

Holiday Shopping the 'Small-town' Way

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A Place for Youth in Need

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Potters Return to Colvin Run Mill

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Vienna-logo sweatshirts,
American-made, come in
adult and kids' sizes.
"Somebody in Vienna, VA,
loves me" for kids sells for
\$13.99 at Vienna Rexall
Drug Center.

Supporting Wounded Warriors and Their Families

Yellow Ribbon Fund arranges and pays for variety of services.

BY SUSAN BELFORD
THE CONNECTION

As the executive director of the Yellow Ribbon Fund (YRF), Vienna's Mark Robbins spearheads projects that make the lives of Wounded Warriors and their families better. With his staff of 11 and 1300-plus volunteers, he leads the YRF in planning and hosting 100 events a year.

Last year, injured troops and their families were given 3076 free cab rides, and 5,554 free rental car days. They received 2,791 free hotel nights, 480 free massages for family caregivers — and the list goes on. “There is nothing better than knowing the work you do has a major impact on others,” Robbins said. “We provide practical solutions for injured service members and their families. The work we do allows the service member to recover from catastrophic injuries. It also allows the families of the injured to be with their loved one. We make a difference to all of these people. There is nothing better than that.”



PHOTO BY SUSAN BELFORD/THE CONNECTION
Mark Robbins, executive director, Yellow Ribbon Fund

Robbins, who has lived in Vienna for 17 years with his wife, Dianne, and three daughters, has been executive director of YRF since 2008.

THE IDEA for YRF originated in 2005 when Lt. Col. John Adams (USAFR-Ret) and colleague Denis Neill of Bethesda were introduced to Walter Reed staff members by the father of an injured Marine. While there, they had the opportunity to help a mom who was rushing to her son's side because he had been wounded in combat. She had no place to stay, so they made a reservation at a nearby hotel and paid for it. When they found out the hotel shuttle could not take her to Walter Reed at the odd times she



needed to go, they rented her a car — and paid for that too. Adams and Neill saw firsthand what families go through when their loved one returns with severe injuries that require long hospital and rehabilitation stays, and what families must endure when they arrive and must negotiate a totally new environment. Thus, with help from other businessmen and women, they founded the Yellow Ribbon Fund to “fill in the gaps for injured service members and their families during treatment at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Fort Belvoir Community Hospital and continuing support after they return to their hometown.”

Located in Bethesda, the non-profit YRF was selected this year for the Greater Washington Catalogue for Philanthropy “A Guide to Giving 2013-2014.” The catalogue's theme of “Give Where You Live” is a message to the Greater Washington area that the charities that are included can be trusted to spend the monies and deliver the services as they state in their literature.

“The selection process for the Catalogue for Philanthropy is really rigorous. A charity can only be selected one time every three years — it's really an honor and shows our

impact on the community by putting us in the limelight. They look at all the finances, the percentage of overhead — ours is less than 17 percent. This year, I believe we are the only organization in it that is helping our Wounded Warriors,” Robbins said.

The organization is gearing up for its four annual holiday parties. “These parties are so meaningful to the wounded warriors and their families,” said Kristen Henderson, YRF director of communications. “One of our board members, Vito Pampalona — Uncle Vito to the servicemen and women — holds a golf tournament to raise funds for YRF every year. He spends all the proceeds on holiday gifts for holiday parties for the servicemen and women and their families — and ships everything here from Michigan. He buys backpacks, t-shirts, CDs, gift cards, iPads, Playstations and more. Santa comes to hand out the gifts — and everyone enjoys a light-hearted afternoon that truly helps when each day can be a struggle.”

ONE OF ITS MOST EFFECTIVE programs supports the family caregivers who, “as unsung heroes, put their lives on hold to help their injured loved one manage the marathon of surgeries, appointments, medications and tasks of daily living,” Robbins said. “We do whatever it takes. We provide

SEE HONORING, PAGE 5

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From left, members of the team: Stephanie Barber, administrative associate; Christine Bartell, resource manager; Lynne Giordano, volunteer; and Jade Leedham, development manager.



PHOTOS BY
RUSS UGONE/
THE CONNECTION

A Place for Youth in Need

The Alternative House has been providing support, since 1972, to at risk youth and their families.

BY RUSS UGONE
THE CONNECTION

Driving on Gallows Road near the Dunn Loring Fire Department, you will pass a well maintained split-level home with purple doors with a sign in front titled "Alternative House." Located at 2100 Gallows Road, the Alternative House has been providing support, since 1972, to at risk youth and their families. Christine Bartell, resource manager, said, "It is the only organization in the area offering emergency shelter to young people," and added "that estimates have shown that there are 7,000 homeless kids in Northern Virginia." In the predominantly affluent Fairfax County, the number of at risk youth is not visible to many, making it an even greater challenge for Bartell and other staff when conducting community outreach efforts. The Alternative House views their Open Door Information Sessions and their Ambassador program as key efforts to obtaining community engagement and support. Bartell manages resources, such as property and donations that support their initiatives. The Alternative House is supported by a dedicated staff of 40 employees and 1,350 volunteers.

The Alternative House has four major programs: an Emergency Shelter for Teenagers, a Homeless Youth Initiative, Community-Based Youth Services and Assisting Young Mothers. Services that are provided include voluntary three-week emergency shelter for youths; a 24-hour crisis hotline; individual, group and family counseling; and safe shelter for at

risk and pregnant women. The Alternative House also sponsors two teen centers that offer food, counseling, workshops and life-skills education. Half of the funding comes from public sources with the remaining half through private donations from individuals and companies. They include the Rotary Club of McLean, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Chipotle, and Vienna Inn, just to name a few.

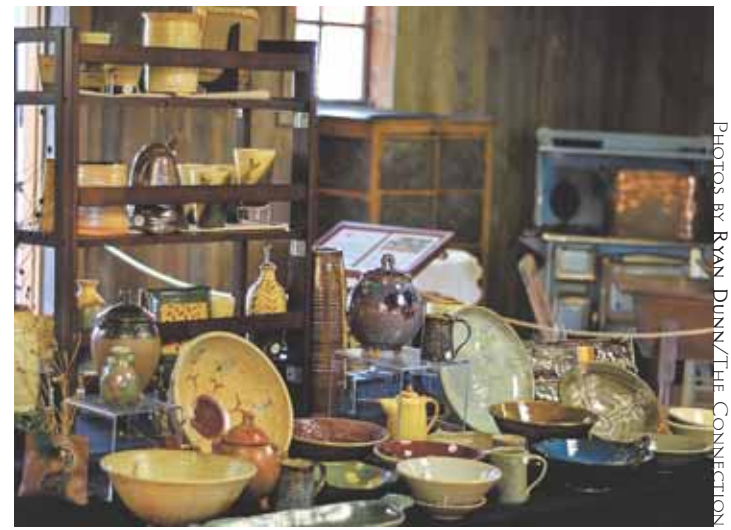
Jade Leedham, development manager, said that Open Door Information Sessions are their primary means to reach out to the community, and are conducted on the second Tuesday of each month at 10 a.m., 3 p.m., and 6 p.m. The purpose of the sessions is for the community to become more aware of and support the initiatives undertaken by the Alternative House by observing and talking with the coordinators and the youths. Leedham said her development goals for the upcoming year are "to host more events like these to show results to donors and obtain more support so that they can do more projects" to support the kids. To further accomplish community engagement, Leedham wants to enlist "Ambas-

sadors," as short-term volunteers who will introduce more people in their respective communities to the Open Door Information Sessions.

Lynne Giordano, a volunteer, manages the "household" by keeping everything on schedule. Giordano's children are in college and she wanted to help other kids, remarking that "It is great to meet and interact with the kids!" Bartell, Leedham, and Giordano said volunteers are always needed and require background checks and training. To find out more about the Alternative House, visit their website www.TheAlternativeHouse.org. If you would like to contribute to their wish list of donations, which includes basic items such as food, paper products, detergent, diapers or gift cards, contact Christine Bartell, Resource Manager at 703-506-9191 ext 2009. Also, if you are a Federal employee, the Combined Federal Campaign number is 41814.



