

# The Great Falls Farmers Market Moves Indoors

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A very cold winter has prompted the decision to move Great Falls Farmers Market indoors to the historic Great Falls Grange in January and February.

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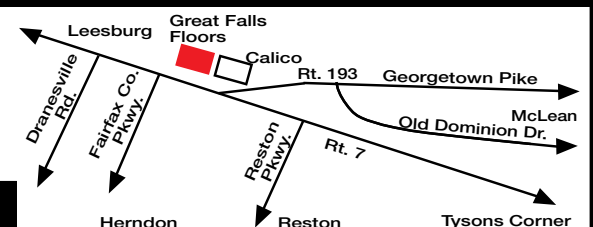
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## Let Sun Shine on Virginia's Financial Disclosure Laws

State legislators turn attention to ethics in wake of McDonnell gift scandal.

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

As members of the Virginia General Assembly convene for the first time since last February, legislators are stampeding to introduce ethics legislation in response to the gift scandal which engulfed then Gov. Robert F. McDonnell (R).

The revelations last spring about numerous undisclosed gifts and purported loans from businessman Jonnie Williams to McDonnell — including a \$6,500 Rolex watch engraved to the “71st Governor of Virginia” and \$35,000 in gifts and catering for his daughters’ weddings — shined a spotlight on Virginia’s porous financial disclosure laws.

McDonnell, who remains under federal investigation over his relationship with Williams, pointed to various loopholes in existing state law as reasons for not disclosing gifts, noting that state law requires only the disclosure of gifts directly to officeholders, and not their families.

Following the principle cited by Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis that “Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants,” state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-Fairfax) has introduced an ethics reform package which he says “makes the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) a centerpiece.”

**PETERSEN’S BILLS** would increase disclosure, limit contributions and gifts, prohibit the use of private law firms for state business, and create an ethics commission, ideally with subpoena power, to hold legislators accountable and increase transparency.

“The era of Rolexes, lake-house vacations, and \$150,000 loans must end,” Petersen said. “For far too long those of us who serve in Richmond have relied on super-sized political contributions to fund our campaigns. That is a part of our current flawed culture. Working Virginians don’t see campaign donations larger than their yearly incomes as ‘no strings attached.’ They see a transaction.”

Petersen’s package of ethical reform bills takes its place alongside several others announced last week, including a bipartisan reform package unveiled Tuesday, Jan. 7, by House Majority Leader M. Kirkland Cox (R-Colonial Heights) and House Minority Leader David J. Toscano (D-Charlottesville).

Under the Kirkland-Toscano bill, reforms include:

- ❖ A \$250 cap on tangible gifts to officials and their immediate family members



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34), sitting, confers with a colleague during last year’s General Assembly session. After the session ended in February, it was disclosed that federal and state authorities had launched an investigation regarding gifts given to then-Gov. Robert McDonnell (R) and his family. The investigation served to heighten public awareness of Virginia’s lax financial disclosure laws.**

from lobbyists or people with business before the state.

- ❖ A ban on solicitation of those gifts.
- ❖ The requirement that family members’ finances and gifts be disclosed.
- ❖ The creation of an ethics commission that would serve as a resource, providing legislators guidance on issues that may pose a conflict of interest.

“What we have really tried to do here is take the best parts of our current system, which is fairly strict reporting accountability, and in targeted areas, we’ve really tried to beef that up and really get at some of the problems,” Cox said at a news conference in Richmond last week with Republican and Democratic leaders.

Petersen said his proposals differed significantly from the House bill.

“I’m not overly impressed by the ‘bipartisan compromise’ announced in the House this week. My package has teeth. My intention is to change the culture, not just close the loopholes,” Petersen said in an interview on Wednesday, Jan. 8.

“The other issue that’s part of my proposal is making FOIA the centerpiece,” Petersen said. “I think my FOIA bill is critical for bringing more transparency to this process. That’s a huge difference, because without that it’s really hard to know what’s going

on and it’s for people and the media to investigate.”

Petersen said he wants his ethics commission to have subpoena power, which would give the group the authority to compel lawmakers to testify and produce evidence, or face a penalty for failure to comply.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, more than 40 states have similar ethics commissions, most with subpoena power.

Petersen said he has long been bothered by the lack of financial transparency in Virginia, and the ensuing erosion of the public’s trust.

**WHEN REPORTS ABOUT THE ROLEX** surfaced last July, Petersen sent a letter to the governor asking him to “come clean on this matter” by explaining the gifts, denying the reports, or resigning from office. He became the first Virginia lawmaker to suggest McDonnell’s resignation in the wake of the deepening controversy over the lavish gifts.

“For too long, we’ve said ‘hey, we’re honorable gentleman, we can police ourselves.’ Unfortunately, there have been too many recent incidents to contradict that,” Petersen said.

“That’s why I’ve introduced four bills that

### What Petersen’s Ethics Package Would Do

- ❖ **SB212:** FOIA for General Assembly members and staff - SB212 removes the General Assembly’s exception from the Virginia FOIA act. This bill repeals the 2013 General Assembly FOIA exemption act (HB1639), patroned by Del. Tag Greason (R-Potomac Falls).
- ❖ **SB218:** Limits on Campaign Contributions and Gifts - SB218 Limits General Assembly members and Executives in the Commonwealth to a total of \$2,000 in gifts per year. All gifts over \$50 will continue to be itemized and reported. “Super-sized” campaign donations will be limited to \$20,000 per individual donor per candidate.
- ❖ **SB220:** Prohibiting the Use of Private Law Firms for State Business - SB220 requires the office of the Attorney General to contract local city or county attorneys, rather than private counsel, when it experiences a conflict of interest. This bill will remove the incentive for private law firms to exploit the current law and over-bill the state on a public matter. This bill was brought about due to the ongoing attorney’s fees charged by two firms employed by Attorney Gen. Ken Cuccinelli’s office to defend Gov. Bob McDonnell, reportedly more than \$780,000.
- ❖ **SB219:** Establishment of the Virginia Ethics Commission - SB219 requires that all loans, gifts, and statements of economic interests disclosures shall be filed with the Virginia Ethics Commission. Currently these disclosures are filed to the clerks of each house. The Virginia Ethics Commission will be a body independent of both houses, comprised of both former legislators and distinguished independent citizens whom have never held office. The commission will be able to make recommendations for disciplinary proceedings against legislators found in violation of disclosure laws to their respective house, where members will vote on any disciplinary action.

