

Reston Town Center is almost dressed and ready for this year's "Season of Giving." Reston residents are ready, too. A number of local and regional agencies, organizations and faith communities offer plenty of opportunities to share your holiday good will with your neighbors in need.

Reston Ready for Season of Giving

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Nysmith School CyberPatriots
Visit Real-World Counterparts

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Creating Families
with Adoption

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PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Members from The Nysmith School's three CyberPatriot Competition teams visited FireEye cyber security company in Reston. The tech savvy students posed with FireEye staffer David Lindquist in front of the "threat map" in the company's local operations command center.



Sridhar Jayanthi, VP, Engineering was the first FireEye presenter on the agenda. Jayanthi told the group that an aptitude for computers is obviously critical, but "a passion for the field, outside-the-box thinking, and the ability to adapt to constant change" were the real keys to landing a job and succeeding in cyber security.

Nysmith School CyberPatriots Visit Real-World Counterparts

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Most school field trips take in a museum, maybe a visit to a historic house or possibly a kid-centric performance of some kind. All of these outside-the-school-walls outings are great experiences and terrific educational opportunities, but a group of students from The Nysmith School in Herndon got a real treat when they visited the Reston offices of FireEye, a leading developer and provider of cyber security products and services.

AN HOURS-LONG VISIT to an office building might not sound like a lot of fun to your average sixth, seventh and eighth graders, but these youngsters were beside themselves because all of them are members of a Nysmith CyberPatriot Team and this was a chance to see the hypotheticals that they work with come to life before their very eyes.

The CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition is part of the Air Force Association's (AFA) STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Program, aimed at encouraging interest in these areas of study and developing the skills to pursue related careers. As a school that is known for its excellence in STEM education, Nysmith has embraced the STEM curriculum, and its students have equally accepted the challenge of the competition. One of the two Nysmith teams entered into last year's competition took the Middle School National Championship – no small feat when you take into account that more than 2,150 teams were registered from middle schools and high schools from all fifty states, Canada, and DoD Dependent Schools in Europe and the Pacific.

In the competition, the team members act the part of newly-hired IT professionals tasked with finding and fixing vulnerabilities in a number of operating systems with two major ground rules: cause no further damage to the virtual systems and do not cause additional problems for the imaginary



Monica Saraf was a member of Nysmith's 2015 National CyberPatriot Championship. With all that experience, she was a natural choice to captain one of the school's three 2016 teams. Monica liked how the FireEye folks made their presentations "really fun with lots of interesting real-life stories." She also liked the small group activity to consider potential security vulnerabilities at their own school. "I really enjoy being able to use what I learn."

users. "And that's pretty much the same mission for FireEye in the real world," said David Lindquist, an Event Analyst at FireEye and one of several presenters on the Nysmith visit agenda.

"That is so cool," declared sixth grader Ilse Dubert, a first year CyberPatriot competitor. "It shows that the examples and problems we are given are real." Ilse's twin sister Annica is also a Nysmith CyberPatriot and was an attendee at the FireEye field trip.

Ilse was also pleased that their hosts "talked to us, you know, straight." She and several of her schoolmates appreciated that the FireEye gang "didn't treat us just like a bunch of kids."

"Actually," admitted Devon Kerr, a Principal Security Advisor with FireEye, "you guys make me a little nervous, like when I am standing in front of a group of CEOs. You really know your stuff. I can tell just from the questions you ask and the answers you've given." Kerr's presentation included examples of investigations he has conducted



Sixth grader Ethan Yu, a first time CyberPatriot competitor, said he learned a lot and enjoyed the field trip to FireEye. "I especially liked learning how to protect the information on your own personal devices."

for clients around the globe and had his audience head-nodding and adding corroborating stories when he described some of the vulnerabilities he has encountered. When Kerr offered a number of tips on daily computer cyber safety, pens were out and notes were being taken by the students, and their adult companions, as well. (OK. I took a few myself.)

Part of the FireEye discussion addressed the skills needed to work in cyber security. "We have a shortage of skilled people in these critical fields today," said Sridhar Jayanthi, VP of Engineering at FireEye and one of the hosts of the school tour. "Cyber attacks are a daily event at all levels, the threat is real and growing." This group might be a bit young to be considering their career options at FireEye anytime soon, but there was a definite gleam in the eyes of the two George Mason University students in attendance. Juniors Jessica Miers and Alex Handley are the mentors of the Nysmith competitors.

In a day filled with high points, the visit

to the Reston Security Operations Center (SOC) was still a real standout for the young "cyberonauts." Escorted into the "heart of threat monitoring," the visitors were corralled into one area of the room. "Sorry. This is a No-Wander Zone," Lindquist informed them. No one seemed to mind as they watched the enormous multi-screened wall map showing samples of cyber threat incidents that looked like the scene from the movie "War Games" when the sentient computer is trying out nuclear attack scenarios for potential outcomes.

IT TOOK SOME DOING to tear the group away from the SOC, but eventually they gathered once again for the last presentation of the day - and this one was no let down, even after the SOC experience. Alison Cramer, Facility Security Officer and the day's chief liaison, spoke to the Nysmith contingent about the non-cyber aspects of security. Just like the "techie" talkers before her, she brought her topic home for her audience and kept their competitive edges sharpened, breaking them into groups to work on a "daily defense" project.

"Take today's lessons. Think about your school and look for ways to improve on the different areas of security," directed Cramer. Less than five minutes later, each group was ready to make their recommendations. No doubt they will be presenting them soon to school principal Ken Nysmith.

The Nysmith School has upped their stake in this year's CyberPatriot competition, adding a third team, and six more students ready to defend their school's title against 460 other school teams registered to compete. Eighth-grader Monica Saraf, a member of last year's championship team and Team Captain of the 2016 "CyberArmour" admitted that that the challenge was a fierce one, but thought that mentors like Miers and Handley, coaches like parent Bonnie McCrystal and extras like the FireEye visit "will really help us to make Nysmith proud of our efforts."

The 2016 CyberPatriot Competition Nationals will take place on April 10-14 in Baltimore.

NEWS



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Reston Scouts Collect Over 1000 lbs. of Food

Reston Boy Scouts Troop 1970 dropped off collected food during the annual Scouting for Food collection orchestrated by Scouts from the National Capital Area Council. Cornerstones gladly accepted all 1,339 pounds of food collected by the Scouts from Southern Reston. Pack 1313, also of Reston, distributed plastic bags the week before the collection.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



