



Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

Inside
HOLIDAY
ENTERTAINMENT

Lily Zurenda, 5, of Herndon poses as the "Gingerbread Girl" at the Winter Open House and Santa's Workshop event at the Herndon Library.

Santa Visits Herndon Library

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**Herndon Homes Tour
Showcases Holiday Spirit**

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**SPIRIT Equestrian Program
Gets a Christmas Miracle**

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RESTON TOWN CENTER

HOLIDAYS ARE HERE!

Community Holiday Performances FOUNTAIN SQUARE

December

- 8 Fairfax Christian School, 12:30 pm
- 9 Oak Hill 6th Grade Chorus, 7 pm
- 14 Sunrise Valley Elementary School Chorus, 6:30 pm
- 15 Apostolic Faith Church, 7 pm
- 16 KISD Honor Choir, 5:30 pm
- 17 Calvary Temple Church, 12 pm

THE PROMENADE

December

- 10 The Reston Chorale, 1 pm & 2 pm
Northern Virginia Ukulele Society, 3:30 pm
- 11 Northern Virginia Ukulele Society, 12 pm
The Reston Chorale, 2 pm & 3 pm
- 17 Tenor Tim McKee, 12 pm & 1 pm
Catchin' Toads, 2:30 pm

Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides

SATURDAYS, December 10 & 17, 4 - 9 pm

Mini-Train Rides

SUNDAYS, December 11 & 18, 12 - 4 pm

All proceeds from rides benefit local charities

Reston Town Center Ice Skating Pavilion November until March

Open daily; extended hours on holidays

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Rock N Skate on Fridays

Cartoon Skate on Saturdays

See more at restontowncenter.com/events



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Ice Skating Pavilion
(seasonal)
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The Elden Street Plaza provides ground floor retail, such as a coffee shop, bakery/deli, or small store, as well as a restaurant with outdoor café space that will draw people through the pedestrian street.



The Arts Walk is the heart and life of Comstock's proposal. Framed by the Arts Center on one side and loft units on the other, it is an intimate street with meandering landscaping. Art displays and sculptures can be featured and the street itself can become outdoor space for the Arts Center activities.

Downtown Vision Closer to Reality

Town Council endorses proposal for redevelopment of downtown.

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

During a special meeting on Nov. 30, the Herndon Town Council adopted a resolution that directs town staff to move forward with negotiations on a proposal for the redevelopment of nearly five acres of downtown Herndon.

Reston real estate firm Comstock Partners submitted the supported proposal, which lays out plans to redevelop the area that is bordered by Station Street to the east, Center Street to the west, the Washington and Old Dominion Trail to the north and Elden Street to the south.

One of the goals of the downtown redevelopment is "activating the space with more people living downtown," says Herndon Mayor Lisa Merkel. "Like any real-estate transaction, there will be back-and-forth offers and negotiations. We have some questions and some things that we would like to iron out."

The redevelopment has been years in the making. The town requested proposals last year that were to be tailored to meet specifications laid out in its master plan, which was adopted back in February 2011.

"The real work begins now in negotiating the contract," says Merkel. "There's a lot of work to do to get to a contract that we're comfortable with and that Comstock will accept, but we all want it to be successful and it needs to be financially viable for Comstock and for the town."

It was important to Merkel that the sitting council made the determination of which firm to negotiate with before new councilmembers take office in January.

"It's been the biggest thing that we've worked on in the last two years," she says. "I'm pleased that it came together—finally—while the current council was still



This Station Street Plaza connects the Washington and Old Dominion Trail with Station Street and includes areas for both retail and art.

in office."

THE TOWN'S VISION for the redevelopment calls for a four-story mixed-use residential structure, a three-story mixed-use commercial structure, a jointly-funded public-private parking structure and an 18,000-square-foot arts center.

The proposal by Comstock Partners includes a mixed-use development with 281 luxury apartment units, an 18,000-square-foot arts center, 18,000-square-foot retail space, 760 parking spaces and three public plazas.

While the council prefers Comstock's plan, the town also received one other proposal from the Stout and Teague Company.

The primary differences between the two proposals is that the favored plan fulfills the residential requirement with luxury apartment units while the other envisioned 17 townhomes, 55 condominiums and 105 hotel rooms.

Merkel supports bringing luxury apartments to the downtown area because it is something that Herndon does not offer right now. Hotels are another story.

"We didn't see a screaming need for yet another hotel that may or may not be full and would compete with all of the other hotel assets in the region that serve Dulles Airport," says Maggie Parker, spokesperson for Comstock Partners. "We preferred housing more people on a seven-day-a-week basis."

The town would own the arts center and 280 parking spaces within the parking garage, according to Parker. The private developer would own the housing units, retail space and additional parking units.

"What we need to figure out is all of the responsibilities for the public spaces and their long-term improvements," says Parker.

The plazas would primarily be the town's responsibility, but Comstock has offered to assist in maintaining the spaces, she says.

This would be the third development Comstock has done with a local municipality, says Parker. The first development was

with Fairfax County for the Reston Station neighborhood off the metrorail's Silver Line at the Wiehle-Reston station. The second was with Loudoun County to build a parking structure for the metrorail off the same line. Public meetings and hearings were held over the last year to discuss and evaluate both proposals. If negotiations are successful and a comprehensive agreement draft is developed, the council will hold more public meetings.

IT IS ANTICIPATED that a public hearing about the specific terms of the contract and project will be held in spring 2017. Construction would take 24 months.

"Experience is a good friend," says Parker. "This process should move forward. The devil is in the details, but we're used to doing this and we're really excited to get started to finalize this comprehensive agreement."



Brothers Receive Good Neighbor Award

During a Herndon Town Council meeting on Nov. 29, brothers Peter and James Stalcup of Mississippi Drive in Herndon were recognized by their neighbors and the town of Herndon as recipients of the Good Neighbor Award. Town residents may nominate a family member, friend or neighbor for the award for making noteworthy contributions to improving the quality of life in their neighborhood. Peter Stalcup received the award on his brother's behalf from Mayor Lisa Merkel (center) and members of the town's volunteer Cultivating Community Initiative. Neighbors nominated the brothers for the award because they are always willing to help with yard work, shoveling snow and car repairs.

Court Should Overturn Partisan Redistricting

BY SCOTT SUROVELL
STATE SENATOR (D-36)



COMMENTARY

Virginia is represented by Democrats in all five statewide offices, has voted for a Democratic president three times, yet the Virginia House of Delegates has 66 Republicans and 34 Democrats.

