

Holiday Fun for Everyone

NEWS, PAGE 10

A half-a-million crystal and colored lights set Meadowlark Gardens aglow in the second Winter Walk of Lights. Tickets are timed.

Tyson's Plan Debated

NEWS, PAGE 3

Warrior Canine Connection Celebrates First Graduation

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



From left: Fairfax County Public Schools Board Members Patricia Reed (Providence District) and Megan McLaughlin (Braddock District) attended the meeting at Frost Middle School to update the community on FCPS's goal to bring later start times to the region's high schools. Both are ardent supporters of the plan.



From left: Dr. Judith Owens, MD, MPH, D'ABSM is the Director of Sleep Medicine for Children's National Medical Center and heads the consultant group contracted by Fairfax County Public Schools to study the later start times and to present cost-effective scenarios for implementing the change. She is joined by Monica Cameron, Frost PTA President, Lisa Ross, Woodson Pyramid Coordinator, and Phyllis Payne, co-founder of Start Later for Excellence in Education Proposal (SLEEP).

For Whom The [School] Bell Tolls

School district works toward later start times for high schools.

ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Would you send your teenagers to school or put them behind the wheel after allowing them to down two or three alcoholic beverages? Hopefully not. But the effect of sleep deprivation on the average adolescent has been shown to be impairment equal to – if not more than – just that amount of alcohol. And more and more parents, teachers, school authorities, doctors, and many others increasingly agree that the sleep-deprived state is the plane on which the majority of our kids exist today. One way to help them catch a few more hours of sleep per week is to delay the school start time.

You would think that a small change in the start times of Fairfax County high schools – from 7:20 a.m. to 8 a.m. or a bit after – would be a relatively simple thing to enact. Like Captain Picard aboard the Starship Enterprise, why can't the Powers That Be simply command "Make it so," and that would be the end of it? "There's a huge ripple effect to be considered," explained Patricia Reed, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Board Member, Providence District, to a small gathering last Monday night at Frost Middle School in Fairfax, organized by a partnership of PTAs and the founders of Start Later for Excellence in Education Proposal (SLEEP). Reed is a supporter of the delayed start times and sympathized with the frustration being expressed by the assembled parents and other stakeholders.

There was lots of head nodding and murmurs of agreement when Mantua resident Shannon Murphy asked questions like, "How much of the decision to move forward is based on transportation issues and expense? On budget shortfalls?" and "Why can other counties like Arlington and Loudoun start later, but Fairfax is taking years to get to the same place?"

Reed and her fellow Board Member, Megan McLaughlin (Braddock District) addressed the audience for almost an hour, while awaiting the arrival of the evening's key guest speaker, renowned sleep authority Dr. Judith Owens, Director of Sleep Medicine and Children's National Medical Center in DC, and the head of the consulting collaborative contracted by FCPS to study the proposed new start times and provide workable solutions for their enactment. Both could not have spoken more passionately on the topic. "As Dr. Owens will elaborate upon," stated McLaughlin, "our sleep deprived kids are a quiet health crisis in Fairfax County."

McLaughlin and Reed gave a succinct, and often brutally honest, history of the movement toward delayed start times in the county. "Even though the vast majority supports later start times, when we presented the final proposal for implementation in 2009, almost everyone protested, even those most in favor of the idea," admitted McLaughlin, "and the change was ultimately voted down. Some people took that to mean that later start times weren't wanted, but that wasn't the case. The solutions that were presented at the time were flawed, didn't take into account all of the obstacles or solicit enough input from the parents, teachers, administrators, transportation providers, and all of the others who would be affected by the change."

"So what will give this attempt a greater chance of success than the 2009 effort?"

Reasons to Start Later

- ❖ Districts with start times like ours have significantly higher teen car crash rates.
 - ❖ 1 in 4 Fairfax teens suffers from symptoms of depression.
 - ❖ 2 in 3 Fairfax teens are severely sleep deprived (lose 2 or more hours of sleep every school night).
 - ❖ More than 1,000 Fairfax students dropped out of high school in 2011-12.
 - ❖ Transportation experts have modeled no-cost and low-cost approaches that retain safe, daylight bus stops for elementary students.
 - ❖ Teens with later school start times do get more sleep. This advantage adds up to almost one month of sleep gained by the end of the school year.
- Adequate sleep improves learning, memory, mood, and performance in school, sports, and other activities
- Information from the Start Later For Excellence in Education Proposal (SLEEP) (www.sleepinfoairfax.org for references and research)

asked a number of the attendees, almost in unison.

ONE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE is the change in the makeup of the Board since that time, as well as the arrival of new Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Karen Garza. "I am really hopeful that we will get this done," said McLaughlin, "and Dr. Garza has shown real support for this change." The gathering shared her enthusiasm, but expressed dismay when warned that a county-wide roll-out probably wouldn't happen in time for the start of the 2014-2015 school season, although McLaughlin expressed confidence that some sort of limited implementation could possibly be ready by then. "In the end, it may not be a one-size fits all solution for every district and every school, given the differences in the communities throughout our county," said Board Member Reed.

"We are taking into account transportation issues, athletic programs, daycare concerns, students who work after school, even

the amount of homework our students are given," said Reed. Dr. Owens, her team and her collaborators hope to present their "Blueprint for Change" to the Superintendent and the Board sometime in January of 2014. Reed and McLaughlin did not provide specifics, but spoke to some of the barriers that are being addressed. "No doubt you have all been hearing about our budget shortfall, so cost is always a consideration. But there are ways and means to find the money," stated McLaughlin. "We are talking a serious threat to our children's health and welfare. We need to get more serious about finding the means."

Shannon Murphy and several others complained of bus stops where there are no students to collect, and others where it takes several weeks at the start of each school year for a bus to consistently collect. "They say Fairfax County runs the second largest fleet of buses after Greyhound," noted McLaughlin, "so I know there are some problems we need to work on." Several audience members responded that the county should consider contracting transportation to Greyhound, or even to FedEx as companies known for their ability to provide efficient routing and logistics on a large scale.

Teacher morale, the perception of too much administrative work versus teaching time, and other transportation disconnects – like Woodson students getting out of school at 2:05 p.m. but having to wait until 3 p.m. for sports practice to begin were some of the other topics that Reed and McLaughlin gamely tackled from the audience before Dr. Owens took the floor.

Dr. Owens, the author of over 100 research and review articles, chapters and books on the topic of pediatric sleep, highlighted the work of her consulting team, then provided

SEE SLEEP, PAGE 5

Tysons Plan Debated

Follow-up dialogue with County staff on Phase I, Land Use.

BY RUSS UGONE
THE CONNECTION

As part of the Tysons Plan Amendment Process, a follow-up meeting on Dec. 4 was held by the Fairfax County Planning Staff with the public at Freedom Hill Elementary School. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss proposed changes to Phase 1 of the Tysons Plan. Implementation of the Tysons Development Plan began in 2010, after a 5 year planning process. Areas such as Ballston and Rosslyn were used as models when the plan was being developed. Construction at Tysons is expected to be completed in the year 2050 when Tysons will be home to 100,000 residents and 200,000 jobs.

Matthew Ladd, Senior Planner, Planning Division, Fairfax County, said that "this was the first of three meetings on recommendations from the public to the 2010 Tysons Development Plan." He added that "the recommendations would be grouped into three phases, Land Use, Transportation and Parks, and Public Facilities." Fairfax County planners will hold separate meetings with the public to discuss the results of examining each phase's recommendations in order to seek comments on proposed changes. Final decisions on amendment to the Plan will be made by the Board of Supervisors in 2015.

AT THIS MEETING, three recommendations and outcomes pertaining to Land Use were covered. The first recommendation pertained to increasing the density level over what was planned for office space development. Based on comments received from the public sector, the Board of Supervisors asked for a study. As a result, the Board approved new language that was added to the Tysons Plan which would strengthen the monitoring on infrastructure and funding progress during the construction phase. This progress reporting process would allow for future changes that would be needed to complement the Tysons plan; for example, a funding plan that tracks with



Suzianne Zottl, Revitalization Program Manager, and Matthew Ladd, Senior Planner, Planning Division, Fairfax County.



Vienna residents David Roberts and Laura Abbot.

growth. David Roberts, a Vienna resident, said that "the Tysons Development was happening in an artificial manner," explaining that "cities normally grow because of need, but here at Tysons, businesses got together and decided to build the city first." Rob Whitfield, a Reston resident, added that "the occupied office space at Tysons is at the same level it was 13 years ago." He also expressed concern that all available county resources are going to the Tysons area, especially when there are needs for parking at the other Silver Line Metro stations. The second recommendation pertained to adding density at the Circulator Route stops. Ladd said that "while the goal is to have as much growth as possible at the metro stations, this recommendation was not adopted at this time." The plan calls for a high-quality bus service to connect the Tysons Metro Stations. Currently, 95 percent of the traffic at Tysons is vehicle traffic and the Plan seeks to increase public transportation. Laura Abbot, a Vienna resident, commented that there will be a need for public transportation since there will be no parking at the Tysons stations. She was also concerned with the cost of such a Circulator Route, and said

that "the prior Circulator bus had very low ridership and was funded by taxpayers." Some of the residents in attendance said that transportation and funding were key issues and that it comes down to who will pay for these services, taxpayers or developers.

