

Sign of a Dove: This image was taken on the Fourth of July from behind the Christ the King Lutheran Church on Georgetown Pike. Reverend Paul Gysan, the former Pastor of the church gave photographer Walt Lawrence some good advice on where to set up his camera to photograph the fireworks and capture the church bell tower in the foreground. Lawrence was particularly struck by the symbolism in this image as the rocket seems to have been fired from the bell tower and the resulting burst has the appearance of a white bird in its center, hence the title, "Sign of a Dove." This is one of the images in Lawrence's "Great Falls in the Evening" exhibit at Katie's Coffee.

'Great Falls in the Evening' at Katie's Coffee

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Rugby Fundraiser Held in Great Falls

COMMUNITY, PAGE 10

The Great Falls Farmers Market - Back to Our Roots

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PHOTO BY WALT LAWRENCE

AOG Wealth Management • Keller Williams Realty, Great Falls/Mclean • Katie's Coffee House

Celebration of Lights

Saturday, December 6 ~ 5:30pm to 8:00pm

Great Falls Village Centre Hill

Join us for our Celebration of Lights! Watch Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Tree. Enjoy the petting zoo, pony rides, fire pit, hot cider, hot chocolate and popcorn. And don't miss the beautiful, live nativity scene.

5:30-Refreshments available

6:00pm ~ Santa & Mrs. Claus arrive to light the Christmas Tree

6:15pm ~ Petting Zoo and Pony Rides begin

6:15pm ~ Village Green Day School

6:35pm ~ Great Falls Elementary Chorus

6:55pm ~ Forestville Elementary Chorus

7:15pm ~ Sing-a-Long (please join us!)

7:30pm ~ Live Nativity Scene

All activities are FREE to the public.



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What are the needs and priorities of the homeless in Fairfax County this winter?

Jolie Smith, director of development, Shelter House:

"Housing. Affordable housing. We always need hygiene products. One thing people don't realize is that with food stamps you can't buy any hygiene products. So, we always ask people to give shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrush. Gift cards. A gift card from CVS can help people buy medications they may need. Gift cards are always in need. Think about what you need and those are the needs of our families."



Joe Meyer, executive director, Shelter House:

"This is a community that really cares about the issue that we have—homelessness and domestic violence. For a community to come together is one of the biggest things that I want to see this winter."



Scott Covino, board member, Shelter House, and daughter Lauren, 10, of Leesburg:

"It's getting the folks who need the help, help. It's usually trying to identify folks and make sure that they are in the system, that they're being recognized and make sure that they are not just out there on their own. And communicating that there are places they can go and things that they can do to help themselves. And we can help them do that."

Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D-Va):

"We need to make sure that this winter, which is expected to be a very tough winter, that we have the shelter for folks to make sure they can [have] shelter, they can have food, they can have healthcare. We need to do our part to provide for those individuals who need help today."



Brian Ricks, director, Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter:

"The biggest issue is affordable housing in Fairfax County. We are a rapid re-housing program. However, though, rents are really high in Fairfax and we have a lot of families that are low-income that may need additional support in housing. The biggest need is fair market housing in Fairfax."



— ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO

Gov. Terry McAuliffe carves the turkey served to families at Shelter House on Thursday, Nov. 27, in Fairfax.



PHOTOS BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO/THE CONNECTION

Homelessness, A Year-Round Issue

Gov. McAuliffe serves Thanksgiving lunch at Shelter House.

BY ABIGAIL CONSTANTINO
THE CONNECTION

"Do you like the stuffing? I made it," said Gov. Terry McAuliffe on Thanksgiving, as he mingled with guests of Shelter House. Earlier, the governor donned a hairnet and served lunch to invited clients and residents at the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter in Fairfax.

"Fairfax County does an excellent job in providing for those who need shelter, who need food," said McAuliffe. "I was so honored to come out here with my family to show our support and give back a little bit." Though he said we all have something to be thankful for, there are those who are really in need.

Mo, his wife, and their two children arrived at the family shelter the night before. He was working two full time jobs when he got hurt at work. He lost one job and started falling behind on his bills. "It was just me providing for my family and I couldn't do it anymore," he said. He has been in the U.S. for 15 years, emigrating from West Africa. "I've never been in the shelter. Most of the time people talk about the shelter, and it's, like, you know, you are somebody who doesn't want to work. And, I'm not like that."

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT Jolie Smith said Mo's situation is very common. "Really, all they need is a hand up not a handout." With the help they receive, she has witnessed people bounce back. "A couple of month's rent, a secu-

rity deposit and they're off and running," she said.

But there are those whose needs require more than financial help. "Thanksgiving, you're supposed to be with your friends but right now, I cannot be with my family and friends," said "Lee" (name changed for security). Lee fled from domestic violence and her husband does not know where she is staying. "He kind of knows I'm in a shelter. He knows I have no friends, no relatives. He pushed me out. Where am I supposed to go?"

Lee never called the police because her husband was the only one working in the family. "Since I got married, I kind of lost myself. I used to be very confident...go to work. But I have been a housewife for eight

years. I don't know what I can do." Lee left her children with her husband, while she regains her independence and learns to be self-sufficient. "I want to get custody of them. I want to fight for them," she said.

McAuliffe visited the tables of the families he served and took photographs with them. Jennifer Erazo posed with him and nervously forgot to ask her question about housing for people with disabilities. "There's a lot of housing for low funds, domestic violence. There should be more for people with mental disabilities," she said. She is dealing with mental health issues and domestic violence.

LAST SEPTEMBER, McAuliffe announced his measure to expand healthcare services to over 200,000 Virginians. Through a series of executive actions, the plan includes care and coverage for people with mental illness. The plan was a reduction from a more ambitious one that was thwarted by the General Assembly when it shot down the expansion of Medicaid in the commonwealth. He said that about \$26 billion of Virginia taxpayer money has gone to Washington, D.C. and the commonwealth has a right to bring that money back. "It's unconscionable that we're not doing that," he said.

About 26.2 percent of sheltered homeless persons have a severe mental illness, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. But although mental illness may contribute to homelessness, the lack of low-income housing is the predominant cause of homelessness, according to a 1994 study by Shinn and Gillespie published in American Behavioral Scientist.

November is homelessness awareness month. Shelter House executive director Joe Meyer said that homelessness is not just a holiday or a seasonal issue. "It's a year-round issue that we need to address."



A father and son pray before eating their Thanksgiving meal, served at the Katherine K. Hanley Family Shelter by Gov. Terry McAuliffe on Thursday, Nov. 27, in Fairfax.



Colvin Run Mill has always been a favorite subject for photographers and painters alike. "On an evening in June I started to set up my camera when the water wheel began to move and it kept going faster and faster until it was almost a complete blur like an airplane propeller. After a few minutes at this high speed the wheel began to slow and eventually stopped so I could capture this image using a 25-second exposure. To this day I have no idea why the wheel would ever spin so fast," Lawrence writes.

'Great Falls in the Evening' at Katie's Coffee

PHOTOS BY WALT LAWRENCE

Great Falls photographer, Walt Lawrence, opens a new exhibit at Katie's Coffee.

The exhibit entitled "Great Falls in the Evening" opened on Dec. 1 and runs through the month of December. The show is part of the longstanding program where Mike Kearney, proprietor of The Old Brogue and Katie's Coffee, features the work of a different local Great Falls Studios' artist each month.

"It's no secret that I have been photographing the river, landmarks, landscapes and wildlife of the Great Falls area for the past 10 years. Earlier this year I began to examine my collection of images and quickly came to the conclusion that I really

had a number of different mini or sub collections. One of these mini collections included a number of images that had been taken in the evening in all seasons of the year. I assembled a set of nine for this exhibit which includes a number of well-known landmarks, both past and present, and even a couple of Potomac River waterscapes which are very unusual. All of the images have been printed on canvas and are available in a variety of sizes. Since all of these were taken in the evening I obviously had to use a tripod and some very slow shutter speeds," said Lawrence.

The author shares and discusses some of the images featured in the exhibit with the Great Falls Connection readers.



