

Keyvan Moussavi of Amalthea Ridge Farm presents their line of beauty products made from goat's milk at the Great Falls Farmer's Market Saturday, Feb. 2. The market takes place every Saturday all through the winter.

## Farmer's Market Continues Through Winter

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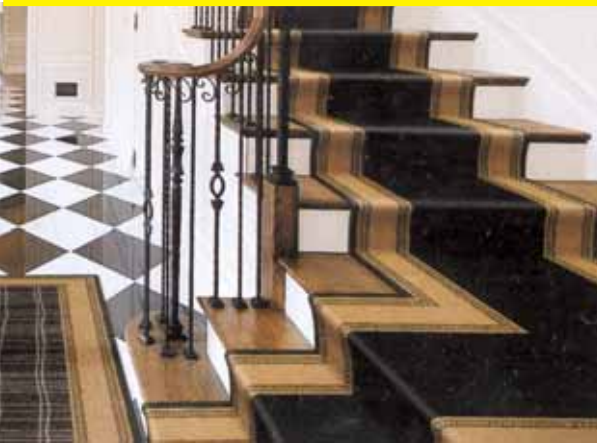
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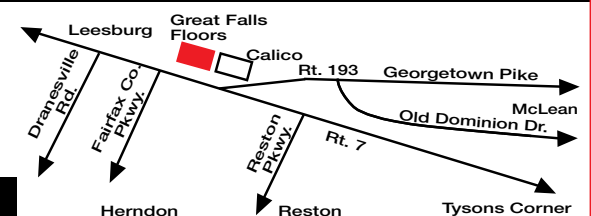
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Shoppers browse a selection of greens and other produce at the Great Falls Farmer's Market Saturday, Feb. 2. The market is happening all winter long, either at its usual site, or inside Maison du Vin on days with below-freezing temperatures.



PHOTOS BY  
ALEX McVEIGH/  
THE CONNECTION

## Farmer's Market Continues Through Winter

Weekly market will take place every Saturday, indoors or out.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County is home of dozens of farmer's markets throughout the year, but by November, almost all of them have shuttered for the winter before re-opening in the spring. But the Great Falls Farmer's Market is open year-round, offering produce and other items throughout the winter.

"We did a survey in November and asked if people were interested in a winter farmer's market, and we got a very positive response," said Kathleen Murphy, who oversees the market. "At first we asked if they wanted a monthly bulk purchase market, but people really wanted the regular market."

The market is located in its usual location most weekends, in the parking lot next to the Wells Fargo at the Great Falls Village Centre, but wintry conditions have forced them inside the last few weeks, to the nearby Maison du Vin.

If the temperature outside is less than 32 degrees or there are high winds, the market moves indoors. This is due to certain products, like honey from Backyard Eden (made in Great Falls by local apiarist Jeff Rainey) and some of the vegetables, which will freeze in such conditions.

**MANY OF THE MARKET'S SIGNATURE PRODUCTS** are available during the winter. Murphy herself brings in vegetables from Tuscarora Organic Growers, a co-op of 44 families in Pennsylvania. A selection of winter root vegetables, such as carrots, onions, shallots, garlic, beets and turnips are available.

Certain items come up from week to week that shoppers enjoy experimenting with. The Saturday,

Feb. 2, market featured a selection of baby cabbages that many shoppers had never seen before.

"I love the fresh produce, I try and get it all here, because I know that it's coming directly from a farm, no chemicals, no herbicides or anything like that," said Julie Ben-Achour of Great Falls. "I do as much shopping as I can here, eggs, honey and herbs. I've been really into the fresh sage the last few weeks, I like to put it in my tea."

The produce selection also features several kinds of mushrooms, and micro-greens such as baby arugula and baby chard that have been very popular.

"I come here to try veggies and produce I've never had before, and I've had pretty good luck recently trying the purple top turnips and baby greens," said Danni Lougee of Great Falls. "There's a lot on my list when I come every week, bratwurst, honey, chocolate, I have to pick up all of these things when I come by."

High View Farms out of Berryville, Va., is a mainstay at the market, with Berkshire pork and chicken products, including eggs, sausage and pork chops.

"We try and have a special every week on a product, this week for the Super Bowl we did bratwurst and wings," said Craig Hagaman, farmer at High View.

**FOOD ISN'T THE ONLY THING** available at the market. Amalthea Ridge, a goat farm in Great Falls, is at the winter market, with a collection of beauty and hygiene products that are made from goat's milk.

"We've been trying to incorporate more local ingredients in our products, we've been using tea from Laurie Bell of the Great Falls Tea Garden, and honey from Jeff's Backyard Eden, and we're looking at more," said Keyvan Moussavi, who runs the farm with his wife Sarah Wehri.

The Great Falls Farmer's Market takes place every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



**Keyvan Moussavi of Amalthea Ridge Farm presents their line of beauty products made from goat's milk at the Great Falls Farmer's Market Saturday, Feb. 2. The market takes place every Saturday all through the winter.**



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Members of the Great Falls Library Children's Book Club discuss Roald Dahl's autobiography, "Boy," during their meeting Monday, Jan. 28.

## Library Hosts Children's Book Club

Monthly meetings allow children to discuss variety of books.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

Some of the youngest library patrons in Great Falls are coming together monthly to discuss children's books as part of the library's Children's Book Club.

Originally two clubs were started, one for boys and one for girls, but a fortunate miscommunication led to a joining of the groups.

"We got the time mixed up one week, and everyone showed up at the same time, and we had a great discussion, so we decided to combine them," said Michele Miller, a parent volunteer who helps run the group. "Since then, we try and alternate books that have boy and girl main characters." Miller, who has a degree in library sciences and children's librarian Sharon Harmon, run the club. Miller picks most of the books, and she tries to choose books that mostly fall outside of the classic children's canon.

"We've done a few Newbery Medal winners, such as 'From the Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler,' and some serious books, but we try to mix them in with lighter, funnier stuff as well," Harmon said.

Most of the books are before the 1990s, but it's not a rule for the club. Miller brings in background materials on the authors to help enrich the discussion. The books are generally meant for ages 9 to 12, but students of all abilities have attended.

"We have kids of varying reading abilities come through, but regardless of their level, this gets them thinking about books

they read, and gives them goals," Miller said. "We had one boy come to an early meeting, his family is Russian and they just moved from Japan, and he had no idea what a book club was. We didn't know if we would see him again after the first meeting, but he's been back to a lot of them."

Miller says reading the book isn't mandatory to attend club meetings.

"We don't want kids to think of it as another kind of homework, if they have the time to finish the book, that's great, but they can also read some of it and come in and discuss," she said. "And if they start the book and hate it 50 pages in, then that's a legitimate topic for the club."

The club discussed Roald Dahl's autobiography, "Boy," at their most recent meeting on Monday, Jan. 28.

"We had gotten a few requests for an autobiography to fulfill some students' reading requirements, and this created a good discussion that led into Roald Dahl's other books," Harmon said.

"There are so many great books out there, and kids love to read stuff over and over again," Miller said. "There's a lot of distractions out there that involve staring at a screen, but it's always important to get an appreciation for sitting down and reading an old-fashioned book."

The club's next meeting will be Monday, Feb. 25, at 4 p.m. at the Great Falls Library, and the book will be "A Lion to Guard Us" by Clyde Robert Bulla. For more information on the club, contact Harmon at sharon.harmon@fairfaxcounty.gov.



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## NEWS

# Recollections of Great Falls, 1901-2000

Group conversations—four Mondays in February—and you are invited.