This week, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments on the legality and constitutionality of the last redistricting of Virginia House of Delegates' districts. The court's decision could be monumental for all Virginia voters.

If I could fix one thing to make our government work better at every level, I would reform redistricting. Partisan redistricting abuse has been around since the beginning of American democracy. The term "gerrymander" originates from an 1812 attempt to draw districts favoring Massachusetts Gov. Eldridge Gerry. To be clear, both parties do it, but in the last two decades, gerrymandering has become especially powerful for a few reasons.

First, America is more partisan. Due to multiple and growing sources of information available in today's world, voters are able to self-select their news sources and are exposed to fewer alternative perspectives. This has driven up partisan identification and led to fewer voters who are willing to split their votes between political parties.

Second, and more importantly, computer-enabled mapping software has made it possible to draw districts that are finely crafted. When redistricting was done with index cards shifting precincts days because of ancillary effects and the need to recalculate and balance

district populations.

Today, computing technology analyzes data by census block and in a few seconds can draw a comprehensive set of districts to elect a predicted number from a specific political party while maximizing majority-minority districts.

Over the last 30 years, these political considerations have caused district lines to constantly shift. Many areas constantly move between congressmen, senators and delegates every redistricting cycle. Changed lines leave people confused about their representatives. Census level analysis leaves precincts split requiring local governments to redraw precinct lines to avoid polling places with multiple ballots. This costs taxpayers money and leaves voters confused about their polling place.

Resulting districts are not communities of interest. The 36th Senate district that I represent stretches 60 miles across three counties and two area codes. The 1st Congressional District crosses the 36th District and stretches from Manassas to near Norfolk. Districts should minimize jurisdictional splits, use natural geographical boundaries like rivers and be truly compact and contiguous.

Together, this creates a series of hyper-partisan districts, both Republican and Democratic, which are so safe in general elections that they incentivize incumbents to focus on galvanizing primary voters' support and not the broader electorate. This distorts public policy and increases partisanship when it is time to legislate.

There are two solutions to this problem. First, the legislature could give up redistricting power and transfer it to a bipartisan or non-partisan commission. Incumbent legislators should not pick their voters. I have always supported nonpartisan redistricting and the Virginia State Senate has passed it several times, but it always dies in the hyper-gerrymandered House of Delegates. A legislative solution is highly unlikely.

The real opportunity to remedy this situation lies in the courts. Some courts have thrown out hyper gerrymandered seats using Voting Rights Act provisions. While valuable, this law is not a comprehensive tool because it is limited to preventing racial discrimination and does not address other problems with partisan redistricting. A Wisconsin federal court recently used an analysis based on the 1st and 14th Amendments to invalidate partisan redistricting by focusing on "wasted votes," but did not recommend a remedy.

Courts can often better resolve issues that legislatures cannot. For example, in 1962, numerous legislatures, including Virginia's, refused to redraw districts recognizing the booming suburban populations. The U.S. Supreme Court required Virginia and other states to draw districts based on actual population by adopting the "one man, one vote" rule of the *Baker v. Carr* case.

Today, it is similarly time for the courts to restore democracy to our country and our commonwealth. Hopefully, they will use the Virginia House of Delegates case argued this week to restore democracy to America.

It is an honor to serve as your state senator. If you have any feedback, you can always contact me at scott@scottsuovell.org.

To Be a Delegate

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

The National Conference of State Legislatures sponsors a "Legislators Back to School Day" each year as a way to promote the idea that more legislators should visit their local schools to see the good work they are doing as well as to understand the challenges that school administrators and teachers face. I take advantage of that opportunity and other times I am invited to visit schools in my district and sometimes to visit schools in other areas to learn about special programs. For me the visits are very positive experiences. I continue to be impressed with the outstanding work that our schools are doing especially considering the thousands of children—more than 180,000 in Fairfax County—they have to educate. Ensuring that every child reaches his or her full potential is a continual challenge, but I find administrators and teachers at every level working earnestly and diligently to make sure it happens. The children in our community are amazing! They are for the most part eager learners who are full of questions and curiosity. And they are good citizens.

One question that I get from children that

may be a curiosity of some adults as well is just what is a delegate. I discuss with the students the meaning of "to be delegate" and explain that I am given a delegation of responsibility by the voters of my district to go to the state capitol each year to represent their interests. In most states and at the federal level, members of one house of the legislature are called representatives; they represent their constituents in the legislature just as I am delegated to do by the people who live in my legislative district.

Their follow-up question is a key one that must be answered appropriately if our representative form of government or republic is to be successful: How do I know the interests of my constituents? I give several explanations. My term of office is for two years. When I stand for re-election every two years I tell the voters in my district what I stand for and believe in. Their vote for me is an affirmation that I stand for the kind of things that they want in their government. If I do not represent the interests of my voters, they have an opportunity every two years to take back the delegation of responsibility they have given to me and give it to someone else.

Secondly, I know many of the interests of



COMMENTARY

my constituents because I am out and about in the community all the time. I listen to a lot of people. I encourage people to call or write to me. I try to stay very active in the community to understand my constituents and their needs. I encourage people to respond to my annual constituent survey which you can do at www.kenplum.com. Along with Senator Janet Howell I hold public meetings; the next one is Monday, Dec. 19, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., at the Reston Community Center at Lake Anne. Please come and participate.

Being a delegate is supposed to be a part-time job in Virginia; for me it is a full-time job and a half, but I am very honored to have been entrusted with this delegation of responsibility.

Write The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Send to:

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By e-mail:
north@connectionnewspapers.com

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CALENDAR

Send announcements to www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

ONGOING

All-comers Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running Every Tuesday and Thursday, 6:30 p.m. For beginners or competitive runners, come out for a free, fun, low-key run that's safe and social. 703-689-0999 potomacriverrunning.com

One to One English Conversation Dec. 1 - Dec. 31 Reston Regional Library 11925 Bowman Towne Dr. Reston. Practice your conversation skills with a volunteer. Call to register Mondays after 1 p.m.

LRA "Dreams, Creates, Inspires" at Ernst Center Nov. 22 through Dec. 18 The exhibit is free and the gallery is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 am - 5:00 pm. at the Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center on the Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus, Building CE, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale.