Jade Leedham, development manager.



PHOTOS BY RYAN DUNN/THE CONNECTION

There was a good selection of pottery and ceramics at the Colvin Run pottery show.

Potters Return to Colvin Run Mill

BY RYAN DUNN
THE CONNECTION

Local potters returned to Colvin Run Mill the first weekend of November for their holiday sale. Many of the potters are juried members of the Torpedo Factory Art Center's Scope Gallery located in Alexandria. "It is something we look forward to every year, it is so lovely to have so many creative people come down to display their work at the mill. It has been a good relationship," Mike Henry, manager of Colvin Run Mill, said.

As stated on their webpage, the Kiln Club of Washington is a professional organization for working ceramic artists, serious continuing students and supporters of the ceramic arts.

"We have 16 artists here, and they are all local," Reston resident Tracie G. Tso said.

Tso, the Chinese brush-painting teacher at Reston Community Center Lake Anne, is also a member of the Washington Ceramic Guild and the Kiln Club. Tso exhibits some of her brush painted pottery monthly at the Torpedo Factory Art Center's Scope Gallery. "We have a summer pottery show in Bethesda, so this is our fall show on the Virginia side."

This is the fourth year the handcrafted pottery show has been at the Colvin Run Mill barn. "This is my first year at this show, although I am familiar with the property," said potter Susan Schumpert. A studio potter for over 25 years, Schumpert sells from her stu-



Susan Schumpert decided at the age of 7 she wanted to become a potter. The annual holiday sale at the Colvin Run is an opportunity for vendors to speak and make contact with customers.

dio and Annapolis Pottery Guild events. "When I was 7-years-old I saw the work of Beatrice Wood and I decided I wanted to become a potter when I grew up," Schumpert said.

Colvin Run Mill is the sole surviving operational 19th century water-powered mill in the D.C. area. Colvin Run Mill Park is located at 10017 Colvin Run Rd. in Great Falls, at the intersection of Colvin Run Rd. and Leesburg Pike (Rt. 7). Membership in the Kiln Club is open to anyone interested in the ceramic arts. In order to show and sell at Scope Gallery, in Alexandria, one must be juried into the Club.

To learn more about the Kiln Club, visit their website at <http://www.kilnclubwdc.com>

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



The Freeman Store sells Rachael Peden collectable hand-painted wood ornaments that depict Vienna landmarks. The 2013 ornament is Vienna Santa, with spectacles, sunglasses or no glasses.



PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

The Freeman Store, built in 1859, recalls the flavor of bygone days. Reproduction vintage games and toys, Civil War and Vienna history books, Virginia preserves and Vienna-logo pottery highlight the stock at The Freeman Store, owned by the Town of Vienna and operated jointly by Historic Vienna, Inc. and the Town.

Holiday Shopping the ‘Small-town’ Way

Local businesses offer personalized service, distinctive and unique gifts.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

So, you ask, what makes shopping at Vienna’s small businesses a pleasant, rewarding experience. For starters, merchandise and services are likely to be unique and distinctive, and customer service is typically personal and enthusiastic. You can go to the mall and find the same brands, harried employees and temporary staffing at one store or another. Or ... you can shop locally where the merchants are your neighbors, your fellow club or church members, and community supporters. From one-of-a-kind hand-knit hats to wood birdhouses and bat condominiums, Vienna-logo gifts, and pumpkin pie liqueur, there’s something for everyone in Vienna’s hometown shops.

And if you’re looking for special promotions, note Saturday, Nov. 30 on your calendar. That’s Vienna Business Saturday, organized by Vienna’s Town/Business Liaison Committee and the Vienna Business Association. Participating businesses throughout the town will offer special deals or incentives.

But, that’s not the best part about shopping Vienna: the best part is the knowledgeable and friendly customer service you’ll get when you’re in the store. And that’s priceless.

❖ **Step into the Freeman Store** and you’ve stepped into a nostalgic Norman Rockwell painting. Beyond the reproductions of vintage kids’ toys, beyond the planked floors and potbelly stove, beyond the Civil War books and themes, there is a vast but warmly-created array of Vienna-logo and Virginia-made merchandise.

Shopkeeper Alla Fiore takes visitors around the shop, identifying objects. Ask her about the squirrel who lives outside the side door or the cardinal who makes his home out back.

The Vienna-logo pottery is made in Pennsylvania, not overseas, and has the look of



Birdwatchers, opened Nov. 14, sells nest-houses that are ornithologically-correct [size of cavity, location of hole are specific to bird, bat, owl or squirrel]. Many of the houses, such as the bluebird house, open on two sides for cleaning and observation of nest.



The Artful Gift Shop in Vienna sells hand-knit wool hats and scarves. Store manager David James, brother of owner Peggy James, designs and knits everything himself for the store. He also knits custom-ordered hats and scarves, as well.



At The Artful Gift Shop, sport-themed birdhouses handcrafted by Vienna resident Howard Lewis sell for \$68. You can buy off-the-shelf or custom-order a special team.

Williamsburg pottery. Every year, collectors come in to the Freeman Store to add to their Rachael Peden collection of hand-painted wood ornaments depicting a Vienna scene. This year’s ornament, at \$19.95, is a Vienna Santa Claus — in spectacles, sunglasses or perfect vision.

The holiday cards, are designed anew each year by a Vienna artist. Freeman House, in its snowy glory, is featured in 2014. The cards, designed by Vienna Arts Society artist-of-the-year Debi Elliott, are sold in packs of ten, either with message or blank, for \$8.50.

Fiore makes the decorated grapevine wreaths for sale in Freeman Store. The wreaths start at \$14.50.

The preserves come from Graves’ Mountain in Virginia and are priced at \$6 and up. Vienna tea towel are \$8 and up, and Historic Vienna, Inc. afghans – depicting iconic Vienna landmarks – sell for \$50.

The Freeman Store and Museum is owned by the Town of Vienna and operated jointly by the Town and Historic Vienna, Inc.

The Freeman Store is open Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. It will be open throughout the evening for Santa and for sales during the Church Street Holiday Stroll on Monday, Dec. 2.

Visit www.historicviennainc.org for store and museum information.

The Freeman Store and Museum, a circa 1850 white clapboard house, is at 131 Church Street NE, at corner of Church and Mill streets, across from the caboose parking lot.

❖ **“Birdwatchers”** and wildlife-watchers, take note.

For the bird, bat, owl, squirrel-watcher or wildlife -watcher on your gift list, head over to the newly-opened “Birdwatchers” at the corner of Beulah Road and Maple Avenue. The shop, owned by Vienna resident Cindy DiMeglio, reflects her love of birds and backyard wildlife. There are

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WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Honoring Wounded Warriors

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housing and transportation to keep families together during long-term treatment. We sponsor therapeutic massages for the caregivers and outings for the families. These activities give the caregivers a break from hospital life and a chance to build relationships with other caregivers."

One caregiver explained how the YRF supported her. Bridgit Neisen was 20 and from a small town in Missouri when her husband was injured. When she arrived in D.C., her instructions were to rent a car. "I was too young to rent a car," she said. "Here I was, not knowing a soul, feeling totally lost and lonely, scared to death at what I was going to find when I finally saw my husband — but Bob Talbot of the Yellow Ribbon Fund was at the hospital waiting for me as my mentor. He helped me speak with the medical personnel, find a place to live, and even got me taxi vouchers. The Yellow Ribbon Fund has been there for my husband and me — and this is where I will send my donations for the rest of my life."

Amy Oppelt, wife and caregiver of Sgt. Lucas Oppelt who lost both legs in an IED blast in Afghanistan also knows the value of the YRF network. "Often I felt overwhelmed and isolated. Then a fellow Wounded Warrior spouse dragged me to a Yellow Ribbon Find caregiver dinner one night. Suddenly I was not alone in my struggles. I found respite in the caregiver events, developed friendships that I truly value and felt a great sense of community." Oppelt is now serving as YRF caregiver program director.