The third recommendation was to separate calculations for Affordable Workforce Housing by distinguishing between calculations for condominiums (for sale units) versus rental units.

THE TYSONS PLAN calls for reserving 20 percent of the residences for "affordable and workforce housing." This language to separate calculations was not added to the plan.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Whitfield reiterated an overall recommendation for a fiscal plan that showed total costs and sources of such funds. The audience was in agreement, and the County planners stated that they would take this recommendation back to the Board of Supervisors. Dates for the remaining two meetings were not available at this time. To learn more about the plan for Tysons and the proposed amendments, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/tysons.

PHOTOS BY RUSS UGONE/THE CONNECTION

Online Launch for 2013 Wish List Project

Being a Wish List "Angel" easier than ever before in 14 year history of The Wish List Project.

BY JEAN T. JIANOS
THE CONNECTION

With a little help from her friends, Great Falls resident Ginger Mahon, founder of The Wish List Project, has taken The Wish List high-tech. A Wish List "Angel," donor Lissa Perez, assisted Mahon with building online sign up capability for The 2013 Wish List Project on the website "SignUp Genius." Perez is a Great Falls resident and partner at Deloitte & Touche, LLP.

Now Wish List Angels are sent email invitations and the link to sign up for any of the holiday gift items requested by families in area shelters and teens in Fairfax County foster care. In her email announcing the new online capability, Mahon says,

"This year (our 14th year making a difference!) will bring a new and exciting way for ALL to see the Wish List requests, choose and donate. You will receive all the information: easy to share with family, friends and office mates with just a 'click' using SignUp Genius link . . . YOU are going to make this an amazing year for children and families in need this holiday!"

Once again, The Wish List Project is part of Paisano's "Share the Pie" campaign. Paisano's "Pizza, Pasta, Subs, Strombolis, Wings & More," with locations in Reston, Vienna and Herndon, will donate 10 percent of any order on Sunday,

Dec. 15 that mentions "The Wish List." 100 percent of donations will go directly to The Wish List.

Another Wish List Angel and donor of the past 14 years, Patrick Devlin of Great Falls, has already delivered bins that are ready and waiting for the donated gifts that will be dropped-off no later than Saturday, Dec. 14.



The 2013 Wish List Project sign up on signupgenius.com is a user-friendly way to donate holiday gift items requested by families in area shelters and teens in Fairfax County foster care.

The visual impact of the online list re-emphasizes the enormous need that The Wish List has fulfilled for the past 14 years, benefiting over 325 gift recipients last year. The list of gifts already pledged is impressive, but there are items requested by families and foster teens still to be selected and donated. You really don't have to be a genius, just generous. Contact Mahon at gingermahon@aol.com for the email invitation and signupgenius.com link.

PHOTO BY JEAN T. JIANOS/THE CONNECTION



Graduates, their trainers and new owners gather during the ceremony.



PHOTOS BY SUSAN BELFORD/THE CONNECTION

Rick Yount awards Patty Kennedy who accepts flowers for all she has done to support Warrior Canine Connection.

Warrior Canine Connection Celebrates First Graduation

Vienna's Patty Kennedy honored.

BY SUSAN BELFORD

The graduation ceremony was like every other commencement. It included a graduation speaker, honored guests, the National Anthem, an invocation and a crowd of spectators cheering as the grads took their places on stage. They were proud to have just completed their schooling and ready to enter the next phase of their lives, meet more challenges and discover new horizons. These honored graduates are five assistance dogs named Navi, Ron, Cadence, Birdie and Gabe. After 2 and a half years, these service dogs have mastered the required skills and intuition to become the best friend and partners of Wounded Warriors. The canine graduates also represent the success of the Wounded Warrior teams who trained them for their fellow Wounded Warriors and the puppy parent volunteers who cared for them in their homes.

The Warrior Canine Connection (WCC) is part of the National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE) at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, a state-of-the-art facility dedicated to the diagnosis, clinical care and research of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) as well as to the psychological conditions that affect Service Members and their families. Therapists at NICoE have discov-



Army Sgt. Justin Lansford, Carol Balmes and Gabe at the graduation ceremony of five assistance dogs in the Warrior Canine Connection program.

ered that teaching service members and veterans with combat stress to train service dogs for their fellow Wounded Warriors has shown promise as being therapeutic for the Warrior-trainers.

At the graduation, Rick Yount explained how WCC began: "It

started about 18 years ago, when two friends were concerned about another friend and decided to give a very thoughtful, caring gift of a golden retriever puppy. I was the recipient of that puppy at the time." He was working with foster children and families and of-

ten took the puppy, Gabe, to work with him. Soon he realized that this "very special dog" was helping his clients deal with the trauma in their lives. He was struck with an "a-ha" moment that would change his life — and the lives of Wounded Warriors.

In 2008, he created a service dog-training program to address symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and TBI in veterans and service members who are in treatment. WCC was established in 2011 for the purpose of expanding this concept to additional facilities caring for Wounded Warriors and "helping to bring the healing power of the best dogs to our heroes." Yount serves as executive director of WCC, a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization.

During the ceremony, Yount reflected on the original act of kindness of his friends giving him the golden retriever puppy and the subsequent acts of benevolence of supporters who have advanced the mission of WCC. He said that so many people have gotten involved, with the right people coming together at the right time. He specifically recognized the contributions of Vienna resident Patty Kennedy, who has supported his efforts over the past four years to demonstrate the efficacy of service dog training as a therapeutic intervention for the invisible wounds of war. A former aide to retired U.S. Sen. John Warner, Kennedy has also worked with Yount to convey to DOD and VA medical officials and policy-makers the benefits of the Warrior Canine Connection program to the nation's Wounded Warriors and their families. She was honored for her dedi-

cation and perseverance in the development of WCC and for serving by Yount's side at NICoE.

"I am very grateful to be involved in a program that has such positive impacts on injured combat Veterans and their spouses and children," Kennedy said. "I have witnessed firsthand the extraordinary capacity of WCC's dogs to know just what the Warriors need as they struggle to overcome their psychological and physical wounds. I have no doubt that with Rick's tireless determination, and the commitment of WCC's staff, volunteers and supporters, that WCC dogs will play an important role in the healing of Wounded Warriors in treatment facilities throughout the country and will be in the forefront of research associated with Animal-Assisted Therapy."

The service dogs are bred by Molly Morelli, WCC's dog program director and wife of Rick Yount, at their WCC's Brookville Training facility. The puppies are taught to open doors, fetch needed items, even to help the wounded vet take off socks and shoes. They turn lights on and off, open the refrigerator and accompany them everywhere, providing a sense of safety and security. Because of their unconditional love and dedication, they offer the Wounded Warrior a calm presence which helps them when they feel troubled or can't sleep. They also aid them in becoming more social — the dog serves as a social lubricant and helps the Wounded Warrior feel more comfortable in public places. In return, the Wounded Warrior must accept the duties of taking

SEE GRADUATION, PAGE 8

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

SLEEP Promotes Later Start Times

FROM PAGE 4

an overview on the science of sleep and adolescents. As FCPS Board Member McLaughlin promised, for many Owens' presentation was, indeed, eye-opening.

A MEDICAL DOCTOR as well as a researcher, Owens presented physiological evidence that at puberty, the adolescent brain experiences numerous changes, including a shift in the body's "master clock" that controls circadian rhythm, influencing sleep-wake cycles among other bodily functions. "At adolescence, kids are just programmed to sleep a little later, stay up a little later," said Owens. "Forcing them to ignore this biology disrupts the sleep cycle, sometimes dangerously. The deepest REM sleep takes place during the last third of sleep, just when we are waking them up to get ready for the bus. As the week goes on, the child gets more and more sleep deprived, then tries to 'catch-up' with a long sleep on the weekends." Studies show that there is no real benefit to the "catch-up plan." "Instead," said Owens, "it's like these kids eventually enter a



Shannon Murphy came from nearby Mantua. A firm supporter of later start times, Murphy keeps up with the FCSP happenings.

semi-permanent jet lag state. Not exactly peak conditions for learning, thinking creatively, engaging in sports, or just about any aspect of daily life. Worse, studies are showing sleep deprivation in our kids is having negative effects on their health and welfare a long way down the road as well."

Owens provided data linking prolonged abnormal sleep patterns with diabetes, obesity, depression, bipolar and other disorders.

Owens discussed examples of other districts around the country that have made the change to later start times. She provided statistics from these school districts showing increased attendance, decreased tardiness, reports of less depression in the student population, better test scores, and "Here's a biggie," she said. "The data shows the areas where school starts later for high schoolers report fewer car crashes involving these young drivers. When you think about it, it makes sense. The kids behind the wheel are more awake and more aware of risks."



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Martha Purnell and her daughter Hannah. The Purnells recently moved to the area from Wisconsin, where school's started later. Hannah attends Marshall High School.

To date, she has spoken at more than ten PTA-organized events and continues to solicit input from the public.

