

# Celebrating Diversity

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PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

## A Chorus of Praise

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## Hypothermia Shelter Brings Homeless in From Cold

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From left, Tom Wilkins, a founder of the Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Foundation, Jennifer Johnson and Robert Simon, founder of Reston, at the MLK foundation's celebration of cultural diversity at Herndon's ArtSpace Saturday, Jan. 26.

WINTER FUN  
& ENTERTAINMENT  
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# RESTON COMMUNITY CENTER

*You're Invited to RCC Hunters Woods for...*

## Community Relations and Program/ Policy Joint Committee Meeting

Monday, February 11 • 6:30 p.m.

Do you have ideas and opinions about the future of cultural, recreational and leisure time amenities? Small district 5 residents are invited to attend the combined meeting of the Community Relations and Program/Policy Committees to share your thoughts.

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## Board of Governors Meeting

Monday, February 4 • 8:00 p.m.

*Dates subject to change. Please check website prior to attending.*



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# THE COUNTY LINE



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Stanton (center) with his adoptive parents Mike and Freda Delgado of Fairfax during Fairfax Families4Kids National Mentoring Month Celebration on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Pinn Center in Fairfax. “This isn’t easy, but you can’t give up. Michael and I always say to Stanton that no matter what, we’re not giving up on you,” Freda said.**

**Fairfax Families4Kids hosted a luncheon for mentors to celebrate National Mentoring Month on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Pinn Center in Fairfax. (From left) Alexandra LaJoux; Joan Brady, Paris, 16, a foster teen who was recently adopted; Molly Pell; Carmen Jordan, Carissa and Beverly Howard, the director of the program.**

## A Chorus of Praise

**Fairfax County mentors celebrated during National Mentor Month.**

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

Second article in a three part series.

**C**an we get an “amen?” The joyful noise coming from the David R. Pinn Center in Fairfax on Saturday wasn’t a gospel revival, but it was just as inspiring and enlightening.

“C’mon now. I want to hear from everybody. Give me an adjective to describe your mentor... How about amazing?” asked Beverly Howard, the “dynamic” director of Fairfax Families4Kids.

“How about chill!” said Stanton, 14, sporting yellow sunglasses and a baseball cap, making everyone laugh.

“Supportive,” shouted one teen. “Caring and helpful,” shouted another.

The boisterous call-and-response session was part of a special luncheon hosted by Fairfax Families4Kids, a foster-mentoring program run by Fairfax County’s Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, to celebrate National Mentor Month. Created in 2005, the program’s mission is to build bonds between volunteers and foster children, a majority of whom are 14 years old or older.

“Mentors can truly make the difference between struggle and success,” Howard said. “Our mentors are all heroes.” She said research has shown that volunteer mentors can play a powerful role in reducing drug abuse and youth violence as well as boosting academic achievement.

While Howard was more than willing to praise mentors, many of the mentors and youth were just as enthusiastic about her.



**Alexandra LaJoux, of Fairfax, holds up a poster created by one of the youth she mentors. She attended the Fairfax Families4Kids luncheon for mentors to celebrate National Mentoring Month on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Pinn Center in Fairfax.**

teach a class.

“And let me add that I love the name Paris,” LaJoux said with a mischievous grin, before snapping her fingers and serenading Paris with the Cole Porter classic “I love Paris.”

“*I love Paris in the spring time; I love Paris in the fall; I love Paris in the summer when it sizzles; I love Paris in the winter when it drizzles...*” I sang that song to her the first time I met her,” LaJoux said, laughing. “You can see, we’re just one big family here.”

“Yeah, one big crazy family,” Paris said, smiling. The celebration ended on a high note, as mentors gathered around a chocolate cake with candles.

“Blow out the candles and make a wish,” said Howard. “I wish all of you loving families.”

“Miss Beverly is fun and funny,” said William, a 13-year-old in the program who was recently adopted. “When we’re sad, she brings us up.”

“She uses her soft, inside voice with us,” said a 16-year-old foster youth. “She doesn’t yell. I like that.”

Another foster child spoke movingly about his mentor, “Mr. Keith” Foxx, one of the program’s first mentors. “He’s a great basketball player. He’s smart, and he’s always happy to see me.”

Paris, a 16-year-old singer/songwriter, praised all the mentors by leading the group in singing “We Are The World,” playing her jazz interpretation of the song on a guitar. After several years in the program, Paris was recently adopted.

“Paris is so talented. She’s an avid reader and she writes poetry,” said Alexandra LaJoux, a mentor who lives in Fairfax. LaJoux—known for her exuberant personality, and her penchant for bursting into song—is a music teacher who became involved in the program when she volunteered to

### VIEWPOINTS

## Inspired to Mentor

**T**he Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recently recognized January as National Mentoring Month. “As a nation, we need to ensure that all of our young people are well equipped to lead healthy and productive lives. You can help a young person prepare for a successful future

by volunteering with a local mentoring program,” said General Colin L. Powell, the spokesperson for the national campaign, during an event in Washington, D.C. last week. As part of National Mentoring Month, we asked mentors with Fairfax Families4Kids, a Fairfax County foster-mentoring program

### “What Inspires You to be a Mentor?”



**Alexandra R. Lajoux**

“Joy! After songwriting with creative teens in foster care, I wanted to spend more time with them and to mentor. Paraphrasing a prayer: “Child of God, my mentee dear, to whom God’s love commits me here. Ever this life, I’m at your side. To light, to guard, to love, to guide.”

**Kathy Moore**

“When my younger child left home for college, I realized that I had time, energy, and love to give to teenagers who had no caring adults in their lives. The challenges are great, but seeing the kids become confident, happy and trusting through the mentor relationships is incredibly rewarding.”



**Keith Foxx**

“It’s simple. These kids need mentors like any other children, but they also need an adult figure in their lives that can help guide them like a parent would. I had a desire to help young people, which soon turned into a love for mentoring, friendship and our kids!”

**Molly Pell**

“I can’t pinpoint a specific reason that I became a mentor. I had a little bit of free time and I like teenagers, so I thought I’d give it a shot. Six years later, I’m still here. The kids inspire me to stick with it. They’re like family to me, and I look forward to seeing them as often as I can. I am inspired by their strength, resilience and their open hearts.”



