

# Oak Hill Herndon CONNECTION

Homes Tour  
Showcases  
Decorations,  
Herndon History

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Lillian Gallardo, 4, of Herndon  
(left) waits patiently for Santa  
to turn his attention to her  
during the Annual Holiday Tree  
Lighting and Sing-Along held  
Saturday evening, Dec. 2.

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## NEWS

# Herndon Lights Holiday Tree

By MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Spectators gathered on the Herndon Town Square in the Historic Downtown District on Saturday evening, Dec. 2 to witness the annual Holiday Tree Lighting and join in a Sing-Along. The Herndon Chamber of Commerce produced the candlelit event featuring music by the Herndon High School Band: Pride of Herndon.

Laura Price attended the Tree Lighting and passed out candles to the public. Asked how many years she had been doing this, Price said, "I've lived in the Town of Herndon for 40 years, and this is the first time I'm lighting candles for the Chamber."

When the band finished playing, Mayor of Herndon Lisa C. Merkel walked to the microphone. She thanked the band members for their performance and reminded those present the Herndon High School Band would represent the United States at the 75th Anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France in 2019.

Waiting a moment, Merkel put her hand



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

**Members of the Herndon High School Band don Santa hats as they perform during the Town of Herndon's Hometown Holidays Tree Lighting and Sing-Along held Saturday evening, Dec. 2.**

on the switch and then illuminated the town's official holiday tree. The tree will remain lit in the evenings throughout the holiday season.

After the applause stopped, sirens could be heard in the distance heading up Lynn Street toward the Town Square. Most par-

ents and children knew what was going to happen next.

Little ones clamored to the curb and waited.

With lights flashing, Santa arrived in style, high on the back of a bright red Fairfax County fire truck. Santa climbed down and

spread a little holiday cheer as he shook hands with the children and passed out candy canes.

Slowly the crowd dispersed. As one mother walked away with her child, her voice could be heard in the distance. "This is going to be a long three weeks," she said.

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## Homes Tour Showcases Decorations, Herndon History

**The festive tradition comes alive with community pride and hospitality.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he Town of Herndon kicked off their 'Hometown Holidays' celebrations with the Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon held Saturday, Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Planned and produced by the town's Cultivating Community Initiative (CCI), the time-honored and much-anticipated tradition debuted in 1979. The daylong ticketed event allowed the public an opportunity to experience firsthand some of Herndon's most festive homes decorated for the holidays, many located in the Historic District.

Members of the CCI's Homes Tour Committee selected the five featured properties based upon historical, architectural or community interests. Local artist Patricia C. K. Macintyre whose pen and ink drawings of the homes were gifted to the owners explained that the houses selected came from a diversity of eras and architectural styles. "Yet always so warm [and] decorated for the holidays," Macintyre said. "True family homes. Some are stately, proud from Herndon's early days; some more contemporary." According to Macintyre, each home stood ready to inspire visitors with ideas to incorporate into their own way of living.

Connie Hutchinson was a docent at the home of Kristin and Shane Eddy, 630 Oak St. Hutchinson spoke about the unique historical aspect the home offered tour-goers. "It's wonderful to have this particular home on the tour because of its connection to the town's history as a summer retreat for folks coming out from Washington, D.C. This home was a boarding house at the turn of the century," Hutchinson said.

Steve Mundt took part in the event as a tour-goer. Waiting on the porch at a featured home with a group of friends, he spoke about this year's tour and what he liked best. "The way the decorations and the history of the town are interwoven makes this tour fantastic," Mundt said. Nancy Crosby waited in the same group. "The decorations of the houses reflect the families who live there. It makes you connected to the town," Crosby said.

Keven LeBlanc and Susan Anselene co-chaired the 2017 Homes Tour Committee. In their message in the tour brochure they wrote, "This tour would not be possible without our homeowners, who generously share their beautiful homes and the many individuals in our community who support the tour in numerous ways."

**INCLUDED** in this year's self-guided tour

**Stacy Schalk, wife of Jeff Schalk a Herndon Rotary member opens the door to welcome tour-goers (from left) Gail O'Neil, Nancie Crosby, Betsy Mundt, Patrick Berry, Tessa Berry, and Steve Mundt to the home of Tim Bonnett and Kimra Traynor, 904 Elden St., during the 2017 Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon.**

PHOTO BY  
MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEVEN LEBLANC

**Patti Kelly, owner of 106 Monroe Hill Court accepts the pen and ink drawing of her home created by local artist Pat Macintyre during the reception held for the five homeowners whose properties were featured on The 2017 Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon.**

was the home of Tim Bonnet and Kimra Traynor at 904 Elden St. They filled their home with bright, bold colors and decor, which reflected an eclectic blend of history and modern elements in their 100-year-old

stately brick home.

Julie and Jeff Johnson, at 1412 Cuttermill Court, chose traditional, beach, outdoor and art themes as holiday decorations for their 1999 home located in a neighborhood of

beautiful trees.