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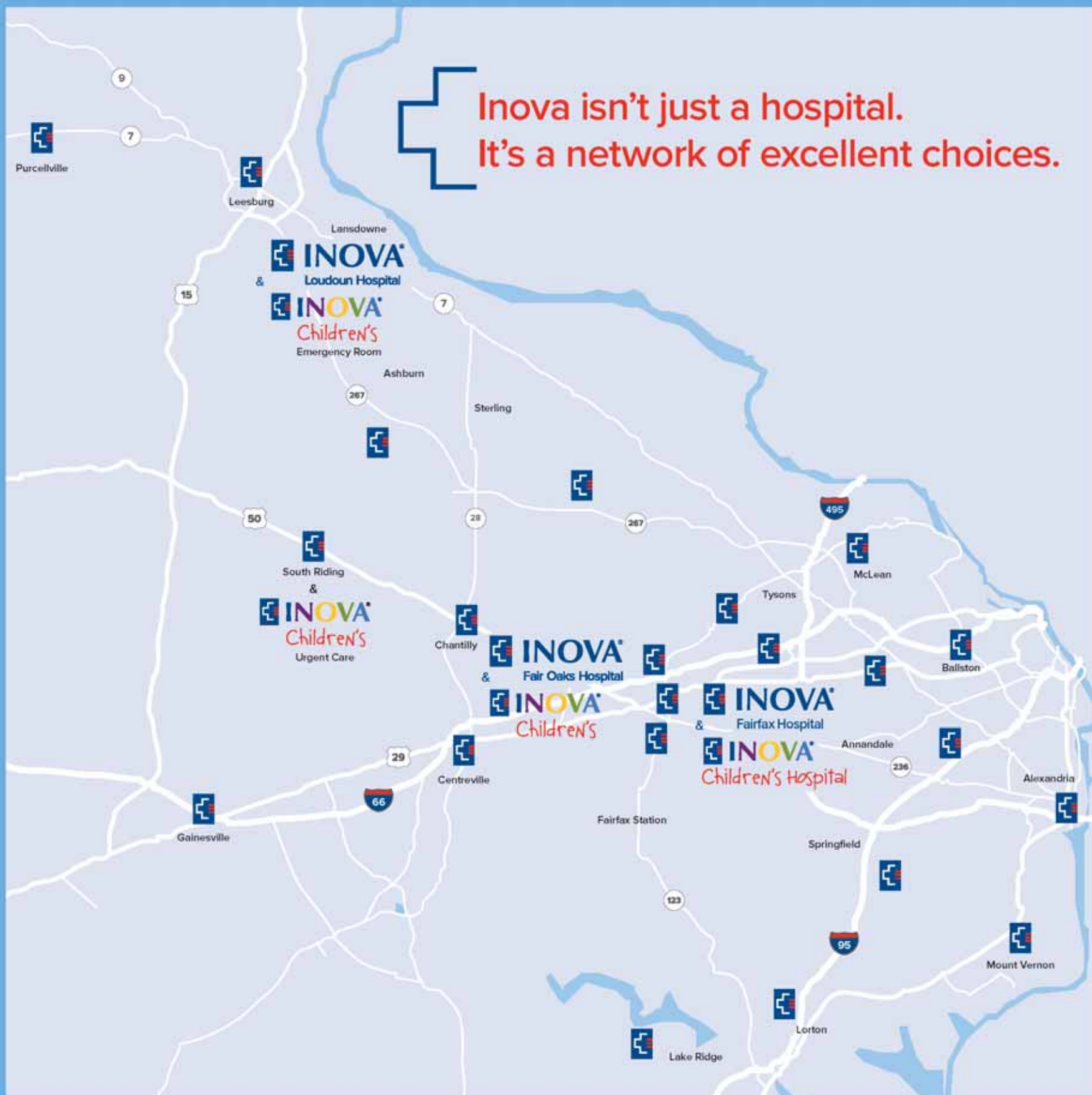
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OPINION

Celebrate, Shop, Dine Locally

Every day can be “small business day.”

There is a joy to participating in community traditions and celebrations during the holidays, from walking along a sidewalk with the streets decked out for the holidays, to shopping in local stores, to being greeted by someone likely to be the owner of the store, to finding gifts that are not mass-produced.

One way to be sure holiday shopping comes with some holiday spirit is to do a portion of your shopping in some of the area's locally owned stores. There is special holiday ambiance available by shopping in the heart of a town that is decked out for the season. Small retail shops are part of defining any community. Their livelihood depends on the livability and quality of the neighborhoods around them. A small business owner pays attention to every detail in his or her business in a way that is otherwise unmatched.

We all benefit when local stores thrive, when local business districts beckon. An effort to support locally owned businesses has resulted in the recognition of Small Business Saturday, the Saturday after Thanksgiving, also called

Shop Small. This year that day is Nov. 28.

Locally owned retail shops, services, restaurants depend on vibrant local communities to thrive, and communities depend on those businesses as well. Most small, locally owned businesses invest in community, helping to transform our towns and communities with a sense of place.

Frequently, it is the small retail person who is active in fundraising for local charities, advocating for improvements, for fire and rescue service, for local schools and in organizing holiday events.

Local retail stores, mom-and-pop stores, face tough challenges right now. Competition from big box stores and online sellers makes the holiday shopping season all the more important to locally owned retailers. But local families will literally spend millions of dollars to shop and exchange gifts during the next month in a variety of places.

Everyone will do some of their shopping at the mall. Everyone will shop online. Many will answer the call of the big box. But local shoppers should be sure to do some celebrating, shopping and dining locally. We promise it brings more joy.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

Children's Connection

During the last week of each year, The Connection devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. It is a keepsake edition for many families. The annual Children's Connection is a tradition of well over a decade.

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 contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers. To be published, we must have first and last name of the student. Please include the student's age and/or grade, school attended and town of residence.

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. Please provide submissions by Friday, Dec. 4.

Email submissions for the Children's Connection to ChildrensNorth@connectionnewspapers.com. Subject line should be school name, town and teacher's last name (e.g. Westgate ES, McLean, Card).

The Challenge of Ending Homelessness

BY MARGI PRESTON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FACETS

COMMENTARY

Sometimes it takes a challenge to make progress. That's what happened here in Fairfax when leaders of six nonprofits serving those who are homeless decided to push themselves to do more.

With the second largest homeless population in the region, homelessness is a real problem in the Fairfax County-Falls Church community. A majority of the people who are homeless are in working families with children. Throughout the year, FACETS works in partnership with Fairfax's Office to Prevent and End Homelessness and other nonprofits to bring our community closer to a day when no one is homeless through a variety of effective programs. And in the summer of 2014, we decided to do even more by teaming up with five other local nonprofits to motivate ourselves to reach new records in moving people from homelessness to housing.

Our power team — FACETS, New Hope Housing, Cornerstones, Shelter House, NVFS and Volunteers of America-Chesapeake — kicked off a year-long Fairfax County Housing Challenge. The challenge was modeled after the successful Rapid Rehousing Challenge, which was organized by the National Alliance to End Homelessness to motivate nonprofits statewide to rapidly re-house as many families as possible within 100 days.

Rapid re-housing is a proven and cost-effective strategy used by communities across the

country to reduce homelessness. It involves helping households move into housing as quickly as possible after they enter the shelter system. Families and individuals are housed in market-rate apartments or houses in the community, and receive rental subsidies and/or services that are tailored to their specific needs, including a caseworker to help ease the transition.

Our housing challenge showed the real benefits of collaboration. Together we set and met quarterly ambitious goals to find homes for even more people who were unstably housed and homeless. We brainstormed and found new ways to get people out of homelessness and into safe and secure housing. And it worked. At the end of the challenge, nearly 500 single adults and more than 220 families now have a home of their own and services to help them remain housed.

As important as it is to get people into housing right away so they can start the transition back to a stable life, we all recognize that preventing homelessness is the top priority. Like our nonprofit partners, FACETS relies on help from volunteers and partnerships with the faith and business communities to prevent homelessness throughout Fairfax County by offering a full spectrum of services, such as basic needs and financial assistance, career counseling and outreach, educational enrichment programs, and permanent housing.