**Yusef Jamaludeen**

“What inspired me to mentor was the overall need for positive non-parental role models for our youth. Mentors are the ‘life coaches for the adolescent.’ In addition, it takes little amounts of effort to be a mentor and it has such a significant impact to the mentees. As a youth with a stable home life, I can’t remember how often I saw my mentor but I will never forget him. Knowing someone cares about you who isn’t related to you or paid to do so makes all the difference in the world sometimes.”



**Chavon Rogers**

“I started mentoring because I wanted to give back to the community by doing something I love, which is working with children. I continue to mentor because I love working with kids and the program. I mentor some amazing and resilient kids who bring much joy to my life.”



—VICTORIA ROSS

Photos of mentors courtesy of Joan Brady of Great Falls. Brady, a professional photographer, volunteers as a mentor, photographer and videographer for Fairfax Families4Kids.

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## NEWS

# MLK Foundation Celebrates Diversity

Organization welcomes member of Tuskegee Airmen.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

The Martin Luther King Cultural Foundation hosted a celebration of cultural diversity Saturday, Jan. 26, at ArtSpace in Herndon. The Reston-based organization provides thousands of dollars per year to send local students to college.

"Our foundation exists to work toward Dr. King's interpretation of community, and we're committed to the idea that through education young people will one day grow up to fulfill Dr. King's dream," said Myrtle Gallow, president of the foundation. "It hurts to think of the young people in this community, who are able to make their grades and get

into college, but they just can't get a ticket to pay for it. That's a problem we can help them take care of."

The foundation gave out \$4,000 scholarships to 15 students last year, and Gallow said they are always trying to increase that amount. She said their goal is to be able to give \$8,000 scholarships, which is the average amount it takes to get a two-year degree from a community college.

Board member Cesar Del Aguila said that the foundation is one of the most "just and honorable efforts" he had ever been a part of.

"This organization is all about giving opportunity to those who might not otherwise get one," he said.

The celebration also welcomed Hiram Mann, a retired lieutenant colonel in the Air Force and member of the original Tuskegee Airmen, the first African-American military aviators in the United States Armed Forces.

Mann, who was part of the 332nd Fighter Group, one of two groups that make up the Tuskegee Airmen, flew 48 combat missions during World War II,

sustaining only minor shrapnel and bullet damage to his P51-D Mustang.

He said he thought it was especially important to appear with a foundation that prioritized education. After his active duty career, he was an admissions counselor at the Air Force Academy.

"I had the privilege of seeing the military pre-integration, during integration, and post-integration, and it was the biggest change I saw in my time in the military," he said. "I can still remember the first time I had a white roommate."

He recalled a study conducted in 1925 by the Army War College, which referred to African-Americans as "a race that has not developed leadership qualities [and] his mental inferiority and weakness of character are factors that must be considered."

"What makes me the proudest of what we were able to do is prove every single statement in that report false," Mann said. "That contradicted a study by the Army's war college, and was instrumental in making integration successful."



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

From left, Dudley Johnson, Reston founder Robert Simon, Jennifer Johnson, Hiram Mann, a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, Tom Wilkins and Chuck Smith at the Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Foundation's celebration at Herndon's ArtSpace Saturday, Jan. 26.

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## OBITUARY

### Charles 'Dan' McGuire, of Reston, Dies

Passionately Irish and passionately Virginian, Charles "Dan" McGuire lost his battle with cancer on Jan. 19. Thus, another of Reston's "Old Timers" has passed on. Dan was one of Reston's early residents who helped guide a growing Reston through his community activism. He served several terms on Reston Association's Board of Directors. He served a term as vice-president of the Reston Citizens Association. He ran two competitive campaigns for the 36th House of Delegates seat with the slogan "No Tolls McGuire." Dan practiced his sup-



Charles 'Dan' McGuire

port of Reston serving on numerous citizen committees. He was a joiner and belonged to an impres-

sive list of local and state organizations including the Knights of Columbus, American Legion, the First Family of Virginia, the Virginia Historical Society, the local Lincoln Club, the Republican Club of Greater Reston, and the Northern Virginia Republican Business Forum. Dan was a member of St. John Newman Catholic Church in south Reston. A Mass of Christian Burial was scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 29. Dan will be laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery at a date to be scheduled with full military honors befitting a Brigadier General, U.S. Army.

## COMMENTARY

# A Breach of Trust

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

In a Tom DeLay, Texas-style move, Republicans in the Virginia State Senate re-drew the legislative district lines without public notice or involvement. This action in the 20-20 divided body came on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday when Democratic Senator Henry Marsh, who is one of Virginia's most prominent civil rights leaders, was away attending President Obama's inauguration. The new map, if passed by the Republican-controlled House of Delegates and signed by the governor, would give Republicans an advantage in taking back control of the Senate which they hold now only by virtue of the lieutenant governor who is the presiding officer and tie breaker being a Republican. "Count this as a new low for hyper-partisanship, dirty tricks, and the unaccountable arrogance of power," is the way one newspaper editorial described the action.

Events that will occur after this column is written will dictate the final outcome. The speaker of the house could declare their new map to not be germane to the House bill to which it was attached because it clearly violates House rules that a bill encompass a single object. The governor could veto the bill because he has already expressed publicly that it is not the way to do business. The courts or the U.S. Justice Department under the Voting Rights Act could intervene and invalidate the plan. Or voters could be left in districts with senators who would not be

representing them after senatorial elections in 2015. Whatever the outcome, voters will once again find themselves selected by legislators rather than voters selecting legislators under the current approach to legislative redistricting. At the same time, there are bills being considered to suppress voting through new identification requirements, and bills including mine to make voting more accessible, are being defeated.

Most damaging to the legislative process is the loss of trust that comes from the secretive and contrived way the action was taken. While the House of Delegates has become entirely too infamous for political skirmishes, the State Senate has been relatively free of partisan controversy. There are numerous examples of bipartisan cooperation in the Senate in the past that have led to better government for Virginia. That spirit of cooperation has been badly damaged if not destroyed. Efforts to expand Medicaid and to establish a system for transportation funding have been put in serious jeopardy by this power move. Last year the House of Delegates was prominent on late-night comedy programs for its antics; now the State Senate is there.

If voters choose to return me to the House of Delegates next year I will re-introduce a bill I have introduced many times since 1982. It would establish an independent redistricting commission. There is too much interest in self-preservation for legislators to do legislative redistricting fairly. In the meantime, legislators need to act in a way that will not breach the public trust.