Kristin and Shane Eddy, at 630 Oak St., garnished their circa 1901 boarding house turned private residence with rustic natural holiday decorations such as pine cones and evergreens creating a holiday retreat that complimented the ambiance of the period home.

Mary and Kim Hamlin, 301 Missouri Ave., decorated in a bright and merry Christmas manner, adding touches of fun and whimsy as evidenced by their colorful Christmas trees and decorations like their smiling polar bears.

Patti Kelly and family, 106 Monroe Hill Court, enhanced their circa-1850 "New/Old Farmhouse" with traditional Christmas elegance. Greenery and wreaths abounded adding to the holiday spirit. Kelly's goal was to bring the home into the new millennium while respecting and retaining its character.

**PROCEEDS FROM THE TOUR** will support the many Herndon civic organization whose participation allowed the Homes Tour to occur. The organizations include the Order of the Eastern Star, Herndon Historical Society, Herndon Woman's Club, Herndon Fortnightly Club and Rotary Club of Herndon.

Scott Tilton is a member of the Herndon Historical Society. "The Herndon Historical Society is happy once again to be a sponsor for a house on the tour. A portion of the funds raised by the Herndon Holiday Homes Tour will support the Historical Society's efforts," Tilton said.

Volunteer members of each participating civic organization acted as docents, greeting the tour-goers and welcoming groups into the private residences. Docents called attention to the seasonal decorations and recited fun facts and historical stories of these magnificent homes and the people who have lived in them.

For instance, at the home of Patti Kelly, docents noted the cascades of greenery and swags that decked the halls. They also took time to explain how the Kellys are only the fourth family to own the 160-year-old house and how the home initially passed through the hands of Smiths of D.C. who built it in the 1850s, the Younts who in the 1860s turned it into a dairy farm, and the Paynes who purchased it in 1968 from descendants of the original Younts family and then sold it to Doll Homes in 2006. Doll Homes then moved the house off its original stone foundation in 2012 and sited it down the hill as part of their development for Monroe Hill Court. In 2014, Patti Kelly and her family bought the property.

In a prepared statement Homes Tour Co-chair LeBlanc wrote, "It has been an honor to serve on the Herndon Homes Tour, to become friends with the homeowners who graciously invite our neighbors into their homes at this special time of year. It shows that no matter what is happening in the world, our community comes together."



# What? Elvis Can't Buy His Tree In Herndon Next Year?

**Mark and Suzanne Eaton pulling up stakes Dec. 20 after 31 years.**

BY MERCIA HOBSON  
THE CONNECTION

Come next winter, Elvis will have to buy his Christmas tree somewhere other than the Town of Herndon. For 31 years, Suzanne and Mark Eaton have sold Christmas trees in Herndon and their sign, "Elvis Buys His Tree Here Every Year," has followed them.

Next year, the Christmas tree site at the corner of Elden and Center streets will not be available. In October of this year, the Herndon Town Council approved to move forward with a Comprehensive Agreement with Comstock Herndon Venture LC in the redevelopment of 4.675 acres of town-owned land which includes the location where the Eaton/Elvis lot is now.

Suzanne Eaton said they are looking for another town location, but cannot find one. Looking back, Eaton reminisced about the good old days when she and her husband Mark stood up their first load of Christmas trees in Herndon at the Exxon Station, 597 Elden St. "We were there until the owners, Dallas and Sherry Brumback put in the car wash. The Brumback's were very, very good



**Suzanne Eaton, owner of Suzanne Eaton Christmas Trees and Jim Pettis, assistant, wave a bittersweet goodbye as the days countdown to their final Christmas tree sale date in the Town of Herndon scheduled for Dec. 20, Suzanne and Mark Eaton (not pictured) have sold trees in Herndon for 31 years.**

to us," she said.

Eaton continued, "We then moved to the second of our three town locations, the one



**From left: Richie Smiechowski, 17, of Herndon and a Christmas tree salesman at the "Elvis Buys His Tree Here Every Year" lot explains what a great tree this will be for the Jones family of Herndon - Ryan, 10, Colin, 16 and dad, Ian. (Not pictured Corryn, 14, and mom, Mary).**

near the 7-Eleven at 701 Van Buren, across from the Post Office. We set up our Christmas trees in the adjacent field. When Fulton

Bank went in there sometime during the mid-1990s, we moved to our last location, here at the corner of Center and Elden streets, then owned by Joe Paul, Subaru."

"This has been our home since then, but due to the pending redevelopment of the land, the town has told us this is our last year here," she said.

Eaton has kept photographs of the happy families who have been coming to the lot throughout the years, especially photos of the children. Many of them are now adults and are bringing their children to Elvis' tree lot one last time.

Eaton recalled how so many young parents pull their little red Radio Flyer wagon to the lot. When they arrive, their children are in the wagon, but when the family leaves, the prized tree rides in glory instead.

"Each year, as soon as I arrive back in Herndon, I'm reminded of the beautiful people who live here, and year after year bring their families."

According to Eaton their lease from the town ends Dec. 20. They will be pulling up stakes and heading back home after 31 fantastic years.

"We're going to miss all of you. Have a wonderful Christmas," Eaton said.

