

Vienna Mayor M. Jane Seeman announced in early January that she is retiring when her term expires in June.

# Vienna Mayor to Retire in 2014

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The Vienna Town Green, the town's most visible achievement during Mayor Seeman's tenure, is packed with families through the summer concert months.



PHOTO BY DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

## Retail Worries

October numbers artificially inflated; holiday numbers could spell trouble.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

The partial government shutdown was more than an October surprise during the race for governor. Newly available statistics from the Virginia Department of Taxation show the month was also an unexpected boost to sales tax revenues across the commonwealth. Fairfax County, for example, recorded a 15.5 percent spike in sales tax revenue in October 2013 compared to October 2012. But state and local officials says that's because several major department stores neglected to increase their sales tax rate to reflect the new regional tax for transportation when the new fiscal year began in July. So the October numbers represent the backlog of uncollected revenues.

Which retailers flubbed their taxes?

"That's proprietary information, so we can't say," said Marcia Wilds, revenue and economic analysis coordinator with the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget. "They're big."

The revenue corrections came at a key time for local governments, a month that many expected to be particularly bleak. Many government workers and contractors were out of work in October, when local governments became concerned that spending habits might reflect a sense of uncertainty about the future. Now budget officials across Northern Virginia are worried about what kind of sales tax revenue they'll collect from the holiday season.

"The sales tax will be back with holiday sales," said Stephen Fuller, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University. "Over the year there will only a minor weakening."

**BUDGET OFFICIALS** are not so sure. As local governments across the region prepare for the first round of budgeting next month, a sense of uncertainty looms over the revenue projections and spending priorities. Part of that is the unemployment rate, which remains at about 6 percent across Virginia. That means consumers may hold back on consumption based spending, which would mean lower revenues for local governments on retail sales and restaurant meals.

"If revenues continue to decline, it may be necessary to make up any additional shortfalls with expenditure reductions,"

## Vienna Mayor to Retire in 2014

After 14 years at the helm, M. Jane Seeman will not seek re-election.

BY DONNA MANZ  
THE CONNECTION

Vienna Mayor M. Jane Seeman is retiring from office when her term expires in 2014, a decision she made during the 2012 election campaign.

Seeman has spent 18 years on the Town Council, from her first four as a council member, to the last 14 years as mayor. She publicly announced on Jan. 6 that she is retiring from politics to open the path for younger elected officials and to spend more family-and-friend time when her term expires on June 30.

"I'm not giving it up," said Seeman. "I'm just not running for re-election. I made up my mind in May 2012 that I would not run again."

**IT WAS 1996** when M. Jane Seeman stepped in to fill her husband's unexpired term on the council after his death. She ran and won seats on the council in 1997 and 1999. When then-mayor Charles Robinson approached Seeman about running for mayor in 2000, she had some trepidation.

"I was thinking I wasn't capable at all," Seeman said. "I felt as if I swallowed a rock."

"If you really believe in something, you have to step forward and do it. I believe in Vienna and that's what this was all about."

Seeman was diagnosed with lung cancer in spring, 2013, but her decision to turn the

reins of the town over came a year before her diagnosis. Other than the cancer, she called herself a "healthy" person.

Throughout Seeman's administration and in the years before, the town's emphasis was on maintaining Vienna's way of life, a small-town feel with a family focus, Seeman said. "It's paid off. We have all these young families moving to Vienna, raising their kids here."

**CHANGES**, other than the push to new technology, come to the town gradually. The Town Council and Vienna's administrative departments and committees guide the development of the community, from the Maple Avenue Vision to infrastructure, such as sidewalk construction. "We don't want to be Tysons," said Seeman. "We want to be Vienna."

"I have faith in the people of Vienna. They'll make sure the town is run the right way."

— Mayor M. Jane Seeman

What is a "huge" change in Vienna, Seeman said, is the town's rapid move to technology and social media. "With new hires, we've come in to it very quickly," Seeman said. "It has changed the way we work, all of us."

Another big change in the town is all the new homes going up, Seeman said.

Of the things outside the town's administrative domain, Tysons redevelopment has the biggest impact on Vienna, Seeman said. "They've been very kind to include Vienna on [Tysons redevelopment] committees."

Seeman said the town is doing what it

can do to mitigate the challenges arising from the new Tysons. The biggest disadvantage, she said, is increased traffic congestion. A big advantage is the people who will work in Tysons but want to live in Vienna.

**THE MOST VISIBLE ACHIEVEMENT** during Seeman's tenure was the development of the Town Green, a project conceived, promoted and supported by the Town Council and department directors. "Everyone works toward the same goals," Seeman said. "We did not set out to be recognized as a great place to live in the country. Vienna is a great place to live because everyone, officials, residents, want it to be."

Seeman's biggest disappointment as mayor was the collapse of the proposed parking garage plan for Church Street. Since she came in as mayor, Seeman was aware that parking in Vienna was a challenge to be resolved. Parking, particularly in the Historic Church Street corridor, is at a premium.

"We try to be very transparent about where we get the money to pay for things and where it goes," she said. "Every year, it's a balancing act."

"We want the people in Vienna to get their tax dollars' worth in services," said Seeman. "It's the way we work here."

Prices for goods go up, even the salt we use on icy streets. Sometimes, things on the wish-list have to be set aside for a greater priority.

**WHEN SHE RETURNS** to life as just "Jane," rather than Mayor Jane, she'll have more free time for her personal activities and passions, and for her family and friends. She's been working on scrapbooks for her grandchildren. She'll have more time to fin

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SEE SALES TAX, PAGE 4

VIENNA/OAKTON CONNECTION ♦ JANUARY 22-28, 2014 ♦ 3



# Into the Budget Fray in State of County

**Bulova highlights accomplishments, challenges in annual address.**

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

**D**espite the lingering impact of an anemic economy, and the regional ripple effects of federal sequestration, Fairfax County residents will see some concrete signs of progress this year.

That message was delivered by Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova, who cast a mostly positive light on the county's future during a media screening of her televised annual State of the County address on Wednesday, Jan. 15.

In addition to the completion of Phase 1 of the Silver Line in Tysons, motorists can expect to see congestion eased through a number of state-funded transportation projects, including the new I-95 Express Lanes that will tie into the Beltway Express lanes at Edsall Road.

Residents can also look forward to the revitalization and redevelopment of older commercial and industrial areas throughout the county, including the \$250 million transformation of Springfield Mall into the Springfield Town Center in the fall of 2014.



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova hosted a media screening of her annual State of the County address on Wednesday, Jan. 15. Residents can view the address on Channel 16 from 7:30 to 8 p.m., or on YouTube at <http://youtube/YzeaC3K-wiY>**

The newly-renovated mall will include the addition of roughly 700,000 square feet of retail, restaurants, a food court and a state-of-the-art movie theater. The 20-foot-tall brown numbers that indicated the mall's six main entrances — a hallmark of the 1970s-era mall — will be replaced with one central grand entranceway.

