

Springfield CONNECTION

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WELLBEING

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Ellie Zerr, 3, of Springfield, and her brother Jack, 1, and Lily Buckner, 3, of Alexandria, play with an inflatable Santa at the Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park.

Cherished
Holiday Tradition:
'The Nutcracker'

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Best James, Lake
Braddock in Shootout

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Zhengia and Winston Meng and Xiao Lan Cheng of Vienna visit Santa and Mrs. Claus, a.k.a. Rodney and Janet Smith.



Visitors roast marshmallows at the Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park.

PHOTOS BY STEVE HIBBARD/THE CONNECTION

Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park

More holiday fun in the park next weekend.

Several hundred people attended the fourth-annual Winter Wonderland held at Burke Lake Park last Sunday, Dec. 2, 2018. Activities included the Holiday Express train ride, a Carolers Carousel ride, Gingerbread Man Mini-Golf, visits and photos with Santa and Mrs. Clause, s'mores around a campfire, candle-making crafts and hot drinks. The event provides community outreach and a fun holiday event for the entire family at the park, according to Chris D'Anna, Parks Assistant Manager at Burke Lake Park.

The Winter Wonderland will be held again next weekend, Dec. 8-9. Activities run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Six-hour

passes are \$15 in advance and \$20 on event day.

The park is also hosting a Celebration Station on Dec. 7-8, which includes a train ride through a forest decorated with holiday-themed lights and a spin on the Carolers Carousel from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each, and rides take place every 20 minutes. Celebration Station tickets provide visitors with one train ride, one carousel ride and one cocoa or cider drink.

Burke Lake Park is located at 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Call 703-323-6600 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/burke-lake.

— STEVE HIBBARD



Jonah Dennis, 6, and brother Sawyer, 3, visit with Santa during the Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park last Sunday, Dec. 2, 2018.



Conductor Stuart Copan drives the "Holiday Express" train around Burke Lake Park during the Winter Wonderland last Sunday, Dec. 2, 2018.



Ellie Zerr, 3, of Springfield and her brother Jack, 1, and Lily Buckner, 3, of Alexandria, play with an inflatable Santa.



Norah Lottich, 5, of Burke, and Leah Jacobson, 3, and sister Emma, 5, of Burke eat S'mores at the Winter Wonderland at Burke Lake Park.

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OPINION

Give Locally

For tens of thousands of poor children and families in our area, uncertainty and need are distant from the celebrations and plenty that so many of us associate with this holiday period.

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.

Northern Virginia is among the wealthiest areas in the country. Many if not most of us go through our daily and seasonal routines without encountering evidence of the needy families among us.

In Fairfax County Public Schools, more than 54,000 students (29 percent) are poor enough to receive subsidized meals.

Many 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 Christmas

and the holiday season.

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

Many nonprofits in the region need your help to provide holiday meals around Christmas, to provide children with gifts.

There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of ways to give locally this season, for humans in need, for animals in need, for an environment in need. Here are a few ideas. Please let us know what we have missed.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Where to Give Locally

❖ **Cornerstones**, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, serving Reston and Herndon. 571-323-9555, 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, Gifts for Kids and annual Coat Drive. For families in need, often there isn't enough money to spend on gifts. To register for the Gifts for Kids drive, visit <https://www.cornerstonesva.org/gifts-for-kids-donation-form/>. Personalized wish lists will be distributed within two business days of your submission. Gifts will be collected at Cornerstones' main office, 11150 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 210, Reston, VA 20190, during the following times: Thursday, Dec. 6 and Friday, Dec. 7: 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8: 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. 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 hundreds of needy families this year. In December, Share's families will be welcomed to a festive party, served a light meal, and Santa will travel all the way from the North Pole to take photographs with the children. Help Share help those in need by fulfilling a wish or donating Walmart, Target, Giant, or Safeway gift cards. Contact ShareWishes@gmail.com for more information. Visit www.shareofmclean.org for more info about Share.

❖ **Herndon-Reston FISH** (Friendly Instant Sympathetic Help), 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, 703-391-0105 herndonrestonfish.org. Herndon-Reston FISH has assisted local residents in short-term crises by since 1969. 703-437-0600.

❖ **The Community Foundation of Northern Virginia** www.cfnova.org The Community Foundation for Northern Virginia

works to respond to critical need and seed innovation in our region. Your gift helps us make grants in our focus areas of interest while also bringing a spotlight on the benefits of community philanthropists www.cfnova.org/for-donors/donate-now

❖ **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. 703-437-1776 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. Coming up, holiday bike drive. 703-281-7614, www.cho-va.com

❖ **Our Neighbor's Child** (ONC) volunteers are preparing for delivery of holiday gifts for children from financially struggling families in western Fairfax County – predominantly in Centreville and Chantilly. www.ourneighborschild.org/

❖ **Northern Virginia Family Service**. The organization provides the essential building blocks for financial, emotional and physical well-being, serving as leaders and innovators for the Northern Virginia community. Every year, it empowers 35,000 individuals to achieve self-sufficiency. www.nvfs.org Northern Virginia Family Service, 10455 White Granite, Drive, Suite 100, Oakton, VA 22124. 571-748-2500

❖ **Second Story** — Second Story (formerly Alternative House) provides shelter and services for homeless, runaway or abused teenagers, unaccompanied youth, and young mothers and their children. second-story.org.