"We try to honor every request," Robbins said. "We

are one of the 'go-to' organizations to bring families together — even if it's not a traditional family. If a serviceman or woman believes their best friend, girlfriend, boyfriend, cousin or fiancée will help them through the recovery process, we make every effort to get them here. And we continue to help them after they arrive with housing, transportation and whatever they need."

Henderson explained that, going forward, as there are fewer injured vets returning from war, the YRF's efforts will transition to the VA Ambassador program. They are currently recruiting volunteers around the U.S. to work with vets to help them no matter what their needs — finding a job, renovating a house, paying their bills. YRF stays in contact with the servicemen and women who have returned to their communities. One staff member makes phone calls to check on them (2,000 calls in two years). She was told by one vet that "This is the first call I've received since I was released."

Henderson added, "By working with civilian organizations, building networks and partnering, we can help those with lasting injuries better negotiate their world. We are also reaching out to the younger generation at local universities to become involved because they will all be aging together. One example is that American University communications students are interviewing wounded warriors and working on public service announcements for them."

The YRF needs donations and volunteers to continue the work they are doing. To donate or sign up to volunteer, visit www.yellowribbonfund.org.

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OPINION

Shop Locally, Shop in McLean

Small business Saturday isn't enough; don't wait until then, and don't stop after that.

An effort to support locally owned-businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving. This year that is Nov. 30. Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, is known as a dedicated day of national zeal for shopping. Presumably the next day shoppers can focus on local shopping.

It sounds like an obligation, and it is. But there is a joy to shopping in local stores at the holidays, to walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon.

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

The economy continues to improve slowly without inspiring. Local families will shop and exchange gifts during the next month, spending tens of millions of dollars in a variety of places.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally

EDITORIAL

owned stores. There is special holiday ambience available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that no chain can.

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

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

Everyone will do some of their shopping at the mall. Everyone will do some shopping online. Many will answer the call of the big box. But local shoppers should be sure to save some shopping time and dollars for local stores. Spend some time shopping in your own community, and also plan an excursion to a nearby town to check out the local businesses and holiday spirit there.

Some of the upcoming holiday events in the area include:

McLean's Winterfest

Bring out the family to McLean's Winterfest, the only community parade in McLean. Watch the colorful floats pass by while listening to holiday tunes. It all takes place on Sunday, Dec. 1 at 3:30 p.m., at Old Chain Bridge Road.

Vienna's Annual Church Street Holiday Stroll

Leisurely stroll along the streets amid the sights and sounds of the holidays. Admire beautiful houses adorned in colorful lights while walking with beloved family and friends at the Annual Holiday Stroll, on Monday, Dec. 2 from 6-9 p.m., at Church Street between Lawyers Road and Mill Street in Vienna.

Great Falls Celebration of Lights

Watch Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Christmas tree on Dec. 7, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Great Falls Village Centre Hill. There will also be a petting zoo and pony rides for children immediately after the tree lighting ceremony.

McLean's 31st Annual Holiday Crafts Show

Eighty artisans from across the country convene for this highly-regarded and much-anticipated juried show. This show features fiber arts, wood, ceramics and pottery, jewelry, glass, holiday decor, items for children, gourmet foods, paper art, photography, soft sculpture, paintings and drawings and more. It is the perfect place to purchase your holiday gifts. Mark your calendars for Dec. 6-8 at McLean Community Center.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Response to Sharon Bulova

Dear Chairman Bulova:

Perhaps I am mistaken, but your recent article ("Library Reorganization Deserves More Work," The Connection, Nov. 13-19, 2013) sounds to me like a repudiation of the hard-fought community efforts over the last several months to maintain strong library services. It also appears to be a pre-emptive strike against the Library Board of Trustees presentation to be made on Nov. 19.

I understand that these are hard times financially, but I also understand that in hard times people need their public libraries to resolve personal and financial issues by researching jobs, careers, education, with the help of experienced librarians in a non-intimidating, friendly, neighborhood environment. Therefore I do not think this is the time to take the Fairfax County Public Library down the road to destruction by continuing to refuse to provide it with the funds it needs to be of service to the community.

In your article, you mention other library systems have successfully saved money in hard times by reducing hours, cutting services, or even closing library branches. These approaches by other library systems have one thing in common: they are all temporary cutbacks which can be re-adjusted slowly over time as the financial situation gets better.

The Beta Plan however will effectively destroy the library by reducing to a point of no return the quantity and quality of staff and services the library is able to provide. The Beta Plan is not a temporary plan. The changes are designed to be permanent (re-designation and reclassification of personnel is not to be undertaken lightly; nor is a one-size fits all library system where branches no longer serve the needs of their individual communities.) There will be no easy, gradual return to the level of quality and service at FCPL that we all know today, let alone to bring FCPL to the level it was at before the series of extensive budget cuts the Library has been taking over the last five or six years. The Beta Plan will be a mortal

wound to the Fairfax County Library system and the Fairfax County citizens who need and deserve the best library they can get. It will take a lot more money to bring FCPL back from the Beta Plan.

I certainly hope that your Nov. 13 comments in The Connection do not reflect a closed mind and an intent to go forward with the Beta Plan no matter what the citizens of Fairfax County want and need, and no matter what the Library Board of Trustees present to you on Nov. 19. I hope that your charge to the Library Board to find out what the public wants was not an exercise in futility and that you will listen with an open mind and do the right thing.

Mary Alice Giarda
Springfield

Bad Plan for County Libraries

Chairman Bulova:

I find it very disturbing that after many hours of public meetings, hundreds of speakers, and thou-

sands of emails and petition signatures about the proposed "strategic redirection" of Fairfax libraries you can still believe that absolutely dreadful plan contains many ideas "of value" which "should continue to be explored." The problem was not that the plan was "too much for the organization to absorb;" the problem was that the plan was a bad plan which was condemned as such by staff and public alike. What is worth pursuing about lowering educational requirements and eliminating the expectation that there be any actual librarians in our libraries or in eliminating staff specializing in service to children?

This was not a plan to enhance or improve our libraries. It was a plan which would degrade our library services and devalue our library staff. Fairfax libraries do not suffer from a failure to reinvent themselves. They suffer from years of budget cuts and staff reductions. Fairfax libraries have fallen behind neighboring systems because we have been increasingly unwilling to fund them. The li-

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Vienna & Oakton CONNECTION

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Holiday Cooking with Children

Local culinary instructors offer suggestions for bonding in the kitchen.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Maria Kopsidas recalls childhood holidays filled with turkey, sweets and merriment. Because she grew up in a family of professional chefs, cookbook authors and culinary enthusiasts, the stretch from Thanksgiving to Christmas always brings fond food recollections.

“My grandmother was always tasked with seven to eight pies, my aunt made her famous stuffing and brownies [and] my uncle cooked the turkey. My mother was in charge of everything else, [including] and more importantly, playing referee between my two grandmothers, who competed over the invisible gravy of the year award,” said Kopsidas, who owns Cookology Recreational Culinary School, in Dulles Town Center.

Kopsidas and other culinary instructors say the holidays are an ideal time to spend time in the kitchen with children. When tasks match a child’s age and ability, the kitchen becomes fertile ground for making memories, learning and creating lasting bonds.

Stephen P. Sands, of Culinary Cooking School in Vienna, agrees. “Besides being educational — teaching them math through measuring ingredients, and the chemistry of food, such as why egg whites cause soufflés to rise, or why or how baking soda works — it bonds families together,” he said. “It provides all with a purpose, a fun way to work together, and the results are enjoyed by everyone. Some of life’s great lessons can be learned in the kitchen.”

