

OPINION, PAGE 6 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 12 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 14

How the Powerless
Access Power

FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION, PAGE 8

A Message
From Oakton:
'We Care'

NEWS, PAGE 2

Remembering
Christmases Past

NEWS, PAGE 4

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) and his family at Christmas. In this week's Connection, neighbors share traditions and memories of the holiday season.

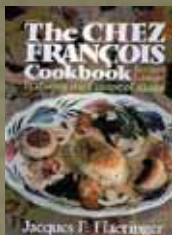
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NEWS

L'Auberge Chez François



Chef Jacques and the staff of L'Auberge Chez François wants to wish all of you, your families and friends a Happy, Healthy and Safe Holiday Season! We hope to see you at the restaurant during this festive time for either lunch or dinner. Also, consider L'Auberge Gift Certificates or one of Jacques' cookbooks or DVD sets for your holiday gift giving.



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From left—OES Librarian Kevin Hjelm, PTA president Alysia Dempsey, and PTA volunteers Tammy DiBlasi and Mary Pat Julian help students hold up the 10-foot "We Care" banner displayed during the school's Book Fair last week.

PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/
THE CONNECTION

A Message From Oakton: 'We Care'

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Money was flying everywhere the day before Thanksgiving break, as Oakton Elementary School students pulled spare change and dollar bills from their pockets, hats, lunch bags, purses and—in some cases—shoes.

"We were surprised by all the donations," said Alysia Dempsey, the school's PTA president, who launched a campaign to help schools in Staten Island devastated by Hurricane Sandy.

After all the money was counted, students and staff raised nearly \$1,400 with donations of quarters, dollars and more.

"It was truly inspirational to see our Oakton family come together for such a great cause. The kids learned that they can make a difference," Dempsey said.

Hurricane Sandy destroyed dozens of schools in New York last month, displacing thousands of students into makeshift classrooms in school gyms, libraries and cafeterias.

After learning about the storm-battered neighborhoods and schools, OES students made a commitment to help P.S. 52 in Staten Island New York. More than 500 students were displaced as a result of the Hurricane, and were forced to move temporarily to another school on Staten Island.

"[Our efforts] began with a few inspiring words from 800 students and staff on a 10-foot banner. The 'We Care' campaign inspired our entire school to care about our fellow students and teachers in New York," Dempsey said.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The week before Thanksgiving break, OES students signed the 10-foot "We Care" banner, showing their support for students displaced by Hurricane Sandy.

"It was truly inspirational to see our Oakton family come together for such a great cause. The kids learned that they can make a difference."

**— Alysia Dempsey,
the Oakton Elementary PTA President**

Dempsey said the PTA hopes to grow "We Care" and have goodwill campaigns each year.

"We envision our students as active participants and partners - creating ideas, planning, volunteering, using their talents to learn the act of giving," she said.

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NEWS



PHOTO BY DEB CORB/THE CONNECTION

Participants of the Jeans Day 2012 ceremony held at the government center.

Going Casual for a Cause

Nearly 10,000 people and 130-plus organizations participate in Jeans Day 2012 to help end homelessness.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Nearly 10,000 residents representing 130 businesses, Fairfax County agencies, schools and organizations pulled on their favorite jeans Friday, Dec. 14 for the second annual Jeans Day—a powerful community initiative that aims to “Put the ZIP on Homelessness” through building awareness and fundraising.

“This is a fun way to dress, but a serious challenge for our community,” said Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors during the Jeans Day 2012 ceremony held at the government center.

Bulova noted the county’s longstanding commitment to the issue by establishing the Office to Prevent and End Homeless (OPEH) in 2008. OPEH supports the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness which engages nonprofits, businesses, faith-based communities and county agencies in its efforts to implement the 10-Year plan, which focuses on rapid re-housing and prevention by increasing the availability of permanent affordable housing.

“It’s not okay to have people living in tents or in their cars. . . . We have it within our power to end homelessness as we know it in Fairfax County, and Jeans Day is just one of many great ways we are doing just that,” Bulova said.

The day of community give-back was facilitated by the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce (Fairfax Chamber), Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness, The Connection Newspapers and Apple Federal Credit Union. Participating organizations allowed employees or members to wear jeans to work Friday in exchange for a \$5 contribution to the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent & End Homelessness.

“Jeans Day is an especially vibrant example of the meaningful impact we make when businesses, nonprofits and government come together to raise awareness about an important issue and take action to help prevent it,” said Fairfax Chamber President & CEO Jim Corcoran. “The Chamber and business community are proud to be a part of this powerful initiative.”

Corcoran, who typically wears business suits as president of the Fairfax Chamber, said he went into a detailed explanation earlier that morning about his casual attire when he was speaking to a group of

Facts About Homelessness in Fairfax County

❖ On Jan. 25, 2012, there were 1,534 people who were literally homeless in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community. Six hundred and ninety-seven of them were individuals and 837 were people in families.

❖ During the past year, the number of people who were homeless in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community declined by one percent (15 people) from the number counted in January 2011. Persons in families decreased by 5.2 percent (46 people) compared to 2011. The number of single adults increased by 4.5 percent (30 adults) compared to 2011.

❖ The majority of the homeless are families and many work full time:

❖ Close to 60 percent of homeless persons are in families.

❖ More than 75 percent of children in homeless families are under the age of 11.

❖ Nearly 60 percent adults in homeless families work.

❖ Lack of affordable housing is the main cause of homelessness.

❖ Monthly rent for a one-bedroom apartment is \$1,134.

❖ A family must earn \$22.25 an hour to afford a one-bedroom apartment.

❖ 82 percent of homeless families earn less than \$14.24 an hour.

More information about homelessness in Fairfax County, and the partnership to end it, is available at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/>.

high-powered business executives. “The reason I went into such detail was to save my job,” he joked. “Please, don’t anyone suggest wearing a skirt next year.”