The League of Reston Artists displays paintings, drawings, mixed media, photographs and two-dimensional works suitable for wall hanging. www.leagueofrestonartists.org

Mini-Train Rides 12 - 4 p.m. November 27 through December 18. Departures on Market Street next to Talbots 11900 Market Street, Reston Town Center. Enjoy train rides through Reston Town Center every Sunday through December 18. Donations accepted - all proceeds benefit local charities. restontowncenter.com/holidays

Retrospective Photography Exhibit Dec. 1 - 31 9 a.m. - 9 p.m. Daily except Sunday when the RCC



On Saturday February 6 from 6:30 - 9 p.m. the Herndon Community Center will host a Father Daughter Dance. A moment father's will treasure for the rest of their lives and a special night for daughters. This semi-formal event will include an evening of dancing, appetizers, drinks, a photo of the couple, and a keepsake. Daughter may be accompanied by an uncle, grandfather, or a male guardian. \$50 per couple. The Herndon Community Center is located at 814 Ferndale Ave, Herndon. www.herndon-va.gov.

facility closes at 8 p.m. Reston Community Center at Hunters Woods 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. This exhibit includes more than 70 color and monochrome photos by Reston photographer Fran Bastress taken from 2007 to the present. She specializes in landscape, nature, and fine art photography. Cost: Free. www.restoncommunitycenter.com/attend-shows-events-exhibits/

exhibits-and-galleries **LRA PenFed Realty Hosts Sievers' Paintings** The League of Reston Artists is showing the oil paintings of Ruth Sievers during December 2016 and January 2017 at the office of PenFed Realty, 1886 Metro Center Dr. Reston. Cost: free. Office open to visitors Monday - Friday from 9 - 5 p.m. www.leagueofrestonartists.org

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 7



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Nicole Springer rides a horse named Max at the SPIRIT Equestrian Program.



Wilton Stubbs rides a horse.



PHOTOS BY LAURA-JEANNE SPRINGER

Before she moved to Virginia and started the SPIRIT Open Equestrian Program, Davorka "Dada" Suvak gave therapeutic riding lessons in Croatia.

SPIRIT Equestrian Program Gets a Christmas Miracle

BY FALLON FORBUSH
THE CONNECTION

As a certified therapeutic riding instructor, Davorka "Dada" Suvak has given lessons to at-risk children, senior citizens and people with disabilities in Fairfax County for almost 10 years. But when she was told that her small nonprofit had to vacate its rented

property, she panicked.

"We received the notice to vacate the property exactly one week before Thanksgiving and they wanted us moved out by Dec. 31," she says. "We really need a Christmas miracle to go through this transition and survive it."

The SPIRIT Equestrian Program in Herndon has rented a farmhouse on West Ox Road next to the Frying Pan Farm Park

for the past three years.

It was a month-to-month lease and Dada knew from the beginning that the owner was looking to sell.

"There was no space to fight or blame anybody," she says.

Slowly, the organization, which has 14 horses, raised money so that it would be prepared. The "Home for SPIRIT" campaign on Indiegogo, an online fundraising website, has raised more than \$17,000.

Meanwhile, more than 300 clients spent nearly 4,000 hours riding horses with the organization last year, according to its annual report.

John Stubbs, a single parent of Falls Church, enrolled his 14-year-old autistic son Wilton into the program a year ago. It was a "desperate" attempt to find something for his son to enjoy.

"Once he hit puberty, there was absolutely nothing except for looking at his iPad or playing with toys that he seemed to enjoy in life," Stubbs says.

HORSEBACK RIDING quickly became a passion for Wilton. Ice skating, bowling and many other activities were tried, but horseback riding is the only thing that has stuck.

"It has to do with that bond with the horse, I'm sure," he says. "It's really improved his self-esteem. He can't ride a bike, but he can make a horse turn left and right, trot and stop."

When his 8-year-old son Christopher, who has no disabilities, saw his brother Wilton riding one day, he demanded to participate as well.

"Now my sons for the first time have a shared activity and it has been absolutely wonderful that they have this thing in their life," Stubbs says.

Laura-Jeanne Springer's 16-year-old daughter Nicole has been riding with Dada and her volunteers for the last seven years.

Springer enrolled Nicole in classes to help develop her core muscles, since she was born with Hypotonia, a syndrome that affects muscle tone.

"The confidence it's given her, I can just see a change," she says. "Not only does she have confidence when she's on a horse, it

spills over into other aspects of her life like in school and here at home."

She says Nicole would be heartbroken if she could no longer ride Max, her favorite horse.

In anticipation of losing the farmhouse, Dada and her volunteers were looking to raise enough money to purchase a mobile office trailer and horse trailers and pickup trucks to transport the horses.

But they ran out of time.

There was not enough funding for these goals when the property was purchased by McLean developer Scimores Corporation.

Fortunately for Dada and the people who rely on her program, they received good news.

On the morning of Dec. 1, Dada got her Christmas miracle. The Fairfax County Park Authority called her and said that it was considering allowing her to rent and use some of its fields in Frying Pan Farm Park to continue her work and house the horses.

BY THE END OF THE DAY, an interim agreement had been reached.

Judy Pedersen, a spokesperson for the Fairfax County Park Authority provided this statement to the Connection:

"The Fairfax County Park Authority and SPIRIT Equestrian are hard at work on a cooperative agreement that will ensure the continuation of equestrian therapy services for the community. We have reached agreement on an interim use agreement that will allow SPIRIT to relocate to Frying Pan Farm Park and are currently working on a long-term solution.

We anticipate closure on this agreement in time to meet impending deadlines for their departure from their current location to a spot on our farm in Herndon. We appreciate the many members of the community who have spoken up in support of this remarkable program."

While the details of the long-term agreement are being worked out, Dada is thankful that her organization will survive.

"We are so thankful to the Park Authority that they considered us as a vendor that is good enough to deserve a place in the park," she says.

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 5

Explorations in Color Exhibit

Featuring Artist Kristin Herzog
December 7, 2016 - January 8, 2017.
ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center
Street, Herndon. Explorations in
Color is an exhibit featuring abstract
paintings executed in vibrant color.
Kristin Herzog's paintings are all
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For more information call 703-956-
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circulation and increasing strength,
muscle control and mobility.
Free.parkinsonfoundation.org.
ckacenga@sportandhealth.com 703-
621-4148.