❖ **Shepherd's Center of Oakton Vienna** providing services, personal enrichment, volunteer opportunities for adults 50 and over. Currently serving 3,000-plus mature adults in the region. 703-281-0538, www.scov.org

❖ **Touching Heart** in Herndon is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to educate children to have giving hearts. www.touchingheart.com, 703-901-7355.

❖ **Western Fairfax Christian Ministries** — 4511 Daly Drive, Suite J, Chantilly, VA 20151 in Chantilly. For more information or to sponsor a family, call Jennie Bush, Community Outreach Manager at 703-988-9656, ext. 107. To mail gift cards or send donations by check, send them to: WFCM, P.O. Box 220802, Chantilly, VA 20153. @WFCM_VA

❖ **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 donations and volunteers, and offers a variety of one-time and ongoing opportunities. 703-865-4251 or volunteer@facetscares.org. www.facetscares.org. 10640 Page Ave., Suite 300, Fairfax VA 22030

❖ **Britepaths** Britepaths is working to assist 800 Fairfax County area families who might otherwise go without December holiday meals and gifts for their children. Sponsor a family or donate to provide a family with a holiday meal and/or gifts for their children. Britepaths.org

❖ **Centreville Labor Resource Center** (CLRC), a safe, organized center where residents and contractors can negotiate work arrangements with day laborers. Centreville Square Shopping Center, 5944 Centreville Crest Ln, Centreville, VA 20121. Phone: (703) 543-6272 Email: Contact@CentrevilleLRC.org www.centreville-lrc.org/

❖ **Fairfax City Area FISH** (For Immediate Sympathetic Help) FISH provides funds and volunteers to serve the needy and elderly in the

greater Fairfax City area of Fairfax County. FISH responds to requests for life's necessities: food, clothing, financial assistance for delinquent rent, mortgage, utility bills, gasoline, and prescriptions. 703-222-0880 fairfaxfish.org/

❖ **Lamb Center**, www.thelambcenter.org, day center for homeless, Fairfax 703-691-3178.

❖ **Food for Others** Located at 2938 Prosperity Ave., Fairfax, VA 22031, 703-207-9173. 2938 Prosperity Ave. info@foodforothers.org. Most needed items include: Fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, canned chili, canned tomato products, canned meat, rice, 16 oz packages, spaghetti sauce, 14 oz – 1lb (ideally in cans instead of glass), canned fruit (packed in fruit juice instead of syrup) 11oz – 20oz, beans, dried or canned, canned pasta. www.foodforothers.org

❖ **Ecumenical Community Helping Others** (ECHO), 703-569-9160. 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. Outerwear drive through Dec. 14. See Greater Springfield Chamber for drop off locations. www.echo-inc.org.

❖ **Lorton Community Action Center** (LCAC) will provide holiday assistance to hundreds of families. Christmas food baskets along with fulfilling gift wishes for children and teens will help low-income families. See website for warm coat and Christmas donations and volunteer needs. lortonaction.org/seasonal-assistance/.

❖ **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

SEE GIVE LOCALLY, PAGE 10

Springfield CONNECTION

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Habits that Stick

Key to making changing old habits and making new ones.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Standing outside the glass doors of the studio, lit harshly by fluorescent bulbs, Annabelle VanLandingham admits that she is intimidated by a group of women standing in front of her — all model-thin and wearing cropped tank tops that reveal finely toned abs.

"I always feel like I don't fit it and everybody is staring at me, but this time, I'm really going to stick with it," she said, acknowledging her failed attempts to make regular exercise part of her daily life.

Vows to change habits are easy to make, but keeping them can seem nearly impossible. Commitments to cooking healthy weeknight dinners give way to the reality of packed schedules, while a morning meditation practice is overtaken by an inability to resist checking email right after getting out of bed. Local human behaviorists say that when it comes to creating habits, understanding how they develop is a first step.

"Essentially, a habit is turning a new behavior into something that is done automatically," said Lauren Puglisi, LCSW. "For example, grabbing a cigarette after dinner or putting on your seatbelt when you get in the car are automatic. You don't have to talk yourself into doing those things, you do

them without even thinking."

