



PHOTO BY RENÉE RUGGLES/THE GAZETTE

## At Lights of Love

Santa stopped by the Mount Vernon Inova Hospital cafeteria during the 2013 Lights of Love program. Madison was the first one to visit with him. More photos, page 6.

## Area Angels Aid the Poor

**At Rising Hope, eight churches provide Christmas gifts.**

BY ED SIMMONS, JR.  
THE GAZETTE

**I**t was a time for angels Sunday evening, Dec. 15, at Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church where a large, quiet crowd gathered in the candlelit sanctuary for The Blessing of the Angel Gifts.

Located a short ways off Richmond Highway between Hybla Valley and Woodlawn at 8220 Russell Road, the church aids the homeless and needy living along the Route 1 corridor.

"We call them angel gifts because angels went out to buy them," the Rev. Keary Kincannon told the hushed, seated crowd moments before blessing the gifts. "As messengers of God they are

agents of God's grace."

Because most in the crowd were Hispanic, Rising Hope's Mary Hamilton, coordinator of community ministries, spoke to them in Spanish. She explained that while the choir sang Christmas carols, their numbers would be called to go to the adjoining room to pick up their gifts.

"Eight churches went out to buy these gifts," she told them. This year at the bidding of church council, all the gifts were for children. "Each gift was bought with that person in mind," she said.

That night, 400 gifts were given out. Piled in large clear plastic sacks, each gift was brightly wrapped. In the coming week, 2,000 more would be given to

SEE AREA ANGELS, PAGE 5

## Food Assistance Cuts Affecting Local Residents

**Cuts to food stamp program are hitting local beneficiaries and food banks.**

BY LISA SPINELLI  
THE GAZETTE

**M**elinda Anderson, 50, of Alexandria is feeling the extra pinch to her federally-subsidized food budget.

"I have had to eat less and hit up more food banks in the area just to survive," she said while collecting her monthly food allotment from the Fairfax-based food-bank Food for Others. "I'm visiting three [food banks] a month now."

Anderson and the other 456,626 Virginians are among the 47.7 million Americans enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program — also known as food stamps, all of whom had their monthly food benefits cut on Nov. 1 after a four-year temporary boost from the Recovery and Reinvestment Act (RRA) expired. Virginia experienced a \$99 million cut last month when the boost ended. For Anderson, a childless

SEE FOOD STAMP, PAGE 9

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# What More Could FBI Want? Virginia leaders tout merits of Springfield site for FBI relocation.

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE GAZETTE

A high-ranking delegation of Virginia politicians gathered in Springfield Tuesday morning in a renewed effort to convince the Federal Bureau of Investigation to relocate its headquarters to a warehouse site in Springfield.

The move in the high-stakes, highly competitive regional competition comes after site selection guidelines eliminated almost all other Northern Virginia locations.

U.S. Senators Mark Warner (D) and Tim Kaine (D), U.S. Reps. Jim Moran (D-8), Frank Wolf (R-10) and Gerry Connolly (D-11), Governor-elect Terry McAuliffe (D), State Del. Vivian Watts (D-39), Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee) and others held a news conference on Tuesday, Dec. 17 at Northern Virginia Community College's Medical Campus Tuesday to send a message that the Springfield site is the ideal choice.

**IN LATE 2011**, the General Services Administration (GSA), which manages federal properties, announced plans to move the FBI's main office out of the run-down, dilapidated J. Edgar Hoover Building on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Since then, several jurisdictions across the Washington region have made it clear they have the ideal location for the bureau's move.

But the Virginia delegation made the argument that the federally-owned warehouse in Springfield makes the best location for the FBI to consolidate as many as 11,000 employees for a number of reasons, including the fact that the GSA already owns the warehouse, which guarantees that federal government ownership of the campus is both clean and easy.

"Virginia checks every box," Warner said, "transit accessible, fiber-wired, synergy with FBI Quantico ... Many FBI employees live



PHOTO BY GEORGE BURKE

**U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) joins other Virginia politicians in backing the Springfield site for the new FBI headquarters. The GSA is expected to announce the site selection in 2015. From left are Secretary of Commerce and Trade Jim Cheng, who represented Gov. Robert McDonnell; U.S. Rep. Jim Moran (D-8) and Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee).**

in Virginia, and it is easy for D.C. and Maryland residents to commute."

Citing the bi-partisan display of unity in the effort, Kaine said he was "brought into this process by our three members of Congress — Connolly, Moran, and Wolf ... It is characteristic of us in Virginia that we all work together."

Wolf, who chairs the appropriations subcommittee overseeing the FBI, said the site is ideally located, with easy access to the CIA and Quantico.

Connolly agreed: "The FBI's ability to interact with other federal anti-terrorism offices located in NoVA is critical."

McKay, whose district is home to the warehouse site, said county officials will do "everything in our power to make sure zoning and other factors are in place."

McKay said the benefits to the federal government of relocating to Springfield "would be substantial."

In January 2012, Fairfax County joined

Prince George's County and the District in placing its marker on the table in the high-stakes competition soon after the Senate passed a resolution authorizing the GSA and FBI to seek new headquarters in December 2011.

"The FBI needs 2 million square feet of office space, located within two miles of a Metro station and within 2.5 miles of the Beltway according to the GAO. Redeveloping existing sites in D.C. would be extremely expensive, especially given the post-911 security features that are now required ... It is adjacent to the Franconia/Springfield Metro Station, VRE, AMTRAK, bus service, and every highway except Route 66," McKay said at the time.

He pointed out that airport access will soon be served by two Metro stations once rail to Dulles is complete.

Fairfax County would also benefit by high-paying jobs that would come to the area, and redevelopment of the site would spur

construction of other office projects nearby and expand commercial tax base.

"You know the site makes perfect sense when the entire Northern Virginia Congressional Delegation, the Governor, the Governor-Elect, and State elected and appointed officials — both Democrats and Republicans — all agree on something," McKay added.

**ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS**, the

decision by the GSA will be made in 2015. While other regional sites have been eliminated for various reasons, Maryland is still in the running with its site in Prince Georges County.

But Connolly predicts the Springfield site will be the chosen one.

"We're going to win this on the merits, not on politics. We had a number of sites in Virginia, but we put our parochial interest aside to support the best site for Northern Virginia and for our national security."

— U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11)

## A Transparent Debate Upcoming session to feature fight over transparency of State Corporation Commission.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE GAZETTE

How much should Virginia citizens know about regulators? That's a debate that's about to take place during the upcoming session of the General Assembly, when two rival bills will attempt to open the books on the State Corporation Commission.

One is from Del. Scott Surovell (D-44), who will be introducing legislation to make the Virginia Freedom of Information Act apply to the State Corporation Commission. Another is from state Sen. John Watkins (R-10), which seeks to make information available without forcing the commission to be subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

"If any entity ought to be subject to FOIA,

it should be the State Corporation Commission because there is so little public accountability associated with their activities," said Surovell. "I don't think the State Corporation Commission is some special blessed agency that gets special rules. They are part of the government just like everybody else, and I think that FOIA ought to apply to them like any other part of the government."

Watkins disagrees. He says Virginia has a good reputation as one of the best states to do business, in part because of the regulatory climate created by the State Corporation Commission. He said making documents and records available under the Freedom of Information Act would jeopardize that reputation, perhaps making the commonwealth a place that is not as friendly to business.

"There is a level of trust that businesses need to have with their regulatory agencies with regard to their proprietary information," said Watkins. "The problem I have with Mr. Surovell's bill is that it puts yet another third party in between the business and the regulatory authority in who is controlling the documents."

**THE STORY** begins back in 2011, when the Virginia Supreme Court determined that the Freedom of Information Act did not apply to the State Corporation Commission. Even though there is no specific language making the commission exempt, the justices concluded that the collective reasoning of 26 statutes was that the commission should be exempt from the Freedom of Information Act. Over the summer, leaders of the

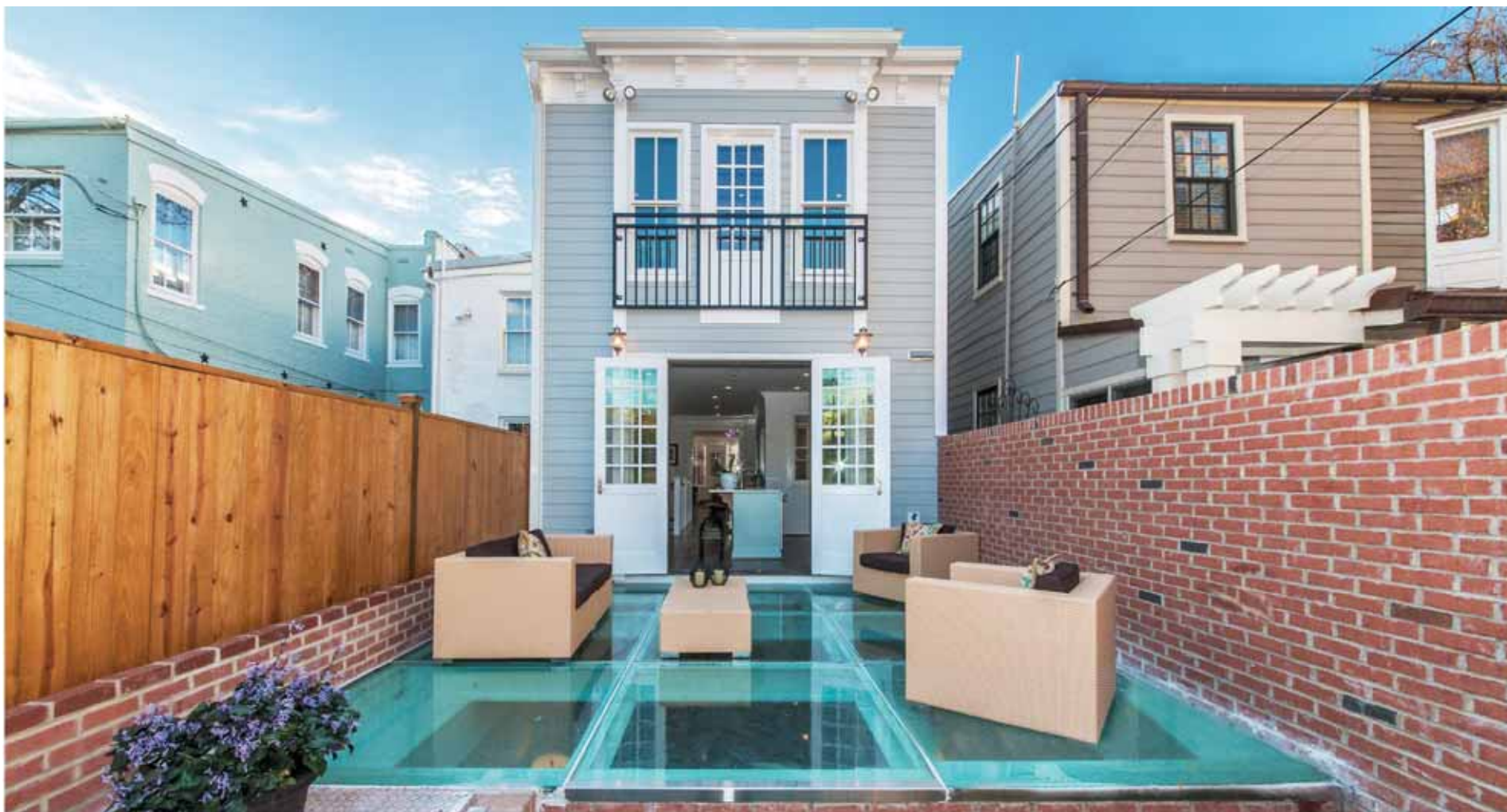
telecommunications industry appeared at a Freedom of Information Advisory Committee hearing to warn making their documents available under the Freedom of Information Act would undermine their ability to have open and frank conversations.