Teen and Adult Art Classes

ArtSpace Herndon Every Monday
from 5:30 - 8:30 p.m. 750 Center
Street, Herndon. Drawing and Mixed
Media with Melanie Stanley - During
Fall and Winter of 2016. Cost: \$45/
class. The class will use a variety of
techniques for drawing, painting,
mark making, and collage using fine
arts tools and materials. Students
will be taken down a creative path to
learn to use drawing tools and
brushes more effectively. Register by
emailing Melanie, and she will send
you the supply list and payment
options/information:
ridingfree2@gmail.com. 703-956-
9560. www.artspaceherndon.com

All-comers' Group Fun Run at Potomac River Running.

Tuesdays and Thursdays. Reston
Town Center, 11900 Market Street,
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<https://potomacriverrunning.com>.

Herndon Regional Wind Ensemble Practice.

Every Tuesday 7-9 p.m.
through May. Herndon Middle
School, 901 Locust St., Herndon. For
advanced high school students,
college students, and adults who play
a brass, woodwind or percussion
instrument. 703-904-4800
HerndonRegionalWindEnsemble@gmail.com
Cost: Free

Senior Tea ARTSPACE Herndon

10:30 - 12 p.m. Every month seniors
are invited to visit the gallery to view
the current exhibit and enjoy a cup of
tea on the second Friday of the
month, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m.
750 Center Street, Herndon. All teas
are free and open to the public.
[http://www.artspaceherndon.com/
events-2/senior-tea/](http://www.artspaceherndon.com/events-2/senior-tea/)

College Night Skate, Rock N Skate,
Cartoon Skate at the Ice Skating
Pavilion

Every Thursday, 6 - 9 p.m. - Every
Friday, 8 - 10 p.m.

Skate Shop, 1818 Discovery Street,
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skating@restontowncenter.com
restontowncenter.com/skating

Ice Skating in the Pavilion 8 a.m. -
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March

THURSDAY/DEC. 8

The Closet of Herndon Art Sale 10
- 4 p.m. Thursday Dec. 8 - Saturday
Dec. 10 771 Elden Street, Herndon.
Huge inventory at liquidation prices;
most items less than \$25. In 2015,
The Closet gave away more than
\$68,000 worth of clothing and
necessities to over 1500 needy

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persons referred by an authorized
social service agency or one of our
member congregations, as well as
donating more than \$54,000 in
profits to local organizations and
providing scholarships to local
students.

FRIDAY/DEC. 9

Free Holiday Choral Concert

United Christian Parish 11508 N
Shore Drive, Reston. The program,
conducted by David Lang, will
feature holiday and seasonal pieces
including, And the Glory of the Lord,
Irving Berlin's Christmas, Shepherds
Pipe Carol, and others. [http://
encorecreativity.org](http://encorecreativity.org). 301-261-5747
or email info@encorecreativity.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 10

Explorations in Color Exhibit

Opening Reception 7 - 9 p.m.
ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center
Street, Herndon. Explorations in
Color is an exhibit featuring abstract
paintings executed in vibrant color.
Kristin Herzog's paintings are all
about color and its power to convey
emotion. With color she explores her
reactions to the physical and
emotional landscapes of daily life.
For more information call 703-956-
9560. ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center
Street, Herndon.
www.artspaceherndon.com

SUNDAY/DEC. 11

Cornucopia of Inspirations

**"Earthbeat" Children's Art
Activity** 2 - 5 p.m. Artspace
Herndon, 750 Center St. Described
by The Smithsonian as "an uplifting
eco-fable," this engaging workshop
and presentation shares an important
lesson about man's impact upon the
environment. Children will make
their own terrific Tortoise Rod
Puppet and enjoy the true story of
"Lonesome George," a truly one-of-a-
kind tortoise from the Galapagos
Islands. Grades 1-5. Cost: \$5. 703-
956-9560 www.artspaceherndon.com

TUESDAY/DEC. 13

Amphora's Diner Deluxe doors open
6 p.m. 7:15 p.m. start time. 1151
Elden St - Herndon. The Reston-
Herndon Folk Club is pleased to host
Debi Smith, a member of Four
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members 703-435-2402
www.restonherndonfolkclub.com

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potomacriverrunning.com

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 14

Small Wonders 11:30 a.m. Storytime.
Reston Regional Library 11925
Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Short
stories for you and your child. Age
13-23 months with adult. Status:
Openings [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/
library/branches/rr/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/)

THURSDAY/DEC. 15

ESL For Advanced Students 10 a.m.
Reston Regional Library 11925
Bowman Towne Drive, Reston.Join
Richard's Thursday conversational
group. [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/
library/branches/rr/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/)

ESL For Beginners 10 a.m. Reston
Regional Library 11925 Bowman
Towne Drive, Reston.Join Sandra's
Thursday conversational group.
[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/
branches/rr/](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rr/)

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WELLBEING

Preventing Underage Drinking During the Holidays

Experts suggest holding honest conversations.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

As Bridget O'Brien took inventory of her liquor supply recently, she checked off vanilla rum, white chocolate liqueur, peppermint schnapps, Champagne and Crème de cassis. These fanciful ingredients would be the key ingredients of the signature drinks — candy cane cocktails and kir royale — that guests had come to anticipate at her family's annual Christmas caroling party. This year, however, there was a new item on her checklist: keeping a close eye on her 13-year-old daughter, 16-year-old son and their friends, who would be among the guests at the family-friendly affair.

"The party begins at our house and we stroll to the end of the street singing carols," said O'Brien. "There are so many people, that it would be easy for kids to wander off back to the house where they'd be alone with the alcohol. They're starting to want more independence now, so we naturally lose some of the control that we had when they were younger."

Flowing drinks are as much a part of some holiday parties as decadent desserts. As a result, yuletide festivities increase access to alcoholic beverages for underage drinkers. According to experts, underage drinkers are responsible for between 10 and 20 percent of all alcohol consumed. During the holiday season, they also make up the highest percentage of impaired drivers. The temptation among tweens and teens to experiment and give into peer pressure, combined with the availability of alcoholic beverages can be a deadly combination, says safety experts. They encourage parents to have conversations with their children.

"A lot of parents would be surprised that their child would drink, but there are a lot of ways for children to get alcohol," said Allen Lomax, executive director of the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria. "It's easy for them to get alcohol from their parents' home if it's not locked up. You have to constantly monitor parties in your home when teens are there because there's a good chance that someone, even if it's not your own child, could have alcohol."