Kopsidas believes that children between the ages of 3 and 9 would enjoy creating a dish designed especially for other children. “Sit down with your children to discuss what they think each child/guest would like to eat for Thanksgiving,” she said. “Discuss who is a picky eater, who would love vegetables, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, pie. Let them help make baked goods like pies, brownies and cupcakes.”

Sands said praise and encouragement can make meal preparation a joyful experience for children. “At an early age, provide positive reinforcement, a sense of accomplishment and pride in the work they produce,” he said. “However, remember there are those negatives: like egg shells in



PHOTO COURTESY OF COOKOLOGY

Holiday cooking with children promotes learning and self-confidence and creates fond memories.

the batter, salt being added to a dessert instead of sugar and my favorite, the spatula in the mixer while it’s running, [which] results in chocolate splatter on the walls, not to mention you, them and probably the dog. Regardless, it is a fun experience all will enjoy.”

Even children who may not en-

joy spending time in the kitchen can take part in process. “Have your kids set the kids’ table, making colorful place settings with each kid’s name and maybe a drawing of their likeness,” said Kopsidas. “This will make the guest children feel special when they arrive at a new home.”

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PHOTO COURTESY OF AMBER SCRUGGS OF LITTLE MOON PHOTOGRAPHY

Amber Scruggs of Little Moon Photography says photo subjects should wear clothing that coordinates without matching. Find a pattern for one family member and then pull colors from that for the rest of the family's outfits.

Tips for Holiday Card Photos

Local photographers offer suggestions for taking great family photos.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Amber Wilson has spent the last week scouring her computer files in search of the perfect pictures for her holiday card. One image missing from her collection is a shot of her entire family.

"I'm planning to use one photo of each of my three children and one picture of all of us together," said Wilson, who lives in Lorton. "I am hiring a professional photographer for the family photo because, selfishly, I really want it to be fantastic."

With the holiday season just around the corner, many families are pondering designs for their festive cards. The simplicity of a holiday greeting adorned with an image of Santa and Rudolph has been replaced by designer cards peppered with photos of smiling, well-dressed children. Parents like Wilson compete to have the best holiday card photo among their circle of friends and will shell out hundreds — even thousands — of dollars for professional photographs. Whether you're hiring a professional or taking your own family photos, however, a few local photographers offer tips for getting a picture-perfect portrait.

Amber Scruggs, of Little Moon Photography in Vienna, photographs families in the Washington-metro region. She said that light, connection and colors are important in good photos. "You can have an amazing location and connection, but if you don't utilize the light, the photo can be ruined."

Harsh lighting on the faces or bodies ruins images. "This can be avoided by not shooting in the middle of the day," said Scruggs. "The best lighting is in either the early morning around 8 a.m. or late afternoon starting at 3:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. with Daylight Savings Time," she said. "Putting the low sun behind the subjects makes for magical 'rim'

lighting behind the subjects."

Michael Kress, of Michael Kress Photography in Bethesda, Md., offers a caveat for photographs that will include young children: "Make sure you pick the time of day that is best for them so they aren't cranky and crying in the shot," said Kress.

Photographer Katherine Cogan, based in Potomac, Md., suggests taking photographs outside whenever possible. "Natural lighting is great so you don't have to worry about artificial light," she said. "The sun should be behind the photographer and shining on the subject."

Kress, said creating a successful photo means each person in the picture should look his or her best. "Everyone needs to look good in the photo," he said. "Posing should be natural, not contrived. The picture says we're happy to be together even if it isn't always felt."

When it comes to choosing clothing for a family or group photo, Scruggs said photo subjects should wear clothing that coordinates without matching. "Find a cute pattern you love for one family member and then pull colors from that for the rest of the family's outfits."

Kress adds, "If you're doing groups, avoid mixed patterns of clothing. Nothing is worse than looking at a picture with all different patterns."

Ensure the photo subjects are not distorted. "Cards are usually small, so fill space wisely with tighter cropped images, not a picture of a scene with little people saying 'we were here,'" said Kress.

For those who decide to use a professional photographer, Kress said, "Be upfront and ask about prints and their cost. If you know you want to order specific sizes, ask the photographer to possibly include them in a package."

When choosing a location for your photo shoot, Cogan said to make sure the clothing colors don't clash with the colors of the background. "If you're outside behind a tree that is green consider wearing shades of red," she said. "Reds and greens work well together as do blues and purples."

No matter what location you use, Kress said, "Don't do the picture the same way and same place every year."

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE



Vienna-Logo pottery is made in Pennsylvania and the pieces start at \$19.95. Graves' Mountain preserves and chutneys are produced in Wakefield, Va.



Vienna-Logo sweatshirts, American-made, come in adult and kids' sizes. "Somebody in Vienna, VA, loves me" for kids sells for \$13.99 at Vienna Rexall Drug Center.

PHOTOS BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION



The Vienna Rexall Drug Center, owned by the Borgatti family since the 1960s, has some pretty distinctive gifts in the store, including the Vienna's most-varied selection of Virginia Diner peanuts and nut snacks. The Old Bay seasoned peanuts, a savory sensation priced at \$12 for 18 ounces brings a bit of the Chesapeake Bay to out-of-town gift recipients.

FROM PAGE 4

birdfeeders, cylindrical and house-y, birdhouses made in Maine of real wood, ornithologically-correct. Bluebirds, for example, have housing preferences different from woodpeckers. Most have one or two sides that open, protected with Plexiglas, to allow for cleaning or for observation of nest.

The shop sells birdseed in packages from small to huge, as well as baffles to keep squirrels out of the birdfeeders, birdbaths to provide water during the cold months. The deck-mounted heated birdbath [Kozy Bird Spa, \$116] prevents water from freezing. Birds need water as much as they need food, DiMeglio says. "Birdwatchers" birdbaths range in price from \$35 to \$150.

DiMeglio grew up watching birds; her shop reflects her passion. Her knowledge is so vast that speaking with her can turn a football fanatic into a bird watcher. Pick up a birdhouse or birdfeeder for anyone with an interest in nature. The bat condos [\$52] are architectural curiosities, sure to delight anyone who sleeps upside down.

"Birdwatchers" is at 396 Maple Avenue East; its phone number is 703-242-4565 and web address is www.birdwatchersvienna.com. Husband Jeff and son Nick are on-hand on weekends to guide customers around the store. Currently, the shop's hours are 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

♦ **The Artful Gift Shop** is, well, "artful," and is full of unique and distinctive local artisan crafts, from handcrafted animal-face clocks to playful handcrafted birdhouses, jewelry, and hats and scarves hand-knit by shop manager David James. James' sister Peggy owns and operates The Artful Gift Shop with an ear and an eye to bringing high-quality local crafts to Vienna. She's also one of the town's most dedicated community supporters, donating her time to Vienna events and associations.

What's so nice about "The Artful Gift Shop" — besides Peggy and David — is that the shop offers collections that appeal to diverse interests. Know someone who loves pets? Consider the animal-face clocks, handmade. Is there someone on your gift list that loves

one-of-a-kind jewelry? The James' offer lots of that.

There's no other shop in Vienna that sells hand-knit wool hats and scarves. While David works in the shop, he knits there. There's always an ample stock on-hand. The hats are so well-crafted, even an Irishman in Ireland asked where one such hat was made. How's that for an endorsement? David will custom-knit a hat or scarf for a customer; just tell him what you'd like. His hats and scarves sell for \$18 to \$24.

Is there a sports fan in your family? "The Artful Gift Shop" sells sport-themed birdhouses handcrafted by Vienna resident Howard Lewis. The houses sell for \$68. Like David's hats and scarves, you can buy a birdhouse off the shelf or ask the shop to have Lewis custom-make one for you.

♦ **Vienna's Maple Avenue ABC** has a staff and manager that take the time to describe and explain the liquor's store inventory. Have questions about seasonal products or what makes a single-malt different from a blend or how does the cask influence the taste? Ask an informed employee there; they know their selection and how the liquors are made. The store is like a Toys R' Us for adults. Spend \$50, before taxes, and get 10 percent off on Black Friday, Nov. 29. The store opens early that day, at 8 a.m.