For more information on these bills, go to:

<http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?141+sum+SB212>  
SB220 (Petersen)  
<http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?141+sum+SB220>  
HB1639: (Greason, 2013)  
<http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?131+sum+HB1639>  
SB218 (Petersen)  
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will increase the public’s right to know, limit campaign contributions to \$20K per candidate from a single donor, end the soaking of taxpayers by white-shoe law firms, and start a truly independent and distinguished ethics commission that includes everyday citizens to hold legislators accountable.”

But Del. Dave Albo (R-42) said he wasn’t overly impressed with Petersen’s bills, and he supports the bipartisan compromise.

“The bipartisan House proposal includes an ethics commission, so I don’t know why Senator Peterson thinks that his ethics commission is better,” Albo said Friday, adding that it’s unrealistic for state lawmakers to impose certain campaign contribution limits.

“If a bill could be crafted that would equally limit [all campaign contributions], then I would support it. But it has to be a level playing field,” Albo said.

“It takes a long time to start earning back the trust that you have lost, and as Virginians, and as public officials, we need to start now,” Petersen said.

# Comstock Runs for Congress

**Comstock will run against state Sen. Richard Black (R-13) and Richard Shickle (Frederick) for the Republican nomination.**

BY ETHAN MCLEOD  
THE CONNECTION

Virginia State Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) will be running for the Republican nomination for Virginia's 10th Congressional District election in 2014. Comstock issued an official statement Jan. 7 about her decision to run, citing her past three terms as a delegate successfully working within the limits of Virginia's state budget as a primary reason behind her decision to run.

"I am running for Congress because I believe my strong record as a common sense conservative leader is what is needed in Congress," said Comstock in her statement. "Common sense isn't very common in Congress today, but in the state legislature, we have to operate within budget limits and produce results." Delegate Comstock represents Virginia's 34th district, which includes Great Falls, Vienna, and parts of McLean and Loudoun County extending toward Algonkian Park, and announced her campaign run one day before the start of this year's General Assembly session on Jan. 8. In an email exchange, Comstock highlighted job creation, repealing Obamacare, and continuing U.S. Rep. Frank R. Wolf's (R-10) tradition of protecting national security as several of her key priorities in this election.

**COMSTOCK** worked with Wolf both as a senior aide in his office from 1991-1995 and as a state delegate since 2009. "Having worked for over 25 years with Congressman Wolf as a volunteer, as a senior staffer and as a state legislator, I would hit the ground running with a great breadth and depth of experience already having worked on all of the key issues facing Northern Virginia," said Comstock. Wolf announced Dec. 17, 2013, that he would not seek re-election to his House of Representatives seat, and three weeks later Comstock was the first to officially announce she would run for the Republican nomination.

As of Jan. 13, Comstock's biggest competition appears to be from State Senator Richard Black (R-13), a social conservative who represents areas of Loudoun and Prince William counties. Black previously served from 1998 to 2006 in the House of Delegates and won the election for his current senate position in 2012.

Black confirmed Monday, Jan. 13, that he would be running for the Republican nomination. "I have represented all of Loudoun County at one time or another," said Black in an interview. "I am very concerned about the disarray in our foreign policy and can bring some strength to the foreign policy and military arenas." He is also concerned with helping the United States achieve energy independence.

Richard Shickle, chairman of the Frederick County Board of Supervisors, also intends to run for the Republican nomination. Shickle was first elected in 1996 to the board, whose territory includes Winchester and parts of Virginia extending toward the West Virginia border, and has served as chairman since 2004.

Artur Davis, a former Democratic U.S. representative from Alabama who moved to Northern Virginia, and state Del. Tim Hugo (R-40), whose district includes Centreville, Clifton and parts of Fairfax, were seen as potential candidates to seek the Republican nomination. However, both said in Dec. 2013 they would not be running.

**AS FOR POTENTIAL DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES** for the seat, Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) announced Dec. 10, 2013, that he would seek the Democratic Party's nomination for the 10th congressional district election. Foust pointed to his own disappointment at the House's Republican-led shutdown of the federal government in Oct. 2013 as a primary reason he would run for congress. In addition to Foust, Leesburg architect Sam Kubba and Fairfax attorney Richard Bolger are also campaigning for the Democratic nomination, which will be decided by a primary.

The question of how the Republican Party will determine its nominee for the election is still on the table, with the options of choosing a candidate through either an open primary, in which both candidates will run publicly

for the nomination, or a closed party convention. The 10th Congressional District Republican committee will decide on how to proceed with choosing its nomination on Wednesday, Jan. 23.



PHOTO COURTESY OF COMSTOCK FOR CONGRESS

**Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) will seek the Republican Party nomination for the 2014 election for the 10th Congressional District seat.**

**"I am running for Congress because I believe my strong record as a common sense conservative leader is what is needed in Congress."**

**— Delegate Barbara Comstock (R-34)**

**There'll be posters for buses, schools and other locations in support of Just Ask campaign.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## New Campaign Targets Teen Sex Trafficking

Officials from the Fairfax County Police, public schools, Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services, and the Northern Virginia community gathered last Friday, Jan. 10, in Fairfax, to kick off a new education and prevention campaign on teen sex trafficking. Defined as "the act of manipulating or forcing anyone under the age of 18 to engage in a sex act in exchange for anything of value (money, drugs, shelter, food, clothes, etc.)," police identify an average of two new potential victims per week.

Many people believe teen sex trafficking only happens to runaways or in other more urban settings. But it's on the rise across Northern Virginia and teens are now being targeted in public venues — bus stops, walking down the street, parties, shopping malls, through social media outlets and more.

Sex traffickers don't discriminate; they recruit victims across ethnic, economic and gender strata. Most teens are unaware they're being drawn in and often don't recognize the signs of manipulation until it's too late. Traffickers aren't just gang members or criminals; they may be business professionals, family members, students and teens they know. The trafficker

may not be a stranger; rather it may be a friend or acquaintance from the classroom.

The Just Ask Prevention Project is a new public-awareness campaign addressing the increasing prevalence of teen sex trafficking in the region. The goal is to inspire residents to get involved with prevention and encourage them to learn more about spotting and reporting manipulative recruiters.

The campaign incorporates age-appropriate and illustrative new videos into the FCPS Health & PE. Family Life Education curriculum. There's an interactive Website, [www.JustAskVA.org](http://www.JustAskVA.org), plus a Just Ask Facebook page. There'll also be posters for buses, schools and other locations. Schools will create a plastic bracelet awareness campaign.

Additionally, the campaign partners with the Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services which will fund several prevention and education programs to better prepare personnel on the front lines to respond to human trafficking victims and survivors. Parents, family, teachers and friends will learn how to recognize the signs and symptoms of teen sex trafficking situations and be urged to report suspicious activities to the FCPD Human Trafficking Unit.