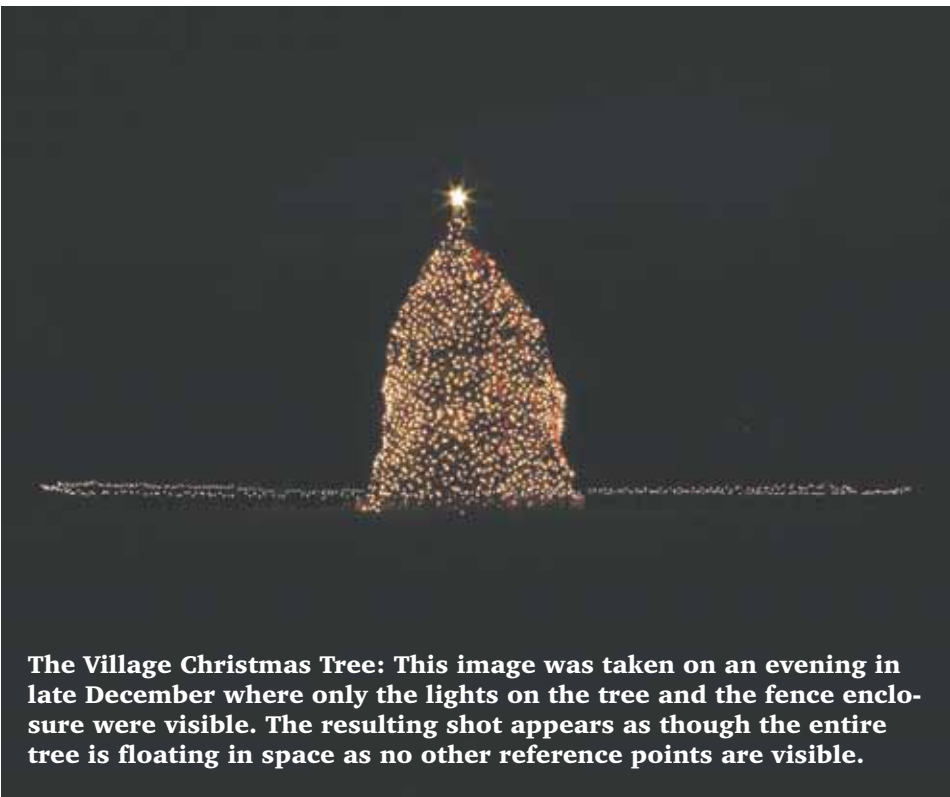
"Thelma's Store, both inside and out, was also a great subject for my camera. Nearly every kid in Great Falls was raised on Thelma's ice cream. This image was taken on a September evening just after the sun had set. I always found it difficult to get decent shots of the place because there was so much stuff scattered around outside, as well as inside the store. I feel that a night-time shot helps to eliminate some of the clutter and create a bit more mystery to the place," Lawrence said.



"Great Falls in the Moonlight: This shot of the falls in Great Falls Park was taken on a cold December evening with the moon rising over my right shoulder. The image almost appears as though it was taken in daylight thanks to a 25 second shutter speed. The effect of the extended shutter speed is also evident in the extremely smooth water surface," Lawrence said.



"Moonrise at the Seneca Breaks: This image was taken with a shutter speed of 32 seconds just as the sun had set and the moon was rising through the trees on the Maryland shoreline. I had set up my camera on the Virginia shoreline just next to an area of the Potomac called the Seneca Breaks. This image speaks to me on so many different levels because it could be a site on almost any large river across America. The small white building on the right side of the photograph gives me a feeling of a former period of time when someone might have actually lived in a place like this. I also have to ask myself if Henry David Thoreau had been a resident of northern Virginia instead of Massachusetts might he have selected this site for his cabin instead of Walden Pond," Lawrence said.



The Village Christmas Tree: This image was taken on an evening in late December where only the lights on the tree and the fence enclosure were visible. The resulting shot appears as though the entire tree is floating in space as no other reference points are visible.

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Fairfax County Facing More Budget Strain

County Executive and FCPS Superintendent present adverse forecasts.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Days before the traditional loosening of belts for Thanksgiving, Fairfax County officials discussed the need for tightening theirs.

The Board of Supervisors and Fairfax County School Board met jointly Nov. 25 to talk about budget forecasts, prior to Governor Terry McAuliffe's (D) state budget proposal expected in mid-December.

County Executive Ed Long delivered the grim estimate of a just over \$100 million shortfall for fiscal year 2016. That's versus the estimate in the FY2015 adopted budget of around \$37 million.

Long cited lingering effects of the recession, including slow job growth, at 0.4 percent in Northern Virginia versus 2.4 percent before the downturn, as well as 10.8 percent drop year-to-date in



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Karen Garza speaks Nov. 25 at a joint meeting of the FCPS School Board and Board of Supervisors.

home sales. Federal procurement spending has been trending down, and Long is expecting a 3-4 percent decline for FY 2014.

Residential and non-residential real estate values have also been decreasing, 3.3 percent since 2008 and 5.2 percent since 2009, re-

spectively, accounting for tens of millions of dollars of lost revenue for the county.

Even with a projected \$84 million in new funds from revenues, it doesn't cover the expected increases in disbursements of about \$185 million over the previous year. Those include county employee pay increases and benefits, public safety and human services, and for schools a 3 percent operating increase, capital support, debt service and Full-Day Mondays support.

"There are a lot of challenges going forward to the spring," Long said. "Uncertainty remains in the economy, we don't know what's going to happen with the Sequester."

Since FY2009, the county has cut around \$269 million by cutting positions and programs, but it just isn't keeping up.

"Looking back, there's nothing easy left to cut," said Long. "We're down to the meat of county programs. Cuts are going to be hard, there's no two ways about it."

Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova commented that additional county reserve funds

shouldn't be looked to as a resource to cover the shortfall.

"Our reserves are too low for comfort," Bulova said, "and compared to other jurisdictions, we're dangerously low."

FCPS Superintendent Karen Garza followed Long to further explain the challenges facing the vast school system regarded as one of the top in the country.

"Sometimes our challenges get masked by looking at the overall percentage of our size," said Garza. "Forty-nine schools have 50 percent free or reduced lunch or higher. There are some parts of our county where that population and the needs of our students are certainly growing."

Garza referenced growths of 2-3,000 students in the system over the last several years, as well as jumps in the percentage of students who take English for Speakers of Other Languages and or are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Total enrollment is now over 186,000 students.

"The real cost of growth exceeds \$190 million," Garza said. "And of

SEE BUDGET, PAGE 7




Dr. Allen S. Garai

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- Diplomate, American Board of Orthodontics (Board Certified)
- Premier Preferred Invisalign Provider 2012, 2013 and 2014
- Attending Faculty— Orthodontic Department Children's/Washington Hospital

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Area Students to be Featured in Sleepless in America

Students from Langley High School and Oakton High School, Superintendent Karen K. Garza, and Fairfax County School Board member Sandy Evans will be featured in *Sleepless in America*, a television show on sleep deprivation produced by the National Geographic Channel, premiering Sunday, Nov. 30, at 8 p.m.

The show focuses on the sleep-loss epidemic in the U.S. and explores the health consequences of sleeping too little. Citing the clear health benefits for adolescents, the Fairfax County School Board recently approved a recommendation to start high schools later, between 8 and 8:10 a.m. This change,

which will begin in the 2015-16 school year, will benefit more than 57,000 high school students representing more than 30 percent of Fairfax County Public Schools' (FCPS) student population.

In August, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a policy statement that recommended later start times so that school schedules would be aligned with the biological sleep rhythms of adolescents. Other research indicates sleep-deprived students have shortened attention spans, slower reaction time, lower test scores, poorer grades, increased rates of depression, and higher risk of car crashes.

Fairfax County Facing More Budget Strain

FROM PAGE 6

the cuts over the last six years, one-quarter were just the last year. There are 2,175 fewer people, but at the same time we grew by 20,000 students. That's significant for our system."

Echoing Long, Garza said the cuts are not allowing schools in the county to keep up with needs and in particular for schools, the needs of teachers.

"We're very concerned with competitive compensation," said Garza. "Our bread and butter is the quality of teachers in classrooms, employed throughout our school system. We're losing our competitive edge and I'm very con-

cerned with where we stack up compared to our surrounding jurisdictions."

