio 18 of Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. In this show, the artists excel in holiday spirit and sparkle with jewelry, sculpture, clothing and wall pieces. The gallery is open from 10 a.m.-6 p.m., except on Thursdays when it is open from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Closed Dec 25 and Jan 1. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org.

The Marshall House Incident Exhibition: This exhibit at Fort Ward features objects from the museum collection to tell the notable story about the event that launched the Civil War in Alexandria. Open through 2012 at Fort Ward Museum (4301 West Braddock Rd.) is open Tuesday - Saturday, from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., and Sunday, from noon - 5 p.m. Visit www.fortward.org or call 703-746-4848.

Art Exhibit. Alexandria artist Francis Seeger will display "People" in the Athenaeum Gallery, 201 Prince St. from Jan. 10-Feb. 24. Free. Features a number of the artist's larger figural paintings. Often appearing to be waiting for time to pass or expressing

a touch of boredom, Seeger's subjects are captured with a bold, intuitive hand and vibrant palette. Visit www.nvfaa.org or 703-548-0035.

Life in Civil War Alexandria

Exhibition. Daily exhibit traces life in Alexandria following Virginia's decision to secede from the Union in May 1861. Through September 2013 at The Lyceum, Alexandria's History Museum, 201 South Washington St. Open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Suggested admission \$2. Visit www.alexandriahistory.org or call 703-746-4994.

Tavern Toddlers. Mondays, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Mondays through the end of April 2013. Designed for walkers through 36 months and their caregivers. Tavern Toddlers features a weekly open playtime in Gadsby's historic ballroom. Gadsby's Tavern Museum is located at 134 North Royal St. Call 703-746-4242 or visit www.gadsbystavern.org.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 19

Chatham County Line 'Electric Holiday Tour.' 7:30 p.m. \$22.50. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

Music. 10:45 a.m. - noon at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Terminal B near Cibo Bistro and Wine Bar. Free performance by Carl Sandburg Middle School Symphonic Orchestra and Choralettes.

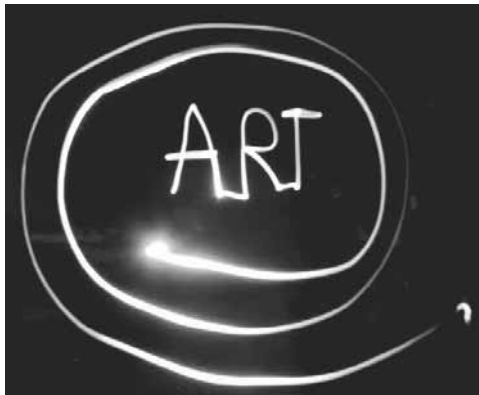
DJ Dance Party. 9-11 p.m. at Nick's Nightclub, 642 S. Pickett St. Enjoy dancing with DJ Dabe Murphy. \$6. Visit www.gottaswing.com or 703-359-9882.

Music. 8 p.m. at St. Elmo's Pub, 2300 Mount Vernon Ave. Hear modern bluegrass artist Conor Mulroy. Visit www.stelmoscoffee.pub.com or www.conormulroy.com.

THURSDAY/DEC. 20

Carbon Leaf. 7:30 p.m. \$27.50. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

Christmas Display of Lionel Trains. 10 a.m. Bring the Kids to visit Hollin Hall Senior Center to watch the operation of both HO layouts and the Lionel train setup by Joe Pallone. At 1500 Shenandoah Road. Call 703-765-4573.



Art at the Center

Art at the Center's winter session will begin Jan. 7 and continue through March. Visit www.artatthecenter.org for full class descriptions and to register. Take advantage of early bird discounts through Dec. 21.

THROUGH DEC. 20

Exhibition. Night Windows, an exhibition of 3D, mixed media constructions in lighted boxes, will be on display in the Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery, located in the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center at the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College, 3001 North Beauregard St. The gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday and during concert performances.

FRIDAY/DEC. 21

Pieces Of A Dream . 7:30 p.m. \$35. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

Light the Night Community Art Event. 5-7 p.m. at Art at the Center, 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane. Free event. Donations of unwrapped toys and books for families in need in the area will be accepted. Visit www.artatthecenter.org or 703-201-1250.

Wee Ones Storytime. 10:30-11 a.m. at Hooray for Books, 1555 King St. Children up to age 2 can explore the world through stories and songs. Free. Visit www.hooray4books.com.

THROUGH DEC. 21

Food Drive. Bring non-perishable food donations to the @home lounge, 111 S. Alfred St. Upon donation, patrons can feel free to enjoy a free cup of hot chocolate, warm up by the fire.