For those who want to make activities like exercising or meditating life-long habits, the key is to begin with realistic and attainable steps. "New habits are best formed in small, manageable increments," said Jessica McLaughlin, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology at Montgomery College. "For instance, if you want to develop the habit of exercising, start by taking 10-minute walks instead of promising to exercise for an hour every day. It is easier to form habits if the changes are similar to what you are already doing, as opposed to something that drastically alters your current day-to-day schedule."

Develop a list specific actions to take, advises Puglisi. "For example, swapping out potato chips and a soda for hummus and whole wheat pita bread for an afternoon snack or taking a 30-minute walk three days each week can be attainable ways to get started," she said. "Otherwise, you might get overwhelmed and give up."

"Research supports that it can take approximately two months of daily repetition to develop a habit, but keep in mind that some habits aren't as easy to make automatic, and may require more time," added Joanne Bagshaw, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Montgomery College. "For instance, developing a habit of walking 15

minutes every day may take eight to 10 weeks to become an automatic behavior, but running five miles every day could take much longer."

Find ways to increase accountability. "Write down your goals and keep [the list] in a visible place where you have a constant reminder and can check off your accomplishments each day," said McLaughlin. "Tell someone else what you are doing or, better yet, make the change with someone else, such as practicing mindfulness together or eliminating sugary drinks as a team." Setting up reminders can help one avoid backsliding, especially when habit formation is in its early stages," said Puglisi. "If you want develop a meditation practice to relieve stress at work, set an alert on your phone for a time that know you'll definitely be free," she said. "Set a realistic amount of time to spend meditating, and select a specific meditation. This will make it easy to do quickly and easily, so you'll have fewer excuses not to do it."

The company one keeps also plays a role in habit formation. "You're likely to boost your willpower if you choose to spend time with someone who has strong willpower," said Bagshaw. "Plan on creating your daily walk or running habit with a friend, or coach, or group who will be a role model for self-control."

Assess your progress regularly. "Self-monitoring adds to success," said psychologist Stacie Isenberg, Psy.D. "Writing down what you've eaten each day can help you stay honest with yourself. That said, be realistic with your time frames and don't cause yourself extra stress. If thinking about how you ate during the week on a Friday is less stressful than writing it every day, do that. But do choose a regular time to consider progress and impediments or you'll be at 2020 without your new habit."

"It helps to set up the environment to remind you to do the behavior and make it easy to follow through," said Jerome Short, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at George Mason University. "For example, put vegetables and fruits on the first shelf you see when you open the refrigerator. You are more likely to eat what you see than what you do not see."

Don't forget rewards, says McLaughlin. "Change won't happen unless you are motivated to make the change," she said. "This means you have to find what is rewarding for you. You might find that what you are doing is intrinsically rewarding, such as increasing your energy levels or seeing your scale number go down. Other times, you might need to create your own reward, such as getting a manicure when you've gone a week without biting your nails."

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ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO COURTESY FAIRFAX BALLET

Jessica Werfel performing the role of Clara in "The Nutcracker," a joint production of the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and the Fairfax Ballet.



PHOTO BY GOODWIN PHOTOGRAPHY/COURTESY FAIRFAX BALLET

Veronica Robertson performing in "The Nutcracker," a joint production of the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and the Fairfax Ballet.

Cherished Holiday Tradition: 'The Nutcracker'

Singular collaboration of Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and Fairfax Ballet.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra (FSO) and the Fairfax Ballet are combining their artistic forces to present the timeless family classic, Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker."

The production will be a musical and dance cornucopia of dancing snowflakes, sugar plum fairies and epic battles between heroic toy soldiers and mischievous mice, but also of a brave young girl who stands up to danger.

"Audiences will delight in The Fairfax Ballet's magical dance performance with original choreography as the Fairfax Symphony, under the direction Christopher Zimmerman, performs Tchaikovsky's captivating score," said Jonathan Kerr, Executive Director, Fairfax Symphony Orchestra.

"We're delighted and grateful that many people from across the region have made this a cherished tradition of their holiday season," added Kerr. "It's certainly rare as one of few 'Nutcracker' productions in the area where Tchaikovsky's beautiful music is performed live by our full orchestra, together with the wonderful dancers onstage. Combining this with high-definition, digital scenery creates a magical experience that is sure to be a highlight for the entire family."

"We're incredibly honored to join the Fairfax Symphony in our fourth annual production of 'The Nutcracker,'" said Karla Petry, Executive Director of The Fairfax Ballet. "Our dancers will be performing with our extraordinary guest soloists from American Ballet Theatre."

The guest artists are Elina Miettinen danc-

Where and When

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and Fairfax Ballet present "The Nutcracker" at George Mason University, Center for the Arts 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Performance Sunday, Dec. 16, 2018 at 4 p.m. Tickets: \$49, \$69 and \$89. Purchase tickets online at www.fairfaxsymphony.org or by phone 703-993-2787.

ing the role of the Sugar Plum Fairy and Sean Stewart dancing as the Cavalier. "This provides Fairfax Ballet dancers with a rare opportunity to perform with a live orchestra on the premier stage at the Center for the Arts," added Petry.