“By God, if we have to wear a skirt next year, we’ll call it a kilt,” joked Michael L. O’Reilly, Chairman of the Governing Board of Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness. O’Reilly told the crowd that the Fairfax community is especially passionate and committed to the cause of ending homelessness. “For there to be one family, one child who is homeless is simply unacceptable.”

Dean Klein, the executive director of OPEH, said he was energized by the success of this year’s effort. “We have heard so much goodwill and positive feedback about our effort this year. The number of participants really is amazing and we are so pleased we have been able to increase our reach and impact this year. We have had such amazing collaborations from each sector of our community, including business, nonprofit, government, schools, faith and individuals.”

“In Fairfax County, it’s easy to forget that there are homeless families here, homeless children in the schools, and that many people who are homeless here are actually working, but don’t make nearly enough money to afford housing,” said The Connection Publisher Mary Kimm. “The Connection is committed to raising awareness of homelessness and the need to provide permanent shelter, and to recognizing the good works of individuals and businesses in Northern Virginia.”



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Showing Support for Jeans Day 2012: Senator Mark Warner’s Office.



Employees with the Fairfax County Regional Library



FACETS employees



Employees of group Z in Tysons Corner



Sara Thomas, holding Laila, Renate Akers (Sara's grandmother and Laila's great-grandmother) lighting candles on the Christmas Tree in Coshocton, Ohio, December 2010.



Maris and Mark Angola at Karin's Florist.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Remembering Christmases Past

Neighbors share traditions and memories of the holiday season.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

Few of us cannot remember a family Christmas tradition or a special holiday event. Maybe, it was a specialty food prepared by a family member or, perhaps, a seasonal activity. Some Vienna neighbors shared their recollections with Vienna-Oakton Connection readers.

STATE SEN. CHAP PETERSEN [D-34], Fairfax:

"My best Christmas memories are oriented around our family Christmas caroling parties.

Every year, starting in 1969, my parents invited 50 or so friends to meet at our house in downtown Fairfax and sing Christmas carols. After a few practice rounds and some holiday beverages, we would head out and walk through the downtown, stopping at two dozen restaurants and bars.

At each stop, we'd enter and sing our Christmas favorites. The owners and patrons loved it. They expected us every year. We've kept this tradition in our family for 44 years."

BARBARA MCHALE, realtor, Vienna:

"In our family, Christmas has always been a big deal. I've got so much Christmas stuff out.

Growing up, everything was natural. We lived in the country in Virginia and holly and cedar grew there. We always had a cedar Christmas tree. They smelled

so good. Mother was always cooking. She made cakes, cookies, candy. A marvelous cook, a fantastic cook.

There was great anticipation that Santa was coming. Our tradition was that everything happened on Christmas morning.

Dad made eggnog on Christmas day. Neighbors came and dad added more liquor as the day went on.

We always got three things in our stockings, nuts, a big orange and firecrackers. Dad shot off the fireworks Christmas night. It was a heavenly, exciting day for kids.

It didn't matter if we got what we asked for, we were happy for what we got. We were satisfied. We had a great time.

Gifts weren't the biggest thing; it was family and friends. My parents made it that way."

VITO FLORIMONTE, master wood craftsman/gardener, Oakton:

"One tradition of Christmas from my mom's kitchen was the preparation of many types of Christmas cookies, especially honey balls. These [the honeyballs] were made by rolling long ropes of sweet dough into simple strands about 18 inches long, floured, and then cut into pieces about 1/2 inch long. Later, these were fried in peanut oil where they would change shape into little dough balls, like small marbles. After they dried, the balls would be boiled in honey where they would absorb the honey, harden and become a

confectionary delight which would be sprinkled with sparkly colored beads.

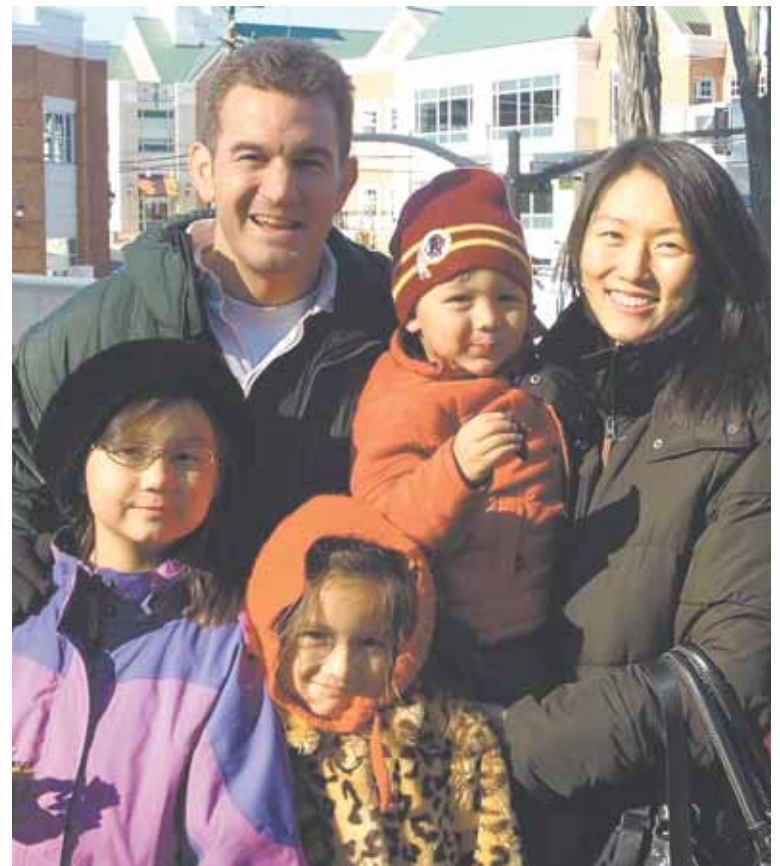
That was the easy part. The more difficult part was getting my dad to share these with family and friends since these were his favorite and, like King Midas, he protected his Christmas treasure. It was a sad day when the last of the honeyballs were consumed and we all had to wait until next year to watch it all happen again. Dad was very generous to his family and friends with everything except honeyballs."