SATURDAY/DEC. 22

Bill Kirchen's Honky Tonk Holiday Show.. 7:30 p.m. \$29.50. Visit <http://billkirchen.com/>. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

Wee Ones Storytime. 10:30-11 a.m. at Hooray for Books, 1555 King St. Children up to age 2 can explore the world through stories and songs. Free. Visit www.hooray4books.com.

Sweets with Santa. Sessions at 10 a.m., noon, 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. at Occasionally Cake, 207 King St. Santa makes a visit while visitors can make an ornament and enjoy a sweets buffet of hot cocoa, truffles, mini-cupcakes and cookies. \$50/child. For reservations, 703-647-9638. Visit www.occasionallycake.com.

SUNDAY/DEC. 23

Christine Lavin & Uncle Bonsai 'Just One Angel' 7:30 p.m. \$25.00. Visit www.christinelavin.com or www.unclebonsai.com/. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

Performance. Metropolitan Fine Arts Center Frosty Follies jazz ensemble will perform at the National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C. at 1 p.m. Free. Visit www.metrofinearts.com.

THROUGH DEC. 23

"A Broadway Christmas Carol" A cross between the classic Charles

Dickens tale and uproarious song parodies of favorite Broadway show tunes. From Thursday through Sunday. 8 p.m. on Thursday and Friday; 3 and 8 p.m. on Saturday; 3 and 7 p.m. on Sunday. At MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. Call 703-548-9044 or visit www.metrostage.org.

Santa Claus is Coming to Old

Town. Santa and Mrs. Claus are back in Old Town Alexandria to take pictures with children every Saturday and Sunday between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Presented by the Old Town Boutique District in partnership with the City of Alexandria and Bike and Roll Alexandria and with the support of area businesses. The cost for pictures is \$15 for a 5 x 7 print. Hours: Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. except for Dec. 1 (Scottish Walk Parade day) when hours are 1-5 p.m.; Sundays, noon-5 p.m. At Bike and Roll Alexandria, One Wales Alley. Call 703-501-6289 or visit www.oldtownboutiquedistrict.com.

THROUGH DEC. 25

The Christmas Attic's Holiday Advent Calendar. The Christmas Attic, has partnered with area schools, churches, and community groups again to help produce its annual temporary exhibition featuring illuminated canvases of art for The Christmas Attic's Holiday Advent Calendar Event. Each day at sundown, the store will reveal "advent art" featuring a variety of local holiday creations. All art will be placed either in the windows or on the brick of the building on the front side facing Union Street. Visitors can picture the entire building being transformed into an advent calendar. There will be holiday entertainment and activities inside the store for shoppers to enjoy on a variety of nights. At the closing of the Advent Calendar event, the canvases of advent art will be available for auction at a post-event celebration (to be scheduled). Proceeds from the auction will go to the Make-A-Wish Foundation of the Mid-Atlantic. At The Christmas Attic, 125 S. Union St. Call 703-548-2829 or visit www.christmasattic.com.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 26

"Downton Abbey" Marathon. 1-5 SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 18

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 17

p.m. at Charles E. Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Free. Tea and biscuits will be served. 703-746-1702.

THURSDAY/DEC. 27

“Downton Abbey”

Marathon. 12:30-5:30 p.m. at Charles E. Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Free. Tea and biscuits will be served. 703-746-1702.

FRIDAY/DEC. 28

“Downton Abbey”

Marathon. 10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. at Charles E. Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Free. Tea and biscuits will be served. 703-746-1702.

Concert. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. See Robin and Linda Williams perform. \$29.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or 703-549-7500.

SUNDAY/DEC. 30

TANK. \$55. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

MONDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. This annual New Year's Eve bash takes over Old Town Alexandria with 100 performances at 18 indoor venues, with live music, dancing, and children's face painting and games. The afternoon Fourth Annual Fun Hunt is joined by all-new activities for families and dogs. Afternoon activities are from 2-5 p.m., including Fourth Annual Fun Hunt. Performances are from 7-11:15 p.m. Venues throughout Old Town. Midnight fireworks at Potomac River at the foot of King St. Call 703-746-3301 or visit firstnightalexandria.org. Admission is \$15 before Dec. 17; \$20 after. Children 12 and under and active military are free.