"We enjoy that give and take with the commission, and we would hate to see that dialogue become a matter of public record," said Duront Walton, who represents the Virginia Telecommunications Industry Association. "If it does, it will certainly change the combatants and people who represent us will be in a courtroom and not in an informal meeting."

Since that time, members of the advisory council rejected Surovell's bill. But Surovell says he will introduce it anyway, even

SEE TRANSPARENCY, PAGE 18





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**Rising Hope's Mary Hamilton organized the gift-giving event.**



**The Rev. Keary Kincannon blesses the gifts.**

PHOTOS BY ED SIMMONS, JR./THE GAZETTE

## Area Angels Aid the Poor

FROM PAGE 1

needy families. "It's our busiest time of the year," said Hamilton.

Churches that bought and wrapped gifts to meet the need of a specific child include St. Aiden's Episcopal Church, Washington Street UMC Preschool, Washington Street UMC, Franconia UMC, Burke UMC, Christ UMC, Washington Farm UMC and St. Andrew UMC.

Additionally, churches and organizations that donated new gifts to the more than 2,000 gifts given out this week include Mary Gabriel Fund, St. George UMC, Buckhall UMC, Gifts for the Homeless, The Bike Doctor, Christ UMC, South County Region 1

Senior Center, Annandale UMC and Camp Highroad.

In an interval between carols, Kincannon invited those gathered to share stories of Christmas blessings past. Choir member Crain Thomson was one who spoke. A jack-of-all-trades — and homeless — he sleeps in a tent hidden in woods not far away. On particularly frigid nights he stays at the hypothermia shelter located at Rising Hope.

He spoke of waking very early one Christmas morning sensing a presence with him. He realized it was God. He was six at the time and is now in his late 50s.

"God's been with me for the rest of my life," he said. He helps out at Rising Hope nearly every day.



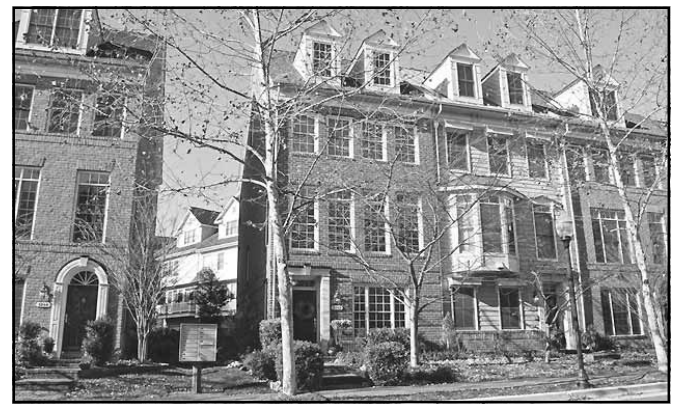
PHOTO BY ED SIMMONS, JR./THE GAZETTE

### Helping Out

**Troop 211 Girl Scouts Olivia, Bridget and Kiki collect food at Hollin Hall Safeway for United Christian Ministries. "We've been best friends for years," said Kiki.**



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PHOTOS BY RENÉE RUGGLES/THE GAZETTE

Off in the distance, several trees were shining brightly, lit with Lights of Love.

# Mount Vernon Inova Hosts Lights of Love



The IMVH Christmas Carol Group serenaded the audience with several selections.



Members of the Mount Vernon Community gathered in the INOVA Hospital lobby on Saturday, Dec. 14 for the 2013 Lights of Love program. Friends and family who have lost loved ones can honor them, with a light, through a small donation. The funds raised are used to provide needed equipment and improvements in the hospital.



Norm Byers sang "The Little Drummer Boy" for the audience in the lobby, below.



Maxwell Anderer was one of three Groveton Elementary School students who read short essays they wrote about the Lights of Love program.



Marina Blanco reads her essay for the audience.



George Souza, auxiliary president, welcomed everyone to the 2013 Lights of Love program.



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## News

# Food Stamp Cuts Hit Locally

FROM PAGE 1

adult, her food benefits went down \$11 a month to leave her with a max amount of \$189 per month. A family of four is receiving \$36 less a month from a max benefit of \$668 to \$632. And more cuts could be on the horizon once Congress reconvenes next year.

"We've seen a definite increase in referrals for food since the November first reduction," said Lisa Whetzel, executive director of Our Daily Bread, a Fairfax-based nonprofit servicing local disadvantaged families. Her nonprofit receives referrals from social workers on who should be admitted into their food assistance program. "These single mothers, or people with very low income, they need this assistance in order to just make ends meet or to just keep the lights on — especially in this area. I've heard some people say that cutting SNAP is doing the poor a favor — I disagree."

**THE REDUCTION** isn't necessarily a cut, as many politicians will argue, because the benefits were always intended as a temporarily boost, not a long-term payment-plan. But the Bureau of Labor Statistics puts the total national unemployment rate at 7.9, which is 0.1 percent higher than in 2009 when the RRA boost was enacted — hardly a major recovery. The D.C.-metro area has not recovered well either, being tied in October with the Boston area for the largest metropolitan unemployment rate increase over the last year at 0.6 percent, landing the D.C. area at a 5.9 unemployment rate.

While the total unemployment rate in the metro-area is low compared to the worst-hit parts of the nation — though D.C. by itself ranks among the highest at 9.9 percent, the increase in unemployment hints there is not an instrumental economic growth happening in the area. Without economic growth, those relying on SNAP to feed their children, and themselves, are left scrambling.

"I'm working as a CNA (certified nursing assistant), but it's never steady. We have to come here after everything is finished," said Amany Hussein, 47 of Alexandria, about visiting Food for Others. Hussein said even with her job, being in the SNAP program, and her husband's two jobs as a pizza delivery man and taxi operator, they are still unable to feed themselves and their two teenagers after paying their \$1,700 monthly rent.

Executive Director of Food for Others Roxanne Rice said she sees first-hand the growing economic problems in the area. As she compared the number of patrons to her food bank from last October to this



PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE GAZETTE

**Lisa Whetzel, executive director of Our Daily Bread, holds up an advertisement of the organization that encouraged donations.**

October, she saw a staggering 28 percent increase — and the SNAP reductions are only going to add to her figures for November, she said.

Those enrolled in SNAP could have even more cuts to fear next year. The Republican-led U.S. House of Representatives recently passed a bill cutting the program by \$39 billion over the next 10 years and is awaiting Senate approval. While the cuts are unlikely to pass, even the Senate is looking to cut \$4.5 billion over 10 years from the most expensive food stamp program the nation has ever seen — \$80 billion a year. The House bill as it stands would potentially cut 3.8 million Americans from the program entirely within the first year, and could especially hurt families with children.

**AT LEAST FOR NOW**, the Fairfax County Public School system has been picking up some of the bill for those children in need, said Food and Nutrition Director Penny E. McConnell. While all children whose families are enrolled in SNAP, homeless children or children in foster-care receive a free lunch during school days, there are disadvantaged children who fall between the cracks. With the proposed SNAP cuts, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, predicts many children across the nation will lose their free lunches.

"It doesn't help anybody to cut food stamps," said Rice. "Increasing minimum wages, encouraging ways to end disparity of income in our society is definitely needed, but that has nothing to do with helping people in other ways."

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**Mount Vernon-based art instructor and author Kathryn Horn Coneway signs copies of her new books during a recent launch party at Art at the Center.**



**Sophia Rees-Hoofnagle and Grace and Abby LaFleur, create collages at a launch party and book signing for two books written by Kathryn Horn Coneway of Art at the Center in Mount Vernon.**

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KATHRYN HORN CONEWAY

# Art Educator Releases Two Books

**Stories offer children and parents innovative ways to explore art.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE GAZETTE

**E**lizabeth Augenblick Smith, 10, spent a recent Saturday afternoon gluing strips of brightly hued tissue paper to create a collage. There were no rules or guides to follow. Smith was allowed to create her project in her own vision and felt supported. Her project wasn't part of an art class. She was at a launch party and book signing for two books written by her art teacher, Kathryn Horn Coneway of Art at the Center in Mount Vernon.

"The thing I like most about classes at Art at the Center is you choose what you want to do and there's no right or wrong about

it," said Elizabeth. "I really liked that it was collage and you could tell how much work went into it. I like [the fact that] now I know a published author."

Elizabeth's project was based on one of the books, "Collette: A Collage Adventure," which tells the story of a bottle of glue that wants to get in on the artistic action at a studio. The other book released at the party is called "Oops Paint" and is aimed at toddlers and preschool children. It introduces stamping with everyday objects through a fun story of a family accidentally dropping things in paint.

The books were inspired by Coneway's work at Art at the Center and incorporate her art education philosophy of giving children opportunities to explore art in a supportive environment without judgment. Both books conclude with a letter for parents that offers tips for getting started with art at home.

"I want the books to be starting points for people to start creating together," said Coneway, who has worked as an art teacher,

an artist-in-residence and an art therapist. "The best feedback I get is when people tell me they read 'Collette' and want to get some scraps and make collages, or that they read 'Oops Paint' and start noticing everyday objects and imagining shapes and patterns they might print."

Elizabeth's mother, Amy B. Augenblick, of Great Falls, said the books are an extension of the classes at Art at the Center. "Children are given the freedom to create art without being told 'this is the way you have to do it.' Their art projects are not treated as a craft from Pinterest," she said. "They are given the freedom to create their own art in support, nurturing environment."

Elizabeth Rees, the mother of three children ages 10, 7 and 3, attended the launch party and said all of her children have taken classes at Art at the Center. She appreciates the books' underlying messages.