BY KATHLEEN MURPHY  
PRESIDENT/GREAT FALLS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Here are the themes:

❖Feb. 4th—Family Life in Great Falls (family, home, household management, holiday and other celebrations, care of habitat around the home.)

❖Feb. 11th—Economic Life in Great Falls (dairy farming, Thelma's, Buck's Store, Fitzgerald's Store, other stores and local businesses that make up the fabric of Great Falls life), emergence of new economic activities (CIA, technology consultants, etc.). How residents earn their living.

❖Feb. 18th—Impact of Disruptive Events on Life in Great Falls (impact of the great depression, World War I, World War II, the Civil Rights movement, environment movement, women's rights, etc., breakthroughs in transportation, communications, globalization, etc. on local life.)

❖Feb. 25th—Social Life in Great Falls (church life, school life, community celebrations, the Grange community, role of the fire station in Great Falls life, Great Falls Park and other local parks, role of nature in family and community life).

The Great Falls Historical Society is preparing a documentary film on "Life in Great Falls, 1901 to 2000" as part of the upcoming Great Falls Day celebration, to be held on Sunday, May 5.

We invite you to share your memories, photographs, and/or artifacts by joining in any or all four "group conversations" about life in Great Falls scheduled for each Monday in February—the 4th, 11th, 18th, and/or 25th. The group conversations will begin at 11 a.m. with social conversations and potluck lunch (everyone brings a dish to share). We will prepare the questions, scan photos, and photograph artifacts, etc. during the social time. The filming will begin at 12:30 p.m. and will continue until everyone has had their say and the topic is fully discussed.

To sign up, e-mail [president@gfhs.org](mailto:president@gfhs.org).



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## News

The design of the new license plate features the Fairfax County seal, county map and the website of Visit Fairfax and county government.

CONTRIBUTED



# Civic Pride on the Road

## Fairfax County license plates available soon.

**Y**ou can flaunt your car and show off your civic pride, thanks to a customized Fairfax County license plate approved Tuesday, Jan. 29, by the Board of Supervisors.

The license plate features the county seal, county map and the website addresses of the government and Visit Fairfax. The plate will cost \$25 a year. By state law, \$10 is retained by the state while the other \$15 goes back to the license plate sponsor after 1,000 plates are ordered.

The Board of Supervisors voted to direct the initial proceeds toward the 2015 World Police and Fire Games that will be held in the county. The World Police and Fire Games are an international sporting event offering thousands of police officers, firefighters, customs and correction officers from

around the world an opportunity to showcase their athletic excellence in over 65 sporting events. These games are the second largest sporting event in the world after the Summer Olympics.

Before the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles can proceed with plate production, it needs 350 commitments from the community. Visit Fairfax will soon allow you to sign up for one of the first license plates at [www.fxva.com](http://www.fxva.com).

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield), who initiated the plan, noted the City of Fairfax has its own tag which generates roughly \$5,000 per year in revenues at \$15 per vehicle and is dedicated to the city's historical resources. Using Fairfax City's population as a benchmark, Herrity estimated that Fairfax County could generate roughly \$250,000 per year from its own license plates.

"I look forward to being one of the first residents to get my hands on a Fairfax County License plate," Herrity said.

—VICTORIA ROSS

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- Opening Up Your Floor Plan

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### Great Falls Blue Knights U12 Soccer Tryouts

The Great Falls Blue Knights, a U12 Boys Travel Soccer team, are looking to strengthen their squad for their 2012-2013 ODSL campaign.

Indoor tryouts will be held 6:30pm-8:00pm on February 20<sup>th</sup> at NZONE in Chantilly.

The Knights have several roster spots remaining for committed U12 players born 08/01/00 or after looking to take their game to the next level.

Training sessions are normally held on Monday, Wednesday & Thursdays 6:30-8:00 pm in the Great Falls/Reston area during the season.

If you are interested, have questions or would like to register for tryouts, please email the Team Manager at [GFBLEKNIGHTS@LIVE.COM](mailto:GFBLEKNIGHTS@LIVE.COM)

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# THE COUNTY LINE

## Making the Difference Between Struggle and Success

BY CARMEN JORDAN

All youth need stability and loving parents to give them the best chance for success in life. This is why finding adoptive homes and permanent traditional foster homes for our youth is so critical. Over the last six years, as a Fairfax Families4Kids mentor, I have seen foster youth struggle, especially when circumstance has caused them to be moved frequently from foster care placement to foster care placement (including traditional foster homes and foster group homes).

There is one 14-year-old youth in particular that I recall that was originally removed from his biological home, then lived with another biological family member for a time, then was moved into a traditional foster home, then to a group foster facility—all of this taking place over a few short years. This youth has been participating at group FF4Kids mentoring events for several years. I remember the poor behavior demonstrated at times by this youth at the group events, including not following the rules, speaking out of turn in an effort to gain attention, occasional physical outbursts due to not being able to control his anger, actually teasing other foster youth in an effort to get them to chase him around the room.

This behavior was his way of crying out for the love and attention he was not receiving at “home.” He wanted so desperately to be seen and heard by anyone in his life. This foster youth was just recently placed in a loving, adoptive home. The youth’s behavior at the group mentoring events has made a complete turnaround. He no longer needs to be the center of attention, always has a smile on his face, and demonstrates positive interaction with both mentors/volunteers and the other foster youth. This is due to him finally feeling safe and knowing that there are loving adults that he can trust to protect and take care of him. There is no amount of support from the county, school system, programs, and organizations that can replicate the day in and day out support that a child receives from a loving family.

**MY HOPE** is that as a community, we do more to seek out Fairfax County families that are willing to provide loving adoptive and long-term foster homes for foster youth. There is a reason that the name of our program is “Fairfax Families4Kids.” It is our mission to find Fairfax County families for these foster kids. Mentoring through the program helps prepare these youth for placement. The county’s ability to more effectively find long-term, loving homes for foster youth is the key to a foster youth’s ability to grow to become mature, responsible, independent adults.

I have mentored many foster youth both through their years in foster care and their transition out of foster care. Though many foster youth have positive transitions out of foster care into independent, adult lives, there are many foster youth whose outcomes are less successful.

I can tell you stories about Fairfax County foster youth that transition out and become homeless within weeks or months. They share with me the “life skills” they have learned to survive.

“The metro trains/buses run all night except 3 to 6 a.m., so if you have metro money, you can ride all day and night to stay warm. Then you just need to walk the streets during those hours.

\* Another youth said he sleeps on the floor of a



**Carmen Jordan, mentor for Fairfax Families4Kids: “My hope is that, as a community, we do more to seek out Fairfax County families that are willing to provide loving adoptive and long-term foster homes for foster youth.”**

### About the Author

Carmen Jordan of Reston has been a mentor for Fairfax Families4Kids for six years. She is considered one of the most experienced mentors in the program. In addition to working full-time as a marquee account manager at Deltek in Herndon, Jordan makes herself available to “trouble-shoot” for the children and families she mentors. In the following column, she details her experiences with the program, and at-risk foster youth.

friend’s motel room or catches a few hours of sleep at the 24-hour McDonald’s until the police ask him to leave.

\* They can tell you about their stays at the various community homeless shelters. “The crack heads and heroin addicts will steal from you so you need to keep your stuff with you at all times.”

\* They will tell you where they can find public computers where they can apply online for jobs. They can make enough money to feed themselves but not enough to find permanent housing. They live with health ailments because they no longer have health insurance.