# Celebrate Great Falls Foundation



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# OPINION

## From Late Night Comedy to Your Bedroom

### Why the General Assembly matters more in Virginia than most states.

**T**he Virginia General Assembly began its annual session last week on Jan. 8.

The actions of the Virginia General Assembly matter more to localities than it would in many other states. In Virginia, localities have only the power specifically granted by the General Assembly, the Dillon rule.

So, for example, Montgomery County and Prince Georges County in Maryland recently voted to increase the minimum wage in those localities. They didn't need permission from Maryland General Assembly to do so. Arlington and Alexandria might be inclined to follow suit (the District government also voted to increase the minimum wage) but do not have that power.

The General Assembly limits how localities can raise revenue, what kinds of traffic regulations they can implement, whether they can control where guns are allowed, whether school districts can begin classes before Labor Day, and much more.

Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria sent their members of the Northern Virginia delegation of state senators, all Democrats, and delegates, overwhelmingly Democrats (13-5), to Richmond, where the House of Delegates is overwhelmingly Republican and control of the Senate is still up in the air pending special elections.

Del. Ken Plum (D-36) filed HB536 which would "increase the minimum wage from its current federally mandated level of \$7.25 per hour to \$8.25 per hour effective July 1, 2014, and to \$9.25 per hour effective July 1, 2015, unless a higher minimum wage is required by

the federal Fair Labor Standards Act." It isn't likely to see the light of day.

Anyone can watch the Virginia House of Delegates or Senate on streaming video when either is in session, and the Virginia General Assembly proved last year that it can be worthy of national attention for entertainment. It is in fact well worth tuning in once or twice or more. Visit <http://viriniageneralassembly.gov/> and click on "members and session," and see the "quick links" section for video links.

Legislators will consider literally thousands of bills between now and March 8.

Some quite random examples of proposed legislation from local delegates and senators:

❖ Del. Dave Albo (R-42): Driving while intoxicated; refusal of blood or breath tests. This bill would allow a person who has been arrested for driving while intoxicated and who has refused to submit to a blood or breath test be given another opportunity to consent to testing after the arresting officer has advised the person of the consequences of his refusal.

❖ Del. David Bulova (D-37): One bill would allow the employment of lights for the observation of deer (spotlighting) for certain activities authorized by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. Another would provide that property used in connection with certain crimes associated with human trafficking is subject to forfeiture to the Commonwealth.

❖ Del. Scott Surovell (D-44) has propose the repeal of last year's hybrid tax, plus a bill that would place a cap on the compensation that may be paid to a special counsel appointed to handle certain legal matters where it would be improper or uneconomical for the Attorney

### See for Yourself

Visit <http://viriniageneralassembly.gov/> and click on "members and session," and see the "quick links" section for live video links, information on who your legislators are and how to track bills. Every resident is represented by one state delegate and one state senator; look up your and email to be placed on their mailing lists. Consider attending their local meetings.

General, or the Attorney General is unable, to handle such matters. That cap would be the same as allowed for a court appointed attorney, a very small amount.

❖ Del Barbara Comstock (R-34) proposes to allow local school districts to set their own calendars. Another bill would include non-motor vehicles including bicycles among vehicles that any driver must not tailgate. Another would require most state colleges and universities to allocate 75 percent of their slots for in-state students by 2019-2020 school year.

❖ Del. Patrick Hope (D-47) proposes to prohibit firearms on the floor of the House of Delegates. Another bill would require public institutions of higher learning in Virginia to provide a dedicated page on its website to information on mental health resources available to students.

❖ Del. Mark Sickles (D-43) proposes to create the Virginia Health Benefit Exchange, which will be established and operated by a new division within the State Corporation Commission.

❖ Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) would make it a Class 1 misdemeanor for the owner of a website to both post an arrest photo and solicit, request, or accept money for removing the photograph.

❖ Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) proposes to require drivers and passengers to wait for a reasonable opportunity to open vehicle doors on the side adjacent to moving traffic, an effort to prevent the "dooring" of bicyclists.

## Five Million Dollars a Day

BY KENNETH R. "KEN"  
PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)



**V**irginia taxpayer dollars not returned to them has amounted to five million dollars each day since Jan. 1, and will continue at that rate each day that Virginia refuses to expand its Medicaid program. In addition, at least 400,000 working Virginians will continue to be uninsured.

The 2013 session of the General Assembly created the Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission (MIRC) to consider whether reforms to Virginia's Medicaid program were sufficient to allow Virginia to proceed with some form of coverage expansion through the Affordable Care Act. MIRC members have been assured by staff that all requested reforms have

been made, but the Commission members from the House of Delegates have refused to acknowledge the reforms and continue along with the Speaker of the House of Delegates to oppose expansion of Medicaid. For otherwise fiscal conservatives to turn down five million dollars of Virginia taxpayer dollars being returned to them to pay the full cost of Medicaid expansion shows the continued animosity that some Republicans have toward the Affordable Care Act that they refer to as Obamacare. To the concern that the federal government will not be able to continue funding the program into the future, Virginia could make a decision to withdraw at that time.

At the same time, the Virginia Chamber of Commerce business plan for the Commonwealth, "Blue-

print for Virginia," supports the Medicaid reforms that have been made and recommends Medicaid expansion. Chamber leadership has termed Medicaid expansion to be both an economic development as well as a workforce issue. Most of Virginia's one million uninsured residents are employed. It is projected that the expansion would create an estimated 33,000 jobs and bring \$21 billion dollars back to the Commonwealth.

Governor Terry McAuliffe is a staunch supporter of Medicaid expansion. As he stated to the Chamber, "Let me be clear on one point. If Medicaid expansion is not the business community's number one priority in your communication with the General Assembly, it will not happen." He calls for "coming together, putting old ideological differences aside and focusing on what makes sense from a

business perspective."

The case for Medicaid expansion goes beyond the strong business case; it is also a humanitarian cause. Social justice organizations, faith communities, and individuals need also to give priority to making their views known to legislators. Give priority to writing or calling House and Senate leadership and members of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees and ask them to approve the expansion of Medicaid. Contact information is available at <http://viriniageneralassembly.gov/membersAndSession.php?seid=1&active=0#!hb=1&mainContentTabs=0>.

Five million dollars a day is a lot of money. It is too much to turn down, especially when it can improve the health and well-being of Virginians. Please make sure your voice is heard on this issue.