New Year's Eve Benefit. 5 p.m. Join the Washington Area Parrot Head Club aboard the Cherry Blossom Riverboat to benefit the Lupus Foundation. The four-hour cruise benefits the Lupus Foundation and includes: Midnight fireworks display over the Potomac, two live bands (Nautical Wheelers and Smalltown) playing on two enclosed levels, full open premium bar (on cruise), champagne toast, heavy hors d'oeuvres, pre-cruise party and donation. Visit <http://lovenlucknycruise.eventbee.com/>. Pre-Cruise Party 5-8 p.m.; Cruise 9 p.m.-1 a.m. Departs Alexandria City Docks at 0 Cameron Street, Alexandria; \$135.

Performance. As part of “First Night Alexandria,” from 2-4 p.m. at Durant Center members of the TC Williams choir will be singing.

THURSDAY/JAN. 3

Ocean Orchestra & Washington Revels ‘Singers A Celtic Solstice Celebration!’ 7:30 p.m. \$25. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Call 703-549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JAN. 4-5

Pat Mcgee Band Reunion. \$35. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Call 703-



Holiday treats at Occasionally Cake.

Sweets with Santa

On Sat., Dec. 22, Occasionally Cake of Old Town Alexandria is hosting Sweets with Santa. Visitors can make an ornament and enjoy a buffet of hot cocoa, truffles, mini-cupcakes and cookies. Cost is \$50 per child, and includes a Santa session, craft making and sweets buffet. Sessions are offered at 10 a.m., 12 p.m., 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. at 207 King Street in Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-647-9638 to make a reservation or visit www.occasionallycake.com.

549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com.

JAN. 4 THROUGH JAN. 27

Art Exhibit. “Shades of White” by Del Ray artisans at the Nicholas A. Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. White isn’t “just white.” It has tones and hues ranging from blues to beiges to yellows and more. In addition, some white pigments chemically interact with others (e.g. lead-based v. sulfur-based) to create beautiful blues and grays. Curators: Betsy Mead and Hillary Mead. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

JAN. 5 THROUGH JAN. 27

Art Exhibit. See “Between the Lines: Contemporary Drawing Now” at Target Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. An all-media exhibition focusing on current trends in drawing today. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org/target.

SUNDAY/JAN. 6

An Evening of Musical/Political Humor with Mark Russell. 7:30 p.m. \$49.50. Visit www.markrussell.net/. The Birchmere Music Hall is located at 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Call 703-549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com.

Performance. Armonia Nova, an ensemble of historical instruments and voices, performs at 7:30 p.m. at Christ Church, 118 N. Washington St. Donations welcome. Visit www.armonianova.org or call 571-482-9052.

THROUGH JAN. 6

Net Worked: Horjus, Lister, and Pearson. Opening reception is on Sunday, Nov. 18, from 4 to 6 p.m. Free. At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Visit www.nvfaa.org.

Christmas at Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon is decking the halls for Christmas at Mount Vernon, a special daytime program offered through January. Themed decorations (including 12 Christmas trees), historical chocolate-making demonstrations, and 18th-century dancing will be offered. Visitors will get a glimpse of how the

Washingtons might have decorated and entertained during the holiday season. Tour the rarely-open third floor of the Mansion. During Christmas at Mount Vernon, visitors can meet Aladdin, the resident camel. Visit www.mountvernon.org.

MONDAY/JAN. 7

Garden Sprouts: Let it Snow. 11 a.m.-noon at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Children ages 3-5 with adult can listen to the story of Snowflake Bentley and learn how snow is made. Walk the garden and then make a craft. \$5/child. Register online at www.greenspring.org or 703-642-5173. Code: 290 182 3901.

THURSDAY/JAN. 10

Art Focus Group. 7:30-9 p.m. Color Mixing as Science and Art - Explore liquid watercolor for mixing colors and experimenting with application to a variety of paintable materials. Classes are \$25 each or \$200 for the 10 class series. A school

or group of teachers can share the registration for the full series. At 2804 Sherwood Hall Ln. Call 703-201-1250.

Music. Tommy Emmanuel will perform at 7:30 p.m. in the Music Hall at the Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. \$45. Visit www.birchmere.com or 703-549-7500.

Opening Reception. 6-8 p.m. at Target Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. “Between the Lines: Contemporary Drawing Now” is an all-media exhibition focusing on current trends in drawing today. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org/target.

FRIDAY/JAN. 11

Opening Reception. 5-8 p.m. See work by local artists Pamela Underhill and Rusty Lynn at The Gallery at Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane. There will be dance and poetry by Tori Lane. Free. Visit www.Convergenceccf.net.

Growing Healthy Indoor Plants. 1:30-2:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. \$10. Learn how soil, location and plant selection can fill a house with easy-care plants. Register online at www.greenspring.org or 703-642-5173. Code: 290 183 3301.