**AT TIMES** it is painful to witness, but as mentors, our mentoring does not cease just because they transition out of foster care. Through FF4Kids mentoring, a trusting relationship is formed, allowing foster youth to be receptive to the advice and counseling that we have to offer. This is key: if there is no trust, it is difficult for foster youth to accept advice and counseling.

For many of these foster youth, the relationships they have with their mentor is the longest term relationship they have with a responsible adult. I can’t tell you how many times a social worker, case worker, life skills coach or foster parent has said “Carmen, you have known him longer. Talk to him and explain how important it is for him to stay in school, obtain his high school diploma.”

It has been an honor and privilege to mentor many of the foster youth within our Fairfax County community. They have taught me more about perseverance through adversity than I could ever teach them. Mentoring can be difficult at times, they will make missteps along the way but they will also surprise you with their ability to accomplish goals they have set for themselves in an effort to become mature, independent young adults. Mentoring is about being there for them through the ups and downs!

## Building Blocks for Success

**Fairfax Families4Kids: a community of hope.**

BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL FREY

When it comes to building buildings or fixing things, Fairfax County does a great job. Schools, fire stations, parks—the county has a proven track record of exemplary projects.

Building or fixing families and people—that’s tougher to evaluate.

Fairfax is probably no better or worse than most local governments. Fixing people is hard. There is no plan that, if followed to the letter, results in a split family being made whole, or a person with mental illness or substance abuse issues being cured. People are different than buildings.

Maybe that’s why I was so excited about the Fairfax Families4Kids program when I was introduced to it, and became such a huge supporter of it immediately.

Kids in foster care really have the deck stacked against them. For whatever reason their family situation didn’t work and someone—typically the courts—stepped in and forced change. They are left looking to total strangers to do what their family should have done but couldn’t. That’s a lot to ask. They are dependent on government programs to find them temporary housing, maybe a permanent foster home, and for some of the luckier kids, a family.

FF4Kids is a partnership between the county and a whole lot of people who really believe these kids in foster care deserve more help. The program offers the kind of opportunities and experiences that the county can’t possibly provide by itself. Without the volunteers, who serve as mentors, friends, teachers and occasionally substitute parents, most of these kids would bounce from one temporary situation to the next, usually aging out of foster care with little skills, no love, and little chance for future success.

I have been so impressed with everyone I have met who is involved with the program. It has increased my sense of optimism about the chances that more of



**Supervisor Michael Frey (R-Sully)**

these kids will find forever homes with adoptive families. Clearly, there is a positive effect on the kids when they see the mentors devoting so much time and effort to them. Many of these kids have never had the love and attention they get within this program. Certainly they have never had the life education they get, and for the first time many of them begin to believe in themselves. Self-confidence and optimism are not qualities you find in many foster children. A program that gives them those two things, in my mind, can’t help but benefit them.

There have been success stories for kids in this program, including adoption of some of the children by some of the mentors. Of course, not every child has been so lucky. Some still age out of the system with no family back-up to catch them if they fall. But they do have the FF4Kids family, and that in itself is a confidence-builder. They also have life skills and social skills that they likely would not without the FF4Kids programs. There are no guarantees in life, but there is no doubt in my mind whether or not they find the adoptive family we all hope that they will, they will be much better prepared young adults.

As long as there are incredibly caring and dedicated people like the FF4Kids mentors and volunteers, I will be doing all I can to help support them.

BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION



## PEOPLE

### Troop 673 Gets New Eagle Scout

Spencer Weiss is the latest Eagle Scout in Troop 673 sponsored by the Great Falls United Methodist Men. Spencer, who is currently the senior patrol leader of the troop, began his scouting career in 2004 as a Cub Scout in Pack 1884, where he was the undefeated Pinewood Derby champion from 2004-2009.

For his Eagle project, Spencer planned and led over 40 volunteers to construct a set of stairs and a path between Embury Rucker Community Shelter and Reston Regional library using primarily reclaimed materials.

A freshman at Jefferson High School, Spencer earned the National Outdoor Award for Camping in September of 2012. He participates in football, Model UN, and the student council.



Spencer Weiss

PHOTO BY BILL BLOOD

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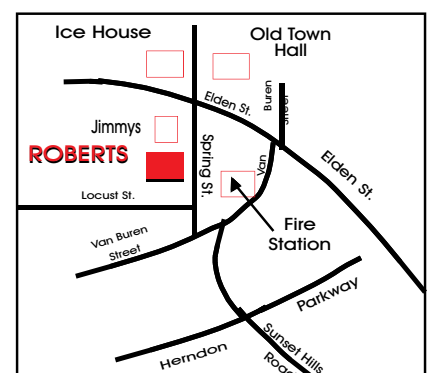
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# OPINION

# Homeless, Not Hopeless

BY PAM MICHELL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NEW HOPE  
HOUSING, INC.

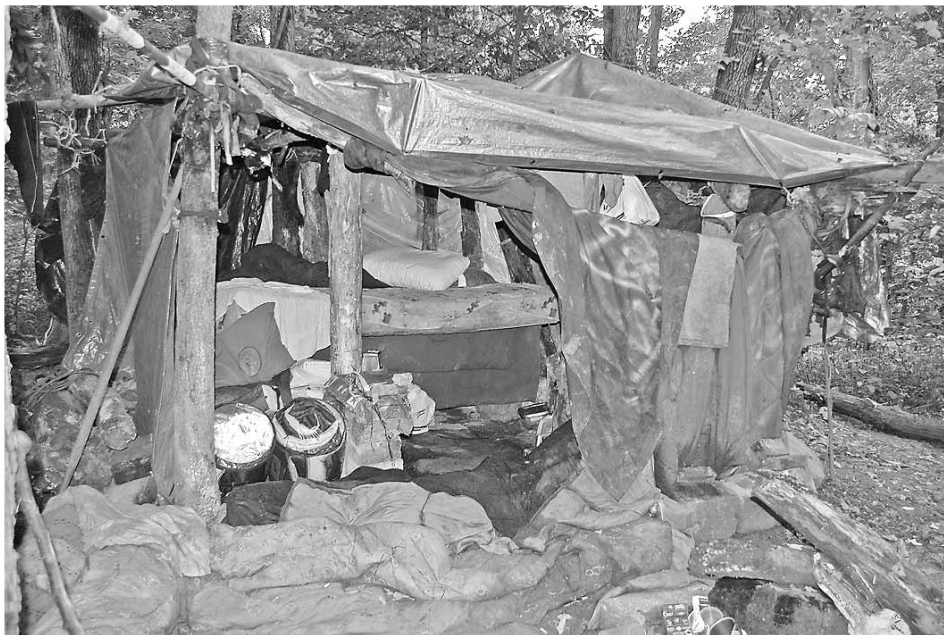
George and Mary spent many years homeless and unsheltered in Fairfax County. Yes, Fairfax County, one of the wealthiest counties in the country. But in Fairfax County, homeless persons such as George and Mary are generally hidden. They live in the woods, behind dumpsters, and in shopping centers. Out of sight, out of mind.

For many years, local non-profit partners have been working with county staff day in and day out to offer persons who find themselves homeless a chance to start anew. When given the stability of housing and the support of professionals and volunteers, homeless adults—including those who have lived many years on the streets and in the woods—can and do change and become stable, contributing members of our community. We non-profit homeless services providers can tell story upon story of what a difference stable housing and supports can make in a life of someone whom others have given up on, whom others have discarded as “hopeless.”