Bulova also praised the Economic Development Authority and Visit Fairfax for boosting tourism and facilitating the selection of Fairfax County as the host of the 2015 World Police and Fire Games, the world's second largest athletic competition after the summer Olympics. The event is expected to generate more than \$100 million in tourism revenue for the county.

The 30-minute State of the County video, 10 minutes longer than last year's production, highlights many county achievements in the past year — such as the county's low crime rate and a 26 percent reduction since 2007 in the number of people counted as homeless. It also features three of the county's new leaders: newly-elected Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, the county's first female sheriff; Police Chief Edwin Roessler and Karen Garza, the new superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools.

In the video, Garza said one of her top priorities is "to listen and learn what our community expects of its schools."

"One of our big projects this year is that we enlisted the help of a broad-based community committee to develop the Portrait of a Graduate — which will detail what our

community expects an FCPS student to know and be to do upon graduating from our system," Garza said.

Garza also addressed the ongoing challenge of funding a school system with a current enrollment of 184,600 students, making FCPS larger than the school systems of eight states and the District of Columbia.

"As you know, FCPS is facing some challenges as well," Garza said in the video. "We have grown by more than 15,000 students in the last five years and our required expenditures for items like employee benefits have continued to increase. At the same time, revenues have not increased enough to cover expenditures."

In fiscal year 2014, 53 percent of the county's general fund budget was transferred to Fairfax County Public Schools, a sum of roughly \$1.9 billion.

School officials recently unveiled a \$2.5 billion budget, asking for a 5.7 percent increase, or nearly \$98 million more in county funding. Under the proposed budget, class sizes will increase at all grade levels and about 730 staff positions will be cut.

After the screening, Bulova emphasized that while education continues to be the board's "highest priority" and the community's "greatest investment," there will likely be a significant gap between what school officials are asking for in their budget, and how much the board is prepared to give.

SEE COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS, PAGE 13

## Sales Tax Error Artificially Inflates October Revenue

FROM PAGE 3

wrote Alexandria City Manager Rashad Young in a memorandum to City Council members this month.

The concerns are larger than retail sales. One of the potential problems on the horizon is transient occupancy tax revenues. In Alexandria, for example, the hotel occupancy rate fell from 76.1 percent in October 2012 to 72.4 percent in October 2013. In Arlington, hotel occupancy tax revenues fell 15 percent in November compared to the previous year and 18 percent in December compared to the previous year.

"Am I worried? Yes," acknowledged Arlington Budget Director Richard Stevenson. "But that's what budget directors do. We worry."

**EXPERTS WHO FOLLOW** local government revenues say jurisdictions are worried for two reasons. The first is the lack of continuity on the part of the federal government. When the shutdown was happening, nobody knew how long it would last or when it would

end. That led families to cut back their spending habits and cast a wary eye toward the future.

"That, obviously, is scary," said Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Government at George Mason University. "It means for a family that you always have to leave something aside instead of using it at a local restaurant, store or other facility."

A second reason for worry is that the uncertainty is far from over. The budget agreement reached between Congress and the president is good through September, leaving open the possibility of yet another battle about bankruptcy and insolvency. That leaves open a sense of doubt for long-term contracts involving everything from bridges and fighter planes to satellite and veterans hospitals.

"With the Federal Highway Trust Fund expected to be insolvent by next year," said Shafroth, "a key partner in the regional Washington economy is becoming an uncertain one."

**THE NEXT FEW** months will detail the extent of the economic

damage created by sequester and shutdown. Will the numbers track with expectations? Or will they fall well below the budgets local leaders voted for last spring? That has local governments worried and prepared to make reductions if necessary. Then again, they also don't want to make spending reduction that are unnecessary and potentially damaging.

"What you don't want to do is make cuts that if we recover enough we didn't need to make," said Laura Triggs, finance director with the city of Alexandria. "But by law, if it continues to be low then yes I have to cut back on expenditures."

Part of the problem is revenue growth not meeting expectations. Even if local governments see an increase in revenue from sales tax revenue, failure to meet expectations could spell trouble for balancing the books in the current fiscal year. And that means even more headaches for trying to predict the future in fiscal year 2015.

"Normally our sales tax is increasing at a larger extent than it is right now," said Wilds.

month	Alexandria	Arlington	Fairfax
July, 2012	\$2,095,566.17	\$3,209,203.92	\$13,721,734.05
July, 2013	\$2,131,996.31	\$3,035,747.37	\$13,659,947.01
difference	\$36,430.14	-\$173,456.55	-\$61,787.04
percent change	1.74%	-5.40%	-0.45%
August, 2012	\$2,140,318.83	\$3,319,659.04	\$14,475,843.20
August, 2013	\$2,026,859.07	\$3,037,107.38	\$13,530,731.80
difference	-\$113,459.76	-\$282,551.66	-\$945,111.40
percent change	-5.30%	-8.51%	-6.53%
September, 2012	\$2,183,674.38	\$3,285,824.25	\$13,581,370.46
September, 2013	\$2,103,012.61	\$3,067,027.71	\$13,521,411.87
difference	-\$80,661.77	-\$218,796.54	-\$59,958.59
percent change	-3.69%	-6.66%	-0.44%
October, 2012	\$2,027,158.90	\$3,178,335.39	\$13,614,131.71
October, 2013	\$2,208,159.20	\$3,661,773.43	\$15,728,025.92
difference	\$181,000.30	\$483,438.04	\$2,113,894.21
percent change	8.93%	15.21%	15.53%
November, 2012	\$2,078,264.35	\$3,301,839.75	\$14,234,067.26
November, 2013	\$2,062,527.46	\$3,218,338.10	\$13,908,035.89
difference	-\$15,736.89	-\$83,501.65	-\$326,031.37
percent change	-0.76%	-2.53%	-2.29%





PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The Vienna Community Center will receive a renovation, plus a new gym.

## 'This Is the Town's Building'

**Vienna Community Center will receive addition, renovation.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

For nearly half a century, Vienna's community center has served its residents. Whether hosting classes, meetings or special events, it's one of the most heavily used buildings in town.

Since its dedication on April 17, 1966, it's been renovated three times. But the last time was in 1998 and, now, it'll be repaired again, and enlarged, as well.

"We're trying to bring it back into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with modern amenities that'll appeal to our residents," said Cathy Salgado, director of Parks and Recreation. "They deserve quality facilities."

The two-story building on Cherry Street S.E. is 28,814 square feet, and people don't need a pass to enter it. They come for classes in everything from art to music, dance, athletics, martial arts, Jazzercise and fitness. Youth groups, the Vienna Women's Club, AARP and bridge clubs meet here. And people from all over flock to the community center for special events including craft fairs, antique shows and bazaars.

"You name it, we do it," said Salgado. "In the summer, this place is full of summer camps; and all year 'round, there's a teen center in the basement. Plus the gym is used for activities such as volleyball, basketball, tennis, pickle ball and table tennis."

But as the building has aged, so have the various systems that keep it humming. Now, it needs a new HVAC (heating and air conditioning) system, as well as a new roof.

