

Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne ♦ Newington

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& Gift Guide 2013

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Honored at Mason

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATRICIA MANCINI, AVERY-HESS REALTORS

8917 Lake Braddock Drive, Burke; 5627 Eastbourne Drive, Springfield: “These two homes were listed in September,” said Patricia Mancini. “The first one (list/sold price \$579,500) sold in three days. The second (list/sold price \$495,000) sold in six days.”

Housing Trends Continue, With Exceptions

Realtors optimistic with increasing prices and low rates, despite uncertainty among buyers and sellers.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

In the spring of 2012, one of the greatest fears and biggest question marks for Realtors in Northern Virginia was the potential effects of Sequestration on the market. Home prices had been rising and interest rates remained encouragingly low. Realtors were optimistic, and so were professional analysts like George Mason University Professor of Finance Gerald Hanwek.

“If you want to move, sell now, buy now,” Hanwek said in an April interview. “Buying six months ago would be even better, buying a year ago would’ve been even better. But buy.” His prediction? “Over the next year, two years, it’s going to be a good market. After that we’re going to see federal government cuts actually start to impact.”

Those comments came in light of Sequestration, well before the federal government shutdown. While those factors have helped contribute to a common sense of uncertainty among buyers and sellers, Hanwek’s vision of a good short term market remains true.

According to the website RealEstate Business Intelligence (RBI), the average sold price of a Fairfax County home in October 2013 was \$522,213 — a 10.13 percent increase for year-on-year. In April, 30-year fixed mortgage interest rates at both national and Virginia levels were a historically low 3.32 percent, and while they peaked for the year in September at 4.48 percent, the numbers as of Nov. 12 are back down to 4.19 percent in Virginia.

AS A RESULT, real estate agents are still seeing the kind of results they expected based on their annual seasonal trends.

“We had a strong spring market,” Patricia Mancini of Avery-Hess Realtors said about Springfield. “Over the summer, things died off. Listings were on the

market, but the demand wasn’t there.” In August 2013, Springfield (22150) homes sat for an average of 54 days on the market, compared to 26 the previous year (RBI).

Summer is generally when people are doing more actual moving than buying, but Mancini also attributes the dip to Sequestration. “Everybody was furloughed. We were just dead in the water,” she said.

Burke experienced a higher than normal influx of military transferees and had a stronger than average summer, according to Pat Richter of Residential Preferred Properties. “We had a great summer,” she said. “Properties sold quickly they rented quickly, and at our asking price or close to it. But that came to a halt with the shutdown.” Properties in Burke were on the market 24 days in July, a 14.29 percent decrease since 2012, according to RBI.

Ron Kowalski of Ron & Susan Associates, affiliated with Re/Max Gateway, saw a similar divot in the confidence of buyers and sellers in his Lorton market. “It’s not really quantifiable,” he said, “I can’t go online and see it. Sequestration, furlough, shutdown — all these events have come one after another in a wave. The debt ceiling has been pushed forward. On the front lines, it’s palpable, this uncertainty.”

IT GOES BACK TO BASICS, he said. “At the end of the day, people who feel good about their jobs buy houses.”

Lorton has also had inventory obstacles to contend with. According to Kowalski, there were about 68 active listings in April this year — a near all-time low — though by August they had climbed back up to 100. One of the ways developers in Lorton are trying to resolve the inventory issue is through infill building, where an existing single-family home sitting on five-to-ten acres is bought and then subdivided into lots for between five and ten new homes.

There is also the Laurel Hill Adaptive Reuse Plan, according to Kowalski, that will convert land occupied by the former prison in Lorton to 352 housing units made up of mostly apartments and town homes, with roughly 23 single-family homes.

Despite the uncertainty, not all buyers and sellers are staying out of the market. In fact, agents believe many people who have been waiting on the sidelines with questionable equity are finally getting involved.

SEE REALTORS, PAGE 4

VIEWPOINTS



Pat Richter, Residential Preferred Properties, Burke

“There’s a cautious attitude out there right now. It affected a lot of people when they didn’t have a paycheck.”



Patricia Mancini, Avery-Hess Realtors, Springfield

“Sellers are putting their houses on the market. They’re looking good and buyers are buying them. The market hasn’t been this good in 6 years.”



Ron Kowalski, Ron & Susan Associates, affiliated with Re/Max Gateway, Lorton

“Jobs equal houses. That’s it, back to basics. At the end of the day, people who feel good about their jobs buy houses.”



Karen Swanson, Long and Foster, Reston

“If homes are priced right and staged right they will sell well. We have a lot of anticipation of the Metro coming in, and hopefully houses will be coming on the market that have been waiting to be put on.”



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PATRICIA MANCINI, AVERY-HESS REALTORS

6606 O'Keefe Knoll Court, Fairfax Station; 6011 Roxbury Avenue, Springfield; 9217 Burke Road, Burke [RIGHT]: "The \$699,000 (Springfield) took 19 days to receive a contract," said Patricia Mancini. "The \$1,000,000 (Fairfax Station) is still on the market and the one for \$369,000 (Burke) received a contract in three days. Prices are continuing to go up, interest rates are low and there are happy sellers out there finding out they are no longer underwater on their mortgage loans."

Realtors Optimistic for 2014

FROM PAGE 3

"Let's say in 2010 or 2011," said Kowalski, "Someone's saying 'Wow, I'm really upside down.' Now they look and see prices have come up 10-15 percent in recent years. And the say, 'Now I'm OK, now I can do this.'"

"People who thought they were under water are finding out that they aren't," said Mancini. This has helped the market get into a rhythm. "Supply and demand has kind of equaled out right now," she continued. "We're finally getting it right."

For Mancini, that sweet spot as far as value is concerned falls in the middle of the price range: The million-dollar properties take longer to sell, with 81

days the October average for McLean, where the list average is around \$1.300,000. The \$300,000 houses are flying. In Centreville, homes listed in the mid 300s, were on the market for a 32-day average in October. But, she said, "The \$500,000 is the new \$300,000. You can't get anything good at 300k like you can at 500."

Barring any more shutdowns or dramatic, unforeseen interest rate hikes, buyers, sellers and agents in Northern Virginia should continue to see the favorable market they've grown accustomed to over the last year, even if the blistering growth has slowed some. They'll all be praying for government that continues to run in 2014.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF RON KOWALSKI, RON & SUSAN ASSOCIATES, AFFILIATED WITH RE/MAX GATEWAY

6812 Springfield Drive, Lorton: "After telling the sellers in April that I believed the house would sell for \$850,000," said Ron Kowalski, "the sellers wanted to start the list price at \$979,000. We had many showings, open houses, etc., but no offers. After nearly five months on the market (during the prime spring sales market) and two price reductions, we ratified a contract in the high-\$700,000's. Looking back, if we had priced it right from the beginning, even the sellers now believe we might have gotten more money for the house during the 'high season' and before all the uncertainty of sequestration, furloughs and the government shutdown."