Joining Miettinen and Stewart onstage is Jessica Werfel, age 16, of Chantilly. She will dance the role of the young heroine Clara. Carlos Alejandro Martinez Espinosa, attending George Mason University School of Dance, dances the role of the Nutcracker Prince.

Northern Virginia's Veronica Robertson and Dony'ae Bush (George Mason University) will perform the famous, "Arabian pas de deux." Northern Virginia cast members in "The Nutcracker" include as well; Aleksey Kudrin as Herr Drosselmeier, Laura McElhaney as the Mouse King, and Ana Victoria Smith in multiple roles. More than fifty dancers and students from across Fairfax County will perform in "The Nutcracker," the first, major production with Andrea Cook as the Fairfax Ballet's Artistic Director.

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RGW is pleased to announce that Dr. Joshua D. Levinson has joined the practice and is seeing patients in the Fairfax and Alexandria offices. It was his research on improving the safety of intravitreal injections for Macular Degeneration, Retinal Vein Occlusions and complications from Diabetes that is credited with making more sterile techniques common practice at clinics throughout the country. Dr. Levinson cares for patients suffering from Diabetic Retinopathy and Age-Related Macular Degeneration, and performs surgical procedures for retinal detachments and macular holes among many other eye-related problems.

We hope our patients will have the opportunity to meet and be treated by Dr. Levinson sometime soon. They can be certain their eyes are in excellent hands.

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HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT

Submit entertainment announcements at www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar/. The deadline is noon on Friday.

ONGOING

Red Cross Fundraiser. Through Saturday, Dec. 15 at Craffhouse, 11861 Palace Way, Fairfax. All three Craffhouse locations in Northern Virginia are donating 10 percent of all bottled beer purchases to the American Red Cross – California Wildfires Fund to assist those affected by the wildfires in California. Call 703-825-1811 or visit www.craffhouseusa.com.

Pop-Up Art show. Through Dec. 16 at Gallery 57, 11899 Grand Commons Ave., Fairfax. Emerging Artists Initiative and the Peterson Companies are partnering to bring an artistic and creative facet to the Fairfax community. A new pop-up art gallery at Fairfax Corner Center will be exhibiting paintings and sculptors by four resident artists in the vacant retail space. Free. Email director@eaiinc.org or visit eaiinc.org.

THURSDAY/DEC. 6

Winter Wonderland. 4-7 p.m. at Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. Join us Insight Memory Care Center in celebrating the season at their Winter Wonderland Holiday Party with treats, drinks, holiday cheer, and to celebrate the families, supporters, volunteers, board and staff members who support Insight. Visit www.insightmcc.org.

Holiday Open House. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Governmental Cetnter, 2511 Parkers Lane. Join Supervisor Storck, his staff and members of the Mount Vernon District Boards, Authorities and Commissions for a holiday open house. Enjoy an evening of refreshments, get to know the staff and tour the office. Consider supporting those in need by donating to the Blanket & Coat Drive for Refugees sponsored by the NOVA Relief Center. New or gently used coat and blanket donations can be dropped off at the Mount Vernon District Office until Friday, Dec. 7. RSVP by Dec. 1, appreciated but not required. Call 703-780-7518.

FRIDAY/DEC. 7

Holiday Benefit Concert. 7:30-9 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 6509 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Celebrate the holiday season with candlelight and carols with hammered dulcimerist, Karen Ashbrook and friends Paul Oorts, Eileen Estes and Jamie Sandel. Free admission. All donations will go to Fairfax Area Community Emergency and Transitional Services (FACETS) and Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO) to help people in need. Childcare provided. Reception to follow. Email foma@standrews.net or call 703-455-2500.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 7-8

Norwegian Festival-Bazaar. Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, 3810 Meredith Drive, Fairfax. Offering Norway's best tastes and traditions: warm woolens, cookbooks, ornaments, waffles, lefse, krumkake demos, plus baked goods, Norwegian food products, Nordic handcraft artisans, jewelry, sweaters. Café includes smørbrød, soup, and more. Live musicians both days with Nordic Dancers on Saturday. Free admission. Visit www.norwaydc.org/events/bazaar.

The Pajama Game. Friday, 7 p.m.; Saturday, 2 and 7 p.m. at Falls Church High School, 7521 Jaguar Trail, Falls Church. The Pajama Game is a musical based on the 1953 novel "7 1/2 Cents" by Richard Bissell. \$7. Visit www.fchsdrama.org or www.itickets.com/events/408638.html.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 7-9

"An Invitation to Christmas." Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, noon, 4 and 7:30 pm.; Sunday, noon and 4 p.m. at Richard Ernst Theater, NOVA campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The dancers of Encore Theatrical Arts Project are getting ready for their holiday extravaganza, "An Invitation to Christmas." The elves at the North Pole are super-busy and need extra help, so they send out invitations for children picked by Santa to attend Elf-Training School. However, one of the new recruits is a



PHOTO BY DENISE BOWDEN

Norwegian artisan knitting by Solbjorg Jansberg.

full-grown man, and his classmates wonder why he's there. He does, too, since he thought he was going on a job interview. \$19-\$26 via www.encoretap.org or 703-222-5511.