She showed starting teachers' salaries hovering around the middle of surrounding jurisdictions, above only Loudoun and Manassas Park City for 10 years experience and a master's degree, and just above Prince George's Maryland for maximum salary.

Even with \$53.1 million in a transfer from the county, Garza is still projecting a \$63.9 million deficit for FY2016, something she and the supervisors agree should garner some attention from the state.

"We recognize and believe the state has to do something more to help us," said Garza.

Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay weighed in as well. "We're funding 70.6 percent of the FCPS budget, which is significantly higher than almost everywhere else in the state," he said. "If we received adequate funding from the state, we wouldn't be having this conversation. It's a huge emphasis moving forward. If we're not looking at the long-term, these issues will continue to compound."

Garza and Long will spend the next few months finalizing their budget plans. Garza's proposal for FY2016 should be released Jan. 8, 2015 and Long's plan for FY2016-2017 should come up at the Feb. 17, 2015 Board of Supervisors meeting.

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OPINION

Be Part of Children's Connection 2014

Annual edition showcases youth art and writing.

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome student's original ideas. Here are some suggestions:

❖ Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite ac-

tivity. These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or larger art projects are also welcome.

❖ Short answers (50 to 100 words) to some of the following questions: If you could give your parents any gift that didn't cost money what would that gift be? What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming year? What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What is your favorite toy? What makes a good parent? What makes a good friend? What is the best or worst thing that ever happened to you? What is the best gift you've ever given? Ever received?

❖ Your opinion (50 to 100 words) about news, traffic, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, politics, etc.

- ❖ Poetry or other creative writing.
- ❖ News stories from school newspapers.
- ❖ Photos and text about activities or events.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Email submissions for the Children's Connection to editors@connectionnewspapers.com. To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail to Children's Connection, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Please send all submissions by Dec. 10. The Children's Connection will publish the week of Dec. 27, 2014.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Help! I've Lost Everything!

BY ANN EMMONS PETRI

You may think McLean is a nice, quiet place to live, but you are wrong. In our living room at this very minute lurks an almost invisible menace. It is small and innocent looking but in reality it is the scourge of our lives. Very simply put, it is our laptop computer. It is not what it seems to be. With a mind of its own, it waits patiently for the ideal time to strike.

"Help! I've lost everything!" is Bill's usual panicked response when things go terribly wrong while he's in the process of creating an important document or trying to compose a crucial email. Of course, you know without asking,

that he is expecting me to perform miracles! The trouble is, however, I am not the authority he thinks I am. The sad truth is that I am usually teetering just one tiny branch higher on the Tree of Knowledge. The only sure way I know to fix anything is to turn everything off and start from scratch.

Sometimes this works. But sometimes it doesn't and then we are left with only two options: the first is our trusty son-in-law Dan who is a computer genius and good at explaining things via email or on the phone, and the second is a call to our grandson Brian and his wife Ashley who live nearby and can be counted on to come over and sort it all out.

The trouble with either of these

arrangements is that our temperamental computer acts up fairly regularly and we hate to keep interrupting their busy schedules. And sometimes all three are away on business trips or vacations at the same time. And the worst part is, when we have to appeal to them for help it makes us feel like the two bumbling old fogies we are. Usually it only takes them a minute to explain in a few steps what had seemed like the riddle of the Sphinx to us.

So now, we have developed a totally new strategy. It is incredibly simple. We kowtow to, and humor the all-powerful beast. Whatever it wishes: that is our command. We are no longer masters of our own universe, but who cares?



PHOTO BY BRIAN HENSKÉ

Bill at the computer: With a mind of its own, it waits patiently for the ideal time to strike.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A New Kind of Candidate

To the Editor:

Craig Parisot is a new kind of candidate running to succeed Barbara Comstock in the upcoming special election for the 34th Virginia House of Delegates District.

Not only is the Parisot campaign's organization top rate, but his fresh approach to policy is making this election truly exciting. For example, Craig wants to focus on STEAM education, adding in the extra "A" dimension of arts. The arts have been left out for far too long in our schools, and it is refreshing to see a candidate want to put a focus on this in the Virginia state legislature.

Craig is also incredibly involved in our community as President of Volunteer Fairfax, an organization that partners nonprofits with individual volunteers in our county. One of the big projects Volunteer Fairfax is spearheading is organizing the World Police and Fire Games for the summer of 2015. The games are projected to bring \$60-80 million dollars to Fairfax County, and would have a tremendous economic benefit to our 34th District.

Mr. Parisot has a long history of service, having served as a Captain in the U.S. Air Force. He also has a professional background as a small business owner, which helps

him understand how to bring jobs and boost the economy in our area.

Craig's experiences are most relevant to Northern Virginia's future. He has innovative ideas, and a genuine, unassuming demeanor, which makes him a receptive listener and a well-qualified candidate for public office. Craig Parisot is the right choice for the 34th House of Delegates District. It behooves each of us to learn more about his unique campaign before the special election on January 6th at <http://www.craigparisot.com/>.

Priseilla Griffith
McLean

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue.

The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

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WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

Great Falls Celebration of Lights on Saturday

The 24th Annual Celebration of Lights will be held on Saturday, Dec. 6, 5:30-8 p.m. at the Great Falls Village Centre Hill (behind the Post Office). The schedule of events includes:

- ❖ 5:30 p.m. - Refreshments available (cocoa, hot cider, popcorn and new this year, Mike & Glenn's table).
- ❖ 6 p.m. - Santa & Mrs. Claus arrive to light the Christmas Tree.
- ❖ 6:15 p.m. - Village Green Day School sings, Petting Zoo and Pony rides begin.
- ❖ 6:35 p.m. - Great Falls Elementary Chorus.
- ❖ 6:55 p.m. - Forestville Elementary Chorus.
- ❖ 7:15 p.m. - Sing-a-Long: Singing some old-time favorites.
- ❖ 7:30 p.m. - Live Nativity Scene.

There is another free event for the Great Falls community: For adults - the Great Falls Shopping Center is hosting a Holiday Open House from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. offering area residents an opportunity to shop local in a calm, relaxing Christmas shopping atmosphere.

John Kelly to Speak in Great Falls

Washington Post columnist John Kelly will be the featured guest at the Great Falls Speaker's Series (GFSS) monthly gathering on Thursday, Dec. 4, at 7:30 p.m., at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike. (A brief reception will begin at 7 p.m.) Kelly will be on hand to discuss a variety of wide-ranging topics, from the challenges of writing a fast-paced, entertaining newspaper column to the dynamic process of how he searches for material by observing the smallest details of daily Kelly, a graduate of University of Maryland, has studied as a Nieman Fellow at Harvard University and as a senior visiting Fellow at Oxford University. The event is free and open to the public.

Seating is first-come, first-serve. Reservations will not be taken. Because a capacity crowd is expected, early arrival is recommended. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. RFor further information, contact the Great Falls Library at 703-757-8560.

Great Falls Historical Society to Host Holiday Open House

The Great Falls Historical Society is hosting a Holiday Open House on Thursday, Dec. 11, at 6 to 8:30 p.m. at the historic Old Forestville Schoolhouse at 9812 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The festive event will kick off a community-wide membership drive by the Society and is open to all residents of Great Falls. Families and children of all ages are welcome.

Come enjoy the holiday music, hor d'oeuvres and desserts made by some of the finest cooks in the community. A selection of historical displays will be on view, and Kathleen Murphy, president of GFHS and the GFHS board members will be in attendance to answer any questions about the Historical Society and its mission and projects. For almost 40 years, GFHS has been dedicated to preserving the history of Great Falls and informing the residents of the community of its unique past and traditions. The society presents monthly programs for its members and the public on a historical aspect of Great Falls and the surrounding area, it hosts the annual Great Falls Day celebrating history, family and community, and it continues to gather local historical artifacts, photos, oral histories, research and published works through its historical archive.

The GFHS welcomes you to stop by, celebrate the season, and learn a bit more about the historic community, while reveling in the wonderful music, delicious food, and warm fellowship with your neighbors. Contact Betty Swartz (703-759-2378) Hospitality Chair or Jan Schar (703-759-3940) Membership Chair for more information.