7735 Porters Hill Lane, Lorton: "We listed it for \$639,900 - very close to the list price of the exact same model home on the same street," said Ron Kowalski. "After two to three weeks on the market, we signed a contract, but then the deal fell through due to an appraisal nearly \$20,000 under sales price. Within a week of re-listing the house, we received another offer and the appraisal came in over the sales price."

‘Live Like Nick Did’

Memorial blood drive, Nov. 30, will honor Nick Franca.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

If he'd lived, Nick Franca would be celebrating his 24th birthday on Dec. 4. But the Town of Clifton native and 2009 Centreville High grad died of a form of cancer called neuroblastoma, in May 2011, at age 21.

His death devastated those who knew and loved him, and they will always carry him in their hearts. Yet it's not just because he died so young, it's also because of the person he was and the way he lived – fearlessly and with gusto.

And on Saturday, Nov. 30, from 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., the first annual Live Like Nick Did (LLND) Blood Drive will be held at Clifton Presbyterian Church, behind Trummer's parking lot, in Clifton. Besides honoring his memory, the event's proceeds will fund research and a college scholarship.

"Giving blood is universal – everyone can give the gift of life," said Nick's mother, Caryn Franca, who organized the event. "And it's so important for the people needing it, such as those going through cancer treatment or people who've been in an accident."

But more is planned than a blood drive. "We'll also have a raffle of some very cool items, plus an awesome bake sale to raise funds for our two causes," said Franca. "There'll be cupcakes from Clifton's new shop, Cupcaked, and several local people and groups are also contributing homemade baked goods. It'll be a big party and a fun day."

RAFFLE TICKETS will be \$10 each, and the prizes include: A weekend getaway in Sandbridge, in the Virginia Beach area; an iPad mini; a \$200 gift certificate to Fair Oaks Mall, a Paperwhite Kindle; a gift certificate to Clifton's new, Italian restaurant, Villagio; a wine pairing at Trummer's on Main; jewelry from All that Glitters; and two box-seat tickets to see "The Lion King" at The Kennedy Center in July.

In addition, Clifton's Amy Waldrop will be taking photos from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. For \$20, people may have their children or pets photographed with Santa; Waldrop will also take family photos without Santa. The church is at 12748 Richards Lane and childcare is available. Those attending the event are advised to bring cash or a checkbook, since an ATM machine won't be available.

"Even if people can't donate blood, they can drop by and buy a few raffle tickets and some baked goods," said Franca. "But hopefully, we'll get 100 blood donors." People are advised to sign up for an appointment in advance at www.inovabloodsaves.org and enter sponsor code 8025. Or call Inova



Nick Franca in summer 2009.

blood at 1-866-256-6372 and give that same code number.

In 2007, Franca helped establish the non-profit Band of Parents – comprised of parents of children with neuroblastoma – to fund nontoxic treatments for them. And proceeds from the blood drive will be split between this group and a memorial scholarship in Nick's name at Lynchburg College, where he attended when his health permitted. It's given to students with a physical or emotional challenge.

Those unable to attend the event, but wishing to contribute to the scholarship may send checks payable to Lynchburg College to the college, Attn: Gene Frantz, 1501 Lakeside Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24504. Write "For the Nicholas Franca Memorial Scholarship" on the memo line.

"Before the summer of 2005, Nick was a normal teenager, hungry for a life filled with adventure, love and success," said Franca. "When stage IV neuroblastoma invaded his dreams, he refused to let it take away his love for life."

Throughout six years of treatment, he endured pain, suffering, humiliation and isolation from the world around him. But he did his best to maintain his indomitable spirit and refused to let his condition define him.

"He'd reach out to others in treatment, put his friends and family at ease and embrace each and every moment he could," said Franca. "He never gave up and never let his circumstances deter him when he had a good day. On May 1, 2011, his body let go, but his spirit lives on – and we call it Live Like Nick Did." To donate to Band of Parents, go to www.bandofparents.org or www.llndblooddrive.com. Looking forward to the blood drive, she said Nick's friends are also involved in the remembrance in a variety of ways, whether giving blood or volunteering. For example, Chris Gogoel built the event Website, Kristina Baranowski of Cupcaked will be bringing her tasty treats and Trexler Jasien's family donated the Sandbridge raffle item.

SINCE NICK'S DEATH, Franca said she and her husband Jim and Nick's siblings are doing all right and are honoring his memory by "trying to Live Like Nick Did, embracing life and living it to its fullest. Nick never let his disease get in the way of him having fun, and LLND is how we keep going." She's also hoping the blood drive will be a big success.

BULLETIN BOARD

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/NOV. 21

Creative Writing. 4:30 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Read aloud as a group, write an addition to the story and draw an illustration. Age 6-10.

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice English with others and improve your skills. Adults.

English Conversation. 7 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation group for people learning English. Adults. 703-339-4610.

Springfield Writers' Group. 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Share your work, give and receive feedback in a supportive setting. Adults. 703-451-8055.

THURSDAY/NOV. 21-SUNDAY/DEC. 15

Sheehy Toys for Tots Toy Drive Drop Off. Sheehy Volkswagon of Springfield, 6601 Backlick Road, Springfield; Sheehy Ford, Nissan, & Subaru of Springfield, 6727 Loisdale Road, Springfield; Collecting new, unwrapped toys to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program in which Christmas gifts are given to less fortunate children in the community.

FRIDAY/NOV. 22

Reading Buddies. 4 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Grab a book, grab a buddy! Teen volunteers available as reading buddies. Ages 3-8 years.

Friday Morning Music Club. 11 a.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Promoting musical culture among members and the community.

Bee Healthy. 10:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. A 20-minute puppet presentation provided by the Fairfax County Health Department. Explains immunization as well as healthy habits to children and their caretakers. Ages birth-5 with adult. 703-339-4610.

SATURDAY/NOV. 23

Dog Adoption. 12-3 p.m. PETCO, 13053 Greenbiar Towncenter, Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy, Fairfax. 703-817-9444.

Wag a Tale. 11:00 a.m.-11:15 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Need a little practice reading or just love dogs? Register to read to Chester, our Reading Therapy Dog. Age 5-12. 703-339-4610.

SUNDAY/NOV. 24

Burke Historical Society Meeting. 4:30 p.m. Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, 6304 Lee Chapel Road, Burke. "A Celebration of

Thanksgiving."

MONDAY/NOV. 25

Introduction to Creative Writing. 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Six week writing workshop led by graduate students in George Mason University's Sally Merten Fellows creative writing program. Bring your ideas, laptop, or pen and paper. Registration required. Adults. 703-451-8055.

TUESDAY/NOV. 26

English Conversation Group. 5:15 p.m.-6:15 p.m. Lorton Library, 520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Practice your English conversation skills. Adults. 703-339-7385.

eBooks. 2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Learn how to browse the collection, check out books and download to PC, Mac and eBook readers. Call the library to schedule an appointment. Adults. 703-451-8055.