A child's inquisitiveness about alcohol is a sign that it's time for a parent to begin a dialogue about the dangers and consequences of underage consumption, says Linda R. Cote-Reilly, a developmental psychologist, certified family life educator and professor at Marymount University in Arlington. It is best to start the conversation ... long before the child might be in a situation where they partake in underage drinking. ... It's not that different from conversations about sexual activity. One big dif-



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

The holidays and the resulting increase in celebrations and parties create opportunities for underage drinking.

ference, though, is that the child will have observed his or her own parents' alcohol use, so parents should be prepared to ... answer pointed questions."

In fact, personal experiences, even those that are unpleasant, can be teachable moments and should not be avoided or sugar-coated, says Cote Reilly. "Some children will have an alcoholic in the family, and parents should always address that situation honestly and in child appropriate language. For example, a child might say, 'Why did Uncle Jim fall asleep during Thanksgiving dinner?' and the parent could respond, 'Because he drank too much alcohol.'"

Because alcohol is a legal substance that children often observe parents and other adults consuming, and that they might legally consume themselves later in life, the issue can be confusing. While parents want to curb underage drinking to keep their high school children safe and avoid legal penalties, said Amy L. Best, professor and chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, George Mason University. "On the other hand, parents also need to lay the groundwork for their children to consume alcohol responsibly in early adulthood."

Unfortunately, straight alcohol bans do little to protect young people as they move out from under the yoke of parental supervision. For students transitioning to college, it is very important they have the tools and resources to manage situations where binge drinking is more common.

Engaging in a straightforward discussion that is void of mandates and hard-lined rules is the most effective approach in getting children to be receptive, advised Best. "I think parents do well when they engage in honest and reasoned discussions with their children about alcohol and that these conversations be ongoing, informal and structured so their children can feel comfortable talking about what they are observ-

ing around them," she said.

"Research suggests that when parents focus on rules and discipline, adolescents tend to be more likely to engage in surreptitious drinking and succumb to peer pressure," agreed Shannon N. Davis, associate professor of sociology at George Mason University. In fact, parents who talk to their adolescents about drinking as something that is forbidden might actually be enhancing its desirability, says Davis.

"Instead, [discuss it] as something that in moderation is part of adult life; [these discussions] are more likely to have their children express ideas about moderation in their own subsequent alcohol consumption," she said. "This is not to say that parents should encourage their adolescents to break the law. Instead, rather than focusing on the illegality of the behavior and the rules around drinking, parents should have honest conversations about drinking, the consequences on bodies of drinking, and explain why the rules exist in general."

Honest conversations also help clear up misconceptions. "Children often harbor ideas about alcohol that are downright wrong," said Best. "Sometimes this means

"Instead, rather than focusing on the illegality of the behavior and the rules around drinking, parents should have honest conversations about drinking, the consequences on bodies of drinking, and explain why the rules exist in general."

**—Shannon N. Davis,
associate professor of sociology at
George Mason University**

parents just listen and then can share their own observations, as well as the strategies they used to navigate the complex world of adolescent and adult drinking."

It is important that parents set clear boundaries. "I also think parents do well when they set clear guidelines and follow them," said Best. "It is important that teens have the means to forge a sense of self that is separate from their parents. That is the fundamental developmental project of adolescence. When teens have productive means to forge a sense of self independence of parent(s), alcohol holds less appeal."

It also holds less appeal to confident teens. "Most importantly, parents want to ensure that their adolescents have high levels of self-esteem that allow them to feel comfortable saying 'no' to any circumstance where they are uncomfortable or pressured by their friends," said Davis. "Reminding adolescents that it is OK to be different is a hard thing, and it is a hard thing for the adolescents to hear."

Free Holiday Cab Rides Offered to Prevent Drunk Driving

Combating that holiday period which the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says is a "dangerous time to be on the road due to a high number of drunk drivers behind the wheel," a local nonprofit organization announced that free cab rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during the winter holidays.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the annual

Holiday SoberRide® program will operate between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. each evening between Friday, Dec. 16, 2016 and Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period.

During the evening hours, between Dec. 16 and Jan. 1, Washington-metropolitan area residents celebrating with alcohol may call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-cost (up to \$ 30 fare), safe way home. (AT&T wireless users can dial #WRAP for the same service.)

More information about WRAP's SoberRide initiative can be found at www.soberride.com.



The Santa family prepares to welcome the young ones. From left: "Elf" Lauren, Mrs. Claus aka Shari Murphy, Terry "Santa" Murphy, and "Elf" Alex. Playing the Santa gang is a real tradition for the Murphys and their grandkids. This is Alex's first year as a helper instead of a "lapster" and even Miss Lauren says this is her first year to go full-costume, but she's already looking forward to next year.

Santa Visits Herndon Library

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

Despite their no doubt very hectic schedule at this time of the year, Santa, Mrs. Claus, and two of his favorite elves managed to fit in a visit to the Winter Open House at the Herndon Fortnightly Library on Saturday.

Co-sponsored by the Friends of the Herndon Library, the Fortnightly Club, ArtsHerndon and the Herndon Chamber of Commerce, the lobby level of the library on Center St. was transformed into a bustling Santa Workshop from 1-4 p.m. "Gingerbread" was the theme, and children (of all ages!) gathered around tables to make their own gingerbread men and cookies, participate in other arts and crafts and generally let their holiday-inspired imaginations run wild, while listening to the sounds of a trio of string players from Herndon High School.

Nicholas Black, Director of Music for ArtSpace Herndon, added "people conducting" to his regular repertoire as he circled the venue, helping to check on the young attendees at each station. Anna Warburton and Amanda Jasper of FuzzieTales, (contact amandajasper100@gmail.com for info about this "storybook adventure club") did a bit of orchestrating of their own, keeping a happy flow of children well-entertained at their table filled with gingerbread-themed activities. All of the action kept the kids occupied while they awaited the arrival of the star of the event – Santa.

Eventually that jolly individual made his appearance and settled into his Workshop, with Mrs. Claus and elves Lauren and Alex on hand to help. Families were shepherded into the Workshop to meet their hero and whisper their Christmas



Anna Warburton and Amanda Jasper (Back row behind the table) oversee the action at their FuzzieTales table, where kids were busy making gingerbread men and crafts.