SATURDAY/DEC. 8

Winter Open House. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Celebrate the season with crafts, activities, seasonal music with a recorder ensemble and light refreshments for the whole family. Children can join Kingsley's Winter Reading Club by reading five books between Dec. 8 and Feb. 2 and receive a prize. Free. Call 703-978-5600.

Art & Crafts Marketplace. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Lake Braddock Secondary School, 9200 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Santa and his elves will be on duty for picture taking; gift wrapping available (all sizes welcome); vendors with something for everyone; babysitting for parents while shopping; food for sale; 50/50 raffle; drawings hourly and an auction. Contact Carrie Holmes, Chairperson at 571-205-9083 or Bob Gaylord, LBSS PTSA Second Vice President at 703-338-3033.

Coding Pizza Party. 2:30-4 p.m. at Thomas Jefferson Library, 7415 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church. Create a "Code Your Own Adventure Story" using Google's CS First Hour of Code. Make up a short adventure game with at least two options for a player to select what happens next in their story. At the end, play the adventure games the other coders created. Pizza and prizes for all. Free. Call 703-573-1060 or visit librarycalendar.fairfaxcounty.gov/event/4797761 to register.

Night in Bethlehem. 6-8 p.m. at Franconia United Methodist Church, 6037 Franconia Road, Alexandria. Experience a live recreation of the Christmas Story. Free to the community and includes a living Nativity, manger petting zoo, crafts, and hot cider. Call 703 971 5151 or visit www.franconiaumc.org.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 14-16

"An Invitation to Christmas." Friday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, noon, 4 and 7:30 pm.; Sunday, noon and 4 p.m. at Richard Ernst Theater, NOVA campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. The dancers of Encore Theatrical Arts Project are getting ready for their holiday extravaganza, "An Invitation to Christmas." The elves at the North Pole are super-busy and need extra help, so they send out invitations for children picked by Santa to attend Elf-Training School. However, one of the new recruits is a full-grown man, and his classmates wonder why he's there. He does, too, since he thought he was going on a job interview. \$19-\$26 via www.encoretap.org or 703-222-5511.

SATURDAY/DEC. 15

Jazz Brunch and Vendor Expo. Vendor Expo, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Jazz Brunch, noon at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, 6560 Braddock Road, Alexandria. Fairfax County NAACP offers a Jazz Brunch and Business and Vendor Expo, featuring more than 40 vendors. Shop for holiday gifts and stay to enjoy the jazz brunch celebration. Proceeds

Norwegian Festival-Bazaar

Offering Norway's best tastes and traditions: warm woolens, cookbooks, ornaments, waffles, lefse, krumkake demos, plus baked goods, Norwegian food products, Nordic handcraft artisans, jewelry, sweaters. Café includes smørbrød, soup, and more. Live musicians both days with Nordic Dancers on Saturday. Kids craft activities on Saturday and other attractions such as Fjord horses, Norwegian Lundehunds, and Norwegian Forest Cats. Friday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 8, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, 3810 Meredith Drive, Fairfax. Free admission. Visit www.norwaydc.org/events/bazaar.

benefit scholarships and advocacy efforts. Jazz Brunch, \$65; expo admission is free. Visit www.fairfaxnaacp.org/.

Pet Adoption Event. 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at Pet Supplies Plus, 11054 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Find a new forever animal friend with the help of the City of Fairfax Animal Control and Animal Shelter. Visit www.fairfaxva.gov/government/police/programs/animal-control/adopt-a-pet.

SUNDAY/DEC. 16

Football Viewing Party. 12:30-4 p.m. at Patriot Harley-Davidson, 9739 Fairfax Blvd., Fairfax. Patriot Harley-Davidson will host a Redskins viewing party with former Redskin and Hall of Famer, Darrell Green. Green will be available for pictures throughout the event and will take part in a half-time Q&A session. Photos that can be autographed will be available in exchange for a new, unused, unwrapped toy donation for the Sheehy Toys for Tots toy drive. These photos are the only items Green will autograph. Free and open to the public. Visit www.patriothd.com or call 703-352-5400.

BHS General Meeting. 3:30-5 p.m. at Pohick Regional Library, 6540 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Cindy Bennett shares anecdotes from her new book Wicked Fairfax County, recounting events like the typhoid epidemic at Camp Alger, a 1918 murder in Burke, and, of course, the Bunnyman. Free. Email slawski_brian@yahoo.com or visit burkehistoricalsociety.org.