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- Sun. Feb 3** Sound of Sleat, the quartet of well-known local artists: master piper Bob Mitchell, Tabby Finch on accordion, cellist Karin Loya, and Pat Egan on vocals.
- Sun. Feb. 10** Al Petteway & Amy White. This celebrated duo performs their evocative combination of traditional and original Celtic and Appalachian tunes and songs. [www.alandamy.com](http://www.alandamy.com)
- Sun. Feb. 17** Beth Patterson. A Louisiana native joins her Cajun/Celtic stylings with Connemara native Patrick O'Flaherty's Gaelic musical traditions in song and dance. [www.bethpattersonmusic.com](http://www.bethpattersonmusic.com)
- Sun. Feb. 24** Seán Tyrrell. Coming from a family immersed in the musical traditions of his native Galway, Sean was described by Billboard Magazine as "the genuine article!" [www.seantyrrell.com](http://www.seantyrrell.com) Sean's tour is sponsored in part by: Culture Ireland.
- Sun. Mar. 3** Shannon Dunne, Graham DeZarn & Sean McComiskey. Combining Sean Nos dancing with rollicking traditional music!
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## Extreme, But Brief, Volunteering

More than 150 volunteers needed to survey chronic homeless for three days in February.

**T**he real solution to homelessness is housing.

This week in Northern Virginia, a point-in-time survey will record all of the “literally homeless” individuals and families in the region. Last year, on Jan. 25, 2012, there were 1,534 people who were literally homeless in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community; 697 of them were single individuals and 837 were people in families. A third of the total number of homeless were children. Nearly 60 percent of the adult members of the homeless families were employed.

Later in February, the Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to End Homelessness will embark on a new, intensive approach to identify the nearly 300 people who are chronically homeless, living on the street or in the woods around the county. This is part of a national effort, 100,000 Homes.

Volunteers will create a registry, including names, photographs and personal stories of all

individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in the area. The information gathered will identify particularly vulnerable people, and help prioritize housing and support resources. The county’s goal is to get half of them in housing within three years.

**EDITORIAL**

The effort is not without precedent. Arlington’s registry week was in October 2011, and identified 153 homeless individuals, with more than half at risk of dying on the streets. Since then, more than 30 homeless people identified as vulnerable have been placed in permanent housing. Arlington’s campaign is on target to fulfill the goal of housing 100 people in three years.

The Fairfax effort, 100,000 Homes Fairfax, kicks off on Feb. 23 with Registry Week, a multi-day event where volunteers go out on the streets and gather information to create a name and photographic registry.

It will require the work of more than 150 volunteers countywide. Most will help conduct surveys with homeless individuals on the

streets for three days during registry week. Others will help with data entry and other support roles.

It’s a big commitment but also an opportunity to be a part of real change for some of the area’s most vulnerable people. Volunteer efforts on those days will most certainly lead to saving lives.

Survey volunteers make a four-day commitment, a half-day of training plus working three mornings (4-7 a.m.) in teams of four to interview homeless individuals for the registry. The same team of four must survey the assigned geographical area all three days. Survey volunteers will need to be available: Saturday, Feb. 23, overview and training, noon-4 p.m.; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Feb. 25, 26, 27, team survey, 4-7 a.m.

The Registry Week will wrap up with a presentation to the community on March 1.

Other volunteers will help set up for the volunteer training and/or assist at headquarters each survey morning by setting up food, helping with cleanup and answering volunteer questions. You can register online and learn more at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/100khomes/registry-week.htm>.

## Searching for ‘The New Virginia Way’

Need to change the way Virginia supports people with disabilities.

BY RIKKI EPSTEIN AND  
KYMBERLY DELOATCHE

**I**n light of Virginia’s settlement with the Department of Justice over Virginia’s state institutions for people with disabilities, also known as training centers, it is time for us to enter “The New Virginia Way.” We must focus on building community supports and capacity for those leaving the training centers and for the 7,500 families on waiting lists for state Medicaid waivers.

“The New Virginia Way” means changing the way Virginia supports people with disabilities from an under-funded, complicated system to a comprehensive community support structure. Right now, there are not enough supports available for every individual in the community. In fact, this lack of community options was a large part of the reason the DOJ investigated Virginia and found it violates the civil rights of people with disabilities.

The DOJ settlement and “The New Virginia Way” will ensure community supports are done correctly. The settlement is a legally enforceable agreement that holds Virginia responsible for making sure every person transitioning to

community-based care has the supports they need lined up before they move. If the Independent Reviewer overseeing implementation feels that Virginia is falling short, the case goes back to court. Judge John Gibney, who is overseeing the settlement, has made clear his commitment to protecting the rights of everyone involved and ensuring all requirements are met.

It is worth noting that since the settlement, the General Assembly has funded more waivers than the minimum mandated by the settlement. The governor’s current budget proposal includes rate differentials for individuals who have intense behavioral and nursing needs, and the state is hiring a consultant to redesign the waivers to provide more comprehensive services with adequate reimbursement rates. This demonstrates a step forward.

Increasingly, service providers have dedicated themselves to supporting individuals with significant needs. Some specialize in helping individuals with a history of significant behavioral challenges and others have nurses on staff to support individuals with complex medical concerns. Several have begun to expand since



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ARC OF VIRGINIA

An individual with a disability and his caregiver wearing “I Support The New Virginia Way” stickers at the Martin Luther King Day Rally in Richmond.

the settlement to help individuals transition.

The settlement encourages creativity and smaller, customized supports. We need to consider sponsored placements and apartments with 24-hour staffing. These housing models are already working in Virginia and can be established affordably and quickly.

Over a dozen states have no institutions and most have closed at least one. We have great role models for institutional closure, an Independent Reviewer with decades of experience in making

transitions a reality, a settlement that mandates safe and appropriate supports, and thousands of advocates dedicated to making sure we support everyone the right way.

This settlement is a landmark opportunity to ensure Virginia is changed for the better forever. That will happen when we all put our energy towards making “The New Virginia Way” reality.

*Rikki Epstein is executive director at The Arc of Northern Virginia. Kymberly DeLoatche is executive director at the Autism Society of Northern Virginia.*

# OPINION

## Short Subject: RA Survey, Lake Anne Progress?

BY JOHN LOVAAS  
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST

It turns out ours was one of 3,000 or so households included in Reston Association's community survey. In fact, we got not one, but two in the mail.