"It's leaking in multiple places and, sometimes, people have to move to another room," said Salgado. "And the last thing people want to do is take yoga class in a room that's 50 degrees. We also need a new electrical system. We have older wiring, so our



**Cathy Salgado,**  
director of Parks  
and Recreation.

keep it for our programs such as gymnastics and indoor tennis."

So the town plans to add a new, full-sized gym in the back. It'll be 8,000 square feet and will be used for programs and athletics. And once it's operational, Vienna Youth Inc. (VCI) will be able to play basketball in the community center for the first time. Now, said Salgado, "They play in the schools and wherever else they can find space."

Furthermore, the parking lot will be reconfigured to add more spaces. Overall, said Salgado, "We're about to go to request-for-proposals for architectural services. We plan to pick the architect in the next month or two and get the design started. We hope to have the design done by the end of the year."

Then, she said, construction is expected to start early next winter and take about 16 months. Dedication of the new portion is earmarked for the community center's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April 2016.

The work is funded by the town's Capital Improvement budget, courtesy of a \$4 million bond issue in fall 2013. "But we'll probably need to raise another \$1 million to pay for everything we'll need," said Salgado. "Hence, we're looking for partners." Anyone interested may contact her at [csalgado@viennava.gov](mailto:csalgado@viennava.gov).

A task force of citizens and user groups, plus open

classrooms aren't high tech for laptops."

Besides all that, she said, "The floors and walls of the classrooms are in need of repairs. And the windows need to be replaced because they aren't energy-efficient. Basically, the building has been well-used and is in need of a facelift."

Salgado also noted that the gym is "too small for league play because it's not regulation-sized and the ceiling is too low. But we'll

SEE VIENNA COMMUNITY, PAGE 10

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# OPINION

## Extend Health Coverage in Virginia

General Assembly should not block coverage for as many as 400,000 uninsured.

Standing on what is essentially scorched earth, Republicans in the Virginia General Assembly have condemned hundreds of thousands of poor Virginians to living without health coverage even though it would be fully funded by Federal money for the next three years, and with Virginia paying 10 percent after five years.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe has pledged to do everything he can to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, and we encourage him to use every creative option available to make that happen. In Ohio, the governor found a legal way to accept the Medicaid funds despite objections from the General Assembly, for example.

Earlier this week, McAuliffe included an amendment to the FY2014 budget bill authorizing the Governor to act in the event that the Medicaid Reform Innovation and Reform Commission (MIRC) fails to decide

whether or not to accept federal funding to cover up to 400,000 uninsured Virginians through Medicaid by the end of the current legislative session.

### EDITORIAL

Business groups and chambers of commerce around Virginia, including the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce, support accepting the expansion of Medicaid in Virginia under the Affordable Care Act. One persuasive factor for the business community: The expansion would create an estimated 30,000 jobs. Hospitals support expanding Medicaid which would offset many of the costs of caring for uninsured populations.

It isn't as if there is no health care cost for the uninsured now. Right now, they access health care when they are very sick by going to an emergency room or other clinics, where providers spread the cost of care around. This is inefficient, expensive and unhealthy, including for those of us who do have health insur-

ance. It means unvaccinated and/or sick people are going to work and going about their daily lives putting themselves and others at risk.

As of January 2014, in Virginia, Medicaid eligibility for adults without disability is limited to parents with incomes below 51 percent of poverty, or about \$11,900 a year for a family of four, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. Adults without dependent children remain ineligible regardless of their income.

The General Assembly should not be able to block coverage for as many as 400,000 Virginians basically out of spite. The established excuse, that the Feds can't afford it and can't be counted on to pay the money, doesn't hold water in Virginia, which receives more Federal dollars per capita than any other state but Alaska. If legislators are so concerned about Federal ability to pay, you might expect to see them refusing transportation money, for example, or to turn the possible FBI headquarters away, or thousands of other ways that Federal dollars make their way into Virginia.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## Petersen Proposes Amendments, Bills

Over the next couple months, the General Assembly will be dissecting the biennial state budget proposed by the outgoing governor. Individual members may propose amendments,

**RICHMOND REPORT** and state Sen. Chap Petersen did so on Jan. 10.

"They are all relatively small amounts, but could have a critical role," Peterson said.

His amendments are as follows:

1. Hiring of Legislative Ethics Commission Director: For \$200,000, you can hire a director with benefits, as well as staff in Richmond. There's no point in having "ethics reform" unless you have an independent body to enforce it.

2. Providing archival video of Assembly sessions: For \$35,000, you can provide video services with archives which are available online, showing daily sessions in the House or Senate.

3. Creating a "veteran's court" pilot project in Fairfax County: For \$75,000, the Virginia Supreme Court is willing to train existing court staff to set up a separate track for criminal offenders who have combat backgrounds and may be suffering from PTSD symptoms. The point is to refer them to counseling and support services. This is a pilot project and there are existing judges in Fairfax County who are willing to lead on this.

4. Creating the Virginia-Korea



Petersen

Virginia citizens with business contacts in Korea. The board position will be voluntary. The Republic of Korea is not just one of America's largest trading partners with a Free Trade Agreement; it also has a direct connection with the Commonwealth due to the large Korean-American population in northern Virginia which has close ties to the ROK. That's a sampling. The sum total of these annual costs will be approximately \$500,000 — about the cost of a single-family residence in Fairfax City.

Petersen also submitted the following bills, this session:

SB 212: Opening up the General Assembly to Virginia's Freedom of Information Act. It requires Assembly members, like other Virginia public servants, to disclose their records to the public upon request

SB 218: Limitations on Contributions and Gifts: To restore trust to state politics.

SB 219: Establishing a State Ethics Commission: No ethics regime can be complete without an enforcement body to hold members accountable.

SB 220: Prohibiting the Use of Private Law Firms for State Busi-

ness. It 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.

SB 221: Eliminating the Hybrid Penalty: It avoids ill-conceived obstacles to innovation and could result in a savings of \$64/year to hybrid owners.

SB 222: Repealing HOA Restrictions on Solar Panels: It would be effective against community restrictions on private property rights.

SB 225 Regarding protection of bicyclists. This is a holdover from last year.

SB 226: Conforming Employment Contracts to Virginia Law: It would ensure that Virginia citizens are not held hostage to out-of-state employment restrictions.

SB 228: Protecting Companion Animals sold through Pet Stores. It offers a number of protections for consumers who purchase companion animals that are not healthy or properly cared for.

Currently serving his second term in the Virginia Senate, Petersen has previously served as delegate and city councilman for the City of Fairfax. For the 2014 session, he sits on the Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, General Laws and Technology, and Privileges and Elections Committees.

### OBITUARY

## Norine McGraw Swaminatha

On Thursday, Jan. 2, Norine McGraw Swaminatha, 65, a 34-year resident of the Town of Vienna passed away at home.

Beloved and devoted wife to Kris Swaminatha, mother to Tara Swaminatha (Robert Kaplan), Sheela Myers (Stephen), Meara DeRose (Paul) and Neala Swaminatha and sister to Regina McGraw; grandmother to Arin and Molly Kaplan, Emily and Mason Myers, and Vinny and Lucy DeRose.