Tchaikovsky: The Nutcracker. 4 p.m. at GMU Center for the Arts Concert Hall. Experience this timeless holiday classic with the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra and the Fairfax Ballet. Enjoy a winter wonderland of dancing snowflakes, sugar plum fairies and epic battles between heroic toy soldiers and mischievous mice. There will not be a pre-concert discussion for this matinee performance. \$49-\$89. Visit www.fairfaxsymphony.org/nutcracker-1-1.

SATURDAY/DEC. 18

Santa's Critters and Craft. 10 a.m.-noon at Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Blvd., Springfield. Come one, come all to meet Santa and his merry band of critters. Bring a camera to take pictures with Jolly Saint Nick, his elves and their animal friends. Ages 2-12. \$10. Call 703-451-9588 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/hidden-pond.

FRIDAY/DEC. 21

Moscow Ballet's Nutcracker. 4 and 8 p.m. at GMU Center for the Arts Concert Hall, 4373 Mason Pond Drive, Fairfax. Experience Moscow Ballet's Great Russian Nutcracker during their Dove of Peace Tour, spreading goodwill in over 100 cities across North America during the holiday season. \$28 and up. Go to www.nutcracker.com for tickets.

Family Movie Night: "The Incredibles."

Lights go down at 7 p.m. at Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Enjoy a free, family friendly (movies are PG) movie night. Participants may bring their own snacks. An adult must accompany anyone under the age of 14. Britepaths will accept donations of non-perishable food until 9 p.m. Call 703-385-7858.

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SPORTS

Mackey, West Potomac Best James, Lake Braddock in Shootout

Senior rivals combine for 79 points in early-season matchup.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

West Potomac's Daryl Mackey Jr. and Lake Braddock's Quentin James stepped onto the basketball court Monday and talked about their families.

They spent the rest of the evening talking trash.

The senior guards have been battling since they were freshmen on their respective varsity squads, back when West Potomac and Lake Braddock were conference rivals. Now that the teams are in different districts, they've been limited to one regular season matchup each of the last two seasons.

Monday's meeting might have been the final time Mackey and James compete against one another at the high school level.

They made the most of their opportunity.

James scored 36 points and led the Bruins on a furious fourth-quarter comeback attempt, but Mackey bested his counterpart with a career-high 43 points while leading the Wolverines to a 94-84 victory on Dec. 4 at West Potomac High School's Wolverdome.

Mackey and James, each listed at 6 feet, are quite familiar with one another, having faced off six times in their high school careers. They also played on the same AAU team, Team Takeover, last season. James called the rivalry "friendly, but not so friendly," with the not-so-friendly half born from healthy competition between a pair of super scorers.

"It's not like we hate each other," James said. "We had to be teammates [in AAU]. We gained respect for each other over time."

MACKEY was a potent scoring threat from the beginning of his high school career, contributing significantly as an underclassman on teams that reached the state tournament during his freshman and sophomore seasons. As a junior, he was named Gunston District Player of the Year.

Mackey plans to play college basketball but has yet to commit to a school.



PHOTO BY JON ROETMAN

West Potomac guard Daryl Mackey Jr., left, and Lake Braddock guard Quentin James combined to score 79 points during West Potomac's 94-84 victory on Monday.

James was more of a facilitator as a freshman, playing on a Lake Braddock team led by 6-foot-8 post James Butler, who plays collegiately at Drexel, and standout guard Corey Pelham, who plays at Virginia Wesleyan. James became more of a scoring threat as he got older. Last season, he produced a career-best 42 points against Fairfax.

James, who was also a standout receiver and defensive back for the Lake Braddock football team, received his first college offer from the Davidson football program a few weeks ago. James is still weighing his college options.

On Monday, Mackey and James engaged in good-natured trash talk during stretches when they defended one another.

"We always went at each other, even in practice for AAU," Mackey said. "That was something I wanted to do, was guard him. He probably wanted to guard me."

Mackey quickly took control of Monday's matchup, scoring 23 points in the first half, including five 3-pointers, as West Potomac built a 49-42 halftime lead.

SEE BASKETBALL, PAGE 10

lost (adj): 1. unable to find the way. 2. not appreciated or understood. 3. no longer owned or known



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OPINION

Where to Give Locally

FROM PAGE 5

opportunities, contact
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❖ **Comfort for America's
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❖ **Shelter House** provides crisis
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supportive services to promote self-
sufficiency for homeless families and
victims of domestic violence in
Fairfax County. It is our mission to
get families back into stable housing
in order to provide them the
opportunity to continue their journey
to self-sufficiency.
www.shelterhouse.org