For more information about Suzanne Eaton Christmas Trees/Herndon, find them on Facebook at Suzanne Eaton Christmas Trees/ Herndon or visit them at [782 Elden St.](#) in the Historic Downtown District.

## Herndon Library Hosts Open House, Santa's Workshop

The Fairfax County Public Library offered a Winter Open House/Santa's Workshop on Saturday, Dec. 2, at the Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., in the heart of the Town of Herndon. The free event celebrated the holiday season with live music, crafts, and visits from Santa and light refreshments.

The fun was part of the Town of Herndon's "Hometown Holidays," a series of 11 events November through December that offers a multitude of different activities for all ages and interests. The happenings are meant to help celebrate the holidays with neighbors and friends in the Town of Herndon.

Upcoming events include Santa, Stars, And S'Mores on Friday, Dec. 8 at Runnymede Park and the Holiday Model Train Show Saturday, Dec. 9 and Sunday, Dec. 10, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Herndon Municipal Center, 777 Lynn St. The W & OD caboose and the Depot Museum will be open for tours. The event is free.

For a complete listing of all events, visit [www.herndon-va.gov](#).

— MERCIA HOBSON



**Saharsh Maram, 3, of Herndon shows off the paper plate polar bear puppet he made at the Winter Open House/Santa's Workshop. Saharsh's parents, Rajttha Maram and Srinadh Maram, give Saharsh's hand a big polar bear love hug.**



## Herndon Family Medicine Opens in New Location

**With over-sized scissors in hand, Herndon Mayor Lisa C. Merkel gathers with staff and officials on Nov. 28 to open the new location of Herndon Family Medicine, now at 381 Elden St.**

### SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to [north@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:north@connectionnewspapers.com) by noon on Friday.

**Alice Ji**, an eighth grader at Carson Middle, was named the grand prize winner of the Virginia Association of Science Teachers (VAST) art contest for her illustration depicting celebrating science. Ji's work is featured on the booklet for the VAST 2017 Professional Development Institute, scheduled to take place in November. Her illustration took first place in the middle school category and was chosen as the grand prize winner over submissions in the early elementary, middle elementary, and high school categories.

Vocal musicians from 14 Fairfax County public schools have been named to the Virginia Honors Choir for 2017. Thirty-four Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students were selected for the choir, and five students were named as alternates. This select choir is open to the top 125 singers from around the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is the highest honor a choir student can attain during his or her high school career. FCPS students named to the 2017 Virginia Honors Choir include: **Emma Rood**, **Vaheed Talebian**, and alternate **Kishan Rao** from Herndon High School.



# ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at [www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/). The deadline is noon on Friday. Photos/artwork encouraged.

## NOV. 24-JAN. 4

**Gingerbread Village.** Various times at the Hyatt Regency Reston, Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. See the annual display in the hotel lobby. Call 703-7300-1234 or visit [reston.hyatt.com](http://reston.hyatt.com).

## DEC. 2-18

**Willy Wonka on Stage.** Various times at NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. NextStop's professional company on stage for Charlie Bucket's visit to Willy Wonka's mysterious chocolate factory. \$25; family (4+) and group (10+) discounts available. Call 866-811-4111 or visit [www.nextstoptheatre.org](http://www.nextstoptheatre.org).

## FRIDAY/DEC. 8

**Santa and S'mores.** 6-7:30 p.m. at Runnymede Park, 195 Herndon Parkway. Follow the luminaries to the campfire and Santa. Dress for the outdoors. S'more kits available for sale. Free. 703-787-7300 or visit [www.herndon-va.gov/events](http://www.herndon-va.gov/events).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 9

**Winter Festival.** 10 a.m.-noon at The Goddard School - Herndon, 2400 Dulles Town Blvd. Breakfast with Santa, Face painting, dancing with a princess, cookie decorating, raffle prize, festive crafts, and games. \$5. Call 703-653-0337 or email [herndonVA@goddardschools.com](mailto:herndonVA@goddardschools.com).

**Elden Street Tea Shop Pop Up.** 11 A.M.-4 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St. Sip tea while visiting with the art shop. Call 703-956-6590 or visit [www.artspaceherndon.org/](http://www.artspaceherndon.org/).

**Gray Goose Studios Class.** 2-4 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Children and teens can create art in the medium of their choice with assistance from the instructor as needed. Drawing, painting, collage, mosaic, and sculpture supplies provided. Artists can choose one medium or work in mixed media. \$25. Call 703-956-9560 or visit [artspaceherndon.com](http://artspaceherndon.com).

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 9-10

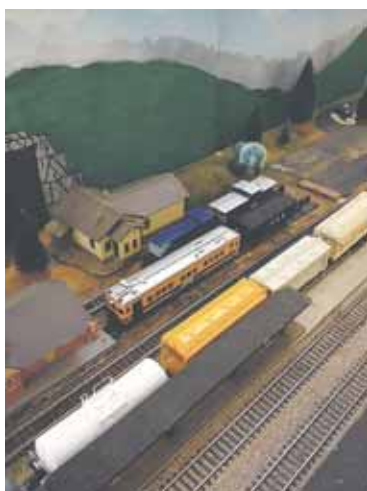
**Holiday Model Train Show.** 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Herndon Municipal Center, 777 Lynn St. W&OD caboose and Depot Museum also open for tours. Free. Call 703-437-5556.