Santa Picture Day

Saturday December 6, 2014
8AM to 2PM



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UPPERVILLE - Brick colonial on 50+ gorgeous acres in Greystone. 9000+ sq.ft. of spectacular living space, 3 finished levels, heated pool, tennis court & brilliant gardens overlook picturesque pond w/ fabulous mtn views. Private & secluded.
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MIDDLEBURG - Beautiful stone home on 40+ acres just minutes from the town of Middleburg. Goose creek runs through the property. 4 bdrm 5 bath house is perfect for entertaining. Exquisite 8-stall stone horse barn with tack room. Additional guest house and lot available.
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STONEBROOK FARM - c.1750 house w/ Stone Addition c. 1793 & recent total renovation w/ all of the charm of period home coupled w/ modern amenities. 3 additional guest houses, fantastic horse facilities, riding arena, 8+ stall barn/living space.
 Peter Pejacsevich 540.270.3835  Scott Buzzelli 540.454.1399 



LO8371530 **\$1,899,000**

Spring Grove - 1820 stone home on 46 acres (2 lots). House features beautiful moldings, 6 FP, HW floors, formal living & dining room, 4 bdrm, 4.5 baths. Bank Barn, 3 ponds, pool & pool house, apt over 3 bay garage. Private location.
 Jane Hensley 571-550-2728 



LO8175796 **\$1,765,000**

ROBIN CIRCLE, LEESBURG - Stone, brick and cedar estate on 3.54 acres. Heated indoor pool, a sports pub, racquetball court w/ hoop, audio/video system, roof top pavilion. 2, 2-Car garages & caretaker apartment.
 Peter Pejacsevich 540.270.3835  Scott Buzzelli 540.454.1399 



LO8412399 **\$1,495,000**

PURCELLVILLE - Antique brick & stone home on 6.5 beautiful acres w/ mtn views. 7 fireplaces & solid cherry floors. 5 bdrms, 3 1/2 baths. Carriage house wing has two bedrooms/ large living area/kitchen area.
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FQ8482311 **\$675,000**

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 Ted Zimmerman 540-905-5874 



FQ8415944 **\$425,000**

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Gary Coetzee and the U9 Great Falls rugby team.



U17 Gonzaga Rugby

PHOTOS BY TERRANCE MORAN/THE CONNECTION



Gary Coetzee

Rugby Fundraiser Held in Great Falls

Gary Coetzee gives back by supporting spinal cord injury research and recovery.

Twelve months ago Gary Coetzee dove head first into a rugby pile and fractured his neck. Luckily a surgeon was on the pitch and was able to stabilize him. The fracture caused him to lose his ability to use his arms and legs.

After surgery Coetzee was accepted to the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, Ga., a nationally ranked rehabilitation hospital for spinal cord injuries. Coetzee suffered a major bruise to his spinal cord and had to relearn how to walk and use his body. His wife Theresa would visit every other week. His

two children were worried that their dad may never walk or play with them.

It took three months but Coetzee was able to regain the use of his legs and arms. His children saw him first stand, yet there was a lot of work to do to become independent.

Over the next nine months Coetzee worked daily to strengthen his body with rehabilitation and gym sessions. After 12 months of hard work and support from friends and family Coetzee decided to establish the annual fund raising rugby tournament in support of spinal cord injury research and recovery. The 2014 beneficiary is MedStar National Rehab Hospital.

Rugby teams from Gonzaga, Vienna, and Great Falls participated on Nov. 22 with age groups from U11 to U17. The entrance fee for each team was \$100 with 100 percent of the fees going to MedStar National Rehab Hospital.

On a brisk Saturday a field behind the Great Falls Library was set up to allow both small sided and large field matches in 7 V 7 format. Each match lasted seven minutes. Parents, coaches and players lined the field encouraging play and watching the nationally ranked Gonzaga rugby team display their skills in hard fought, fast action play.

— TERRANCE MORAN



U 13 Boys Tag Rugby



Gary Coetzee doing leg rehab exercises.

COMMUNITY

Great Falls Studios to Host Holiday Art Show and Sale

Show and Sale Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 13-14 at the Center for Education at Wolf Trap.

Holiday shoppers, fine art collectors, Secret Santas and even good Saint Nick, don't miss "Art meets Architecture", Great Falls Studios' Annual Holiday Art Show and Sale on Saturday, Dec. 13 and Sunday, Dec. 14, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. both days, at The Center for Education at Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Sponsored by Sun Design, the weekend will feature 36 GFS member artists - original paintings, photography, wall hangings and jewelry, high quality prints, pots and dinnerware, purses, pillows and scarves, walking sticks, sculpture, art cards and books. Something quite unique for individual collections or a perfect gift for the special friend, teacher or family. Great Falls Studios artists are your neighbors and friends creating in home and group studios tucked throughout our scenic and artful village. Each artist enjoys telling the story of their creativity. Visitors are encouraged to engage in the, often lively, conversations. Not everyone will make a purchase, but all will leave with a story. Learn more at www.GreatFallsStudios.com and www.sundesigninc.com/ Family friendly, fun and free.



"Mulled Wine," watercolor by Linda Jones.

Established in 2003, Great Falls Studios is a consortium of more than 100 artists living or working in Great Falls - a unique and diverse group of painters, potters, jewelry makers, sculptors, fiber artists, photographers and others representing a variety of media, creating in unique studio spaces,

scattered throughout the back roads of scenic Great Falls. Three of these spaces are group studios. The purpose of GFS is to support the artistic endeavors and objectives of members and to make the Village of Great Falls a more artful place.

Great Falls Studios manages exhibit ven-



"The Wreath," oil painting by Begona Morton.

ues in the community. The public is invited to enjoy solo member shows at Katie's @ the Old Brogue Irish Pub/760 Walker Rd., Great Falls and the art of local elementary school students at Starbucks @ Great Falls Center/9862 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Member art is often on display in the Large Meeting Room or the Small Conference Room at the Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The Virtual Gallery on the Great Falls Studios website hosts a monthly themed exhibit of member work is as close as the click of the mouse.

Visit www.GreatFallsStudios.com for more information including additional special events and exhibits.



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R.S.V.P. by contacting Baird Corporate Events at 888-331-1907. If you are unable to join us in person, we encourage you to sign up for a recorded version of the seminar.

Admission is \$45 for clients, \$65 for non-clients. All proceeds to go to Hopecam, a nonprofit connecting hospitalized and homebound children undergoing treatment for cancer with loved ones and support networks.



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CALENDAR

Send announcements to north@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

THROUGH SUNDAY/JAN. 4, 2015

Meadowlark's Winter Walk of Lights. 5:30 p.m. Meadowlark Botanical Garden, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. A winter wonderland, including a flowing stream of softly glowing lights, a two story animated fountain and a Gingerbread Village. Admission: \$13 adults, \$8 children ages 3-12; children under 3 are free.

THROUGH WEDNESDAY/DEC. 24

Santa HQ at Tysons Corner Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons Corner. Visit Santa's Magical Workshop & Observatory, presented by HGTV - for photos and family activities, located in Fashion Court on level one between Nordstrom and Bloomingdale's - beginning November 14th. Reserve your space online to see Santa. Ongoing event.

THURSDAY/DEC. 4

35th Annual Tiny Tots Holiday Concert 2014. 10 a.m. & 7 p.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. The James Madison High School Wind Symphony and Color Guard present an exciting concert celebrating the spectrum of seasonal music. Purchase tickets at: <http://james-madison-band.ticketleap.com/tiny-tots>

Civil Twilight with Special Guest Baby Bee. 8 p.m. The Barns Wolftrap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Stirring alt-rock with impassioned vocals and atmospheric melodies. \$22. 703-255-



Langley High School's choirs, including the Madrigals and the Women's Chamber Choir, will present Renaissance-style dining and musical event on Dec. 5-6 at Capital Church, 10233 Leesburg Pike, Vienna.

1900. <http://www.wolftrap.org/Barns.aspx>.