## Great Falls CONNECTION

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**NEWS DEPARTMENT:  
To discuss ideas and concerns,  
Call: 703-778-9410  
e-mail:  
[greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com)**

**Kemal Kurspahic**  
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414  
[kemal@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:kemal@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Amna Rehmatulla**  
Editorial Assistant  
703-778-9410 ext. 427  
[arehmatulla@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:arehmatulla@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Victoria Ross**  
County Reporter ♦ 301-502-6027  
[vross@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:vross@connectionnewspapers.com)

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**Debbie Funk**  
National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor & Publisher**  
Mary Kimm  
703-778-9433  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

**Executive Vice President**  
Jerry Vernon  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor in Chief**  
Steven Mauren  
**Managing Editor**  
Kemal Kurspahic  
**Photography:**  
Deb Cobb, Craig Sterbutzel  
**Art/Design:**  
Laurence Foong, John Heinly  
**Production Manager:**  
Geovani Flores

**Special Assistant to the Publisher**  
Jeanne Theismann  
703-778-9436  
[jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@TheismannMedia](https://twitter.com/TheismannMedia)

**CIRCULATION: 703-778-9426  
Circulation Manager:**  
Linda Pecquex  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)







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- Please register at [www.greatfallslacrosse.com](http://www.greatfallslacrosse.com). Space/sticks are limited to 60 boys. Boys can attend both clinics. Please arrive at the field 15 minutes before the scheduled start time.
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# Lift Me Up! Shares History of Secretariat

The nonprofit kicks off its Good Fences Make Good Neighbors fundraiser in Reston and Great Falls.

By Ethan McLeod  
The Connection

Many know the story of Secretariat, a thoroughbred horse who overcame great physical limitations to win the 1973 Triple Crown, taking home wins at the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes and the Belmont Stakes. However, many may not be aware of Northern Virginia's historical ties to Secretariat's owner, Penny Chenery, who rode for the equestrian team for the Madeira School in McLean before graduating in 1939.

During January and February 2014, Great Falls nonprofit Lift Me Up! will share Secretariat's story with Great Falls and Reston residents in a film screening of Disney's Secretariat, as well as a book signing featuring Chenery's daughter, Kate Tweedy, co-author of Secretariat's Meadow: The Land, The Family, The Legend. In the book, Tweedy and her co-author Leeanne Ladin detail the history of The Meadow, a thoroughbred farm in Caroline County, Va., once owned by the Chenery family. In the movie Secretariat, for which Tweedy served as a consultant, the champion thoroughbred horse helps to financially save The Meadow after winning the Triple Crown in 1973.

**LIFT ME UP!'S THERAPEUTIC RIDING PROGRAM** offers horseback riding lessons to both the physically and mentally disabled, as well as military veterans injured in battle through its Back in the Saddle program. Many of the riders have mental health conditions ranging from autism to cerebral palsy, down syndrome and post-traumatic stress disorder, to name a few, and they all benefit greatly from renewed balance, coordination and confidence from riding with Lift Me Up!'s therapy horses.

Georgia Bay, Director of Programs for Lift Me Up! notes that while its 13 therapy horses may not be championship-winning thoroughbreds, they do make a difference in riders' lives every day. "We see these wonderful little victories – the child who develops the ability to sit balanced, when before he could just lean to the side; the rider who decides to talk after months of riding in silence," said Bay, adding fondly, "Of course that first comment is always about the horse."

The nonprofit receives help from community donors and volunteers as well as student interns, equestrian students from the Madeira School, who work with riders each week. "If Penny were attending there now, I imagine she would likely volunteer too," said Laura Smith, Director of Donor Relations. Smith also noted that Penny's father, Christopher Chenery, helped to train military veterans in horseback riding here in Northern Virginia. "Penny has long been a champion for horses and people with disadvantages."

**ONE OF THE PROGRAM'S HORSES** is actually a former racing thoroughbred named Radar,

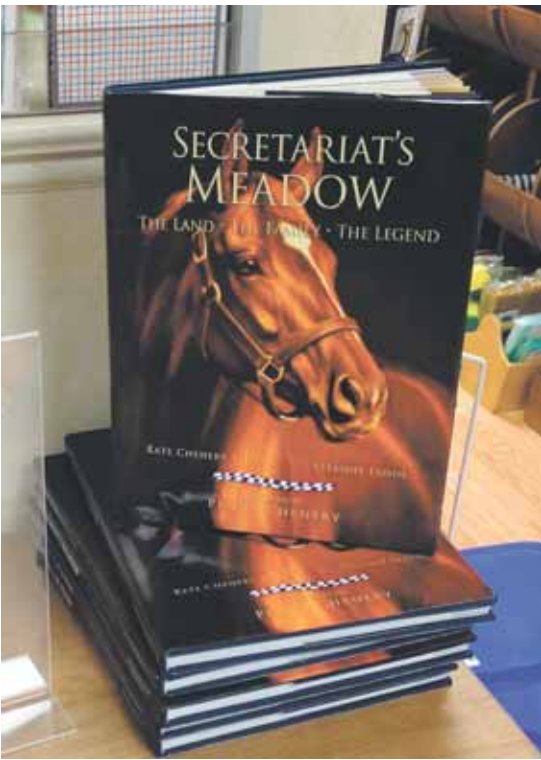


PHOTO BY ETHAN MCLEOD/THE CONNECTION

**The Saddlery, at 731 Walker Road in Great Falls, is selling copies of Secretariat's Meadow: The Land, The Family, The Legend by Kate Tweedy and Leeanne Ladin for \$35.**

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

- ❖ Film Screening of Disney's Secretariat from 1-3 p.m., Jan. 31. Free. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls, VA 22066
- ❖ Book signing featuring Kate Tweedy, daughter of Penny Chenery and co-author of Secretariat's Meadow: The Land, The Family, The Legend, 5-8 p.m., Feb. 8, 2014. Cost: \$50 for entrance, \$35 per book copy. Fairfax Hunt Club, 1321 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston.

who, after a short-lived racing career, has taken home awards with young riders at the Therapeutic Riding Association of Virginia's statewide horse show in Lexington, Va. Radar's former owner Donna Zimmerman, a Great Falls resident, donated him to Lift Me Up! after her daughter Jenna, now a volunteer with the organization, outgrew the former competition racing horse.

"He was the most gentle, caring soul that I had ever seen in a horse, and for me at the time, I knew that this horse was going to be safe with my daughter to learn on," said Zimmerman of Radar. When her daughter moved on to higher competition levels, Zimmerman saw that Radar would make a great training horse and notified Program Director Georgia Bay. "He's not a high-strung thoroughbred at all," added Zimmerman. "We knew that he would be a perfect horse for the riders to learn on at Lift Me Up! It's great to see him bring so much joy to so many people."

Lift Me Up!'s major fundraising program for 2014 is called Good Fences Make Good Neighbors. The organization is collecting donations from the community in order to fund the building of new fences surrounding the nonprofit's property in Great Falls. "We need to reinforce our fences to protect both our horses and the properties of our neighbors," said Lift Me Up! President Bob Best about the fundraiser.