"The 'Oops Paint' book is especially good for younger kids as an introduction to the possibilities of paint and stamping," said

Rees, of Mount Vernon. "'Collette' is a more complex story line, but the beautiful collages engaged all of my children. The mix of simple ideas to try along with a creative storyline helped make a book that was enjoyable for kids and could also be used in art instruction. Both books beautifully reaffirm the idea that any direction in art can lead to interesting results and that anyone can be an artist."

Rees, the associate rector at Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria, took a parent-child class with her 3-year-old daughter. She has also found professional inspiration in the books and art classes. "I get to experiment and create and learn and follow wherever my creativity leads right along with the kids," she said. "I'm a priest and I've had several sermons take shape from my time there. Art at the Center is one of my favorite places to be."

Art at the Center will hold drop-in classes in December based on the themes of the books. For more information on the classes or books, visit [www.artatthecenter.org](http://www.artatthecenter.org).

# Teaching Children To Be Charitable

**Experts say modeling, nurturing key to raising generous children.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE GAZETTE

**E**lena Santiviago walked her 6-year-old son down the aisle of a grocery store near her Arlington home. They picked up five boxes of toothpaste and two bottles of mouthwash, several bars of soap and a few sticks of deodorant. The shopping trip was part of a school project in which students fill holiday stockings with personal hygiene items for the homeless.

"I gave him \$20 to spend," she said. "I

figure he can learn how expensive things are and that there are some people who can't afford to buy the things he takes for granted."

Teaching children about charity, particularly during a season when many are focused on making sure Santa Claus gets copies of their Christmas lists, is an important lesson, according to experts. Redirecting a child's focus from getting to giving this season may not be as difficult as one might think, however. The key, say experts, is for parents to model and foster a sense of gen-

erosity.

"Most children are born with a sense of caring for others, which is related to empathy, or being able to put oneself in another person's shoes," said Amy Van Arsdale, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology at Marymount University in Arlington. "Empathy and caring are found among humans and other social mammals, and a strong sense of empathy can help people to feel loved and included. As children develop,

SEE CHARITABLE, PAGE 20



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**Experts say exposing children to those in need can help them develop a sense of charity.**



# OPINION

## Preserve 3-2-1 for Housing

Housing for all income levels near transit supports vibrant communities and job growth, reduces traffic.

BY MICHELLE KROCKER  
AND JIM EDMONDSON

In the latest edition of The Herrity Report, Springfield Supervisor Pat Herrity proposed “redirecting developers’ \$3 per square foot contribution for buying rent-controlled housing units into a trust fund to pay for public school renovation and construction.”

The report proceeds to make several unsubstantiated claims regarding the number of people living in subsidized housing and the growth in both the number of subsidized units and number of households in Fairfax County. However as in the past, The Herrity Report does not provide the full picture of the housing policy under discussion, and misrepresents the facts.

The Board of Supervisors adopted its housing policy in 2010 as a part of the larger plan

for the redevelopment of Tysons. It is now under consideration, at the request of the board, for application in other designated high density, transit and business centers in the rest of the county. Called the ‘3-2-1’ policy, the proposal by county staff would apply a contribution from commercial development to support the construction of workforce housing in the transit or business area, as it does in the Tysons plan. The contribution would be applied on a sliding scale based on a proposed development’s proximity to a transit station. This proposal will go before the Planning Commission and then the Board of Supervisors in the first quarter of 2014.

Why is this policy important?

❖ To accommodate projected job growth and remain competitive within the region, it is important to ensure housing opportunities for the workforce of the future at all income levels;

❖ Developing housing at transit stations and adjacent to employment centers encourages use of mass transit, walking and biking which can lead to fewer cars, and less congestion; it also enhances Metro revenue and reduces the pressure on local government to provide subsidies for the system;

❖ Linking commercial development (jobs) and housing via a linkage program is an acknowledged “best practice” in hundreds of communities across the country to ensure an

adequate supply of housing to support job growth.

❖ It recognizes the changing preferences of workers/taxpayers/voters, particularly young people, to live near where they work.

The proposed policy anticipates that the contributions will be made to a housing trust fund used by the county to leverage private sector financing to develop the needed housing.

The housing that is constructed will not be owned or purchased by the county. In fact, very little of the affordable housing in the county is owned by the government.

Securing decent housing that is affordable remains a challenge for Fairfax County households earning less than \$60,000.

Meeting the growing needs of our school system is also an important issue. Both education and safe, decent housing are fundamental to the well-being of our community, and residents want leadership that seeks to find workable solutions. Failing to recognize the importance of both and pitting one issue against the other are not the answers, and the citizens of Fairfax County deserve better from elected officials.

*Michelle Krockner is executive director, Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance. Jim Edmondson is president of AHOME, which promotes affordable housing opportunities for families at all income levels.*

GUEST  
EDITORIAL

## Route 1 Version 2.0: Yellow Line to Belvoir

BY SCOTT A. SUROVELL  
DELEGATE (D-44)



COMMENTARY

This is my fourth article about the U.S. 1 Multimodal Transit Analysis Study and why I believe a Yellow Line Metro subway extension to Fort Belvoir

is the best choice. My first article was an overview. Number two explained how a Yellow Line extension would improve our schools. The third examined reducing traffic congestion. This article explores how extending the Yellow Line would be a boost to our environment.

Moving people by rail uses less energy than moving them by gas-powered vehicles. Thousands fewer pounds of steel are required and rail travel minimizes wind resistance and energy consumption. Also, putting thousands of people on a train is more efficient than putting fewer people in smaller light rail trains or buses. It reduces our community’s carbon footprint. That’s the easy part.

Northern Virginia has some of the worst congestion and highest per capita automobile ownership rates in the U.S., driven by sprawl and relatively high incomes. However, statistics show that people who live inside the Beltway have fewer cars, drive less and use public transit more.

Less-vehicle-dependent,

... and a healthier environment.

walkable communities are smart for other reasons. Parking, especially free parking, inflicts enormous costs on society. County regulations require developers to use huge amounts of land for parking which largely remains empty most of the time. One study estimates that 37 percent of parking lots, even in high-density residential areas, remain empty overnight. Dedicating thousands of acres for impervious parking lots is not efficient, generates polluted storm water runoff and reduces property tax revenues.

Studies also show that walkable communities based on transit have healthier citizens. People who walk get more exercise, weigh less and tend to have lower healthcare costs.

Most important, Metro’s history in Northern Virginia has proven that, like the movie, “A Field of Dreams,” if you build it, they will come. Everywhere Metro lines have been deployed, beneficial redevelopment has followed. Commercial rents for our neighbors in Eisenhower Valley were \$5 more per square foot than in

Tyson’s Corner in 2010, because close-in, Metro-accessible properties are in high demand.

Extending the Yellow Line to Fort Belvoir would bring significant, more environmentally-friendly redevelopment to the U.S. 1 Corridor which also would modernize our stormwater infrastructure.

Mount Vernon has the most outdated stormwater infrastructure in Northern Virginia. When I was a child, Paul Spring Creek was a vibrant stream, home to turtles, crawfish, minnows and bugs. Today, Paul Spring and Little Hunting Creek is a stormwater-ravaged, unpaved storm drain. With every rain, stormwater volumes push everything alive into the Potomac River, along with trash and pounds of eroded sediment. Hybla Valley is essentially a large concrete and asphalt funnel to the Potomac River with few stormwater controls.

One study showed that 62 percent of the county’s streams sampled are in poor to very poor

SEE ENVIRONMENT, PAGE 12

## LETTER

### Woodlawn Betrayed

To the Editor:

The closing of the Woodlawn Stables has caused grief to many, many in the Mt Vernon Area. The open green space with the beautiful horses grazing was an uplifting sight even to those who would not dream of actually touching a horse. Although I am not a member of the Save Woodlawn Group, I signed petitions, wrote letters, attended meetings in support of the stables. How many came out in the community to actively support Arcadia? How many letters, petitions? Once again ‘officials’ have ignored the communities wishes.

**Carol E Kennedy**  
Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon Gazette

www.MountVernonGazette.com

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## POETRY

### The Visitor

winter starlight  
bare trees quivering  
in icy winds

The living nativity  
on the church lawn shimmers  
in its quiet way

I know  
that every murmuring  
cannot end with the word hope,  
and yet, may it all be true  
may it all be true

winter starlight  
bare trees quivering  
in icy winds

— FONDA BELL MILLER

### BUSINESS NOTES

Email announcements to [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com).

**Spring Hills Home Care Services** will bring features of Spring Hills Mt. Vernon to seniors who need assistance in their current environment. Help is available for activities of daily living, companionship, medication reminders and other services by certified home health aides. Other opportunities include transportation services, participation in activities in a Spring Hills community, even customized food service where chefs associated with Spring Hills provide advice on how to create meals for individual needs. Spring Hills Home Care Services is located at 3709 Shannons Green Way, Suite 309. Visit [www.spring-hills.com/home\\_care\\_communities](http://www.spring-hills.com/home_care_communities).

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**Mount Vernon Gazette**

## OPINION

# A Healthier Environment

FROM PAGE 10

condition. Little Hunting Creek, Quander Brook and other Potomac tributaries violate state and federal pollution requirements because of e-coli, PCBs and other pollutants. Redevelopment with modern infrastructure can help bring our streams and the Potomac into compliance. The Potomac is a drinking water source and food source for five million people.

Adding more buses to U.S. 1 or putting a light rail line on a 45-mph highway will not bring the kind of redevelopment that will maximize the benefits that our community has because of our proximity to Washington, D.C. and a large military job center directly to our south.

It is important for citizens to contribute to the discussion about improving transit on U.S. 1. We have reached a critical point — preliminary recommendations will be decided in the next three months. Please let your voice be heard. One opportunity will be our public hearing in March and at the Jan. 13 hearing of the county's Environmental Quality Advisory Council. Visit <http://bit.ly/eqac2013> for more information.

Most importantly, you need to let your leaders know — myself, Senators Puller and Ebbin, and Supervisors Hyland, McKay, and Bulova, and Congressman Moran. The time for speaking out is now.

Please let me know your views at [scottsurowell@gmail.com](mailto:scottsurowell@gmail.com). It is an honor to serve as your delegate.

## Write

The Gazette welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Send to:

Letters to the Editor  
The Gazette

1606 King St., Alexandria VA 22314

Call: 703-917-6444

Email: [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)

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# Mount Vernon Boys' Basketball Wins 3 of First 4

**Majors reached district championship game last season.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE GAZETTE

**T**he Mount Vernon boys' basketball team reached the National District championship game last season and earned a home game in the Northern Region tournament.

In the district final, the Majors fell short against a Wakefield team that reached the state semifinals. At regionals, Mount Vernon lost to a South County team that got hot at the right time, overcoming a seven-win regular season to come within one victory of a state tournament berth.