Seasonal highlights include (real) Maple Crème liqueur, Gingerbread Beer Bourbon, Pumpkin Pie and Apple Harvest liqueurs, and gift packs of top-shelf scotches, bourbons, gins, and liqueurs. Special reserve scotches come out in the fall.

Nineteen-year-old Glenfiddich single-malt scotch, "Age of Discovery," spent its aging life in American oak casks that were originally used for bourbon. The scotch has a distinct bourbon edge to it. It sells for \$179.95 so it really is for the scotch aficionado. Speaking of scotch aficionados ... the Vienna ABC features Johnny Walker Blue label bottle engravings on a multiple of dates in December. At \$229.95 for a 750-ML bottle, your recipient deserves to see his name inscribed.

Not every specialty spirit is priced in the stratosphere. Sazerac straight rye whiskey sells for \$29.95. The Sazerac rye is released in October of every year and fall is the only time it comes to market. John J. Bowman single-barrel Virginia straight bour-

bon, produced in small batches in Fredericksburg, is priced at \$49.95. Abraham Bowman produces a seasonal gingerbread beer bourbon.

The seasonal liqueurs, Kahlua peppermint mocha, Cabot Trail Maple Cream, Fulton's Harvest and Pinnacle pumpkin pie, and Pinnacle Peppermint Bark, sell in the \$10 to \$23 price range, all for 750 ML.

If you waited until now to order 20-year-old Pappy Van Winkle bourbon, you waited too long. The three-year waiting list is closed; not bad for a \$133.75 bourbon. Family Reserve Van Winkle, aged 12 years and selling for \$54.90, has only a one-year waiting list and there's still time to get in on that one. Both Pappy and Family Reserve have December Virginia release dates.

The Vienna ABC opens at 8 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 29. When the season products are gone, they're gone until next year.

The Vienna ABC store is located at 436 Maple Avenue East. Call 703-938-2476 for holiday hours.

♦ **The Vienna Rexall Drug Center**, owned by the Borgatti family since the 1960s, has some pretty distinctive gifts in the store, including Vienna's most-varied selection of Virginia Diner peanuts and nut snacks. The Old Bay seasoned peanuts, a savory sensation priced at \$12 for 18 ounces, brings a bit of the Chesapeake Bay to out-of-town gift recipients.

Old-fashioned "buttery" peanut brittle sells for \$13.50 for 16 ounces. Of course, you can buy the traditional Virginia Diner salted and unsalted peanuts, as well.

When you've had your fill of nuts, you can look over the selection of Vienna-Logo sweatshirts and T-shirts. U.S.A.-made sweatshirts sell for \$19.99 in adult sizes. Cute "Somebody in Vienna, VA, loves me" sweatshirts for kids are priced at \$13.99. What kid would not be delighted to be loved by "somebody in Vienna."

The Vienna Drug Center also offers a selection of walkers and fancy canes, as well as senior aids ... because you never know what is on someone's wish-list.

The Vienna Rexall Drug Center is at 150 Maple Avenue West.

The Campagna Center

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HOLIDAY CALENDAR

THURSDAY/NOV. 21

Christmas Craft Show. 10 a.m.-7 p.m., at Oakton Church of the Brethren, 10025 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Variety of hand-made items and craft supplies for purchase, plus a soup and sandwich lunch and bake sale. More info: www.oaktonbrethren.org or 703-281-4411.

FRIDAY, NOV. 22

Christmas Craft Show. 10 a.m.-7 p.m., at Oakton Church of the Brethren, 10025 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Variety of hand-made items and craft supplies for purchase, plus a soup and sandwich lunch and bake sale. More info: www.oaktonbrethren.org or call 703-281-4411.

SATURDAY/NOV. 23

Holiday Party at Lofty Boutique. 3-7 p.m. 354 W. Maple Avenue, Vienna. Makeup and hair demonstrations, a trunk show, pampering treatments and more.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 22-24

Area-wide Art Exhibition. 7-9 p.m. and 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sunday noon-4 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. Vienna's largest exhibition of the year features hundreds of original artworks by artists from around the region, to include Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. Enjoy music and light refreshments while meeting the artists at two receptions. 703-319-3971 or www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 23

Holiday Bazaar. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Paintings, photography, fused glass sculptures, jewelry, bird houses and more. More info contact: melarkins@verizon.net

Christmas Craft Show. 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at Oakton Church of the Brethren, 10025 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Variety of hand-made items and craft supplies for purchase, plus a soup and sandwich lunch and bake sale. More info: www.oaktonbrethren.org

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

2013 Vienna Turkey Trot. 8 a.m. Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center Street S., Vienna. Admission: \$15-\$35. <http://www.viennaturkeytrot.com/>

Stuff the Sleigh 5K Run / 1 Mile Run/Walk. 9 a.m.-11 a.m. At the entrance to 7925 Jones Branch Drive

in Tysons.
Holiday Bazaar. 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Paintings, photography, fused glass sculptures, jewelry, bird houses and more. More info contact: melarkins@verizon.net

THURSDAY/NOV. 28

Thanksgiving Day Worship Service. 10 a.m. St. John's Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean.

Thanksgiving Day Brunch. 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Take part in traditional Thanksgiving fixings and festive selections of brunch favorites. \$120 per adult; \$40 per child, ages 4-12. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

Four-Course Thanksgiving Dinner. Bazin's on Church, 111 Church Street, NW, Vienna. Admission: \$39/person. Kids 10 and under \$15.95. <http://www.bazinsonchurch.com/>

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

Annual Gingerbread House Opening. 2 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Visit the life-sized gingerbread house. It is large enough for guests to walk around inside and explore the sugary construction. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

McLean's WinterFest. 3:30 p.m., starting from Old Chain Bridge Road. McLean's only community parade. www.mcleanwinterfest.org

MONDAY/DEC. 2

Annual Church Street Holiday Stroll. 6-9 p.m. Church Street between Lawyers Road and Mill Street, Vienna. Visitors are invited to stroll along the streets amid the sights and sounds of the holiday season. 703-938-5187.

Breakfast with Santa. 9-10 a.m. Wildfire, Tysons Galleria, 3rd floor. Get into the holiday spirit early with a holiday breakfast buffet. Cost: 10.95 per child and \$13.95 per adult. 703-442-9110.

THURSDAY/DEC. 5

John Medeski in Concert, Solo Piano. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Jazz pianist showcases original songs and improvised compositions from his debut solo album. Tickets: \$25. <http://www.wolftrap.org>.

FRIDAY/DEC. 6

31st Annual McLean Holiday



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

You hear the blaring sirens before the antique fire engine comes into view. Santa Claus arrives in-style to Vienna during the 2012 Church Street Holiday Stroll.

Crafts Show. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. at MCC, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Eighty artisans from across the country convene for this highly-regarded and much-anticipated juried show. This show features fiber arts, wood, ceramics and pottery, jewelry, glass, holiday decor, items for children, gourmet foods, paper art, photography, soft sculpture, paintings and drawings and more. Tickets: Adults \$3; ages 13 and under \$1.

Bill Frisell's Big Sur Quintet. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Eyvind Kang, Hank Roberts, Rudy Royston, and Jenny Scheinman Dynamic mixture of nature-inspired orchestral jams and jazz riffs composed by guitarist Bill Frisell. Tickets: \$35. www.wolftrap.org.

Christmas with FCS: Trumpets Sound! Voices Ring! 8 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park Street, NE, Vienna. Welcome in the holiday season with the Fairfax Choral Society and the Washington Symphonic Brass. Purchase tickets at www.fairfaxchoralsociety.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Celebration of Lights. 5:30-8 p.m., at Great Falls Village Centre Hill. Watch Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Tree. Afterwards, Santa will meet all children who wish to share their holiday wishes. <http://www.celebrategreatfalls.org>

31st Annual McLean Holiday Crafts Show. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at MCC, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Eighty artisans from across the

country convene for this highly-regarded and much-anticipated juried show. This show features fiber arts, wood, ceramics and pottery, jewelry, glass, holiday decor, items for children, gourmet foods, paper art, photography, soft sculpture, paintings and drawings and more. Tickets: Adults \$3; ages 13 and under \$1.