## SUNDAY/DEC. 10

**Holidays on the Farm.** 10-11:30 a.m. or 1:30-3 p.m. at Frying Pan Farm Park's Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Take a wagon ride with Santa and write him a letter with Christmas wishes. Decorate cookies, play games and make a seasonal craft. \$8. Call 703-437-9101 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Kids Yarn Workshop.** 2-4 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. Pakistani-American fine artist and sculptor Asma Chaudhary will present an interactive yarn wrapping experience with participants to use embroidery yarn, bells, and pipe cleaners and attach them to various repurposed and recycled objects often found around in homes such as baskets, kitchenware, furniture, and bird cages. \$15. Call 703-956-9560 or visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com).

**Holiday Crafts Day.** Various times at Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. Enjoy Christmas at the Farm, write letters to Santa, decorate cookies, take a wagon ride



## Holiday Model Train Show

**Saturday-Sunday, Dec. 9-10 see the Holiday Model Train Show 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Herndon Municipal Center, 777 Lynn St. W&OD caboose and Depot Museum also open for tours. Free. Call 703-437-5556 for more.**

with Santa, and enjoy seasonal craft projects. Call 703-437-9101.

**Treble Clefs Holiday Music.** 7-9 p.m. at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St. Join the Treble Clefs for a night of holiday classics. Teas from Elden Street Tea Shop and hot cider will be available as well. Recommended donation of \$20. Visit [www.artspaceherndon.org](http://www.artspaceherndon.org)

## MONDAY/DEC. 11

**Herndon Holiday Decoration Contest Judging.** 6-8 p.m. at Herndon residences. Yard decorations judged in traditional, whimsical, lights categories. Free. Call 703-435-6800 X2084 or visit [www.herndon-va.gov/CultivatingCommunity](http://www.herndon-va.gov/CultivatingCommunity).

## TUESDAY/DEC. 12

**Folk Music.** 7:15 p.m. at Amphora Deluxe Diner, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. Abbie Gardner presented by The Folk Club of Reston-Herndon. \$11 (\$10 members) Call 703-925-0900 or visit [www.amphoragroup.com](http://www.amphoragroup.com).

## WEDNESDAY/DEC. 13

**Herndon Holiday Shoppe.** 10 a.m. at Herndon Elementary School, 630 Dranesville Road. Shop for gifts or volunteer to work for volunteer hours. Call 703-326-3100.

**College Funding Workshop.** 7-9 p.m. at South Lakes High School, Lecture Hall, 11400 South Lakes Drive, Reston. Hosted by the College Funding Coach, learn strategies to qualify for financial aid, sources for scholarships, and strategies for maximizing your wealth and minimizing tax exposure. Free. Email [slhssteam@gmail.com](mailto:slhssteam@gmail.com).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 16

**Holiday Open House.** 11 a.m. at the Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive. Join staff to celebrate the holiday season with light refreshment, music, and entertainment for all ages. Age 18-24 months with adult. Call 703-689-2700.

**Horse-drawn Carriage Rides.** 4-9 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free with adult. Proceeds go to local charities. Call 703-709-6720 or visit [restontowncenter.com](http://restontowncenter.com).

## SUNDAY/DEC. 17

**Mini-Train Rides.** noon-4 p.m. at

Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. Proceeds go to local charities. Call 703-709-6720 or visit [restontowncenter.com](http://restontowncenter.com).

**Ukulele Concert.** noon at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. Music by the Northern Virginia Ukulele Society. Call 703-476-4500 or visit [restoncommunitycenter.com](http://restoncommunitycenter.com).

**Catchin' Toads Concert.** 2-3 p.m. at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. Music by Catchin' Toads. Call 703-476-4500 or visit [restoncommunitycenter.com](http://restoncommunitycenter.com).

## THURSDAY/DEC. 21

**Puppet Snow Show.** 10 and 11:30 a.m. at Frying Pan Farm Park's Visitor Center, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. Puppet master Bob Brown brings this special holiday puppet show to the park. \$5. Call 703-437-9101 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov).

## SATURDAY/DEC. 23

**Catchin' Toads and Tim McKee in Concert.** noon at the Promenade, 11900 Market St., Reston. 45-minute performances presented by Reston Community Center. Call 703-476-4500 or visit [restoncommunitycenter.com](http://restoncommunitycenter.com).

**Horse-drawn Carriage Rides.** 4-9 p.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. \$5 per person; children 5 and under ride free with adult. Proceeds go to local charities. Call 703-709-6720 or visit [restontowncenter.com](http://restontowncenter.com).

## SUNDAY/DEC. 31

**New Year's Eve Golf Tournament.** 10 a.m. at Herndon Centennial Golf Course, 909 Ferndale Ave. Annual four-person scramble. Entry fee includes green fee, cart fee, range balls and prizes. Call 703-471-5769 visit [www.herndongolf.com](http://www.herndongolf.com).