It is not what I expected. The survey was billed as feedback on RA performance to "help . . . its Board of Directors set benchmarks for tracking the quality of services provided to residents." Sounds like a good idea. In fact, the lengthy survey asks for little direct info on RA or its performance. Only one in five questions are directly or partly relevant to association services—35 out of 158 questions. And, these are not probing questions likely to ID RA services which are excellent, problematic or in between.

More questions ask about preferences for future development of Reston, land-use matters and services provided by the county. They seem to be more of a referendum on the county. Other questions ask opinions on existing or future businesses in Reston and how the economy is affecting us. Several questions are more a peek at how we interact with our neighbors and how we perceive the sense of community in Reston. The survey concludes with 16 personal data questions.

While the survey might be interesting as a reading

on community feelings about the economy, land-use and development issues, and county services plus a snapshot of demographic information, it seems a weak attempt at a performance review and unlikely to effect changes at RA. I look forward to a new RA Board's report on survey outcomes, costs, and what will be done with the extensive data.

\* Lake Anne Redevelopment. Fairfax County finally invited a couple of representatives from the Lake Anne community to participate in developer proposal review and selection for new residential and commercial construction here. The chance to have a voice came as good news to Lake Anne residents and even more to businesses. The merchants have experienced many lean years and they were, according to the county and promoters of the redevelopment, supposed to be principal beneficiaries of new high-density development. The businesses have many concerns about the new development—how it will be linked with the existing plaza, the nature of the commercial components, and how construction will be phased to assure minimum disruption of their businesses. The future livelihood of these small, family-owned businesses is at stake.

The bad news, according to merchants I've spoken with, is that the condominium association did not include a single business owner to participate in the review of proposals, selection of a winner and negotiation of terms.



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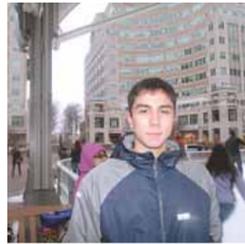
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WINTER FUN IN RESTON, HERNDON

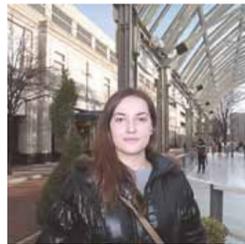
Area residents discuss “the best ways to have fun.”

—OLUFEMI AKINSITAN



**Zachary Quiza**, student visiting Reston from New Jersey

“I love ice skating and bowling. I also love snowball fighting.”



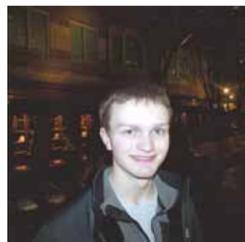
**Salma Ajanovic**, babysitter, Reston

“I like to go shopping, ice skating, look around and go out with my friends.”



**Shani Seidel**, pharmaceutical sales, with kids, lives in Ashburn

“I love to take my son ice skating, get together with friends and play games. I also like to eat chili.”



**Andrew Coffee**, student, Reston

“When it snows, I like to sled. Like other kids in my neighborhood, I love to make a snowman with a hat on it and ice skating.”



**Lauren Morstrom**, student from Springfield

“I like to watch Disney movies at home and drinking hot chocolate and ice skating.”



**Maritza Trochez**, restaurant worker, with daughter, Herndon

“I stay at home and clean and sometimes go to the movies.”

ENTERTAINMENT



**Dry Branch Fire Squad**

**Dry Branch Fire Squad Serves up Bluegrass With Comedy**

A bluegrass band known almost as much for their humor as their music plays traditional and old-time Appalachian style bluegrass on Friday, Feb. 1 at 8 p.m. at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. \$15; children 12 and younger, free. 703-435-8377 or [www.drybranchfiresquad.com](http://www.drybranchfiresquad.com).

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

**WEDNESDAY/JAN. 30**

**Herndon Council of the Arts Annual Meeting.** 7-9 p.m., Ice House Café, 60 Elden Street, Herndon. Members and the general public may join the Council for the Arts for the Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony; refreshments and cash bar included. [www.herndonarts.org](http://www.herndonarts.org).

**FRIDAY/FEB. 1**

**Kids Night Out.** 6:30-10 p.m., at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Parents take the night off while children enjoy a cheese pizza dinner, watch a movie and participate in games and activities; participants must register by 4 p.m. on the day of the event. \$15. [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov).

**Artists Reception: Scenic Highway/Hopeful Calm & Beginnings.** 7-9 p.m., at the Post Gallery, ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Local photographers Catherine Powers and Michael Kane present a mixed exhibit of Powers' photography from up and down US 17 from Virginia to Florida recording the vanishing culture, and Kane's images of the natural world on a journey of discovery. 703-956-6590 or [www.artspaceherndon.org](http://www.artspaceherndon.org).

**Dry Branch Fire Squad.** 8 p.m., at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon. A bluegrass band known almost as much for their humor as their music plays traditional and old-time appalachian style bluegrass. \$15; children 12 and younger, free. 703-435-8377 or [www.drybranchfiresquad.com](http://www.drybranchfiresquad.com).

**SATURDAY/FEB. 2**

**Freezin' for a Reason.** Noon-2 p.m., at Lake Anne Plaza, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. Take the plunge into frigid waters—or, for the faint of heart, the Chicken Dip—to benefit Camp Sunshine, a year-round retreat for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. A \$100

minimum donation and courage to brave the elements is required to plunge; free for spectators. [www.freezinforareason.com](http://www.freezinforareason.com).

**Father Daughter Dance.** 6:30-9 p.m., at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Fathers and daughters dance to popular music at the semi-formal event; appetizers, beverages and a photo of the couple are included. \$50 per couple; \$25 for each additional daughter. [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov).

**WEDNESDAY/FEB. 6**

**Public Art in the Windows** at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street. A community effort to promote outdoor public art in the Town of Herndon; artists and photographers are invited to submit original works of art in any medium. 703-956-6590 or [www.artspaceherndon.org](http://www.artspaceherndon.org).

**Preschool Open House.** 2-4 p.m., at Herndon Community Center Preschool, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Register for the state-licensed preschool program designed to stimulate your child's mind and development; for ages 3-5 on a first-come, first-served basis. [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov).