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street, Springfield. Practice and improve your English. Adults. 703-451-8055.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 27

Storytime: Crafts. 10:30 a.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Let's read a seasonal story and make a craft. Age 3-5 years with adult.

Reading Buddies. 4 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Grab a book, grab a buddy! Teen volunteers available as reading buddies. Ages 3-8 years.

English Conversation. 10:15 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre, Alexandria. Conversation group for people learning English. Adults. 703-339-4610.

What Am I Wearing? 11a.m.-11:30 a.m. Lorton Library, 520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Stories and activities. Age 3-5 with adult. Registration required. 703-339-7385.

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

Dog Adoption. 12-3 p.m. PETCO, 13053 Greenbiar Towncenter, Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax.

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Seminar on Scams. 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. West Springfield High School Auditorium, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. Learn how to protect against devastating financial scams and fraud.

ONGOING

John Witt Chapter of the Colonial Dames of the 17th Century. The patriotic, genealogical and heraldic society for women of lineal descendants of an ancestor who lived or served prior to 1701 in one of the original colonies in the geographical area of the present U.S. is accepting new members; the chapter meets four times yearly. jsmithtot@aol.com.

First Virginia Community Bank Opens New Springfield Location

First Virginia Community Bank (FVCbank) will opens its new central Springfield office Dec 2. Springfield branch manager Pati Gambino, a 45-year veteran of the area banking industry, has spent 35 years serving the Springfield community throughout her career. Senior Vice President Todd Lattimer, with 36 years in the banking industry, will run the branch's

commercial lending efforts. He has served as president of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, president of Springfield-Franconia Lions Club and chairman of the Northern Virginia Young Bankers Section of the Virginia Bankers Association.

FVCbank will open its central Springfield branch at the 6500 block of Backlick Road.

OPINION

Shop Locally, Shop in Springfield

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.

EDITORIAL 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 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:

Black Friday at the Workhouse

Support local artists by discovering the work of about 100 artists and find things at any price value at Lorton's Workhouse Arts Center's Black Friday on Nov. 29.

Historic Clifton Candlelight Home Tour

Stroll along the historic district of Clifton and take in the sights of five homes trimmed for the holidays, two churches and community hall on Dec. 7.

City of Fairfax of Lights & Carols

Bring the family to enjoy holiday activities on Dec. 7 in Fairfax, with live holiday music, hot cider, smores by the Yule log, caroling and lighting of the Christmas tree in the winter wonderland.

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

AREA ROUNDUPS

Child Care Education Conference

The 2013 Infant Toddler Family Day Care (ITFDC) Early Child Care Education Conference will be held on Sunday, Nov. 24, 12:45 – 4:45 p.m. at Fairfax Marriott at Fair Oaks, 11787 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax.

Join ITFDC, early child care educators, parents, and community colleagues to discuss critical

issues of early child care education. This year the theme is "Play, Learning, and Development in the Outdoors" and features the following workshops:

❖ "Bringing Science Indoors, Loving the Earth and Recycling" by Juliana Heitz of Ideaventions;

❖ "How to Teach Nature Appreciation, Bugs, Leaf projects and Indoor Gardening" by Mike Mcaffery and Anne Sneed of Hidden Pond;

❖ "Obesity/Nutrition/Movement" by Dr.

Rene Hackney of Parenting Playgroups.

ITFDC is accepting donations for the conference. Educational toys, gift cards, books, art/craft supplies are all welcome. All donations are tax-deductible. Registration for the conference is now open. The event is free to all Infant Toddler Family Day Care providers approved under our license and enrolled families. Cost for the general public is \$45. Visit <http://www.infanttoddler.com/2013-itfdc-early-child-care-education-conference/> for more details.

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'The Lady from Maxim's' at West Springfield High

"The Lady from Maxim's," a rollicking, period French farce by George Feydeau will be performed by drama students at West Springfield High at 7 p.m. on Nov. 21, 22, and 23, and at 2 p.m. on Nov. 24. This comedy of mistaken identity begins after a guys' night out. As lies pile upon lies, so do the laughs in this turn-of-the-century comedy. The production may not be suitable for younger audiences. Tickets are available at the door.

Thunder Blue Seeks Players

SYC U17 Thunder Blue seeks talented, committed players. Thunder Blue just completed an undefeated Fall 2013 WAGS season. Interested players should email Manager Rich McMahon at rmcmahon@eei.org to schedule a time to train with the team. Please include a brief history of playing experience, current/most recent travel team, positions played and parents phone number.

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Holocaust Survivors Honored at Mason

Jewish Student Association hosts
'Expressions of the Holocaust: a Dinner Honoring Survivors.'

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

On Nov. 13, George Mason University's Jewish student association, Mason Hillel, organized and hosted "Expressions of the Holocaust: a Dinner Honoring Survivors." The date for the event was chosen with care – just days after the 75th anniversary of the Nov. 9-10 Kristallnacht – "Night of Broken Glass." In just two days in 1938, almost 100 Jews were killed, nearly 1000 synagogues were damaged or completely destroyed, thousands of Jewish homes, businesses, schools, hospitals and even cemeteries were looted and vandalized by rioting mobs in Germany, Austria and Sudetenland and some 30,000 Jewish men were arrested and sent to concentration camps like Dachau and Buchenwald, both of which had to be expanded to accommodate the influx of prisoners. As Natalie Roisman, President of Mason Hillel's Board of Directors noted in her welcoming address, many scholars and historians consider Kristallnacht to be the "watershed moment, leading directly to the Holocaust." This rampage against the Jewish community marked the beginning of violence as a recognized and legalized tool in the Nazi arsenal against the Jewish people. German Jews were already being subjected to ever-increasing restrictive policies prior to Kristallnacht, but it was not until after that event that violence and mass arrests became the norm, especially since most of the German citizenry had reacted passively to the brutal actions of those 48 hours.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER those hours of destruction and despair, the young men and women of Mason Hillel, with their leader, Executive Director Ross Diamond, and the support of the Student and Community Boards, decided to "both build a bridge to the past for the local community and help keep us to our promise of Never Again," as Diamond described their vision. So the "Expressions of the Holocaust" Committee, chaired by Hillary Dallas, went to work to organize an evening of thematic art, music and poetry to honor more than 40 local survivors of the Holocaust and



John Baer started life as Hans Lothar Baer outside of Frankfurt, Germany, before his family managed to escape to America via the United Kingdom. The Baer family arrived in New York on Oct. 3, 1940 – the first day of Rosh Hashanah. "After the blackouts in London and the long sea voyage, the lights of Long Island were awesome!" Mr. Baer will be giving a talk on his experiences at the Fairfax Library on Jan. 11, 2014.



Mason Hillel Executive Director Ross Diamond takes a breather during the 'Expressions of the Holocaust Dinner' with George Mason University Sophomore Melissa Treshnjeta. Treshnjeta, as the Holocaust Education Fellow is a member of the Hillel Student Ambassador Leadership and along with Taylor Kreinces and a host of others, helped organize and host the event.

the memories of the six million lost to the Nazi's "Final Solution" to the Jewish Problem.