SATURDAY/JAN. 12

Garden Design: Session One. 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Two instructors will present lectures on “What Kind of Garden Do You Want?” and “Garden Bones.” \$35. Register at www.greenspring.org or 703-642-5173. Code: 290 182 3101.

Garden Sprouts: Gifts from the Gardens. 11 a.m.-noon at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Children ages 3-5 with adult can learn how seeds, fruit and other natural materials can be made into ornaments. \$5. Register online at www.greenspring.org or 703-642-5173. Code: 290 185 9501.

Family Fun: Snow Globe Workshop. 2-3 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Make a snow globe in a jar with miniature figures and glittering snowflakes. \$6/person. Register online at www.greenspring.org or 703-642-5173. Code: 290 182 3501.

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Make Plans for First Night Alexandria!

December 31

This annual New Year's Eve bash takes over Old Town with 100 performances at 20 indoor venues, with live music, dancing, and children's face painting and games. The afternoon's Fun Hunt is joined by all-new activities for families and dogs! Plus, a spectacular fireworks display on the river at midnight. Afternoon activities, 2 to 5 p.m. Performances, 7 to 11:45 p.m. Tickets \$15 in advance; \$20 after Dec. 17. Details on this and dozens of events at VisitAlexandriaVA.com.

VISITALEXANDRIA.COM

703.746.3301

Visit us online for a complete calendar of events and sign up for our free Access Alexandria e-newsletter.

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Mount Vernon Girls' Basketball Team Starts 4-0

The Mount Vernon girls' basketball team improved to 4-0 overall, 2-0 in the National District with a 65-35 victory against Wakefield on Dec. 14.

According to stats from the Washington Post's Web site, Taylor Dunham led Mount Vernon with 17 points. Kelly Loftus and Chanel Shannon each had 11 points and Samantha Porter had nine.

Mount Vernon beat Hayfield, 97-35 on Dec. 11 in the Majors' district opener. On Dec. 4, Mount Vernon snapped Oakton's 34-game winning streak with a 68-52 win at Oakton High School.

Mount Vernon hosted Robinson on Tuesday, after The Gazette's deadline. The Majors will host Washington-Lee at 7:45 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 20. Mount Vernon will host a holiday tournament Dec. 27-29.

MV Boys' Basketball Loses to Wakefield

The Mount Vernon boys' basketball team fell to 0-2 in the National District with a 68-53 loss to Wakefield on Dec. 14.

According to stats from the Washington Post's Web site Xayvin Johnson and Anton Lucas each scored 13 points for the Majors.

Mount Vernon lost to Hayfield, 76-59, on Dec. 11.

The Majors traveled to face Robinson on Tuesday, after The Gazette's deadline. Mount Vernon will travel to face Washington-Lee at 7:45 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 20.

West Potomac Boys' Basketball Wins 3 of 4

The West Potomac boys' basketball team defeated Oakton, 56-45, on Dec. 14, giving the Wolverines three wins in their last four games.

According to stats from the Washington Post's Web site, Kwame Camon and Caleb Williams each scored 13 points for West Potomac. Brandon Presley finished with 12.



Samantha Porter, seen against Oakton on Dec. 4, and the Mount Vernon girls' basketball team started the season 4-0, including National District wins against Hayfield and Wakefield.



Brandon Pressley, seen against Mount Vernon on Nov. 27, and the West Potomac boys' basketball team won three of their next four games after dropping their opener to the Majors.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE GAZETTE

West Potomac Girls' Basketball Drops to 2-5

The West Potomac girls' basketball team lost, 71-35, to defending state champion Oakton on Dec. 14. The loss dropped the Wolverines' record to 2-5.

According to stats from the Washington Post's Web site, Maddy Zdebski led West Potomac with 10 points and Rasheika Gregory added nine.

West Potomac hosted South County on Tuesday, after The Gazette's deadline. The Wolverines will travel to face Annandale at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 21.

Dance Team Wins at Winterfest

At the Dec. 15 Winterfest Cheer and Dance Competition at CD Hylton High School, the Carl Sandburg Middle School Dance Team, competing in the middle school category, won 1st place trophies in Pom, Lyrical, Captains Dance, and the Solo categories. They also placed 2nd in Hip Hop, and won the overall Best Costumes Award.

Coached by Ashley Hoffman, an Honors English teacher at CSMS, the dance team is comprised of both 7th

and 8th graders. The girls work throughout the year holding fundraisers and workshops to be able to compete against other middle schools at four competitions. They recently performed during the half-time at George Mason University. Most of the team members dance with local studios and will go on to dance with the West Potomac High School Dance Team.

Carl Sandburg Middle School Dance Team



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