In addition to the organization's upcoming fundraising events in January and February, The Saddlery, located at 731 Walker Road in Great Falls, is also selling copies of Secretariat's Meadow for \$35 to contribute to the fundraiser.

## ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO BY MICHAEL BAILEY/COURTESY OF AMERICAN SHAKESPEARE CENTER

**Stephanie Holladay Earl as Desdemona and Fernando Lamberty as Othello will perform Shakespeare's "Othello" on Saturday, Jan. 25, 8 p.m., at the Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center.**

Send announcements to [greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

**THURSDAY/JAN. 16-FRIDAY/JAN. 17 International Guitar Night.** 8 p.m. Wolftrap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. The International Guitar Night (IGN) is the world's premier touring guitar festival, each show bringing together the most interesting and innovative acoustic guitarists to exchange musical ideas in a public concert setting. Tickets: \$25-27.

**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](http://www.colvinrun.org).  
**Six Degrees Singers.** 7:30 p.m. 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Silver Spring's premiere young professional choir, will perform inspirational choral masterpieces. Tickets are \$15 at the door, students under 18 are free. <http://singsix.com/>

**SUNDAY/JAN. 19 Breakfast Buffet.** 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. 330 Center Street, N., Vienna. Adults \$8, children \$3. 703-938-1379.  
**National Choir Appreciation.** 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m. Antioch Christian Church, 1860 Beulah Road, Vienna. The community is invited to share appreciation for choir members at both services. For more information go to [www.antiochdoc.org](http://www.antiochdoc.org) or call 703-539-8238.  
**Mission Sunday: Sudan.** 10 a.m. Great Falls UMC, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. A sermon service hosted by Great Falls United Methodist Church.

**THURSDAY/JAN. 23 Music from Oberlin at Oakton, 10th Season!** 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. The Darwin String Quartet performing works by Mendelssohn, Haydn, and Piazzolla. 703-842-3156

**FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JAN. 24 & 25 THIS.** 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. *THIS* is a bright, tart, and melancholy comedy that captures the uncertain steps of a circle of friends entering the choppy waters of middle age. Contains adult language; for theatre-goers over 16. <http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/>

**SATURDAY/JAN. 25 Gustaf Yellowgold's Show.** 10:30 a.m. Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave E., Vienna. Groovy Gustaf Yellowgold is a small, yellow, cone-headed fellow, who came to Earth from the Sun and has a knack for finding himself neck-deep in absurd situations as he explores his new life in the Minnesota woods. Equal parts pop rock concert and animated storybook, Gustaf Yellowgold concerts are a truly different multimedia experience that entrances children and adults alike. Tickets: \$10. <https://jamminjava.com/events/gustaf-yellowgold>  
**"Othello."** 8 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave, McLean. Tickets: \$20 MCC District residents and \$30 for non MCC District residents. Visit: [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org) or call 703-790-0123.

**SUNDAY/JAN. 26 McLean Chocolate Festival.** 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. McLean Community Center. Wide variety of chocolate vendors. Plenty of parking. Children's game room with chocolate-themed games. Admission fee is \$2, with \$1 going toward the purchase of chocolate. Kids under 6 get in free. McLean Rotary uses proceeds to fund local charitable organizations. [www.mcleanchocolatefestival.org](http://www.mcleanchocolatefestival.org).  
**Music from Oberlin at Oakton.** 7:30 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Music from Oberlin at Oakton hosts current Oberlin Conservatory students three times a year to provide top-notch music to the local community. "In its 14th season, this program will feature two pianists, a percussionist, and a soprano. (703) 281-4230  
**You Can Change Your World.** 10 a.m. Great Falls UMC, 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. A sermon service hosted by Great Falls United Methodist Church.

**FRIDAY/JAN. 31 THIS.** 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. *THIS* is a bright, tart, and melancholy comedy that captures the uncertain steps of a circle of friends entering the choppy waters of middle age. Contains adult language; for theatre-goers over 16. <http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/>

**SATURDAY/FEB. 1 Ballroom Dance.** 8-9 p.m. Samba 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](http://www.colvinrun.org).  
**Arts for Autism Gala.** 6:30 p.m. Tower Club, 8000 Towers Crescent Drive, #1700, Vienna. An evening that brings together the arts, fashion and autism communities to benefit individuals and families affected by Autism. Festivities include a reception, dinner and silent auction. [www.arts-for-autism.org](http://www.arts-for-autism.org)

**SATURDAY/FEB. 1, 7, 8 THIS.** 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. *THIS* is a bright, tart, and melancholy comedy that captures the uncertain steps of a circle of friends entering the choppy waters of middle age. Contains adult language; for theatre-goers over 16. <http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/>

**SUNDAY/FEB. 2 & 9 THIS.** 2 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. *THIS* is a bright, tart, and melancholy comedy that captures the uncertain steps of a circle of friends entering the choppy waters of middle age. Contains adult language; for theatre-goers over 16. <http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/>

**SATURDAY/FEB. 15 Valentine's Ballroom Dance.** 8-9 p.m. Tango lesson, 9-11:30 p.m. dance. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Live music from Helmut & Andre 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](http://www.colvinrun.org).

**SATURDAY/MARCH 1 Ballroom Dance.** 8-9 p.m. Merengue lesson, 9-11:30 p.m. dance. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Live music from Helmut & Andre 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](http://www.colvinrun.org).

**ONGOING Straight Ahead Jazz.** 8 p.m., at the Maplewood Grill, 132 Branch Road, Vienna. Every Monday drummer Karl Anthony hosts a night of straight ahead jazz featuring guest musicians and open to sit-in musicians. [www.maplewoodgrill.com](http://www.maplewoodgrill.com).  
**Personalized ebook/e-Reader Instruction.** Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Learn about your e-reader and downloading eBooks; event continues through March 31st.



## Here's What's Happening at MCC

**"The Rest is Silence: Silent Shakespeare"**  
Wednesday, Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m.  
\$10/\$6 MCC district residents

**Lifetime Learning Coffee & Conversation**  
Friday, Jan. 17, 10:30 a.m.-noon  
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**Family Fun Bingo**  
Friday, Jan. 17, 7-8:30 p.m.  
\$10/\$5 MCC district residents  
free infants to 36 mo.