Before the program officially began in the HUB Ballroom on George Mason's Fairfax campus, many of the honored guests spent time with the Student Ambassadors chosen to guide and assist them throughout the event. In "VIP" rooms, the survivors answered questions and spoke openly about their experiences and the losses they endured. John

Larry Baer (formerly known as Hans Lothar Baer) acknowledged the trials his family endured, but focused on the positives. Sitting next to Shirley, his wife of 50 plus years, Baer handed out his mini-autobiography entitled "A Grateful Refugee Kid's Recollections" and declared, "It's been a good, rich and rewarding life in my adopted country, which gave me a life and a career."

Jacqueline Mendels Birn, whose story is included in the Tribute



Dr. Pat Mercer Hutchens was inspired by photographs taken at Auschwitz to paint the depictions and collect them as "Auschwitz Album Revisited." Prints of her paintings were on display and were the much-admired silent auction prizes. In this scene, titled "Fogel Family Waiting in the Grove," Dr. Hutchens recreated a photo showing two of the brothers and the mother of survivor Irene Fogel Weiss who was among the honored guests. Mother and sons were gassed shortly after the photo was taken.

Book produced for the event, tells of her family's flight from Paris in 1942, just after the round up of 13,000 Jews in the city. Most were held in deplorable conditions in a sporting stadium and later bussed to internment and concentration camps where most were put to death. Birn, her father, mother and sister narrowly escaped arrest on a number of occasions, frequently hiding in cellars, chicken coops and even the open woods. But, like Baer, Birn considers herself fortunate. In her memoir she writes, "We now count approximately 200 members of our extended family that were murdered, gassed, shot or died by exhaustion as slave laborers."

This interaction between survivors and students was a critical element in the organizers' mission. "Many who could bear witness to the atrocities of the Holocaust are lost to us now, either during those days or through the passage of time," said Board President Roisman. "This is probably the last generation that will be able to hear these stories first hand...so we do this here on a college campus, so that this generation can be educated and empowered to combat anti-Semitism and genocide over the course of their lives."

"Having an opportunity to hear from a Holocaust survivor was something that cannot be recreated nor explained," said Melissa Treshnjeta. She is a sophomore at

the university and is the Holocaust Education Fellow intern. Treshnjeta and Hillel Events Production Chair Taylor Kreinces were among the many students who devoted hours before and during the event to ensure a successful program.

MORE THAN 300 packed the HUB Ballroom on George Mason's Fairfax Campus, including the survivors and their families and friends, members of the University's staff, the Hillel administration, students, members of the greater community, and other honored guests, such as Virginia Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41). Talented George Mason University students treated the assembly to a number of musical performances, including the university's first and only all-female a cappella group, Noteworthy, who sang both the National Anthem and the Hatikvah, Israel's National Anthem.

After the dinner (provided by the Kosher Kitchen Catering Company) two of the honorees, both volunteers at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, took to the stage to share their stories. After enduring the hardships of being rounded up by the Hungarian authorities and forced to live with hundreds of others in an old brick factory with only one

SEE HOLOCAUST, PAGE 9

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

From left — Kathy Allen of Falls Church is the Chaplain at Greenspring Senior Living community in Springfield and accompanied friend, Holocaust survivor and Greenspring resident, 91-year-old Anne Hermann to the dinner honoring Hermann and her fellow survivors. Hermann, from Nuremberg, Germany was left alone in 1939 at the age of 16 when her parents were killed.

Holocaust Survivors Honored at Mason

FROM PAGE 8

hand-dug outside latrine for a restroom, Irene (Fogel) Weiss and her family were deported in 1944 to the Auschwitz-Birkenau camp. When they arrived at the camp, the Fogel family was “processed,” like all the others sent there. Her mother, her older brother and three younger siblings were killed. Irene and her sister were chosen for forced labor. Her father was killed later, when he was no longer able to perform his assigned duties. At the time of her arrival at Auschwitz, Irene Fogel Weiss was 13 years old.

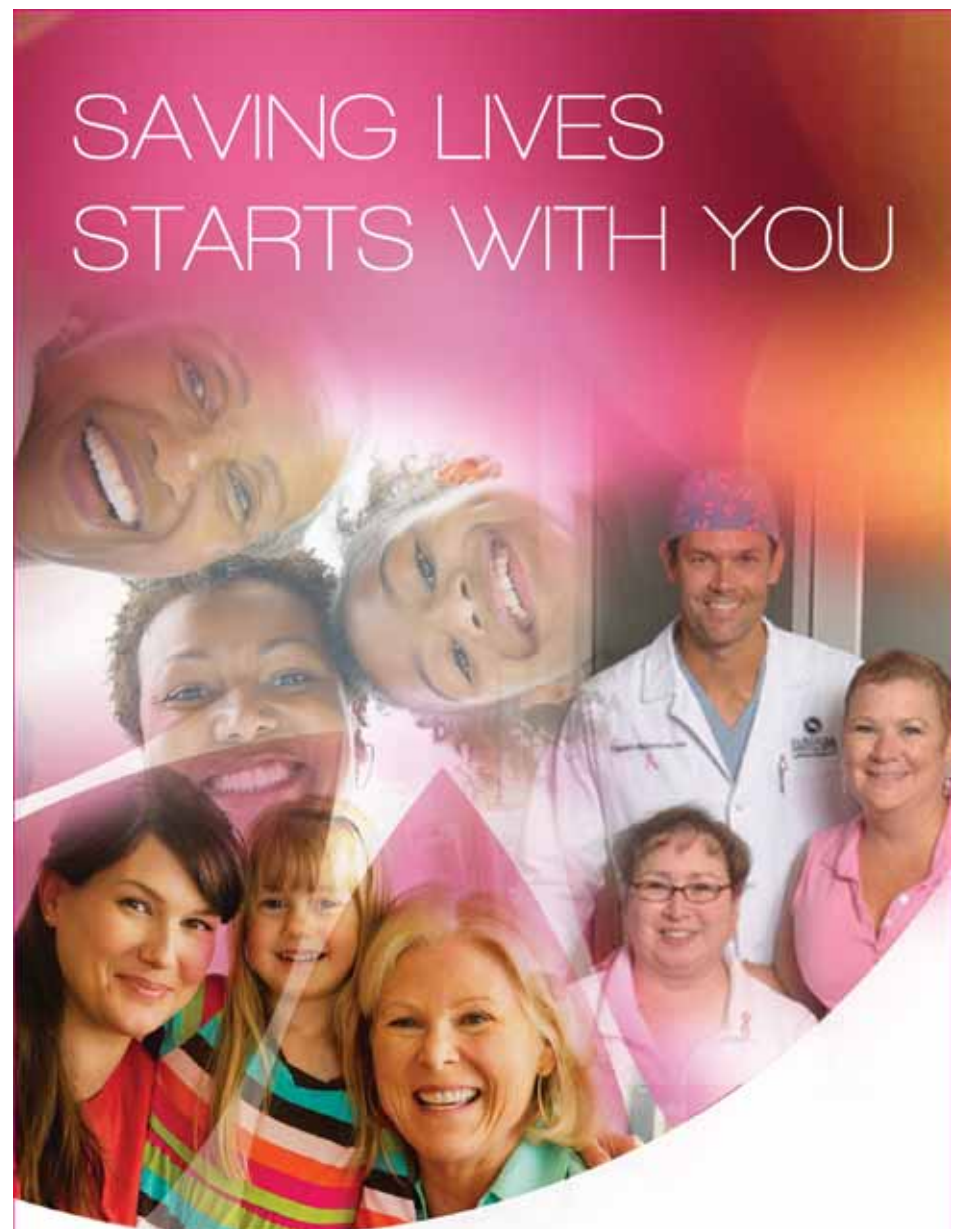
Although willing to speak of the horrors they witnessed or personally survived, the honorees all seemed equally eager to listen — especially to the young Student Ambassadors hosting at each table, and to enjoy the evening, the program, and the company. One survivor, originally from Poland said, “Once I thought there would be no tomorrow. But here it is, thank God, and here are these young people who will make more tomorrows. It’s good.”