"I feel like we have more to prove this year than we did last year," senior guard Bryce Washington said. "Last year we went to the district championship and nobody expected us to go there. ... We proved that

we can get there, now we have to prove we can win (big) games."

If Mount Vernon has something to prove this season, the Majors got off to a strong start, winning their first three games. The Majors defeated Centreville, 52-51 on Dec. 3, Lee, 70-44 on Dec. 6, and McLean, 35-32 on Dec. 7.

"We've been up and down," head coach John Wiley said. "We have stretches where we play very good basketball and our half-court defense has been the key."

Mount Vernon was scheduled to face rival West Potomac on Dec. 10, but the game was postponed due to inclement weather. The Majors returned to the court on Dec. 13, losing to Yorktown, 56-48. Wiley pointed to hot Yorktown shooting and poor rebounding and free-throw shooting (5-16) by the Majors as reasons for the defeat.

Senior point guard and team captain Kwadwo Diawuo mentioned a different reason.

"Going into the game," he said, "we were more worried about a game that was post-

poned (West Potomac) instead of being ready for the game that was right in front of us."

Diawuo (5 feet 9) and Washington (6-3) are captains and the Majors' top offensive threats. "Kwadwo is the heart and soul of the team," Wiley said. "He's my point guard. He's tough. He's a leader and he can score this year. Last year, he was primarily a defender. This year, I look to him for points. ... Bryce is the one that everyone comes and game-plans for. ... He's a shooter on the perimeter. What he's added to his game is the (ability to score in the) low post." Senior Brendon Maturey (6-3) is also a team captain. Senior center Olu Akinbayo (6-5) and junior forward Ernest Jones Jr. (6-6) provide the team with height. Senior center Jordan Blanco (6-6), senior guard Nikai Glover (6-2) and sophomore guard Tarel Terry (6-3) are also impact players.

Mount Vernon will host Wakefield at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

"I really like this team," Wiley said. "Very coachable, everyone's dedicated to the cause, to the common goal. The guys seem to really like one another."

**"I feel like we have more to prove this year than we did last year. Last year we went to the district championship and nobody expected us to go there. ... We proved that we can get there, now we have to prove we can win (big) games."**

— Mount Vernon senior Bryce Washington

## SPORTS BRIEFS

### Mount Vernon Girls' Basketball Gets First Win

The Mount Vernon girls' basketball team defeated Yorktown 83-56 on Dec. 13, improving its record to 1-1.

The Majors opened the season with a 60-32 loss to Centreville on Dec. 3.

Mount Vernon will travel to face Wakefield at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

### West Potomac Boys' Basketball Beats Chantilly

The West Potomac boys' basketball team improved to 1-1 with a 51-50 win over Chantilly on Dec. 13.

The Wolverines will host Woodson at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 20.

### Aces Seek Host Families For 2014 Season

The Alexandria Aces Collegiate Summer Baseball Club, coming off a 27-17 regular season record which took the team into the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League playoffs this past summer, are looking for host families for their upcoming 2014 season.

Thirty-five young men from all over the U.S. will come to Alexandria next summer to play wooden bat baseball at Frank E. Mann Field at Four Mile Run Park.

From early June to early August, they will play 40 games in roughly 60 days. An Aces player hosted by a family next summer might one day be playing Major League Baseball sometime in the near future.

Host families are asked to provide a bed and access to a washer and dryer, and the Aces will take care of the everything else.

Those who would like to volunteer as a host family are asked to contact Aces' host family coordinator, Dave Cheney, at 703-370-2882.



**The Carl Sandburg Middle School Dance Team competed at the Winterfest Cheer and Dance Competition last Saturday.**

PHOTOS  
CONTRIBUTED



**Emma Anderson, 15, competing in the high school category, won second place for her lyrical solo at the Winterfest Dance and Cheer Competition.**

### Dance Team Returns With Trophies

At the Dec. 14 Winterfest Cheer and Dance Competition at CD Hylton High School, the Carl Sandburg Middle School Dance Team, competing in the middle school category, won first place trophies in Pom and Hip Hop. Additionally, Ashleigh Roddey placed 1st for her jazz solo and Connie French placed 2nd for her lyrical solo.

Coached by Ashley Hoffman, an English teacher at CSMS, the dance team is comprised of both 7th and 8th graders. Throughout the winter, the girls will compete in four more local competitions.



## SPORTS

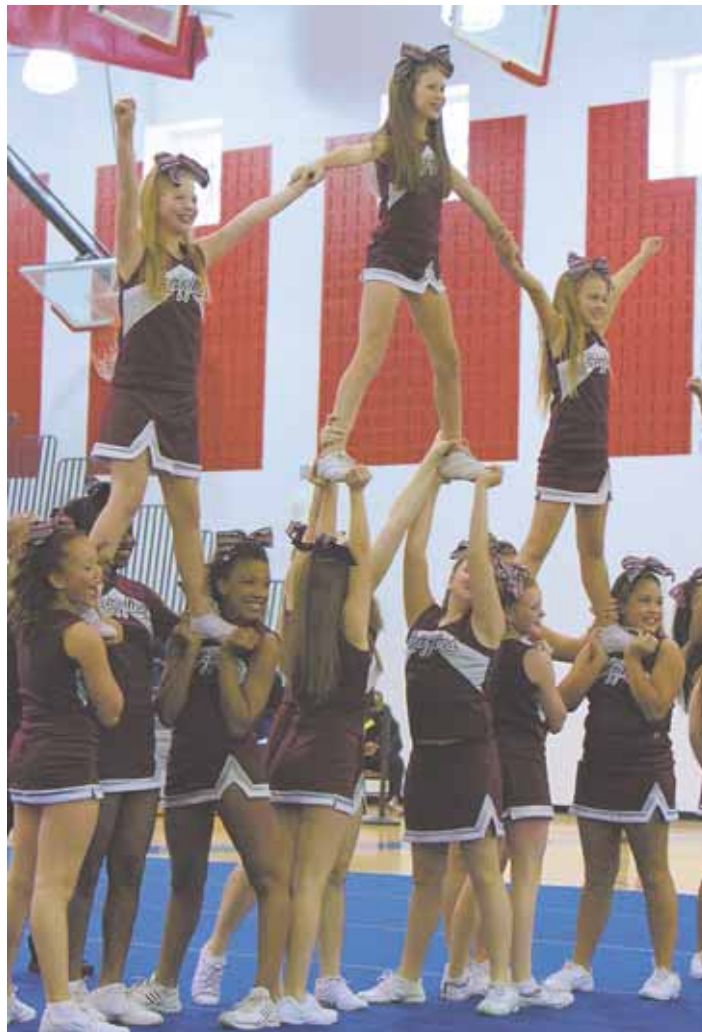


The Mount Vernon Tigers perform the routine that took 3rd place in their division. The cheerleading competition was held at T.C. Williams High School on Dec. 14.

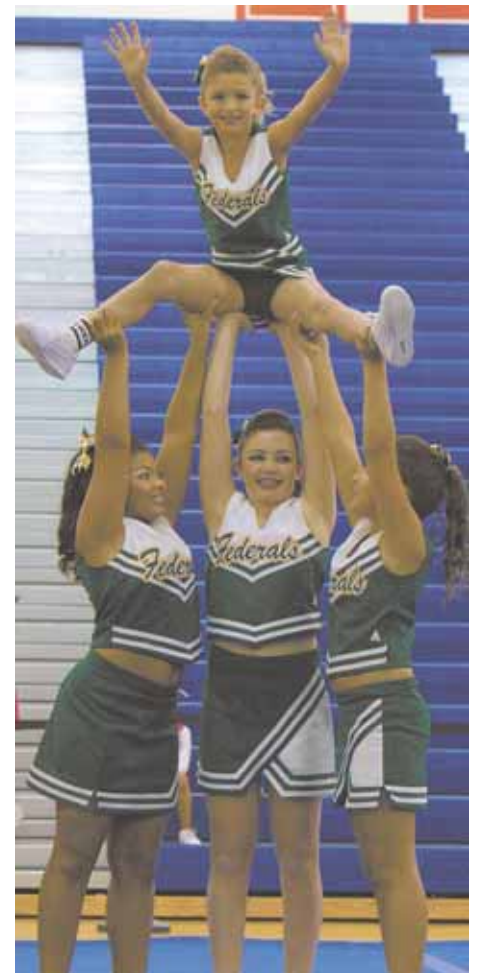
# At the Holiday Invitational Cheerleading Competition



Members of the Fort Belvoir Bulldogs doing a lift during their winning routine.



The Gainesville Grizzlies took 1st place after this performance.



Members of the Fort Hunt Federals squad during their spirited performance.



Members of the Fort Belvoir Bulldogs enjoying the music before their performance begins.

PHOTOS BY  
RENÉE RUGGLES  
THE GAZETTE

Some parents brought banners to show support from the stands.





# Holiday Ice Show at Mt. Vernon RECenter

Skaters filled the rink for a 4-minute warm-up in preparation for Saturday's Holiday Ice Show at the Mt. Vernon RECenter. The center offers group and individual lessons. On Jan. 4, 2014 group lessons start up again. For more information stop by the center or call 703-768-3224 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks). The RECenter is located at 2017 Belle View Boulevard.



Jessica Ingoglio in O Holy Night.



Isabelle Hendricks in Requiem of the Tower.



Cheyenne McQuinn skates to Santa Claus Is Coming to Town.



Ian Martin in Beat It.



Denise Gant in El Dorado.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE GAZETTE

## Transparency

FROM PAGE 3

though it does not have the blessing of the council. Leaders at the Virginia Press Association say they oppose Surovell's bill because they believe it will do more harm than good.

"It's very restrictive," said Ginger Stanley, executive director of the Virginia Press Association. "It almost takes away any opportunity to see records."

**THE DEBATE** about how to draft more transparency has created a sticking point. Leaders at the Virginia Press Association say they are concerned about one of the exemptions, which blocks public access to records related to the commission's "exercise of the powers and duties prescribed to it by the Constitution of Virginia ... or by any law relating to the regulation or control of persons engaged in any activity or conduct that is ... subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission." Some say that exemption is too way too broad.

"We couldn't support it based on the way it came out of the council. I think they were trying to satisfy everybody, and in doing that they pretty much negated openness of the records," Surovell disagrees.

"I don't think that what somebody is paid or how much they paid for furniture or what they did with a procurement — I don't think any of those things relate to regulation or control of people engaged in these activities," said Surovell. "A court wouldn't say the General Assembly made the SCC subject to FOIA and then in this exemption they took the whole SCC out. That's not realistic."

Meanwhile, Watkins is ready to introduce his rival legislation. Stanley says the Virginia Press Association has not yet taken a position on his bill because the draft language is not yet available.