With the cold temperatures approaching, we have begun to gear up for our Hypothermia

Prevention and Response Program. Through a partnership with over 40 faith communities, this program enables FACETS to offer refuge from the bitter cold to over 200 individuals in our community who are homeless each year. The success of the Fairfax Housing Challenge has inspired us to remain motivated in helping even more people come in from the cold this winter and ideally keep more from ever having to experience the cold at all. We are up for the challenge ... and I know our community partners are too. That's a win for the whole community. To learn more, visit us at www.FacetsCares.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Entering Into the Arena

To the Editor:

Theodore Roosevelt once said that the credit belongs to those who are in the arena. Craig Parisot should be commended for stepping into the arena in what he knew would be a tough fight. Northern Virginia is becoming increasingly polarized and competitive and, as a result, the cost, both financially and personally, of running for office here is exorbitant. Respected incumbents declined to run for reelection this year, no doubt in part because of this strain. Craig knew what he was walking into, but he did it anyway out of a desire to serve his community. Thank you Craig Parisot for entering into the arena. I hope you are not done fighting.

Priscilla M. Griffith
McLean

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COMMENTARY

More on Session Agenda

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

The General Assembly will convene for its regular session on Jan. 13. Major work in the even-numbered years is passage of a biennial budget. With some recovery in the Virginia economy it should be possible to pass a required balanced budget without program or staff cuts, but it will not be possible to fund all the budget requests or pent-up demand from the dire budgets of the past decade. Budget deliberation will be controversial, however, because of the refusal to accept federal funds for Medicaid expansion that would free up about \$350 million of state monies that could be used for other purposes.

Many of the issues that concern me will face an uphill battle. We should fully fund the state share of public education, but there are those who will resist those efforts. I support expanding Medicaid to provide health insurance for the working poor. I am also concerned that Virginia's lax gun laws can lead to more gun violence. We need to expand background checks for all gun sales. We should take action to keep guns out of the hands of persons against whom protective orders have been issued by a court. Likewise, commonsense laws should be passed to keep guns out of the hands of children. Looking to the next round of legislative redistricting we need to pass a constitutional amendment to require independent, nonpartisan drawing of legislative boundaries. A constitutional amendment would permit the people to vote on it.

Last week the Republican majority was reported to have announced its priorities



for the upcoming session. I understand that in public education their priority is passage of a constitutional amendment to allow for the establishment of charter schools. Such an amendment passed the General Assembly last year and with passage this year would go to the voters for approval. With public schools already having

the power to establish alternative schools; magnet schools; and vocational, gifted, and special education centers it is difficult for me to see the value or need for charter schools that would drain resources from public schools.

Although the misleading campaign against tolls on I-66 had little impact on the outcome of recent elections, the majority intends to propose legislation to prohibit tolls on I-66. Their bill can lead to a full discussion of the tolling proposal. They can explain to single-occupant car drivers why they oppose access to I-66 during the rush hour if a driver is willing to pay a toll. Or, how they will raise the money to widen I-66 without toll revenue. Or why other roads will continue to have tolls.

A perennial favorite with the majority party is to pass bills and resolutions to say that Virginia does not have to comply with federal law. This year the aim is the clean air regulations issued by the federal Environmental Protection Agency. There also apparently will be a further attempt to tighten voter registration that will also make it more complicated and may discourage registration.

Republicans called their priorities "a broad, bold agenda." Others may find their session agenda to be too confrontational and controversial.

RESTON CRIME REPORTS

Notable Incidents from Nov. 17-20

Robbery

2200 block of Gunsmith Square, Nov. 19, around 10:53 p.m. The victim was walking to the door of her residence. A man approached from behind, pushed the victim to the ground and took her handbag by force. The victim incurred non-life-threatening injuries. The suspect fled and was described as Hispanic, between 5 feet 8 and 5 feet 11 inches tall, short dark hair, medium build, and wearing an orange sweatshirt and jeans.

Burglary

2300 block of Freetown Ct., Nov. 17, 10:29 a.m.. A resident reported someone entered the residence and took property.

12000 block of Greywing Sq., Nov. 18, 12:30 p.m. A resident reported someone entered the residence and took property.

11900 block of Winterthur Lane, Nov. 18, 2:23 p.m. A resident reported someone entered the residence. It is unknown at this time if anything was taken.

11900 block of Winterthur Lane, Nov. 18, 7:47 p.m. A resident reported someone entered the residence and took property.

Larcenies

1100 block of Dranesville Road, jewelry from residence


12200 block of Laurel Glade Court, phone from business

800 block of Forestville Meadows Drive, property from residence

2300 block of Hunters Woods Plaza, merchandise from business

11800 block of Saint Trinian Court, money from residence

12000 block of Sunrise Valley Drive, purse from residence



RESTON TOWN CENTER HOLIDAYS ARE HERE!

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27

8 AM
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GINGERBREAD MAN MILE RACE FOR KIDS

8 AM - 11 PM
ICE SKATING PAVILION

11 AM
25TH ANNUAL RESTON HOLIDAY PARADE

12:30 PM - 4:30 PM
VISITS & PHOTOS WITH SANTA & MRS. CLAUS

MINI-TRAIN RIDES

5 PM
"FROSTY FOLLIES" PERFORMANCE


6 PM
TREE LIGHTING & SING ALONG

6:30 PM - 10 PM
HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES

WEEKENDS

SUNDAYS 12 - 4 PM	Nov. 29, Dec. 6, 13, 20 MINI-TRAIN RIDES
SATURDAYS 4 - 9 PM	Dec. 5, 12, and 19 HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE RIDES

THROUGHOUT DECEMBER
Holiday Performances and Strolling Carolers



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SEASON OF GIVING

Reston Ready for Season of Giving

Where to give, how to help in Reston area.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

“I do everything early,” says Phyllis K. of Reston. Phyllis prefers to remain anonymous because “it’s not about blowing your own horn. It’s about helping others.” She says her family laughs at her need to always get ahead of the curve. “I have most of my Christmas gifts already wrapped and tagged. I’m not telling where they’re hidden!” Just like her preparations for her family holidays, she’s also long since prepared her Thanksgiving baskets and clothing and toy donations for a number of local drives. For several weeks she’s been adding to the boxes she’ll be taking to Reston Community Center at Hunters Woods for the Thanksgiving meal distribution, “you know, just a can or two each time I grocery shopped. Now I’m getting the coats

and scarves ready to drop off for the Winter Coat Closet.” In addition to the sorting of items the family no longer uses, she also picked up more winter wear at a local thrift shop. “I got some real deals during the summer and have just been waiting until now to get them ready to pass on.” Thankfully, our neighbors in need in Reston and surrounding communities, can count on lots of people like Phyllis to help provide many of the basics they may be lacking and to brighten their holidays. **THE CHARITABLE,** Reston-based organization Cornerstones looks out for those neighbors all year long through a wide variety of programs and in partnership with many other organizations, government agencies and faith communities throughout our region. They are a key component of that Thanksgiving meal distribution that Phyllis has been collect-

ing for and the Gifts for Kids Drive that helps hundreds of local struggling and homeless families put a smile on their children’s faces when otherwise there just wouldn’t have been money to spare on the “luxuries” of Christmas gifts when the basics of food and shelter are iffy items on the family budget. Collecting for those drives may be over (with so many to care for, they have to get a jump on things just like Phyllis), but you can still make contact at www.cornerstonesva.org to see what else you can contribute or how else you may assist. The Winter Coat Closet has only just opened, and will remain so until March 19, 2016, so there’s still plenty of time to be a good neighbor by donating new or gently used winter coats, jackets, scarves and gloves for both children and adults. The Community Room at the North County Government Center at 1801 Cameron Glen Dr. serves as donation and pick-up location.