KAREN AKERS, School of Business, GWU, Vienna:

"It wasn't until I became an aunt that I truly loved and appreciated my family's tradition of celebrating a Bavarian-style Christmas, in a small town nestled in the crook of three rivers in east-central Ohio.

Our whole family—roughly 16 of us—would gather on Christmas Eve for an early dinner in a house decorated with evergreens, rustic Santas and Krist Kindls, and every form of light, from candles to ropes of small white tree lights, twined around pine branches and set in trunks, arranged on table surfaces . . . and, of course, on the tree. Always a sharp, short-needled tree, beautifully-decorated, decked with real candles, and significantly bare below the branches.

"Following a huge, noisy, happy dinner, the family would gather by the tree. In our house, the tradition is that the oldest son would read the nativity story from the Bible, and then we would sing carols and traditional hymns. My mom shuddered at the idea of secular Christmas carols of Chris-



State Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) with family in 2007.



Vito and Toni Florimonte celebrate the season.

Christmases Past

FROM PAGE 4

mas Eve, and it was actually a pleasure to sing the beautiful songs that have endured for years—Away In a Manger, Silent Night (in German and English), O Come All Ye Faithful. Afterwards, a small group of adults would pile all the children in cars to take a tour of Christmas lights throughout our small town. The children would return to a house mysteriously hushed, the door between the kitchen and the dining room closed. Oma, the kids' beloved grandmother, nowhere to be seen.

Eight little ones in the kitchen, dancing with anticipation, standing by the door. The little ones have already been admonished by the older ones not to touch the door. The adults are there, too, with the same sense of anticipation, waiting in the quiet.

"And from the other side of the door comes the sounds of bell tinkling. The Christ Child has come..."

Santa Claus may bring presents to the children on Christmas morning, but the Krist Kindl brings them on Christmas Eve. The dining room door swings open and the children almost tumble into the dining room. Through the wide archway into the living room, they behold a miracle where there wasn't one only an hour earlier... the tree, lit only by softly glowing candles, with mountains of presents beneath its sweeping branches. Somehow, quietly, Oma appears behind them, with a Christmas hug and kiss for each of them.

And my brother, sister and I, along with our spouses, share smiles as we watch our children take in the sight. Huge eyes, shining faces, joy, joy, joy.



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) and his family at Christmas.

Christmas, for me, is summed up in that moment, when family, heritage and tradition combine. The rest of the evening is a haze of watching the kids open their presents, then we settle down with eggnog, wine and coffee to share our gifts at a more leisurely pace. By then, it's time for Midnight Mass, where everyone is a little sleepy and deeply in the spirit of the day."

U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, [D-11]:

"The holiday season is a time to cherish traditions. Every year my wife Smitty, our daughter Caitlin and I have our friends Jen and Greg over to dress the Christmas tree, exchange presents and cook dinner together. It is a great chance to just relax, listen

to music, and enjoy great company. It's hard to believe we've been doing it for 20 years."

MARIS ANGOLIA, president, Karin's Florist, Vienna:

"My husband Mark and I have a tradition every Thanksgiving morning.

Everyone in the house, whether they live there or are just visiting, gets up before the Macy's Parade. We watch the parade, and during the commercials, we all jump up and decorate the family Christmas tree. When the parade returns, we run back to watch.

By the end of the parade, the tree is decorated and we've gotten our exercise. And by the way, participation is not optional; you must get up to decorate or Mark will pull you by your hair... just ask the kids."

Virginia Interfaith Center Honors John Horejsi

The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy in Richmond has honored John Horejsi, a Vienna resident and founder and coordinator of Social Action Linking Together (SALT), as one of the top 30 Social Justice Makers in Virginia. A Northern Virginia citizen nominated him for the award: Robert Stewart, an Ignatian Volunteer.

In making the nomination, The Virginia Interfaith Center took into consideration Horejsi's years of dedication in advocating for the most vulnerable in the community and state. For many years, Horejsi has volunteered his services with Fairfax County's Advisory Social Services Board,



John Horejsi

with the Fairfax Alliance for Human Services, and with charitable activities, such as Catholic charities.

During the past 25 years in his efforts to advance the common good, Horejsi demonstrated leadership, persistence, forbearance, tolerance, charity of spirit and effectiveness through Social Action Linking Together (SALT), the organization he founded in 1983. SALT began as a small group of concerned citizens and has grown to a network of over 1,200 social justice volunteers. Membership in SALT is open to any person committed to social justice and advancing the common good, and willing to join in

state and local faith-based advocacy.

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THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

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 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 organizations.

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/benchtreet.htm>
- ❖ Buy a book to fulfill the Library Foundation's Wish List www.amazon.com/gp/registry/registry.html/002-9627810-1915264?id=2P3AKWX1F9FO
- ❖ Donate the gift of trees through Reforest Fairfax of the Fairfax County Restoration Project <http://www.fcrpp3.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, mcccfoundation.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:
- ❖ **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
- ❖ **Our Daily Bread** has been serving needy families in Fairfax County for 25 years. The Holiday Program helps those in need with food for the holidays and gifts for their children, making last year's holiday season brighter for approximately 3,000 families. www.odbfairfax.com/holiday
- ❖ **Food for Others** distributed more than 2.4 million pounds of free food to families in need in Northern Virginia in the year ending June 30, 2012. The non-profit provides a safety net for people who face emergencies such as a family illness or the loss of a job or a spouse. 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. www.foodforothers.com
- ❖ **Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO)**, 703-569-9160. Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families, helping more than 5,000 people last year. www.echo-inc.org.
- ❖ **Lorton Community Action Center** operates the Act II Thrift Shop at 9506 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Sales from the shop generate funds for LCAC and clients also shop there. Now collecting gift cards and food baskets for Christmas, and warm coats. 703-339-8611 www.lortonaction.org.
- ❖ **Comfort for America's Uniformed Services (CAUSE)** —

- ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation. 4114 Legato Road Suite B, Fairfax, VA 22033, 703-591-4968, cause-usa.org
- ❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia, 703-541-3063. www.capitalareafoodbank.org
- ❖ **Western Fairfax Christian Ministries** — food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive in Chantilly (near Backyard Grill and Bar). For more information or to sponsor a family, call 703-988-9656, ext. 105. To mail gift cards or send donations by check, add a note saying "food basket program" and send them to: WFCM, P.O. Box 220802, Chantilly, VA 20153. 703-988-9656.
- ❖ **The Jeanie Schmidt Free Clinic**, 13525 Dulles Technology Drive, Herndon, VA 20171, 571-235-3577. Last year, 139 community volunteers including nurses, nurse practitioners and physicians, gave more than 1,300 hours of their time to see patients. jsfreeclinic.org.
- ❖ **Alternative House** — Abused and Homeless Children's Refuge, 2100 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182, 703-506-9191. www.thealternativehouse.org.
- ❖ **Reston Interfaith**, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, www.restoninterfaith.org. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program and holiday food drives.
- ❖ **SHARE of McLean** is fully volunteer run, and seeks donations of grocery gift cards and more. Checks and gift cards can be sent to: Share, Inc. PO Box 210, McLean, VA 22101. 703-284-2179. www.SHAREofMcLean.org
- ❖ **LINK**, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more, needs contributions of food, coats and holiday toys for children, plus volunteers. More than 4,000 adults and children have signed up for help with holiday meals. 703-437-1776 www.linkagainsthunger.org
- ❖ **FACETS** helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area.

- FACETS is always in need of volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. 703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. FACETS offers a monthly Youth Volunteer Night. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Avenue, Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030
- ❖ **Committee for Helping Others (CHO)**, Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of concerned churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield, Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. 703-281-7614 <http://www.cho-va.com>
- ❖ **Fairfax City Area FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help)**, working with the Office of Coordinated Services Planning, Fairfax County Department of Human Services, FISH helps local citizens who are in temporary need of food, clothing and financial assistance for rent, mortgage payments, utilities, and medical treatments. FISH also provides limited transportation for doctor appointments and food delivery. 703-222-0880 <http://fairfaxfish.org/>
- ❖ **Herndon-Reston FISH (For Immediate Sympathetic Help)**, 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105 <http://herndonrestonfish.org>
- ❖ **Lamb Center**, www.thelambcenter.org, Day center for homeless, Fairfax 703-691-3178
- ❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**, 10455 White Granite Drive Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124 703-385-3267 <http://www.nvfs.org/>
- ❖ **United Community Ministries**, Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, 22306 <http://www.ucmagency.org/>
- ❖ **Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN)** of Northern Virginia, 703-820-9001, www.scanva.org, Parent Education, Public Education-re: child abuse and Court Advocacy for Abused and Neglected Children

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LETTERS

'A Needed Amusement'

To the Editor:

Probably without intending to do so, your December 5-11 issue provided considerable amusement.

First—after years of mindless support for Gerry Connolly's determination to turn Tysons Corner into God's Own Junkyard through a secret, no-bid contract—Mr. Horrock has discovered that Metro's Silver Line is badly flawed; no parking, restricted access to the tunnel into D.C. and, alas, doubtful ridership ["Silver Line Faces 'Daunting Issues'"]. But, not to worry, our fearless Board of Supervisors has a solution, for... Second, as Ms. Tozzi's letter ["Opposing Tysons' Service District Tax"] points out, everything can be easily fixed with a fine new tax on residential—not commercial—real estate. Problem solved! Third, to top it off, there appears Mr. Kanter's letter ["Tax Cuts for Wealthiest: Not Right and Not

Smart"], evidencing his eagerness to pay higher Federal income taxes. Bravo! The theoretical \$90 billion of new annual revenue raised by that tax increase will really take a whack out of our \$16 trillion deficit. Or, perhaps it is the case that Mr. Kanter is so satisfied with the way Gerry Connolly and the Board of Supervisors have spent his money over the years locally on projects like the Silver Line that he hopes for more of the same from the Federal government. Not to worry, it's coming. For my part of the tax/Fiscal Cliff debate, I would simply paraphrase the criticism of Martin Amis to suggest that Mr. Obama stop pretending to govern and confine himself to giving interviews. Meantime, thanks for the needed amusement.

Jack Gleason
Vienna

Taxing 'Household' or Individual

To the Editor:

Joel Kanter of McLean wrote a letter to the editor commenting on Tax Cuts for the Wealthiest [Tax Cuts for Wealthiest: Not Right and Not Smart, Connection, December 5-11, 2012]. I don't disagree that we need to raise some taxes, especially on the wealthy. There is a problem with the current proposal, however, and I believe that if implemented as stated by proposed legislation, it will overly impact not only married couples but also the lesser salaried spouse. The legislation means a higher tax for "households" making more than \$250,000. I believe the word "household" should be "individual" as many columns and speeches indicate, knowing they mean "households." I am not opposed to individuals paying more

when they make that kind of money. I am opposed, and voting with liberals usually, to penalizing married couples. The individuals are given a pass at \$200,000 and if two individuals live in the household they get a \$400,000 benefit. Do you see a need to penalize married couples? I would think someone has seen this issue. When a couple who is married and each makes a salary and it adds up to this \$250,000, that is a lot of individual work effort to get taxed at the proposed increased rate. I think this makes it unfair to married couples. Frankly in this area, a working couple each of who makes \$125,000, would hardly be considered "rich."

Nancy Appler
Vienna

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FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

How the Powerless Access

Immigrants make significant gains in influencing political system.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

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."



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

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 CONNECTION

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 10

PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION



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.

SEE BARRIERS, PAGE 10

FOCUS ON IMMIGRATION

Immigrants Gain Influence in Virginia

FROM PAGE 9

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.

PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

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 9

We had seen a lot of things. Whenever I see war-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 was worked at the Small Business Administration, and had also served as an attorney with the Federal Communications Commission's Wireless Bureau.

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Cast of Altar Boyz, from left, Zack Powell as Abraham; Edward C. Nagel as Mark; Jonathan Walker as Juan; Derek Tatum as Luke; and BJ Gruber as Matthew.