In January 2012, 697 single adults were counted as homeless in Fairfax County and 51 percent of them (353) were chronically homeless—12 consecutive months or four separate incidences of homelessness in the past three years; 24 percent of homeless adults were unsheltered. These numbers are going up.

This month you can help us find out who is “out there.” You can hear their stories and you can help provide them the housing they need.

As part of a nationwide effort to put a name and a face to each



PHOTOS  
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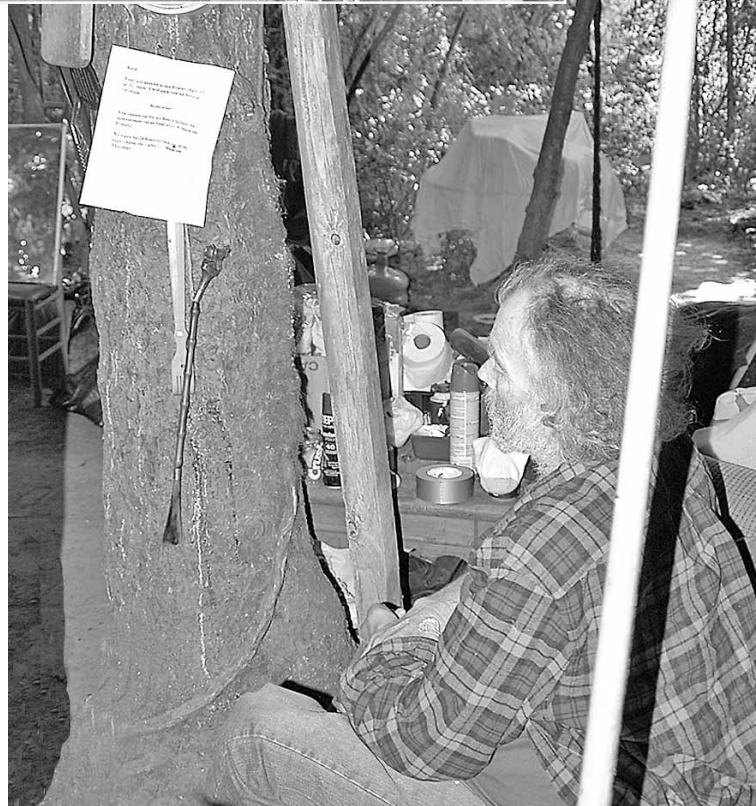
**Homeless camp: In January 2012, 697 single adults were counted as homeless in Fairfax County and 51 percent of them (353) were chronically homeless.**

number, the Fairfax-Falls Church community is participating in a national campaign—100K Homes—that will help us understand who is homeless, why they are homeless and how we can get them housed.

Join us on Feb. 25, 26, and/or 27, as a part of a volunteer team visiting campsites to interview homeless individuals. On March 1 we will give a detailed report to the community about who we found and where we go from here. See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/100khomes/> for details.

Help us help everyone in Fairfax County find a way home.

For more information on New Hope Housing in Alexandria, go to [www.newhopehousing.org](http://www.newhopehousing.org).



**The Fairfax-Falls Church community is participating in a national campaign—100K Homes—that will help in understanding who is homeless, why they are homeless and how we can get them housed.**

## We Are a Family

To the Editor:

Thank you for the wonderful articles highlighting the positive impact of Fairfax Families4Kids and the relationships and families that have come about because of the program.

As a mentor, I know firsthand how important mentoring programs such as Fairfax Families4Kids can be in a child's life.

Initially I got involved with

FF4Kids because I wanted to give back. In other words, I wanted to be there for children because I have had adults in my life that have mentored me and helped to mold me into the person I am today.

Also, my grandparents and my mother have been foster parents and I have seen the impact on foster kids of hav-



Shavonne  
Hayes

PHOTO BY JOAN BRADY

ing loving/caring adults in their lives.

What I have realized is that spending time with the kids has had a tremendous impact on me. I think of the various experiences of the kids—multiple foster homes, aging out without a place to live or no job. It always reminds me to remember how

truly blessed I am no matter what happens. If they can survive the

hand life has dealt to them then there is nothing I cannot overcome. I continue to be amazed and humbled by their resiliency.

To see the challenges they have aging out of the system makes me want to do all I can to ensure they have the support they need. We are more than mentors and mentees. We are a family.

**Shavonne Hayes**  
Sterling

Great Falls  
**CONNECTION**

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## In Support of Riverbend Park Master Plan

To the Editor:

I am a Boy Scout from Troop 712 based in Chantilly and I am writing about the proposed Riverbend Park master plan. The reason I've chosen to write about this is because I've been to Riverbend Park numerous times and really enjoy my visits there. I want to give my support for implementing the Riverbend Park master plan.

Riverbend Park is located in Great Falls, right along the Potomac River. The park has a total of 400 acres of forests and meadows. It also contains a 2.5-mile section of the Potomac Heritage Trail. The park already includes a visitor's center, nature center, pavilion and parking lots. I think that out of all of the changes proposed, the most important and useful are the following: reconfiguration of the main entrance, the addition of a nature watching tower and the new outdoor pavilions/classrooms.

Through the reconfiguration of the entrance the guardhouse would be moved farther back into the park. Moving the guardhouse

will allow the cars farther into the park. This in turn will greatly reduce the amount of traffic on the main road and make it less of a hassle for people with houses neighboring the park. The reconfiguration will also make a separate road running out of the park to allow one-way traffic in and out.

The nature tower will be built on a meadow that was a part of the original Conn's farm. There will be a map in the tower and interpretive features about the farm and wildlife. On this meadow there will also be historical farm equipment, trails and hayrides. I think that this will be a great addition to the park for being able to see the park's scenery.

The outdoor classrooms will play a huge role in education of children. Currently, without the additions, the park can hold three classes simultaneously, two indoors and one outdoors. With the outdoor classrooms there will be space for three more classes. There would be a large pavilion for 130 people or two classes. This will allow more classes, and therefore more income, for the park.

The original master plan contained this goal as the quote, "Riverbend Park is a nature pre-

serve managed to protect the biological communities and cultural Resources of the Potomac Gorge, while providing a natural space for education, research, and outdoor recreation that is compatible with preservation goals." I think that with all of the proposed improvements, Riverbend Park will continue to meet the goals originally established. This is why I'm in support of implementing the original master plan at Riverbend Park.

**Jamison Stevens**  
Oak Hill

## Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue.

The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

Send to:

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# Valentine's

## Gift Guide

### Great Falls Blue Knights U12 Soccer Tryouts

The Great Falls Blue Knights, a U12 Boys Travel Soccer team, are looking to strengthen their squad for their 2012-2013 ODSL campaign.

Indoor tryouts will be held 6:30pm-8:00pm on February 20<sup>th</sup> at NZONE in Chantilly.

The Knights have several roster spots remaining for committed U12 players born 08/01/00 or after looking to take their game to the next level.

Training sessions are normally held on Monday, Wednesday & Thursdays 6:30-8:00 pm in the Great Falls/Reston area during the season.



If you are interested, have questions or would like to register for tryouts, please email the Team Manager at [GFBBLUEKNIGHTS@LIVE.COM](mailto:GFBBLUEKNIGHTS@LIVE.COM)



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**Dr. Donna Greco**  
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Family Dentistry



Dr. Donna Greco completed her undergraduate studies in fine art, and after a brief professional career as a graphic artist, she returned to dental school and earned her Doctorate of Medicinal Dentistry from the University of Kentucky in 2002.

