

Fun For All at Reston Skating Rink

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The Nodine sisters, from left:
McKenna and Faith took to the ice
with their mom, while Dad took
the family photos and encouraged
from the sidelines.

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McKenna Nodine got it down, and ready to fly across center ice!



Ms. Sybil takes 7-year-old Lukka for a spin.

PHOTOS BY BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Fun For All At Reston Town Center Skating Rink

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

A little drizzle didn't stop those ready to round out the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend with some exercise on the ice at the Pavilion at Reston Town Center. Peter Lindquist of Atlanta was ready to "take a break from eating and shopping! I need to get all the kinks out before the long drive home tomorrow." Like a number of the skaters, Lindquist was in the area visiting family for the holidays. "This is great. The kids love it. Outdoor ice skating is not something we can do in Atlanta. You folks are lucky."

Locals like the Nodine family were also happy to put aside the turkey leftovers for a while and take a few spins. Dad Matthew played observer, while Mom Victoria looked pretty accomplished and daughters Faith and McKenna gave it their all, obviously gaining confidence with each turn around the rink.

The Ice Rink at Reston Town Center is open seven days a week, now until March. Starting at 11 a.m. each day, Sunday-Tuesday they are open until 7 p.m., Wednesday



"I've got you!" Gauge has a hold on his young cousin Jack, showing him the skating ropes with great patience as they went round and round at Reston Town Center Skating Rink. "It's called 'family,'" said 'Nana' Leah.

and Thursday until 10 p.m., and Friday and Saturday until 11 p.m.

In between those opening hours there are special events taking place, with something for everyone in the family. The Saturday Cartoon Skate is a popular happening with



Phelan's having fun!

the younger crowd. Costumed cartoon characters share the ice and interact with the skaters from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Older siblings will enjoy the Friday night "Rock and Skate" from 8-10 p.m., and on Thursday nights, from 6-9 p.m., college students get \$2 off the regular \$10 general adult admission with their valid student identification. If you and/or your family are avid skaters, or just ready to get into the sport, season and family passes are probably your best bet.

No skates buried anywhere in your base-

ment storage room? No problem. There are some 500 pairs available for rental in sizes 8 toddler to Men's 13, in both figure skating and hockey styles. A bit shaky on those blades? Still no problem. Group skating lessons are offered to enthusiasts of all skill levels from rail-clinging beginners to those who've got the twirls and backwards one-legged swan moves already under control. The rink can also be a creative alternative for birthday parties, corporate outings and group skates. Packages are available for all of those events.

In keeping with the "season of giving" Reston Town Center Ice Skate even offers "Edu-Skate" opportunities, ways to fundraise and ways to support local schools. Your warm heart will serve you well on that cold ice.

1818 Discovery Street in Reston, alongside the rink, is the place to book, get more information, and rent those skates. Call the Skate Hotline at 703-709-6300. More information is available on the Reston Town Center website at www.restontowncenter.com, including a link to the "learn to skate" site. Enjoy the season!

Leila Gordon Receives Leadership Award

RCCE executive director recognized by Leadership Fairfax.

Leadership Fairfax, Inc. (LFI) honored Leila Gordon, executive director of Reston Community Center as the recipient of the 2015 Northern Virginia Regional Leadership Award. The award, presented Thursday, Dec. 3 at LFI's annual Northern Virginia Leadership Awards luncheon at the Waterford Fair Oaks, recognized Gordon's dedica-

tion and leadership in the Northern Virginia community.

Leadership Fairfax highlighted Gordon's significant career-long service to Reston and her leadership that focuses on enhancing the quality of life for everyone. Her recent notable accomplishments include her role as Chair of the Fairfax County Master Arts Plan Task Force. The Task Force will provide Fairfax County with a plan that guides development of cultural facilities and public art across the County's many different communities. The Task Force envisions the results will reflect the County's diversity, consider existing facilities, and respond to future growth.

"Thank you all so much for this extraor-



Leila Gordon

dinary honor and for the inspiration and joy of working with you," Gordon said. "Leadership Fairfax helps make all of our communities places where everyone - regardless of their identity, religion, roots or

circumstances - can dream big. I am humbled and touched to be recognized by this remarkable group of leaders."

Leila Gordon has been leading RCC since April 2008. She is active in a variety of civic and cultural organizations including the Arts Council of Fairfax County, Initiative for Public Art - Reston, Greater Reston Arts Center, Reston Historic Trust, Cornerstones and Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce among others. Gordon is a graduate of Virginia Tech University and earned her Master's Degree from Florida State University. She is married to Robert Gordon and they have three children and three grandchildren.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



The Pearl Fine Teas pop up shop at the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station offers a variety of tea and teaware. Most of the vendors are open from 3 to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday until Dec. 24.



PHOTOS BY RYAN DUNN/THE CONNECTION

The pop-up market at Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station is Comstock's initiative for businesses to try a small retail space, about 100 square feet. At the end of December, many of the shops will close to be replaced by new vendors.