Any funds raised from the event, includ-



One of the evening’s two Holocaust survivors who shared their stories with the assembly, Irene Weiss, was sent to Auschwitz at age thirteen, where her mother, older brother and three younger siblings were killed upon arrival at the camp.

ing the silent auction of framed prints of paintings by Dr. Pat Mercer Hutchens, inspired by photographs from Auschwitz, tickets sales, tributes or sponsorships are targeted to help underwrite a future Holocaust Education Fellow position at Hillel. The group hopes to see the creation of a Genocide Studies Program at George Mason University and possibly even ultimately endow a professorship in Holocaust Education at the school.



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PHOTOS BY
STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION



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



PHOTO COURTESY OF COOKOLOGY

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.

"Don't let holiday cooking take away from time with your kids," said Erika LaChance, of Tiny Chefs Cooking School, with locations in Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax and McLean, Va., and Potomac, Md. "Get them involved too. A great way to get in some extra quality time with the kids during the holidays is to let them lend a helping hand in the kitchen. Depending on how old they are, they can help with a number of different tasks, which will not only help them build confidence in the kitchen, but also enjoy the feeling of contributing to the family meal."

Stephen P. Sands, of Culinaria 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."

Details

Other child-friendly recipes from Maria Kopsidas, of Cookology, and Tiny Chefs Cooking School can be found online at www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2013/nov/19/holiday-cooking

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 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 enjoy 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."

Children who are 10 and older can be tasked with making a specific dish. "Work with them to choose a recipe and encourage them to gather the ingredients and make the dish themselves, with little or no supervision, except when it comes to dealing with the oven or the stovetop," said Kopsidas. "A lot of ingredients can be prepared in the microwave, such as melting chocolate chips. Children who are 9 years old and older have the motor skills to handle a knife. Give them a quick safety tip on keeping their stabilizing hand away from the cutting blade, and tell them calmly to take their time when they are cutting."

For those looking for cookbooks designed for children or parents and children, Emily Henry of Hurray for Books in Old Town Alexandria recommends "I'm Dreaming of a Chocolate Christmas: Recipes and Holiday Inspiration for Chocolate Lovers," by Cheryl Burkirk and "Cooking with Love: Comfort Food that Hugs You" by Carla Hall.



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 hiring a professional or taking one's 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

SEE TIPS, PAGE 15

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

THURSDAY/NOV. 28

First Annual Fairfax Turkey Trot. 9 a.m. 9330 Pentland Place, Fairfax. Four mile turkey trot. <http://www.fairfaxturkeytrot.com/>
Thanksgiving Day Church Service. 11 a.m. Christian Science Church, 3725 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Bring family, kids, and friends (before feast and football games) for a Thanksgiving church service.

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

Black Friday at the Workhouse. 9 a.m.- 7 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Discover the work of about 100 artists and find things at any price value. <http://www.workhousearts.org/events/visual-arts/black-friday-workhouse>

SATURDAY/NOV. 30

"A Chanticleer Christmas." 8 p.m. GMU Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A Chanticleer Christmas" will showcase ancient hymns, venerated and sacred songs, classical works and a selection of festive and familiar carols and spirituals from Europe and America. Tickets: \$50, \$42 and \$25. <http://cfa.gmu.edu/>
Cookies with Santa: A Pre-Show Treat Before "In Santa, We Believe." 11 a.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Tickets: \$8.50 Adults, \$8 Children under 12 years old.
In Santa We Believe. 1 p.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. LIVE onstage! Join for an afternoon of adventure with Vianlix Mestey's original story. Tickets: \$8 Children, \$10 Adults.

Eileen Ivers brings the joy of the holiday season to Fairfax with her celebration for the whole family, a heartwarming concert filled with tales of Irish Christmas traditions and favorite Celtic holiday tunes on Dec. 21 at GMU's Center for the Arts .



PHOTO BY LUKE RAITRAY

SUNDAY/DEC. 1

Civil War "Christmas in Camp." 12-4 p.m. 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Participate in camp drills and learn about Civil War-era holiday customs with Company D, 17th Virginia Infantry, "Fairfax Rifles" C.S.A. 703-591-0560.

TUESDAY/DEC. 3-SUNDAY/DEC. 8

Drumming with Dishes: Holiday Edition. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. This whimsical production is a 35-minute interactive, non-verbal show, which features two adult actors and a musician. Geared towards children ages 2-6. For tickets and information, visit: <http://www.workhousearts.org/events/performing-arts/drumming-dishes-holiday-edition-7>

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 4

Annual Holiday Tunes for Tots Concert. 10 a.m. W.T. Woodson

High School Gymnasium, 9525 Main Street, Fairfax. Tickets: \$3 per person. Questions: 703-764-5820

THURSDAY/DEC. 5

Annual Holiday Tunes for Tots Concert. 10 a.m. W.T. Woodson High School Gymnasium, 9525 Main Street, Fairfax. Tickets: \$3 per person. Questions: 703-764-5820
Annual Holiday Tunes for the Young at Heart. 7 p.m. W.T. Woodson High School Gymnasium, 9525 Main Street, Fairfax. Tickets: \$3 per person. Questions: 703-764-5820

THURSDAY/DEC. 6

Virginia Opera Presents: The Magic Flute. 8 p.m. GMU Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets: \$44-\$86. <http://cfa.gmu.edu/>

SATURDAY/DEC. 7

Plantation Christmas. 2-7 p.m.

Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton. Ride in a horse-drawn carriage, sip warm cider by the fire, and sample period food prepared in the hearth kitchen. \$15 adults; \$5 children. 703-550-9220.

City of Fairfax of Lights & Carols.