"Virginia is ranked by several to be one of the best places in this country to do business," said Watkins. "I would contend that this is one of the reasons why."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## MCJROTC Blood Drive

The Mount Vernon High School MCJROTC partnered with the INOVA Blood Service and held a blood drive at the school the Friday before Thanksgiving. The goal was to collect 80 units of blood in six hours to help the Northern Virginia blood bank. The goal was exceeded by three units after 92 donors showed up to donate.



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-Thomas A. Edison

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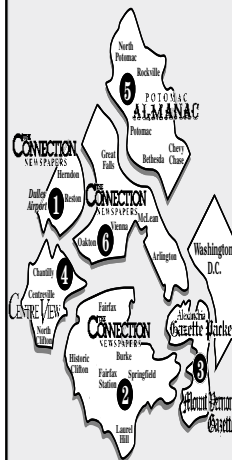
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The McLean Connection  
The Great Falls Connection



# Teaching To Be Charitable

FROM PAGE 9

empathy can be diminished if they are not exposed to it often enough or learn that other characteristics, such as aggression, are more rewarding."

Fred Bemak, Ed.D., who is with the Counseling and Development Program in the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University in Fairfax, said that some children are more likely to be interested in giving than others. "Children have predispositions for charity, but they are not born with it," said Bemak. "You have children who naturally share more than others. There are some toddlers who share their toys with other children and some toddlers who don't."

Bemak believes that a sense of compassion must be nurtured.

"A child could have a predisposition for charity, but have parents who don't foster it," he said. "You can cultivate it by bringing those values into your home environment."

There are a number of ways to cultivate it. "In young children, parents can foster a child's sense of empathy by modeling this response," said Van Arsdale. "For example, if they see a person who has been injured, the parent could comment on how that injury must hurt. ... Ask the child, for example, 'How might that person be feeling right now?' These interactions can help foster the child's empathy for others."

Bemak suggests directly connecting older children with opportunities to help people who are in need. "Take children to serve people who are homeless or refugee populations or people who don't have resources," he said. "Modeling the behavior is extremely important."

He recalled a personal example from his own life. "I was in Burma working with children who were vulnerable and poor [who

were] at high levels of risk," he said. "Outside the gates [of our facility] were homeless children who were in more desperate situations than those children I was working with."

The children were homeless, hungry and dressed in rags. "They had no parents and were markedly different than the at-risk children I was working with," he said. "Typical response of the children I was working with was 'Go away. Leave us alone and don't sit outside our facility.'"

Bemak suggested the homeless children be invited inside for dinner. "We talked with them, welcomed them and ate with them," he said. "After they left, we talked about what the experience was like for the at-risk kids and what they learned by talking to the homeless children."

His students learned about charity through processing the experience of having a human encounter. "We talked about what it meant to give," he said. "It was very powerful for all involved. This exercise can be replicated anywhere."

Van Arsdale said that older children learn best about charity when their parents involve them in altruistic activities. "For example, the family could volunteer together by serving meals at a homeless shelter," she said. "This direct, interpersonal experience is more likely to affect the child's sense of empathy than an indirect experience [such as] telling the child they should be charitable."

Cultivating altruistic values is key to raising children who have a sense of charity. "Share food, possessions, support and assistance in ways that people might need it," said Bemak. "Even a young child can share their toys with other children who might not have toys. In psychology we talk about altruism as a healing variable. Altruism leads to compassion and charity."

## BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday at noon.

### HOLIDAY SPECIAL

**SoberRide Program.** From 10 p.m.-6 a.m., Dec. 13-Jan. 1, Washington-metropolitan area residents can call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI for a free taxi ride (up to \$30 value). Visit [soberride.com](http://soberride.com).

### TUESDAY/DEC. 24

**Bluegrass Christmas Eve.** 5 p.m. at Fire Station #5, 6300 Beulah Street, Alexandria. The community is invited to celebrate Christmas Eve with Aldersgate Kingstowne. The Big Hillbilly Bluegrass band will play traditional Christmas carols during the worship service. This is an opportunity to find meaning in the mayhem of the season by celebrating Christmas in a relaxed setting with the whole family. Visit [www.aldersgatekingstowne.com](http://www.aldersgatekingstowne.com).

### FRIDAY/JAN. 10

**Application Deadline.** The Mount Vernon Council of Citizens Associations (MVCCA) is seeking to recognize a high school senior from Mount Vernon HS, South County SS and/or West Potomac HS, who demonstrates

personal achievement through community involvement, volunteer work, and/or exceptional civic duties. The award will be made during the MVCCA Annual Gala on April 26, 2014. Visit [www.mvcca.org](http://www.mvcca.org).

**Speaker Series Kickoff.** 8:30-10 a.m. at the SpringHill Suites, 6065 Richmond Highway. Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation will host a free speaker series to encourage the startup and growth of small businesses in Southeast Fairfax County. The series will be held on the second Friday of every month. Panelists include local business owners ready to share their tips, advice and lessons learned. Coffee and light breakfast. RSVP to [info@sfdc.org](mailto:info@sfdc.org). Visit [www.sfdc.org](http://www.sfdc.org).

### TUESDAY/JAN. 14

**Pet Loss Support Group.** 1:30-2:30 p.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. Talk with others who are dealing with the death of a beloved pet. Free, register by calling 703-333-6963.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 18

**Open House.** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Fort Hunt Preschool in the Carriage House, 1909 Windmill Lane. Learn about the school, meet teachers and our classrooms. Visit [www.forthuntpreschool.com](http://www.forthuntpreschool.com) for more.

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### 21 Announcements

**ABC LICENSE**  
Los Cuates, VA Inc trading as Los Cuates Restaurant, 1116 King St, Alexandria, VA 22314. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for a Wine and Beer, Mixed Beverage Restaurant on Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Sergio Kehl, Director and President.

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required legal notices. Objections should be registered at [www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov) or 800-552-3200.

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### 21 Announcements

### 21 Announcements

MullinsMemorial.com, Cape Coral Breeze



**Robert "Bobby" Deane Via, 58**, a Cape Coral, FL resident since 1986, formerly of Alexandria, VA, passed away Wednesday, December 11, 2013 in Ft. Myers. He was born June 21, 1955 in Alexandria.

Bobby was a faithful and loving son, a wonderful father and husband and a friend to all who knew him. He loved golf, family and his faithful dog Dingo. Better known as the unofficial "Mayor of Cape Coral", Bobby was blessed with countless friends. All you had to do was meet him and you had made a friend for life. Bobby was an unabashed ladies man as well as a man's man. He had a smile and a laugh that would light up any room. He was a tremendous cook, mechanic and master conversationalist with a great sense of humor. Bobby loved life like there was no tomorrow. He will be missed. So where ever you are, please raise a glass to Cape Coral's prodigal son for one last toast. Cheers Bobby!

He is survived by his beloved wife of 31 years, Christina C. Via of Cape Coral; one loving son, James "Deane" Via also of Cape Coral; his mother, Joyce T. Bernstine of Lakewood, OH; his father, Robert E. Via and wife Marilyn of Colonial Beach, VA; a sister, Torey Via Worrone and husband Jeff also of Lakewood, OH; a niece, Tully Lee Worrone of Lakewood; a sister-in-law, Tresa A. Caplanis of Woodbridge, VA; a brother-in-law, Mike W. Caplanis of Stephen City, VA; as well as Dingo!

Bobby was preceded in death by his step-father, Dr. Richard L. Bernstine.

A Celebration of Larger Than Life, Life will be held 2:30PM Saturday, December 21, 2013 at the Chapel By The Sea, 11580 Chapin Lane, Captiva, FL 33924 with Pastor George Morris officiating. A casual dress reception will immediately follow at the Captiva Island Yacht Club, 15903 Captiva Dr., Captiva, FL 33924.

If you will be attending the services, it is requested that you bring any photos of Bobby that you may have to be placed on a memory board as a gift to the family.

Memorial contributions in memory of Robert "Bobby" Via are suggested to the National Foundation for Transplants, 5350 Poplar Ave., Suite 430, Memphis, TN 38119 or the American Liver Foundation, 39 Broadway, Suite 2700 New York, New York 10006.

Friends are invited to send condolences via the on-line guest book which can be found at [www.MullinsMemorial.com](http://www.MullinsMemorial.com).

Mullins Memorial Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Cape Coral, is entrusted with final care.

### 21 Announcements

### 21 Announcements

#### PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the City of Alexandria has requested authorization from the Marine Resources Commission to repair four existing weirs and an existing weir structure in Cameron Run Adjacent to 3600 -4000 Eisenhower Avenue in the City of Alexandria.

Send comments/inquiries within 15 days to: Marine Resources Commission, Habitat Management Division, 2600 Washington Ave, 3rd floor, Newport News, Virginia 23607

### 21 Announcements

### 21 Announcements

## EVEN SUPERMAN HAD FOSTER PARENTS

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### Legal Notices

#### LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 3600 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304 is now in possession of unclaimed bicycles, mopeds, lawn equipment, money, scooters, and other items. All persons having valid claim to the property should file a claim to the property with reasonable proof of ownership or the items will be sold, destroyed, converted or donated. For a complete listing go to <http://alexandriava.gov/police/> and contact the Police Property Section at (703) 746-6709.

An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.

-Werner Heisenberg

### 21 Announcements

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I believe the future is only the past again, entered through another gate.  
-Arthur Wing Pinero



# ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail announcements to [gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com). Photos and artwork are encouraged. Deadline is Thursday at noon.

## ONGOING

**Book a Librarian.** At the Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St, for help with research or to better understand the library's databases and resources. Make an appointment by calling 703-746-1751.

**Computer Tutoring.** At the Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Individual assistance from a librarian. Call 703-746-1751.

**Theater Performance.** Through Sunday, Dec. 22, see "A Broadway Christmas Carol" at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. Wednesday, Nov. 27 at 7 p.m.; Thursday-Friday at 8 p.m.; Saturdays at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. This show is a cross between the classic Dickens' tale and song parodies of more than 30 Broadway show tune favorites. \$50/adult; \$25/student or child. Visit [www.metrostage.org](http://www.metrostage.org) for tickets.

**Theater Performance.** See The Little Theatre of Alexandria's "A Christmas Carol" from Dec. 5-22 at the theatre, 600 Wolfe St. Performances are

Thursdays-Fridays at 8 p.m. and Saturdays-Sundays at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. \$15. Visit [www.thelittletheatre.com](http://www.thelittletheatre.com) or 703-683-0496.

**Art Exhibition.** Through the end of December, see artist Oenone Hammersley's recent semi-abstract and wildlife paintings at Patrick's Home Decor, 106 N. St. Asaph Street. Call 571 970 6931. Visit [www.oenonehammersley.com](http://www.oenonehammersley.com) or [www.patricksdesigns.com](http://www.patricksdesigns.com).