Urban Pop at Reston Station Small business try retail At Reston Wiehle Avenue.

BY RYAN DUNN
THE CONNECTION

Visitors to Reston Station may have noticed glass jewel housing on the north side of the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station. These pop-up stores are housing emerging and established artisan brands. The Urban Pop Shop opened in November at Reston Station, welcoming the holiday season. "Our Urban Pop lends vitality to the Plaza, and offers our commuters and neighbors an easy shopping experience. The Smart Markets Farmers' Market experience each Wednesday afternoon has been very popular, and we're confident that this 'first taste' of a different retail experience will generate interest from other entrepreneurs," said Maggie Parker, director of communications with Comstock Partners LC.

Several vendors are traveling in from Washington, D.C., and like the commuters, can use the Silver Line Metro when they close their shops. "Reston seems really nice," said Soyini George, owner of Yinibini, LLC. Yinibini Baby is handmade clothing and accessories for little ones. The company was recognized by Washington City Paper's BEST of DC, Best Local Crafter for the year.

Most of the vendors are open 3 to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday until Dec. 24. Select vendors offer weekend hours.

"I love this, because it is really nice to be able to pick up something," said Vienna resident and Silver Line commuter Eileen Scherzinger. Scherzinger made a purchase at the station from D.C. based Co Co. Sala, a restaurant and chocolate boutique. Phase Two of the "Urban Pop Active" is scheduled to open Spring 2016, and will include an outdoor piazza entertainment area in an open concept setting, revealing oriented pathways and gathering spots.

Reston resident Rachel Wood, owner of Scrawl Books, recently welcomed New York Times Bestselling author Kwame Alexander to her pop-up station. "This is a great way to start out," said Wood, who plans to open an independent bookstore. Wood offers a good selection of books at her stand. "Some books for holiday gifts, and some books people can read on the metro," said Wood. Reston resident, graphic designer and knitter Janice Everett displays handmade scarves, gloves and hats in her space, WitKnits. For many it is a great introduction to retail business at the Wiehle Avenue area neighborhood.

Elise Scott, Chief Leaf and owner of Pearl



PHOTO PROVIDED BY COMSTOCK PARTNERS LC

The Arthur Christine pop up shop on the north side of the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station. The Urban Pop leases are short-term, but for the holiday launch see: Pearl Fine Teas, Scrawl Books, Cloud Terre, Co Co. Sala, Yinibini Baby, WitKnits (also jewelry from UrbanJule), Arthur Christine, and Scrawl Books.

Fine Teas, has welcomed visitors seeking tea and teaware at her stand on the Reston Station plaza. Pearl Fine Teas offers a broad

selection, including Darjeeling organic and Earl Grey de la Crème. "We are happy to be here and to get to know the Reston community," said Becky Waddell, owner of Be Clean skin care shop. Waddell, a self-described "ingredient label purist," opened her D.C. studio in May.

Starting next year, Reston Station residents will live at Comstock's BLVD apartments. Farmers Restaurant Group (FRG), the company for the Founding Farmers and Farmers Fishers Bakers restaurants in D.C., Maryland, and Northern Virginia, signed a lease for approximately 10,000 square feet of restaurant space in the heart of Reston Station's urban core. Reston's Wiehle Avenue is currently the final point of the Silver Line, which is planned to extend to Dulles Airport in Loudoun County. Officials with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority estimate passenger service for Silver Line Phase 2 will begin in 2020.

The pop-up market is Comstock's initiative for businesses to try a small retail space, about 100 square feet. At the end of December, many of the shops will close. Urban Pop is signing up vendors for next month's occupancy. For more information and leasing opportunities at Urban Pop, visit www.urbanpopreston.com.

Reston Hospital Center Now Offering Newest Robotic Technology

HCA Virginia's Reston Hospital Center is the first in Northern Virginia – and only the second in Virginia – to successfully perform surgery using the new da Vinci Xi robot, a surgical platform designed to enable complex surgery using a minimally invasive approach.

"The new Xi system is a great advancement for surgery," said Brett Sachse, M.D., section chief of general surgery at Reston Hospital Center and the first to use this new technology. "Patients who

have robotic surgery have less pain, a faster return to work, and overall higher satisfaction."

According to Sachse, the new Xi system has a smaller camera with better image quality, more precise instruments, wider range of mobility, and enhanced precision which will improve the patient experience even more.

"I am proud of Reston Hospital Center for being a leader in the area as the only hospital with this technology, and I am honored to be able to provide this state of the

art advancement to my patients," said Sachse.

Intuitive Surgical, Inc. introduced the da Vinci Xi to the U.S. in April after receiving clearance from the FDA. The system was designed with the goal of further advancing technology used in minimally invasive surgery and has broader capabilities than prior generations. The da Vinci Xi provides surgeons with superior visualization, greater precision, and enhanced dexterity compared to other surgical approaches.