The Mass of Christian Burial was held Friday, Jan. 10 at Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church in Vienna. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Norine's memory to the American Brain Tumor Association (on Norine's page at <http://hope.abta.org/goto/Norine>, by phone 773-577-8750, or by mail at 8550 Bryn Mawr Ave, Suite 550, Chicago, Illinois, 60631-3225).

## Vienna & Oakton CONNECTION

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## NEWS

### What's Next for I-66

VDOT will hold a public information meeting on the next steps to identify potential traffic improvements in the I-66 Corridor. It's set for Thursday, Jan. 30, from 6:30-8:30 p.m., at Oakton High School, 2900 Sutton Road in Vienna. (If cancelled due to weather: Tuesday, Feb. 4).

VDOT and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation have identified 10 concepts to increase capacity within the I-66 corridor, plus options to increase travel-mode choices, improve individual interchanges, address spot safety needs and enhance travel efficiency.

### Meet With Local Legislators

Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34<sup>th</sup>) and Del. Mark Keam (D-35<sup>th</sup>) will discuss their legislative priorities and other anticipated issues for the 2014 Virginia General Assembly session at a Town Hall meeting. It's slated for Saturday, Feb. 1, from 1-3 p.m., at the

Vienna Town Hall, 127 Center Street S. For more information, email [kathy@fairfaxsenator.com](mailto:kathy@fairfaxsenator.com).

### Town of Vienna Honored

For the 20<sup>th</sup> year in a row, the Town of Vienna received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officers Assn. of the United States and Canada.

It's the highest form of recognition for governmental budgeting.

### Volunteer Drivers Are Needed

The Shepherd's Center of Oakton-Vienna has an urgent need for volunteer drivers to take area senior citizens to medical appointments and other activities. Opportunities to volunteer for other services are also available.

Hours are flexible. For more information, go to [www.scov.org](http://www.scov.org) or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 703-281-5088 or [volunteer@scov.org](mailto:volunteer@scov.org).

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# ENTERTAINMENT

## 'This' Opens in Vienna

Vienna Theatre Company presents comedy-drama exploring challenges of a certain-age.

**O**n Jan. 24, the Vienna Theatre Company debuts "This," a drama with a humorous take on the tribulations of life at about 40 years old ... give or take a year or two in either direction.

The five characters are facing pivotal stages in their own lives, from the birth of a child to the death of a spouse to the search for love. In between is the requisite turn to infidelity as a theatrical platform for psychoanalysis.

"This" refers to that thing that's kind-of blocking you in your life, things you don't want to talk about," said "This" producer, Jessie Roberts of Great Falls.

A widow, a couple whose new parenthood builds a wall, and a gay man who feels insignificant in the shadow of a French doctor engaged in humanitarian work make up the ensemble cast. Allen McRae plays the French doctor working with Doctors With-

out Borders, Jean Pierre.

"The chance to do a French accent appeals to me," McRae said. "I like working with accents, British, French ... I actually do a phone conversation in French and that was fun."

"**THIS**," whatever this is to the characters absorbed in their own internal maelstroms, is the center of their problems, this thing that stands in the way of their happiness and contentment. The characters are waiting for the "thing" that will put "everything in focus" as they grasp with that thing that invades their lives and impedes their happiness.

"I think it's fascinating to look at a period in people's lives," said "This" director, Tom Flatt. "Although it deals with some of the more challenging aspects of adulthood, it does it with humor."

Veteran community theatre actor Allen McRae plays French doctor Jean Pierre in the Vienna Theatre Company's production of "This," opening on Jan. 24 at the Vienna Community Center.



DONNA MANZ/THE CONNECTION

"This" has adult language and is not appropriate for children under 16. The play was written by Melissa James Gibson.

Tickets are priced at \$13 each for adults and are available for purchase at the Vienna Community Center or at the door on performance day. Performances are on Jan. 24, 25, 31, and Feb. 1 at 8 p.m., and at 2 p.m. on Feb. 2 and 9.

"This" is presented at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street SE. Call the community center at 703-255-6360 for weather cancellations.

— DONNA MANZ

## Register for Greater Vienna Babe Ruth Baseball

Registration is now open for the Spring 2014 Season. Offering Prep League for 13's, American League for 14's and 15's, Senior League for 16-19's, and Senators travel teams.

Returning players, please register online at [gvbri.org](http://gvbri.org). New players must register in person.

Two sessions are planned, Jan. 25 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and Feb. 1 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St SE, Vienna, VA 22180. Early-bird discount applies to everyone registering in person. More information at [gvbri.org](http://gvbri.org).

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# ENTERTAINMENT

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

## 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. [www.viennatheatrecompany.org/](http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/)

## SATURDAY/JAN. 25

**Gustafer Yellowgold's Show.** 10:30 a.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave E, Vienna. Groovy Gustafer 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, Gustafer Yellowgold concerts are a truly different multimedia experience that entrances children and adults alike. Tickets: \$10. <https://jamminjava.com/events/gustafer-yellowgold>

**"Othello."** 8 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave, McLean.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Visitors enjoy a chocolate fountain from Capitol Chocolate Fountains at the 2012 McLean Chocolate Festival. This year's festival will be Sunday, Jan. 26 at McLean Community Center.**

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.

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11

# COOL CRAFTS

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# Virginia Supreme Court Makes Audio

## Virginia Supreme Court opens audio recordings to public.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

Members of the Virginia Supreme Court have a New Year's Resolution — become more transparent. Starting this year, members of the public will finally have access to audio recordings of oral arguments. The recordings were once public, but installation of new recording equipment in January 2008 changed that. Because the new microphones were so powerful, justices were concerned that sidebar conversations between justices might be audible.

"That was a lame excuse," said Del. Dave Albo (R-42). "I'm glad they decided to change this without the General Assembly passing legislation to make it happen."

As it turns out, legislation was already in the works when the justices changed the policy. Wise County Clerk of Court Jack Kennedy approached Del. Terry Kilgore (R-1) about introducing legislation requiring the court to release audio recording of oral arguments. Draft language for House Bill 1018 said audio records of Supreme Court oral arguments "shall be made publicly available in electronic format without fee within a reasonable time after oral arguments take place."

"I'm a Democrat and he's a Republican,"

said Kennedy, who lives in Kilgore's district. "But transparency should not be a partisan issue."

**THE LACK OF TRANSPARENCY** in Virginia has been a problem for many years, and the commonwealth has recently gained a reputation as a place that is hostile to open government. In 2012, the State Integrity Investigation ranked and graded each of the 50 states on government accountability, transparency and corruption. Virginia got an F, largely because police agencies deny access to basic documents. This week, Richmond-based Open Law Virginia issued its own state-by-state guide comparing public availability of online documents. Virginia got a C minus, largely because many documents and files are difficult for members of the public to access.

"Access to live and recorded oral arguments creates opportunities for civic education and public engagement," the report concludes. "And even many judges have recognized, in part based on experience, that it is time to bring video coverage to appellate courtrooms routinely."