Reading no doubt comes naturally to Stephanie Gardner since she works at the Herndon Library, but her "out loud" reading skills impressively held the attention of the youngsters who were waiting their turn to visit with Santa.



wishes into his ear. Waiting families were not left to simply stand on some endless line, as many Santa visits demand, but instead were treated to a comfy spot in the outer room where Stephanie Gardner, a library employee, kept

them captivated with her readings of holiday stories.

Was the event a success? "Oh yes!" declared four-and-a-half-year-old April Cao. "This is a good place to see Santa since you can have real fun!"

PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/ THE CONNECTION

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Rocking the Chair



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not that I was ever a CB person (Citizens Band radio), good buddy, but right now, I am in the middle of both my four-to-five week infusion interval and my quarterly-scan interval. Far enough past that I don't have any residual food or emotional issues and not close enough that I have any anxiety about the food and emotional issues that will inevitably occur. I am between a rock and a hard place, and I mean that in an atypical way: I am under no pressure, but no illusions either, oddly enough. I am sailing smooth and riding high, mindful of my reality, but appreciative of the relative — and comparative calm with which this interval affords.

Not that I can be normal (not a cancer "diagnosee"), but this is as close to 'normal' as it gets — for me. After all, I do have a "terminal" form of cancer (non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV), not a cold, so it's not as if it will go away with time. Nevertheless, I am grateful for the particularly good times — now, while trying to manage my expectations for the bad times — later, after this honeymoon-type period ends. But since there have been many more good times than bad since I was diagnosed in late February 2009, I am not bogged down, emotionally by my circumstances, although I am somewhat compromised, physically. Nothing I can't live with, however. Actually, I'm thrilled to live with any of it, 'live' being the operative word.

At this juncture, nearly eight years post initial symptoms (New Year's Day 2009), mostly I can handle what happens to me, so far any way. But when similar stuff happens to others: death, disease, disability, dementia; I feel their pain, sort of; and suffer emotionally. It's not as if I take in all their anxiety, but in a way, the weight of it does affect me. And sometimes, I get weepy over it. As I've written before, and heard many times as well in the cancer world, negative anything is extremely harmful to cancer patients — or most other "terminal" patients I would imagine as well. From my own experience though, I certainly understand the difficult circumstances under which all us patients/survivors endure; remaining positive and being surrounded by positivity is key as is humor, encouragement, compliments, congratulations, compassion and empathy. All are crucial to our core. Healthy bodies we may no longer have, but healthy minds we have to maintain. And the stronger and healthier that mind is, the more it will help us to mind our own business and do so in a manner that will prevent the cancer from taking over those minds.

Just as The United Negro College Fund "slogans" "A mind is a terrible thing to waste;" in the cancer world, it's terrible when patients are unable to use their minds to fight their disease. In many cases, cancer is a killer, there's no doubt about that, but allowing negative emotions to take over is really unhelpful. Accentuating the positive (like the subject of this column) and minimizing the negative has to be the order of the day — and the night, too. You have to find the good or the funny and embrace it, exaggerate it, extend it, elongate it, and reinforce it. Anything to make sure it matters more than the bad. Bad is bad enough on its own. It doesn't need any help from us. Focusing on what I can enjoy hopefully will enable me to keep on trekking, and to "Live long and prosper."

Come back.

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

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OBITUARY



Chester William Fannon III (Chet) of Middleburg, Virginia died peacefully on Saturday, December 3, 2016 with his wife, Kate Armfield Fannon and his sister, Heather Fannon Young by his side.

A loving husband to Kate and a respected and cherished father to Kingsley and Chester, Chet was born on October 21st, 1961 in Alexandria, Virginia to Chester William Fannon Jr. (Bill) and Mary Frances Tucker Fannon. His childhood was spent at Laurel Hill in Rappahannock County, Virginia. His love of and years spent on the family farm fostered his lifelong passion for the outdoors, bird hunting, dog training and habitat restoration. He also enjoyed horseback riding and had been an accomplished polo player.

Chet was a graduate of the Blue Ridge School in Albemarle County and James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia and enjoyed a career with Fannon Petroleum.

In death, Chet showed the same courage, integrity and grace that had been the hallmarks of his life. He is remembered with love and missed with heartache by his wife Kate, his daughter Kingsley and son Chester; parents Bill and Mary Frances Fannon; sisters and their husbands, Beth and Jimmy Swindler and Heather and Daron Young; nieces Addie Swindler, Ellie Young, and Claire Young; and nephew Trey Swindler; and beloved in-laws, Howard and Gloria Armfield.

Chet's family will receive friends on Wednesday evening, December 7, from 4:00 pm until 6:00 p.m. at Royston Funeral Home in Middleburg, Virginia. A memorial service will be held on Thursday, December 8 at 11:00 a.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church in Upperville, Virginia. Family and friends are invited to gather for remembrances at the Middleburg Tennis Club after the funeral service. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Chet's memory to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) at 700 N. 4th Street, Richmond, VA 23219 or at www.unos.org.

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21 Announcements

OBITUARY

DURHAM – Eleanor Christine Ingram Mallette, 92, of Croasdaile Village Retirement Community, died on Tuesday, November 29, 2016. Born in Arden, N.C., Eleanor was the daughter of the late Viola Lenora Causey of Pleasant Garden and Sidney Oscar Ingram, Sr. of Asheville. She grew up on Long Shoals Road in Arden, along the banks of the French Broad River, and in that river she learned to swim.

Eleanor graduated as salutatorian from Valley Springs High School in Skyland, NC in 1941 and earned her A.A. in Secretarial Science from Mars Hill College in 1943. While at Mars Hill she was a member of the basketball team, swimming club, Buncombe County club, business club, and served as a society officer and Friendship Circle Leader. In April 1944, Eleanor lost her father in an automobile accident not far from the family homestead.

Later in 1944, she began working as a secretary to an Army colonel in the Air Communications Service based in Asheville. An officer reporting to her colonel had been drafted into service during his junior year of college, was tasked with writing the history of the Army Air Corps, and was assigned a desk near hers. The officer, Malcolm Mallette, too shy to ask her out himself, asked a buddy to call her to express his interest. She said if he wanted a date, he'd have to ask her himself. He did get up the nerve to talk to her and asked her out. Eleanor and Mal got married in September 1946 after his discharge and the newlyweds lived in Syracuse until he finished his journalism degree at Syracuse University in January 1947.

Asheville became Eleanor and Mal's home base as Mal played professional baseball through 1952; first with the New York Yankee organization and then the Brooklyn Dodgers. During the season, Eleanor was known to jump in the car and drive by herself to see Mal play, once driving from Asheville to Kansas City.