11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Old Town Fairfax, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Enjoy live holiday music, hot cider, smores by the Yule log, caroling and lighting of the Christmas tree in the winter wonderland. <http://www.fairfaxva.gov>

Historic Clifton Candlelight Home Tour.

4-7 p.m. Historic District, Clifton. Five homes trimmed for the holidays, two churches and community hall will be open for touring in the historic district. Tickets: \$20. <http://clifton-va.com/>

Art Guild of Clifton Holiday Art Exhibit and Sale. 4-9 p.m. Clifton Town Hall Meeting, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton. Enjoy original art, jewelry, fiber arts, pottery, and photography made entirely by Clifton artists. www.artguildofclifton.org

Cabaret Series: Home for the Holidays. 8 p.m.

Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Tickets: \$25, includes planche campagnarde.

Clifton Candlelight Homes Tour. 4-

7 p.m. 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton. Five homes will be trimmed and open for touring, and two churches will have choirs singing. cliftonva.org.

Annual Tree Lighting. 7:30 p.m.

Ayre Square, main square town in Clifton. Caroling, treats and hot chocolate.

Lunch with Santa. 11 a.m., 12 p.m.

and 1 p.m. The Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. \$6 per child. Tickets required. 703-385-7858.

Festival of Lights and Carols. 11

a.m., 12 p.m. or 1 p.m. Sherwood Community Center. 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. \$6 per child for ages 10 and under. 703-385-7858 or visit www.fairfaxva.gov

SATURDAY, DEC. 8

Family Advent Celebration. 5-6 p.m. Burke United Methodist Church, 6200 Burke Centre Parkway, Burke. Annual family advent celebration. All are welcome. 703-250-6100.

Four Centuries of Virginia

Christmas. 2 p.m. Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main Street, Fairfax. Learn about the evolution of Virginia Christmas customs from author Mary Miley Theobald. Free.

Vivaldi's "Gloria." 9 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Burke United Methodist Church, 6200 Burke Centre Parkway, Burke. BUMC Chancel Choir (and friends) presents Vivaldi's "Gloria."

Cabaret Series: Home for the

Holidays. 1 p.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Tickets: \$25, includes planche campagnarde.

Holiday Open House & Cathedral

Brass Christmas Concert. 4 p.m. 5500 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. A musical celebration of the season. 703-352-1421.

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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: ChildrenSouth@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.

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CAPPIES REVIEW



PHOTOS BY KRISTIE MCENTIRE

Joshua Reiter, Drew Bondy, Lexie McEntire, Maddy Branley ("No One is Alone") in W.T. Woodson High School's production of "Into the Woods."

Facing the Life Challenges

W.T. Woodson High School's production of 'Into the Woods'

BY JAMIE JOEYEN-WALDORF
LANGLEY HIGH SCHOOL

"Careful the things you say. Children will listen." While we all want to tell our children to live happily ever after, such dreams are not always that simple. In W.T. Woodson High School's production of "Into the Woods," what started out as an innocent amalgamation of fairy tale characters became a powerful story of resilience, responsibility, and letting go of the people we love.

Written by Stephen Sondheim (music) and James Lapine (book), "Into the Woods" premiered on Broadway in 1987, running for 765 performances and earning Tony Awards for Best Book and Best Score. The show has since enjoyed numerous revivals and an upcoming film adaptation set to debut in 2014. The story centers on a baker and his wife who have been cursed with infertility by a witch. Determined to have a child, the couple journeys to fulfill the witch's requests and free themselves of the curse, meeting a slew of characters from Brother's Grimm fairy tales along the way. Plagued by various obstacles, the characters' stories intertwine as they deal with the consequences of their choices and the sad truths of mortality and loss.

Tackling the complex harmonies of Sondheim is quite a daunting task for high school students, but the cast took on the challenge with style and professionalism. Particular standout songs included "No

One is Alone" and "It Takes Two." Both the orchestra and cast showcased impressive stamina in the nearly sung-through score.

Driving the plot line, Joshua Reiter as the Baker successfully displayed the sensitive struggles of protecting a loved one, his rich baritone voice filling the theatre with genuine emotion. Opposite Reiter was Emily Bubeck as the Baker's Wife, whose pleasant vocals and witty line delivery accentuated the contrast with her more vulnerable character interactions. Lara Taylor as the Witch effectively captured the multi-faceted psychological layers of her role, consistently engaging in scenes with vocal inflections without letting a facial mask hinder her ability for expression, her comical cackles balancing cries of agony and frustration. Portraying the dazzling Cinderella, Lexie McEntire's mellifluous voice shone throughout the production as she transformed from the figurehead of a princess

to a headstrong woman of courage and accountability. As Jack, Drew Bondy impeccably played the sprightly, naïve character with charm, his belting voice soaring in the song, "Giants in the Sky."

Completely transformed into a mysterious woodland landscape, the stage was filled with a multi-story platform simulating a forest path and various flats representing different households. Props included, among other things, an intricate light-up witch's staff and authentic baked goods. Despite some occasional cue errors and audible cracks, the sound crew admirably handled the use of 16 body microphones.

The cast and crew of "Into the Woods" successfully contrasted the playful nature of the first act with the serious turn of events in the second. Beneath the innocent fairytales of childhood, poignant undertones bring a sense of raw emotion. Through all the losses of life and opportunity in our world, we—like the Baker, Cinderella, Little Red, and Jack—must remember that someone will be on our side, for no one is ever alone.



Bryce Menard, Sean McCracken, Claudia Caceres, Emily Bubeck and Joshua Reiter.

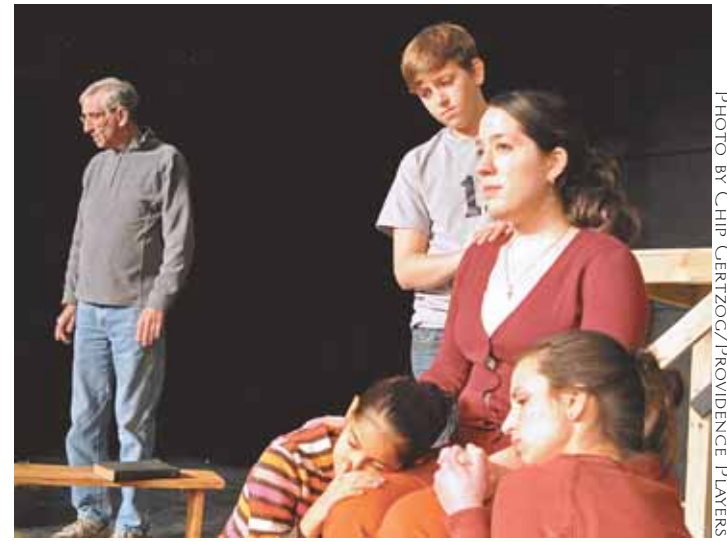


PHOTO BY CHIP CERTZOC/PROVIDENCE PLAYERS

From left — John Barklay Burns as Scrooge, Ethan Phillips as Peter, Amanda Ranowsky as Mrs. Cratchit, Stephanie Marinova as Li'l, and Eryn Gleason as Martha in rehearsal for the Providence Players production of "A Christmas Carol."