Wolf Trap Holiday Sing-A-Long. 4 p.m. Wolf Trap National Park, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. "The President's Own" United States Marine Band Members of local choirs and vocal groups Kick off the holiday season with family and friends at Wolf Trap's 2013 Holiday Sing-A-Long.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7, 14, 21

Gingerbread House Decorating Class. 10 a.m. or 1 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Learn to make your own gingerbread house. \$70 per child, ages 2-12. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7, 14, 21

The Nutcracker Tea. 10 a.m. or 1 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Watch the ballet production of "The Nutcracker" while enjoying afternoon tea and treats. \$75 per person. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

SUNDAY/DEC. 8

31st Annual McLean Holiday Crafts Show. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at

MCC, 1234 Ingleside Ave. McLean. Eighty artisans from across the country convene for this highly-regarded and much-anticipated juried show. This show features fiber arts, wood, ceramics and pottery, jewelry, glass, holiday decor, items for children, gourmet foods, paper art, photography, soft sculpture, paintings and drawings and more. Tickets: Adults \$3; ages 13 and under \$1.

SUNDAY/DEC. 8, 15, 22

Gingerbread House Decorating Class. 10 a.m. or 1 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Learn to make your own gingerbread house. \$70 per child, ages 2-12. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

SUNDAY/DEC. 8, 15, 22

The Princess Tea. 11 a.m. or 2 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Watch a theatrical production feature Disney princesses while enjoying afternoon tea and treats. \$75 per person. Children under 2 are free. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

SATURDAY/DEC. 14-SUNDAY/DEC. 15

Great Falls Studios Holiday Show and Sale. Wolf Trap Center for Education, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. This annual show includes paintings, pottery, traditional and digital photographs, jewelry, drawings, art quilts, and hand pulled lithographic prints, plus artful gifts and cards.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 25

Christmas Day Brunch at Entyse Bistro. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Celebrate the holiday with brunch. Enjoy live musical entertainment and special activities, including face painting and a balloon artist for the children. \$120 per adult; \$40 for children under 12. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

TUESDAY/DEC. 31

New Year's Eve at Entyse Bistro. 5:30-10:30 p.m. at the Ritz Carlton, 1700 Tysons Blvd., McLean. Ring in the New Year with a four-course tasting menu, champagne toast and live music. \$135 per person. Reservations required. 703-917-5498.

New Year's Eve Party. 7:30 p.m. Vienna's American Legion Post 180, 330 Center Street, North, Vienna. hris Polk Band: \$35 single, \$50 per couple, benefits Legion National Emergency Fund. Call 703-938-9535 for tickets.

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Be a Part of CHILDREN'S CONNECTION

During the last week of each year, the Vienna/Oakton Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students. The results are always remarkable, and the editions have won many awards. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

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

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through e-mail or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be provided in .jpg format. Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location. Please provide the submissions by Friday, Dec. 6 for publication the week of Dec. 26.

E-mail submissions to: ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com

To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail the CD to Children's Connection, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

ENTERTAINMENT

Send announcements to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2013/sep/26/fairfax-county-calendar/>.

FRIDAY, NOV. 22

Remembrance and Recombination to the Principles of JFK Presidency/Requiem Event. 8 p.m. St. Mark Catholic Church, 9970 Vale Road, Vienna.

Mozart Requiem. 8 p.m., at St. Mark Catholic Church, 9970 Vale Road, Vienna. A performance of the Requiem in D Minor (K. 626), in remembrance of John F. Kennedy, on the 50th anniversary of his death. Free. 703-771-8390.

Kekuhi & Kaumakaiwa Kanaka'ole. 8 p.m., at The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Hawaiian chanters of the 20th century, this family duo present native songs in a multigenerational performance. Tickets: \$25-\$30. Call 1.877.WOLFTRAP or wolftrap.org.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 22-24

Area-wide Art Exhibition. 7-9 p.m. and 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Friday and Saturday, Sunday noon-4 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St., Vienna. Vienna's largest exhibition of the year features hundreds of original artworks by artists from around the region, to include Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. Enjoy music and light refreshments while meeting the artists at two receptions. 703-319-3971 or www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 23

Jonathan Edwards. 7:30 p.m., at The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. This singer/songwriter has been performing feel-good honky-tonk and heartfelt bluegrass for more than 40 years. Tickets: \$25. Call 1.877.WOLFTRAP or wolftrap.org.

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

Stuff the Sleigh 5K Run / 1 Mile Run/Walk. 9 a.m.-11 a.m. At the entrance to 7925 Jones Branch Drive in Tysons.

MONDAY/NOV. 25

Saving Money and the Environment. 1 p.m. Emmanuel Lutheran Church-Upstairs, 2589 Chain Bridge Road, Vienna. Susan Stillman's power-point presentation, Vampire Energy, outlines how energy is generated in Virginia compared to other states, and suggests ways to reduce home energy consumption. Non-members wishing to attend should contact Cherie Lejeune at latripp24@gmail.com or 203-400-3668.

THURSDAY/NOV. 28

Thanksgiving with Wildfire. 10:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Wildfire at Tysons Galleria, 3rd floor. A special family style menu featuring spit roasted turkey and all the traditional Thanksgiving dishes. Cost is \$42.95/person and \$16.95 for children 12 and under. For reservations call (703) 442-9110 or visit wildfirerestaurant.com/mclean.

Thanksgiving Day Worship Service. 10 a.m. St. John's Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean.

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

"Annie!" the Musical. 7 p.m. McLean High School Theater, 1633 Davidson Road, McLean. The popular comic strip heroine takes center stage in the perfect family-friendly musical. Adults \$15 and Students/Seniors \$10. Reserve seats at www.mcleandrama.com

Treasury of Art Show and Sale

Vienna Arts Society exhibition runs from Nov. 22 through Nov. 24 at the Vienna Community Center.

BY DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

You can see art treasures in museums and art shows around the world, but, to see a treasury of art, one must visit Vienna the weekend of Nov.22.

From Friday, Nov. 22 through Sunday, Nov. 24, the Vienna Arts Society's 44th Annual Treasury of Art Juried Show and Sale holds court at the Vienna Community Center on Cherry Street. Nearly 200 original pieces of art created by artists from Virginia, Maryland and D.C. will be for sale. Vienna artist and Vienna Arts Society [VAS] artist-of-the-year Debi Elliott donated "Not Yet Beaten," a framed piece, to be raffled off to benefit cancer treatment or research.

VAS public relations representative Dore Skidmore emphasized that the public is invited to meet the artists and the juror, Jack Rasmussen, at Friday and Saturday evening receptions. On Nov. 22, from 7 to 9 p.m., an awards reception with light refreshments and music by the Serenada String Quartet, provides the background as Rasmussen, curator and director of American University's Katzen Arts Center, announces place winners.

The following evening, Saturday, Nov. 23, is a bluegrass reception running from 7 to 9 p.m., showcasing the Higher Ground String Band. Artists will be on-hand.

"Not Yet Beaten" honors VAS friends and family members fighting cancer. The painting, created about a year ago, is valued at \$750. The raffle winner will select a charity supporting cancer research or treatment and the Vienna Arts Society will donate the raffle proceeds to that charity. Tickets are priced at \$5 each or five tickets for \$20. The winning ticket will be drawn at the close of the show, and the winner need not be present to win.

"We wanted to honor cancer survivors, as well as those battling cancer," said Skidmore. "We all know somebody who



DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

Vienna Arts Society artist-of-the-year and Vienna resident Debi Elliott donated her piece, "Not Yet Beaten," to be raffled off on behalf of cancer research during the Vienna Arts Society 44th Annual Treasury of Art Juried Show and Sale.

had or is battling the disease.