## MONDAY/JAN. 1

**New Year's Day 5K.** 10 a.m. at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St. music, food, awards, and fun celebration following the race. Presented by Potomac River Running. Call 703-709-6720 or visit [restontowncenter.com](http://restontowncenter.com).

## DEADLINE JAN. 5, 2018

**2018 Fine Art Photography Competition.** Fine Art Photography of any subject is welcome; there is no required theme for entries. Call 703-956-9560 or visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com).



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**ENTERTAINMENT**

**Reduced Shakespeare  
Company performing  
“The Ultimate Christmas  
Show (abridged).”**

PHOTO COURTESY OF  
RESTON COMMUNITY CENTER



# Inspired, Merry Holiday Fun

**Reduced Shakespeare Company’s ‘The Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged)’ at Reston’s CenterStage.**

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

## Where & When

The Reduced Shakespeare Company presents “The Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged),” at CenterStage, Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Performances: Saturday, Dec. 16, 2017 at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets: \$25, non-Reston \$35. Call 703-476-4500 or visit [www.restoncommunitycenter.com](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com)

“The zany antics of the Reduced Shakespeare Company have been making Restonians laugh for 20 years and return with ‘The Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged),’” said Paul Douglas Michnewicz, director, Arts and Events at the Reston Community Center. The production is a mad-cap, unconventional show that celebrates the many traditions of the Holiday season — Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanza; and even the Winter Solstice.

“I just love hosting the ‘bad boys of abridgement’ in the CenterStage. They have been coming to Reston so long that they feel like family to us,” added Michnewicz. “Children have grown up and are now bringing their own children to laugh at their hilarious antics.”

For those not familiar with the Reduced Shakespeare Company, the troupe has been around for more than three decades producing and performing their own brand of fresh, tongue-in-cheek looks at the world and all that makes it spin.

A small taste of what audiences can expect from the on-stage capers of the three-performers from the Reduced Shakespeare Company include tied together skits for the “Annual Holiday Variety Show and Christmas Pageant at St. Everybody’s Non-Denominational Universalist Church,” where all faiths are welcome. But, alas, there seems to be a slight problem: bad weather leading to the scheduled performers not making their performance.

What’s to be done?

Well the Reduced Shakespeare Company will find a way to solve that problem leading to fast, funny and physical performance.

Since this is a Reduced Shakespeare Company production, the audience will participate in a significant interactive manner. They will even give the onstage performers ideas to riff off of as the “Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged)” unspools.

With the audience’s imagination, each and every live show is different. For instance, who knows how many different ways there are to make new versions of the classic tune, “The Twelve Days of Christmas.”

During the holidays when there can be stress that can overwhelm all the joy and good tidings; let the Reduced Shakespeare Company’s “The Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged)” be one way to have some holiday joyful tidings and to light up the Holidays season with good-natured merry irreverence and big smiles. There will even be a gift exchange connected to the performance. Bring a wrapped Christmas gift of \$5 value or less to participate in the audience gift exchange.

The Reduced Shakespeare Company’s “The Ultimate Christmas Show (abridged)” at CenterStage can be a part of the day bringing Holiday cheer in Reston.

**Announcements**

**Announcements**

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Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

### ORNAMENT FUNDRAISER

**White House Ornaments Sale.** Through Dec. 15, 2017 White House Ornaments available for purchase from Assistance League of Northern Virginia for \$22 per ornament. Proceeds benefit the nonprofit's children's programs. Local delivery can be arranged. Visit [www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org](http://www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org) for more.

### WEDNESDAY/DEC. 6

**Supervisor Hudgins Holiday Open House.** 4:30-6:30 p.m. at the North County Governmental Center Community Room, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive. Email [huntermillRSVP@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:huntermillRSVP@fairfaxcounty.gov) for more.

### TUESDAY/DEC. 12

**Public Forum.** 7-9 p.m. at Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Learn about Fairfax County's Police Civilian Review Panel and Independent Police Auditor. More about the Civilian Review Panel at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel) and the Independent Police Auditor at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/policeauditor](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/board/policeauditor).

### SATURDAY/DEC. 16

**Application Deadline.** The Reston Planning and Zoning (P&Z) Committee is seeking volunteers to serve on the committee. All residents of Reston, over 18 years of age are eligible to serve. The committee consists of fifteen (15) members with five (5) positions expiring each year, and three (3) associate members that serve one year terms. To serve on the Reston P&Z Committee, find the application at [rpz.myreston.org](http://rpz.myreston.org) and return it with your resume, as per the instructions on the application.

### TUESDAY/DEC. 19

**Land Use Committee Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. at the North County Governmental Building, 1801 Cameron Glen Drive, Reston. The Hunter Mill District Land Use Committee meets. Agenda items include Virginia Electric and Power Company. The Land Use Committee will NOT meet in November. Contact Goldie Harrison at 703-478-0283.