"I am ready to keep showing up to talk about these issues and get feedback and suggestions. Changing the start times of high school is key to solving this growing health crisis, but we still need to educate students and

parents on the importance of getting enough sleep."

More information on the proposal and on the science and statistics of sleep in adolescence can be found at the Fairfax County Public Schools' website, www.fcps.edu, Dr. Owens' website www.smartschoolstart.org, and at the SLEEP website www.sleepinfairfax.org.

FAITH NOTES

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

Historic Antioch Christian Church, 1860 Beulah Road in Vienna, invites the community to come and Go Sing-Along Coffee House. Great musicians will share music. Join us for a selection of delicious coffees and sweets, fun singing, and for an opportunity to see inside our beautiful chapel. Photos will be taken for your family Christmas card. Free. Children can ring the historic church bell. Saturday, Dec. 14, 1 - 3 p.m., 1860 Beulah Road, Vienna. All are welcome. For more information go to www.antiochdoc.org

GriefShare, a weekly support group for adults grieving the death of a loved one, meets Sundays 6-7:30 p.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Part St., Vienna with a video/discussion format through Dec. 8. \$20 for workbook. GriefShare@viennapres.org.

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. 703-941-7000 or www.havenofnova.org.

St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, 1830 Kirby Road in McLean, holds a third Sunday service every month at 10:15 a.m. which allows children to play active roles in the music and as greeters and ushers.

Traditional services are every Sunday at 8:15 and 10:15 a.m.

Visit These Houses of Worship To Highlight Your Faith Community, call Karen at 703-917-6468

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Baha'i Faith for Northern Virginia ... 703-821-3345
Baptist
Global Mission Church ... 703-757-0877
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Bethel Primitive Baptist Church ... 703-757-8134
Cartersville Baptist Church ... 703-255-7075
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Our Lady of Good Counsel ... 703-938-2828
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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
Antioch Christian Church ... 703-938-6753
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Church of the Holy Comforter ... 703-938-6521
Church of the Holy Cross ... 703-698-6991
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Jehovah's Witnesses ... 703-759-1579
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Unitarian Universalist
Congregation of Fairfax ... 703-281-4230
United Church of Christ
Emmaus United Church of Christ ... 703-938-1555
Unity
Unity of Fairfax ... 703-281-1767</p> |
|---|---|--|



OPINION

Happy Holidays, Safely

SoberRide safety net, 1-800-200-TAXI.

Holiday party season is well under way, along with winter weather advisories. It's up to individuals to make good decisions about celebrations that involve alcohol and how to handle transportation.

Plan to abstain. Plan to celebrate at home or someplace where you will be comfortable for some period of time. Plan to bring a designated driver. Plan to take public transportation. And if all of that fails, the Washington Regional Alcohol Project has a safety net for you.

WRAP, a local nonprofit organization, will offer free cab rides to would-be drunk drivers throughout Northern Virginia during the winter holidays.

More than 10,000 died in drunk driving related accidents in 2010. Tens of thousands

more were injured. Holidays lead to an increase in impaired driving, the Christmas and New Year season in particular.

The annual Holiday SoberRide program will operate nightly from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. starting Friday, Dec. 13, 2013, and continuing until Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period.

During these times, area residents celebrating with alcohol can call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI for a no-cost (up to \$30 fare), safe way home.

Callers will be responsible for fare amounts over \$30. Last December 1,927 people took advantage of this program. On New Year's Eve alone, 387 people call on SoberRide for a safe trip home.

SoberRide is offered in throughout the Northern Virginia and Maryland suburbs. In these areas, local taxicab companies will be providing this no-cost service to local residents

age 21 and older who might otherwise have attempted to drive home after drinking.

Since 1993, WRAP's SoberRide program has provided 58,576 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

We know that many young people over 21 are living at home with parents, or will be visiting for the holidays. Parents, be brave. Have a conversation with your children whether they are under or over 21. Be sure those over 21 have a plan, and are equipped with the SoberRide number.

SoberRide is not available for underage drinkers, but parents still should talk to their children about their plans, and tell them out loud that you expect them not to drive impaired and not to get into a car with an impaired driver. Tell them to call, and you'll come get them if necessary.

It's a good time for a conversation about the risks of drinking to excess beyond drinking and driving as well.

EDITORIAL

One Year Since Newtown – It's Time for Congress to Act

BY MARTINA LEINZ

A few months ago, I met the father of one of the first-graders murdered at Sandy Hook Elementary School. I expressed how sorry I was for his loss and how grateful I was that he had found the strength to fight for sensible gun laws in an attempt to spare other families the pain he has suffered. What I did not share, because it did not seem appropriate, was just how deeply I was grieving too. None of those children were mine, but they all felt like mine. They were America's children.

I don't believe I am alone in these feelings. The carnage at Sandy Hook Elementary School one year ago (Dec. 14, 2012) was devastating not just to the families and community of Newtown, Conn., but to the entire nation. Twenty first-graders and six educators were murdered by a deranged individual in possession of dangerous weapons that he never should have had. It affected us all.

We will never fully recover from this tragedy as individuals or as a nation but there is much that Congress can do to prevent other tragedies like this from occurring. A critically important step is to enact sensible legislation to require background checks on all gun sales.

Many people incorrectly assume that we already conduct universal

background checks on gun purchasers but the Brady law, enacted 20 years ago, only covers about 60 percent of gun sales. It does not cover online purchases, sales through classified ads or transactions by private sellers at gun shows. This leaves the door wide open for criminals, terrorists, domestic abusers and those adjudicated mentally ill to purchase guns without having to pass a background check.

Imagine if the FDA only screened 60 percent of pharmaceutical drugs and allowed the other 40 percent to hit store shelves with no testing, no screening, and no questions asked. It does not sound very safe, does it? Well, that is exactly the scenario we face with gun purchases in this country.

Our children deserve better than 60 percent when it comes to background checks. This is because like FDA testing, when done completely, background checks work. Since President Clinton signed the Brady bill into law, background checks have blocked more than 2 million purchases, keeping guns away from convicted felons and other dangerous people.

It is now time for Congress to finish the job and expand Brady background checks to cover all gun sales. A bipartisan bill, H.R. 1565, the Public Safety and Second Amendment Rights Protection Act of 2013, has been introduced

in the House that would do just that. It has already been co-sponsored by 186 Representatives including Congressmen Connolly, Moran, and Scott of Virginia. None of the Republican Representatives from Virginia have yet co-sponsored this important legislation. Hopefully they will soon.

This is not a partisan issue, nor is it a Second Amendment issue. There is nothing inconsistent with respecting the right for law-abiding citizens to own guns while trying to keep them out of the hands of dangerous individuals. More than 90 percent of Americans support extending background checks including over 80 percent of responsible gun owners and NRA members. It is time for Congress to listen to the public and enact

sensible solutions meant to reduce the number of gun deaths. In a country where gun violence kills more than thirty-one thousand people a year, sixty percent is not getting the job done.

To commemorate the lives taken in Newtown and the more than 32 people killed by guns each day in the United States, Congress should act now and require that background checks be conducted on all commercial gun sales. Keeping guns away from dangerous individuals is an important step to curbing the epidemic of gun violence devastating our country.

Martina Leinz is President, Million Mom March, Northern Virginia Chapter, the grassroots wing of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.

Humanity at Its Finest

To the Editor:

Thank you to the ladies and police of Vienna who gave support and encouragement to a handicapped old lady whose walker tipped and she ended up waiting an hour in the street for an ambulance. This was kindness and comfort way beyond the call of duty. Thank you for examples of humanity at its finest.

Gratefully,

Clare Schwartz
Oakton

Vienna & Oakton CONNECTION

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NEWS

Karin's Florist of Vienna Named Best in America

Vienna's Karin's Florist has been named the Best Florist in America by the hit daytime show "Steve Harvey" as part of its first annual Neighborhood Awards. Airing on Friday, Nov. 29, the "Steve Harvey" Neighborhood Awards recognize the unsung individuals and businesses who exemplify excellence in their communities. Categories this year include: Best Daycare Provider, Best Principal, Best Bus Driver, Best Police Officer, Best Deli, Best Bakery, Best Pizzeria, Best Florist, Best Steakhouse and Best Coffee Shop. Viewer votes determined both the nominees and the final winners. "Steve Harvey" is a nationally syndicated daytime show - check local listings for time and channel.

Family owned and operated since 1956, Karin's Florist has award winning floral designs, gourmet gift baskets and specialty gifts for any occasion. Karin's Florist can deliver your order anywhere, whether it is right down the street or across the globe. Karin's stands by their motto, "Flowers Worth Remembering" and is dedicated to providing a high level of outstanding customer service, quality and value to each and every customer.

Karin's Florist is actively involved in the community and participates in many organizations. They are members of Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce, Vienna Business Association, Tysons Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Fairfax. Maris Angolia, President, serves on the Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts Associates Board and



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Maris Angolia, President of Karin's Florist, receives the Best Florist in America award.

the 2015 World Police and Fire Games Board of Directors as well as the Inova Gala Executive Committee. Visit www.karinsflorist.com for more information.