Between 1950 and 1958, Eleanor and Mal had three sons. She would laugh about the big babies she had given birth to and how their size helped them all become good athletes. Eleanor was the ever-present supporter at their swim meets, tennis matches, baseball and basketball games. She was proud of her "three boys" and enjoyed talking about and sharing their achievements.

Post baseball, Mal's journalism career took the family to Asheville; Winston-Salem; Paramus, NJ; and, Reston, VA where they lived from 1974-1999. While not an avid exerciser, Eleanor welcomed each summer and time at the RHOA pools and was known to do a lap of backstroke from time to time.

After Mal's retirement, and with some encouragement from their three sons, Eleanor and Mal moved to Durham's Croasdaile Village Retirement Community in August 1999. As part of the first group of residents, they quickly adapted to life at Croasdaile and enjoyed the social aspects of living in a retirement community.

Eleanor was predeceased by her husband Mal and her eldest son, Gary Malcolm Mallette. She was also predeceased by her parents; her sisters Margaret Helen Ingram and Grace Viola Ingram Fritts; her brother Sidney Oscar Ingram, Jr.; her half-sister Frances Hayman Brown; step-sisters Beulah Estelle Ingram and Blanche O'Neal Ingram Lunsford; and, stepbrother G. Orison Ingram.

She is survived by her sons Bruce and wife Julie Rice Mallette of Cary, NC; and David Mallette and wife Melinda Stubblee of Durham, NC; nine nieces and one nephew.

The family thanks the many Croasdaile Village staff and departments who cared for Eleanor throughout her 17 years as a resident there. Thanks are extended also to the entire medical team at Duke University Medical Center who saw Eleanor many times over the years, and especially to the Emergency Department and General Medicine team for their support of Eleanor and the family over the last few days.

Memorial donations can be made to education activities at Save The River, Clayton, NY or the National Baseball Hall of Fame, Cooperstown, NY, or a charity of your choice. The Mallette family is under the care of Hall-Wynne Funeral Service. Email condolences can be sent to www.hallwynne.com

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To have community events listed in the Connection, send to connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/ by noon on Friday.

THROUGH DEC. 18

The Container Store Annual Holiday Hugs Program in Partnership with Children's National Health System Collections are going on now through December 18th and gifts will be delivered to the hospital the week of December 19th. The Container Store is thrilled to continue its annual, nationwide signature giving program, Holiday Hugs. In each of our Washington, DC-area stores, we are partnering with Children's National Health System to collect and deliver new, unwrapped gifts to their young patients who are spending the holidays in the hospital. Customers can participate in the Holiday Hugs program by dropping off new, unwrapped books, small toys and games, toiletries, gift cards and kid-friendly stocking stuffers in collection bins at our Washington, DC, Arlington, VA, Reston, Tysons Corner and Rockville locations

WEDNESDAY/JAN. 11

Learn About the Consolidated Community Funding Pool 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Taking Place at The Jo Ann Rose Gallery Reston Community Center Lake Anne 1609-A Washington Plaza, Reston. Our January 2017 FCIA Network Meeting will focus on Consolidated Community Funding Pool (CCFP) priorities in preparation for the next CCFP funding cycle. FCIA Network Meeting attendees will dialogue about the types of services for which there is a continuing need, current service gaps, and emerging needs. The CCFP funds local nonprofit organizations to provide human services, affordable housing development and construction. Priority-setting is the first step of the next funding cycle. Once set, a request for proposal will be issued in the fall of 2017. Awards will be announced the following spring. Total funding in FY 2017 was 12.5 million dollars. **Please note, this meeting WILL NOT take place at the Government Center.**

ONGOING

Passages Divorce Care. Tuesdays 6:45 to 9:00 p.m. beginning Sept.13 through Jan 7. Vienna Presbyterian Church is located on the corner of Maple Avenue (Rt. 123) and Park Street in Vienna, Virginia. Cost to cover materials \$20, scholarships available. 703-938-9050, www.viennapres.org, or send an email to

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 10 a.m. during the summer. Nursery and childcare are provided starting at 8 a.m. until the end of the service. 703-437-5500 or www.trinityherndon.org.

Vajrayogini Buddhist Center, Unitarian Universalist Church, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds weekly classes starting Sept. 12, Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m., for the general public which use Buddhist teachings to practice meditation. \$12 or \$6 for students, seniors and unemployed. 202-986-2257 or www.meditation-dc.org.

St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 1700 Wainwright Drive in Reston, holds Sunday services at 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and contemporary service at 5 p.m. during the summer. Nursery, Sunday school and adult education available. 703-437-6530 or www.stannes-reston.org.

Washington Plaza Baptist Church will hold Adult Bible Study at 9:30 a.m. Sundays 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.

Passages@ViennaPres.org.
The **Herndon Adult Day Health Care Center** needs volunteers to assist with fitness activities, arts and crafts, mealtime, entertainment and much more. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Toy Drive in Collaboration with Nonprofit FISH Through Dec. 16
Stop by 11890 Sunrise Valley Drive any weekday from 9-4 and drop a new, unwrapped toy in the donation box in the lobby. All toys will be distributed to needy children within Loudoun County and to Herndon/Reston children via the non-profit Herndon-Reston FISH, Inc. Toys should be for the ages of Newborn to 16. The last day for donations is December 16. Call 703-860-4600 for more information.

The **Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents in nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Contact Lisa Callahan at 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Also visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltombudsman/.
Submit a Nomination for Volunteerism & Community Service Awards
The Virginia Governor's Volunteerism and Community Service Awards is looking to recognize individuals and groups whose volunteer activities contribute to the life and welfare of Virginia citizens. There are a variety of categories for both individuals as well as groups so if you have a special volunteer in your organization or know of a group that should be nominated, please visit the website to get started: <http://virginiainservice.virginia.gov/volunteering/governors-volunteerism-awards/>

Fairfax County needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Respite Care volunteers give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

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.

Epiphany United Methodist Preschool, 1014 Country Club Drive, N.E. in Vienna, is now enrolling 3- to 4-year-old students. 703-938-2391 or www.epiphanypreschool.com.