**THURSDAY/FEB. 7**

**Help Cure John Benefit Dinner.** 5-9 p.m., at Santinis Restaurant, 11804 Baron Cameron Ave., Reston. Eat at Santinis and 15 percent of the bill supports Cure CMD, an organization searching for the cure to the severe muscular degenerative disease that plagues 4-year-old John Gluck of Reston and will leave him breathing on a machine while sleeping in a couple years if left uncured. 703-390-1154.

**SATURDAY/FEB. 9**

**Chocolate Festival.** 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Floris United Methodist Church, 13600 Frying Pan Road, Herndon. Carnival games, large inflatables, a silent auction, face painting and balloon art go well with chocolate in every shape and form. 703-898-2330.  
**Black History Month Event.** 1-2 p.m., at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Student-Athletes from Herndon HS will



**Reston resident Raba Letteri, with her sons Aaron, 8, (right) and Joseph, 12, jump into the 40 degree water of Lake Anne on Feb. 4, 2012, as part of the Freezin' for a Reason fundraiser to benefit Camp Sunshine in Casco, Maine.**



**Mermaid Mary Turner of Herndon jumps into the 40 degree water of Lake Anne on Saturday, Feb. 4, 2012, as part of the fifth Freezin' for a Reason Polar Dip.**

PHOTOS BY DEB COBB/THE CONNECTION

Freezin' For a Reason at Lake Anne

Area daredevils ready to freeze to help kids battling illnesses.

Individuals in crazy costumes and creative flair will take over Lake Anne Plaza in Reston once again for the 6th Annual Freezin' for a Reason Virginia Polar Dip on Saturday, Feb. 2. The event will kick off at noon with family friendly activities and warm-up—with the dip scheduled to take place starting at 2 p.m. Last year's event drew record crowds of both spectators and jumpers raising over \$76,000. Registered participants will take a chilly full plunge or a “Chicken Dip”—to raise funds for Camp Sunshine, a national year-round retreat for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families.

The creation of the Virginia Polar Dip was started in 2008 by the Northern Virginia based Toth family after a long history with Camp Sunshine. They first attended Camp Sunshine as a participating family in 1996 when their daughter Jennifer was a cancer patient at age 3, and they have returned as volunteers every summer since. After Jennifer participated in a Camp Sunshine Polar Dip in New Jersey, her family decided to bring the event to Virginia in order to help more local families. Since 2008, 480 people have participated in the Virginia Polar Dip raising over \$232,700 for the camp. The camp organizes 11 polar dips on the East Coast each year. The event will be emceed by Mix 107.3 radio personality Chilli Amar.

Celebrating their 28th year, Camp Sunshine is

**FREEZIN' FOR A REASON**

What: 6th Annual Freezin for a Reason Polar Dip  
When: Saturday, Feb. 2  
Where: Lake Anne Plaza (Waterfront)—1609 Washington Plaza, Reston, VA 20190  
Time: Noon-3 p.m. (Registration, Activities, Post-Dip Celebration. Actual Polar Dip Begins at 2 p.m.)  
Website(s): [www.freezinforareason.com](http://www.freezinforareason.com), [www.campsunshine.org](http://www.campsunshine.org), [www.lakeanneplaza.com](http://www.lakeanneplaza.com)  
Cost: \$100 minimum donation to plunge and is open to anyone willing to brave the elements for a good cause. Free to spectators. Rain or shine (will be rescheduled if major snow storm is forecast).

nestled alongside the shores of Sebago Lake and provides respite, support, joy and hope to children with life-threatening illnesses and their immediate families through various stages of a child's illness.

This year's goal is to raise \$100,000 which will allow 50 families from the Mid-Atlantic area—including Virginia, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Delaware, West Virginia and North Carolina—to come to Camp Sunshine. Through pledges or self-sponsorship, each participant will raise/donate a minimum of \$100 for the opportunity to plunge into the frigid waters, and will receive a commemorative “I DID IT” event shirt. Spectators are welcome to come and cheer for the plungers.

The event is sponsored by Lake Anne, David Madison Photography, Fairfax Christian School, ING Financial, Jasmine Café, Reston Association, Reston Community Center, Mix 107.3 FM, Sheraton Reston Hotel, Spotted MP Marketing & Public Relations, Tropical Smoothie Cafe. For more information about the event or to register to participate, visit [www.freezinforareason.com](http://www.freezinforareason.com) or become a Facebook Fan (Virginia Polar Dip) and view pictures from previous dips.

present readings on the document, its history and importance. [www.ArtSpaceHerndon.com](http://www.ArtSpaceHerndon.com).

**Contra Dance.** 7:15-8 p.m. and 8-10:45 p.m., at RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston. Susan Taylor calls contra dances and squares to the music of the June Apple Band; an hour-long workshop precedes the dance, which begins at 8 p.m. and requires no partner. 703-

476-4500.

**SUNDAY/FEB. 10**

**Dating Abuse Stops Here.** 9-10 a.m., at Dulles Town Center Mall, 21100 Dulles Town Circle, Dulles. The third annual DASH at Dulles 5K Walk in memory of Siobhan Russell in protest of dating abuse is open to the public. \$15. [www.datingabusestops.com](http://www.datingabusestops.com).

**TUESDAY/FEB. 12**

**St. Timothy's Pancake Supper.** 6-7:30 p.m., at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, 432 Van Buren St., Herndon. Join for the popular community event to feast on pancakes, French-toast sticks, ham, applesauce, coffee, apple juice and milk with leftovers given to the Emily Rucker Community Shelter in Reston. \$15 per family; \$8 per adult. [www.saint-timothys.org](http://www.saint-timothys.org).

**AIM HIGH**

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**CALL FOR BOARD CANDIDATES**  
**2013 Reston Association Board of Directors**

Interested in guiding the direction of the Reston community?

Then consider running for the Reston Association Board of Directors.

Three seats will be open in the spring:  
Lake Anne/Tall Oaks District Director  
North Point District Director  
At-Large Director

To qualify you must:

- Be a Member of the Reston Association — either a renter or property owner.
- Complete a Candidate Statement and a Petition of Candidacy.
- If you run for a district seat, you must live in that district.

Forms must be filed by 5 p.m., Feb. 1, 2013. Candidacy Forms and other election information can be found online at [www.reston.org](http://www.reston.org).