**Art Exhibit.** See "Photographers at the Factory" Nov. 1 through Dec. 31 at Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. The exhibit celebrates FotoWeekDC. Hours are Thursdays 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; all other days from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Photographs will line the hall walls and in multiple studios. Free. Visit [www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery presents "Holiday Sizzle" in Studio 18 at Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Exhibit starts on Nov. 19, additional items will be added Dec. 9 and the exhibit closes Jan. 5. Free. Some items will be for sale. Visit [www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com](http://www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com) or 703-548-0935.

**Art Exhibit.** Artist John Gascot of Studio 4, 218 N. Lee St., suite 101, creates an art exhibit to honor the life journeys of transgender individuals. It will be on display through January. Gallery hours are Thursday-Saturday, noon-7 p.m. and Sunday from noon-5 p.m. or by appointment. Visit [www.studio4oldtown.com](http://www.studio4oldtown.com) for more.

**African American Activists Exhibition.** Through Saturday, Jan. 4, 2014, Living Legends of Alexandria is an ongoing photo-documentary project created in 2006 by artist-photographer Nina Tisara to identify, honor and chronicle people making current history in Alexandria. This free exhibit is at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 601 Wythe St. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Visit [www.alexblackhistory.org](http://www.alexblackhistory.org) or call 703-746-4356.

**Art Exhibit.** "Small Works," juried by Irene Owsley will run Nov. 26-Jan. 5, at the Multiple Exposures Gallery in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Visit [www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** See "IMPART," a project that is a collaboration between The Art League and the Wounded Warriors at Ft. Belvoir. Features ceramics by eight artists showcased at The Art League in the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. Exhibit runs through Jan. 5. Visit [www.theartleague.org](http://www.theartleague.org) for more.

**"The Street Sense Project."** Thien-Kim Pham presents "Portraits of People Who Live and Work on the Streets" in studio 21 at the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. The exhibit runs Dec. 5 through Jan. 6. A portion of the sales will be donated to a local charity related to the subject matter depicted in the piece. Visit [www.theartleague.org](http://www.theartleague.org) or 703-683-1780 for more.

**Art Exhibit.** "Small Worlds," a multimedia juried exhibition with a focus on artists who work in miniature or small scales will run Dec. 6-Jan. 12, at the Target Gallery in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Visit [www.torpedofactory.org](http://www.torpedofactory.org) for more.

**Art Exhibit.** See "No Room For Doubt," abstract works on wood, canvas and paper by Kristen Hayes through Jan. 26 at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Free. Visit [nvfaa.org](http://nvfaa.org) or 703-548-0035.

**Art Exhibit.** See "Primary Colors" art exhibit from Jan. 3-Feb. 2 at The Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Artists use the three primary colors without mixing them. Free.



Williamson

Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org) for more.

**Occupied City: Life in Civil War Alexandria Exhibition.** At The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St., through Sunday, March 23, 2014. This exhibit traces life in Alexandria following Virginia's decision to secede from the Union in May 1861. The Lyceum is open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, 1-5 p.m. Suggested admission is \$2. Visit [www.alexandriahistory.org](http://www.alexandriahistory.org) or call 703-746-4994.

## CLASSES

### Metro Club After-School Program.

From Sept. 9-June 2014, the Metropolitan School of Arts presents an after-school program for grades 1-6. The program is located at both the Lorton studio at Workhouse Arts Center, 9517 Workhouse Way and in Alexandria at 5775 Barclay Drive. Programs will focus on the arts, including music, dance, theatre, yoga and academics, as well as designated homework time. The program will run Mondays, 1-6 p.m., and Tuesday-Friday, 3-6 p.m. Tuition runs from \$130-150. Call 703-339-0444 or visit [www.metropolitanarts.org](http://www.metropolitanarts.org).

**Life Drawing.** Del Ray Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions for anyone to develop life-drawing skills further. Just drop-in for the session and bring your supplies to draw or paint our live models. Fee ranges from \$8-\$12. All skill levels are welcome. Del Ray Artisans is located at 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org) for a schedule.

**Photography Workshop.** 10:30 a.m.-noon at Multiple Exposures Gallery on 105 N. Union Street. Photographers and enthusiasts of all skill levels are invited to share work, ideas, and questions at this free workshop held on the last Sunday of each month, except December. No reservations. Call 703-683-2205.

**Winter Class Registration.** Early bird registration for classes at Art at the Center, 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane will end Dec. 20. Call 703-201-1250 or visit [www.artatthecenter.org](http://www.artatthecenter.org) for a list of classes.

**Holiday Cupcakes.** Through Dec. 31, Occasionally Cake, at 207 King St. in Old Town is hosting cupcake decorating classes on Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m.; Wednesdays, 5-7 p.m.; Saturdays, as scheduled and Sundays 3-5 p.m. Each class is two hours and instructors teach four different cupcake designs for take-home

cupcakes. \$60 per person. Students 11 years old and younger must be accompanied by a paying adult. Call 703-647-9638 or visit [www.occasionallycake.com](http://www.occasionallycake.com).

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 18

**Santa's Winter Wonderland.** 5-8 p.m., meet Santa at Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe St. See a scale model of the City with features such as City Hall, Masonic Memorial and more, look at 20-foot-high trees decorated for the season and entertainment. Children ages infant to 17 can get a gift. Contact Ian Hawkins at [ihawkins@arha.us](mailto:ihawkins@arha.us) or 703-549-7913.

**A John Waters Christmas.** 7:30 p.m. at Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Hear a compilation of Christmas music selected by director John Waters. \$49.50. Visit [www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) or 703-549-7500.

## THURSDAY/DEC. 19

**Music Performance.** Carbon Leaf will perform at 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit <http://www.birchmere.com> for tickets.

## FRIDAY/DEC. 20

**Santa Railway Express.** 1:25 p.m., depart King Street Station and return at 3:30 p.m. Ride the train with Santa and Mrs. Claus. \$27.50, tickets sold exclusively at Whistle Stop Toy & Hobby, 1719 Centre Plaza. Visit [www.whistlestophobbies.com](http://www.whistlestophobbies.com) or 703-549-4912.

## West Potomac Graduate Performing at Kennedy Center

Soprano Lisa Williamson makes her Washington National Opera debut in the world-premiere production of Jeanine Tesori's children's opera, "The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me." Williamson, the daughter of two military musicians, graduated from West Potomac High School. She now makes her home in Connecticut with her husband, Lt. Cmdr. Adam Williamson, the director of the United States Coast Guard Band.

"The Lion, the Unicorn, and Me" tells the story of the Nativity from the donkey's point of view, WNO Artistic Director Francesca Zambello brings this award-winning children's book to life. This holiday family opera runs through Dec. 22 at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater. Run time is approximately 90 minutes. Tickets \$44-\$64 at [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org).

**Holiday Market.** 6-9 p.m. in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. The Del Ray Artisans will offer handmade work from local artists, handmade ornaments and bake sale items to benefit the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. Free. Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org) for more.

**Light the Night.** 5-7 p.m. at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Bring flashlights for light painting, and new unwrapped toys and books for donation to Rising Hope Ministries ([www.risinghopeumc.org](http://www.risinghopeumc.org)). Visit [www.artatthecenter.org](http://www.artatthecenter.org).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 21

**Holiday Market.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. The Del Ray Artisans will offer handmade work from local artists, handmade ornaments and bake sale items to benefit the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. Free. Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org) for more.

**Holiday Food & Wine Event.** At Balducci's, 600 Franklin St. Join professional winemakers, importers, aficionados and gourmet chefs and sommeliers as they sample various wines, trade recommendations, and just share stories about their mutual passion for gourmet food and wine. Balducci's Food Lover's Market will have special holiday wine and food samplings. Free. Visit <http://www.balduccis.com/> for more.

**Author Event.** 3-5 p.m. at Mount Vernon Estate, 3200 Mount Vernon

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 24

## 2014 Composers Competition Opens

The 2014 Kluge Young Composers Competition, a new competition for composers 18 years or younger, was announced in celebration of Maestro Kim Allen Kluge's 25th anniversary year with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra (ASO).

Established through the joint efforts of the ASO and the Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria, the competition provides an opportunity for young composers to develop their talents. The winning composition, selected by Maestro Kluge, will premiere at an ASO performance. The 2014 Kluge Young Composers Competition is open to any composer 18 years or younger who resides in the state of Virginia. Compositions should be 5 to 7 minutes in length and should use standard orchestra instrumentation and normal doublings. Submissions must be received by December 20, 2013. In addition to having their piece performed by the ASO, the winner will receive a \$1500 cash prize. For details, visit [www.alexsym.org/kluge-young-composers-competition](http://www.alexsym.org/kluge-young-composers-competition).



# Celebrate the New Year



**Christmas Day** - Traditional Dinner with all the trimmings. Open at 5pm. Live music starts at 8:30 pm

**New Year's Eve** - 4-Course Dinner with party favors, live entertainment and champagne toast at midnight. \$40 per person. Reservations only.

**New Year's Day** - Brunch 11am-2pm

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Belle View Shopping Center

**Chef's Special Menu for New Year's Eve**  
**New Year's Day Dinner open 4-9 pm**

Call us for details

**Closed Christmas Day for the Holiday**  
**Closed New Year's Day for Lunch**

**Party Trays and Gift Certificates for the Holidays**  
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- Linguine with Mixed Seafood
- Roast Leg of Lamb with Rosemary
- Veal with Cream Brandy Sauce

- Special Three-Course dinner menu only after 7:30 p.m.
- Early seating available 5:00-7:00 p.m. featuring our regular & special menu

Franco & his staff wish you a Joyful 2014!

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- Mon.: Italian Class & Toastmasters
- Wed.: Jazz Night
- Fri.: Sophisticated Swing
- Sat.: Jazz Combo
- Sun.: Italian Brunch with Mimosa
- Daily Lunch Special \$9.95

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### Cozy Countdown To-Go Bag

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### Ocean & Range

**NYE Dinner in the Wine Bar**  
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### O'Connell's Irish Bar 2014 New Year's Party



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# 2014



# ENTERTAINMENT

## Celebrate NEW YEAR'S EVE

December 31 ★ 10PM - 2AM

★ TWO DJs & THREE BARS ★

No Cover Charge



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## FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA®

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An Old Town New Year's Eve Party

22 indoor venues with live music,  
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### FIREWORKS ON THE POTOMAC



**PLUS** afternoon adventures with  
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new creative and culinary activities  
all around town

Don't miss the area's largest, safest,  
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New Year's Eve celebration!