Hope Fellowship Church will temporarily be meeting at Hyatt Place, 21481 Ridgetop Circle, Sterling. Sunday worship services are Sundays at 9:30 and 10:45 a.m., a Bible Study is on Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. and a weekly prayer conference call is Thursdays at 9 p.m.
The public is invited to join a Bible believing, multi-ethnic/multi-cultural congregation, with Bible-based sermons and uplifting music. 703-599-3527 or www.hopefellowshipchurchloudoun.org.

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church needs knitters the first and third Wednesdays of the month at 7 p.m., at 432 Van Buren St., Herndon.
The church's Prayer Shawl Ministry is offering free knitting instruction while providing shawls, blankets and other knitted items for people in need. No cost and yarn can be provided.
Email shawl@saint-timothys.org or visit the Pastoral Care page at www.saint-timothys.org.

Herndon Homes Tour Showcases Holiday Spirit

By ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

If you weren't able to attend the 2016 Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon, you missed a real treat. It's a tradition that dates back to 1979. It has come and gone a few times during those years, but since 2008 the Tour has been lovingly tended by the the Town of Herndon Cultivating Community Initiative. This year, together with the participation of Herndon civic organizations Order of the Eastern Star, the Herndon Historical Society, the Herndon Woman's Club, the Herndon Fort-nightly Club and the Rotary Club of Herndon – who all provided the army of volunteers who shepherded the crowds through five holiday-dressed Herndon homes – the Tour benefits those worthy organizations, but more importantly, “it embodies the flavor of Herndon, and highlights our amazing sense of community,” said event co-chair Susan Anselene. As the Tour was getting underway at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Anselene was on welcome duty at ArtSpace Herndon on Center St., which was the designated Tour “Rest Stop” offering refreshments, cookies, and “necessary facilities” for Tour goers.

THE HOMES on this year's tour itinerary, so generously opened to the public by their owners, offered an eclectic mix of residences, from historic to the recently built, with interior design styles ranging from giving more than a passing nod to the history of Herndon, to an elegantly simple craftsman atmosphere. Even the renovations and refurbishments varied widely, from enviously accomplished “DIY” projects to professional works customized to reflect the homeowners' needs and personal taste. Tying all five properties together were the wonderful decorations that provided an uplifting start to the Holiday Season.

House “D” on the route is the establishment that pays homage to historical Herndon. Scott and Melissa Tilton consider themselves to be “stewards” of the house on Station St. that was originally built by Holden and Louise Harrison. The Harrisons moved to their newly built home in semi-rural Herndon in 1955, leaving behind one of the largest dairy farms in Fairfax County, started by Holden's grandparents in the 1870s, near Floris. Dressed as a train conductor, Herndon Historical Society president Charlie Waddell, took the first shift as house greeter. “Holden Harrison was instrumental in saving our wonderful train Depot in the Town center,” explained Waddell. “I'm just getting in the spirit of things.” Harrison also served on the Town Council. He was a Volunteer Fire Department Officer, the town Cemetery Association officer, a Herndon Mason, Chamber of Commerce Director and Director of the Herndon Bank. This Herndon Citizen of the Year for 1969 certainly embodied community spirit and is deserving of all the mentions and memorabilia that the Tilttons have artfully preserved and displayed in their home.



From left — Terry Walters and event co-chair Susan Anselene are ready and waiting to greet Herndon Holiday Home Tour visitors from the “Rest Stop” at ArtSpace Herndon on Center Street.



From left — Debbie Lasky, volunteer Ginny Finley, Michele Wojtan, and Cinda Mersel get ready to visit the Kepshire House on Monroe St. The most recently built of the homes on the Tour, the craftsman-style property also houses the newest Town residents among the homeowners who opened their doors for the annual event.

Tour Stop “A” on Elden Street calls to mind more of a blend of European and American classics. Owners Kelly and Sean Berg spent a decade overseas and they have decorated to remind themselves of the memories they made during their adventures, while adding touches that make them – and their house – feel right at home on main street America. Visitors to the Berg House were obviously enchanted at the incorporation of swans and greyhounds in a variety of places and iterations. Both Bergs love greyhounds and Kelly belonged to a swan rescue group when she lived in England. Their Christmas decorations, mostly collected at Christmas Markets in Germany and France made more than one visitor sigh “Can't we stay here? At least for the Holidays?”

Vicki Herman's home on Wood Street has offered its owner some challenges as a vintage Cape Cod-style property, built in 1948, but Herman has obviously risen to the challenge. This was the house where impres-

sive DIY skills were on serious display. A lot of the renovation work, including cabinetry, and floor refinishing are the results of Herman's own hands. The home surprises with a number of cozy “reading spots” or places to just relax and enjoy like the three season room Herman converted from the old screened-in porch. Practicalities are also observed in the property. The downstairs sitting room with attached bath can easily become a mainfloor bedroom – a much sought-after rarity in most area houses.

Monroe St. is the location of Dax and Heather Kepshire's Tour Stop “C” home, representing the truly new on the tour itinerary, for these newly minted Herndon residents. The personal touches of Heather's reclaimed wood projects really stand out in this property, painted and presented in a minimalist craftsman style. This will be the family's first Christmas in the house, but it already projects the warmth of a well lived in abode. Stop “E” may have been last on



PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

Herndon Historical Society president Charlie Waddell paid tribute to original homeowner Holden Harrison, as he greeted visitors to the house on Station St. dressing as an old-fashioned train conductor in honor of Harrison who was instrumental in preserving the Town's train Depot from demolition. Current owners Melissa and Scott Tilton have included a lot of memorabilia of both the Town and the Harrison family in their décor.



Swans, Greyhounds and European references speak of the passions, pursuits and memories that the Berg Family brought with them to their home on Elden Street. Having lived overseas for a decade, they brought back lots of treasures – and one treasured daughter – to blend in with the traditional Americana of their home.

the list, but it offered its visitors no less charm and interest than any of the other homes on the Tour. It becomes quickly obvious that persons of artistic talent reside within these walls.

OWNERS Laura Cuttle and Michelle Sparling purchased the house in July of 2010, and went for a soothing coastal style – several years before “Coastal” became the hot trend. Weathered antique cabinets, repurposed fencing as walls and lots of other reclaimed wood are featured throughout the property. “I love doing the Home Tour,” said tour goer Carrie Arnold of Herndon, “for two reasons. The decorations really get me in the Holiday mood – and I always get great ideas for my own house! My poor husband. He's waiting in fear at home. “Hope you didn't miss this treat. In any case, mark your calendars now for the next Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon, scheduled for Dec. 2, 2017.