If you really have your heart set on making your “Season of Giving” include a toy for a youngster, there are still a number of ways to make your wish – and theirs, too – come true. Reston Town Center (RTC) and a number of local businesses are supporting Toys for Tots once again, in association with the U.S. Marine Forces Reserve. The Marines will be on hand at Town Center for a collection kick-off event on Dec. 1, but unwrapped new toys will gladly be accepted in collection boxes in building lobbies around RTC through Dec. 15.

If you are a member of a faith community, you can probably be a “Christmas Angel,” buying a desired gift for a child, or maybe a much-needed item like a coat for an adult. Many of our local faith communities host this program on their own, or participate in the program sponsored by the Salvation Army. Sponsoring a child, or several, or a family can be a done by individuals, groups like your faith community, or even your family or a group of friends. Sounds like a great way to draw a family, or a neighborhood, closer together during the holiday season and beyond – and don’t forget that bell-ringing Santa outside the Giant, or the Safeway, or wherever. That bell ringing may make you a little dizzy, but think of the kind-hearted volunteers who stand there for hours regardless of the weather, just trying to shake a little change loose from passersby because a little bit of change goes a long way.

IN RESTON you can also combine your giving spirit with a bit of action, if you so desire. Potomac River Running is hosting the fifth annual Race With Santa 5K around Reston Town Center on Dec. 6. Registration starts at \$30 through Nov. 21, and goes as high as \$40 on race day. There are prizes in a number of categories, including best costume. With net proceeds going to local charities, you can get some exercise after all that Thanksgiving turkey and pie, kick off your holidays with some costumed fun,



It’s official! The Holidays are here and Reston Town Center says so!

PHOTOS BY
ANDREA WORKER/
THE CONNECTION



E’Occitane in Reston Town Center is just one local business that offers shoppers a way to check a gift off their personal shopping list, while attending to their “season of giving” list, as well.



Reston Town Center is almost dressed and ready for this year’s “Season of Giving.” Reston residents are ready, too. A number of local and regional agencies, organizations and faith communities offer plenty of opportunities to share your holiday good will with your neighbors in need.

and feel good when part of your fee is used to help someone else enjoy the holidays as much as you will. A good deal all around. And if riding, versus running is your thing, you can still help out while having fun. Starting on Friday, Nov. 27, after Santa arrives at the end of the RTC Holiday Parade, there will be mini-train rides and horse-drawn carriage rides that will be available on weekends throughout December. The first

come, first serve rides that pick up in front of Talbots, only cost \$5 per person, and the proceeds will benefit local charities. While you’re waiting for your ride, don’t forget to check out which of your favorite stores in RTC are sponsoring a holiday drive of some sort, like E’Occitane, that is working with Dress for Success, a nonprofit that helps women achieve economic independence. Certain gift purchases from the store will help

someone get professionally attired for an interview with the support of the organization – and you. Even if you haven’t prepared for the holidays like our friend Phyllis, don’t forget that it’s never too late to lend a hand, and with all of the options right here in our own community, there are plenty of ways to make this a real “season of giving” and show your less fortunate neighbors some real Reston holiday cheer.

Forget the Fruitcake. Give a gift that really matters this holiday season.

RESCUE ANIMALS
\$20 will buy toys & treats for two shelter pets.

HELP A STUDENT
\$10 buys \$30 worth of school supplies for a needy student.

CELEBRATE FAIRFAX
\$1,000 will fund a Community Spirit Scholarship.

PROTECT A NEIGHBOR
\$75 buys a home security system for victims of domestic violence.

PROVIDE HEALTHCARE
\$300 will buy one child a year of medical care.

FEED THE HUNGRY
\$100 will buy a holiday meal for a family in need.

FUND SOME SUMMER FUN
\$50 provides a week of summer fun at camp.

PROTECT OUR VIRGINIA
\$100 will buy a holiday meal for a family in need.

Enough with all the snowflake ties and reindeer sweaters, too. This year, there are lots of great ways to give and give back at the same time. Now you can donate to any of these Fairfax County nonprofits in honor of anyone on your gift list. It makes shopping easy and offers you a nice tax deduction. But best of all, it helps those organizations succeed in bringing goods and services to those who need them most at this special time of year. Learn more at givefairfax.net

THE FAIRFAX COUNTY OFFICE OF PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

To request reasonable ADA accommodations or information in an alternative format, call 703.324.5171 TTY 711 | Concept and design by Williams Whittle

Joining the ‘Season of Giving’

The Winter Coat Closet: Give a coat or other winter outer wear, or get one at the North County Government Center, 1801 Cameron Glen Dr. Call Hunter Mill District office 703.478.0283 for hours or information.

Cornerstones – Reston-based non-profit offering wide variety of programs and support, partnering with

Just a few suggestions on ways to join in the “Season of Giving” in your community:

other agencies, organizations and faith communities. www.cornerstonesva.org.

Reston Town Center – Check the website. RTC has many Toys for Tots donation drop-offs, and a number of holiday events that will benefit local charities. www.restontowncenter.com

Salvation Army – Christmas Angel Program. Sponsor a child, an adult or a family and make some Christmas wishes

come true. Something that family and friends can do together. www.virginiasalvationarmy.com

Embry Rucker Shelter – A 70-bed residential emergency center that houses men, women and families. There’s lots of ways to support this organization that cares for the most vulnerable in our community. Call 703.437.1975 to find out how.

Fairfax County Office of Public Private Partnerships – A great place to check out lots of volunteer or donation opportunities all around our region.

Herndon-Reston Fish (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) – www.herndonrestonfish.org. Providers of immediate basic necessities and more. 703.222-0880.

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 Music: grades 3 - 7
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CALENDAR

Send announcements to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline is the Friday prior to the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

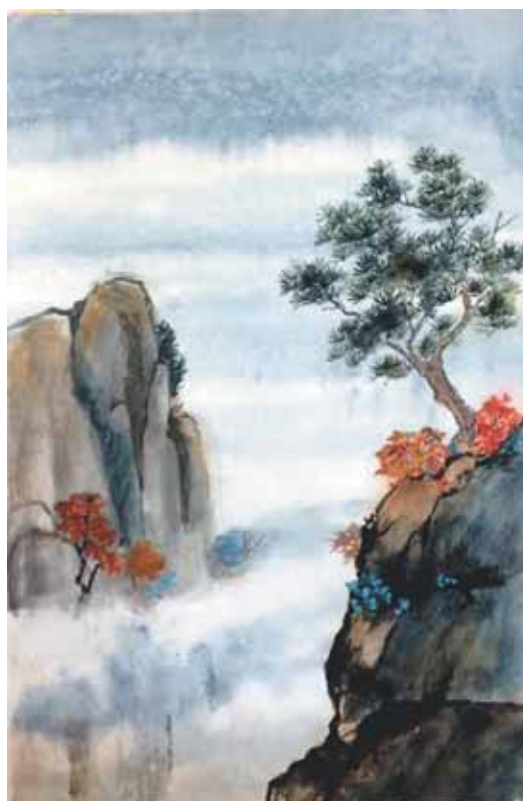
Art/Craft Programs. 10 a.m.-noon. Saturday/Nov. 28. Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza, Reston. Nov. 7-Colorful fall leaves. Nov. 14-Marshmallow sculpture. Nov. 21-Paper bag turkeys. Nov. 28-Holiday decorated snack plates. Ages 3-11. www.restonartgallery.com.