As a dental student, she was selected as one of only three dental students to ever complete the year-long clinical research training program at NIH in Bethesda, Maryland, studying head and neck development. After graduation, she returned to the D.C. area and eventually settled in Loudoun County, where she resides with her husband, Craig, and their daughter. Dr. Greco participates in extensive continuing education and training in all aspects of her profession, including her particular areas of interest which are esthetic and cosmetic dentistry, orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics, dentistry for children and TMJ disorders.

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# WELLBEING

## Preserving Mental Health as We Age

Experts say diet, exercise and mental stimulation are key.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**R**andy Weadon walks six miles each day around the perimeters of his retirement community, Greenspring in Springfield. He also does crossword puzzles daily.

"During tax season, I walk around the halls and mentally do my income taxes in my head," said Weadon, a retired Coast Guard officer. "If I had not started walking, I don't know if I'd be alive. I am 86-and-a-half years old, but I don't feel that age at all."

Geriatric experts say healthy lifestyle habits like regular exercise, eating a nutritious diet and brain challenges can help preserve mental health as we age.

"The one thing that I always tell my patients is that if you don't use it, you lose it. I recommend

crossword puzzles, mentally challenging games and reading, especially about current events," said Dr. Lisa Calusic, a psychiatrist at Inova Behavioral Health Services in Alexandria, and an Arlington, resident.

Researchers Pamela Greenwood and Raja Parasuraman, professors at the Department of Psychology at George Mason University in Fairfax, have spent more than 20 years studying the way the human brain ages with a focus on Alzheimer's disease. The two wrote a book, "Nurturing the Older Brain and Mind," in which they explore ways

**"Exercise [is] the 'lifestyle' factor with the strongest effect. A number of different research groups have found benefits of aerobic exercise on both brain structure and function and on cognitive performance."**

— Pamela Greenwood, Ph.D.,  
George Mason University



Geriatric experts say healthy lifestyle habits like regular exercise, eating a nutritious diet and brain challenges can help preserve mental health as we age.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

middle-aged people can stave off mental deterioration.

"We know that if we can put off dementing illnesses, even by a year or two through lifestyle changes, that will reduce the number of people with Alzheimer's disease, which is reaching epidemic proportions," Parasuraman says.

The duo says that preventing and staving off mental deterioration is more important than ever now that workers are staying employed longer for economic reasons. Physical activity is an important tool as well.

"Exercise [is] the 'lifestyle' factor with the strongest effect," said Greenwood. "A number of different research groups have found benefits of aerobic exercise on both brain structure and function, and on cognitive performance."

Joel Martin, a professor of kinesiology at George Mason, agrees: "Regular exercise has been proven to slow the aging process," he said. "People have their actual age, which they can't do anything about, and their biological age. Someone could be 40 years old, live a very inactive lifestyle and not eat very well, which may cause them to be closer to 60 in terms of their biological age. Vice versa: Someone who is 60 could be very active and eat a healthy diet and feel like they are much younger, perhaps a biological age closer to mid-40s."

As an octogenarian, Weadon credits his sharpness to regular mental challenges. Martin agrees. "Regularly engaging in activities requiring cognitive function is important," said Martin. "Most tissues in the body respond to stress placed on it by be-

coming stronger or adapting to handle the stimulus you place on it. If you lift weights, your muscles get bigger and stronger. If you don't do any sort of physical activity to stimulate your muscles, then they get smaller and become weaker. The brain is the same way, it needs regular stimulation to maintain its function."

Experts also say not to rule out the importance of good nutrition. "The antioxidants in foods, especially fruits and vegetables, can help to preserve and protect tissues from damage that occurs as part of the natural aging process," said Martin.



Randy Weadon, 86, does crossword puzzles and walks six miles each day.



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## A Complicated Answer

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



And a further explanation and corollary to last week's column: "A Simple Question," which attempted to sort through my reactions to being asked an extremely innocent, appropriate, well-intended and always appreciated courtesy: "How are you?" and the problem that it sometimes causes me. That problem being: a question which had it not been asked would then not require an answer. An answer that I'll always give, but not before I've given it some thought, which if I hadn't thought about, wouldn't have bothered me in the least. And in the most, it doesn't really bother me, but after four years, a sort of cancer-fatigue has set in. I'm tired of talking about it. "Not that there's anything wrong with that"; being asked the obvious question. Still, if I'm going to keep pretending that my coast is semi-clear, I'd rather not be reminded that five hundred years ago, that coast/horizon represented the end of the world.

This first paragraph was yet another attempt by yours truly to offer some insight into the thought process of a cancer survivor (OK, maybe just this cancer survivor; or a person with some issues, although I would deny that). The related point being that there are the obvious problems being a cancer patient (need I elaborate?) and then there are the less-than-obvious, almost subliminal-type problems which can just as easily ruin your day – and night, as much if not more than a chemo-cocktail infused straight into your body for six hours every three weeks can.

And just like the Philadelphia-born comedian, David Brenner, used to joke about mosquitoes: "It's not the ones you hear you should worry about, it's the ones you can't hear." So too with cancer. There's plenty to worry about that you know – or think you know or have heard about, or maybe have even anticipated: lab work, diagnostic scans, biopsies, surgery, chemotherapy, radiation, doctor's appointments, etc. But it's the down time, the private time alone and away from all the people, places and things with which you've grown familiar and dare I admit, accustomed, that becomes cherished. Then, when you least expect it, a courtesy question inquiring about your overall health, not even one particularly cancer-centric. Still, the question takes you (at least it does to me), right back to cancer central. The one place – for me, I try to avoid. The one place I never imagined I'd be, and now that I'm there often, the one place where I'd rather not be reminded that I semi-reside.

Four years post diagnosis, I realize this jack-pot I find myself in is hardly a winning hand, and it's more than a bad dream. It's a reality. Yet avoiding the nightmare directly – and indirectly, as often as possible, has been my M.O. I can't say I've been particularly successful doing so, but I've had my moments and have made my peace. However, it's the random nature of the spoken and written word that occasionally has undercut my emotional foundation. A foundation built on a lifetime living and learning, trying not to make a bad situation worse; and one striving to not be irrational, unreasonable, illogical and ill-prepared for all that life throws at you. I ceded control four years ago and now when I'm asked, 'How I'm doing?', I'm always reminded how fragile and unpredictable life can be; "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," as Cerphe used to say back in the day, on the original WHFS.

I know – and appreciate – that you have to ask. Please understand that sometimes, I might not feel like answering.

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

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PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Irene Bak, with FastTran, and Glenn Padeway, with Fairfax County's Neighborhood and Community Services Department, brave chilly weather on Saturday, Feb. 3, to promote Fairfax County's "Stuff the Bus" campaign at the Fairfax Wal-Mart.**



**(From left) Angie Carrera of Op3; Chris Garris, Our Daily Bread's food program manager and volunteer coordinator; Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Wendy Lemieux of OP3 encourage shoppers to purchase gift cards.**

# 'Stuff the Bus' Campaign Helps Feed the Hungry

**Donations continue to increase as campaign enters third year.**

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

**L**ocal grocery stores were packed this weekend with shoppers stocking up on Super Bowl snacks for the annual football fan party. At the Wal-Mart in Fairfax, shoppers were greeted with colorful displays of chips, dips and other party favorites.

They were also greeted by volunteers from Our Daily Bread (ODB), who were handing out flyers and encouraging shoppers to donate gift cards or specific items to restock ODB's pantry shelves. A Fairfax nonprofit for nearly 30 years, ODB provides food and other critical services to the working poor, the elderly and the disabled. More than half of ODB's clients are local children.