PHOTO BY BRAD KALBFELD/
COURTESY OF
1ST STAGE

'Altar Boyz' at Tysons' 1st Stage

1st Stage production of "Altar Boyz" at 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean, features performances now through Dec. 30. The show is performed Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets \$15-\$30. Call 703-854-1856 or visit www.1stStageTysons.org.

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

THURSDAY/ DEC. 20

McLean High School Holiday Ensemble Performance. 6-7:30 p.m. at the McLean Racquet & Health Club, 1472 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Players for this event are the members of the McLean High School Philharmonic orchestra. www.mcleanracquetandhealthclub.com.

FRIDAY/DEC. 21

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

SATURDAY/DEC. 22

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

Welcome Yule! 4:30 p.m., at Vienna Baptist Church, 541 Marshall Road, Vienna. The Vienna Choral Society celebrates the season with traditional English carols in a wood-beamed church with hot cocoa and Christmas cookies to follow the concert. \$20, adults; \$15 over 64, under 18; and \$35 for families. www.ViennaChoralSociety.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 23

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

MONDAY/DEC. 24

Good For The Jews. 7 p.m., at Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. The self-proclaimed players of Jewish music for people who don't

like Jewish music. \$20. <http://jamminjava.com/home/events/good-for-the-jews>.

FRIDAY/DEC. 28

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

SATURDAY/DEC. 29

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

SUNDAY/DEC. 30

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

MONDAY/DEC. 31

Watch Night. 7 p.m.-midnight at the crossroads of Broad and Washington Streets, Falls Church. Named after the ancient African tradition of watching in the New Year, the community comes together for small-town festivities including magicians, storytelling, face painting, karaoke, digital dance revolution, live music, restaurants and more. www.fallschurchva.gov.

Ballroom Dance: New Year's Eve "Ring The Bell." 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m., Colvin Run Schoolhouse, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Ring in 2013 with all your favorite dance styles; hors d'oeuvres included, black-tie optional. \$50 through Dec. 10; \$60 after Dec. 10. 703-759-2685 or www.colvinrun.com.

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 2

Senators and Delegates at Town Hall Forum. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Sen. Favola

(D-31), Sen. Howell (D-32), Del. Brink (D-48), Del. Comstock (D-34), Del. Keam (D-35) and Del. Scott (D-53) speak at the McLean Citizens Association meeting on the upcoming legislative session; the officials will also answer questions and hear resident's concerns in an extended question and answer period. www.mcleancitizens.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 5

The Capitol Steps. 8 p.m., at the Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Bipartisan comedy addressing the question for January following an election year: "What new material will the Steps come up with now?" \$45; \$35, McLean district residents. 703-790-0123 or www.aldentheatre.org.

FRIDAY/JAN. 11

21st Annual Economic Conference. 7:15-11:45 a.m., at McLean Hilton Tysons Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Drive, McLean. Presented by Cardinal Bank and George Mason University. Free for 2012-2013 paid alumni members, LLP '12 and ELI/LFI '13 members. Register by Jan. 3 at Danielle@leadershipfairfax.org.

SATURDAY/JAN. 19

Oratorical Contest. 10 a.m., at the Vienna American Legion, 330 Center St. N., Vienna. High school students can register by Jan. 11 to participate. 703-867-1285 or ronp5555@yahoo.com.

An Evening With Dick Gregory. 8 p.m., at the Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. A Movement leader from the 1960s and comedian, civil and human rights activist, author, recording artist, television and film personality, nutritionist and veteran committed to non-violent social change speaks in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. \$20, \$10, MCC residents. www.aldentheatre.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 20

Breakfast Buffet. 8 a.m.-noon, at the American Legion, 330 Center St. N., Vienna. Omelets, scrambled eggs, blueberry pancakes, bacon and all the fixings. \$8, adults; \$3, children. 703-938-1379.



Founder and artistic director of the American Festival Pops Orchestra, Anthony Maiello, directs the concert of cherished Christmas carols and festive holiday classics.

Holiday Pops: Songs of the Season

As part of the Great Performances at Mason series, the American Festival Pops Orchestra Holiday Brass Quintet performs holiday classics with guest narration from Rick Davis on Saturday, Dec. 22 at 8 p.m. at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. \$24, \$40, \$48; youth through 12th half price when accompanied by adult. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

FAITH NOTES

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

Christ Church Vienna, meeting at Louise Archer Elementary School, 324 Nutley St. NW, Vienna, holds a **Lessons & Carols Service** on Sunday, Dec. 23 at 10 a.m. and a **Christmas Eve service** on Monday, Dec. 24 at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. 703-865-7929 or www.ChristChurchVienna.com.

Trinity United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean, holds a **Christmas Eve Service** at 5 p.m., where children are invited to participate and services at 8 p.m. and 10 p.m. which include communion and candlelight. On Wednesday, Dec. 19, a **Service of Hope and Healing** at noon and 7:30 p.m. provides a worship service to keep the feelings of what can be a difficult time of year in perspective.

Redeemer Lutheran Church, 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean, will hold four services on **Christmas Eve**, Monday, Dec. 24 along with a 4 p.m. **Children's Pageant** and 6, 8 and 10 p.m. **Candlelight Services**. A **Christmas Day service** will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 25 at 10 a.m. and on Sunday, Dec. 30, the church will hold a **Lessons and Carols service** at 10:30 a.m. The church also welcomes all to attend their Monday, Dec. 31 **Affirmation of Baptism Service** at 5 p.m. Call 703-356-3346.

St. Mark's English as a Second Language Program for adults at the St. Mark Christian Formation Center, 9972 Vale Road, Vienna, opens registration for the winter term on Tuesday, Jan. 8 and Thursday, Jan. 10 at 7 p.m. for seven proficiency levels from Beginner 1 to Advanced 2. Students will be registered and tested for classes beginning on Tuesday, Jan. 15 to meet on Tuesdays and Thursday from 8-9:30 p.m. for 10 weeks. \$25. 703-626-3585, 703-622-4153 (English or Spanish); 703-505-0123 (Korean); or email st.mark.esl@gmail.com.