"This technology reflects our steadfast

commitment to ensuring the highest standards of care for our patients," said John Deardorff, CEO of Reston Hospital Center. "We are proud to offer the best healthcare, clinical excellence, and a quality medical experience to meet our patients' needs."

In addition to the new da Vinci Xi, Reston Hospital Center has the region's only Mazor Robotics Renaissance Guidance System for spine surgery, creating the most comprehensive robotic program in Northern Virginia.

News



Mary Cook, a South Lakes High School senior, celebrates the holidays on stage as Persephone in Conservatory Ballet's "The Nutcracker."



South Lakes High School senior Sara Petrosian enchants audiences performing as the Sugar Plum Fairy.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Conservatory Ballet's The "Nutcracker" Spreading Holiday Cheer

More than 85 area students make holiday magic come to life performing in Conservatory Ballet's 43rd annual production of The Nutcracker. Performances run Wednesday, Dec. 9 through Sunday, Dec. 13 at the Reston Community Center located in the Hunters Woods Village Center. In addition to six full-length performances,

there are two shortened toddler matinees that run 1 hour 30 minutes. Tickets can be purchased online at www.restoncommunitycenter.com; by phone at 703-476-4500, press 3; and in person at the box office on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 4-9 p.m., Saturday: 1-5 pm, and two hours prior to curtain time.

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OPINION

Safety Net for Holiday Celebrations

It's an opportunity to talk about responsibility, alcohol and planning ahead.

The holiday party season is here, and we will almost all be celebrating in some way. Some ways will involve celebrations that include alcohol. It's up to you to make a plan to get home safely.

Plan to bring a designated driver. Plan to party (and live) where you can take public transportation. Plan to celebrate at home or someplace where you can spend the night. Plan to abstain.

And if all of that fails, the Washington Regional Alcohol Project has a safety net for you.

WRAP, a local nonprofit organization, will offer free cab rides to would-be impaired drivers throughout Northern Virginia during the winter holidays.

The annual Holiday SoberRide program will operate nightly from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. starting Friday, Dec. 11, 2015, and continuing until Thursday, Jan. 1, 2016 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period.

During these times, area residents 21-and-over, celebrating with alcohol can call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI for a no-cost (up to \$30 fare), safe way home. Callers will be responsible for fare amounts over \$30.

WRAP also offers free cab rides for other

holidays, including Halloween, Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo, and more.

Concerns about consequences of driving under the influence are well founded.

In Fairfax County in 2014 there were 740 alcohol-related crashes, which included 12 alcohol related fatalities and 476 alcohol related injuries. (Overall in Fairfax County in 2014, there were 13,680 total crashes including 32 fatalities and 7,649 injuries.)

In 2014, there were no fatal vehicular accidents in the City of Alexandria. But of the 1,777 total crashes, 99 were alcohol-related; and of the 757 injuries in crashes, 60 were alcohol-related.

In Arlington in 2014, there were 235 alcohol related crashes, with two alcohol-related fatalities and 78 alcohol related injuries. (Overall in Arlington in 2014, there were 2,469 with five fatalities and 1,094 injuries.)

In 2013, 10,076 people were killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, accounting for nearly one-third of all traffic-related deaths in the United States, according to the CDC. Tens of thousands more were injured. Holidays lead to an increase in impaired driving, the Christmas through New Year season in particular.

Since 1993, WRAP's SoberRide program has provided more than 63,000 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Safe Ride Home

WRAP's 2015 Holiday SoberRide program will be offered from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. nightly from Dec. 11, 2015 to Jan. 1, 2016. To receive a free cab ride home (up to a \$30 fare), call 800-200-8294 (TAXI). You must be 21 or older to use the SoberRide service. See www.SoberRide.com.

We know that many young people over 21 are living at home with parents, or will be visiting for the holidays. Parents, be brave. Have a conversation with your children, whether they are under or over 21. Be sure those over 21 have a plan, and are equipped with the SoberRide number.

SoberRide is not available for underage drinkers, but parents still should talk to their children about their plans, and tell them out loud that you expect them not to drive impaired and not to get into a car with an impaired driver.

Tell them to call you, and you'll come get them if necessary.

The consequences and vulnerabilities of drinking to excess are significant, more so for underage drinkers and young adults, even beyond drinking and driving. Don't let the opportunity to talk about it pass you by.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

COMMENTARY

The Passing of an Era

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

Last week I made a journey to Norfolk, Va., to say a final goodbye to a former colleague in the House of Delegates, Thomas W. Moss, Jr., who passed away. He was more than just a member, however, he was Speaker of the House from 1991 to 2000. His service in the House from 1966 to 2002 spanned a passing of an era in Virginia's history, and he was an important transition figure.