### ONGOING

**Herndon High School Library** needs volunteers. Training available to help with re-shelving books, pulling books for teacher use, helping to check passes, or other special projects. To learn more, email [hhs\\_library@fcps.edu](mailto:hhs_library@fcps.edu).

**RSVP**, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at [chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403- 5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).

**Sunrise at Reston Town Center** offers a monthly Caregiver Support Group on the fourth Wednesday of the month, 6:30-8 p.m. Monthly support group offers a safe place for family caregivers, to meet and develop a mutual support system and to exchange practical information and possible solutions. Learn about resources available in the community and how to manage caregiver related stress. Call 703-956- 8930 or email [Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com](mailto:Reston.ED@sunriseseniorliving.com) to RSVP.

**Exercise for Parkinson's.** Every Monday, 1:15-2:15 p.m. Reston Sport&Health, 11445 Isaac Newton Square, Reston. This program brings together people impacted by Parkinson's Disease to participate in various physical exercises aimed at improving posture, balance and circulation and increasing strength, muscle control and mobility. Free. [parkinsonsfoundation.org](http://parkinsonsfoundation.org). Call Natalie McCall nmccall@onelifefitness.com 703-904-7600 for more.

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## Context of Having Written



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't want to self-indulge too much about last week's column but, sometimes in my unexpressed desire to fulfill my writing obligation/not let me cancer/cancer treatment affect my schedule, I write my column under less-than-ideal circumstances.

Post chemotherapy/(last week) – the immediate week after, is about as challenging as it gets for me. I'm a bit irritable. I'm a bit out of sync/unable to focus. I'm somewhat impatient. My hands are shaky. My eyes are "squinty." I'm hungry yet I can't eat. My self-editing skills are below average – more than usual. And finally, my reading comprehension is mostly lost in the toxic haze. Still, I'm determined to make my deadline.

Not that any of the preceding paragraph is an excuse. It's more of an explanation as to why a column written with the best of intentions may have missed the mark in tone and substance. Though I've not received any feedback as yet confirming my sense of what I had written last week; nevertheless, my feeling upon submitting it to editorial was that I had wavered a bit. Unfortunately, I didn't have the balance emotionally or the ability physically to assess its content. I apologize in arrears for attempting to maintain its regularity.

And to that point, specifically to that word, that's what my attitude as a cancer patient has been about: regularity. Doing the things that I regularly/normally/typically do without deviating from my norm. Because for me, deviating from my norm, living/doing outside of my box – within reason, would be – to me anyway, reinforcing the negative that is most definitely a cancer diagnosis. A diagnosis with which I have long ago made my peace, made my choices and moreover, made my it goal to face the present/future with a positive attitude infused with as much self-effacing good humor as possible. It's nothing I really did intentionally, it is simply who I am: my father's son, with inherited sensibilities to live my life thinking the glass is half full, until it's not.

And so far, nearly nine years into a "13 month to two-year" prognosis, I'm living proof that either whatever I'm doing is working (and there's a bit more to the story) or I'm an incredibly lucky act of kindness for which there's no quantifiable explanation. Regardless, I'm not the least bit inclined to look a gift horse in the mouth and/or deny the possibility that my tumors are necrotic (dead). I'm very happy to accept the inexplicable fact that, statistically speaking, I'm an official anomaly: a stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer survivor.

However, since I'm not one to presume facts not yet in evidence, I'm still infused every six weeks, scanned quarterly and seen by my oncologist every three months. I don't for a second believe that somehow, after being diagnosed with a "terminal disease" in late February 2009, that life goes merrily along without consequences. Not that I'm a fatalist – Rebecca, I'm merely evaluating/introspecting/compartamentalizing and allocating precious emotional resources so I can live my life as I'm accustomed to doing.

And what I'm most accustomed to doing, especially dating back to December 1997, is writing a weekly column for Connection Newspapers. Though the columns published previous to June '09 were not "cancer" columns, as we call them, they were nonetheless written with the same passion and nonsensical prose as my "cancer" columns are. So, generally speaking, I am able, as my brother Richard says, "to churn out the dribble."

Still, writing is not like reading. Though a similar commitment is needed, writing requires a bit more effort. And it's been an effort I've sustained before, after and during my lung cancer diagnosis. Some weeks are harder than others. Last week was difficult. This week not so much.

Perhaps you agree?

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



# OPINION

# Give Locally in Fairfax County

## Holidays are for giving; many choices to help.

The holidays are about giving, and giving thanks. The holidays are about children and family. The holidays are about sharing, about joy. The holidays are about being thankful and about faith and appreciation. The holidays are about alleviating suffering for others.

**EDITORIAL** Northern Virginia is among the wealthiest areas in the country. Many if not most of us go through our daily and seasonal routines without encoun-

tering evidence of the needy families among us.

In Fairfax County, more than 52,000 (28 percent) of FCPS students are are poor enough to receive free or subsidized meals.

The median family income in Fairfax County rose to \$129,800. But among families with children, 6 percent have income below the poverty level. That's \$20,420 for a family of three. That's about \$1,700 a month. Median rent in Fairfax County is \$1,747, meaning the cost for half the rentals is more than that.