Great Falls United Methodist Church is providing an Advent sermon series called **"A Different Kind of Christmas: Living and Giving**

Like Jesus", based on the book by Rev. Mike Slaughter. They will look at the celebration of Christmas and find ways to bring the focus of the season back to the reason we celebrate. Attendees will be encouraged to examine Christmas celebrations and to develop new Christmas traditions that focus on relationships and service. The series are being held on Sundays, Dec. 9, 16 and 23 at 10 a.m. at 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. 703-759-3705 or office@greatfallsumc.org.

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

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

St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, offers three Sunday services and a host of musical, educational, outreach, and fellowship ministries to enrich spiritual growth. 7:45 a.m. Worship Service without music; 9 a.m. Worship Service, Children's Chapel and Children's Choirs; 10 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Forum; and 11 a.m. Worship Service with Adult Choir. 703-759-2082.

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

Madison's Huge Second Half Leads to Win Against McLean

Warhawks overcome 15-point halftime deficit.

BY ALEX VAN REES
FOR THE CONNECTION

The Madison Warhawks trailed by 15 points heading into the second half, but overcame their poor start by delivering an overwhelming 43 points in the final two periods to defeat the McLean Highlanders, 56-49, on Friday night in a Liberty District showdown.

"No one should be comfortable with any lead when facing us," said Madison senior wing Patrick Murphy. "We can come back at any time and we proved that tonight. We never give up and that's an important aspect of our game."

Heading into the half, the Highlanders seemed to be on a roll and on the way to a second consecutive win, after starting the season 0-3, as they were leading comfortably, 28-13.

However, the Warhawks busted out of the gate in the third period and did not leave anything on the court. Madison scored more than three times as many points in the second half by outscoring McLean 43-21.

"We played really well together in the second half," said Murphy. "We started to go inside more and work inside-out. Once we started working together, we started playing better defensively. Our strong defense led to better execution toward the end of the game."

Murphy led the onslaught in the second half with 21 points. He led the team with 27 overall, making seven of nine from the floor over the final two periods. Senior guard Tommy House and senior post Phillip Davine both added 13 points of their own to the mix.

THIS GAME was the first time the Warhawks were out-rebounded in a contest up to this point in the young season. One of the major talking points in the locker room after the first half was that they needed to work on their rebound game.

Although they finished the game with fewer rebounds, they did a much better job in the second half, which was readily apparent.

"I was disappointed with our inability to run offense and the amount of turnovers and lack of rebounds in the first half," said Madison Head Coach Chris Kuhblank. "We turned it around in the second half and were able to get the shots off that we needed. That's the type of team we need to be and can be."

On the other side of the court, the Highlanders came roaring onto the court and dominated the first half of the game, but fell off quickly after the first half.

"We have had major problems with turnovers this season, and that was apparent in the second half," said McLean head coach Kevin Roller. "Little things add up, and we made too many mistakes in the sec-



The Madison boys' basketball team defeated McLean on Dec. 14 at McLean High School.

PHOTO BY ALEX VAN REES

ond half and that really cost us."

In the first half, the Warhawks struggled with turnovers, totaling 11, compared to just six by the Highlanders. However, the second half was a different story. McLean had 10 turnovers and missed a number of layups in the final minutes of the game.

"It was all just execution," said McLean senior center John Pascoe. "We knew what to expect from them, but we got lazy in the second half and they played great. That was the major difference in the game."

McLean senior guard Samer Abdelmoty led the Highlanders with 19 points, including eight free throws, all of which came in the final period. Pascoe tallied 14 points and both senior guard Milos Lesevic and junior guard Joey Sullivan finished the contest with six points apiece.

"We're still learning and that will take some time," Roller said. "It was about what I expected from these two teams. Both teams are learning what they can do well and what they need to work on. We had a very strong first half and they obviously had a very impressive second half."

The road win was Madison's second of the season. "If you don't give up, there's always a chance you can come back and win," said Kuhblank. "We were down more points after the first half than we had scored the entire first two periods."

Pascoe said the Highlanders should bounce back. "I'm confident we'll rebound," said Pascoe. "We'll practice hard this weekend and then get a good scouting report for our game on Tuesday. Hopefully, we'll play much better in the second half than we did out there tonight."

THESE TWO TEAMS will do battle again in January.

With the win on Friday night, the Warhawks (3-2 overall) are now tied with both Langley and Marshall atop the Liberty District, each sporting a 2-0 record. The Highlanders (1-4) drop to 1-1 in the district after they defeated South Lakes last week for their first win of the season.

Both teams will be on the road for their next contests on Tuesday evening; McLean heads to Chantilly, while Madison will square off against Oakton in Vienna.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL

Langley senior Garrett Collier scored a career-high 23 points during the Saxons' 49-33 victory against South Lakes on Dec. 14.

Saxons Undeclared

Collier's 23 points lead Langley past South Lakes.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The opening scene of Garrett Collier's career-best performance featured the senior guard knocking down a pair of 3-pointers as the Langley boys' basketball team built a 15-point first-half lead against the South Lakes Seahawks.

After South Lakes trimmed the lead to five late in the third quarter, Collier's finale included a buzzer-beating jumper that spelled the beginning of the end for the Seahawks.

Collier's jump shot beat the third-quarter buzzer and sparked a 14-2 Langley run as the Saxons pulled away for a 49-33 victory on Dec. 14 at Langley High School. Collier scored a career-high 23 points and the Saxons improved to 6-0, including 2-0 in the Liberty District.

"I started to make some threes early," he said, "and I thought I got my confidence up."

Langley opened the game on a 12-2 run and held South Lakes without a field goal for the first 5 minutes, 39 seconds. The Seahawks hit a pair of three-pointers toward the end of first quarter, but each time Collier answered with a three of his own.

After a 13-point first half and pair of field goals in the third quarter, Collier buried his third three-pointer of the evening midway through the fourth quarter, giving Langley a 45-30 lead.