When the court's policy of denying public access became public last year, leaders at the Supreme Court initially decided to defend the policy. In a written statement explaining the lack of transparency, director of legislative and public relations for the Office of Executive Secretary Katya Herndon said new technology was to blame.

"The new digital recording equipment is more sensitive so that the recordings now include any confidential comments any jus-



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

Since January 2008, the Supreme Court of Virginia has denied public access to audio recordings of its oral arguments.

tice makes to another justice during the oral argument," said Herndon last June. "Accordingly, the recordings, which are for the internal use of the justices, are no longer made available to the public."

Since that time, a number of media outlets have reported on the lack of transparency. And legislators began drafting bills to force the court to open up. Now, the court

has decided to change course — at least for oral arguments moving forward. Advocates for open government say it's a victory for the public.

"We can't have secret courts," said Ginger Stanley, executive director of the Virginia Press Association. "The public has a right to hear these audio records. That's how democracy works."

## Vienna Community Center Gets Boost

FROM PAGE 5

houses and a town-wide survey asked residents what they wanted in their revamped community center. Some 97 percent requested a swimming pool, a new gym and a fitness center.

A pool would be more expensive than the amount of money the town has for this project so, for now, it's tabled. But there will be a new gym and Salgado said the old one could become a fitness center in the next phase.

However, in phase one, the focus will be on the renovation plus the construction of the new gym.

"Then we'll discuss future plans if the Town Council chooses to do so," she said. "There are a lot of needs in town and we have a finite amount of money, so we have to balance all the needs and be fiscally responsible."

Meanwhile, said Salgado, "We want the community center to continue serving the town residents. They give a lot of their time to the town and participate in events and programs here. So it's nice to allow them to partake of their recreation in town, without traveling elsewhere."

So how does she feel about the project? "I'm extremely excited," she said. "I think we can really incorporate some neat things into this building and make it hospitable, light, bright and airy. I want to make it feel like our community, which is very caring, giving and supportive. This is the town's building, so we want it to be inviting — and the best way to do that is to make sure it represents the values of our town."



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The exterior of the 48-year-old Vienna Community Center.

### BULLETIN BOARD

#### ONGOING

**Senior Fall Prevention Classes.** 1:30-2:30 p.m. and 2-3 p.m., The Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Drive, Fairfax. Classes are held in a heated indoor pool and are designed to work on balance and core muscles. \$10. 703-667-9800.

**Coffee/Tea Poetry Group.** Poets and poetry lovers seek to form a group to meet once a month at a local coffee/tea shop to enjoy each other's creations. 703-819-1690.

**Virginia Sheriff's Institute Scholarship Program.** Those enrolled in a Virginia college or university who are pursuing a degree in the field of criminal justice are eligible for the Virginia Sheriff's Institute Scholarship Program; recommendation letter needed. 703-246-3251, shfpio@fairfaxcounty.gov or http://vasheriffsinstitute.org/scholarship/.

**Everest College Free GED Test Preparation.** Tysons Corner, Vienna. Free GED test preparation and credential completion program, GED Advantage, open to the public. 1-888-201-6547.

**Weekly TIPS Lunch.** 12:15-1:30 p.m., at Shula's, 8028 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Tyson's Regional Chamber of Commerce does

lunch. 703-862-4895.

**New Neighbors League Club of Northern Virginia.** For women, the club includes Bridge, mah jong, gardening, quilting and many other activities. www.newneighborsvirginia.com.

**Volunteers for Change.** A program for adults which offers more than 50 weekend and evening volunteer opportunities per month. www.volunteerfairfax.org.

**Haven of Northern Virginia Support Group.** 703-941-7000, www.havenofnova.org or havenofnova@verizon.net.

**The Advisory Board of the Northwest Center for Mental Health Services.** 7-9 p.m. Looking for volunteers who are dedicated to improving mental health services. 703-435-0868.

**Brinker Toastmasters.** 9:30 a.m. at Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.E., Vienna. Meets second and fourth Saturday of the month. brinker.wordpress.com.

**Pauline Shirley Toastmasters Club Meeting.** 6:45 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Develop better speaking and presentation skills, learn to think quickly and clearly on your feet. 703-893-5506 or paulineshirley.freetoasthost.info.



# ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 9

## MONDAY/JAN. 27

**Fuse Box.** 7:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Avenue East, Vienna. A guitar-driven, rock 'n roll band. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$13 day of the show, and are on sale now at [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

## 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. [www.viennatheatrecompany.org/](http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/)

## FRIDAY/JAN. 31-SATURDAY/FEB. 1

**La Cage aux Folles.** 8 p.m. Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Book by Harvey Fierstein, music and lyrics by Jerry Herman, based on the novel by Jean Poiret. Georges, the owner of a popular drag nightclub in San Tropez, and Albin, the club's star, have lived in unwedded bliss for 20 years. Jean-Michel, the son they have raised together, throws the happy household into hilarious turmoil by announcing that he is going to marry the daughter of an ultra-conservative politician. [www.McLeanPlayers.org](http://www.McLeanPlayers.org) or 866-811-4111.

## 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



PHOTO BY JOCELYN STEINER

**From left: Shannon Benton and Rikki Howie rehearsing for the play "THIS," a comedy that captures the uncertain steps of a circle of friends entering the choppy waters of middle age. Starts Jan. 24 at the Vienna Community Center.**

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)

Tropez, and Albin, the club's star, have lived in unwedded bliss for twenty years. Jean-Michel, the son they have raised together, throws the happy household into hilarious turmoil by announcing that he is going to marry the daughter of an ultra-conservative politician. [www.McLeanPlayers.org](http://www.McLeanPlayers.org) or 866-811-4111.

## 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. [www.viennatheatrecompany.org/](http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org/)

## SUNDAY/FEB. 2

**La Cage aux Folles.** 2 p.m. Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Georges, the owner of a popular drag nightclub in San

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# Changing of the Guard?

Centreville girls' basketball wins third straight over Oakton.

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Oakton girls' basketball program was the defending state champion, had won eight consecutive district titles and hadn't lost to the Centreville Wildcats since 1995 when the two teams faced one another on Jan. 18, 2013.

Centreville had won 14 of its first 15 games during the 2012-13 season and the Wildcats felt confident they could knock off mighty Oakton. The Cougars, however, weren't ready to relinquish their place atop the Concorde District and won by 17 points on their home floor.

"I think we came out scared in the first half," Centreville head coach Tom Watson said after the game.

Centreville got another shot at Oakton the following month. This time, the Wildcats won, 49-38. Ten days later, Centreville beat Oakton again, this time in the Concorde District championship game, 44-41. It was Centreville's first district title since 1993.

Eleven months later, the teams had their first meeting of the 2013-14 season on Jan. 17 at Centreville High School. Friday's contest presented Centreville a chance to show last year's victories against Oakton were no fluke, while providing the Cougars an opportunity for payback.

In the second half, the Wildcats made a case that their stay atop the district (now Conference 5) will not be a one-and-done affair.