Great Theater for a Great Cause

Providence Players present 'A Christmas Carol.'

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

It is that most wonderful time of the year; Christmas is coming. And the Providence Players have "a new fresh approach to that Holiday icon, 'A Christmas Carol,'" said Brian O'Connor (Annandale). The Players have found a new adaptation by Janet Allard and Michael Bigelow Dixon that will "give families great enjoyment along with being a new take."

O'Connor described the production as "something like a traveling repertory theater company would produce as actors take on several roles, all to give the audience enjoyment." The dialogue is taken directly from the Dickens' novella. His cast includes several actors originally from the United Kingdom who will have accents most fitting and real.

The "very active set will look like a large three-dimensional Advent Calendar," added O'Connor, with lots of doors and windows that open providing scenes and action. Even the walls may be moving.

You know the Charles Dickens' timeless story of redemption, written over 150 years ago and still modern in its out-look.

On the eve of Christmas, Jacob Marley (David Whitehead), and the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come confront the tough-

minded Ebenezer Scrooge (John Barklay Burns, professor emeritus. George Mason University) to help him change his ways. Community theater veteran Cheryl Sinsabaugh is the narrator.

There are a number of children in the 16 member cast. Tyler Demille (Tiny Tim) is a second grader at Greenbriar East Elementary School. Tyler is no stranger to being in front of an audience. A leukemia survivor, Tyler has had the opportunity to share his story several times for the Leukemia Lymphoma Society (LLS) and the Young Hearts. He was the 2011 LLS Light the Night Honored Hero and the 2012 LLS Pennies for Patients Honored Hero.

Other children in the production include Stephanie Marinova is a fourth grader at Woodburn Elementary School and Ethan Phillips a seventh grader at Frost Middle School. And Brendan Dure who has performed at Harmonia School of Music & Art (Vienna) and Kyleigh Friel has performed with the Joy of Dance (Burke). Bron Pedulla-Smith, sophomore at WT Woodson High School, is working the sound board.

Beyond the enjoyment of the show, half of all net proceeds will benefit "The Young Hearts Foundation" dedicated to improving the lives of young people affected by long term illness.

CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event. For more entertainment events in the county, go to: <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2013/sep/26/fairfax-county-calendar/>.

WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY/ NOV. 20-DEC. 8

"Shades and Tones Spiced with Color" 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays, noon to 5 p.m. Sundays, at the Workhouse Arts Center, Building W-5, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Gloria Benedetto and Traci Oberle are the featured artists in the building; see their work featuring rich color in subtle workings. www.workhousearts.org.

FRIDAY/NOV.22-JAN. 5, 2013

100 under 200. Daily, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Black Friday Sale, at the Workhouse Arts Center, Building W-16 McGuireWoods Gallery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. One hundred artists exhibiting work priced less than \$200 in an unrestrained gallery exhibit by each one of the artists at the Workhouse. <http://workhousearts.org/events/visual-arts/black-friday-workhouse>.

"From the Fire." Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Five diverse ceramic artists challenge themselves to create personal work for a joint firing in "From the Fire", an educational exhibit of 30 works and concomitant photographs and text.

THURSDAY/NOV. 21

"The Miracle Worker." 7 p.m. South County High School is located at 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. The story of Helen Keller and her dedicated teacher, Annie Sullivan. Tickets: \$8 general admissions; \$6 seniors and students. www.southcountytheatre.org.

FRIDAY/NOV. 22

Friday Morning Music Club. 11 a.m.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER SPARKS/ SOUTH COUNTY HS THEATRE BOOSTERS

Annie Sullivan, center (Kelsey Davis, double cast), talks with her students before leaving to care for Helen in South County High School Theatre fall production of "The Miracle Worker," Nov. 21-23.

Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. Promoting musical culture among members and the community.

"The Miracle Worker." 7 p.m. South County High School is located at 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. The story of Helen Keller and her dedicated teacher, Annie Sullivan. Tickets: \$8 general admissions; \$6 seniors and students. www.southcountytheatre.org.

SATURDAY/NOV. 23

"The Miracle Worker." 2 & 7 p.m.

South County High School is located at 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. The story of Helen Keller and her dedicated teacher, Annie Sullivan. Tickets: \$8 general admissions; \$6 seniors and students. www.southcountytheatre.org.

WEDNESDAY/NOV. 27

The Fresh Beat Band, 6:30 p.m., at the Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. The band from the Nick Jr. series of the same name performs. \$46.70-\$165. <http://www.freshbeatband.com>.

patriotcenter.com/.

FRIDAY/NOV. 29

Home for Dinner Closing Reception. 6-9 p.m., Nov. 29, in the Vulcan Gallery, Community Action Space, Lorton Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC) and the Workhouse Arts Center are collaborating on the exhibition filled with arts that helps raise awareness about hunger and homelessness in southeast Fairfax County. Home for Dinner will showcase how community members can make a difference; bring canned food as a donation. www.workhousearts.org.

MONDAY/DEC. 2

Laura Black Murphy Book Signing Event. 4-8 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 12193 Fair Lakes, Promenade Drive, Fairfax. Murphy, a resident of Fairfax Station, Va., will be available to sign copies of her book, "My Little Messenger."

"The Mixed Nut." 7:30-8:30 p.m. Lanier Middle School, 3801 Jermantown Road, Fairfax. The Fairfax Academy of Dance presents a dance performance featuring mixed variations from "The Nutcracker." Tickets: \$5.

TUESDAY/DEC. 3

Laura Black Murphy Book Signing Event. 4-8 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 12193 Fair Lakes, Promenade Drive, Fairfax. Murphy, a resident of Fairfax Station, Va., will be available to sign copies of her book, "My Little Messenger."

TUESDAY/DEC. 10

Laura Black Murphy Book Signing Event. 4-8 p.m. Barnes & Noble, 12193 Fair Lakes, Promenade Drive, Fairfax. Murphy, a resident of Fairfax Station, Va., will be available to sign copies of her book, "My Little Messenger."

THURSDAY/DEC. 12

"Survivor." 7 p.m. Richard Byrd Library, 7250 Commerce Street. Novelist Louis Bayard will read his comic Christmas essay "Survivor." Hear the author relate a true holiday misadventure that took place at nearby Springfield Mall.

FRIDAY/DEC. 13

One Night Stands. 8 p.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. In concert, one night only, featuring solo cabaret performers from the DC area. Two performers each night, each performing a solo 45 minute set. Tickets: \$15-25.

SATURDAY/DEC. 14

2nd Saturday Art Walk. 6-9 p.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The 2nd Saturday Art Walk at the Workhouse showcases the diverse work of more than 100 visual artists in a unique historic venue, creating an atmosphere that encourages visitors to immerse themselves in the richness of this creative community.