"He's such a scrappy kid," Langley Head Coach Travis Hess said. "He doesn't even know who [former NBA player] Stacey Augmon is. We call him the 'Plastic Man' (Augmon's nickname) sometimes because he gets his hands on loose balls, he baits kids into throwing that wing pass . . . and picks it off

and takes it the other way.

" . . . He shot the ball well. He was a football player, so he's just kind of getting his basketball legs back. If he can shoot like that every single night, we'll be all right."

Xavier Ryan scored seven points for Langley. Justin Galiani scored six points and grabbed eight rebounds, Brad Dotson finished with six points and five rebounds and Philip Novacki had three points and seven boards.

South Lakes struggled to score against Langley's zone defense. The Seahawks finished the contest with 12 field goals and 28 turnovers. The Seahawks made only six of 21 free-throw attempts.

"It's a different game if we make free throws," South Lakes Head Coach Andrew Duggan said. "Free throws, unforced errors—we're just throwing the ball away. It's the right idea with some of the passes we're trying to make, especially against that zone, [but] we just threw the ball away too many times without much pressure on us."

The 33 points allowed by Langley were a season-best for the Saxons and a season-low for South Lakes. Sophomore point guard Brandon Kamga led the Seahawks with 11 points.

"Defensively, I couldn't be happier with holding them to 33 points," Hess said. "Offensively, I thought we could have taken care of the ball a little better, I thought we could have executed a little better, I thought we could have finished in transition a little better, but to hold a team to 33 points in a high school basketball game; you're going to win a lot of games if you can do that."

Through six games, Langley is limiting opponents to 39.7 points per contest.

The Saxons will host Westfield at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 18.

Teaching Health and Holiday Culinary Traditions

Nutrition experts say moderation, not deprivation, is key.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

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 recreation 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 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-deprivation. They emphasize that moderation, minor modifications and keeping it real are the keys to maintaining 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, pep-



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/THE CONNECTION

When faced with a wide array of yuletide treats, dietician Jennifer Kay Nelson advises against "mindlessly grabbing cookies [and] candy ... here-there-everywhere."

ermint 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-a-likes."

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."

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.

ESCHEWING LARGE cookie cutters for their bite-sized counterparts and baking pies with graham cracker crusts instead of traditional fat-laden shells are tactics that Vienna-based culinary instructor Christine Wisniewski employs during the holiday season. "There are lots of ways to go about healthy-ing up the holidays," she said. "If the filling is the

star of the dessert, fill and bake individual ramekins for a crust-free dessert and significant calorie and fat savings."

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."

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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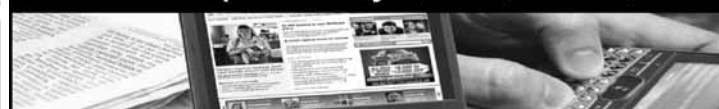
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I'am a slow walker,
but I never walk back.
-Abraham Lincoln

Touching For Sure, But Not Always



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Usually, but not always, when I show for my scheduled post-chemotherapy/post-scan appointment with my oncologist, I am physically examined (touching, feeling). Recently, due to some enhanced computer and facility upgrades, I was shown the actual scans, digitized. However, on more than one occasion over the last 18 months or so, after we discussed the results of my most recent CT Scan – and lab work, no physical exam was performed. Apparently, as I later learned, the good results from my scan sort of trumps any need to feel for physical manifestations. Meaning, that if the scan shows no tumor growth or movement, it stands to reason – medically speaking, that corollary-type symptoms/indications/abnormalities would not occur/be present. To simplify even more, there's no need for a "pre-operative grope," to quote Dr. Hawkeye Pierce from an episode of M*A*S*H, if the diagnostic test shows there's nothing to "gripe."

On balance then, the doctor's not examining me is good news, generally, presumably; at least that's how he explained it to me. It's a professional version of "Why bother?" There's nothing to see so he doesn't have to take a look. I can live with that. Still, I remember the first appointment I had with my oncologist when he didn't examine me (he always asks questions though); before I sort of realized that I hadn't been examined, I was already in my car driving home. I said aloud to my wife, Dina: "He didn't even examine me!" I felt cheated somehow, as if I didn't get my co-pay's worth. I called my nurse the next day to complain and express my curiosity/anxiety about why it was that my oncologist had not touched/ tested me for any physical reactions/signs as he had on all previous appointments.

My doctor did not call back if I recall, but I believe my nurse did, with some tepid reassurance. However, on my next appointment with my oncologist, we discussed the reason why I hadn't been examined during the previous appointment. He said there is a debate within the medical profession about this very subject. If the scans are encouraging and show no appreciable tumor growth and/or movement, the patient's body will likely not exhibit any signs to the contrary. Ergo, physically examining the patient is sort of redundant. However, my concern that something wasn't done to me (physically examined by my doctor) is not uncommon, my doctor said, and causes patients to have a not-unexpected reaction: skepticism. The perception by us patients is that the doctors are not in fact doing everything they're supposed to be doing, "Hippocratically" speaking. The doctors might know better, and know the facts, but when dealing with us patients, there are feelings to consider. And if the patient's feelings are not considered during this fairly intimate doctor-patient relationship, then the facts, clear as they may be, may fall on deaf ears. This is the quandary – as it was explained to me; examine a patient who you know (from their most recent diagnostic scan) is not experiencing any negative reactions (to their disease) or, don't examine the patient and cause a negative emotional reaction by not physically examining them. And as any of us terminal patients will attest, there's a fine line to be straddled between positive and negative thoughts and interpretations and how they affect the patient. Maybe, reassuring the patient might be more important than following protocol?

As much as I want to be a patient patient, the longer I survive, the more impatient and paranoid I'm becoming. I want to enjoy the good news, really I do, but sometimes I can't. Damn cancer.

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



The carolers sang briefly near the Santa set in Tysons Corner Center before being asked by security to discontinue.



The carolers continue to sing as they walked to Senator Mark Warner's office on Monday, Dec. 10.