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NEWS

Celebrating Graduation

FROM PAGE 4

care of their dog and understand that patience, love and caring go along with owning an animal.

Vice Admiral Matthew L. Nathan, Surgeon General of the Navy and Chief of the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery was the keynote speaker at the graduation. He stated that he is "humbled by the people who serve and step forward wherever they are needed." In describing the Wounded Warriors, he said, "But then, all of a sudden, this heroic person is not the same — they are an amputee, has brain trauma, gunshot wounds or is suffering from the invisible wounds of the war. I've watched them fight their way back. These servicemen and women just want their lives returned — and a dog who loves so unconditionally can help them get it back. I am honored to be a part of this ceremony. It shows what can happen when you light one candle and pass it on to light the entire room. Thank you to the teams who have trained these dogs — and for the lives you will change."



PHOTO BY SUSAN BELFORD/THE CONNECTION

Vice Admiral Matthew Nathan, Rick Yount and Patty Kennedy at the graduation ceremony.

The dogs were awarded to the servicemen and women and their families while the crowd watched.

WCC's program now includes 40 dogs — and some will be ready to graduate in the Class of 2014.

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NEWS

Madison High Senior Olivia Staton to Appear on NPR's From the Top

James Madison High School senior, Olivia Staton, 16, will appear on a national broadcast of From the Top on NPR, the pre-eminent showcase for America's best young classical musicians, hosted by acclaimed pianist Christopher O'Riley. The episode will air locally on 90.9 FM on Dec. 22 at 6 p.m.

On the broadcast taped at Wingate, N.C., on Nov. 23, Staton performs "Chant de Linos" by Andre Jolivet.

Staton, 16, a senior at James Madison High School, is in her second year in the National Symphony Youth Orchestra Fellowship Program where she studies with NSO principal flutist Aaron Goldman. She has been principal flute of the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestra for the past three years,

and has won numerous awards for her performances including first place in the Richmond Flute Competition, second place in the U.S. Navy Band Concerto



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Olivia Staton, 16, will appear on a national broadcast of From the Top on NPR.

Competition, and third place in the Duquesne Concerto Competition. Olivia is a member of the National Honor Society, Tri M Music Honor Society and French Honor Society. She has attended the Boston University Tanglewood Institute for the past two summers.

What began as a radio experiment in 2000 quickly became one of the fastest growing and most popular weekly classical music programs on public radio. Broadcast on over 200 stations nationwide to an audience of 700,000 loyal listeners, From the Top has been described by the Boston Globe as "an entertaining, accessible and inspirational mix of outstanding musical performances, informal interviews, skits and games; the show is a celebration of extraordinary musicians who happen to be teenagers leading fairly normal lives."

Learn more at www.fromthetop.org.

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VIENNA/OAKTON CONNECTION ♦ DECEMBER 11-17, 2013 ♦ 9



A toy soldier accompanies Frosty the Snowman during the James Madison High School Band Tiny Tots holiday concert.



Lunch with Santa at the Vienna Community Center is an annual sell-out. Santa visits there on Saturday, Dec. 14.

Holiday Fun for Everyone

Season highlights sparkling winter wonderland to Santa visits.

By DONNA MANZ
THE CONNECTION

The weather outside may not be frightful, but it sure has that wintry feel to it. Fortunately, there are seasonable activities and events that warm up December days and brighten December nights.

The Vienna-Oakton Connection takes a look at readers' favorites, year after year, plus a debut First Night celebration likely to become a readers' favorite year after year.

❖ Winter Walk of Lights Meadowlark Gardens, ongoing through Jan. 6

As if Meadowlark Botanical Gardens is not spectacular enough in the fall with its crimson and gold foliage, you've got to see the park aglow with a half a million diamond and colored LED lights in displays and on the landscape. From a gingerbread house to animated vignettes, there is enough sparkle to brighten the chilly nights. This is the second year the park has produced its winter wonderland.

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights is open from 5:30 to 10 p.m. seven days a week from Nov. 15 to Jan. 6. Timed tickets required; shows and entertainment are included in admission price.

Monday-Thursday (excluding holidays): Age 13+: \$12; ages 3-12: \$7; under 3: Free.

Weekend & Holiday Rates (Friday to Sunday): Nov. 28, 29, Dec. 24, 25, 31, Jan. 1, Age

13+: \$13; age 3-12: \$8; under 3: free

At the door: a limited number of tickets are on sale at the door each night and admission is not guaranteed. No discounts apply. Age 13+: \$14; age 3-12: \$9; under 3: free

Meadowlark Gardens is off Beulah Road, at 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Ct., Vienna, near the Dulles Toll Road overpass. It is a Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority property.

❖ Lunch With Santa, Saturday, Dec. 14

It's no wonder Santa is so plump; he's eating breakfast and lunch all over Vienna in December. You can join him for lunch at the Vienna Community Center, shortly after he's feasted on all-he-can-eat pancakes at breakfast at the fire department. The cost of \$5 per person includes Santa, lunch, and entertainment. Lunch with Santa runs from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. Limited tickets are available, so stop by the community center for tickets well in advance.

Holiday pancake breakfast at the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, Saturday, Dec. 14, 8 a.m. to noon in the Flame Room of the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department station.

The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department [VVFD] Auxiliary hosts its annual All-You-Can-Eat Holiday Pancake Breakfast at the VVFD, 400 Center Street S. The price includes all the pancakes you can eat, sausage, bacon, juice, and coffee.

Santa Claus arrives at 10:30 a.m. to greet the children. There will be tours of the fire equipment, as well.

The Auxiliary invites the public to "have some pancakes, visit with

Santa and spend time with members of the VVFD and Vienna community."

Price of the holiday pancake breakfast is \$8 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$6 for children under 12 years old, and free for children under 4.

❖ Radio City Christmas Spectacular excursion is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 14, for the 4:30 p.m. matinee, sponsored by the Town of Vienna. This trip sells out quickly, the Department of Parks and Recreation says. The trip costs \$138 for residents and \$172.50 for out-of-town participants. Price includes transportation to NYC and tickets in the 200 section of the 3rd mezzanine in Radio City Music Hall. The tour is appropriate for ages 5 and up.

The Rockettes, who have been kicking up their heels for generations of kids, perform their famed routine of "The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers." A charter bus departs the Vienna Community Center at 6:30 a.m. and returns around 1 a.m. Fee includes transportation and one ticket to the show. There will be movies shown on the bus and a stop going and returning. Free time before and after the show is built into the schedule. Buy tickets at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street.

Call 703-255-6360 for details or visit www.viennava.gov.

❖ Santa visits the Freeman Store, Saturday, Dec. 14, and Sunday, Dec. 15, 1 to 3 p.m.

There's not much of a waiting line at the Freeman House when Santa takes a seat in the parlor. The setting is not an artificial North Pole, either. It's a pleasant alternative to the mall's Santa.

❖ VVFD Santa Runs, mid-December to Dec. 24

Around mid-December, Santa

Claus climbs onboard the antique fire truck belonging to the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, and, along with elves dressed as emergency responders, visits neighborhoods throughout Vienna. Very loud seasonal music emanates from the cruising vehicle and Santa's driver honks the horn as it announces its impending arrival up and down town streets. Where children converge, Santa stops and his elves distribute candy canes.

Occasionally, senior citizens open their doors, waving to Santa. Santa is probably delighted that folks of all ages are happy to see him.

❖ The Vienna Choral Society, a holiday concert "for a cause," Saturday, Dec. 21.

This holiday season, the choral society partners with the Women's Center of Vienna in support of mental health awareness in the choral society's performance of "Light and Dark," a 4:30 p.m. presentation recognizing the winter solstice.

For tickets and details, go to www.viennachoralsociety.org.

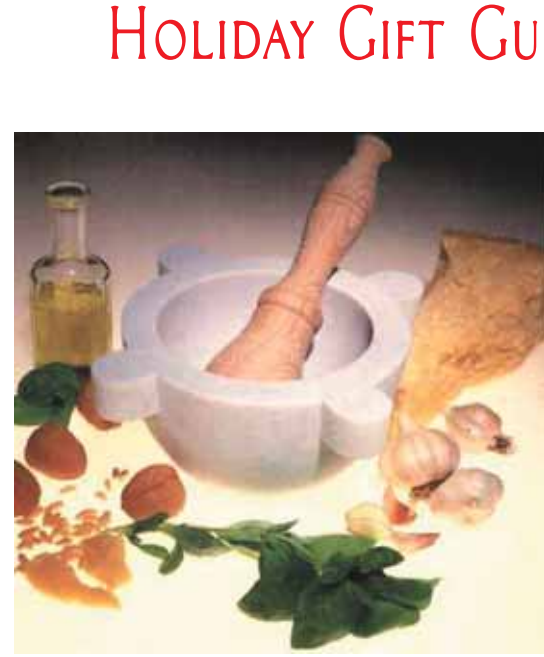
❖ First Night Vienna Celebration, Dec. 31; 7 p.m. to midnight

The Vienna Business Association, in partnership with the Town of Vienna, kicks off the first-ever "First Night" celebration in Vienna. A family-friendly New Year's Eve celebration, First Night features food, musicians, vocalists, and activities for kids. The ball drops, figuratively-speaking, for kids at 9 p.m. Grown-ups can toast the new year alcohol-free at midnight.