48th Annual McLean Holiday Homes Tour. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tour starts at 1173 Ballantrae Lane. Showcases four distinctive homes in central McLean. \$25 in advance, \$30 on tour day. Sponsored by Woman's Club of McLean. Tickets at Mesmeralda's, McLean; Karin's Florist, Vienna; Great Dogs of McLean; tour houses. Benefits local charities. No children. 703-556-0197 or www.mcleanwc.org.

MarketPlace Fair and Fundraiser. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. United Methodist Church, 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean. Free admission and parking. Numerous vendors, handmade and gift items, lunch and Homes Tour tickets for sale, silent auction of high-value products and services, free

buses to Homes Tour. Trinity Sponsored by Woman's Club of McLean. Benefits local charities. 703-556-0197 or www.mcleanwc.org.

FRIDAY/DEC. 5

Ugly Sweater Party. 7-10 p.m. Old Firehouse Teen Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. For 7th-9th graders. \$10/\$5 OFTC member.

35th Annual Tiny Tots Holiday Concert 2014. 10 a.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. The James Madison High School Wind Symphony and Color Guard present an exciting concert celebrating the spectrum of seasonal music. Purchase tickets at: <http://james-madison-band.ticketleap.com/tiny-tots> for

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 5 - 6

Renaissance Feaste. 7 p.m. Capital Church, 10233 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Langley High School's choirs, including the Madrigals and the Women's Chamber Choir, present Renaissance-style dining and musical event. The holiday celebration features costumed servers, jesters, minstrels, and musicians in a festive "Greate Hall" environment. Fashioned after a 16th-century gathering of landed gentry, the event offers entertainment and traditional Madrigal songs such as "Masters of This Hall," "Gloucestershire Wassail," and "Deck the Halls."

Tickets adults \$30; student \$20. For more information on the Langley choirs and tickets for the Renaissance Feaste, visit www.langleychorus.com.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 5 - 7

32nd Annual McLean Holiday Crafts Show. Friday: 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Saturday: 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sunday: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. Admission: Adults, \$3; \$1, ages 13 and under. Good all 3 days.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 5-14

Christmas Market & Winterfest. Friday, 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Saturday & Sunday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Tysons Corner Center Outdoor Plaza, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons Corner. Festival will include 30 vendors selling German holiday goods. Plus, mulled wine, German beer, German fare, hot chocolate and coffee. Enjoy the spectacular Christmas tree, entertainment, beer garden and other festive activities. Ongoing event.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Holiday Sing-A-Long. 4 p.m. Wolf Trap's Filene Center, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. No tickets are required, but patrons are encouraged to bring an unwrapped toy donation for Toys for Tots. For more information, visit wolftrap.org.

Great Falls Celebration of Lights. 5:30 - 8 p.m. Great Falls Village Centre. Watch Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive in an antique fire truck to light the Great Falls Tree. Afterwards, Santa will be in his house to meet all children who wish to share their holiday wishes. For the children, there will be a petting zoo and pony ride that will begin immediately after the tree lighting ceremony. <http://www.celebrategreatfalls.org/Christmas.html>

The Nutcracker Tea. 10 a.m. & 1 p.m. Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Boulevard, McLean. Delight in a contemporary twist on the beloved holiday classic while you enjoy afternoon tea, petite sandwiches and pastries. All children will go home with a nutcracker doll and pictures to remember their day. \$79 per person. Event also takes place on Dec. 13 and 20.

Authentic Darjeeling Teas. 1-3 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. From India's Himalayan foothills, the "Champagne of Teas" has recently been granted Protected Origin Status. Taste and compare the unique qualities from the four seasonal flushes and learn why tea garden location can impact the final flavor of Darjeeling teas. Tea infused treats included. Advance reservations and payment (\$30 per

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

32nd Annual McLean Holiday CRAFTS SHOW
A Juried Arts and Crafts Show Since 1982

Friday-Sunday December 5-7
Friday: 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
Sunday: 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Admission: \$3 adults, \$1 age 13 and younger. Good all three days!

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LOST DOG & CAT RESCUE FOUNDATION

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www.lostdogandcatrescue.org

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 12

person) required through the Mill at 703-759-2771.

Holidays with Santa Paws. 12-2 p.m. Clemyjontri Park, 6317 Georgetown Pike, McLean. The Friends of Clemyjontri, Inc. will join with the Fairfax County Park Authority to ring in the holidays with Santa Paws. There will be holiday-inspired crafts and goodies along with plenty of photo opportunities on the magical grounds of the newly renovated Clemyjontri Park. Bring your Pennies for Clemy and receive a Holiday treat from the Friends. www.friendsofclemy.com.

Breakfast with Santa. 8:30-10:30 a.m. St. Francis Episcopal Church, 9220 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. St. Francis Episcopal Church is hosting a Breakfast with Santa. Each family attending the event is encouraged to donate a new, unwrapped toy for a child up to 12 years old. The toys will be given to children served by the nonprofit organization Transitional Housing Corporation (THC), which provides housing and supportive services to homeless and at-risk families. The event is free and open to the public. The Breakfast with Santa will include a visit and photo with Santa, holiday craft activities, holiday music, breakfast treats, and hot chocolate. The St. Francis youth choir, the Joyful Noyz, will sing Christmas carols. www.stfranciscgreatfalls.org

Holiday Ballroom Dance. 8-9 p.m. Viennese Waltz lesson, 9-11:30 p.m. dance. \$20 for the evening. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Live music from the Dance-tet playing favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. Attire is ballroom casual, everyone is welcome. 703-759-2685 or www.colvinrun.org.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 6-7

Gingerbread House Decorating Class. 10 a.m. & 1 p.m. Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Boulevard, McLean. Learn to make your own sugary home at a Gingerbread House Decorating Class, taught by The Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner's Pastry Team. The class includes all the ingredients to construct a beautiful gingerbread house as well as a special souvenir. \$75 per child, ages 3 to 12, inclusive of tax and gratuity. Event also takes place on Dec. 13, 14, 20 and 21.

SUNDAY/DEC. 7

McLean WinterFest Parade. 3:30 p.m. Old Chain Bridge Road, McLean. Groups interested in participating in the parade should go to www.mcleanwinterfest.org to complete the registration information and submit it to parade officials. Each entrant will receive confirmation of their registration with this year's parade rules. Registrations will be accepted until Nov. 18.

FRIDAY/DEC. 12

Annual Holiday Reception. 4-6 p.m. Vienna Town Hall, 127 Cedar Street S., Vienna. Mayor Laurie DiRocco and the Town Council invite the public to celebrate the holidays at the annual Holiday Reception. Enjoy the sounds of the holiday season with the James Madison High School Madrigals from 4:30 to 5 p.m. and the Vienna Choral Society from 5:30 to 6 p.m. Light refreshments will be provided by the Vienna Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary. No cost and no RSVP required. For more information, contact the Mayor's office at 703-255-6311 or mayor@viennava.gov.

Artists' Atelier Presents Holiday Squares

Holiday Squares, large and small, will fill The Artists' Atelier Gallery the month of December. Join the 14 member artists on Saturday, Dec. 6, 12 - 4 p.m. for a reception and sale to celebrate the holiday season. Members are Carol Howard, Jennifer Duncan, Cindy Grisdela, Elaine Elinsky, Terri Parent, Jill Banks, Walt Lawrence, Chris Rollins, Tracie Weir, Lisa Tureson, Tina Learned, Roberta Beasley, John McCabe and Judith St. Ledger Roty. The Artists' Atelier is located at 1144 Walker Road, Great Falls.



"Male Cardinal in Dogwood," by Walt Lawrence.

The Atelier is open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 12 - 4 p.m. or by appointment, 703-862-0771. The studio will be closed Dec. 21-31.

SATURDAY/DEC. 13

"Frozen" the Movie. 2 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. Come watch this family-friendly movie that all will enjoy. Free.

Santa at the Mill. 3-6 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Enjoy old-fashioned family holiday fun at Colvin Run Mill. Visit Santa in the mill and see the Christmas tree trimmed with Victorian decorations. Join the costumed 49th Virginia Volunteer Infantry caroling around a bonfire. Roast marshmallows and make a family craft. \$5/person.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 13-14

Great Falls Studios Holiday Show and Sale. Wolf Trap Center for Education, 1645 Trap Rd., Vienna. Great Falls Studios presents Great Falls Annual Holiday Art Show and Sale. This annual show includes paintings, pottery, traditional and digital photographs, jewelry, drawings, art quilts, and hand pulled lithographic prints, plus artful gifts and cards. All of the artwork is created by Great Falls artists. Free admission.