Speaker Moss was first elected to the House of Delegates as an anti-establishment Democrat. His campaign slogan, "Get Norfolk Out of the Byrd Cage," reflected the fact that while a Democratic-controlled political machine dominated the state since Reconstruction it was not good for urban areas like Norfolk. That machine was headed from the 1930s by Governor and then Senator Harry F. Byrd, Sr., a tight-fisted conservative who called himself a Democrat but could more appropriately

be labeled a Dixiecrat as many white Southerners were known. Byrd vehemently opposed racial desegregation of Virginia's schools, and his opposition to government spending kept Virginia a backward state for decades. Mr. Moss was a national Democrat and succeeded in getting himself elected to the House of Delegates where he was in the minority among the more conservative members. Changes in Virginia's political alignment came about because of the work of leaders like Moss working within the system and federal laws and court decisions influencing the system from the outside.

Getting rid of the poll tax and other restrictive voting laws that kept mostly African Americans from voting, passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and court decisions on redistricting brought about a shift of power where Del-



egate Moss as a more progressive member became Speaker and the more conservative Democrats switched parties and became Republicans. Eventually this realignment of political allegiance and federally-enforced fairer representation among the regions of the state led to Speaker Moss losing his leadership role in 2000. He retired from the House after the next term when the new Republican majority drew him into a legislative district with another Democrat.

He was elected Treasurer of the City of Norfolk where he served until January 2014.

Virginia became more progressive during Mr. Moss's tenure—in the areas of public school spending, investments in higher education, improved mental health and social service programs, and roads. In areas of civil rights it languished. The Equal Rights Amend-

ment (ERA) for women was opposed by Mr. Moss until he was challenged by a woman who came close to defeating him in a primary. Virginia still has not passed the ERA. Talk with anyone who knew him and you are likely to get a funny story about him. His sense of humor was always evident no matter how serious the moment. Sometimes his wisecracks challenged the boundaries of social acceptance. During tense times in the legislature his levity helped move the business along.

Not only did Mr. Moss get Norfolk and Virginia out of the Byrd cage, he helped move the state into a modern era where public education and strong institutions of higher education were valued and transportation and infrastructure were recognized as critical investments.

Speaker Moss provided leadership during the passing of an era for which he will be remembered. Whether his legacy will be built upon or neglected is in part in the hands of those who mourned him last week.

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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.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 9

Holiday Centerpiece Craft. 1:30-3:30 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Join creating a beautiful seasonal decoration. We will have many options for you to choose from to make your floral decoration unique and an instructor to guide you along the way. Cost: \$22/resident; \$33/non-resident. Email Ashleigh@reston.org or call 703-435-6577 for more information.

Tinsel 'n Tinis Annual Holiday Celebration. 6-9 p.m. Harrison at Reston Town Center 1800 Jonathan Way, Reston. This festive event includes fantastic networking in a fabulous, spacious venue, and food and drinks, including the signature Chamber-tini! Price varies. Registration at <http://www.restonchamber.org/events>.

Classic Cinema Series. 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join us for a nostalgic holiday favorite. Adults. 703-689-2700.

Reston Sings! Handel's Messiah. 7:30 p.m. St. John Neumann Catholic Church Chapel, 11900 Lawyers Road, Reston. Join the chorus this holiday season with The Reston Chorale's annual Messiah Sing-Along. A treasured holiday tradition, this event also benefits Cornerstones (formerly Reston Interfaith.) Bring a new or gently used coat — or new hat, gloves, socks or scarf — and receive \$5 off the price of admission. www.restonchorale.org.

WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 9-13

Conservatory Ballet's "The Nutcracker." Check for times. Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. More than 85 area students make holiday magic come to life performing in Conservatory Ballet's 43rd annual production of The Nutcracker. www.restoncommunitycenter.com. 703-476-

Ongoing

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. 12 and 19. 4-9 p.m. Departures on Market Street in front of Talbots at Reston Town Center. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free. All proceeds benefit local charities. www.restontowncenter.com/holidays.
Mini-Train Rides. Sundays, Dec. 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.
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.
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>.

4500.

FRIDAY/DEC. 11

Encore Chorale Holiday Choral Concert. 7:30 p.m. United Christian Parish, 11508 North Shore Drive, Reston. Features holiday and seasonal pieces. Guest artist for the concert will be violinist Heather Haughn of the West Shore Trio. Audience will be invited to join the chorale in a sing-along of holiday favorites. Free. <http://encorecreativity.org>. 301-261-5747.

SATURDAY/DEC. 12

Train Ride and Santa Visit. Noon-6 p.m. Lake Fairfax Park, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Engine #62 of the Resources Railroad will be taking visitors for a spin around the park. See the lighted Christmas tree and inflatable seasonal decorations. Make a holiday project to take home, gather around the campfire and listen to holiday music, and enjoy warm drinks and treats from the food vendor. \$10. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/lakefairfax>. 703-471-5414.