The election is open to property owners and renters within Reston Association.

Details or questions: e-mail [electionscommittee@reston.org](mailto:electionscommittee@reston.org) or call 703-435-6512.

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**LOCATION:** Langley's campus at 1411 Balls Hill Road in McLean, VA

NOW registering at [www.langleyschool.org](http://www.langleyschool.org)!

## PEOPLE

# Miss America to Promote STEM

**A**t a pre-Inauguration event Sunday, Jan. 20, newly crowned Miss America 2013 Mallory Hagan addressed a large audience gathered at the FAA for a "Federal Open House and Program Mentoring and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)." She spoke passionately about girls and STEM education, which along with her personal issue will be the chief cause during her reign. Reston resident Elizabeth Vandenburg, who co-leads the Mid-Atlantic Girls Collaborative (MAGiC) and serves on the AAUW National STEM task force, thanked Miss America for giving girls and STEM a voice. "She is passionate, articulate and she can carry an important educational message about girls and STEM to girls everywhere," said Vandenburg.



Elizabeth Vandenburg meets Miss America 2013 Mallory Hagan.



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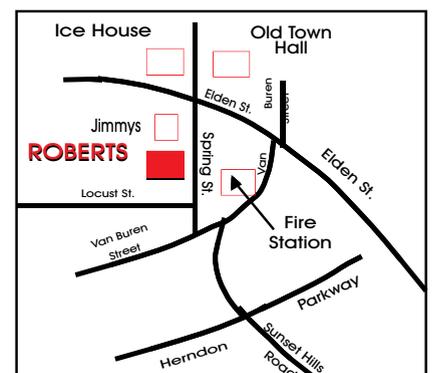
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# FAITH

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

**A seven-session course on the history of African American spirituals** and their impact on Christianity worldwide will begin Sunday, Feb. 3, at 9:30 a.m. at the United Christian Parish, 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston. All are welcome.

Instructor will be Rev. LaVerne M. Gill, United Church of Christ minister, and member of the United Christian Parish and the Mosaic Harmony gospel choir. The course is based on an article she wrote for a conference held in Ethiopia by the World Council of Churches and the Vatican on the origins of African American sacred music.

Subjects to be covered include the origins of spirituals, spirituals as codes of the underground railroad, the black church, the popularization of spirituals, classical arrangements, contributions of major religious figures from other countries, the role of spirituals in the US civil rights movement and the 21st century. Musicians to be featured include Jessye Norman, Mahalia Jackson, Paul Robeson, Henry "Harry" Thacker Burleigh, and Sweet Honey and the Rock.

The United Christian Parish is an ecumenical church uniting four denominations: United Methodist, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). For more information, call the church office at 703-620-3065.

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**, 651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has

Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery and childcare are provided and youth and adult Sunday school classes are held prior, from 9:40-10:45 a.m. 703-437-5500 or [www.trinityherndon.org](http://www.trinityherndon.org).

**St. Timothy's Episcopal Church**, 432 Van Buren St., Herndon, offers Ash Wednesday services on Wednesday, Feb. 13 at 6:30 a.m., 12:15 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend. 703-437-3790 or [www.saint-timothys.org](http://www.saint-timothys.org).

**Vajrayogini Buddhist Center**, Brown's Chapel, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds monthly classes for the general public. Gen Kelsang Varahi, an American Buddhist nun, will teach 'Living Meditation: Meditation for Relaxation,' teachings and guided meditations that teach students how to relax their body and mind. \$12. [www.meditation-dc.org](http://www.meditation-dc.org) or 202-986-2257.

**Trinity Presbyterian Church**, 651 Dranesville Road in Herndon, has Sunday Worship Service at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery and childcare are available during worship services. Youth and Adult Sunday School is held Sundays from 9:40-10:45 a.m. 703-437-5500 or [www.trinityherndon.org](http://www.trinityherndon.org).

**St. Anne's Episcopal Church**, 1700 Wainwright Drive in Reston, holds Sunday services at 7:45 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. Nursery, Sunday School and Adult Education available. Morning Prayer on Monday at 9:30, Holy Eucharist Wednesday at 8:15 a.m.

703-437-6530 or [www.stannes-reston.org](http://www.stannes-reston.org).

**Adult Sunday school** will be held 9:30 a.m. Sundays at the Washington Plaza Baptist Church at Lake Anne Village Center. The group is studying the Gospel of Mark. Services follow at 11 a.m.

**HAVEN of Northern Virginia** offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) for schedules and registration information.

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

**The Baha'i community of McLean** holds a weekly fireside, a meeting of discussion, devotion and fellowship, at 7500 Box Elder Court in McLean, at 8 p.m. every Friday. An opportunity to learn about the Baha'i faith. 703-556-3400.

**Epiphany United Methodist Preschool**, 1014 Country Club Drive, N.E. in Vienna, is now enrolling 3-4-year-old students for the 2010/2011 school year. Contact 703-938-2391 or [www.epiphanypreschool.com](http://www.epiphanypreschool.com).

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# SPORTS

**The Oakton High team and coaches hold up the district banner with pride after winning the Concorde District at a meet on Saturday, Jan. 26.**



PHOTOS BY  
KATIE PIERCE

## Oakton Swim and Dive Wins District Titles

**O**akton High School's Varsity Swim and Dive teams won both the boys' and girls' Concorde District Swim & Dive Championship Saturday night, Jan. 26, at Cub Run RECenter. The girls won with 532 points over Robinson in second place with 323 points. The boys won with 464 points over Robinson (460) in second place.

Oakton's divers set the stage for an incredible night. Bennett Fagan placed third for the boys. Julia Powell and Hana Burkly placed fifth and sixth overall respectively.