Visit from Santa. 1:30-3:30 p.m. Santa Claus will be visiting the Freeman Store. Seated in his special chair next to Historic Vienna's beautifully decorated Christmas tree - courtesy of the Optimist Club and the Ayr Hill Garden Club - he will meet his young visitors and hear their Christmas wishes. Parents (and grandparents) are encouraged to bring their cameras to capture the looks of joy and wonder as the little ones talk to the Man In Red. For information call 703-938-5187 or visit www.historicviennainc.org.

SUNDAY/DEC. 14

Claude Moore Colonial Farm Wassail. 1 - 4 p.m. Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Gather in the Farm's orchard to Wassail! ("wish good health to") the apple trees with singing, dancing, and chants to ensure a "howling crop" next year. Enjoy spiced cider, ginger biscuits, a bonfire and 18th century games. Regular admission fee. 703-442-7557.

Holiday Joy Concert. 3 p.m. McLean Community Theater, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. The program

include Rosauero's "Concerto for Marimba and Orchestra," performed by Rebecca Kite; Rossini/Respighi, "La Boutique Fantasque", Favorite Holiday selections for Orchestra, and the annual carol sing-along, led by the Symphony Festival Singers, Felicia Kessel Crawley. A concert for all ages. Adults: \$25; Seniors: \$20, Youth with student ID: \$15, Children 12 and under: Free. <http://mcleansymphony.org/index.php>

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 31

New Year's Eve in Entyze Wine Bar & Lounge. 9 p.m. to Midnight. The Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Boulevard, McLean. Celebrate the New Year with live musical entertainment provided by The Christopher Linman Jazz Ensemble and culinary delights. As the clock strikes midnight, welcome 2015 with a complimentary champagne toast. \$100 minimum food & beverage purchase per person.

THURSDAY/JAN. 8, 2015

Dobet Gnahoré. 8 p.m. The Barns Wolftrap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Discover delicate ballads and sensuous African grooves from this Grammy-winning vocalist, percussionist, and dancer praised as one of contemporary African music's most charismatic talents. \$25-30. 703-255-1900. <http://www.wolftrap.org/Barns.aspx>.

FRIDAY/JAN. 9, 2015

The Ying Quartet. 8 p.m. The Barns Wolftrap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Ying Quartet occupies a position of unique prominence in the classical music world, combining brilliantly communicative performances with a fearlessly imaginative view of chamber music in today's world. \$35. 703-255-1900. <http://www.wolftrap.org/Barns.aspx>.

THURSDAY/JAN. 15, 2015

Kevin Griffin. 8 p.m. The Barns Wolftrap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. A rare solo show by the frontman and songwriting mastermind of alt-rock band Better Than Ezra, who has written for Train, Sugarland, James Blunt, Howie Day, Missy Higgins, Blondie, and more. \$25-27. 703-255-1900. <http://www.wolftrap.org/Barns.aspx>.

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WELLBEING

Handling Family Dynamics During the Holidays

Local experts offer suggestions on how to diffuse family tensions.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Last month, Linda and Tom Bullen traveled from Boston to Arlington, to celebrate Thanksgiving with their son Matt, daughter Rachel and her partner Grace Knight.

But Rachel Bullen, who spent weeks creating a menu and coordinating a table setting that would please even Martha Stewart, was deflated by one question from her mother.

"Do you think you might be eating too many carbs?" Linda Bullen asked as her daughter scooped up a second helping of potatoes.

"What I eat is none of your business," Rachel Bullen responded. She spent the rest of meal fuming in silence and feeling humiliated in front of her partner and brother.

Family dynamics — and the drama that often ensues — are often unwelcome, but frequent guests at family gatherings during the holiday season. While spending time with family can be a source of comfort, it can also be fraught with anxiety. And the more people and dynamics involved, the more effort it takes to create or maintain harmony.

"During the holidays, people who live far apart and are not part of one another's daily lives often come together," said Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D. "As a result ... people cover lot of territory, catching up in a short amount of time, instead of gradually as things naturally happen throughout the year. People give opinions without understanding all of the details."

Being aware of the feelings and emotions of others can help minimize family conflicts, however. "Sensitivity allows us to tune in to what others might be feeling at a particular moment or in a particular situation," said Katherine Knapp, Ph.D., a marriage and family therapist based in Burke. "It helps us make wise decisions about things that we might say or decide not to say."

For example, Linda Bullen was concerned about her daughter's weight.

"Rachel recently lost about 25 pounds," she said. "As a teenager she'd been overweight and had self-esteem issues." She thought she was being a supportive and helpful mother.

Knapp says this is where sensitivity can reduce interpersonal tension, particularly during the holidays.

"When family members are sensitive to each other's feelings, they think before they speak about how what they say might affect another person's feelings," she said. "Even innocent comments or questions can damage a relationship when we speak from our own perspective and don't consider what another person might be feeling."

The pressure to create a perfect holiday can exacerbate pre-existing difficulties as well.

"People are often stressed during the holidays, es-

pecially those preparing meals, having out of town guests staying in their homes," said Isenberg. "Guests can be stressed too, as they are staying in someone else's

home, don't have their own space, and are operating according to someone else's agenda. So tensions are already higher, and patience is shorter."

The ability to be flexible and recognize that even the most organized plans can fall apart, will reduce pressure as well, said Pamela Daniels, a licensed clinical social worker and psychotherapist based in Lorton. "Flexibility allows us to roll with the punches," she said. "Rigidity can be a recipe for disaster, especially during the holidays."

FAMILY MEMBERS can help ease tension by expressing their needs up front.

"Some people just have a need to feel appreciated," said Knapp. "Everyone has different needs, but others, including family members won't know those needs unless we tell them."

Rachel Bullen needed her mother to recognize and validate the effort that she'd put into preparing a healthy Thanksgiving dinner and an aesthetically appealing table, and to maintaining a lifestyle that had kept her fit.

"I've always seen my mother as thin, beautiful and the perfect hostess," said Rachel Bullen. "And she can always find something wrong with everything that I do, but she can find no wrong with my brother."

Recognizing that such old patterns and dynamics may be rekindled during big gatherings can help family members navigate difficult relationships.

"Even though there may be months or even years between visits, people's triggers and sensitivities are the same unless they've previously worked through them with their family members and reached an understanding about the best ways for them to interact," said Isenberg. "The judgmental parent or uncle will still be judgmental and the inquisitive grandmother who pushes boundaries will still do so."

Prior to spending time with family, she suggested, it's a good idea to think about the actions, words or situations that ignite tensions and decide how they can be avoided.

"Consider topics to discuss with certain family members and how you will politely steer away from topics you'd rather not discuss," Isenberg explained. "If you anticipate that there will be a topic or way of interacting that is too difficult to be avoided with subtlety, you may want to consider gently approaching it prior to the holidays. For example, tell your parents you don't feel comfortable discussing your relationship with your significant other in front of the extended family and ask them not to mention it during dinner, and provide them with an answer to give when relatives inquire."

Rachel decided to begin seeing a therapist to help strengthen her relationship with her family. "Hopefully Christmas will be less tense," she said. "If not this Christmas, then next."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Stacie Isenberg

WELLBEING

GMU Chosen To Join Healthy Campus Initiative

George Mason was recognized for its commitment to health and wellness.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO BY ALEXIS GLENN

George Mason University's wellness efforts recently earned national recognition for the school.

George Mason University's well-being and wellness programs recently received national recognition when the Fairfax-based university was chosen as the first higher education institution in Virginia to join the Healthy Campus Initiative, an effort to encourage colleges and universities to make their campuses healthier by adopting guidelines around food and nutrition, physical activity and programming.

Last month, the Partnership for a Healthier America unveiled the pilot program at the American Public Health Association's annual conference in New Orleans. (Leaders from The Healthier Campus Initiative praised Mason for its commitment to a health and for agreeing to adopt more guidelines on food and nutrition, physical activity and programming in the next three years.)