Community Irish Ceili and Set Dance. 6:30-10 p.m. Frying Pan Park Visitors Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Call for directions, 703-437-9101. Wear flat, comfortable shoes and lightweight clothing. Holiday headgear for a chance at an extra door prize ticket. \$15. 703-631-9179.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 12-13

Movies and Mimosas—"A Christmas Story." 3-5 p.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. bowtiecinemas.com. 703-318-1801.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 16

Senior Movie Day. 9:15 a.m. Reston Bow-Tie Cinemas 11940 Market St. Reston. The Reston Association, in cooperation with Reston Town Center Bow Tie Cinemas, presents, "Meet Me at the Movies". Join us on the fourth Wednesday of each month; 9:15 a.m. doors open, 10 a.m. movie ("A Walk in the Woods") starts. Refreshments are provided and door

prizes are distributed prior to the movie. 703-435-6530.
Toys for Tots Collection Event. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Ice Skating Pavilion, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. U.S. Marines will be on site accepting unwrapped toys and cash donations to help children's holiday wishes come true. restontowncenter.com/holidays.

SATURDAY/DEC. 19

Tour de Lights. 4:40-6 p.m. Lake Anne Plaza Lake Anne Plaza, 11404 Washington Plaza, Reston. You are invited to join Reston Association's Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee for our fourth annual Reston Tour de Lights. An evening bike ride to view some of Reston's best holiday lights. We will travel approximately 10 miles. Riders are required to have a front light and red, rear light. Helmet strongly recommended and required if under 15 years old. Free. For registration contact Craig Clark 703-689-0152, ccbike@verizon.net or Burton Griffith 408-705-2652, burtongc@yahoo.com.

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Melinda Doolittle.

Fresh, Entrancing Musical Evening

Soulful singer Melinda Doolittle at CenterStage.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

She wowed judges and audiences alike performing on season six of “American Idol.” Now Melinda Doolittle is coming to Reston’s CenterStage to present a cozy evening filled with soulfully sweet arrangements of songs ranging from “Home” from the musical “The Wiz,” to American Songbook favorites such as “Let’s Stay Together,” “The Man That Got Away,” “At Last” — to mention a few.

Doolittle, who has performed at illustrious venues such as the White House, the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall, will bring her evening of treasured music into a program she calls “It Must Be Love.” She will be accompanied by a piano.

In an interview, Doolittle indicated that she loved “to sing about love and I definitely picked songs that told my story well. Sometimes you hear a song and you feel like whoever wrote it must have been living your exact life...those are the songs I will put into this show.”

Doolittle enjoys touring. “‘It Must Be Love’ is a fun show to do! It takes the audience on a

Where and When

Melinda Doolittle presents “It Must Be Love” at CenterStage, Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Performance: Saturday, Dec. 19. Tickets: Reston \$25, Non-Reston Ticket Price: \$35. Call 703-476-4500 or visit: www.restoncommunitycenter.com.

journey through the ups and downs of love with classic soul, Broadway and jazz songs they’re sure to recognize,” said Doolittle. “The journey is funny, fast and will occasionally pull on heartstrings too.”

When performing, one of Doolittle’s favorite parts “is watching the audience relate in their own way to each song. I love it!” Each show becomes unique in its own way since she has freedom to interact with the audience in what she calls “a musical conversation.”

When asked about scheduling Doolittle for Reston’s CenterStage through the Professional Touring Artists Series, Paul Douglas Michnewicz, arts and events director, Reston Community Center, said, “I vowed never to watch ‘American Idol’ again when she did not win. Melinda Doolittle is such a remarkable artist and I am so happy that she will be on CenterStage so that I can tell her in person what a fan I am of hers.”

Beyond singing, Doolittle is involved with community outreach and support. “Basically, I love to see people live the best life possible...especially children.” She has partnered with organizations such as “Malaria No More” and the Ronald McDonald House to make a difference for children.

As for her “American Idol” appearances, “I’m indebted to them for the opportunity to do what I love.”

And now local audiences can see Melinda Doolittle all for themselves.

SPORTS



South Lakes sophomore Emmanuel Aghayere dunks against Archbishop Carroll on Dec. 4.



Marcus Cherry led South Lakes with 21 points during the Seahawks’ 74-60 win over Archbishop Carroll on Dec. 4.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

A Family Tradition, Another Aghayere Takes Charge

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

With his team building an early lead against Archbishop Carroll, South Lakes sophomore Emmanuel Aghayere threw down a two-handed dunk in the opening quarter of Friday’s contest, part of a 10-0 Seahawks run.

With 2 minutes remaining in the first half, Aghayere, a physical, 6-foot-3 forward, took a charge with South Lakes leading by 23.

Aghayere took another charge in the opening minute of third quarter. Less than 20 seconds later, he scored and drew a foul at the other end.

The South Lakes boys’ basketball team is young, athletic and full of energy. On Dec. 4, one night after the Seahawks squandered a lead during a 63-56 loss to Robinson, Aghayere’s high-energy play helped South Lakes bounce back with a 74-60 victory over Archbishop Carroll during the second day of the “Readers are Leaders Tip Off” at South Lakes High School.

AGHAYERE finished with 16 points, dunked twice and took multiple charges, leading the Seahawks to their first win of the 2015-16 season.