First Night Vienna is free to the public. Church Street, between Mill and Center streets, closes down for the evening's festivities.



A black, Italian linen apron, like this one by Marcy Butler Designs, will help your food lover's clothes stay clean during meal preparation.



Nancy Pollard, of La Cuisine in Alexandria, suggests giving the food lover in your life a mortar and pestle made from white Carrara marble.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LA CUISINE

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

Gifts for the Foodie in Your Life

Local gourmets share their favorite products for the food lovers on your list.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Whether you're shopping for a seasoned cook or a budding culinary enthusiast, buying presents for a foodie can be a daunting task. What's the best pan? The coolest gadget? The latest trend in desserts? Local gourmets come to the rescue with culinary goodies to entice even the most discerning of food aficionados.

Nancy Pollard, owner of La Cuisine in Old Town Alexandria, suggests the Thermapen cooking thermometer. "This is clearly the best probe thermometer on the market," said Pollard. "It has gotten a lot of kudos from chefs and test kitchens."

Also on Pollard's list are mortars and pestles made from Carrara marble. "We buy these in Carrara, Italy," said Pollard. "They are made of pure white Carrara marble so it is so much easier to see what you are doing. The one that that is particularly useful is 22 centimeters because it is big enough to make mayonnaise, pesto and other sauces."

Chopping vegetables can even be made more interesting with a custom made cutting board, says Lenora Lawson chef faculty at The International Culinary School at The Art Institute of Washington in Arlington. "You can get a cutting board in the shape of your home shape or even a cutting board that has Van Gogh's art on it."

When it comes to kitchen tools, "I'd suggest a non-stick baking mat ... a lovely wooden French rolling pin, a beautiful olive wood cheese board — with a cheese for sampling, of course — or a fun, colorful, Swiss-made Kuhn paring knife," said Nichole Ferrigno, a certified holistic health coach and chef at L'Academie de Cuisine in Bethesda. "It comes in lots of bright colors and with a safety sheath, making it a great addition to a picnic basket."

Culinary instructor Andie Nelson of Creative Kids Kitchen, LLC in Arlington, says her top recommendation is a Vitamix blender. "[This is] the blender that seems to have become a religion among foodies," she said. "This big-ticket item would definitely make any foodie or health-conscious person very, very happy. It even makes soup."

ANOTHER GIFT SUGGESTION on Nelson's list is

aimed at helping save a few trees while adding an elegant touch to the kitchen. "I think that having great linens in the kitchen is highly under-rated," she said. "Many cooks buy lots and lots of paper towels, but I can tell you that having a great set of dish towels — French dish towels are the best — can be a worthwhile and beautiful investment for the kitchen."

Help keep clothing stains at bay with an apron by Marcy Butler Designs. "This is a local designer," said Pollard. "The aprons are made from Italian linen, but they were made in the United States."

If your foodie prefers cookbooks, sweet treats abound in "Fat Witch Brownies: Brownies, Blondies, and Bars" from New York's Legendary Fat Witch Bakery by Patricia Holding. "This book has great recipes for brownies," said Pollard. "We usually suggest that people give this book along with a set of Italian seven-inch disposable square pans. Her recipes will make two perfect square pans of brownies and you can put one in the freezer."

For young cooks, Pollard suggests "Best Lunch Box Ever: Ideas and Recipes for School Lunches Kids Will Love" by Katie Sullivan Morford. "This is a great book for teenagers or anyone over the age of 7," said Pollard. "It encourages them to make their own lunches for school."

Pollard also suggests "The Washington Post Cookbook," curated and edited by Bonnie Benwick, the deputy food editor of the Washington Post. Pollard herself created three of the recipes, including two for Thanksgiving. She says one of her favorite recipes is the Man Catcher Brownies, which she created.

Another interesting read, says Pollard, is "The Billionaire's Vinegar: The Mystery of the World's Most Expensive Bottle of Wine" by Benjamin Wallace. The book tells a true story of a 1787 Château Lafite Bordeaux — supposedly owned by Thomas Jefferson — that sold for \$156,000 at auction.

Ferrigno suggests going a step beyond cookbooks and sending your foodie back to school. "There is such an array of options available," she said. "One could sign up for a knife skills class, a topic specific class like 'puff pastry,' or something more fun and experience oriented, like a couples cooking class, or 'girls' night out.' This is such a fun gift."

CONSUMABLE GIFTS are also on Ferrigno's list: "A bottle of good Champagne or Scotch, beautiful pink or grey sea salts, a spice collection ... or a box of homemade baked goodies" are always hits, she said.

For beer lovers, Lawson suggests a beer brewing kit. "It is something different," she said. "Rather than buying beer, they can make their own and appreciate the beer-making process."

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or understood. 3. no longer
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HOLIDAY CALENDAR



PHOTO BY WALT LAWRENCE

An image of a Mute Swan printed on canvas will be on exhibit at the annual Great Falls Studios Holiday Art Show and Sale.

Holiday Art Show and Sale Moves to Wolf Trap

This year the annual Great Falls Studios Holiday Art Show and Sale will be held at the Center for Education at Wolf Trap on Dec. 14 & 15, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Because of this new larger venue more than 30 members are able to

participate in this event. The Center is located at 1645 Trap Road in Vienna.

Great Falls photographer Walt Lawrence will be featuring his waterscape and bird images that he has taken from a boat on the Potomac.

FRIDAY/DEC. 13

Free Concert & Living Nativity.
6:30-8:30 p.m. 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean.

SATURDAY/DEC. 14

Welcoming Santa Claus. 1-3 p.m. Freeman Store, 131 Church Street, NE, Vienna. Capture that perfect holiday photo with Santa. www.historicviennainc.org.

"The Shoemaker & the Christmas Elves." 2 p.m. The Alden Theater, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. A holiday musical, Theatre IV's show puts a yuletide spin on the classic Brothers Grimm fairy tale. <http://bit.ly/17JW4IX>.

Santa Coming to Colvin Run Mill. 3-6 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Visit Santa, stay warm with a bonfire and roasted marshmallows, and make a family craft. \$5 per person.

SATURDAY/DEC. 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. 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.

SATURDAY/DEC. 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.

6:30 p.m. GF School of Art, 1144 Walker Road, Suite D, Great Falls. \$50 fee (includes all supplies).

SUNDAY/DEC. 15

Welcoming Santa Claus. 1-3 p.m. Freeman Store, 131 Church Street, NE, Vienna. Capture that perfect holiday photo with Santa. www.historicviennainc.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 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. 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.

TUESDAY/DEC. 17

Langley High School Holiday Concert. 7:30 p.m. 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The concert will feature all six Choral Department choirs including Women's Treble, Women's Select Treble, Concert Choir, Women's Chamber Choir, Voicemale and the award-winning Langley Madrigals singing a variety of winter and holiday favorites. Admission is free and the community is welcome to attend.

Gingerbread House Workshop. 4:30-6:30 p.m. GF School of Art, 1144 Walker Road, Suite D, Great Falls. Pre-made houses will be adorned with frosting, candy, and other fun decorations. \$50 fee (includes \$10 supply fee).
Glass Ornament Workshop. 4:30-

SATURDAY/DEC. 21, 22, 28, & 29

Annual Train Display at Colvin Run Mill. Colvin Run Mill Barn, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Watch G-gauge trains wend their way through a miniature western town in the Colvin Run Barn.

SUNDAY/DEC. 22

A Festival of Lessons & Carols. 9 a.m. & 11:15 a.m. St. John's Episcopal Church, 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Lessons will be read by parishioners, seasonal anthems presented by the choirs, and carols sung by the congregation.

TUESDAY/DEC. 24

St. John's Episcopal Church Christmas Worship Services. 3:30 p.m. 6715 Georgetown Pike, McLean. 703-356-4902. This service is especially designed for families with young children.

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.

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/>.

SATURDAY/DEC. 14

Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary Pancake Breakfast. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center Street South, Vienna. Adults: \$8; Seniors 65+ \$7; Children under 12 \$6; Children 4 and under are free.

Drawing Workshop with Michela Mansuino. 2:30-5:30 p.m. GF School of Art, 1144 Walker Road, Suite D, Great Falls. Drawing from large still life set ups of boxes, cups, teapots, buckets, and other manmade objects in progressively oriented exercises. These exercises are particularly important in the understanding of form and proportion, and how these are affected by perspective. \$50 per session [\$5 supply fee paid directly to instructor on 1st day of class] Recommended for ages 9 - 18.

SUNDAY/DEC. 15

Breakfast Buffet. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Vienna American Legion, 330 Center St., N., Vienna. Adults \$8, children \$3. 703-938-1379.