Centreville defeated Oakton 55-38 on Friday. The Wildcats led 24-17 at halftime before outscoring the Cougars 18-8 in the third quarter. A bucket by senior point guard Jenna Green with 3:52 remaining in the fourth quarter gave Centreville a 52-32 advantage, its largest lead of the night.

After going winless against Oakton since the mid-90s, Centreville has now won three straight against the perennial power.

"Last year, the first time we beat them — we beat them for the first time in [nearly] 20 years — that was the game that really helped us because then we realized that we could do this. We could win," Green said. "It's the same this year. We definitely have a good chance [of winning the conference] again and we're going to go after it. It's my senior year, there's a lot of seniors on this team and we want it. We want it really bad."

Green, who signed with William & Mary, played a major role in Friday's victory, finishing with a game-high 20 points. She opened second-half scoring with a three-point play after a nifty spin move.



Oakton girls' basketball coach Fred Priester is seen during the Cougars' Jan. 17 game against Centreville.

"She's definitely the best player in the region, point guard especially," Watson said. "Everyone knows that. Jenna has earned it. Nothing was given to her. She's in the gym before anybody, she goes to a trainer three, four, five times a week. If you're putting that work in, then it should come back to you."

Green is one of six seniors on the Centreville roster. The Wildcats also have six juniors and two freshmen. Centreville started four seniors and a junior on Friday.

Meanwhile, Oakton has just two seniors on its roster, along with five juniors, two sophomores and three freshmen. The Cougars started one senior, two juniors, a sophomore and a freshman against Centreville.

Watson, in his second season as Centreville head coach, praised Oakton head coach Fred Priester's ability to continually produce competitive teams.

"It's not a secret that that's our rival. It's not a secret to anybody," Watson said. "It's not a secret that Fred's a great coach. ... [Games against Oakton] mean everything. Every coach and every team has a chinning bar. Fred Priester is my chinning bar. ... It doesn't matter [when Oakton's top players graduate], he re-tools. [Oakton has three] freshmen and they're still unbelievable. He's got more freshmen, I've got all seniors and the game is still tight until the very end, when we broke away a little bit."

One of the reasons Centreville pulled away was the 3-point shooting of Katie Blumer. The senior guard knocked down a trio of 3-pointers during a 2-minute stretch of the third quarter on Friday and finished with 10 points.

"I think I have the best 3-point team in the region," Watson said. "... I have five kids that can really jack that 3 up. As everybody else knows, Oakton was working their butts off on defense and [it is] debilitating [to the opposition] ... when you knock those



Oakton junior guard and team captain Lindsey Abed led the Cougars with 13 points against Centreville on Jan. 17.

down."

Junior Caroline Wakefield scored nine points for Centreville. Senior Ailyn Kelly and junior Chrissy Jacksta each had six.

Oakton junior guard and team captain Lindsey Abed scored a team-high 13 points. Freshman guard Aisha Sheppard scored nine points and sophomore guard Alex Marquis had six. Junior guard and team captain Karlie Cronin grabbed six rebounds.

Oakton kept the game close for a half, but after Green's three-point play in the opening minute of the third quarter, the Cougars trailed by double digits for the remainder of the contest.

Oakton finished with nine field goals.

"[The Wildcats] have a good team," Priester said. "I can't say anything poorly about them. They played a good game. We're a growing team and we did not play a good game."

The Cougars spent more than 30 minutes in the locker room after the game.

"I didn't tell them anything," Priester said of Oakton's postgame meeting. "I asked them things. They need to come up with some answers."

Oakton and Centreville will face one another again on Feb. 4 at Oakton High School for the Cougars' senior night. The two teams could possibly meet in the conference tournament, as well. For now, the Wildcats have gotten the best of the Cougars three straight times and are the defending Concorde champions.

"It feels great. It's awesome," Green said about beating Oakton in three straight meetings. "But we still will ... see them one, probably two more times. We've got to stay focused because it's really hard to beat a good team like that that many times, so we really need to keep working hard."

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



## NEWS

# County Highlights

FROM PAGE 4

"The schools won't get everything they asked for," Bulova said. "The school board will have to roll up their sleeves and so will supervisors."

When asked how close the board is prepared to get to the 5.7 percent request, Bulova said that a 2 percent increase — or \$33 million — is a more realistic number.

In an effort to bridge that gap, supervisors have made state education funding the county's top legislative priority for this year's General Assembly session.

"This is our education year, our number one ask and priority from legislators is to get the full funding of \$33 million," Bulova said.

Although Fairfax County is not facing the "doomsday budgets" of the mid-1990s, a projected budget shortfall of \$25 million this fiscal year, coupled with the accelerating growth and financial needs of Fairfax County Public Schools will present the Board of Supervisors with choices and challenges.

"Once again, it will not be an easy budget year," Bulova said. "Actions or lack of action at the federal level has impacted commercial and sales tax revenue, making it more difficult for the county to recover from the downturn."

Bulova said the county's advertised budget for fiscal year 2015 will be released for public comment next month.

The county will host a number of public hearings, community forums and town meetings to give residents the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions. In late April, the board officially adopts the budget.

"Every budget tells a story," Bulova said. "We'll look for efficiencies and savings and opportunity for savings, but it won't be easy."

The low-hanging fruit has already been picked."

In spite of the challenges, Bulova said she believes the board has consistently been able to strike a balance that has kept taxes affordable while delivering high quality services to residents.

"We remain committed to work with the community to maintain excellence in the face of our challenges," she said.

**"Based on my 26 years of experience in the Sheriff's Office, there are a number of initiatives that we will be pursuing in the coming year. First, it is important that the Sheriff have a strong bond with our diverse communities. I will be out in the community listening and learning and bringing the new ideas, as well as any concerns, back to the office."**

— Sheriff Stacey Kincaid

**"Recently, the department has established the chief's Council on Diversity Recruiting. This council provides the agency engagement with leaders from culturally diverse communities to assist us in developing innovative recruitment opportunities — to mirror the communities we serve."**

— Police Chief Edwin Roessler

## Mayor Announces Retirement

FROM PAGE 3

ish those scrapbooks.

She'll be decluttering her house, doing yard projects and gardening, reading more books. And spending more time on family activities, especially those involving her grandchildren. She's always had the support of her family in her home life and career, she said. When she thinks about her retirement, Seeman thinks, "retirement is not going to be so bad."

Seeman's daughter, Linda Colbert, is running for a seat on the Town Council. Current Council member Laurie Cole is not running for re-election. Council member Laurie di Rocco, vice-mayor, announced her

bid for a mayoral run in 2014.

Town Hall is as much a community place as it is an official building. From open house holiday receptions to council meetings, Town Hall staff subscribes to the Vienna "way."

"This is my building," said Seeman. "You need to be here and visit. You'll see this is a friendly place."

History, said Seeman, repeats itself in Vienna. Just as her children walked around town,

from school to Maple Avenue, children today do the same. "Vienna's a safe community," she said.

Seeman is leaving as mayor with no regrets. "I have faith in the people of Vienna. They'll make sure the town is run the right way."

"It's time."