“High energy, big-time motor, much like his sister,” is how South Lakes head coach Andrew Duggan described Aghayere, comparing him to his sister, Princess Aghayere, a 2015 South Lakes graduate and former basketball standout at the school. ... “I think he enjoys stepping in and taking a charge. It’s a matter of pride and honor. ... We’re hoping something like that rubs off on other guys. I see him as a leader. I see him as a hard worker.”

How does Aghayere decide when it’s time to block a shot and when it’s time to take a charge?

“You can tell when a guy is coming down the lane

hard it’s time to take a charge,” he said. “Charges help the team. It just boosts our morale and helps everyone get hyped.”

The previous three seasons, South Lakes was led by standout guard Brandon Kamga, who helped the Seahawks win the 2014 Conference 6 championship. Kamga graduated in 2015 and is now a freshman on the Northeastern University men’s basketball team. This year, South Lakes features a nucleus of young talent, led by Aghayere and a trio of talented guards.

Marcus Cherry, a 6-foot-1 junior, led South Lakes with 21 points on Friday. He scored 10 points in the first quarter, including a pair of 3-pointers.

Duggan described sophomore guard Damon Johnson as a high-energy player and a strong defender. Johnson finished with 12 points.

Cameron Savage, a 5-foot-10 freshman, is the team’s starting point guard.

“I think we’re just all really unselfish,” Cherry said. “We all can get our shots pretty easy because we all have that confidence when we’re dribbling the ball and we all feel we can put the ball in the basket any time we need to. We all feed off each other really well.” Senior guard Marvin Grunshie finished with seven points on Friday and was one of 12 Seahawks to score against Robinson.

SOUTH LAKES faced Woodson on Tuesday, after The Connection’s deadline. The Seahawks will travel to face Westfield at 7:15 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 9 and will take on rival Herndon on the road at 7:15 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 11.

“The group is very special,” Duggan said. “Part of it is their athleticism, their basketball skills and their knowledge and they’re smart kids and they work hard, but even when they’re down, they’re still pretty dang good.”

HomeLifeStyle



Designers at Merrifield Garden Center spend almost one year creating holiday displays.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MERRIFIELD GARDEN CENTER

This rustic holiday space incorporates branches and animals.

Ideas for Decking the Halls Local designers create opulent holiday designs.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

From traditional to glamorous, fresh to faux and high-end to old school, local tastemakers tell how they create holiday dazzling holiday design extravaganzas.

Karen Velehoski and the rest of the design team at Merrifield Garden Center in Fair Oaks spend nearly a year planning and building the holiday displays that overtake each store during the Yuletide season.

In creating the holiday wonderlands, the designers assemble each space around a theme, maintaining consistency in style, color and texture. Their goal is to dream up design concepts that will inspire.

"We hope that people will get ideas for their own homes, but the first step is to focus on color," said Velehoski. "You can incorporate family heirlooms or decorations that you've had for years if you coordinate the colors. You can really use ribbons to tie the colors together easily."

For example, they designed a rustic space that draws inspiration from a snow-covered forest. "It's decorated with things like branches, berries, birds and other outdoor

animals," said Velehoski. "And we used red, plaid ribbon to keep the outdoorsy feel."

There's another winter scene that sparkles with décor in hues of gold, copper and platinum, and a classic display that pays homage to time-honored traditions. "It appeals to people who like greens, reds and poinsettias," said Velehoski. "This year we incorporated a little bit of black with that red, white and green which is pretty."

There's even inspiration for those with a penchant for pastels. "It has an icy look," said Velehoski. "It has an icy, frozen winter wonderland feel with snowflakes and icicles. We used a lot of pale blue, pink and a touch of silver."

Simple, clean and fresh are words that Gretchen Fuss, an interior designer with Tchoupitoulas Furnishings in Alexandria, uses to characterize her holiday design aesthetic.

"I don't like to over do it when it comes to holiday design," she said. "I love the mood and ambiance of white lights. It changes the feel of a room. I

like candlelit rooms."

Fuss says she uses a minimalist approach to incorporating family heirlooms with new acquisitions. "I do little vignettes where I'll have a piece, for example, that my mother once used to store ornaments in, and I'll use that to display fresh greenery."

The designer has even created holiday adornments of her own. "I've made holiday sculptures," said Fuss. "I even made little flower-shaped sculptures that I put together to make a six-foot tall Christmas tree."

Fuss adds white back-lighting, which shines through each flower petal, illuminating the tree.

Candles, ribbons and bows hanging on a mantle, swags of greenery and garlands draped over wall art and mirrors are what visitors who enter the spaces created by the designers of Patina Polished Living in Alexandria will see.

"... A string of lights combined with ornaments might flow down the center of a table, or shine inside a cloche combined

with a winter wonderland theme," said designer Amanda Mertins.

For an exterior space, Mertins advises using a twinkling wreath or a lit arrangement in an urn to greet guests at the front door.