**MLK Day Celebration Andrew Young**  
Friday, Jan. 17, 8 p.m.  
\$20/\$10 MCC district residents

**Old Firehouse Teen Center Teacher Work Day Trips**  
Thu-Fri, Jan. 30-31

**Brush Up Your Shakespeare**  
Wednesday, Jan. 22, 7:30 p.m.  
Free admission

**American Shakespeare Center "The Merry Wives of Windsor"**  
Saturday, Jan. 25, 2 p.m.  
\$30/\$20 MCC district residents

**"Othello"**  
Saturday, Jan. 25, 8 p.m.  
\$30/\$20 MCC district residents

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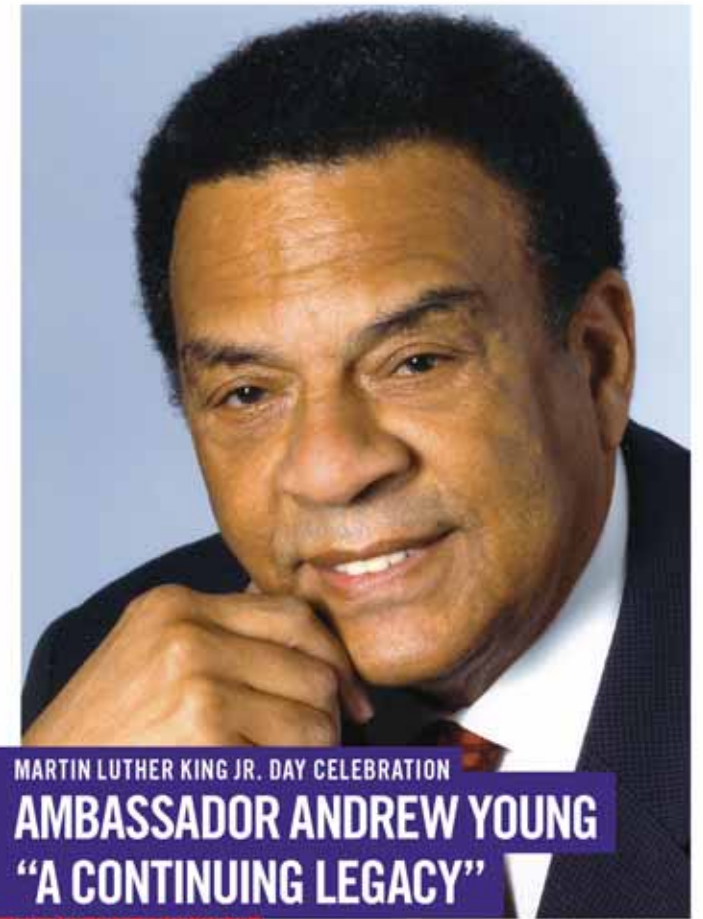
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## NEWS

**Cindy Grisdela  
in her quilting  
studio.**



PHOTOS  
CONTRIBUTED

# Contemporary Art on Exhibit at Katie's Coffee House

**S**hared Colors, a contemporary art exhibit showcasing fiber art and mixed media paintings, will be on display at Katie's Coffee House in Great Falls through January 31.

Cindy Grisdela, a contemporary quilt artist, and Jennifer Duncan, a mixed media painter, share studio space in Great Falls, where they have had many opportunities to enjoy one another's work. Although creating in different media, they have marveled at the remarkable similarities in their use of color and design. This exhibit highlights the unique creative styles of each artist, while emphasizing the parallels in their work.

"While the collaboration between painter and fiber artist is somewhat unusual, we each choose subject matter that relates to the whimsical perspectives we enjoy expressing about the world around us through our art," Duncan explains.

"We don't work in our studio space at the same time, but it's almost uncanny how our color choices are influenced by the experience of being around each other's work," Grisdela adds.

Duncan begins each canvas with an abstract background, then she starts her exploration of an idea or concept that she wants to record. "I draw, and then paint, then draw, then paint again, building layers of color and texture. I think of my process as reverse archeology," she says. Landscapes and creatures, like the abstract horses in several of the paintings in the exhibit, evolve from the process of layering with paint, paper and pencil, and making marks



**Jennifer Duncan in her painting studio.**

and patterns in the design. For more information about her work, please visit her website at [www.jenniferdduncanart.com](http://www.jenniferdduncanart.com)

Grisdela has been making quilts for most of her adult life, starting out with traditional methods and designs and then exploring more contemporary tech-

SEE ART, PAGE 13



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# Creating Books With Children

Experts say helping little readers become authors can deepen a love of reading.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**K**.J., 8, and his sister Kalina, 3, love reading books, particularly books they've written themselves or with their mother. In fact, K.J. is an avid reader of both home-made and traditionally published books, and his sister is following in his footsteps.

"When they were younger, I took pictures and copied them on a home printer," said their mother, Holly Karapetkova, an associate professor of literature at Marymount University in Arlington. "Once they were older, they illustrated the books or chose the item they wanted to include like for a specific letter in an alphabet book."

Karapetkova and other researchers said that creating books like this with children is not only easy and inexpensive, it's one of the best ways to help them develop a love of books and reading, which Karapetkova said is one of the greatest gifts a parent can give a child.

"Reading is one of the fundamental ways that we interact with the world and particularly with knowledge," she said. "As a college professor, I find that my students who can read well can also think well and write well. They are thinkers on a much deeper level. Research has shown that reading makes you more contemplative, builds patience, concentration, and you have to use your imagination."

**MAKING YOUR OWN BOOKS** stretches the imagination. M. Susan Burns, Ph.D., a member of the early childhood education and human development and family sciences faculty at George Mason University says there are a few things that parents should keep in mind when making books with their children, however.

"Parents need to make it a positive experience," she said. "Children need to have books available [on topics] that are of true interest to them. When a book is being made with parents, it may not be engaging if the book is only of interest to the parent."

"Sometimes it gets sickening to have your kid tell you another princess story or another train story, but it is really important though to go with the child's interest," she continued. "You can take a little bit of a twist on the story by maybe adding a map that shows that places where the train might go."

Children may also want to turn to real-life for their books. "Children love to create stories based on their own experiences, and begin to develop a love of art and literature at an early age," said Sharon Fishel, ArtReach director for the McLean Project for the Arts in McLean. "Parents can foster the link between drawing, writing and reading by having their child draw pictures of their daily routine or special events, such as field trips, family outings or unplanned adventures."

When creating a homemade book, the text doesn't have to be original either. "You can take a familiar song and adapt the lyrics," said Karapetkova. "For example, a book about a daily routine can say 'This is the way we brush our teeth, brush our teeth, brush our teeth early in the morning.'"

The techniques for young children are a little dif-



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOLLY KARAPETKOVA

**K.J., 8, and his sister Kalina, 3, make books with their mother, Holly Karapetkova, a professor of literature at Marymount University in Arlington.**

ferent. "You want a little one to engage with a book," said Fishel. "A parent-child idea is nice. We do a lot of parent-child workshops here [at the McLean Project for the Arts] where one parent does one side [of the page] and child does the other."