"A Touch of the Orient." Through Dec. 3. Reston Art Gallery and Studio, Lake Anne Village Center, 11400 Washington Plaza W, # B, Reston. Chinese brush paintings in the traditional style on rice papers by artist Lassie Corbett. Artist demonstrations from 2-4 p.m. on Sundays in November.

Seussical the Musical. Dec. 4-20. Times vary by performance. NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Bring the whole family along for this musical spectacular featuring all your favorite Dr. Seuss characters! The cast of Seussical features local young actors in 3rd through 11th grades. \$25. 866-811-4111. boxoffice@nextstoptheatre.org.

Gingerbread Village at Hyatt Regency Reston. Saturday, Dec. 5 through Thursday, Dec. 31. The Hyatt Gingerbread Village is a holiday tradition presented annually since the hotel's opening in 1990. The sweet, whimsical, classic holiday village scene is on display in the main lobby. reston.hyatt.com.

Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides. Saturdays, Dec. 5, 12 and 19. 4-9 p.m. Departures on Market Street in front of Talbots at Reston Town



Lassie Corbett's "A Touch of the Orient." will be at the Reston Art Gallery and Studio at Lake Anne Village Center until Dec. 3. See Chinese brush paintings in the traditional style on rice papers. Artist demonstrations from 2-4 p.m. on Sundays in November.

Center. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free. All proceeds benefit local charities.

www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

Mini-Train Rides. Sundays, Dec. 6, 13, 20. Noon-4 p.m. Pick up on Market Street in front of Talbots at Reston Town Center. Donated proceeds benefit local charities. www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.

Holiday Gift Wrapping. Dec. 19-22, Noon-6 p.m. Dec. 23, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Dec. 24, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St.,

Reston. Gifts will be beautifully wrapped while you shop or work, same-day service. Donations benefit 22,000 needy kids with school supplies. Presented by Kids R First with support from the Hyatt Regency and Appalachian Spring. kidsrfirst.org. appalachianspring.com.

All-comers' Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running. Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market Street, Reston. For beginners or competitive

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE II

SPECIAL CONNECTIONS CALENDAR

Advertising Deadlines are the previous Thursday unless noted.

DECEMBER

12/2/2015.....Wellbeing
12/9/2015.....Holiday Entertainment & Gift Guide II
12/9/2015.....HomeLifeStyle; Home for the Holidays
12/16/2015..A+ Camps & Schools; Holiday Entertainment & Gifts Pages
12/23/2015.....Special Issue – Safe for the Holidays
12/30/2015.....Children's Connection

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 703-281-4868

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

runners, come out for a fun, low-key run that is safe and social. For more information, call 703-689-0999 or visit <https://potomacriverunning.com>.

Rebecca Kamen: Continuum. Dec. 1-Feb. 13. Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston. Kamen. Informed by research into cosmology, neuroscience, history of science, and philosophy, Kamen's abstract sculptures and paintings connect common threads across various scientific fields to capture and re-imagine what scientists see. restonarts.org. 703-471-9242.

Patrick Dougherty Public Art Installation. Through 2017. Reston Town Square Park, 11900 Market Street, Reston. See and explore "A Bird in the Hand," a monumental public art sculpture made from tree saplings. The event is presented by GRACE in collaboration with IPAR. For more information, call 703-471-9242 or visit <http://restontowncenter.com/index.php>.

Reston Town Center Ice Skating Pavilion – 2015-2016 Season. November through March. Open daily. 11900 Market Street, Reston. For more information on rates, rentals and schedules, call 703-709-6300 or visit skating@restontowncenter.com.

Community Performances. December through the holiday season. 11900 Market Street, Reston. Street performances of music and dance performed by a variety of local groups. For more information and schedules, visit <http://www.restontowncenter.com>.

THURSDAY/NOV. 26

Annual Reston Thanksgiving Day Family Bike Ride. 9 a.m. South Lakes Shopping Center 11120 South Lakes Drive, Reston. Join the South Lakes Village Center ride to Reston Town Center or organize your own neighborhood ride. All rides converge at Starbucks at Reston Town Center. Free. Contact cyclinginreston@gmail.com or call 703-966-6182 for information.

FRIDAY/NOV. 27

Holidays at Reston Town Center. 8 a.m.-11 p.m. Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Stores, restaurants, skating pavilion open early. Gingerbread Man Mile Race. Holiday parade. Dancing. Tree lighting and sing along. Carriage and min-train rides. And, Santa.

SATURDAY/NOV. 28

Local Author Reading. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Reston Used Book Shop, 1623 Washington Plaza N., Reston. Visit local author Tony Mayo as he signs and reads from his new novel "Crimes of Cunning." www.TonyMayo.com.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/NOV. 28-29

Movies and Mimosas—"Holiday Inn." 11 a.m. Bow Tie Cinemas, 11940 Market St., Reston. See the classics how they were meant to be seen on the big screen. \$5.50, \$1 for Loyalty members.

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to north@connectionnewspapers.com by the Friday prior to the following week's paper.

MONDAY/NOV. 30

Board Operations Committee Meeting. 6-10 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. The primary task of the Board Operations Committee is to set the agenda for the Regular Meetings of the Association's Board of Directors. Join in and contribute your ideas and suggestions during the member comment period. 703-435-6530.

TUESDAYS/DEC. 1, 8, AND 15

Design Review Board Meeting. 7-9 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. The Design Review Board (DRB) is responsible for reviewing all additions and alterations to many different types of Reston properties. To assist in the review process, the DRB develops Design Guidelines and review procedures, and establishes design standards for clusters. 703-435-6530.

bowtiecinemas.com. 703-318-1801.

THURSDAY/DEC. 3

Community Holiday Performances. 6:30 p.m. Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Musical performances by community group from Sunrise Valley Elementary.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 3-6

2015 Annual Holiday Mini Sale. Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday, 1-4 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Gift-quality books, gifts, and surprises to delight readers of all ages. Cash or checks only.

FRIDAY/DEC. 4

Gingerbread Village at Reston Hyatt. 11900 Market Street, Reston. Enjoy the annual display in the hotel lobby, throughout the holiday season. For more information, call 703-709-1234 or visit <http://reston.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html>.

SATURDAY/DEC. 5

Jingle on Lake Anne. 8 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Lake Anne Plaza (Waterfront), 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston. Variety of festive activities ranging from the ever popular special visit from Santa (arriving on a lake barge), strolling carolers, music, wine tastings, merchant specials, children's crafts, cookie and ornament decorating, holiday arts and crafts market, holiday entertainment and much more. Santa arrives at noon. Tree lighting at 6:30 p.m. Free. www.lakeanneplaza.com.