Maintaining thematic consistency is a precept that designer Jenne Whitlaw, of GTM Architects in Bethesda, Md., recommends when conceiving ideas for holiday spaces. "Pick a central focal point, and echo the sentiment around the space, for both indoor and outdoor," she said. "This allows the eye to bounce around your holiday canvas, experiencing asymmetrical visual harmony and balance."

For those who prefer holiday decor in muted hues, Whitlaw suggests, "neutrals [like] winter white and pale greys, when paired with light, reflective metallics and sparkle add elegance and a sense of timeless wonder to every room."

For a touch of whimsy, Whitlaw recommends adding decorations to unexpected places. "For a surprising embellishment, how about placing ornaments around the vanity in your powder room?" asks Whitlaw. "Chandeliers are also a perfect theatre in the round for cascading trinkets and greenery."

**"I love the mood and
ambiance of white lights."**

— Gretchen Fuss,
Tchoupitoulas Furnishings

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1/6/2016.....Wellbeing, Renewal, Resolutions
1/13/2016.....HomeLifeStyle
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I Beg Your Indulgence

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Even after seven years as a patient in the cancer whirl, I still find it emotionally difficult to promptly return a well-meaning phone call or a likewise intended e-mail when the message/content is clearly having to do with my health and welfare. Not that I don't appreciate, and on many levels, most likely need these kinds of communications; nevertheless, the challenge of summoning up the intestinal fortitude to discuss, detail, outline, rehash, speculate, articulate, wonder, hope, fear, introspect, extrovert, try to make light of and not be made heavy by, in addition to all the other miscellaneous anxieties a cancer patient experiences 24/7, is often too much. And as regularly as we are left alone with our own thoughts, sometimes, the emotional road less traveled is the one fraught with fewer bumps and bruises.

Not that I want to get stupid and live in a "cone of silence," where I can't be heard and others can't hear me; that wouldn't be smart. Still, as often as not, the effort to respond in kind is not respectfully honored. It's an odd reaction to be sure. Receiving inquiries is one thing, a helpful thing, almost like "Thing" from "The Addams family," but not responding is quite another thing. It's not exactly akin to trudging through the snow – uphill, in winter, as our parents all claimed they did, but the emotional weight of it is something that I'm probably having difficulty explaining – as much as I'm trying.

Maybe this is all just an excuse to obfuscate my ill-mannered and disrespectful negligence. How poorly was I raised that I don't know enough to provide a common courtesy? People ask, you answer. When one is sick or "diseased," and friends, family and co-workers reach out, one is not supposed to pull back, right? I should appreciate their support and absorb whatever positive energy/good vibrations they're sending. Let's face it, as I do most days; living with cancer is not exactly a solitary pursuit. Although it may seem like it, at home, alone, especially at night when tossing and turning and not sleeping becomes an Olympic sport, the cancer experience is not a meal best served cold, if you know what I mean.

Regular interaction with humans, and I don't mean radio, television or Internet, is the next best thing to being there/reaching out and actually touching someone or being touched (which is likely another benefit). Moreover, being made to feel alive and well – and dare I say, normal (not diagnosed with cancer), is the goal, but the figurative elephant in our world is not just in one room, one time; it's in every room all the time; it's her but not seen. But difficult to ignore nonetheless.

Stage IV lung cancer is like that. It's typical that when symptoms manifest themselves, the patient is already inoperable and tumors which gave the patient no indication that they even existed, have now metastasized (moved/grown). Ergo, the staging. There is no stage V, by the way. This is not to imply that it's ever too late. It's just hard to assimilate when the diagnosis comes out of the blue and previously you were feeling in the pink. In this context, the silence of it (meaning the lack of symptoms) was not golden; any more than my silence now in not responding to well-wishers is golden. It's not. It's self-indulgent and most times I readily acknowledge it. However, I feel powerless to affect it. Please don't take my lack of a timely response personally. I'm just trying to navigate as best I can. As George Costanza made famous on a long-ago "Seinfeld" episode: "It's not you. If it's anybody, it's me..."

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

Faith Community Helps Epiphany Episcopal Church with Hypothermia Shelter

Hypothermia shelter will require more volunteers than total members at Epiphany Episcopal Church.

Leaders at Herndon's Epiphany Episcopal Church knew they would need help: they had committed to hosting a hypothermia shelter for the area's homeless population Christmas week, but the number of people required to operate it outnumbered their entire congregation.

So they reached out for help, and neighboring faith and service communities responded.

One month before the shelter is scheduled to open its doors to as many as 49 homeless men and women, eight organizations have committed to contribute either volunteers or supplies needed to operate the shelter. They include FACETS, Epiphany Episcopal, St. Anne's Episcopal, St. Francis Episcopal, New Hope Baptist, Unitarian

Universalist of Sterling, Congregation Beth Emeth, and Boy Scout Troop 1257, with more expected to join.

Epiphany counts about 165 households in its membership but must fill 180 volunteer slots to operate the shelter, which will be open from the evening of Dec. 20 to the morning of Dec. 27 at the church on the corner of Fairfax County Parkway and Franklin Farm Road.