The books children and their parents create don't have to be fancy, however. "When I've made books like this with my children, we've taken photos, we cut out pictures from magazines, glue sticks, something to put the picture onto," said Burns. "You can make those books fun by using artifacts. If you're doing a book from your beach trip, your child may want to put some sand in the book, but it is important to have a child initiate it."

"I like the thicker paper stock and sometimes it makes it easier to hold onto," she added. "The other thing is to get the clear laminating paper and putting a plastic sheet over it."

Even "folded paper, bound with a pencil becomes a writer's journal," said Karapetkova. "You can also take plastic zip-lock bags, punch holes in the bags, fill them and they become bath time books because they are waterproof."

Fishel suggests sticking with the basics: "Composition book, crayons, colored pencils. Go to a crafts store [and get] bags of origami papers or printed pattern papers," she said, noting that "each part of it can be come a lesson plan. Get a patterned piece of paper and explore with your child what makes that a pattern. Don't assume that your child knows."

**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS** at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac create their own books as part of the elementary school curriculum. Jordan Love, head of the Lower School, said that parents can "create a writing center at home by providing a child with an area dedicated to their work and ideas. All children need is blank paper, coloring crayons or markers, and a quiet place to work, preferably at a table that is their size. Elementary-age children should be provided paper that has a blank section at the top and lines on the bottom."

"For preschool age children," Love said, "parents can ask their child to dictate or describe in order the illustrations. Parents should describe what they are writing while the child watches them transcribe their ideas to the paper. This reinforces that language can be printed."

Experts add that it's important to emphasize that mistakes, corrections and changes are OK. "I usually say don't let them erase what they write or draw 150 times. It is not about perfection," said Fishel.

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# SPORTS

## Collier's Return Boosts Langley Boys' Basketball

**Saxons beat Marshall for second road win in three days.**

BY ANDREW MINER  
FOR THE CONNECTION

**I**n Langley's second road game in three days, the Saxons defeated the Marshall Statesmen 53-44 on Jan. 10.

Donning their Baylor/Oregon look-a-like neon jerseys for the first time since their nine-point overtime loss to McLean, Langley had an offensive outburst in the first two quarters yet struggled to hang on for the victory in the second half.

The Saxons, who improved to 4-7 with the win, at long last had senior Garrett Collier back on the court providing experience and confidence for a team that entered 2014 with a 2-7 record. Collier missed the previous nine games with a broken collarbone suffered in Langley's football playoff loss against Stonewall Jackson. Finally, however, head coach Scott Newman and company were enjoying the luxuries of fielding a lineup that featured four seniors and one junior entering what he considers to be the second stanza of the season.

"The basketball season is similar to that of three periods of a hockey game," Newman explained.

He continued to break down the stanzas as the early non-conference portion of the schedule; the holiday break tournaments and conference play as the second, and the postseason as the final.

"We are 2-0 in the second period," Newman finished.

Langley jumped out to a 17-8 after the first quarter, which included an 11-4 run, and entered the locker room with a 14-point advantage. The Statesmen suffocated Langley with a full-court press that transformed to a 1-2-2 defensive trap in the half court in the second half. The Saxons, up 14 at the half, saw their lead dwindle to four within the waning minutes of the fourth quarter.

"We did a good job of utilizing the week off in practice for players to learn how to individually handle pressure," Newman said. "We did better tonight, but still have a lot of work to do and as coaches we have to do our jobs in both victory and defeat."

Through the first half of the fourth quarter Marshall went on a 6-1 run, where Langley fumbled through the motions of their press offense, ran into white wall double-teams, and turned the ball over with countless erroneous cross court passes. It was junior Christian Gaibler who broke the spell as he hit two 12-foot jumpers on consecutive possessions

with approximately four minutes to play. His two free throws with fewer than two minutes in the game gave Gaibler a personal 6-0 run in a two-minute span when his team desperately needed a pick-me-up.

"The press put us on our heels in the front court, which made us have a tough time scoring and therefore we stopped attacking," Newman said when asked about the effects of the Marshall press. He went on to praise Gaibler saying "his shots were huge for us, I'm really glad he hit them."

The trio of Saxon forwards added seven points as sophomore Nate Shafer (2) and seniors Will 'Bach' Gent (3) and Austin Denham (2) pounded the glass and were tasked with the defensive challenge of defending Tyler White, the 6-foot-6 Statesmen sophomore. Gaibler finished with 16 points for the night, senior guard Ross Callaghan finished with 10, and Collier had a game-high 20.

Collier, who will be playing Division III basketball at Denison University in Ohio next year, has averaged 22 points in the first two games of the Saxons' second stanza; made even more impressive is the fact that both resulted in road victories that has doubled Langley's win total.

Collier, however, does not really care where he is playing noting, "I like nothing more than going into two places and silencing two crowds."



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

### South Lakes Girls to Face Langley

**South Lakes junior Princess Aghayere scored 18 points and grabbed 19 rebounds during a 60-52 win against Madison on Jan. 10. South Lakes improved to 11-1, with its only loss coming against Central Bucks West (Doylestown, Pa.) during the Boo Williams Classic holiday tournament. The Seahawks will host Langley at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 17.**



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**The Langley gymnastics team placed fourth at a Jan. 9 meet at Oakton High School.**

## Langley Gymnastics Places Fourth at Oakton Meet

The Langley gymnastics team placed fourth at a Jan. 9 meet at Oakton, posting a score of 114.65. Oakton won the meet with a score of 129.625, followed by Chantilly (128.375) and South County (118.225).

Langley junior Natalie Volpicelli placed third in the all-around with a total of 33.125. She placed first

on vault (8.85), fourth on bars (8.2), fourth on floor (8.675) and 10th on beam (7.4).

Oakton's Natalie Weaver won the all-around with a score of 34.625, followed by Chantilly's Elise Mazzone (33.4).

Langley will compete in five-team meet at McLean at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 15.



**Oakton sophomore Natalie Weaver won the all-around competition during a home meet on Jan. 9.**



## NEWS

**Rock Houses** is an example of Cindy Grisdela's contemporary quilts on display at Katie's Coffee House in Great Falls in January.



**Paddock Sketch II** by painter Jennifer Duncan is on display in the Shared Colors exhibit at Katie's Coffee House in Great Falls in January.