"The painting is a perfect symbol in two ways," Skidmore said. "For those fighting cancer now and for those who have beaten it."

Elliott conceptualizes the project from idea to canvas before starting to paint. Often, the interpretation is an amalgam of moments and matter. The goose eggs centered in "Not Yet Beaten" were bought at a farmers' market and the bowl, at Tuesday Morning. Elliott said she laid down the canvas and set up objects, moving them and the table they sat on. She arranged her still lifes with different lighting.

Doing "something" to fight cancer inspired Elliott to donate "Not Yet Beaten" as a Treasury of Art fundraiser. When her peers voted her artist-of-the-year, the painting was the first thing she thought of.

"I always associate this painting with those courageous women," said Elliott. "Somehow, this painting is connected to them."

Elliott said she does not want to be one of those artists who die and leave a house of paintings. She wants to get them out to the public.

"I want to share what makes art fun," said Elliott.

To learn more about the Vienna Arts Society, its programs and exhibitions, go to www.ViennaArtsSociety.org.



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Here's What's Happening at MCC



31st Annual

McLean Holiday Crafts Show

December 6-8

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Saturday, Dec. 14, 2 p.m.

\$15/\$10 MCC district residents
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Winter Break Trips

Thursday, Dec. 26

Ripley's Believe it or Not,
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Friday, Dec. 27

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Monday, Dec. 30

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SPORTS

Oakton's Stoney, Girls' Team Win State XC Titles

Three Oakton girls' harriers earn all-state honors.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Oakton harrier John Stoney felt nervous with 800 meters remaining in Friday's 6A boys' state championship race, fearing he would be caught from behind.

With 600 meters remaining, the senior's legs went numb.

When Stoney crossed the finish line, however, all mental and physical anguish gave way to the euphoria of accomplishing his goal.

He was a state champion.

Stoney won the boys' VHSL Group 6A individual state cross country championship, finishing with a time of 15 minutes, 25 seconds on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow. Stoney is Oakton's first boys' individual state cross country champion since 1978 (James Hill).

"It's like a dream," Stoney said after the race. "It was my goal from the start of June [and] summer training. To actually do it is incredible."

Stoney said he ran with Lake Braddock's Alex Corbett for much of the race and started to pull away with 800 meters remaining. Victory, however, was hardly a sure thing.

"I was really nervous," Stoney said, "because I was scared I was going to get passed at the very end."

Stoney would hold on to win. Corbett placed second with a time of 15:35. Chantilly's Ryan McGorty finished third (15:45), followed by Osbourn Park's Nick Causey (15:49) and Chantilly's Dakota Lange (15:51).

Madison's Matthew Calem placed seventh with a time of 15:54.

"It's good to see all of [Stoney's] hard work pay off," Oakton head coach Alisa

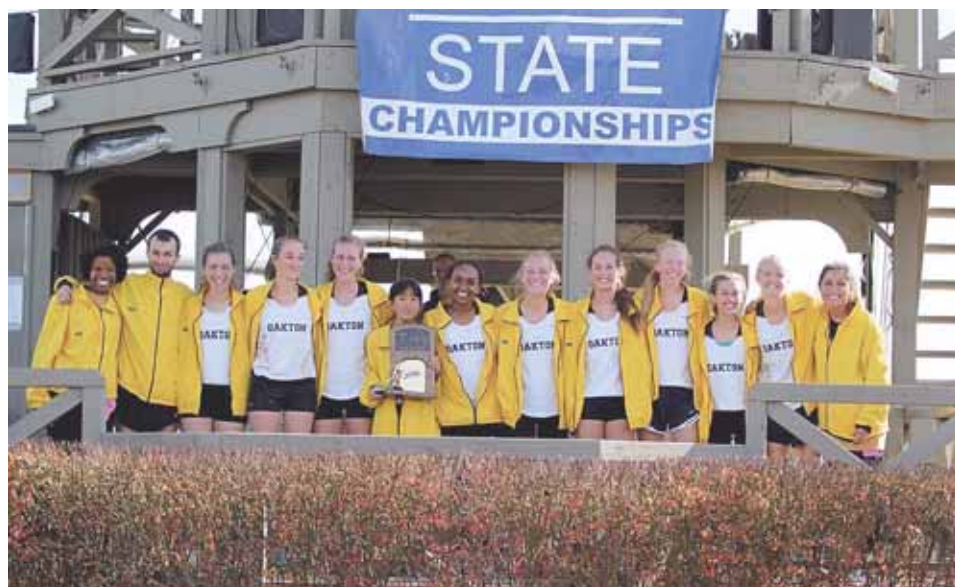


Oakton senior John Stoney won the 6A boys' individual state cross country championship on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow.



Oakton junior Allie Klimkiewicz placed fourth in the state on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow.

PHOTOS BY ED LULL



The Oakton girls' cross country team won the 6A state championship on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow.

Byers said. "He's another person that when we were doing individual and team goals he said he wanted to be a state champ ... and he put the work in over the summer and he's come off stronger than he's ever been."

The Oakton boys' team finished sixth with a total score of 133. Chantilly repeated as state champion with a score of 85, followed by Lake Braddock (87), Robinson (89), Battlefield (89) and Osbourn Park (98).

Stoney wasn't the only Oakton harrier recognized on the podium.

The Oakton girls' team had three individuals receive all-state honors by finishing in the top 15, helping the Cougars capture the team championship. Junior Allie Klimkiewicz (fourth, 18:01), senior Hailey Dougherty (eighth, 18:21) and freshman Casey Kendall (14th, 18:29) were recognized individually. Freshman Leya Salis (24th, 18:56) and junior Kara Kendall (26th, 18:59) also contributed to the team title as Oakton finished with a meet-best score of 55. Washington-Lee finished runner-up with a score of 100, followed by Lake Braddock (112), Ocean Lakes (115), West Springfield (144) and Battlefield (150).

"I saw three girls [earned] all-state, so that's a really good sign," Byers said. "I saw their last ... 300 meters and they looked as strong as I've ever seen them. I'm very proud of what they've done."

West Springfield's Caroline Alcorta won the individual title with a meet-record time of 17:13. Lake Braddock's Hannah Christen (17:52) and Katy Kunc (17:59) finished second and third, respectively.

Madison's Amanda Swaak earned all-state honors with a 12th-place finish (18:28).

Klimkiewicz said she took a different approach than she did during her sophomore year and it paid off.

"[I was] definitely a lot less nervous," said Klimkiewicz, who finished ninth at states last year. "And last year I went out really fast, which was not a very smart game plan, but, hey, it's the state meet so you've got to make big moves. This year I went out more conservatively."

Vienna 3A Braves Win Fall Ball Classic Championship

The Vienna 3A Braves captured the Vienna Little League Fall Ball Classic Championship on Oct. 29. The offense was led by Kyle Robinson, Noah Toole, Michael Bogdon, and Andrew Nee, who combined for seven RBI in the Championship. On the mound, Robinson, Bryce Eldridge, and Hunter Moss combined to strike out fifteen over six innings of play. Throughout the tournament, the Braves were led by timely hitting from Alex Buerkle, Ethan Rowles, and Tyler Schoeberlein, and by strong defense from George Choi, Ben Zim, and Danny Halatai. The Braves were managed by Ben Eldridge, and coached by Matt Moss, Greg Rowles, and Adam Schoeberlein.



Pictured from left-front row: Andrew Nee, Ben Zim, Michael Bogdon, Hunter Moss, Noah Toole, Ethan Rowles. Second row: Bryce Eldridge, Tyler Schoeberlein, Kyle Robinson, Danny Halatai, Alex Buerkle, George Choi. Back Row: Coach Greg Rowles, Manager Ben Eldridge, Coach Adam Schoeberlein, Coach Matt Moss.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to mclean@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication.