❖ **United Community Ministries**,
Mount Vernon, 703-768-7106, 7511
Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA 22306
assists low-income families and
individuals living along the Route 1
Corridor, UCM provides housing
programs as well as a Workforce
Development Center. Last year, for
the holidays, donations of nearly
10,000 toys, books, games, clothing,
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holiday for hundreds of children.
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❖ **Friends of the Fairfax County
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impacted thousands of pets; saving
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enriching the lives of pets and their
humans. (571) 212-9858
www.facebook.com/pg/FFCAS/
about/

❖ **New Hope Housing**, founded in
1977, is a non-profit agency in
Northern Virginia committed to
finding creative and lasting solutions
to end the cycle of homelessness by
offering homeless men, women and
children the services they need to
change their lives and succeed.
8407E Richmond Hwy., Alexandria,
VA 22309
www.newhopehousing.org/how-to-
help/donate/

❖ **National Capital Food Bank**,
6833 Hill Park Drive, Lorton, serving
all of Northern Virginia, 703-541-
3063. www.capitalareafoodbank.org

❖ **Homestretch** is a provider of
transitional housing in Fairfax
County and offers a services to help
the homeless better their lives
through education. Email:
jhenderson@homestretchva.org; 703-
237-2035 x125; homestretchva.org/
volunteer/

❖ **Pathway Homes** providing non-
time-limited housing and supportive
services to adults with serious mental
illness and co-occurring disabilities in
Northern Virginia. Founded in 1980,
Pathways currently serves more than
400 adults in community-based
homes in Northern Virginia.
www.pathwayhomes.org

❖ **Good Shepherd Housing and
Family Services**, 8305-17B
Richmond Highway, PO Box 15096,
Alexandria, VA, 22039. 703-768-
9419, www.goodhousing.org/ The
mission of Good Shepherd Housing

(GSH) is to reduce homelessness,
increase community support, and
promote self-sufficiency. GSH
housing manages more than 70
housing units.

❖ **Christian Relief Services**, 8301
Richmond Highway, Suite 900,
Alexandria, VA 22309, 703-317-
9086, 703-317-9690
christianrelief.org/

❖ **Friends of Guest House
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to female ex-offenders who want to
improve their lives and break the
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❖ **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
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www.habitatnova.org.

❖ **Alice's Kids** (@alicewillhelp)
aliceskids.org P.O. Box 60, Mount
Vernon, VA 22121 When a child is
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electricity nor heat, these are
hardships that they can keep hidden
from their peers. But, when that
same child can't afford to pay for the
band field trip, a pair of glasses, a
chorus outfit or a new pair of shoes,
these are indignities that are evident
to their classmates. Alice's Kids pays
for these relatively inexpensive items
in the hopes of preserving the dignity
of the child. It helps children from all
over the Mount Vernon area through
small acts of kindness.

❖ **Tahirih Justice Center**, 703-575-
0070, www.tahirih.org, Legal
services, public policy advocacy, and
education for immigrant women and
girls.

❖ **OAR** rebuilds lives and breaks the
cycle of crime with opportunities,
alternatives, and resources for
offenders and their families to create
a safer community. 10640 Page Ave.,
Suite 250, Fairfax, VA 22030, 703-
246-3033. OAR needs volunteers and
financial donations. oarnova.org/
christmas

❖ **NAMI Northern Virginia** (National
Alliance on Mental Illness) works to
raise awareness and provide
education, advocacy, and support
programs for people living with
mental illness, families, students,
educators, law enforcement, and the
public throughout our
neighborhoods. Many excellent
programs. NAMI Northern Virginia
serves Fairfax, Falls Church,
Arlington, Alexandria, and Loudoun
www.nami-northernvirginia.org/
HelpLine: (571)458.7310,
Email: info@nami-nova.org

❖ **PRS**, Inc. exists so that individuals
living with mental illness, substance
use disorders, mild intellectual
disabilities, autism spectrum
disorders, and anyone who faces life
crises can achieve safety, personal
wellness, recovery and community
integration. PRS also provides crisis
counseling and connection to
supports CRISISLINK When crisis
calls, we answer 24/7 Call: 800-273-
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85511

Basketball

FROM PAGE 9

By the end of the third quar-
ter, Mackey had 34 points
and the Wolverines led by
13.

"When his shot is going
in," James said about his
opponent, "he's one of the
most un-guardable players in
the area."

However, Lake Braddock,
which trailed by as many as
17 points in the third quar-
ter, wasn't finished.

THE BRUINS opened the
fourth quarter with a 13-1
run, during which James
scored nine points. His
jumper cut the West Potomac
lead to 73-72 midway
through the period.

"[James is] good," West
Potomac head coach David
Houston III said. "I've been
coaching against him for
four years, since he was a
freshman. ... He's impres-
sive, he's hard to stop one on
one. I thought we made him
work and that was the key.
If he had 36, it was a diffi-
cult 36."

While James led a valiant
Bruin comeback effort in the
fourth quarter, West Potomac
never relinquished the lead
down the stretch. The Wol-
verines built a cushion with
a 9-2 run and held on for the
victory.