PHOTOS  
CONTRIBUTED

## Art on Exhibit at Katie's Coffee House

FROM PAGE 10

niques in the last ten years. "My primary focus is color and texture," Grisdela says about her work. She is inspired by nature and her surroundings in the colors of a meadow or the texture of pebbles on a path. Her designs are created intuitively, without a pattern or preconceived idea. "In some ways it's similar to putting a jigsaw puzzle together, but without the picture on the box to guide me," she explains. Her designs use primarily solid color fabric, so the color and line of each composition is the main focus. Once the abstract design comes together, she adds texture to the composition with a variety of stitching motifs. These textural lines are added freehand, without a computer or marking ahead of time, so no

two pieces are ever exactly alike. "I like to think of the process as drawing with my needle and thread," Grisdela said. For more information, please visit her website and blog at [www.cindygrisdela.com](http://www.cindygrisdela.com)

Both artists are members of Great Falls Studios, a group of over 100 artists in Great Falls who support each other artistically and offer art activities to the community, like the annual Studio Tour held the third week of October every year. They are also studio mates at the Artists' Atelier, a group studio of 14 artists located at 1144 Walker Road, Suite D, in Great Falls. The Atelier is open 12-4 p.m. on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and by appointment.

Katie's Coffee is located at 760 Walker Road in Great Falls. Hours are 6 a.m. – 3 p.m. Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

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## In Case Someone Is Wondering

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



I don't mind being alive, really I don't. Occasionally though, I receive well-intended inquiries – electronic and otherwise, from people (who know my cancer story) who are sort of wondering if perhaps I'm not. When people haven't heard from me in a while – and this is a category of people with whom I don't have regular/recurring interactions, but rather a group of people who reach out and attempt to touch me (figuratively speaking) every three or four months or so – there is a presumption on their part that my silence (so far as they know) is not in fact golden, but rather ominous, as in the cancer might have won and yours truly didn't. And when I respond, their pleasure/relief at my not having succumbed to the disease is quite positive, generally speaking. Their honesty and joy in learning that I'm still alive is both rewarding and gratifying. Rewarding in that they care and gratifying in that I must be doing something right which enables me to sustain myself through a very difficult set of medical circumstances: stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, the terminal kind (is there any other kind?).

Statistically speaking, stage IV (there is no stage V) non-small cell lung cancer patients, according to various studies by The American Cancer Society, The National Cancer Institute, N.I.H. are not long-term survivors (the understatement of the year). Those of us who survive five years should have a parade, but very few would be alive to attend. February 27th, 2014 will be my five-year anniversary. Lucky doesn't begin to accurately describe my feelings. Amazing begins to scratch the surface.

Obviously, I understand the underlying concern of those individuals who don't hear from me and can't help but wonder (presume even; let's be realistic) that I've joined the ranks of the undesirables: those who have died and not left a forwarding address. In a peculiar way, these queries are my most favorites. They reinforce to me everything I've done right and minimize anything I've done wrong. They make me proud of who I am and how long I've survived with a "terminal" disease. And the longer I continue to receive them, the longer I will have survived. What's better than that? (That's a rhetorical question). Nothing is better than that!

Still, there are many ongoing challenges I face every day. Perhaps as alluded to in the previous paragraph, grasping at straws (figuratively) is one of my enduring pursuits: attempting to find solace, comfort, understanding, support and an indescribable number of non-quantifiable emotions which build me up and make me feel whole again despite being splintered into a million figurative pieces when unexpectedly diagnosed with an inoperable, incurable, terminal disease at age 54 and a half. After having never suffered a broken bone in my entire life or even spent a single night in a hospital (and only one visit to the E.R.), here I was, in the prime of my middle age, being told in effect that my life (certainly as I knew and understood it) was over. If I was in college, I would have put that in my pipe and smoked it. However, as a mid-fifties-aged adult, recently orphaned, I was left to ordinary devices, which had never been so thoroughly tested.

Presently, five years after the fact, the tests still left to be taken mostly involve well-meaning friends and acquaintances wanting to know my status. A little awkward? Sure. A lot of care and concern? Absolutely! Inquiries I can live without? Not a chance.

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

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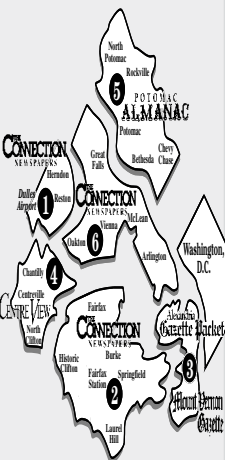


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## News

# The Great Falls Farmers Market Moves Indoors

In January and February the market will operate Saturdays at the Historic Great Falls Grange.

By KATHLEEN MURPHY  
MARKET MANAGER

We made a collective decision to run a winter Great Falls Community Farmers Market based on a survey of summer farmers market shoppers. Most wanted an all-year market and agreed to shop year-round in support of the vendors. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful holiday market in which many vendors sold out completely before the end of the market, delighting our community with their unique offerings.

However, the Farmers' Almanac predictions for a very cold winter have been proving true. The market cancelled on Dec. 14 due to predictions of a head-on snowstorm. The Jan. 4 market faced a parking lot of ice and snow. We tried to arrange a drive-thru, but people preferred to walk. This past Saturday, rains were heavy – the first (unrelenting) downpour our market ever experienced – definitely dampening the market in all respects.

We have good news for our community: Starting this Saturday through the end of February, our community farmers market will be held at the historic Great Falls Grange Hall from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The only exception is Feb. 8, when the Grange has already been rented for the entire weekend – we will return to the parking lot for that pre-Valentine's market.

The Great Falls Grange will celebrate its 85th Anniversary on May 4, 2014. It opened its doors on May 4, 1929. The first grange hall to be opened in Virginia, a group of local dairy farmers formed the local grange No. 738 in 1920 and then raised the funds to purchase the land and construct the building. The Grange served as the center of community life for 52 years – until it was sold to the Fairfax County Park Authority in 1981. This March 1st, FCPA will begin construction to make the Grange handicapped accessible – an initiative that was promised to our community at the time of purchase. These improvements have been a long time in coming – 23 years to be exact



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Celtic Harpist Ellen James performs for the community at the Great Falls Farmers Market.**

– and are very welcomed. Thanks to John Foust for finding the capital in the budget to cover the cost.

The entire Great Falls community and our surrounding neighbors are invited to celebrate the opening of the Grange by a circle of farmers and other micro-producers at our farmers market this Saturday, Jan. 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Great Falls Farmers Market provides a platform for very small farmers, healthy chefs, and artisan micro-businesses to unveil their offerings to our community at an extremely low cost of entry. Our farmers market is an incubator of new businesses that grow, cultivate, produce, or make their offerings themselves. Our local farmers market has grown out of the wishes of our community for a vibrant village center, with a place to meet and greet friends and family in the spirit of neighborliness. As we strive to maintain the semi-rural character of our community in the midst of cities sprouting all around us, the farmers market reflects the down-home experience that best characterizes a truly local rural spirit.

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