Children 12 and under, and active  
military are **FREE**



Badge and schedule information at  
FirstNightAlexandria.org



Memorial Highway. Brian Kilmeade will  
sign copies of his book "George  
Washington's Secret Six: The Spy  
Ring That Saved the American  
Revolution." Estate admission is not  
required. Visit [mountvernon.org/  
specialevents](http://mountvernon.org/specialevents).

**Country-Western Dance.** Lessons  
start at 6:30 p.m., dancing from  
7:30-10 p.m. at Lincolnia Senior  
Center, 4710 N. Chambliss St. A DJ  
provides music. \$10/NVCWDA  
member; \$12/non-member; \$5/child  
18 and under. BYO refreshment, non-  
alcoholic. Visit [www.nvcwda.org](http://www.nvcwda.org) or  
703-860-4941.

### SUNDAY/DEC. 22

**Holiday Market.** Noon-4 p.m. in the  
Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount  
Vernon Ave. The Del Ray Artisans  
will offer handmade work from local  
artists, handmade ornaments and  
bake sale items to benefit the Animal  
Welfare League of Alexandria. Free.  
Visit [www.TheDelRayArtisans.org](http://www.TheDelRayArtisans.org).

**Pictures with Santa.** 6-9 p.m. at  
Osteria Marzano, 6361 Walker Lane,  
Suite 140. Children can take a free  
picture while enjoying dinner. Visit  
[www.osteriamarzano.com](http://www.osteriamarzano.com) or 703-  
313-9700 for reservations.

**National Christmas Tree.**  
Alexandria's Metropolitan School of  
the Arts' Frosty Follies will perform  
at 6:30 p.m. on the Ellipse in  
Washington, D.C. More than 40  
dancers from MSA will showcase  
their live tap dance. Free. Visit  
[www.metropolitanarts.org](http://www.metropolitanarts.org).

### MONDAY/DEC. 23

**Breakfast With Santa.** 8:30 a.m.-11  
a.m. at Union Street Public House,  
121 S. Union St. Visit with Santa and  
Mrs. Claus while enjoying breakfast.  
\$13.50/child; \$22/adult. Must  
purchase time slot in advance at  
<https://usph.webconnex.com/santa>.

**Pictures with Santa.** 6-9 p.m. at  
Osteria Marzano, 6361 Walker Lane,  
Suite 140. Children can take a free  
picture while enjoying dinner. Visit  
[www.osteriamarzano.com](http://www.osteriamarzano.com) or 703-  
313-9700 for reservations.

### TUESDAY/DEC. 24

**Breakfast With Santa.** 8:30 a.m.-11  
a.m. at Union Street Public House,  
121 S. Union St. Visit with Santa and  
Mrs. Claus while enjoying breakfast.  
\$13.50/child; \$22/adult. Must  
purchase time slot in advance at  
<https://usph.webconnex.com/santa>.

### MONDAY/DEC. 30

**Burlesque-A-Pades.** Starring the  
Pontani Sisters, The Maine Attraction  
and more. At The Birchmere Music  
Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit  
[www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) or 703-549-  
7500 for tickets.



## Breakfast with Santa

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting Old Town before leaving for the big  
night. Join them for breakfast Monday, Dec. 23 and Tuesday, Dec. 24. Break-  
fast is table-service and the menu will include some all-time favorites like  
eggs Benedict and Belgian malted waffles. Six seatings starting at 8:30 a.m.  
and every half-hour through 11 a.m. \$13.50 per child (age 3-12) and \$22  
per adult. Cost includes breakfast, milk, soda, coffee, tea, tax, gratuity, and  
a visit with Santa and the Missus. Purchase tickets at [https://  
usph.webconnex.com/santa](https://usph.webconnex.com/santa).

[www.theoldtowntheater.com](http://www.theoldtowntheater.com).

### TUESDAY/DEC. 31

**First Night Alexandria.** Afternoon  
activities from 1-5 p.m.,  
performances from 7 p.m.-midnight  
and fireworks at midnight from the  
Potomac River at the foot of King  
Street. There will be more than 100  
performances at 22 indoor venues,  
dancing, children's games and more.  
\$15/before Dec. 15; \$20/after;  
children under 12 and active military  
are free. Visit  
[www.firstnightalexandria.org](http://www.firstnightalexandria.org) for a  
full list of activities, performances  
and locations.

**New Year's Eve State of Mind  
Benefit Gala.** 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m. at  
the Waterford at Springfield, 6715  
Commerce St., Springfield. There will  
be activities, live music, holiday  
buffet, silent auction and more for  
the whole family to enjoy. Hosted by  
the Metropolitan School of the Arts.  
\$120/adult; \$79/youth age 13-20  
years; \$49/child age 6-12 years;  
free/child under 5. Visit  
[www.metropolitanarts.org](http://www.metropolitanarts.org) or 703-  
339-0444 for tickets.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 4

**Show.** Doors open at 10 a.m., show  
starts at 11 a.m. at Old Town  
Theater, 815 King St. "Dezmo and  
the Secret Power of Knowledge" will  
be performed for children. \$15/  
person. Visit

### SUNDAY/JAN. 5

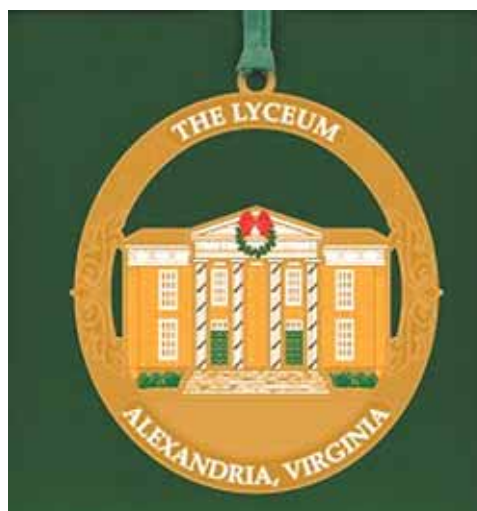
**Twelfth Night.** 6 p.m. at Christ  
Church, 118 N. Washington St.  
Armonia Nova, an ensemble of  
historical instruments and voices  
celebrates 12 years of Twelfth Night  
concerts with more than a dozen  
seasonal early music gems from  
England, France, Germany and  
Spain. Constance Whiteside,  
medieval/baroque harps; Craig  
Resta, vielle & baroque violin; Corey  
McKnight and Jay White  
countertenors. Donations welcomed.  
Visit [www.armonianova.org](http://www.armonianova.org).

### FRIDAY/JAN. 10

**Music Performance.** See Ricky  
Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder at The  
Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount  
Vernon Ave. 7:30 p.m. \$39.50. Visit  
[www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) or 703-549-  
7500 for tickets.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 11

**Music Performance.** See Ricky  
Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder at The  
Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount  
Vernon Ave. 7:30 p.m. \$39.50. Visit  
[www.birchmere.com](http://www.birchmere.com) or 703-549-  
7500 for tickets.



## Alexandria's Ornament

The Lyceum (2013) ornament is the third in the Series honoring the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War. During the Civil War, occupying Union forces seized the building and turned it into a hospital ward, serving both Union and captured Confederate wounded. Turned into a private home after the war, the building now known simply as The Lyceum was saved from demolition by Alexandria's City Council in 1969, to be renovated into the nation's first Bicentennial Center. Today, The Lyceum is Alexandria's general city history museum.

This year's ornament is available for \$18 at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, the Apothecary Museum, The Lyceum, Fort Ward Museum, the Alexandria Black History Museum, the Ramsay House Visitor Center and online at <https://shop.alexandriava.gov>.



# ENTERTAINMENT

## 2013 First Night Alexandria Afternoon Activities

### DURANT ARTS CENTER

**2-4 p.m.** at the Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St. 2-4 p.m. Free. Moon bounce and interactive games for children 12 and under. ThinkFun game room for the entire family.

**2 p.m.** The George Washington Middle School Chamber Orchestra consists of sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. Under the leadership of Jonathon Jones, this orchestra has performed at numerous festivals and concerts over the past 15 years and has been honored with many first place rankings and/or superior ratings at District X, Kings Dominion and Music in the Parks Festivals. In April 2012, the Chamber Orchestra performed at the International Music Festival at the Kennedy Center where they received the Gold Award for their performance.

**2:30 p.m.** The Francis C. Hammond Orchestra is a program of about 130 students, with a proud tradition of excellence. Under the direction of Veronica Jackson, the orchestra received Superior and Excellent ratings at District Orchestra Assessment and at Orchestra Competition at Hershey Park.

**3 p.m.** The T.C. Williams High School choral program is comprised of about 100 students in four distinct groups: Advanced, Mixed, Concert and Show Choir. Directed by Theodore Thorpe, III, their repertoire covers many styles from classical to gospel, from different periods and ranges in difficulty.

**3:30 p.m.** The T.C. Williams Orchestra, directed by Dr. Tzu-Ching Tai, is comprised of three orchestras including the ninth grade Orchestra, the String Orchestra and the advanced Chamber Orchestra. Students in the orchestra program have performed with world famous violinist Midori during her orchestra residencies program and regularly collaborate with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra.

### FIFTH ANNUAL FUN HUNT

**2-5:30 p.m.** Sponsored by Dominion Power. Clue sheets can be picked up beginning at 2 p.m. at the Torpedo Factory Art Center (105 N. Union St.). One 2013 First Night Alexandria admission badge is required for each clue sheet. Badges will be on sale at the Torpedo Factory. This is not a timed event. Completed clue sheets must be turned in at the Durant Arts Center, 1605 Cameron St., by 5:30 p.m. to be eligible for prizes.

### TORPEDO FACTORY ART CENTER

**2-5 p.m.** Not a scavenger hunt person? Participate in a fun, art activity for all ages and skill levels, at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union St. Make a button, mask or crown to wear to the best parties all night. Artists Lisa Schumaier and Dawn Benedetto and their elves will be there to assist. This is a free event sponsored by Dominion Power.

### ALEXANDRIA ARCHEOLOGY MUSEUM

**2-5 p.m.** Learn about Alexandria's potters at this fun, hands-on activity. Discover Alexandria's salt-glazed stoneware potters and their unique decorative patterns produced from 1813 through 1876. You'll be able to copy or create your own take-home designs on paper using markers, paint, or both at this drop-in activity. 105 N. Union St., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. Free.

### THE ART LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA

**1:30-4:30 p.m.** Make a sketchbook to take home, participate in a drawing activity or make a pencil sculpture. 105 N. Union St., 1<sup>st</sup> Floor. Free.

### DOWNTOWN BAPTIST CHURCH

**3 & 5 p.m.** (one hour show). Travel back in time and interact with Thomas Jefferson, Nellie Bly and

Benjamin Banneker in a multimedia, musical, one-of-a-kind extravaganza for all ages. Through the magic of theater reflect on the old and bring in the New with the Alexandria premier of The Bea & The Bug. Created by Gale Nemec [www.TheBeaAndTheBug.org](http://www.TheBeaAndTheBug.org). 212 S. Washington St. \$10 at the door, or in advance at [www.galenemecbooks.com/the-bea—the-bug.html](http://www.galenemecbooks.com/the-bea—the-bug.html).