**"It's paid off. We have all these young families moving to Vienna, raising their kids here."**

— Mayor M. Jane Seeman




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# Friends Forever

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Since it had been more than a few months, today I summoned up the courage to Google my long-time friend and fellow stage IV lung cancer survivor, Suzanne. Suzanne and I had been years out of touch (for no real reason other than initiative and the geographic consideration that she lived in Barnstable, Ma. and I live in Burtonsville, Md.) and recently back in touch – due to our identical cancer diagnoses. I learned that she had succumbed to her disease back in October, 2013. We last had contact electronically back in the summer. She was extremely weak then, she said, too weak to talk, so e-mailing was best. In that e-mail, ultimately her last, she wrote that the most recent chemotherapy drug with which she was infused was no longer effective and that her oncologist had no other drugs left to recommend. Not that she said it in so many words, but at that point her prognosis was grim. She offered that her two boys were with her and from them she would gain great comfort. The news was very unsettling to me and I was afraid that this e-mail might be our last – and so it was.

Suzanne and I were never boyfriend/girlfriend, but from Elementary School through High School we were extremely close and confidants of the highest order (“thick as thieves,” to invoke a quote from the warden in the movie, “Shawshank Redemption” describing the close relationship between Tim Robbins – “Andy Dufresne” and “Red,” – Morgan Freeman). Our friendship was forged during those formative, pre-adolescent years and maintained on – and then off – until back on again a year or so ago, for nearly 50 years. The reason I hadn’t inquired sooner than today was because I was fearful of what I would find out. Typically her e-mails were fairly random and on the occasion when I would e-mail her, she would rarely respond in a timely manner. I tried not to worry about this last silent interval. Today my worst fears were realized.

Just as cancer survivors draw great strength from those of us still living with this terrible disease, so too are we weakened when one of us dies. Rather than feeling fortunate that I am still alive, I feel sadness that Suzanne is not. When one of us dies, we all die – a little bit, or at least, our resolve to persevere dies a little bit. I’ve always said that there is strength in our numbers, numbers that we cannot afford to lose. (Lung Cancer causes approximately 160,000 deaths a year, the leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States.)

Certainly Suzanne’s death affects her family way more than it affects me. However, learning that she has died has given me pause to consider/reconsider how serious my health situation is. It’s ironic that Suzanne and I were friends for so many years and that ultimately we should be diagnosed with the same disease and given a similar prognosis. It seems only fitting that since we started together, we should finish together. I imagine I’ll see her soon enough. For the moment however, I hope it will be in my dreams – not that other place.

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

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#### OBITUARY

**William Dixon Robertson, Jr.**

COLUMBIA - William Dixon Robertson, Jr., 87, died Friday, January 17, 2014, following a brief illness. Funeral services will be held eleven o'clock in the morning, Wednesday, January 22, at Washington Street United Methodist Church. Burial will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. The family will receive friends from five until seven Tuesday afternoon, January 21, at Dunbar Funeral Home, Devine Street.

Admiral Robertson was born in Lexington, North Carolina, on August 27, 1926, to the late William D. and Mary Norman Hargrave Robertson. He enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve on December 11, 1943, and under the V-12 Program attended the University of South Carolina at Columbia. He entered the United States Naval Academy on appointment from his native state in 1944. He graduated with the class of 1948 on June 6, 1947, and was commissioned Ensign. His selection for the rank of Rear Admiral was approved by the President on January 30, 1974.

Admiral Robertson was a proud destroyer officer. He served in USS VESOLE (DDR-878); USS MULLANEY (DD-528); and USS WEEKS (DD-701). He was Executive Officer under Elmo "Bud" Zumwalt's command of USS DEWEY (DLG-14). He attended the Naval Postgraduate School in Washington, DC, in Intelligence and Russian Language; and served as Assistant Naval Attaché at the American Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia; operations officer to Destroyer Squadron THIRTY; instructor for the Naval ROTC Unit at the University of South Carolina; Head of Maritime Intelligence Branch, Office of Naval Intelligence; and Head of the Strategic Warfare Group, Systems Analysis Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OP-96). He was commanding officer of USS WATTS (DD-567); USS RAMSEY (DEG-2); and USS WAINWRIGHT (DLG-28). From August 1974 until his retirement in June 1979, he served as deputy, then Vice Director, Defense Intelligence Agency.

Admiral Robertson attended the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and received a Master of Science in Administration from the George Washington University, Washington, DC. He was awarded the Bronze Star medal with Combat "V" for "meritorious service during combat operations against the enemy" during the Viet Nam War; the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal; Meritorious Service Medal, and Joint Service Commendation Medal. He also wore the American Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; Vietnam Service Medal with bronze star; and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device.

Admiral Robertson was active in his church and with his children's activities wherever his family was stationed. Upon returning to Columbia, he immediately became involved with Washington Street United Methodist Church. He served as Chair of the church's Foundation and he and his wife worked with Meals on Wheels. He was a member of the Columbia chapter of the US Naval Academy Alumni Association; the Saint Andrews Society of the City of Columbia; Forest Lake Club; the Quadrille Club; and a former member of the Caprician Club.

Admiral Robertson is survived by his wife of 61 years, Frances Tuttle "Tut" Robertson, of Columbia; son, William Dixon Robertson III (Allison), of Columbia; daughter, Frances Robertson Butler (Barre), of Charleston; sister, Sassy Shull, of Columbia; grandchildren, Frances Lee Butler Bressan (John) of Charleston; William Barre McLeod Butler of Columbia; and Allison Bethea Robertson of Columbia; three wonderful nieces; and a grand-niece and many grand-nephews and cousins whom he cherished.

Memorials may be made to Washington Street United Methodist Church Foundation, Wounded Warrior Project, or a charity of your choice.

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**Great Falls Writer's Group.** 12-1:30 p.m. Great Falls Public Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Writers of all experience and skill level are invited to discuss the joys/challenges of writing, and to hear authors read from their work. No registration necessary. No charge.

### FRIDAY/JAN. 24

**Messages of Hope.** 7:30-9:30 p.m. Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. This documentary is based on medium and spiritual author Suzanne Giesemann's story; participants can ask questions about the afterlife, hear the rest of the story, and get books signed following the discussion. \$10. [www.unityoffairfax.org](http://www.unityoffairfax.org) or 703-281-1767.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 25

**Making the Connection.** 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Medium and spiritual author Suzanne Giesemann will show participants how to open themselves to higher levels of guidance, creativity, inspiration and love. \$35. [www.unityoffairfax.org](http://www.unityoffairfax.org) or 703-281-1767.

**"Heart Gifts."** 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m., Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Medium and spiritual author Suzanne Giesemann will tell the gripping story of a very special soul called "Wolf" and on how to bring peace, balance and greater love into life. \$35. [www.unityoffairfax.org](http://www.unityoffairfax.org) or 703-281-1767.

### SUNDAY/JAN. 26

**Home Seller Seminar:** What Every Seller Needs To Know. Free no obligation community service offered by The Lyons & McGuire Team of Keller Williams Realty. Tips to getting the most money for your home, avoid inspection and appraisal issues, and the market forecast for 2014. 1-4 p.m. at 774-A Walker Rd., Great Falls. RSVP [LyonsMcGuire@TeamGreatFalls.com](mailto:LyonsMcGuire@TeamGreatFalls.com).