Community Holiday Performances. 2 p.m. Fountain Square, 11900 Market St., Reston. Musical performances by Rhythm Street Dance.

Handmade Holiday Ornaments Workshop. 9:30-11 a.m. Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., #103, Reston. Sign up the whole family for this fun workshop led by GRACE staff to make some fun, creative ornaments. Children must be accompanied by a participating adult. 703-471-9242. Register at restoncommunitycenter.org.

Mystery Authors Extravaganza. 1 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Seventeen authors from Sisters in Crime will discuss their latest books and short stories. Books will be available for sale and signing. Adults. 703-689-2700.

The Wonder of the Season: Around the World. 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. Reston Community Center, 213 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Celebrate the holidays with beloved carols from around the globe, plus Daniel Pinkham's Christmas Cantata, featuring the Washington Symphonic Brass Quintet. Adults/\$25, Seniors/\$20, Military/Free and Youth 17 and under/Free (with adult/senior ticketholder). www.restonchorale.org.

TUESDAY/DEC. 1

Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting. 7-9:30 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. The Environmental Advisory Committee advises the Board on the ecologically sound management of the association's environmental resources, including its water, natural areas and wildlife. Come join in to share your thoughts and ideas. 703-435-6530.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 2

Legal Committee Meeting. 6-8 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Reston Association's Legal Committee is responsible for recommending to the Board of Directors proposed enforcement actions, the imposition of sanctions and the filing of legal proceedings. 703-435-6530.

2015 Tax Planning Seminar. 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. CPA Dan Gilliland will offer tax planning strategies to help you reduce your 2015 taxes. For both individual taxpayers and small business owners. Register for this event at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/.

Fairfax Water

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON WATER RATE AND PROPOSED 2016 BUDGET

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 17, 2015, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges and its proposed 2016 Budget. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes to the Schedule of Rates, Fees and Charges, to be effective April 1, 2016, include the following:

1. An increase in the Availability Charge from \$3,950 to \$4,100†.
2. An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$9,750 to \$10,240.
3. An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,090 to \$1,150†.
4. An increase in the Account Charge from \$36 to \$37.
5. An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge from \$9.80 to \$10.10†.
6. An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$2.55 to \$2.68 per 1,000 gallons of water.
7. An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.55 to \$3.80 per 1,000 gallons of water.
8. An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$50 to \$52.
9. An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
10. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Labor from 110% to 104%.
11. A decrease in the Overhead Charge for Materials from 25% to 16%.
12. An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge from \$45 to \$46.

†Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is proposing a \$170.4 million budget for calendar year 2016*. Revenues are expected to be \$170.4 million in 2016. Water sales are expected to provide \$147.3 million. Approximately \$23.1 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2015	2016
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 53,891	\$ 55,581
Power and Utilities	10,677	10,750
Chemicals	6,335	7,857
Purchased Water	6,717	6,090
Supplies and Materials	4,985	5,113
Insurance	1,017	1,050
Fuel	781	880
Postage	637	664
Contractual Services	9,930	10,422
Professional Services	1,146	1,046
Other	2,363	2,447
Sub-Total	98,479	101,900
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(9,669)	(9,616)
Total	\$ 88,810	\$ 92,284

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$41,417,000
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$24,131,000

*Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

A copy of the proposed changes to the rates and the 2016 budget can be viewed on our Web site at http://fairfaxwater.org/current/public_hearing_2015_12_17.htm. Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Mr. Ken Lasso at 703-289-6194. Interested parties also may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on **Wednesday, December 16, 2015** to be included in the record of the public hearing.

THANKFUL FOR ADOPTION

Consider adopting a child from foster care. In Virginia, there are more than 860 children waiting and hoping to be adopted. Many of those children are listed on the Adopt US Kids website which you can find at: adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx

Creating Families with Adoption

Adoptive parents described: 'Grateful. Generous. Awesome.'

BY JOAN BRADY
THE CONNECTION

November is National Adoption Awareness Month. With that in mind, meet two families expanded through adoption; two families whose kids describe their family as "awesome."

The Hagens of Vienna are a family of two parents, Kelly and Scott; three boys, two adopted and one biological; and two family dogs. Appreciative is the word that comes to mind listening to the Hagens talk about their family.

Lewis, 17, describes family priorities. "Somehow we find time to do stuff together. Like eating dinner. I've heard some families don't do that. That's very sad to me."

Spencer, 16, talks of how his brother, James, influences his life. "I know there are a lot of experiences that I get to have because James is so outgoing."

James, 11, appreciates time spent with his dad. "I like working outside with my dad. And, I like that he pays me for it."

Lewis loves having brothers. "You have people who are always there. I play Xbox with them. We talk. We listen to music. It's like having friends that are always there AND they are family." Would be different with sisters? Spencer says, "Well, they would probably make it all about them."

For parents Kelly and Scott Hagen, appreciation extends outside of their immediate family. "We have a lot of special issues in our family and that has made us more open minded about people," says Kelly. "We make fewer assumptions and we listen more."

Meet the Connelly Family

The Connelys have an immediate family that includes two parents, five sons — two



Hagen Family: Scott, Spencer, James, Lewis and Kelly of Vienna

biological, two adopted from Fairfax County foster care, and one foster son — and two cats. They hope to add a therapy dog in the next few months.

Jackson, 8, likes the commotion that a large family brings. "I like having brothers. It's interesting living with a lot of people. It's very loud, which means I'm never bored and I learn a lot about how to be nice."

Anthony, 17, has a deep appreciation for his parents, "Not every family would take in so many kids and do so much for them. My parents make sure to keep things fair and show us a lot of love."

Ben, 15, recognizes all that it means to be a family, "If you are looking for a family, you will find everything and more from the family right here. We are everything you would expect; the good and the bad. We are a real family."

Hunter, also 15, might complain about the noise, and apparently does, all of the time, but he wouldn't change a thing, "When we are at home and I'm trying to get work done and everyone's doing their thing around my area, it drives me crazy. But I wouldn't trade

them in for peace and quiet."

Scott and Megan Connely have been foster parents to many kids over the years. According to Scott, the "spectacular" success of the foster children they have had over the years, many now grown, as well as the success of their biological and adopted boys is simple. "We make sure they know that we love them, unconditionally, and that we are going to hold them accountable. It takes a few weeks, but then they settle right in."

Megan adds: "One of the things that helps makes our household work is that the kids are flexible and giving. Each time we have added someone new into the mix, they follow the example set and pretty quickly, it's like they were always there."

Nicholas, the Connely's 10-year-old foster son describes his foster parents this way: "They are grateful. They are generous. They are awesome."

Megan Connely is one of 12 kids, 10 of whom were adopted. Megan says that with their current four, they are only just getting started.

Photos and bios provided by Fairfax County Department of Family Services

Adame, an energetic 6-year-old boy has a big smile and big heart to match. Keeping Adame engaged will help him remain on task and minimize anxiety for him. A two-parent household, with one parent primarily in the home available to attend to Adame's needs would be ideal, Adame is resilient and would thrive in an adoptive family of his own.



Tim, an active 16-year-old, loves to keep busy. His favorite thing to do is go fishing. He would like a family who is active and loving. He gets along well with young children and has a good sense of humor. He hopes to one day attend a trade school to become a plumber because he feels this would be a great way to become financially stable.