### THE PAPER SOURCE

**2-5 p.m.** Demonstrations including stamping, heat embossing, envelope making and kit making. 118 King St. Free.

### ALFRED STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

**Noon.** In keeping with its rich history as one of the oldest African American churches in the United States, annually on New Year's Eve, Alfred Street Baptist Church hosts Watch Night Services. The afternoon service will begin at noon and consist of music, led by the church's music and worship arts department, prayers, testimonies and an inspirational message. The church welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds to celebrate the hope of the New Year. 301 S. Alfred St. Free.

### TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES

**1-4 p.m.** There will be a "race" track mapped out in the store for kids to follow and stops along the way to learn about other parts of the world. The story of Galimoto will be read at 4 p.m. There will be light refreshments. The age range for the book and activity is 3-8 years old. 915 King St. Free.

### SUGAR CUBE

**2-5 p.m.** "Countdown to Midnight" free cookie decorating (one cookie per child). 1218 King St. Free.

### OLIO

**1-4 p.m.** Olio Taste Testing Bash. Join the party at Olio and try their taste testing challenge. Taste four infused flavors of oils or vinegars, guess which are which — get them all right and win a prize, including discounts on bottles and other giveaways. 1223 King St. Free.

### HOORAY FOR BOOKS!

**3 & 4 p.m.** Storytelling by Miss Megan. 1555 King St. Free.

### KING STREET GARDEN PARK

**2-5 p.m.** Join friends from Barkley Square, the Animal Welfare League and others for a fun afternoon featuring: photos with pets and family; make a picture frame; kissing booth benefiting A Forever Home; and games and activities with Animal Welfare League of Alexandria such as find the microchip. 3 p.m. - Training demo by Kelli Parker. 1700 block of King St. Free.

### GEORGE WASHINGTON MASONIC MEMORIAL

**Tours at 1:30 and 3 p.m.** The George Washington Masonic National Memorial is more than a colossal memorial and museum. It is a tourist attraction and destination; research center and library; community center; performing arts center and concert hall; banquet and celebration site; and meeting site for local and countless visiting Masonic lodges and organizations. However, first and foremost, it is a memorial to honor and perpetuate the memory, character and virtues of the man who best exemplifies what Freemasons are and ought to be, Brother George Washington. 101 Callahan Drive. \$8 charge for adults; children 12 and under are free.



## Put Us to The Test

Selection

Service

Price



## HOLIDAY HOURS

Monday-Saturday 9:00am-8:00pm

Sunday 11:00am-6:00pm

Closed Christmas Day & New Year's Day

Two Convenient Alexandria Locations

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[www.unwinedva.com](http://www.unwinedva.com)



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#### Mass Schedule

**Saturday Evening**  
5:00 pm Vigil Mass  
6:30 pm Vigil Mass (en Español)  
**Sunday**  
7:30 am; 9:00 am (with Sign Language Interpreter & Children's Liturgy of the Word); 10:30 am; 12:00 Noon; 2:00 pm (en Español); 6:30 pm

**Weekday & Saturday Mornings:** 9:00 am Mass, followed by Rosary (on First Friday, Mass followed by Eucharistic Adoration)  
**Thursday & First Friday of the Month:** 7:30 pm Mass en Español

8710 Mount Vernon Highway, Alexandria VA, 22309  
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# FIRST NIGHT



**Musical entertainment will be featured throughout Old Town during First Night Alexandria festivities. Curtis Blues performed Mississippi Delta Blues at Bittersweet Café during last year's event.**



**Samuel Barrand, 8, and his brother Lucas, 4, visited from New York to enjoy last year's First Night fireworks.**



**Midnight fireworks over the Alexandria waterfront will celebrate the finale of First Night Alexandria.**

## New Year's Eve Alexandria Style

SEE MORE FIRST NIGHT ACTIVITIES ON PAGE 22

### First Night makes Alexandria the place to be.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**B**illed as the largest family-friendly New Year's Eve party in the greater Washington area, more than 100 live performances will take place throughout Old Town as part of First Night Alexandria, a day-long event filled with entertainment and culminating with a fireworks finale over the Potomac River along the waterfront.

First Night participants can enjoy an afternoon scavenger hunt throughout Old Town before evening performances get underway as part of the celebration that extends from the George Washington Masonic Memorial to the waterfront.

The main event begins at 7 p.m. with live performances at 22 indoor venues in Old Town. Musical entertainment will feature rhythm and blues, New

Orleans funk, traditional Irish music, acoustic folk and more. New acts include WAMMIE-award winning Ruthie and the Wranglers, playing high energy roots rock, and Geoff Gallante, 13-year-old nationally recognized trumpet soloist performing an eclectic mix of classical, folk, hymns and spirituals.

This family-friendly event is full of activities for kids throughout the night, including face painting, a moon bounce, clowns doing balloon sculptures and interactive games. This year features an all-new Battle of the Bands for teens. After submitting online videos and receiving votes from the public, the top choices will compete on Dec. 31 for a paid contract to perform at First Night Alexandria 2014. Alcohol-free venues keep it fun and accessible for all ages – and children under 12 and active military are free.

For tickets or more information, visit [www.FirstNightAlexandria.org](http://www.FirstNightAlexandria.org).



#### FIRST NIGHT PLAYBOOK

#### For Children

At 2 p.m. stop by the Torpedo Factory and pick up a First Night Alexandria Fun Hunt clue sheet. It's not a timed event so you can do a couple of the clues and then stop by King Street Blues at 112 N. St. Asaph St. for a late lunch. Kids 12 and under eat free (one child with each adult meal of \$9 or more purchased).

If you aren't into scavenger hunts, there are art activities at the Torpedo Factory in both the great hall and Art League Gallery or explore Alexandria's past in the Archeology Museum on the third floor.

Once you've finished the Fun Hunt, stop by the Sugar Cube for holiday cookie decorating before heading to the Durant Center to drop off your clue sheet and enter to win one of the prizes during the kickoff at 6 p.m. If you arrive early there is a Pyramid Concert from 2-4 p.m. and an art and poetry reading.

Next door to the Durant Center is Jefferson Houston Elementary School where activities for the whole family begin at 2 p.m. and run until 10 p.m. A free shuttle will take you from Durant to the George Washington Masonic Memorial (after 7 p.m.) where there will be face painting, nail art, balloon sculptures and lots of music and dance. You can even see the midnight fireworks from the steps in front of the Memorial.

#### For Tweens/Teens

Start your New Year's off early with dinner at one of Alexandria's more casual restaurants ([www.visitalexandriava.com](http://www.visitalexandriava.com) has menus and addresses) then head to Downtown Baptist Church for entertainment for the whole family. The adults will want to catch Virginia Bronze handbell ensemble and Karen Ashbrook in the sanctuary while the tweens and teens go to the lower level for karaoke, ping pong and a big screen TV.

Across the street at the Lyceum you'll find the Not So Modern Jazz Quartet plus one and Jeoff Gallante, a 13-year-old nationally recognized trumpet soloist.

At Pompanoosuc Mills is WAMMIE winner Ruthie & the Wranglers. Society Fair is in the lobby of the building and a good place for refreshments.

The Durant Arts Center should be on your list of places to stop for the finals of the Battle of the Bands, a competition for teen bands. There will be cash prizes for all the finalists and the winner that evening will receive a paid engagement for First Night 2014. While the judges deliberate, Keira Moran and her band will perform one set.

Top off your night with the grand finale beginning at 10 p.m. in the unit block of King Street followed at midnight with a magnificent fireworks display on the Potomac.

#### For Couples

Come early and stop for a glass of champagne and dinner at one of Alexandria's restaurants then catch the first performance of the Vaughn Ambrose Jazz Trio at Principle Gallery in the 200 block of King Street at 7 p.m.

At 8 p.m. the Old Presbyterian Meeting House at 321 S. Fairfax St. features Al Petteway and Amy White whose music was featured on the Ken Burns documentaries "The National Parks."

Next head to St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 228 S. Pitt St. to see Musikanten and Anders Lundegard.

Your last stop before the finale will be the Torpedo Factory Art Center for Bill Kirchen's final set at 10:45 p.m. He'll play right up to the point where the fireworks begin on the river at midnight.

After the fireworks you have plenty of time for a bite to eat and another glass of champagne to top the evening.

#### Young Professionals

Out with friends and not into the bar scene? First Night Alexandria is the place to be. This all-invited performing arts festival has 22 indoor venues from 7 p.m. until midnight.

Start your evening at the George Washington Masonic Memorial where you have a selection of four bands to dance or just listen to — everything from traditional Irish and country to swing and a tour of music written or performed by artists from the DC region.

Across the street at the train station you can find something a bit more quiet with Robin Bullock, hailed as a Celtic guitar god.

In the 1000 and 1100 blocks of King Street you can hear GRAMMY nominated Ray Owen and blues singer Anthony "Swamp Dog" Clark.

If you want to add a bit of spirituality to your evening, drop by the Alfred Street Baptist Church for "Watch Night" services at 7 and 10 p.m.

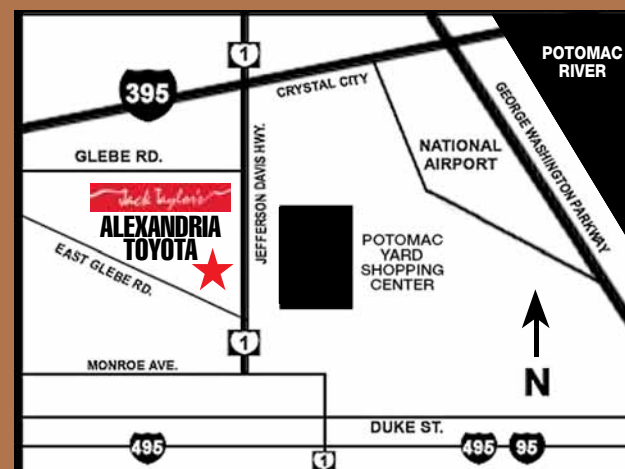
WAMMIE winner Ruthie & the Wranglers returns after a multi-year hiatus from First Night at Pompanoosuc Mills.

Jazz favorite Vaughn Ambrose will be at a new venue, Principle Gallery in the 200 block of King Street which positions you perfectly for the finale beginning at 10 p.m. in the unit block of King Street. Starting off quietly with the a cappella Stairwells, we'll crank it up at 10:30 p.m. with our favorite DJ, Ray Casiano who will take us up to the countdown the fireworks finale on the Potomac.



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