Mackey made a pair of free
throws with 43 seconds re-
maining, pushing him past
his career high of 40 points,
which he set last season
against North Stafford dur-
ing a holiday tournament.
He added two more free
throws with 17.7 seconds
left to reach 43 points.

Mackey finished with five
3-pointers and knocked
down 16 of 19 free-throw at-
tempts.

"He's a dynamic player,"
Houston said, "and ... the
[colleges] that are not look-
ing at him right now are go-
ing to regret it."

James knocked down four
3-pointers and connected on
8 of 9 free-throw attempts,
including the finishing touch
on a nifty three-point play.

"[James is] a great scorer,"
said West Potomac 7-footer
Jonas Munson, who finished
with 12 points in Monday's
victory. "I think he's a good
leader for their guys, but it
wasn't enough."

West Potomac (3-0) will host
Chantilly at 7:30 on Friday.
Lake Braddock (1-1) will host
Hayfield at 7:30 on Friday.

BULLETIN

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewsletters.com/Calendar. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

HOLIDAY DONATIONS

Blanket and Coat Drive. Through Dec. 8. Organized by NOVA Relief Center, blankets and coats will be sent to refugees in three camps in Jordan this winter. Blankets and coats should be new or gently worn. Monetary donations are also needed and may be made to NOVA Relief Center online and at some drop-off locations. Visit novareliefcenr.org.

Toys for Tots Donations. Through Dec. 8 at PaperMoon, 6315 Amherst Ave., Springfield. PaperMoon, a gentlemen's club in Springfield, will give back to the community by collecting new, unwrapped toys for Toys for Tots. Call 703-866-4160 or visit www.papermoonvip.com.

Toys for Tots Drive. Through Dec. 10. Area Sheehy Auto Stores will collect new and unwrapped toys to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, which will distribute those toys as gifts to less fortunate children in the community in which the campaign is conducted.

Christmas Wish Donations and Volunteers. Koinonia is now accepting donations of unwrapped Christmas gifts so that their clients can pick out gifts for their families. This year Christmas wishes will be held at Franconia United Methodist Church from Dec. 10-12. Donations will be accepted through Dec. 10. Visit www.koinoniacares.org for a list of suggested toys and gift cards. Volunteers needed Dec. 9-12, call 703-971-1991.

Sponsor a Local Family. Through Dec. 14, Fairfax-based non-profit Britepaths (formerly Our Daily Bread) is seeking volunteers to sponsor families in need who live throughout the Fairfax County area. Sponsors are matched with an individual or family with demonstrated need, and may opt to provide a December holiday meal, and/or gifts for children under 18. Cash donations and gift cards are welcome to assist those who are not sponsored. Register and learn more at britepaths.org. Contact 703-273-8829 or jwalton@britepaths.org.

Toy Drive. Through Friday, Dec. 14 at local Weichert, Realtors offices. Members of the community are invited to drop off new, unwrapped toys at the company's sales offices. The toys will be delivered throughout the holidays in conjunction with local charities that assist financially and physically disadvantaged children. To find a local office, go to www.weichert.com/offices/.

Holiday Basket Donation. Christmas basket donations by Dec. 17. Preparing a special holiday meal and joining one's family around the table to give thanks are visions that come to mind when we think of Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner. For many a special holiday meal is just not possible. Visit www.koinoniacares.org/holiday-baskets.html for suggestions and to sign up to donate a basket.

MONDAY/DEC. 10

Public Forum. 7-9 p.m. at Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane, Mt. Vernon. The Police Civilian Review Panel will conduct a public forum. Learn how to initiate the complaint process, who will investigate complaints, what to expect once a complaint is filed, and receive a 2018 update on Panel activity. The Independent Police Auditor will be present to explain the Auditor's role in oversight. Participants will have the opportunity to engage the Panel with questions about the process. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/policecivilianreviewpanel/police-civilian-review-panel-public-forum for more.

TUESDAY/DEC. 11

NARFE Fairfax 737 Christmas Holiday Party. 11:30 a.m. at American Legion Post 177, 3939 Oak St., Fairfax. NARFE Fairfax 737 Christmas Holiday Party with entertainment from The Legacy Brass. Call 703-280-2356 by Friday Dec. 7 to RSVP for luncheon (\$11); free if not having prepared lunch. Email rrharney2@cox.net or call 703-501-0020.

Interest Meeting/Open House. 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Burke United Methodist Church, 6200 Burke Centre Parkway, Burke. Scouts BSA Girl Troop 1347 invites all girls (ages 11-17) with parent/guardian to an Interest Meeting and Open House. Includes Scouts BSA program overview, Q&A, and Scout youth activity. Free. Contact Jessica Norsky at Troop1347SM@gmail.com or visit www.burke1347.mytroop.us for more.

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