Damon, a kind and thoughtful 14-year-old young man enjoys eating out, watching movies and going to the park. He has discovered rock-collecting and can identify many different kinds of rocks. Damon likes school; he is energetic and loves sports, especially basketball, rollerblading and riding his bike.



Summer, a 15-year-old young lady enjoys hiking and biking outdoors, and loves music and reading. She is self-taught on piano and guitar and can play songs by ear. She would like a family that has a love for music and enjoys being active in the community.



All 860

BY JOAN BRADY

Parental rights terminated. Available for adoption. Floundering in an imperfect system. These words describe many children who are currently living in foster care in Virginia. In Fairfax County, these four children are hoping that this will be the last Thanksgiving spent in foster homes.

Gov. Terry McAuliffe wants those children who are currently available for adoption, adopted into loving homes, and he isn't messing around.

"Let's make it a goal — all of us in this room — that one year from today all 860 of these children will be adopted," McAuliffe recently charged a room full of adoption and foster care professionals at the Connecting Hearts Summit.

Focusing on Virginia is a good start. More than 26,000 young people across the United States age out of foster care each year to futures more likely to include homelessness and hunger than jobs and careers that will pay the bills. All of those young people were once children like the 108,000 currently languishing in foster care. Children who hoped, in vain, that someone would come forward and

SEE ADOPTION, PAGE 13



Connely Family: Hunter, Jackson, Ben and Anthony (Foster son, Nicholas, not pictured).



Scott and Megan Connely.

THANKFUL Adoption

FROM PAGE 12

choose them for adoption.

In 2014, McAuliffe elevated the priority of foster care adoption by appointing Debbie Johnson as Virginia's Adoption Champion. An adoptee herself, one of her achievements to-date has been to create Connection Hearts. www.connectingheartsva.org. With Ericca Facetti at the helm, Connecting Hearts works with the Virginia Department of Social Services, local departments of social services as well as local businesses to engage and educate the public about children in foster care who are waiting for adoptive families.

One of Ericca's immediate goals is to get as many of those children as appropriate included in the Adoptuskids/Virginia listings. Currently, of the 860, just 180 are listed. www.adoptuskids.org/states/va/index.aspx

According to the Metropolitan Council of Governments (COG), there are 259 children in the DC metro area waiting for adoptive homes. Child Welfare Program Manager, Kamilah Bunn, works tirelessly to bring visibility to foster care adoption in our region. COG's adoption efforts include Wednesday's Child, The PicMe Project, Regional Adoption Events and the Regional Adoption Exchange.

Many children have no problem advocating for themselves. Perhaps one of the more memorable self-advocates was a 10-year old twin, who grabbed his brother, hopped on a stage in downtown DC, grabbed a mic and belted out to the cheering crowd, "WE NEED A FAMILY." Other children are not so forthcoming; They are embarrassed by circumstances that are no fault of their own. They have been disappointed by adults who have said they loved them, but who then turned away. They fear further rejection.

Social workers and other professionals like Kamilah Bunn and Ericca Facetti all work together to protect each child, as they work tirelessly to match children successfully with a small pool of potential adoptive families.

Adoption Expo

What: 2015 Adoption Expo will educate, inspire and celebrate families formed through adoption. Prospective adoptive parents can meet adoption professionals as well as current adoptive and foster parents to learn about foster care adoption and foster parenting.

Cost: Free

When: Dec. 5, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Where: 801 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20001

More: adoptionfosterexpo.org

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

SPORTS



Eric Kirlew and the South Lakes football team lost to Westfield 24-13 in the 6A North quarterfinals on Nov. 20 at Westfield High School.



PHOTO BY WILL PALENSCAR

South Lakes quarterback Devin Miles throws a pass against Westfield in the 6A North quarterfinals on Nov. 20 at Westfield High School.

South Lakes Football Falls to Westfield in Quarterfinals

Seahawks finish season with 9-3 record.

BY WILL PALENSCAR
FOR THE CONNECTION

The No. 3-seed Westfield football team overcame a fourth-quarter deficit to defeat No. 6 South Lakes 24-13 on Nov. 20 in the 6A North region quarterfinals at Westfield High School.

The Bulldogs led 10-6 entering the fourth quarter. The Seahawks answered with a 3-yard touchdown pass from

quarterback Devin Miles to Marvin Grunshie. Khalil Dover's extra point gave South Lakes the advantage at 13-10. However, Westfield's Tavon Greene returned a punt 70 yards for a touchdown and quarterback Tyler Scanlon rushed for his second score of the game with 6:19 remaining to close out scoring.

Westfield will travel to face No. 2 Lake Braddock in the region semifinals at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 28.

Westfield opened up scoring in the second quarter when quarterback Scanlon ran for his first of two scores. The first touchdown was a 22-yard burst which came with 29 seconds left in the second quarter. After Brian Delaney's extra point, Westfield was up 7-0.

In the third quarter, a Westfield punt was downed at the South Lakes 1-yard line. On the next play, South Lakes sophomore quarterback Miles took the snap and fired the ball to receiver Eric Kirlew,

who took the ball 99 yards for the score. After a missed South Lakes extra point, Westfield held a 7-6 edge.

Kirlew finished with four catches for 114 yards.

With 5:15 left in the third quarter Westfield's Delaney kicked a 32-yard field goal to give the Bulldogs a 10-6 lead heading onto the 4th quarter.

South Lakes ends its season with a 9-3 record. Westfield improved to 11-1.

Langley Senior Duenkel Signs with JMU

Langley High School's Halle Duenkel on Nov. 13 signed a National Letter of Intent to play lacrosse at James Madison University.

A four-year starter, she is closing in on the all-time leading scoring records at Langley High School with 112 goals and 53 assists. Duenkel was an offensive weapon on the 2013 Saxon team that went to the state finals. She was named to the Brine All-American team in 2014, and was a Washington Post All-Met honorable mention in 2015. A 6A/5A North All-Region selection in Virginia for lacrosse, she was also first-team all-conference for the past two years.

Duenkel looks to complete her high school career with 13 varsity letters. She is a regional finalist long jumper and all-region field hockey player for the Saxons. She is the president of the Spanish National Honor Society, has a 4.1 GPA, and was a U.S. Lacrosse Academic All-American in 2015.

Outside of school, Duenkel is the founder of the faith-based nonprofit, Compassion in Actions, where she has helped to donate over 540 cubic feet of gently used sporting equipment to poverty-stricken nations. She plans to major in business for James Madison University and contribute to a perennial top 20 Division I lacrosse program.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Langley senior Halle Duenkel on Nov. 13 signed a National Letter of Intent to play lacrosse at James Madison University. Pictured from left: Langley lacrosse coach Maggie Kovacs, Duenkel, Principal Fred Amico and DSA Geoff Noto.

All Four It



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

In fact, it was my idea (and I do think much of it), as it has been previously, but this time, my oncologist felt – to quote my late father: “The idea had merit.” And so, infusing forward, I will be visiting (I use that word loosely), the Infusion Center every four weeks instead of three. A change nearly seven years in the making. Now whether it hastens my demise or simply improves the quality of my life, I certainly don’t know. All I know is what little I know. Nevertheless, given my amazing good fortune to still be alive so many years after my original prognosis “prognosed” otherwise: “13 months to two years,” (as stated by my oncologist on 2/27/09), I suppose I’m living proof that cancer works in mysterious ways and not always according to medical expectations. Thank God!