John Shebat, Michael Pettinichi, Philip Hu, and Gregory DeRosa placed first in the 200yd Medley Relay with a state qualifying time. In the 200yd Freestyle, Nathan Pawlowicz placed fourth with a regional qualifying time, and Michael Ambrose placed fifth. Denny Nguyen placed first in the 200yd Individual Medley with a state qualifying time, and Michael Pettinichi took fifth place for Oakton. In the 50yd freestyle, John Shebat placed second with a state qualifying time, and Gregory DeRosa placed sixth. In the 100yd Butterfly, Philip Hu finished first and Denny Nguyen placed third, both with state qualifying times. Nathan Pawlowicz placed first in the 500yd Freestyle with a state qualifying time, and Gray Liddell finished fourth with a regional qualifying time. In the 200yd Freestyle Relay, Gregory DeRosa, Denny Nguyen, Michael Ambrose, and John Shebat finished second with a state qualifying time. Philip Hu and John Shebat took first and third place respectively in the 100yd backstroke with state qualifying times. Michael Pettinichi placed third in the 100yd Breaststroke with a state qualifying time. Denny Nguyen, Michael Ambrose, Nathan Pawlowicz, and Philip Hu placed third in the 400yd Freestyle Relay with a state qualifying time.

Janet Hu, Melissa Shebat, Julia Capobianco, and Gillian Crews took first for Oakton in the 200yd

Medley Relay with a state qualifying time. Megan Byrnes placed first in the 200yd Freestyle with a state qualifying time, and Kendall Lawhorn followed in second place with a regional qualifying time. In the 200yd Individual Medley, Janet Hu took first place with a state qualifying time. Laura Branton placed second in the 50yd Freestyle, Gillian Crews placed fourth, and Elise Bourdelais placed seventh both with regional qualifying times. Laura Branton and Julia Capobianco placed first and second in the 100yd Butterfly with state qualifying times. Gillian Crews placed fourth in the 100yd Butterfly with a regional qualifying time. Janet Hu placed first in the 100yd Freestyle with a state qualifying time. Kendall Lawhorn took second for Oakton in the 500yd Freestyle with a regional qualifying time. Dylan Staniszewski, Madelynn Norton, and Mary Arscott placed third, fourth and fifth, respectively, in the 500yd Freestyle. In the 200yd Freestyle Relay, Gillian Crews, Elise Bourdelais, Megan Byrnes, and Laura Branton finished first with a state qualifying time. Megan Byrnes placed first in the 100yd Backstroke with a state qualifying time, and Julia Capobianco placed fourth with a regional qualifying time. Melissa Shebat and Ashley Nero placed fourth and sixth in the 100yd Breaststroke. Laura Branton, Kendall Lawhorn, Megan Byrnes, and Janet Hu placed first in the 400yd Freestyle Relay with a state qualifying time.

Swimmers and divers with regional qualifying times/scores will advance to the AAA Northern Region Championship Meet at Oak Marr RECenter starting Tuesday, Jan. 29, with boys' diving at 5:30pm, followed by girls' diving on Wednesday, Jan. 30, at 5:30pm. Swim preliminaries will take place for boys on Thursday, Jan. 31, at 5:30pm, and for girls on Friday, Feb. 1. Swim finals will be held Saturday night at 5:30pm at Oak Marr RECenter in Oakton.

**The Oakton High boys and girls celebrate together their second consecutive Concorde District Championship wins on Saturday, Jan. 26.**



### SPORTS BRIEFS

## Oakton Girls' Basketball Beats Herndon

The Oakton girls' basketball team remained undefeated in the Concorde District with an 88-45 victory against Herndon on Jan. 28.

According to stats from the Washington Post's Web site, Elizabeth Manner led Oakton with 23 points. Angela Sickels scored 15 points, Alex Marquis finished with 13, Kelsey McWilliams had 10 and Lindsey Abed added nine.

Alexis Brown led Herndon with 12 points. Brianna Moses scored 10 points and Sabrina Tolbert finished with nine.

Oakton improved to 16-2 overall, including six to zero in the Concorde District, and improved its winning streak to six games.

The Cougars hosted Chantilly on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. Oakton will travel to face Robinson at 5:45 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 1.

Herndon fell to 4-13 overall and one to five in the district. The Hornets hosted Centreville on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. Herndon will host Chantilly at 6 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 1.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Helen Roberts, seen earlier this season, and the Oakton girls' basketball team improved six to zero in the Concorde District by beating Herndon on Jan. 28.**

## Flint Hill Boys' Basketball Edges Sidwell Friends

The Flint Hill boys' basketball team beat Sidwell Friends 47-46 on Jan. 27, giving the Huskies five consecutive victories after a 3-11 start.

Jerrod Reed knocked down a pair of free throws with 7.6 seconds remaining to help Flint Hill pull out the victory. Cole Herdman had 12 points, including 10 in the second half, and seven rebounds for the Huskies. Britton Anderson finished with 11 points and four steals, and Sam Worman had 10 points and four rebounds.

Flint Hill hosted Maret on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. The Huskies will travel to face St. Andrew's at 6 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 31.

## South Lakes Girls' Basketball Gets Win No. 15

The South Lakes girls' basketball team defeated Langley 51-43 on Jan. 22, improving its record to 15-2 overall and 8-1 in the Liberty District.

The Seahawks' Jan. 25 contest against Thomas Jefferson was rescheduled for Feb. 2 due to inclement weather.

Against Langley, South Lakes junior center Abigail Rendle had 15 points, nine rebounds, eight blocks, five steals and two assists. Sophomore forward Princess Aghayere contributed 10 points and four rebounds.

## Herndon Swimming

Herndon's Conor Cudahy and Ryan Murphy qualified for the state swim meet and several Hornets qualified for regionals at the Concorde District swim meet.

Cudahy finished second with a state-qualifying time in the 500 free, and third with a region-qualifying time in the 200 free.

Murphy qualified for states with his third-place finish in the 100 back, and qualified for regionals by finishing fourth in the 100 free.

Shannon Kelley (third in dive), Kara Joyce (fourth in dive), Eric Johns (sixth in dive), Karly Ginieczki (fifth in 200 free, seventh 100 back), Jonathan Nguyen (seventh in 200 free) and Elizabeth McNulty (fifth in 100 breast) advanced to regionals.

# Hypothermia Shelter Brings Homeless in From Cold

St. John Neumann hosts county homeless as part of FACETS program.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

As temperatures around the area have dipped below freezing, more than 1,700 people around Fairfax County don't have the walls, roof and heat to help them survive the winter. St. John Neumann hosted dozens of people who might not otherwise have shelter last week, part of the FACETS Hypothermia Prevention Program.

FACETS, a Fairfax-based nonprofit, works with 34 different faith communities over the winter months to provide shelter, meals and other assistance to the homeless. Last year the program provided shelter for 244 individuals, up from 141 the year before.