Cecil Ray Comedy Club 7p.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Host Cecil Ray leads the proceedings in a night of laughter with guest comedians from the mid-Atlantic region. Tickets: \$20-30.

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Tips for Holiday Card Photos

FROM PAGE 12

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."

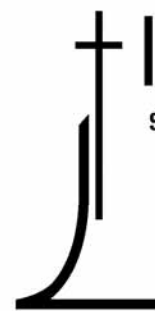
Ensure the photo subjects are not distorted. "Cards are usually small, so fill space wisely with tighter cropped images, not a picture of a scene with little people saying 'we were here,'" said Kress.

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."

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is no competition.
-William Van Horne

West Springfield's Alcorta Wins State XC Title

Lake Braddock boys finish second, girls third.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

As a sophomore in 2011, West Springfield's Caroline Alcorta collapsed as she approached the finish line at Great Meadow during the VHSL state cross country meet.

The first-year harrier had started her kick too early during the course's brutal closing straight-away and her body gave out. After several runners passed Alcorta, she managed to cross the finish line in eighth place, earning AAA all-state honors.

Two years later, Alcorta again pushed herself during the state meet at Great Meadow, jumping out to a sizeable lead during the girls' 6A race. This time, however, the only thing that collapsed with Alcorta near the finish line was the meet record.

Alcorta won the VHSL 6A girls' state cross country championship on Nov. 15 with a meet-record time of 17 minutes, 13 seconds, breaking former Lake Braddock standout Sophie Chase's mark of 17:24, which she set last season.

"I was just hoping to win," Alcorta said. "I didn't expect to get the course record."

After her eighth-place finish sophomore year, Alcorta took second place as a junior behind Chase in 2012. Now a senior,

ALCORTA LEFT HER MARK in VHSL history with a state title and meet record in the same week that she committed to run for the University of North Carolina.

"I felt really good today," Alcorta said. "It definitely hurt, but I felt a lot stronger than I had."

Lake Braddock senior Hannah Christen finished state runner-up with a time of 17:52, improving on her 2012 third-place time of 17:54.

"It felt good," Christen said. "I felt strong the whole time. I hadn't felt that way this season yet, so it was nice."

Christen was Lake Braddock's top harrier this season. While she was successful in the past, her achievements were overshadowed by those of Chase, who finished second in the state as a sophomore in 2010 before winning back-to-



West Springfield senior Caroline Alcorta won the 6A state cross country championship on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow with a meet-record time of 17:13.



Lake Braddock senior Hannah Christen finished 6A runner-up during the VHSL state cross country meet on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow.

The Lake Braddock boys' cross country team finished 6A runner-up at the VHSL state meet on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow.



back titles as a junior and senior.

"Hannah's been a great leader all year and finally gets her chance to shine," Lake Braddock head coach Michael Mangan said. "It's pretty hard to be the understudy with such a super teammate in front who's a three-time Foot Locker finalist. [If] she's in any other program, she's the star and gets a lot more attention. She patiently awaited her time and when it was her opportunity, she's really come through."

With the graduation of Chase, who now runs for Stanford University, and the loss of all-state harrier Katie Roche to injury prior to the Conference 7 meet near the end of October, Lake Braddock

faced a sizeable challenge in regard to defending its 2012 team state championship. The Bruins didn't back down, however, and with runners sporting the initials "KR" on their hands in support of Roche, Lake Braddock finished third with a score of 112. Oakton won the team title with a score of 55 and Washington-Lee (100) finished second.

"Because of Katie being hurt, we were pretty much written off by everybody," Mangan said. "We like that. I'll always be the underdog."

Lake Braddock senior Katy Kunc placed third with a time of 17:59. Sophomore Sonya Butseva finished 23rd with a time of 18:56. Freshman Kate Murphy (20:01)

was 57th and senior Kathryn Voetglin (20:21) finished 65th.

Despite their third-place finish, the Bruins were not recognized at the podium, as a change was made this year to recognize only the top two teams.

"I'm disappointed that the state decided to only recognize two teams this year when we've always recognized three," Mangan said. "I'll probably get myself in trouble right now saying that, but it's really not right. These girls busted their butts to get up on that podium. It's not the trophy; it's the recognition in front of your peers for what you've done. They earned that."

Robinson junior Lauren Berman

Football Playoffs

The Lake Braddock, Robinson and South County football teams remain alive in the 6A North playoffs.

No. 2-seed Lake Braddock defeated No. 15 Chantilly 56-31 on Nov. 15 and will host No. 7 Yorktown in the quarterfinals at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 22.

No. 11 Robinson knocked off No. 6 Patriot 35-13 in the opening round and will travel to face No. 3 Westfield on Friday. Westfield won the teams' regular-season matchup 14-13.

No. 8 South County defeated No. 9 T.C. Williams 51-27 and will travel to face No. 1 Centerville on Friday.

finished 13th with a time of 18:29 and earned all-state honors.

IN BOYS' ACTION, Lake Braddock finished state runner-up with a score of 87. Chantilly repeated as state champion with a score of 85.

"It's really nice for the boys to get their moment in the sun because they've earned it — they've worked their tails off," Mangan said. "... They have had to watch the girls win a lot of races and that's pretty hard to take."

Lake Braddock junior Alex Corbett finished state runner-up with a time of 15:35. Bruins senior Forrest Isenhour (16:12) finished 26th, senior Kevin Jones (16:13) was 28th, junior Kevin Monogue (16:16) was 30th and sophomore Ben Fogg (16:17) finished 31st.

Mangan was pleased that the Lake Braddock boys' and girls' teams each finished in the top three of their respective races.

"For us, we feel like that makes us the best combined program in the state," he said. "We'll take that. We might not have been No. 1 [in] either race, but we'll count No. 1 overall and we'll take that."

Robinson finished third with a score of 89, followed by Battlefield (89), Osbourn Park (98) and Oakton (133).

Oakton's John Stoney won the individual title with a time of 15:24. South County's Alec Jones (15:53) placed sixth and Robinson's Nathan Schulte (15:57) placed 10th.

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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.

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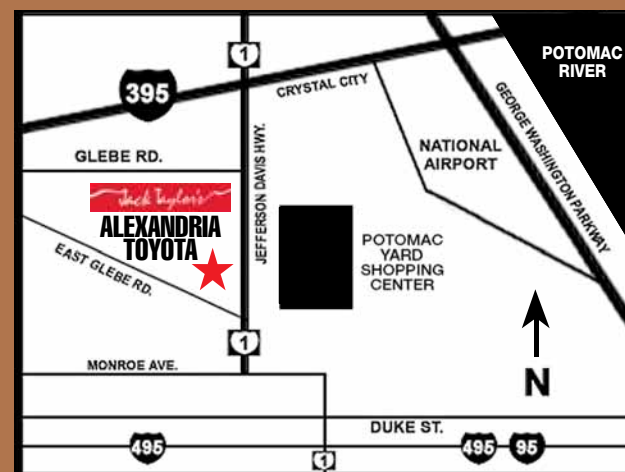
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