Country Western Dance. 4:30-5 p.m. West Coast Line Dance lesson; 5-5:45 p.m. beginner Country Western Two-Step lesson; 5:45-6:30 p.m. intermediate Country Western Line Dance lesson. 6:30 - 10 p.m. dance with Ed Cottrell as DJ playing a Country Western music mix. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. \$15 for the entire event. No experience or partner needed. www.colvinrun.org.

The Claude Moore Colonial Farm Announces: Colonial Wassail. 1-4 p.m. The Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Gather in the Farm's orchard to

wassail or toast the trees with singing, dancing and chants to ensure a "howling crop." Enjoy hot spiced cider, sugar cakes, a roaring bonfire and 18th century games. Regular admission: \$3 adults, \$2 children and senior citizens.

SATURDAY/DEC. 21

Ballroom Dance. 8-9 p.m.; Viennese Waltz lesson, 9-11:30 p.m. dance. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. DJ music from Craig Bukowski playing favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. Attire is ballroom casual, no partner or experience is needed. \$15 for the evening. 703-759-2685 or www.colvinrun.org.

SATURDAY/ JAN. 4

Ballroom Dance. 8-9 p.m. Waltz lesson, 9-11:30 p.m. dance. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Live music from Mike Surratt & the ECB playing favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. Attire is ballroom casual, no partner or experience is needed. \$20 for the evening. 703-759-2685 or www.colvinrun.org.

<call>Saturday/ Jan. 18

Ballroom Dance. 8-9 p.m. Quick-Step lesson, 9-11:30 p.m. dance. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. DJ music from Craig Bukowski playing favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. Attire is ballroom casual, no partner or experience is needed. \$15 for the evening. 703-759-2685 or www.colvinrun.org.

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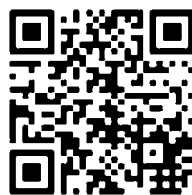


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SPORTS



PHOTO BY ED LULL

Marshall senior Mackenzie Haight will compete at Foot Locker nationals on Dec. 14 in San Diego.



West Springfield senior Caroline Alcorta, seen during the VHSL state meet on Nov. 15, finished first at Foot Locker Cross Country South Regionals on Nov. 30, earning a trip to nationals.

Five Harriers to Compete at XC Nationals

Marshall senior Mackenzie Haight is one of five local harriers who will compete at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships national finals on Dec. 14 in San Diego.

Haight earned the trip to nationals by finishing in the top 10 in the south regional race on Nov. 30 in Charlotte. Haight placed fifth with a time of 14:51.

Nationals will take place at Morley Field in Balboa Park.

Edison's Louis Colson will also compete at nationals after placing fourth at regionals with a time of 14:50.

In the girls' race, West Springfield's Caroline Alcorta and Lake Braddock's Hannah Christen and Katy Kunc will also compete at nationals.

Oakton Boys', Girls' Basketball Teams Start 3-0

The Oakton boys' and girls' basketball teams each won their first three games of the season, including a season-opening wins against Vienna rival Madison.

The boys' team beat Madison 46-29 on Dec. 3. The Warhawks defeated McLean 41-38 on Dec. 6 and Lee 43-32 on Dec. 7.

The girls' team defeated Madison 66-53 on Dec. 3. Two nights later, Oakton beat Stafford 59-32. On Dec. 7, the Cougars beat Loudoun County 75-59.

Led by head coach Friedriester, Oakton won the AAA state championship in 2012 with a 31-0 record. Last season, the Cougars fell one win shy of reaching the state tournament, losing to South Lakes 48-46 in the regional semifinals. Centreville snapped Oakton's run of eight consecutive

district championships.

Oakton's game against Lee on Monday was cancelled due to inclement weather. The Cougars were scheduled to face Yorktown on Dec. 10 and Wakefield on Dec. 11. Oakton will travel to face Lake Braddock on Tuesday, Dec. 17.

The Oakton boys' team was scheduled to face Yorktown on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. The Cougars will host Osbourn Park on Dec. 14.

Madison Girls' Basketball Struggling Early

The Madison girls' basketball team dropped its first three games of the season while facing some of the region's top teams.

Madison lost to Oakton, Centreville and West Springfield to open the year at 0-3. Oakton, the 2012 AAA state champ and a region semifinalist last season, beat Madison 66-53 on Dec. 3. Centreville, a region semifinalist last season, beat the Warhawks 59-55 on Dec. 6. West Springfield, a perennial contender to reach the state tournament, beat Madison 63-50 on Dec. 7.

Madison was scheduled to face defending region champion Edison on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. The Warhawks will host Stone Bridge on Dec. 13.

Langley Girls' Basketball Opens with Win

The Langley girls' basketball team opened the 2013-14 season with a 61-24 win over Herndon on Dec. 6.

The Saxons will host rival McLean at 5:45 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 13.

Langley Boys' Basketball Loses Two

The Langley boys' basketball team lost to Stuart (60-56, Dec. 6) and Falls Church (70-61, Dec. 7) during the Stuart Tipoff Tournament. The Saxons will return to action at home against Potomac School at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 11.

Herndon Boys' Basketball Wins Two

The Herndon boys' basketball team opened the season with victories against Woodson (73-65, Dec. 3) and Patriot (79-49, Dec. 6).

The Hornets were scheduled to face Washington-Lee on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. Herndon will compete in the Gonzaga holiday tournament Dec. 13-15.

South Lakes Girls' Basketball Posts 3 Lopsided Wins

The South Lakes girls' basketball team started the season victories against Stone Bridge, Western (Baltimore) and Potomac Falls, winning each game by at least 18 points.

The Seahawks opened with a 57-18 win against Stone Bridge on Dec. 3. Abby Rendle finished with 15 points, nine rebounds, five steals and three blocks.

South Lakes beat Western 58-40 on Dec. 6. Rendle had 15 points, 10 rebounds, nine blocks, five assists and two steals. Caitlin Jensen finished with 11 points.

The Seahawks beat Potomac Falls 63-25 on Dec. 7.

South Lakes was scheduled to face Woodson on Tuesday, after The Connection's deadline. The Seahawks will travel to face Marshall on Friday, Dec. 13.

Herndon Swimming Falls to Westfield

The Herndon girls' and boys' swim and dive teams each lost to Westfield on Dec. 6, the Hornets posted multiple region-qualifying times and one state-qualifying time.

Freshman Emily Meilus posted a state-qualifying time of 5:07.84 in the 500 free. She also set a new school record. The 500 free was the oldest record on the record board, set by Nancy Reed in 1977 (5:10.11).

First-place finishers for the Herndon girls were: Meilus (200 free (RQ)), 500 free (SQ)), Elizabeth McNulty (200 IM, 100 breast) and Kara Joyce (dive).

The 200 medley relay (Meilus, McNulty, Ryan Murphy and Jenna Krynicki) and 400 free relay (Murphy, Krynicki, Karly Ginieczki, Meilus) also took first with region-qualifying times.

First-place winners for the Herndon boys were: Christian Ginieczki (100 fly, 100 back), Dylan Cudahy (200 free, 500 free) and Justin Bradley (dive).

South Lakes Looking for Girls' Lax Coaches

South Lakes High School is looking for girls' lacrosse coaches — varsity head coach and assistants. Interested applicants should contact Linda Jones, director of student activities at: lljones1@fcp.edu or call 703-715-4518.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Senior Co-Captain Casey Howard performs her floor routine while the Marshall team looks on.

Lady Statesmen Gymnasts Win Third Place in Season Opener

The George C. Marshall Lady Statesmen Gymnastics team kicked off their 2013-14 season with a third place finish in a six-team contest at Washington & Lee High School in Arlington. The Marshall team had their strongest-ever season opener, scoring 128.7 points to finish ahead of JEB Stuart, Wakefield, and Hayfield and behind runner-up McLean and winner W&L. Marshall junior Morgan Stahl won the Floor Exercise event with a score of 9.45. The Statesmen's total score included contributions from several promising freshmen: Kiran Sullivan, Lindsey Price, and Alessandra Iannetti. Head Coach Charlotte Perpall and the Lady Statesmen look forward to a great season; their next meet is Saturday, Dec. 14 at Fairfax High School.

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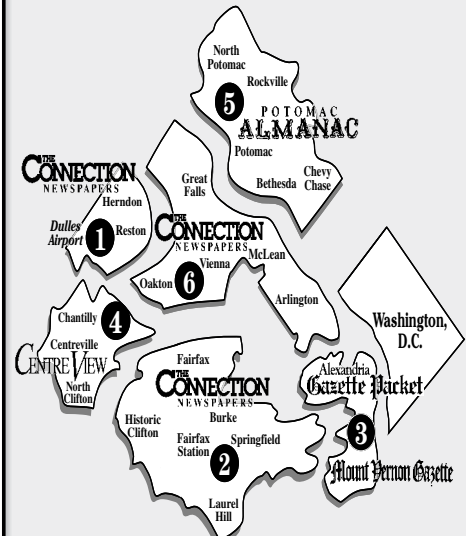
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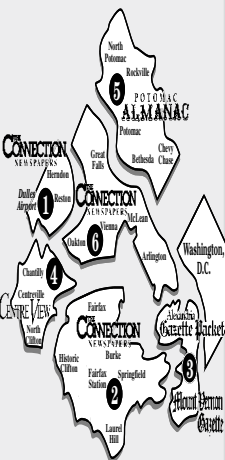
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A "Scancer" Update



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Since you asked, or rather indulged me the past few weeks by wading through my two "Scanticipation" columns anticipating a result, I am happy to finally share that result with you: "Stable and better." These are the exact words e-mailed to me by my oncologist in response to my post-Thanksgiving inquiry about my CT Scan completed on the 27th. Then, as you most recent Kenny-column readers may recall, I had my regularly scheduled post-scan appointment this past Friday, December 6th to discuss those results, and of course have my oncologist examine and question me about any facts, feelings or failings, concerning the previous three months since my last appointment (and four months since my last scan) as a terminal cancer patient. He's not exactly Hubert H. Humphrey, but nevertheless, he was "pleased as punch." And if there's one dominant recollection I'll take home with me from my appointment, it was my oncologist's ear-to-ear smile when sharing his assessment of all things concerning Kenny-with-cancer.