PHOTOS BY JENNIFER BENITZ/THE CONNECTION

Making Their Voices Heard

Caroling about "fiscal cliff" at Tysons Corner Center.

JENNIFER BENITZ
THE CONNECTION

On Monday, Dec. 10, a group of 30-40 residents of Northern Virginia and beyond met by the entrance of California Pizza Kitchen in Tysons Corner Center in preparation to go caroling. Rather than singing holiday favorites, however, the group planned on singing about the fiscal cliff to spread awareness about ongoing federal budget concerns.

"[Caroling] ties into the Christmas season and it's fun and energizing for folks as opposed to just a normal rally," said Anna Scholl, the executive director at Progress Virginia and one of the coordinators for the event. "It was a fun way to get folks involved and have their voices literally heard."

As noon approached, the group of volunteers grew gradually as many practiced the lyrics to the carols and others talked amongst themselves before making their way through the mall. By 12:07 p.m., the group settled in front of the Santa set, located near Nordstrom, and began singing "Revenue! Revenue!" to the tune of "Jingle Bells." The musical rally was short-lived, however. Within only three minutes of starting, the group was told to stop by security personnel.

The carolers continued to sing as they made their way through Nordstrom and across the parking deck towards Senator Mark Warner's Vienna office, located

next to the mall, where they were met by Deputy State Director Ann Rust. Standing in the elevator lobby on the second floor of Senator Warner's office, volunteers listened as some took a few moments to share their personal stories with Rust.

"I think the folks here really felt they got the message to Senator Warner's staff in a creative, friendly way but made sure that they understand that middle class families have a lot at stake in these negotiations," said Scholl.

After traveling four hours from Norfolk to take part in the event, Julia Newtown was the first to share her story. She informed Rust about her 29-year-old son Antoan, his dependence on Medicaid and the devastation they would both face with even a 0.5 percent cut to Medicare's budget. Jameel Soni of McLean followed, talking about her urgency to protect social programs and sharing stories about loved ones and friends who depend on such programs.

Members of various organizations, including Progress Virginia, Service Employees International Unions, Move On, Virginia Organizing and Virginia AFL-CIO also took part in the caroling demonstration that took place not only in Vienna, but also across the state in Norfolk and Roanoke in the same day.

"We really want to make sure Senator Warner takes his constituents and middle class families into consideration in these negotiations," said Scholl, "to make sure that he protects middle class tax cuts, asks the wealthy to pay their fair share and protects the social safety net programs like Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security that a lot of people depend on. Cuts would be really devastating to a lot of the folks here today. It's important for middle class families to stand up and make their voices heard."

VIEWPOINTS

Why is this demonstration and being here today important to you?



Jalmeen Soni, McLean

"Today is important to me because I was working for Obama's campaign for the past 18 months. I believe strongly that this is the time we should raise our voice against GOP. They're out there to take care of the people who can take care of themselves, not for us. And that's why it's very important for me, that I have been doing the volunteer work for so long for this cause and this is the one day that I should be there to raise my voice that we are still out there to watch for the GOP. What the GOP is doing, they are not doing it for us. They are doing it for the interest of people who are giving them a lot of money to fight for them. And we have only the voice to fight back because we are not loaded with the money. We have a voice to reach to them and to the public to stand up for our rights and for our demand."



Valorie Bachelor, Falls Church

"In July, my father who was 85 years old passed away. The last month or so of his life we had him in hospice care. That could've bankrupted my family and the fact that it was paid for fully by Medicare and we didn't have to deal with any of that was a huge help to my family. My mom and I were thinking about what we were going to do with the house, with the cars, and it would have literally bankrupted us. The same situation could happen to another family who would have to figure out how to get 30, 40 or \$50,000 to care for a loved one. It just kills me to think that something like that could happen. I just want to tell Senator Warner that these cuts are not right for Virginia residents."



Julia Newtown, Norfolk

"Any day that I have a chance to tell my story about my son and try to prevent any cuts to Medicaid is very important to me. Any time that I can talk to someone about the devastating cuts that Medicaid will have on me and my family, I feel that I have accomplished something. I hope that Mr. Warner sits down with fellow legislators that he will think about me, this mother, her son and her story and the devastating effects that any cuts to Medicaid will have on my family and families like mine."

—JENNIFER BENITZ

Hudgins Wins Award for Regional Leadership

At its Annual Membership and Awards Luncheon, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), a nonprofit association of 300 area elected officials, presented Fairfax County Supervisor Cathy Hudgins with the organization's highest honor. Hudgins received COG's Elizabeth and David Scull Metropolitan Public Service Award for her work as chairman of the Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which oversees the region's Metro system.

COG Board Chair Frank Principi said

that Hudgins was the "thoughtful, steady, and insightful leader" the region needed to help restore confidence in Metro, which has faced serious challenges and increased scrutiny in the past several years. Her peers at COG noted many accomplishments at WMATA, such as making the safety and maintenance of the system the top priorities of her chairmanship and advocating for Metro's funding needs.

Hudgins also spearheaded several changes to improve the transit agency's governance following recommendations by COG, the Board of Trade, and other groups. She initiated and oversaw a process in

which WMATA adopted its first-ever Bylaws and a modernized Code of Ethics. The Board also agreed to end the custom of rotating the Board Chairman every year. As a result, Hudgins was elected for a second consecutive year in 2012, which provided stability during major turnover among WMATA board members and senior staff.

Her regional colleagues also noted the key role Hudgins has played in ensuring the completion of the Silver Line's first phase to Reston as well as the agreement that will build the second phase to Dulles Airport and Loudoun County.

In addition to WMATA, Hudgins has led

several other regional groups over the past few years, including the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, the Virginia Association of Counties, and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission.

The Scull Award is presented annually to a local, state or federal elected official for outstanding service to the metropolitan Washington region. It is named after the late Montgomery County Councilmembers, who were strong supporters of COG and regional cooperation.

COG is an independent, nonprofit association where area leaders address regional issues affecting the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland and Northern Virginia.