"We are proud and challenged to continue this energy toward a Healthier Campus Initiative," said Bill Ehling, executive director of Mason recreation. "I am continually appreciative of the past efforts and results to provide a genuine sense of a healthier community at George Mason University."

Mason officials point to statistics from The American Public Health Association, which show that during the first year in college, students' overweight and obesity rates increase by more than 15 percent. Additionally, most college students do not meet dietary and physical activity guidelines. PHA officials say, at the same time, the college years are a time when lifelong habits begin to form because most students are making their own choices about healthy eating and fitness.

"As a Mason alumni," said Kerry Ross, director of benefits and faculty/staff well-being, "it gives me

"It gives me great pride to see our community coming together in the areas of wellness and well-being."

— Kerry Ross, George Mason University

great pride to see our community coming together in the areas of wellness and well-being. Mason has demonstrated its commitment to these initiatives for years with opportunities like the annual Health and Fitness Expo, Wellness by Mason, the Well-Being Learning Community, and now our strategic goal of becoming a Well-Being University. We are honored ... to take that commitment to a new level as a partner in the Healthier Campus Initiative under the auspices of The Partnership for a Healthier America."

The Partnership for a Healthier America was created in 2010 in conjunction with first lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! Campaign with a goal of developing strategies to end childhood obesity.

"We know that going to college is a time of change for many students. We also know that means it's a time when new habits are formed. By creating healthier food and physical activity environments today, campuses and universities are encouraging healthier habits that will carry over into tomorrow," said the partnership's CEO Lawrence A. Soler in a statement.

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Langley Boys' Basketball Enters 2014-15 with Increased Depth

Saxons have just one senior on the roster.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Second-year Langley boys' basketball coach Scott Newman hopes to build on the success the team experienced near the end of last season, when it finished third in Conference 6 despite a slow start.

Increased size and depth should help the Saxons' cause.

While Langley's roster includes just one senior, Newman said this year's team has the talent to allow him to play 10 or 11 players on a given night rather than the rotation of seven or eight he played last season. Mix in five players listed at 6 feet 3 or taller and Newman is excited for his second year at the helm.

"Our greatest strength is our depth," said Newman, who was a Langley assistant before taking over head-coaching duties last season. "... It's unlike any team I've coached at Langley."

One big reason for Newman's optimism is 6-foot-4 forward Nate Shafer. The junior is a shot-blocking force at the defensive end and can score in the paint.



Aaron Kim, seen last season, is one of five members of the 2014-15 Langley boys' basketball team with varsity experience.

"Nate Shafer is just a tremendous shot-blocker and interior defender," Newman said. "... When we're forced to help [on defense], Nate can [make a difference]. ... Whenever we have a breakdown, having Nate at the back of the defense ... really [helps. He] cleans up a lot of mistakes that we make. ... I would be really surprised if

he was not one of the two or three guys in discussion for Defensive Player of the Year in our league."

Along with Shafer, senior guard Alex Callaghan, junior guard Daniel Salamone, junior forward Chris Miner and sophomore guard Aaron Kim return with varsity experience.

"Our greatest strength is our depth. ... It's unlike any team I've coached at Langley."

— Langley boys' basketball coach
Scott Newman

Callaghan will start at point guard for the Saxons. Salamone and junior guard Tavon Tarpley are two of the Saxons' top perimeter players.

"[Salamone has] really matured and advanced his game," Newman said. "He'll be one of our key perimeter threats. ... [Tarpley is] long, he's athletic, he's quick and he's our best perimeter defender. He's also crafty on offense and gets to the rack."

Six-foot-4 sophomore Sami El-Rafey could see significant time at forward. Six-foot-6 junior John Rau provides Langley with additional size in the paint.

Langley opens the season with a home game against Osborn at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 3. After hosting Herndon on Dec. 5, the Saxons will travel to face rival McLean on Dec. 12.

"The No. 1 thing that I've taken away from my first year going into my second year is I'm trying to be much more level as a coach and more consistent and even-keeled," Newman said. "I'm taking an approach to build their confidence and believe in their abilities."

Oakton Girls' XC Places 4th at Nike SE Regional

Madison harriers compete at Foot Locker South.

The Oakton girls' cross country team, which captured its second straight VHSL 6A state championship on Nov. 15, finished fourth at the Nike Southeast regional meet on Nov. 29 in Cary, N.C.

The Cougars posted a score of 176. Blacksburg (Va.) won the event with a score of 86, followed by Western Cary (N.C., 106) and Lake Braddock (143), which placed runner-up in 6A at the VHSL state meet.

The top two teams and the top five unattached individuals qualified for the national meet on Dec. 6 in Portland, Ore.

Sophomore Casey Kendall led the way for Oakton, finishing 15th with a time of 18:07.7. Sophomore Leya Salis finished 24th for the Cougars with a time of 18:16.7. Senior Allie Klimkiewicz finished 35th (18:30.4), freshman

Kira Buttrey was 80th (19:01.7) and junior Jill Bracaglia finished 97th (19:19.3).

Patriot High School sophomore and VHSL state champion Rachel McArthur won the individual competition with a time of 17:16.

Klimkiewicz (third), Kendall (fourth), Salis (11th) and Buttrey (15th) earned all-state honors at the VHSL state meet.

Members of the Madison girls' cross country team competed at the Foot Locker South regional meet on Nov. 29 in Charlotte, N.C.

Madison sophomore Devon Williams finished 24th with a time of 17:57. Senior Amanda Swaak came in 28th (17:59), junior Morgan Wittrock finished 36th (18:08), senior Laura Sullivan took 93rd (18:48) and junior Catherine Stone finished 136th (19:31).

Ryen Frazier, a senior at Ravenscroft School in Raleigh, N.C., won the event with a time of 16:27.

The Madison Warhawks placed third at the state meet. Williams (eighth), Swaak (10th) and Wittrock (13th) earned all-state honors.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Oakton sophomore Casey Kendall, seen during the VHSL state meet Nov. 15, finished 15th at the Nike Southeast regional meet on Nov. 29 in Cary, N.C.

NEWS

The Great Falls Farmers Market - Back to Our Roots

KATHLEEN MURPHY
MARKET MANAGER



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Great Falls Farmers Market: Winter season opens on Saturday, Dec. 6 at the Old Forestville Schoolhouse at 9812 Georgetown Pike.

As the farmers market closes its seventh summer season and moves indoors for our third winter season, it is good to take note of why we have a local farmers market for our village.

Farmers markets have been growing remarkably across the U.S., with a 70 percent rise in the number of farmers market in just the last two years. As more and more studies confirm the dangers of GMO, pesticides, antibiotics and hormones in our food supply, consumers want to buy from the farmers who grew the crops who can answer questions about how things were grown. Knowing the farmer, you can also influence the choices the farm makes going forward. (ZDF, the German PBS, filmed the Great Falls Farmers Market in October to show what the “back to the roots” movement looks like.)

Our farmers market strives to connect to our shared vision for Great Falls – “Great Falls, Treasuring Heritage, Home and Habitat” – the tagline for our village, developed as part of the Great Falls 2020 Vision Survey in 2007.

THE LOCAL HERITAGE of agriculture is part of our identity, having a deep history in Great Falls from the growing and milling of corn and wheat in the 1800s, to dairy farming from the 1880s to 1980s. Our past informs who we are and what has meaning for us. Going back to the roots of agriculture can mean animals grazing free and grass-fed, crops growing in healthy organic soil, bakers selecting only healthy, nourishing ingredients, cheeses being cave-aged, or beverages and/or vegetables being fermented or pickled.

Our home is our family’s place where we nestle and gather strength. By returning to the roots of healthy eating, our homes can also be a place where our family thrives. Knowing what we are eating, where our food comes from, and who prepared it matters. There is a process of growing ever more comfortable with healthier food: eating more veggies and fruits, adding raw, including more probiotic and fermented foods, getting to know the value of grass-fed, etc. At first things seem too complex to grasp. The day comes when you can actually discern the differences.