Dianne Hon, a Vienna resident, said "Stuff the Bus" makes it easy to donate. "I am already here for groceries and other items, especially since it's the day before the Super Bowl, so it's very convenient to pick up a few extra items for a worthy cause," Hon said.

"Thank you for doing this," Hon said to the volunteers. "You made this so easy."

Jonathan and Roxanne Daley of Fairfax donated a gift card to the campaign. "It's too easy to forget that there are people in Fairfax County who go hungry," Roxanne Daley said. "I love the gift card idea. It's easy and you know you're helping someone get what they want."

**FAIRFAX BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAIRMAN** Sharon Bulova, who greeted shoppers and encouraged them to donate on Saturday, Feb. 2, said gift cards are especially helpful for a number of reasons.

"There's a dignity about it," Bulova said. "You don't stand out from other shoppers with a gift card, and you can purchase what you want for a special recipe, or if you have specific dietary needs."

Chris Garris, ODB's food program manager and volunteer coordinator, said they are encouraging more people to donate gift cards, particularly because they help clients purchase fresh food. "A \$20 gift card

helps families supplement our pantry's non-perishable food with milk and meat."

Garris said the timing of the Stuff the Bus campaign—which is intentionally scheduled between Martin Luther King Day in January and Presidents Day in February—is important for local pantries because it occurs after the seasonal dose of good will.

"During the fall and holiday season, Our Daily Bread's food pantry is overwhelmed with donations from the community," she said. "But by February, our supplies are often running low even though the need for food is greater than ever."

"Stuff the Bus is an important component in restocking pantries after the holidays," Bulova said. "The need for healthy food is ever growing and the interest for Fairfax County residents to help is there, so we are happily providing the bridge to bring them together."

**THE CAMPAIGN**, now in its third year, is a partnership between Fairfax County Office of Public Private Partnerships (OP3); MV Transportation Inc., which operates the FASTRAN buses and provides volunteers; local nonprofits; and grocery store chains. All donations go directly to local nonprofit organizations that help feed needy families and individuals in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community.

"The residents of Fairfax and our partners, like MV Transportation and Frank & Co., have really come out in support of Stuff the Bus this year. Each year, we get more donations," said Michael Artson, chief planner with the county's Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) Department, one of the food drive's organizers.

"Food pantries address a critical need which is especially acute after the holidays, the Stuff the Bus campaign helps us help our community. Its importance to helping stock the shelves can't be overstated," said Roxanne Rice, executive director, Food for Others.

Last year, more than 25,000 lbs. of food was collected for local pantries, all benefiting local nonprofits that help feed needy families in the Fairfax community.

At the end of Saturday's Stuff the Bus campaign, Juliet Reyes of Herndon, a Wal-Mart employee, who was in the middle of her shift as a cashier, asked ODB volunteers if she could donate cash. "I've been listening to people talk about this, and I want to help too. People here shouldn't go hungry."

## FAITH NOTES

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

Beginning Sunday, Feb. 3, the **Antioch Christian Church** will explore the purpose for every person's life, answering the question, "Why am I here?" The church is located at 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna and worship service times on Sundays are at 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Child care is provided. 703-938-6753 or <http://www.antiochdoc.org>.

**Great Falls United Methodist Men** invite you to their annual pancake dinner Tuesday, Feb. 12, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Dinner is free and donations are accepted. All proceeds will be sent to The Society of St. Andrew to help feed the hungry. For more information call the church at 703-759-3705.

**Emotions Anonymous**, a 12-step recovery program, offers weekly step meetings in Vienna for recovery for couples from a wide range of problems. Join on Mondays from 8-9 p.m. at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 2589 Chain Bridge Rd., Vienna. 703-209-0658.

**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, 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.

**Trinity United Methodist Church**, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean, Sunday worship services are at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for adults is at 9:30 a.m. and for children during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Youth Group for grades 7-12 meets Sundays at 6 p.m. A 20-minute service of Holy Communion is held each Wednesday at 12 p.m. 703-356-3312 or [umtrinity.org](http://umtrinity.org).

## OPEN HOUSES SATURDAY/SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 & 10

When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in this Connection Newspaper. For more real estate listings and open houses, visit [www.ConnectionNewspapers.com](http://www.ConnectionNewspapers.com) and click on the "This Week in Real Estate" link. **Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times**

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



# CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S

Here are some ways to wax romantic or celebratory on a Valentine's outing:

## SATURDAY/FEB. 9

**Balducci's Wine Day.** 8 a.m.-8 p.m., at Balducci's, 6655 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Prep for the big day as you join professional winemakers, importers and aficionados as they sample various wines, trade recommendations and share stories; 25 percent off 12-plus bottle purchases. [www.balduccis.com](http://www.balduccis.com).

## TUESDAY/FEB. 12

**Martinis and Manicures.** 5-9 p.m., at the Day Spa at The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Celebrate friendship at the girls-only event with a cocktail, sweet treats from the pastry chefs, estheticians providing manicures, petite facials and mini massages. Reservations. 703-744-3924.

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 13

**Sealed With a Kiss.** 10:30 a.m., at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Valentine's stories and activities for children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult. [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/dm/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/dm/).

## THURSDAY/FEB. 14

**Valentine's Day Dinner.** 5:30-9:30 p.m., in Bistro, at The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. An elegant evening of gourmet culinary creations in an intimate setting with live music duo accompaniment—or eat at the Sushi Bar where chefs prepare a customized meal. \$125 per person for gourmet dinner. [www.ritzcarlton.com](http://www.ritzcarlton.com).

## Wildfire Valentine's Day Weekend.

5-10:30 p.m., at Wildfire, 1714 International Drive, McLean. For a romantic dinner in a cozy booth or a special treat while celebrating with the family, the four course menu offers gourmet choices in the starter, salad, main course and dessert portions of the meal, offered every evening through Sunday, Feb. 17. Reservations. 703-442-9110.

## FRIDAY/FEB. 15

**Chocolate and Jazz.** 8:30 p.m.-midnight at The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. An evening of live jazz, rich chocolate from the Chocolate Buffet Bar and a bottle of champagne. \$25 per person or \$85 per couple (champagne included). [www.ritzcarlton.com](http://www.ritzcarlton.com).

## SATURDAY/FEB. 16

**Chef Matt's Cooking Class.** 5-7 p.m., at The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. An evening of gourmet cooking classes for two teaches couples how to make a full Valentine's Day dinner and offers a space for them to enjoy their creations. [www.ritzcarlton.com](http://www.ritzcarlton.com). \$150 per couple. [www.ritzcarlton.com](http://www.ritzcarlton.com).  
**Chocolate Bar and Live Music.** 9 p.m.-midnight at the Entyse Wine Bar & Lounge at The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Live music and rich chocolate define the evening, where champagne and a chocolate buffet tempt the palate. \$25 per person or \$85 per couple (champagne included). [www.ritzcarlton.com](http://www.ritzcarlton.com).



**Wildfire serves parmesan-crusted steak as part of their Four Course Menu for Two, offered on Valentine's Day through Sunday, Feb. 17.**

## ENTERTAINMENT



## Author Sophie Burnham on Forgiveness

Author of the bestseller Book of Angels, Sophie Burnham, gives a Forgiveness Workshop on Friday, Feb. 8, from 7-9 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 9, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Burnham's presentation is part of the Season for Nonviolence; get tickets at [www.forgivenessworkshop.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.forgivenessworkshop.brownpapertickets.com) and learn about the Season for Nonviolence at [www.unityoffairfax.org/season-nonviolence](http://www.unityoffairfax.org/season-nonviolence).