THURSDAY/NOV. 21

History of Air Force Fixed Wing Gunships. 7:30 p.m., at Neighbor's Restaurant, 262D Cedar Lane, Cedar Lane Shopping Center, Vienna. Chapter 227, Vietnam Veterans of America Inc., hosts John Bessette, a Vietnam War Air Force veteran, for a discussion of the history of the AC-47, "Puff the Magic Dragon," gunship development to defend outlying Vietnamese villages and military posts and to support American combat ground operations. 703-255-0353 or www.vva227.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

American Legion Scholarships. Due Nov. 30, at Post 180, 330 Center St. N., Vienna. The Post 180 in Vienna is offering three scholarships (\$1000, \$500 and \$250) for currently enrolled full-time college students who are sophomores, juniors, seniors or graduate students. Recipients will be randomly chosen from eligible applicants who apply no later than Nov. 30. 703-938-8535 or www.legion180.net/Scholarship_App1_2013.pdf.

ONGOING

Volunteers Needed. The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in assisted living and nursing facilities throughout the area. Volunteers can work in facilities close to where they live. Training is provided. Call 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Find more information on becoming a long-term care ombudsman volunteer at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/lcombudsman/vol_ombud_program.htm.

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

brary budget has been gutted by 25 percent over the last few years and the materials budget slashed by 2/3. No misguided search for further "efficiencies" will rectify that situation. Only a restoration of appropriate funding will solve the ills which afflict our libraries.

Please listen to the clear message from library users and library staff. We want no part of the despised "Beta plan." It needs to be tossed in the dumpster just as hundreds of thousands of taxpayer purchased books were over the last year. Our libraries need a restoration of funding, a restoration of staff morale, a restoration of public trust in library leadership, and a restoration of hope that Fairfax County is indeed committed to supporting the sort of first class library system a County of our wealth and population deserves.

Charles Keener
Vienna

Merrifield GARDEN CENTER
Get Ready for the Holidays!
See our theme trees and displays for great gift and decorating ideas

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Thurs., Nov. 21, 6-9 pm
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Enjoy a fun filled night of holiday cheer, shopping, appetizers, wine tasting, door prizes & more!

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Baha'i Faith for Northern Virginia ... 703-821-3345
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Global Mission Church ... 703-757-0877
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Oakton Church of the Brethern ... 703-281-4411
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Our Lady of Good Counsel ... 703-938-2828
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St. Mark's Catholic Church ... 703-281-9100
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New Song Church ... 703-698-9777
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Berea Church of Christ ... 703-893-7040</p> | <p>Disciples of Christ
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Church of the Holy Comforter ... 703-938-6521
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Jehovah's Witnesses ... 703-759-1579
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Emmanuel Lutheran Church ... 703-938-2119
Christ The King Lutheran Church ... 703-759-6068
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Great Falls United Methodist ... 703-759-3705
Oakton United Methodist ... 703-938-1233
Vale United Methodist ... 703-620-2594</p> | <p>Smith Chapel United Methodist ... 571-434-9680
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Northern Virginia Christian Fellowship ... 703-242-9001
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21 Announcements

ABC LICENSE
Tipana, LLC trading as Thaiger Asian Bistro, 3035 Clarendon Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer on Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Thitiporn Sankom, President
NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

Fairfax Water
NOTICE OF WATER RATE PUBLIC HEARING

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 12, 2013, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2014, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$3,850 to \$3,950†.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$9,500 to \$9,750.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,050 to \$1,090†.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from \$35 to \$36.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$9.20 to \$9.80†.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.29 to \$2.42 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.45 to \$3.55 per 1,000 gallons of water.
8. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
9. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$44 to \$45.
10. An increase in the Returned Payment Charge from \$17 to \$20.

A copy of the proposed changes can be viewed on our Web site at <http://www.fairfaxwater.org/rates/index.htm>. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Eva Catlin at 703-289-6017. Interested parties also may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

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

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 11, 2013 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

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

21 Announcements

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21 Announcements

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Cost of Living



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As the person primarily responsible for stocking the house with supplies and maintaining miscellaneous inventory, I am frequently in stores (supermarket, drugstore, pet store, etc.) buying the staples (not an office supply reference) our family needs to maintain our lifestyle, such as it is. And if I do say so myself, and I do, I do an excellent job balancing needs, wants and available cash flow to fulfill those various requirements. I don't know if I should win an award, but I should definitely be nominated for the tasks I regularly undertake and the success I have completing them. Moreover, considering the underlying fact that I have a terminal disease: stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer (the incurable kind), and a cash flow which is hardly guaranteed or predictable, I certainly deserve an "A" for effort.

As much as I don't/didn't want to factor my original prognosis: "13 months to two years" into my daily life, especially when allocating resources/spending money, not considering that prognosis/time line has been nearly impossible. The logic goes something like this: why spend money today on an item I might not need in six months (if you know what I mean)? Why deprive/neglect myself today (a definite) in order to prepare/plan for tomorrow (a maybe), a tomorrow that, ever since my February, 2009 diagnosis is no longer guaranteed, or at least no longer anticipated as it was prior to that date – on paper, anyway; given the fact that both of my parents lived into their mid-eighties (I was diagnosed at 54 and half)?

Nevertheless, as my life has gone on, somewhat unexpectedly, considering what my oncologist said to Team Lourie back in early 2009, my attitude about the future has evolved. Whereas once I had one (pre-diagnosis), then didn't (post diagnosis); now I sort of am having one, subject to change of course and therein lies the rub (although, it's a heck of a lot more than a "rub," it's more like a systemic irritation); trying to live/consume normally in the face/context of a terminal cancer diagnosis. It has been and continues to be the bane of my rather fortunate existence. I don't want to pretend or presume that life goes on as I have said it has – for me, but acting as if it doesn't is hardly the negative attitude I want to embrace. And for the most part, I haven't.

This emotional maturity manifested itself recently at the supermarket. I bought multiple items that I didn't need now (charcoal lighter fluid, two cans of shaving gel; in general, non-perishables), but presumably would need later (months later), but given their sale price, their net cost to me was too appealing to resist, so I bought them – without thinking too much about my life expectancy time line. In fact, the time line thing didn't hit me until later when I realized that I had made purchases whose ultimate benefit to me (other than the price discount now), when I would actually use/need the items, was not now, but later, much later. A "later" that I'm not 100-percent sure I have, given my semi-precarious cancer-centric existence. The future was once again part of my instinctive planning. And that realization made me feel unburdened somehow.

Mind over matter, I'm sure, since I've received no result (lab work, CT Scan, etc. – and certainly no assurance from my oncologist) to indicate that my medical status has changed somehow. Still, it was a good feeling to have and one that gave me hope that my future is indeed more than just an abbreviated version of my past.

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

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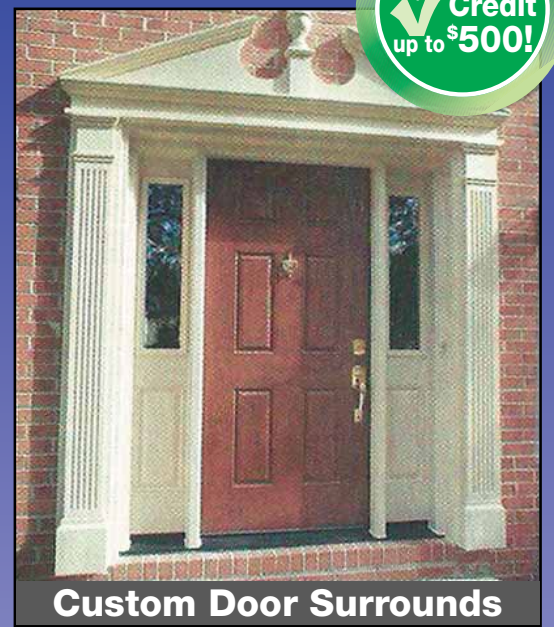


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