These are children living in families who may be on the brink of homelessness, families who must choose between medical bills, car repair, heat and food. Some of these are children who

may not be sure that they will have a meal between the meals they get in school.

School holidays can bring uncertainty and hunger — a far cry from the celebrations, gifts and plenty that we associate with the holidays.

Hundreds of homeless students attend the public schools, and their needs are greater.

Many nonprofits in the county need your help to provide a holiday meal for Thanksgiving or Christmas, to provide children with gifts.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season. Here are a few ideas.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## GIVE LOCALLY

- ❖ **Cornerstones**, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, [www.cornerstonesva.org](http://www.cornerstonesva.org). Nonprofit providing support and advocacy for those in need of food, shelter, affordable housing, quality childcare, and other human services. Programs and services include the Embry Rucker Community Shelter, Emergency Food Pantry, Hypothermia Prevention Program, Thanksgiving Food Drive, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. Gifts will be collected at Cornerstones main office, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, VA 20190 on Thursday, Dec. 7 and Friday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 9, 9 a.m. – noon. Contact Nate King, Donations and Drives Coordinator, at 571-323-9569.
- ❖ **Share of McLean** operates a food pantry; provides assistance to families to avoid eviction, keep utilities on and meet other needs in a crisis. Share of McLean will provide holiday assistance to more than 250 needy families (630-plus people) this year. Help neighbors in need by donating money, fulfilling a wish or donating Walmart, Target, Giant, or Safeway gift cards. Share's Furniture Program is in major need of drivers and helpers. Visit the Furniture Program page. The Food Pantry is in major need of supplies; visit the Food Pantry page and check Facebook to see how to help the Food Pantry. Visit [www.shareofmclean.org](http://www.shareofmclean.org) for more info about Share.
- ❖ **Herndon-Reston FISH** (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105, [herndonrestonfish.org](http://herndonrestonfish.org). Herndon-Reston FISH has assisted local residents in short-term crises by since 1969. FISH provides Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help by responding to emergency requests for rent, transportation, utilities, medical prescriptions and other needs. FISH operates The Bargain Loft, a thrift store, which needs donations of good quality saleable items, accepting and selling art, furniture, jewelry, household linens, dishes, pots and pans, books, women's designer clothing (clean and on hangers), puzzles, games, collectibles, small electronics and more. If you have store questions, call 703-437-0600. Herndon-Reston FISH also provides Holiday Food & Gift Baskets during the November and December season.
- ❖ **LINK**, serving Herndon, Chantilly, Loudoun and more. Every year the goal is to provide each family with a week's worth of non-perishable food in November and again in December. When funds allow, grocery gift cards are also included. In November, clients also receive a voucher for coats and warm clothing. In December, children 16 and under receive gifts. [holiday@linkagainsthunger.org](mailto:holiday@linkagainsthunger.org). 703-437-1776 [www.linkagainsthunger.org](http://www.linkagainsthunger.org).
- ❖ **Committee for Helping Others** (CHO), Vienna, organized in 1969 by a group of churches and individuals in the Dunn Loring, Merrifield, Oakton, Vienna community to provide simple, loving charity to those in need. Last year 450 children had a special Christmas through the annual Christmas Store. 703-281-7614, [www.cho-va.com](http://www.cho-va.com)
- ❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**. 571-748-2500, [www.nvfs.org](http://www.nvfs.org), Employment and job training, healthcare, housing, mental health, foster care and Healthy Families. 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124.
- ❖ **Second Story** — Abused and Homeless Children's Refuge, 2100 Gallows Road, Vienna, VA 22182. 703-506-9191, [second-story.org](http://second-story.org). Second Story

(formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children. Requests for food and clothing are up more than 50 percent.