Send announcements to [vienna@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:vienna@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)

## THURSDAY/FEB. 7

### One-on-one Computer

**Tutoring.** 2 p.m., at Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn the basics of the Internet, Word and Excel; call for appointment. 703-242-4020 or [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ok/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/ok/).

### Great Falls Trailblazers

**Meeting.** 7:30 p.m., at Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Discuss trailblazing plans for the year, with concentration on the trail in progress on Colvin Run/Walker Road, Arnon Chapel, Springvale and Beach Mill/Jeffery Road. [www.GreatFallsTrailBlazers.org](http://www.GreatFallsTrailBlazers.org).

**Solas.** 8 p.m., at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. America's premiere Irish folk ensemble plays songs narrating the life of band leader Seamus Egan's great-great uncle in his immigrant struggle during the Industrial Revolution. \$22. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

romantic entanglements coalesce in one idyllic afternoon in the elegiac memory play. \$11 for students and seniors 65-plus; \$13. 703-255-6399.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 9

**Balducci's Wine Day.** 8 a.m.-8 p.m., at Balducci's, 6655 Old Dominion Drive, McLean. Join professional winemakers, importers and aficionados as they sample various wines, trade recommendations and share stories; 25 percent off 12-plus bottle purchases. [www.balduccis.com](http://www.balduccis.com).

**Forgiveness Workshop.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Sophy Burnham, author of the bestselling book, Book of Angels, holds a workshop on forgiveness. [www.forgivenessworkshop.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.forgivenessworkshop.brownpapertickets.com)

**Furnace Hills Coffee Tasting.** 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Whole Foods, 143 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. The Westminster, Md.-based roasters are launching their Northern Virginia sales with a free tasting with owners Dave and Erin Baldwin on hand. <http://furnacehillscoffee.com/our-story/>.

### Italian American

**Reconciliation.** 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A romantic comedy from the author "Moonstruck" and "Doubt" follows Huey Bonfigliano as he takes to the arts after his divorce, but bad poetry isn't enough and he decides to try and win back his ex with the help of friends. \$25; \$15 for students. 703-854-1856 or [www.1ststage.com](http://www.1ststage.com).

### Southside Johnny & The Poor

**Fools.** 7:30 p.m., at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Front man of The Ashbury Jukes Southside Johnny Lyon joins forces with The Poor Fools and plays an ad hoc rock n' roll routine. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Proposals.** 8 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center, 127 Center St. S., Vienna. The Neil Simon comedy recalls the Hines family gathered at their retreat in the Poconos in the summer of 1953: romantic entanglements coalesce in one idyllic afternoon in the elegiac memory play. \$11 for students and seniors 65-plus; \$13. 703-255-6399.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT,  
PAGE 17

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**7:45 a.m.** Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
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Music: grades 3 - 7  
**10:25 a.m.** Sunday School Grades 3 to 12  
Music 4 years to 2nd grade  
**11:15 a.m.** Holy Eucharist, Rite II  
**5:00 p.m.** Come Just as You Are Contemporary Service

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CHURCH SCHOOL 9:30AM-10:30AM  
MIDWEEK SERVICES, WED. 7:00 PM**

### Assembly of God

Vienna Assembly of God ... 703-938-7736  
Cristo Es Mi Refugio...703-675-0144

### Baha'i

Baha'i Faith for Northern Virginia ...  
703-821-3345

### Baptist

Global Mission Church ... 703-757-0877  
Peace Baptist Church ... 703-560-8462  
Bethel Primitive Baptist Church  
... 703-757-8134  
Cartersville Baptist Church ... 703-255-7075  
Fellowship Baptist Church ... 703-385-8516  
First Baptist Church ... 703-938-8525  
The Light Mission Church ... 703-757-0877  
Vienna Baptist Church ... 703-281-4400  
New Union Baptist Church... 703-281-2556

### Buddhist

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center... 202-331-2122

### Church of the Brethren

Oakton Church of the Brethren  
... 703-281-4411

### Catholic

Our Lady of Good Counsel ... 703-938-2828  
St. Athanasius Catholic Church ... 703-759-4555  
St. Mark's Catholic Church ... 703-281-9100

### Charismatic

Christian Assembly ... 703-698-9777

### Church of Christ

Berea Church of Christ ... 703-893-7040

### Disciples of Christ

Antioch Christian Church ... 703-938-6753

### Episcopal

Church of the Holy Comforter ... 703-938-6521  
Church of the Holy Cross ... 703-698-6991  
St. Francis Episcopal ... 703-759-2082

### Jehovah's Witness

Jehovah's Witnesses ... 703-759-1579

### Lutheran

Emmanuel Lutheran Church...703-938-2119  
Christ The King Lutheran Church...703-759-6068  
St. Athanasius Lutheran Church... 703-455-4003

### Methodist

Andrew Chapel United Methodist ... 703-759-3509  
Church of the Good Shepherd ... 703-281-3987  
The Vine Methodist Church ... 703-573-5336  
Epiphany United Methodist ... 703-938-3494  
Great Falls United Methodist... 703-759-3705  
Oakton United Methodist ... 703-938-1233  
Vale United Methodist ... 703-620-2594  
Smith Chapel United Methodist ... 571-434-9680  
Wesley United Methodist ... 703-938-8700

### Non-Denominational

Celebration Center for Spiritual Living  
... 703-560-2030  
Christian Assembly Church ... 703-698-9777

### Presbyterian

Grace Orthodox Presbyterian Church ...  
703-560-6336  
Korean Central Presbyterian ... 703-698-5577  
Vienna Presbyterian ... 703-938-9050

### Quaker

Langley Hills Friends...703-442-8394

### Seventh-Day Adventist

Northern Virginia Christian Fellowship ...  
703-242-9001  
Vienna Seventh Day Adventists ...  
703-938-8383

### Unitarian Universalist

Congregation of Fairfax ... 703-281-4230

### United Church of Christ

Emmaus United Church of Christ ...  
703-938-1555

### Unity

Unity of Fairfax ... 703-281-1767



# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 16

## SUNDAY/FEB. 10

**Italian American Reconciliation.** 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., at 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. A romantic comedy from the author "Moonstruck" and "Doubt" follows Huey Bonfigliano as he takes to the arts after his divorce, but bad poetry isn't enough and he decides to try and win back his ex with the help of friends. \$25; \$15 for students. 703-854-1856 or [www.1ststageoftysons.org](http://www.1ststageoftysons.org).

**Proposals.** 3 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center, 127 Center St. S., Vienna. The Neil Simon comedy recalls the Hines family gathered at their retreat in the Poconos in the summer of 1953: romantic entanglements coalesce in one idyllic afternoon in the elegiac memory play. \$11 for students and seniors 65-plus; \$13. 703-255-6399.

**Feel the Spirit.** 3 p.m., at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., N.E., Vienna. Celebrate Black History Month with a concert arranged by Moses Hogan of VPC. \$6. [www.metchorus.org/concerts](http://www.metchorus.org/concerts).

**Country Western Dance.** 4:30-10 p.m., at Colvin Run Community Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Dance the 2-step, country waltz, West and East Coast swing, cha-cha, line dance and more with lessons all afternoon leading up to the 6:30 p.m. dance; no partner needed. \$15 (includes lessons and access to loaded snack bar). [www.colvinrun.org](http://www.colvinrun.org).