We are surrounded by habitat – the nature all around us that we treasure – the trees, the foliage, the plants, the vines — that interact with the sun, the rain, the air and water to provide protection and sustenance for us and the wildlife creatures in our midst. The habitat of a farmers market creates a safe place where our village residents and neighbors from surrounding towns have the chance to bring something they grow, cultivate, craft or make – their best talents and capabilities – to market. A local market is a fastest, lowest cost way to find out if a unique offering is promising. It is also a good way to learn about how to launch and market a business.

THIS SUMMER we enjoyed VoilAmi, owned by Amy, a gluten-free baker who was assisted by her husband, Craig, and their four children. The parents remarked about how much their children learned, being part of the business all summer long. Kandis Smith, owner of Wildflour Underground, actually had two launches this year. She began as a gluten-free baker, but later introduced her amazing pies. Daisy Shlakman spends every winter in South America with her husband, learning healing traditions. She will return in the spring to once again sell her wildly popular ginger ale and Kombucha.

It is sad to leave the parking lot just after it was paved so nicely – making the parking lot safe for pedestrians, while encouraging a positive connection between the two village shopping areas. We are grateful to fellow Great Falls resident, Jorge Kifory, for allowing the farmers market to use the Walker Road parking lot for the sixth year and for making things so safe for everyone.

Meet all your farmers market friends starting this Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Old Forestville Schoolhouse, 9812 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls from 9-1. For additional information, please visit our website at www.greatfallsfarmersmarket.org.

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Since It Ain't Broken...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Apparently, at least in the near term, we're (meaning my oncologist) not going to fix it. And by fix it, I am referring to my chemotherapy infusion, which will continue to be every three weeks, as it has been for almost six years; save for a year or so when I was able to take pills at home, and on-site infusions were not necessary. Last week, at my most recent face-to-face appointment with my oncologist, given my higher-than-hoped-for creatinine levels, (which led to a one week's delay in my regularly scheduled infusion), I had inquired about extending my infusion interval to four weeks to give my kidneys a break. Considering the ongoing damage these vital organs have suffered after six years of non-stop chemotherapy, I thought - to quote my deceased father, "that the idea had merit." And it does have merit and my oncologist has always been concerned about the effect. In fact, per his orders, I had seen a nephrologist (a kidney specialist) a few years back. After examining me on multiple appointments, the doctor suggested there was no real need for a return appointment. Though my creatinine levels were abnormally high, her assessment was, considering my pre-cancer/pre-chemotherapy lab work history had been normal, it would likely go back down if we stopped chemotherapy; but since it's highly unlikely that we'll be stopping chemotherapy, given my diagnosis, there was nothing to be done other than watching and managing the levels as my oncologist has been doing. And that's what we've done and I've not been back to see her since.

Nevertheless, it is cause for concern. The kidney is a major organ. As it goes, so might yours truly go, and consequently its affect has been an ongoing theme/point of awareness during my six years of treatment. Fortunately, miraculously maybe (for all I know), a week later the second/rescheduled lab work showed that my creatinine levels had returned to its previous high normal and thus chemotherapy went on/in as semi usual. And thus begins, according to my oncologist, my new normal: I will continue to be scheduled for infusion every three weeks with my pre-chemotherapy lab work completed the Wednesday before the Friday. If my creatinine levels are high, we'll delay, and reschedule the infusion for a week later as happened during this past interval. Now, we didn't discuss what schedule we'd follow if abnormal creatinine levels persist. As has been established during previous conversations between Team Lourie and my oncologist, scenario questions are not helpful and we rarely venture into any what-ifs/what-abouts until absolutely necessary.

But what we did discuss at this last appointment was my future, a little bit. Considering the "shrinkage" written about in last week's column, my oncologist was very encouraged and characterized my treatment going forward as something we're going to be doing for awhile. But he said it so matter-of-fact, that we sort of took it for granted. He didn't really fuss about it and we didn't either. He said it. He didn't really emphasize it. But he meant it. It was all good, that's for sure.

On the way home, my wife, Dina and I reviewed what my oncologist had said and we became even more giddy at what had transpired/been said. It was certainly news with which we could live and that's what we intend to do. I'm not about to look a gift oncologist in the mouth. Since nothing seems broken, I'm not looking to fix anything.

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

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NEWS



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KATHRIN SWOBODA

Nature Visions' Best in Show in Fine Art: "Delicate Nectar Gatherer" by Kathrin Swoboda.

Exploring the Beauty of Nature

Kathrin Swoboda, of Vienna, received the Nature Visions' "Best in Show in Fine Art" award at the recent 2014 Nature Visions Photo Expo. Her photograph is titled "Delicate Nectar Gatherer." The photograph was taken from her Vienna home. Nature Visions is one of the premier photography expos in Northern Virginia. The expo was held Nov. 14-16 at the Hylton Performing Arts Center in Manassas. "This year there were 1,335 entries from 155 local photographers for our nature and fine art competitions.



Kathrin Swoboda.

The talent and creativity is a joy to behold," said Bill Corbett, McLean Photo Club and President, Nature Visions Photo Expo. Camera clubs and their membership from throughout Northern Virginia and beyond were contributors to the Expo.

"I am a physician turned stay-at-home mom turned amateur nature photographer.

I like exploring the beauty of nature with a camera to capture what can't be seen with the naked eye," said Swoboda. "This award inspires me to seek art in nature," added Swoboda.

BULLETIN BOARD

—DAVID SIEGEL

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to north@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication.

Elementary, Cooper Middle and Langley High schools. A holiday social with Strauss will follow the formal program. The meeting is open to the public.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 3

Human Rights Defenders: Relevant International Law and Strategies. 7:15-9 p.m. Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. A presentation by David Padilla, international human rights consultant. How lawyers and other activists try to defend victims of human rights violations around the world. www.uucf.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Region 1 Listening Tour. 9 a.m. Hunters Woods Elementary, 2401 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Superintendent Karen Garza invites students, parents, employees, and community members to join her at the Region 1 Listening Tour Meeting. Garza will discuss school issues and the priorities for Fairfax County schools and listen to ideas, comments, and questions from the audience. Those planning to attend the meeting are asked to please register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/listeningtour2014-15>.

TUESDAY/DEC. 9

Great Falls Citizens Association Meeting. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Dranesville School Board Representative Jane Strauss will be the featured speaker. Strauss will speak to residents about current local schools issues, including school renovations and the annual budget process. She will take questions following her remarks. Also participating in the program will be the four PTSA presidents from Forestville, Great Falls

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 10

Expansion and Renovation Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry Street, SE, Vienna. Learn more about the Town of Vienna's planned Community Center renovation and expansion. The Vienna Community Center, originally built in 1966, is one of the town's most vital sites. The renovation is slated to begin in 2015 with funds budgeted from two Capital Improvement Plan periods. Further community update meetings will be held as plans progress.

Herndon Bus Operations Facility Meeting. 7 p.m. Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Avenue, Herndon. A meeting held to present the proposed renovations to the Herndon Bus Operations Facility.

League of Women Voters Meeting on Fairfax Schools. 7:30-9 p.m. Reston Art Gallery at Heron House, Lake Anne Plaza. Later high school start times and full-day Mondays: what do these mean for the rest of the Fairfax school calendar and schedules for students and parents? Free, open to the public (men and women), call 703-757-5893. Background papers at www.lwv-fairfax.org.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 19-20

Citrus Sale. Friday: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Saturday: 8 a.m.-noon. American Legion, 1355 Balls Hill Road, McLean. Proceeds used to support veteran needs, local community, youth, and patriotic activities. Seedless Grapefruit, and Navel Oranges fresh from Florida. Pure Maple Syrup will be available at all sales. Call 703-356-8259 for additional details and reservations.



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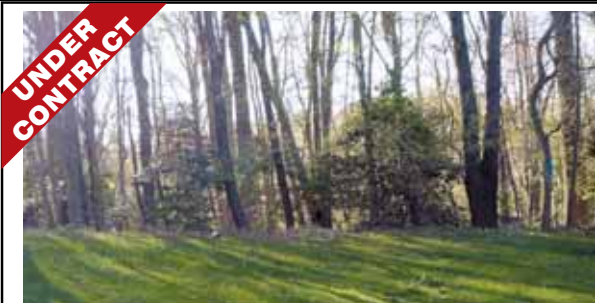
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