Perhaps the future – and maybe even the present, is what I make of it. And though it’s difficult – but not impossible – to do so, among the rather grim tales that one hears in the lung cancer/cancer-in-general world, there are success stories, many of which I’ve actually heard. And the more of these stories I hear, the more I feel empowered and realize that even though we have not won the war on cancer, we are winning battles, not just skirmishes. Lung cancer patients are living longer, as I have been fortunate to do; now we’re going to try and improve the quality of that “living longer.”

Not that you readers can’t sort it for yourselves, but extending my infusion schedule by one week from three to four is not merely a 33 percent increase in that interval, it’s an exponential increase in my head; meaning it feels way more significant than one week. It almost seems as if I can breathe normally again (not that I have any cancer-related difficulty breathing other than climbing stairs, lifting heavy objects or otherwise over-exerting myself); the sensation now, the expectation now, is that I have control of my life for an extra week EVERY SINGLE MONTH that I’ve not had for almost seven years. I don’t want to go commercial here, but can you spell relief? For me, it’s not a product, it’s a lifestyle.

However, as relieved as I am, this decision/possibly even accommodation from my oncologist, is not because I’m cured, in remission or cancer-free. No. It’s because I asked and my most recent PET Scan answered by indicating that I was “stable,” according to my oncologist. News, I like to joke, with which I can live. But news which hardly extricates me from “Cancerville.” Rather, news that allows/enables my oncologist to consider some options that many cancer patients are unable to consider. For the record, though: this is unlikely to be permanent and guarantees are not being made. Still, to invoke Hubert H. Humphrey: “I’m pleased as punch.”

As a long-time salesman, I’ve heard many technique advisories. One I will mention here: “Don’t be afraid to take ‘yes’ for an answer.” Well, I’ve learned my lessons. I am going to take “yes” for an answer. I’m not looking for trouble. If my oncologist is happy to oblige/agree with the four-week interval, then who am I to question it? Question it is the last thing I’m going to do. I’m going to embrace and enjoy it. Besides, I deserve it. I only wish there hundreds/thousands of other “terminal” cancer patients receiving similar results and subsequent improvement in the quality of their lives. And though it may be temporary (until the results of my next CT Scan in January, that is), for the time I’m still being: “Oh, what a relief it shall be!”

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

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FAITH

Finding Oil

BY RABBI LEIBEL FAJNALND
DIRECTOR CHABAD OF RESTON - HERNDON

In a world darkened by violence and despair, candles will soon light up the night. From Alaska to Zaire, the gloom and chaos of our planet, will be replaced by the bright luminescence of millions of Menorahs. Society, desperate for some light, will welcome the festival of Chanukah.

Across our community, and the world at large, countless millions will join hands and make a statement; that if a small candle can banish the dark of night, then surely the light and inspiration generated by our acts of goodness and kindness, can, too, illuminate our world.

Regarding the flames of the Menorah, tradition tells us, its purpose is to tell the miraculous story of the cruse of oil - the last bit of oil, undefiled by the ancient Syrian Greek army, that miraculously burned in the Temple's great Menorah for eight days. Because of the miracle it evokes its flames are sacred, and one may not make use of them for personal benefit - save for gazing at them, thus affirming the supremacy of Divine power over physical limitations.

What is the lesson to be learned?

Man's mission is to harness the "light of day," goodness and decency, in order to "illuminate the night;" we strive to cultivate all that is good and G-dly in our world, and direct these positive resources to overcome and transform the negative "dark side" of the world in which we live. This process was exemplified by the lighting of the Temple Menorah: kindled before day's end in the Temple's inner sanctum, the Menorah radiated its Divine glow beyond the Temple to the dark world outside.

But there are times when the darkness invades the Divine lighthouse, dimming the Menorah and defiling its oil. Times when we no longer feel empowered enough, or capable of, or perhaps even interested in illuminating the madness and menace of our world's ills.

In such times, we must search for the hidden "single cruse of pure oil," the undefilable essence of good that is in every single one of us. We must dig below the surface realities of "day" and "night" to unearth the enormous power that we all have, and transform the ugliness that has surrounded us and seemed unbeatable.

Placed where it can be seen from the street, the Chanukah Menorah teaches us to spread that light to all our surroundings.

FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to reston@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday.

Trinity Presbyterian Church, 651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery and childcare are provided and youth and adult Sunday school classes are held prior, from 9:40-10:45 a.m. 703-437-5500 or www.trinityherndon.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center, Unitarian

Community Chanukah Events:

Reservations can be made at www.chabadrh.org.

MENORAH WORKSHOP

Bring your family and friends for a fun pre-Chanukah experience at the Home Depot. Craft your own Menorah with tons of different materials. Release that little Van Gogh hiding inside of you. Enjoy Latkes, donuts, Dreidels, chocolate Gelt, chanukah music, and much more.

When: Sunday, Dec. 6, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Where: The Home Depot, 1651 Reston Parkway, Reston

Fee: Gratis.

\$50 Menorah Sponsorship

\$100 Event Sponsor

CHANUKAH AT LAKE ANNE

Bring family and friends for an evening of Chanukah fun at Lake Anne.

Change the World with your Good Deed! Bring kosher canned food of all sizes, and add it to the Menorah of Kindness later to be donated to the needy.

An exciting holiday celebration, jam packed with activities for the whole family - lots of fun and surprises for all ages. Giant Outdoor Food Cans Menorah - to later be donated to feed the homeless, face painting, salad bar, sizzling latkes, delicious donuts and chocolate gelt, free dreidels, and lots of holiday cheer for the whole family.

When: Tuesday, Dec. 8, 5:30-7 p.m.

Where: Lake Anne Waterfront and the Reston Community Center, 1609 Washington Plaza N # A, Reston

Fee: Gratis.

Event Sponsorship:

Dreidle Sponsor, \$50

Menorah Sponsor, \$100.

Macabee, \$180

CHANUKAH ON ICE

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When: Sunday, Dec. 13, 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Where: Reston Town Center Ice Skating Rink, 11900 Market Street, Reston

Admission: FREE. \$10 to skate/\$12 at the door.

Event Sponsorship:

Dreidle Sponsor, \$50

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Lit at nightfall, it reminds us that even in our darkest moments, our deepest light can be brought to the fore and shine brightly enough for all "still outside" to see and be inspired. Redemption can come to the world with just one more flame.

For more information on the above, email Rabbi Leibel Fajnlnd at rabbi@chabadrh.org.

Universalist Church, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds weekly classes starting Sept. 12, Thursdays 7-8:30 p.m., for the general public which use Buddhist teachings to practice meditation. \$12. 202-986-2257 or www.meditation-dc.org.

St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 1700 Wainwright Drive in Reston, holds Sunday services at 7:45 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. Nursery, Sunday school and adult education available. Morning prayer on Monday at 9:30, Holy Eucharist Wednesday at 8:15 a.m. 703-437-6530 or www.stannes-reston.org.

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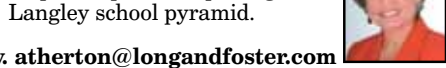
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