- ❖ **Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna** providing services, personal enrichment, volunteer opportunities for adults 50 and over. Currently serving 3,000+ mature adults in the region. 703-281-0538, [www.scov.org](http://www.scov.org).
- ❖ **Touching Heart** in Herndon is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate children to have giving hearts. [www.touchingheart.com](http://www.touchingheart.com), 703-901-7355.
- ❖ **Western Fairfax Christian Ministries** — food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive in Chantilly. For more information or to sponsor a family, call 703-988-9656, ext. 105. To mail gift cards or send donations by check, add a note saying "food basket program" and send them to: WFCM, P.O. Box 220802, Chantilly, VA 20153.
- ❖ **HomeAid** builds and renovates facilities that house the homeless, and partners with many local organizations to do so. 3684 Centerview Drive, Suite 110B, Chantilly, VA 20151. [www.homeaidnova.org](http://www.homeaidnova.org).
- ❖ **FACETS** helps parents, their children and individuals who suffer the effects of poverty in the Fairfax area, a partner in efforts to end homelessness in Fairfax County. FACETS is always in need of volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. 703-865-4251, [volunteer@facetscares.org](mailto:volunteer@facetscares.org) or [www.facetscares.org](http://www.facetscares.org). 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax, VA 22030.
- ❖ **Britepaths** will have 3,000 individuals and families in need of holiday assistance list this fall. Sponsor a family or donate to provide a family with a Thanksgiving meal, December holiday meal and/or gifts for their children. [britepaths.org](http://britepaths.org).
- ❖ **Fairfax City Area FISH** (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) helps local people who are in temporary need of life's basic necessities such as food, clothing, and financial assistance for rent, mortgage payments, utilities, and medical treatments. FISH also provides limited transportation for doctor appointments and food delivery. 703-222-0880, [fairfaxfish.org](http://fairfaxfish.org).
- ❖ **Lamb Center**, day center for homeless, Fairfax. 703-691-3178, [www.thelambcenter.org](http://www.thelambcenter.org).
- ❖ **Food for Others** provides a safety net for people who suddenly face unforeseen emergencies such as a family illness or the loss of a job or a spouse. Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173, [info@foodforothers.org](mailto:info@foodforothers.org) or [www.foodforothers.org](http://www.foodforothers.org). Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- ❖ **Ecumenical Community Helping Others** (ECHO). 703-569-9160, [www.foodforothers.org](http://www.foodforothers.org). Open to receive donations at 7205 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Provides food and financial assistance to those in short-term emergencies, and provides clothing and household goods to low income families.
- ❖ **Assistance League of Northern Virginia** is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that feeds, clothes and educates children in need. Assistance League's philanthropic programs touch the lives of thousands of children at 11 Title I schools in Northern Virginia, serving children most in need at selected schools in Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Alexandria. To learn more

about volunteer and sponsorship opportunities, email [alnorthernva@gmail.com](mailto:alnorthernva@gmail.com) or visit [www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org](http://www.northernvirginia.assistanceleague.org).

- ❖ **Comfort for America's Uniformed Services** (CAUSE) ensures that recuperating service members have opportunities for recreation and social interaction and receive concrete signs of appreciation for all that they have done. 1100 N Glebe Road, Suite 373, Arlington, VA 22201. 703-591-4968, [cause-usa.org](http://cause-usa.org).
- ❖ **Shelter House** provides crisis intervention, safe housing and supportive services to promote self-sufficiency for homeless families and victims of domestic violence in Fairfax County. [www.shelterhouse.org/](http://www.shelterhouse.org/)
- ❖ **National Capital Food Bank**, 6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving all of Northern Virginia. 703-541-3063, [www.capitalareafoodbank.org](http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org).
- ❖ **Homestretch** is the largest provider of transitional housing in Fairfax County and offers a services to help the homeless better their lives through education. Email [jhenderson@homestretchva.org](mailto:jhenderson@homestretchva.org); 703-237-2035 x125; [homestretchva.org/](http://homestretchva.org/).
- ❖ **Pathway Homes** focuses on providing housing and support services to individuals with serious mental illnesses, with the mission to help these individuals reach their full potential and lead stable lives. 10201 Fairfax Boulevard, Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22030. 703-876-0390, [info@pathwayhomes.org](mailto:info@pathwayhomes.org), [www.pathwayhomes.org](http://www.pathwayhomes.org), [www.pathwayhomes.org/support-pathway/](http://www.pathwayhomes.org/support-pathway/).
- ❖ **Christian Relief Services**, 8301 Richmond Highway, Suite 900, Alexandria, VA 22309, 703-317-9086, 703-317-9690, [christianrelief.org/](http://christianrelief.org/)
- ❖ **Friends of Guest House Northern Virginia** offers structure, supervision, support and assistance to female ex-offenders who want to improve their lives and break the cycle of incarceration. Friends of Guest House offers the only program for women of its kind in Northern Virginia. One East Luray Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301-2025, 703-549-8072, [info@friendsofguesthouse.org](mailto:info@friendsofguesthouse.org), [friendsofguesthouse.org/](http://friendsofguesthouse.org/)
- ❖ **Habitat for Humanity of Northern Virginia** transforms the lives of lower-income families in need by providing affordable homeownership opportunities in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax and Falls Church. Learn more at [www.habitatnova.org](http://www.habitatnova.org).
- ❖ **The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia** has launched its Permanent Fund campaign, a community endowment which is a forever source to provide critical support for those in need in the Northern Virginia region; Consider leaving a legacy through a current or planned gift to the Permanent Fund at the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia. [www.cfnova.org/permanentfund](http://www.cfnova.org/permanentfund).
- ❖ **The Literacy Council of Northern Virginia**, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church, Virginia 22042, 703-237-0866, [lcnv.org](http://lcnv.org), teaches adults to speak, read, write and understand English at the most basic level. The organization has been around for 55 years, and serves Fairfax and Arlington Counties and the cities of Falls Church and Alexandria. Most of the students are immigrants, and they are mostly women, and low income.
- ❖ **Neighborhood Health Clinics**, [www.neighborhoodhealthva.org](http://www.neighborhoodhealthva.org). Improving health and advance health equity in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax by providing access to high quality care regardless of ability to pay.

## Oak Hill & Herndon CONNECTION

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