In fact, and in reality-check truth, if you've been characterized as "terminal" by your doctor, whether "diseased" by cancer or some other deadly condition, and you're still undergoing treatment, there's no better feeling – or hope, quite frankly, than seeing your doctor happy and encouraging when sharing/discussing your most recent diagnostic scan/lab work, urine specimen, etc. And considering that Team Lourie has seen my oncologist with less than positive news on previous occasions, hardly do I ever take it for granted when he's as upbeat and enthusiastic as he was during Friday's appointment.

Unfortunately, the process is ongoing and subject to change; after all, stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer is incurable/inoperable. But I am finding out that at least for me/for awhile, it is/can be treatable, albeit non-surgically. Moreover, as long as my body continues to tolerate the every-three-week chemotherapy infusions, I am good to go, or as described by my oncologist: on maintenance. Meaning, we can continue to do this for awhile. And though "awhile" is never defined or discussed, really, given the predictable/unpredictable nature of cancer – and its interactions with the diagnosee, I can live with the indeterminate sentence that I've been fortunate to receive. It certainly beats the alternative.

Originally, I was "prognosed" to live "13 months to two years" by my oncologist. As of November 27th, I have lived four years and 9 months, so I am accustomed to being life-expectancy challenged. And since I've surpassed my oncologist's initial prognosis by years, I don't see any reason to stop now, especially considering the results from my most recent scan and associated lab work. As my brother Richard has said: "If the oncologist is happy then I'm happy." Well, as of Friday, December 6th, I am very happy.

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

SCHOOLS



Ashley Nero

Send school notes to
vienna@connectionnewspapers.com by Friday.

Penn State Altoona swimming freshman Ashley Nero of Oakton was selected as the Women's Swimmer of the Week. Against Bethany, Nero helped the team nab a trio of first places. In the 200 Yard Medley Relay, she joined her teammates to post a time of 2:06.12 for first. Individually, Nero won the 50 Yard Freestyle (26.07) and the 100 Yard Breaststroke (1:13.69). At the Bradford Relays, Nero was a part of the squad that won the Mixed 200 Yard Freestyle Relay with a time of 1:40.41.

Aline Dolinh, 15, is a sophomore at Oakton High School in Vienna and has been appointed as the National Student Poet by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities. Dolinh will participate in readings and workshops at libraries, museums and schools in Virginia as well as create community service projects to expand their reach while increasing engagement in the literary arts.

Kate E. DeWeese, daughter of Randi and Steve DeWeese of Vienna, graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School, and first-year student in the Bachelor of Arts Program, has been inducted into Alpha Lambda Delta honor society at Bucknell University.

On May 11, **Michael D'Onofrio** and **Jill Feroldi** of Oakton and **Charles Schoenthaler** of Vienna graduated from the College of Charleston.

Patrick Murphy of Vienna was placed on the president's list in recognition of academic excellence during the spring 2013 semester at New River Community College.

Vincent Anthony Williams Reese, a graduate of George C. Marshall high school, recently completed a coaching internship with coach Michael Clark of Bridgewater. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in business from Bridgewater College in 2010 and was the quarterback on the Bridgewater Eagles football team. He is working with the US Dept. of Interior at Wolftrap Farm Parks this summer and will be attending graduate school in the fall.

U.S. Navy Ensign **Christopher Michael Ceconi**, son of Bill and Joyce Ceconi of Vienna, graduated from the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md. on May 24 and was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy. Ensign Ceconi completed his Bachelor of Science Degree with a major in political science. Following graduation, Ceconi has been assigned to Naval Air Station Pensacola, in Pensacola, Fla. where he will continue training in naval aviation.

Vanessa Parks of James Madison High School is one of 19 high school students from across the region who have accepted honors scholarships awarded by Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA). Scholarship winners are enrolled in NOVA's Honors Program, and the scholarship covers the cost of the student earning one degree at the college.

Students must maintain a GPA of at least 3.2, attend classes full-time, become a leader in a student organization and represent the college's Honors Program as an ambassador to their high schools.



PHOTOS BY DIMITRI GANAS



The 17.5-foot by 13-foot window wall that dominates the new side-facing gable is one component in a renovated front elevation which now features a well-defined entranceway comprised of glass-facing French doors and sidelights.

While the new floorplan is functionally a “great room,” variances in ceiling height and room width define “use” zones that also gain a degree of privacy.

Opening Up

Open floorplan plus cathedral ceiling equals McLean ranch stylishly re-invented.

BY JOHN BYRD

Assess a circa-1952 ranch on a shady street in McLean with an eye towards maximizing value. Among the shortcomings: rooms that are too small and dark; a kitchen that hasn’t been remodeled in 25 years. A tiny breakfast room. A rear grade too steep for an addition. A front elevation with no visible front door.

And in the plus column: a neighborhood that’s gone decisively upscale; a solidly constructed starter house in a “come-back” style. Just enough undeveloped side lot to add useful square footage. An enviably location at the end of a cul de sac.

Bring to this proposition the team of Sarah Wolf, interior designer, and Josh Britton, architectural draftsman — both at Foster Remodeling Solutions — and what’s revealed are the skills sets that are transforming so many non-descript mid-century dwellings into the spacious eclectically-designed residences expected of northern Virginia’s close-in neighborhoods.

“We’re seeing more homeowners preserving and elaborating post-War suburban styles,” said Sarah Wolf. “The ranch and other smaller-scale dwellings are especially fascinating. They’ve long been classified as the prototype for the modern production house, yet we’re now seeing how inventive design ideas can be applied to achieve architecturally-relevant makeover goals.”

What has turned into a two-phase design process — that will eventually include a second level master suite — began with a single meeting. Wolf had been summoned by homeowners — who had occupied the house for 20 years — “to brainstorm” options

for enlarging the kitchen and family room, and re-defining the bare-bones front elevation.

“The previous owners had relocated the original front door to the side sometime in the 1990s,” Wolf said. “So one of the early questions was whether it made sense to revise the front elevation in conjunction with a proposed kitchen enlargement.”

As the meeting progressed, several key points emerged.

Yes, the owners wanted a substantial enlargement to the kitchen and family room, but the existing interior was also too narrow and too dark. Moreover, since the home’s leafy half-acre lot backs into a grove of mature trees bordered by a lovely creek, shouldn’t the interior makeover be designed to profile the surrounding landscape?

“SUDDENLY, WE ALL SAW the aesthetic opportunity,” Wolf said. “There would be larger windows on all sides. But also a new front-facing family room — with an 11-foot cathedral ceiling dominated by an extensive window wall.”

The window wall would, in turn, help to contextualize a more symmetrical front elevation — one defined by a processional entranceway with double french glass doors and sidelights.

The first challenge, however, was contending with the peculiarities of the lot itself.

“The entire plan depended on adding about 350 square feet on the south side of the house while staying within [Fairfax] County setback requirements,” said project draftsman Josh Britton. “Since the set-back limit runs diagonally on that side of the house, I designed a two-component footprint which steps back from the front elevation.”

Necessity being the mother of



A south-facing bump-out accommodates a cook-top ventilator flanked by transom windows. The concentrated small space solution enlarges the cook’s work triangle and creates an additional source of natural light.



Among chef-required built-ins, pull-out drawers pegged to hold various size dishes.

invention, the solution makes adroit use of tight tolerances. Space formerly allocated to the old kitchen/family room combination is absorbed into a gourmet kitchen configuration which gains 130 square feet to the west for a total of more than 450 square foot. The new family room — tapering down to 220 square feet — supplants a former front deck.

Taken as a whole, the floor plan is functionally a “great room.” Clever variances in room width, ceiling height and sightlines differentiate clearly-identified “use” spaces while reinforcing their inherent sense of privacy.

“The slightly narrower width confers a degree of intimacy on the family room,” Wolf said. “On the other hand, the cathedral ceiling and window wall heighten the drama — enticing the eye to move

up and out.”

Wolfe’s interior design scheme, likewise, balances detailing within a well-integrated whole.

Provincial-stained red oak flooring lends cohesion to the entire suite which now flows into the revised living and dining rooms.