### TUESDAY/JAN. 28

**CIVITAN Club of Tysons Meeting.** 12 p.m. Clyde's of Tyson's, 8332 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. The mission of CIVITAN, a non-profit is to build good citizenship by providing a volunteer organization of clubs dedicated to serving individual and community needs with an emphasis on helping people with developmental disabilities. For further information or to attend the meeting email [tysonscivitan@aol.com](mailto:tysonscivitan@aol.com).

### THURSDAY/FEB. 6

**Great Falls Writer's Group.** 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Great Falls Writer's Group, Great Falls Public Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike (large conference room), Great Falls. Writers of all experience and skill levels are invited to listen to a panel of experts discuss the secrets to successful book publishing. Q&A session to follow the expert panel. No registration necessary; no charge.

### THURSDAY/FEB. 20

**Great Falls Writer's Group.** 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Great Falls Writer's Group, Great Falls Public Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike (large conference room), Great Falls. Writers of all levels are invited to discuss the joys/challenges of writing, and to hear authors read from their work. No registration necessary. No charge.

### ONGOING

**Vienna Toastmasters.** 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., at the Vienna Community Center on the 2nd floor room opposite the elevator, 120 Cherry St., S.E., Vienna. A friendly place to get comfortable with public speaking and impromptu speaking for new and experienced speakers. Open to the public.

**Run With the Doctor.** Every other Saturday at 7 a.m. 8230 Boone Blvd, Tysons Corner. The Center for Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine offers its services in a convenient format to runners at this running event. Free. [facebook.com/runwiththedoctor](http://facebook.com/runwiththedoctor).



# Award-Winning Connection Newspapers

More Reasons the Connection Newspapers are the Best-Read Community Papers  
**Winners of Awards in the 2012 Virginia Press Association  
 and Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association Editorial Contests**

## Best in Show, Non-daily Artwork

The top prize when the first place winners of all the design categories for all Virginia Press Association-member, non-daily papers are judged against each other.



**Jean Card**

❖ **Jean Card, Laurence Foong, Craig Sterbutzel, Fairfax**  
 Connection: Informational Graphics  
 • Parks in Fairfax County



**Laurence Foong**

**Win, Place, Show for Alexandria Gazette Packet**

Alexandria Gazette Packet reporters took all three top spots for In-depth or Investigative Reporting in their division.



**Craig Sterbutzel**

**First Place**  
 ❖ **Nicholas Horrock, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** In-depth or investigative reporting



**Nicholas Horrock**

**Second Place**

❖ **Montie Martin, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** In-depth or investigative reporting • Guns From the South



**Montie Martin**

**Third Place**

❖ **Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** In-depth or investigative reporting • Looking Behind the Numbers



**Michael Lee Pope**

## First Place Winners

❖ **Jean Card, Laurence Foong, Craig Sterbutzel, Fairfax**  
 Connection: Informational Graphics • Parks in Fairfax County



**Nikki Cheshire**

❖ **Nikki Cheshire, Great Falls**  
 Connection: Breaking News Photo • Rescue at Great Falls

❖ **Deb Cobb, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Online Slideshow • Daily Patrols Take to the Water



**Deb Cobb**

❖ **Deb Cobb, Reston**  
 Connection: General news photo • Freezin' for a Reason

❖ **Laurence Foong, Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Informational Graphics

❖ **Bonnie Hobbs, Centre View North: Public Safety Writing**



**Bonnie Hobbs**

❖ **Kenneth Lourie, Arlington**



**Kenneth Lourie**

Connection: Column Writing  
 ❖ **Alex McVeigh, Oak Hill/Herndon**  
 Connection: Education Writing  
 • The Human Element of Learning



**Alex McVeigh**

❖ **Michael Lee Pope, Arlington**  
 Connection: Multimedia News Report • Secret Police

❖ **Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Business and Financial Writing  
 ❖ **Michael Lee Pope, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Breaking



**Victoria Ross**

News Writing  
 ❖ **Victoria Ross, Springfield**  
 Connection: In-depth or Investigative Reporting  
 • Immigration

## Second Place Winners

❖ **Jean Card, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Page Design

❖ **Bonnie Hobbs, Fairfax**  
 Connection: Public Safety Writing



**Louise Krafft**

❖ **Louise Krafft, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Picture Story or Essay  
 • Mount Vernon Graduation 2012

❖ **Louise Krafft, Jeanne Theismann, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Combination



**Jeanne Theismann**

Picture and Story • Memorial Day  
 ❖ **Craig Sterbutzel, Burke**  
 Connection: Sports News Photo  
 • Santiago Valdez

❖ **Jeanne Theismann, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Headline Writing

❖ **Jeanne Theismann, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Column Writing



**Steven Mauren**

❖ **Steven Mauren, Geovani Flores, Stuart Moll, Laurence Foong, Jean Card, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Special Sections or Special Editions  
 • Insider's Guide



**Geovani Flores**

## LOCAL MEDIA CONNECTION



**Kemal Kurspahic**

❖ **Kemal Kurspahic, Amna Rehmatulla, Chelsea Bryan, Laurence Foong, Stuart Moll, Geovani Flores, Great Falls**  
 Connection: General Makeup



**Stuart Moll**

**Third Place Winners**

❖ **Laurence Foong, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Page Design  
 ❖ **Laurence Foong, The Fairfax Connection:** Informational Graphics



**Chelsea Bryan**



**Amna Rehmatulla**



**Mary Kimm**

❖ **Mary Kimm, Fairfax**  
 Connection: Editorial Writing  
 ❖ **Louise Krafft, Arlington**  
 Connection: Sports Feature Photo  
 ❖ **Louise Krafft, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Picture Story or Essay • Celebrating the Irish  
 ❖ **Michael Lee Pope, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** Multimedia News Report • Schools in Crisis

❖ **Michael Lee Pope, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Feature Series or Continuing Story • Horses and Graves Versus Road Widening  
 ❖ **Michael Lee Pope, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Health, Science and Environmental Writing

❖ **Jon Roetman, Arlington**  
 Connection: Sports Writing  
 ❖ **Steven Mauren, Jean Card, Geovani Flores, Laurence Foong, Stuart Moll, Alexandria Gazette Packet:** General Makeup



**Jon Roetman**

❖ **Steven Mauren, Geovani Flores, Stuart Moll, Laurence Foong, Jean Card, Mount Vernon Gazette:** Special Sections or Special Editions  
 • Children's Edition

## MDDC

The Potomac Almanac, a Connection Newspaper located in Potomac, MD, competes in the Maryland-Delaware-DC Press Association, and won at least six press association awards, which will be formally announced on May 17 at the MDDC Press awards luncheon. **Susan Belford, John Byrd, Laurence Foong, Ken Moore (2)** and Staff were named as winners.

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

**Winner of the 2012 Virginia Press Association Award  
 for Journalistic Integrity and Community Service**  
**Great People • Great Papers • Great Readers**