## TUESDAY/FEB. 12

**Martinis and Manicures.** 5-9 p.m., at the Day Spa at The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean.

Celebrate friendship at the girls-only event with a cocktail, sweet treats from the pastry chefs, estheticians providing manicures, petite facials and mini massages. Reservations. 703-744-3924.

**United Methodist Men's Annual Pancake Dinner.** 5:30-7:30 p.m., at 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Great Falls United Methodist Men invited the public to a free dinner, accepting donations to benefit the Society of St. Andrew to help feed the hungry. 703-759-3705.

## WEDNESDAY/FEB. 13

**Sealed With a Kiss.** 10:30 a.m., at Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Valentine's stories and activities for children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult. [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/dm/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/dm/).

## THURSDAY/FEB. 14

**Valentine's Day Dinner.** 5:30-9:30 p.m., in Bistro, at The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. An elegant evening of gourmet culinary creations in an intimate setting with live music duo accompaniment—or eat at the Sushi Bar where chefs prepare a customized meal. \$125 per person for gourmet dinner. [www.ritzcarlton.com](http://www.ritzcarlton.com).

**Wildfire Valentine's Day Weekend.** 5-10:30 p.m., at Wildfire, 1714 International Drive, McLean. For a romantic dinner in a cozy booth or a special treat while celebrating with the family, the four course menu offers gourmet choices in the starter, salad, main course and dessert portions of the meal, offered every evening through Sunday, Feb. 17. Reservations. 703-442-9110.

## Colvin Run Elementary Gives to Those in Need

Children of Colvin Run Elementary School gathered in the school sport auditorium on Monday, Feb. 4, to mark the beginning of the school's food donation program.

According to one of the organizers, Alex Miller, a fifth grade teacher in the school, "the idea of a food donation program was suggested by the PTO," while the school embarked on sensitizing the children through the morning news show.

Under the program, students will deposit their unopened milk, yogurt, chips and other food in specially marked coolers and bins. These will be delivered by volunteers twice weekly to Reston Interfaith. Also, foil lined bags and empty juice pouches will be collected for the fourth grade tetra cycling service project.

The event featured a short play by the students and a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Present at the event were all the students, teachers, volunteers and parents.

—OLUFEMI AKINSITAN



PHOTO BY OLUFEMI AKINSITAN/THE CONNECTION

Students of Colvin Run Elementary School in a short play at the food donation ceremony.

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# SPORTS

**Marshall senior Grant Leibow scored 16 points against South Lakes on Feb. 1.**

PHOTOS BY  
CRAIG STERBUTZEL/  
THE CONNECTION



## Marshall Boys' Basketball: Doormat to District Contender

**Statesmen have more wins this season than previous two combined.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**G**rant Leibow moved up from the JV to join the Marshall varsity boys' basketball team near the end of his sophomore season, becoming part of a group that finished the 2010-11 campaign with a 3-20 record and a first-round exit in the Liberty District tournament.

The following year, Leibow played his entire junior season with the varsity, during which the Statesmen went 7-15 and again lost in the first round of districts. In two seasons under head coach Dan Hale, Marshall managed a 2-28 record against Liberty District opponents.

"We've been through tough times," Leibow said recently.

Now a senior, Leibow is a key member of a Marshall team that

has evolved from district doormat to second place in the standings. Hard work in the off season set the transition in motion. On Friday, the Statesmen displayed the other key component of their turnaround: sharing the basketball.

**SIX MARSHALL PLAYERS** scored at least eight points and the Statesmen defeated South Lakes 65-46 on Feb. 1 at Marshall High School. On Monday, Marshall lost to Langley 39-38 but remained alone in second place in the Liberty District standings with one game remaining. The Statesmen, who are 13-7 overall and 8-5 in the district, are assured of a home game in the first round of the district tournament.

Leibow, a 6-foot-1 guard, led the way with 16 points against South Lakes. His third 3-pointer of the evening gave the Statesmen a 34-26 lead with 5:07 remaining in the third quarter and sparked a 13-4 Marshall run.

"He's our leader, he's the guy we want [with] the ball in his hand facilitating," Hale said. "... He's one of those guys that really worked hard."

Junior forward Towner Hale scored 13 points for



**Marshall freshman Tyler White scored 11 points during a win against South Lakes on Feb. 1.**

Marshall. Freshman center Tyler White finished with 11 points, senior forward Doug Turpin scored nine, and senior guard Connor Barrand and junior guard Christian Cameron each added eight.

"I think our teamwork and our togetherness have really helped us," Leibow said. "It seems like when we pass the ball we play better [and] that's what happened tonight."

Dan Hale, who coached in Hawaii prior to taking over at Marshall in 2010, credited his players' work ethic for helping the program improve. Marshall's 13 victories this season are more than the previous two seasons combined (10).

"This is a group of guys that really kind of committed themselves to doing all the hard work in the off season," Hale said. "We always preach that it's the off season that is the [time] you've got to work hard. There's not enough time in the season to really improve your game. ... This is a group that has been very tight and has worked together and they work really hard and it's paying off."

While Leibow (three 3-pointers) and Cameron (two 3s) shot the ball well from behind the arc, White provided offense in the paint. The 6-foot-4, 250-pound freshman scored with post moves and had a key fourth-quarter tip-in that started a 17-3 run.

"He's adjusted to the varsity game—that's not an easy thing to do as a freshman," Hale said. "He's definitely looking nice and comfortable out there and he had some big plays tonight."

White said opponents at times will get physical with him and engage in trash talk. He tries to block it out, but sometimes he "just [gets] more angry, [gets] more physical."

"He's been able to push a few guys around down low when we need him against teams with bigger guys," Leibow said. "That's something we haven't had in quite a few years."

**MARSHALL WILL CLOSE** the regular season with a road game against Thomas Jefferson at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 8, before entering the district tournament.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Marshall senior Amanda Denny scored nine points against South Lakes on Feb. 1.**

## A 'Learning Year' For Marshall Girls

**2012-13 was projected as a rebuilding year.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Marshall girls' basketball program went 3-11 in district play during the 2011-12 season, but managed to qualify for regionals by upsetting No. 2 Stone Bridge in the opening round of the Liberty District tournament.

Last season ended on a positive note for the Statesmen's five senior starters, but with that much experience leaving the program, 2012-13 projected as a rebuilding year.

Marshall returned three athletes from last year's team—junior Lexi Stalcup, and seniors Elyse Smith and Amanda Denny—and had nearly as many freshmen (two) as seniors (three) on the roster. The result so far: a 4-17 record, including 0-13 in the district.

But while Marshall has struggled, the losses didn't stop

the Statesmen from giving first-place South Lakes a run for its money.

Marshall was within eight points in the fourth quarter, when a 3-pointer by Stalcup cut the South Lakes lead to 39-31 with 3:38 remaining, but the Seahawks scored six of the game's final seven points to pull out a 45-32 victory on Feb. 1 at Marshall High School.

"They responded very, very well tonight," Marshall head coach Chad Scott said. "This is obviously a rough season. We replaced a lot of seniors from last year, so it's kind of a learning year. At times that's tough when you're losing games after games, but tonight they really responded. They took it right to South Lakes. I was very proud of them for that."

Denny led Marshall with nine points. Stalcup finished with eight points, freshman Megan Kenny scored six, Smith finished with five and junior Mariah Raskin added four.

On Monday, Marshall lost to Langley, 52-37. The Statesmen will close the regular season with a road game against Thomas Jefferson at 5:45 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 8.



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