"We're foolish enough to believe that we can make a difference in this world, welcoming our neighbors with open hearts and extended hands, offering a home to those in need this holiday," Epiphany's Rev. Hillary West said. "Our Christmas is made more holy through this opportunity to serve."

The shelter will be open to homeless men and women 5 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. each day, except Christmas, when it will remain open all day. Operating these shelters is a volunteer-intensive effort, with about 25 volunteer slots of about three to four hours that must be filled every day the shelter operates. Volunteers will help transport guests to the shelter, set up the shelter, prepare and serve dinner, breakfast and a bagged lunch, provide entertainment and compan-

ionship, be on hand overnight, and close the shelter in the morning. On Christmas Day, the shelter will remain open to provide shelter, a holiday dinner, and church services for any who wish to attend and participate.

"Last year's shelter experience left us all with wonderful memories," said Celeste Meyer, Epiphany co-lead organizer for the shelter. "We look forward again this year to providing a place that is warm and welcoming, where our guests can have a hot meal, experience some companionship, and be treated with dignity." While Epiphany is hosting the shelter, it is operated by FACETS, a Fairfax County-based poverty relief organization. FACETS organizes a series of hypothermia shelters at different faith-based institutions across Fairfax County from November to March, with each institution hosting and staffing the shelter for a week. Last year FACETS hypothermia shelters served 244 individuals.

For more information or to volunteer, visit <http://www.coe.org/shelter>. For more information about FACETS shelters, visit <http://facetscares.org/programs/hypothermia-prevention-and-response-program/>.

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.

The **Church of the Brethren** will hold the Battle of Dranesville Peace Service at 7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 20, the anniversary of the Battle of Dranesville fought in 1861. Hear about the battle, the Brethren and the war. Artifacts from the battle will be on display. Refreshments will be served. The church is located at 11500 Leesburg Pike, Herndon. 703-430-7872.

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 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.

Adult Sunday school will be held 9:30 a.m. Sundays at the Washington Plaza Baptist Church

at Lake Anne Village Center. The group is studying the Gospel of Mark. Services follow at 11 a.m.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or www.havenofnova.org for schedules and registration information.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Jewish Outreach Institute offer the Mothers/Parents Circle, an umbrella of free educational events and resources. Jewish rituals, ethics and the creation of a Jewish home, regular meetings and group Shabbats and holidays. Participants include Sha'are Shalom, Congregation Beth Emeth, Temple Rodef Shalom and the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia. ShalomDC.org.

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.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 9

Covenants Committee Meeting. 6:30-9 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. The Covenants Committee is responsible for administering the Use and Maintenance Covenants set forth in the Reston Deed of Dedication. In doing so, the Committee considers and decides violations in accordance with adopted procedures that are found by staff or other Association Members, develops Use and Maintenance Standards, and considers requests for temporary exception permits. 703-435-6530.

Business Education Series Workshop. 8:30-10 a.m. Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce, 1886 Metro Center Drive, Suite 230, Reston. Discover how to fill your pipeline with qualified leads just by improving how you network! In this discussion, James Lawson, Co-Founder & Marketing Strategist of Impact Business Solutions LLC., will show you exactly how to create a simple, yet effective, networking

strategy and system. Cost: free/member; \$15/future member. Registration at <http://www.restonchamber.org/events>.

League of Women Voters Program. 7:30-9 p.m. Hunter Mill District Community Room B., 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. "Money in Politics" will be the topic. Free. Open to all. 202-263-1311. www.lwv-fairfax.org.

Ready, Set, Buy: Preparing for a Spring Home Purchase Webinar. Noon-1 p.m. If you're thinking of purchasing your first home you're probably wondering, am I really ready to make such an important investment? Attend this free webinar to learn the home buying basics you'll need to get ready, get set, and buy. Offered by Northwest Federal Credit Union in Herndon. Register at www.nwfcu.org. Click on Upcoming Events.

THURSDAY/DEC. 10

Workshop: Preparing Your Home For Winter. 6:30-8 p.m. Reston Association, Conference Center, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Contractors will provide information on winterizing the home, home inspections, etc. Free. Comments, questions, and RSVP's, covenantworkshops@reston.org.

THROUGH SATURDAY/DEC. 12.

Wish List Project. Take a look at the wish lists and take this opportunity to spread some cheer this December. Wish List Angels directly help families in area shelters, alternative housing and children in foster care. Make wishes come true by signing up to sponsor a child's wish. Find out how at <http://wishlistangels.com/>.

MONDAY/DEC. 14

Rabbi Jonah Pesner. 8-9 p.m. Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation, 1441 Wiehle Ave., Reston. Discussion by Pesner, director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, entitled "American Judaism and Economic Justice." Free. 703-437-7733.

TUESDAYS/DEC. 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.



— REAL STORIES FROM THE EXPRESS LANES —

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- Stephanie S.
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