Large windows facing south and west bring the richly wooded backyard close-in, forming a setting for an eat-in kitchen that is both highly functional and eye-catching. The kitchen’s centerpiece is a food preparation island and dining counter that seats six. The custom built-in is positioned to support both cooking and clean-up tasks while protecting the cook’s work triangle. Drawers designed for easy access to a pull-out mixer stand, a roll-out vertical spice rack, and slots specially fitted for every-

day china. The island’s “ice stone” surface complements a mosaic backsplash comprised of marble, glass, chrome and shell. Glass pendant lamps and lights contribute further to a palette of lighter tones which are countered by cherry cabinets and more textured elements. In the family room, the 54-inch stainless steel hearth with gas burner embedded in river rock is both a heat source and a decoratively ornamental focal point.

Flanked by open cubbies featuring glass display shelves, cherry wood cabinetry, and a wine rack abutting a refrigerator, the built-ins define a functionally separate family entertainment zone that includes wide-screen plasma TV mounted above the fireplace.

A more congenial spot for holiday entertaining is hard to imagine.

Local REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

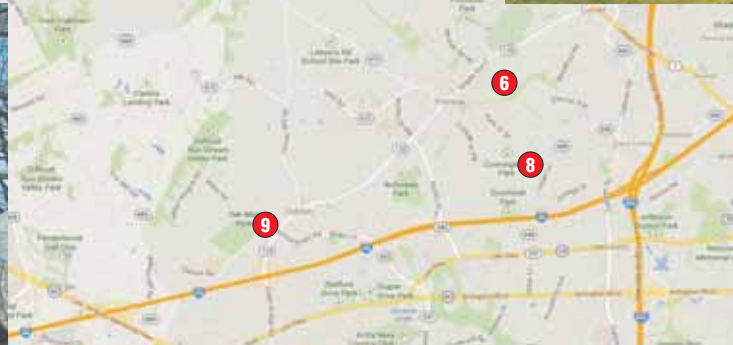
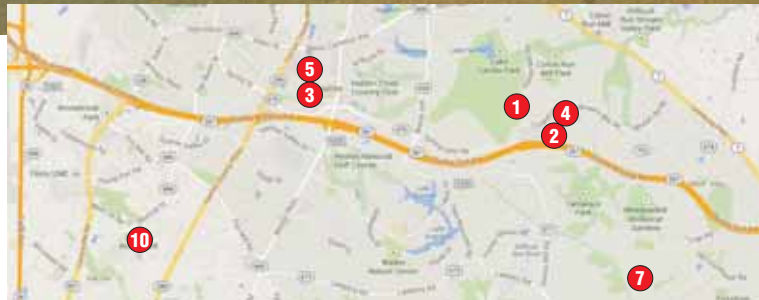
October, 2013 Top Sales in Vienna, Oakton, Reston and Oak Hill



1 11608 Hunting Crest Lane,
Vienna — \$1,629,807



2 10313 Forest Maple Road,
Vienna — \$1,488,000



© Google Map data



6 503 Delano Drive SE, Vienna — \$1,307,500



7 1908 Ballycor Drive, Vienna — \$1,303,000

Address	BR	FB	HB	...	Postal	City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	PostalCode	Subdivision	Date Sold
1 11608 Hunting Crest LN	4	4	1		VIENNA		\$1,629,807	Detached	0.00	22182	HUNTING CREST	10/09/13
2 10313 FOREST MAPLE RD	5	4	1		VIENNA		\$1,488,000	Detached	2.49	22182	VICTORIA FARMS	10/08/13
3 11990 MARKET ST #812	3	3	0		RESTON		\$1,350,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		20190	MIDTOWN AT RESTON TOWN	10/22/13
4 10252 DEERCREST MEADOW PL6	5	2			VIENNA		\$1,325,000	Detached	1.73	22182	DEERCREST MEADOW	10/21/13
5 12025 NEW DOMINION PKWY#401	3	2	0		RESTON		\$1,315,000	Mid-Rise 5-8 Floors		20190	MIDTOWN NORTH	10/04/13
6 503 DELANO DR SE	6	6	1		VIENNA		\$1,307,500	Detached	0.39	22180	EAST VIENNA WOODS	10/23/13
7 1908 BALLYCOR DR	5	4	1		VIENNA		\$1,303,000	Detached	0.83	22182	SADDLEBROOK FARMS	10/25/13
8 8704 PARK ST	5	5	0		VIENNA		\$1,300,000	Detached	0.57	22180	MC HENRY HEIGHTS	10/02/13
9 3120 ELMENDORF DR	4	5	0		OAKTON		\$1,052,000	Detached	0.14	22124	OAK MARR COURTS	10/24/13
10 2655 COCKERILL FARM LN	5	4	1		OAK HILL		\$925,000	Detached	0.33	20171	COCKERILL PLACE	10/31/13

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Holiday Décor: Make it Sparkle

Local designers offer suggestions for decorating your home.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Tis the season for decking the halls. Whether your style is traditional and colorful, muted and demure or metallic and glittery, three local designers offer distinct holiday decorating ideas to spark your creativity.

Victoria Sanchez, who opened Victoria at Home, a home furnishings boutique and interior design studio on King Street in Old Town Alexandria earlier this month, said the décor begins with an aroma.

"Holiday scented candles immediately say 'holiday,'" said Sanchez. "Fresh greens tucked behind artwork and intertwined into tablescapes add a wonderful scent."

She recommends filling bowls with colorful holiday ornaments and displaying holiday cards to add a touch of nostalgia. "What I love most about the holidays is [that] each ornament and every tradition evokes memories of family, friends and childhood," said Sanchez.

Designer Sharon Kleinman of Transitions by Sharon Kleinman in Potomac, said Christmas is no time for minimalism. "The Christmas season is the perfect time to go all out decorating the main areas of your home," she said. "I love the smell of fresh pine, so fill your home with it. Starting at the front entrance, hang a pine wreath on the door."

Kleinman recommends purchasing fresh wreaths. "Many local nurseries like American Plant and Benke's make some really beautiful ones," she said. "Local florists are also a good source."

There are a multitude of uses for fresh winter foliage. "Place pine boughs, candles of varying heights and decorative accessories such as painted wooden toys [like] trains, toy soldiers, blocks or colored balls among the pine branches," added Kleinman.

Another idea, says Kleinman, is to wrap small boxes in colorful paper, top them with brightly colored bows and place them on the mantel. "Decorative stockings hung on the mantel are traditional and a must in my book," she said. "Stair rails can be wrapped in pine boughs, ribbon and/or tinsel."

To add splashes of festive Christmas red to a home, Kleinman recommends "Placing pots of poinset-

tias throughout the house. Personalize your Christmas tree with homemade ornaments, sentimental items, colored bows and lots of tinsel."

When it comes to holiday tablescapes, Kelley Proxmire and Emily Wallace of Kelley Interior Design suggest adding a touch of shimmer. "Try breaking out of a set color scheme of red, white and green," said Wallace. "Try popular metallic finishes that could be used in fabric for pillows, gold accessories for the table [like] tiny vases [or] salt and pepper shakers and napkin rings with 'bling' metallic finishes."

Mix decorative objects with foliage to create a warm and inviting table. "Incorporate 'organic' items of the season, like greens from pine trees, magnolias, pine cones, and some fruit," said Proxmire.

Unconventional items can be used as vessels for a wintery, holiday centerpiece. Wallace and Proxmire found a "tortoise shell-like urn ... for next to nothing at a consignment store" and used it to hold a centerpiece. "You could buy a new vase or container, but it certainly could also be a vintage find and not necessarily brand new," said Proxmire.

"Use lots of little LED lights in votive holders, either clear votives or ones with a metallic tone finish," said Wallace. "This is a case where more is better."

"What I love most about the holidays is [that] each ornament and every tradition evokes memories of family, friends and childhood".

— Victoria Sanchez, Victoria at Home



PHOTO BY GEOFFREY HODGDON

This holiday sideboard, designed by Emily Wallace of Kelley Interior Design, breaks from traditional red and green décor by making use of a metallic color palette.

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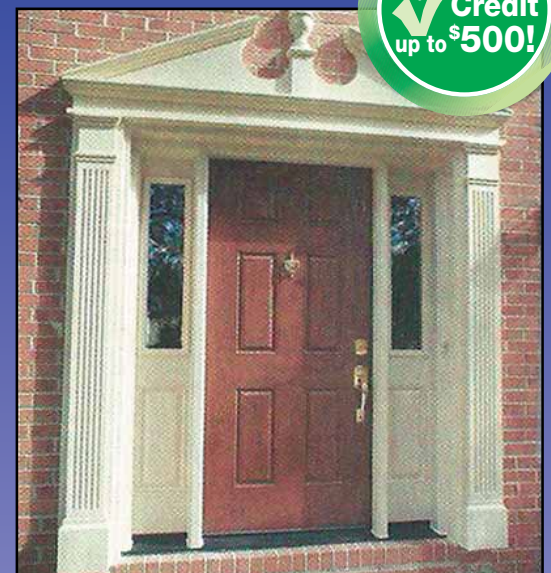
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