This is the sixth year St. John Neumann has hosted people for a week, and it has become a regular outreach opportunity for the church's various groups.

Only 17 people came the night of Sunday, Jan. 20, because of the warmer temperatures. On Monday, Jan. 21, as the temperatures dipped to the low high 30s, more than 20 showed up and temperatures dropped throughout the week.

On Monday, the church's Young Adult Group cooked a dinner of roast beef, rolls, garlic potatoes and chocolate chip cookies and served guests as well.

"The serving is the best part, sometimes I feel like we're trapped in our own little bubble, but it gives you a chance to see smiles on the faces of people that don't take a single meal for granted," said Dan Arena, a member of the group.

Jeffery Edmonds, a seminary student who recently came to St. John Neumann, said events like the hypothermia shelter are a good way for the Young Adult group to support the community around them.

"We've been trying to get the group more involved in a lot of activities, and trying to attract more volunteers for the group," he said. "Our goal here tonight was to provide a meal."



From left, Jeffery Edmonds, Dan Arena, Aless Grasso and Jean Gallagher, members of the St. John Neumann Young Adult outreach group, serve a meal Monday, Jan. 21, at the church's annual FACETS hypothermia shelter week.

PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

The church opens at about 5:30 p.m. to welcome their nightly guests, some who take FACETS transportation, the bus or drive their own vehicles. They stay overnight, get breakfast and a bag lunch in the morning, and depart until the evening.

St. Thomas a Beckett Catholic Church and Beth Emmet, a synagogue in Herndon, also serve meals during the week, along with St. John Neumann's various groups.

The church provides entertainment throughout the week, with musical groups, therapy dogs and even footpaths and pedicures from the church's health ministry.

Donated, gently-used or new clothes such as coats, pants, jackets, sweaters, T-shirts and socks are available several nights during the week for guests to choose from. Volunteers also bring in their sewing machines several nights to mend and repair clothes.

"We post cards on our bulletin boards for items we'll need for our 'clothing store,' and our members pick them up and shop for the items that we give away," said Pam Dister, a member of St. John Neumann.

Many guests have their only possessions in a suitcase or two, or spread over several plastic bags. They keep their items with them, and are issued a bedroll by FACETS.

After dinner, they can spend time in the church's youth room watching TV and playing games until they go to bed. Lights out is at 10 p.m.

The shelter rotates every week to a new faith community in Fairfax County. More information is available at [www.facetscares.org](http://www.facetscares.org).

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**OBITUARY**  
**Adriana Lorio Reynolds**, of Herndon, VA, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 22, 2013, surrounded by family. This was the result of an ongoing struggle against pancreatic cancer.

Visitation was held at Adams-Green Funeral Home, 721 Elden Street, Herndon, VA Friday, January 25 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.. A Funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, 750 Peachtree St., in Herndon on Saturday, January 26 at 2:00 p.m.

Born in Syracuse, NY, on February 14, 1955, Adriana graduated from SUNY Albany in 1978 with a BA in Foreign Language Education. She taught English as a Second Language at Hutchison Elementary School in Herndon from 1996 to 2012.

Adriana was married to the late Michael D. Reynolds of Oswego, NY, on August 22, 1981. They raised three wonderful children: Stefanie Frederick of Dumfries, Paul Reynolds of Herndon, and Daniela Reynolds-Robbins of Reston. Her closest family members include two brothers, Arthur and Paul Lorio, Stefanie's husband Chris, and Daniela's husband Adam, as well Michael's mother Gloria Reynolds, of Oswego, NY, Michael's sister Cathy Chamberlain, her husband Dan, and their children, and grandchildren, also of Oswego.

Adriana was committed to animal rescue. She asks that in place of flowers memorial donations be made to String of Pearls, P.O. Box 661, Woodstock VA, 22664, or to PerPETualCare, P.O. Box 575, Edinburg, VA, 22824.

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## A Simple Question



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't quite know how to start this column so I'll begin with its ending: "I'm fine." I am asked as much, if not more, than the next person how I am doing. It's a standard courtesy offered up every day between many unsuspecting askers and most often provides answers an opportunity to nonchalantly move the conversation along without too many fits and starts. For a cancer patient like myself, however, whose status, situation and story is likely known in advance (generally speaking) of most casual meetings that occur, the question/greeting, though well-intended, doesn't exactly fall on deaf ears, and certainly does not conjure nonchalance; at least not in my head, and that's where this problem really starts.

Of course, I want people interested in my health. Of course, I want people to be courteous and respectful to me. Of course, I want people to engage me and treat me like the non-terminal patient I'm not. I aspire to be normal so I want to be treated normally, and normally, being treated as such wouldn't bother me. And it doesn't bother me, really. What it does do however, is jump-start/remind my brain of my less-than-ideal health circumstances: stage IV non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC). Hardly the cross I wanted to bear beginning at age 54 and a half – after a life of not smoking, with no immediate-family history of cancer.

And given the fact that I semi pay attention to my surroundings and take notice of what I see and hear, when asked a question of health-related substance – sincerely, I am loathe to answer the question "monosyllabically." If I do control my responses and don't burden the questioner with a brief but humorous accounting of my most recent cancer-related anecdote, in my head I will have already gone there and done that: meaning, just because I don't say anything, don't presume for a second that my brain hasn't already considered how in fact I am doing and reviewed all the gory details. So whether anybody intended it – and I'm not sure anybody did, when I'm asked this most innocent of questions, my reaction is anything but. My reaction is a non-verbal, instantaneous re-living of the past four years, beginning with my visit to the Emergency Room on January 1, 2009. And as much as I think about my circumstances – on my own, what few breaks I allow myself are invariably cut short when someone, anyone has the good nature to inquire how I'm doing.

Still, being ignored is no good. Being treated with kid gloves is no good. Being cautious is no good. Being super-sensitive is no good. Being over-reactive is no good. Being pitied is no good. Being alone is no good. Moreover, being diagnosed with a terminal form of cancer is absolutely no good. As much as I want to live long and prosper and consider all the hope the future has to offer, cancer controls from within, often subconsciously. That's what I hate the most; the changes it causes in your head: your reactions, your assessments, your sense of proportion, your sense of self, etc. It's all different. I can live with it, but it does cause me to sometimes make mountains out of molehills and molehills out of mountains; with very little consideration of the mole.

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

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