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Behind the bronze statue of Robert E. Simon installed on a plaza bench with his back to the lake, and alongside a Christmas tree, someone placed a wishing net.



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PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

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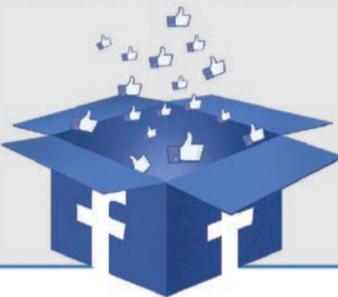
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PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON

Lake Anne Village Center is located around a plaza and the inlet of Lake Anne at 1609 Washington Plaza W. Reston. It is a mix of residential and commercial buildings, restaurants, brewery, small shops, art galleries, Lake Anne Community Center and Reston Historic Trust Museum, with public art calling children to climb on and run through the concrete pieces.

Wishes at Lake Anne

Better than any greeting card for the season.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
 THE CONNECTION

Anyone taking a walk on the plaza at Lake Anne Village Center is drawn to it, unsure at first what it is. Behind the bronze statue of Robert E. Simon installed on a plaza bench with his back to the lake, and alongside a Christmas tree, someone placed a wishing net. It is strung between simple plastic piping wrapped in evergreen garland. The whole thing is topped off with a big, sparkly, red bow, and it is alive with movement.

The netting is filled with hundreds of attached hangtags rapidly fluttering in the lake breeze like white hummingbird wings, moving forward and back, pivoting in figure-eights. They are the marked wishes of unnamed authors, expressing their yearnings.

Some are written in bold, shaky child's script. Letters spill uphill and downhill creating words with inventive spellings. Others show the more collected writings by adults.

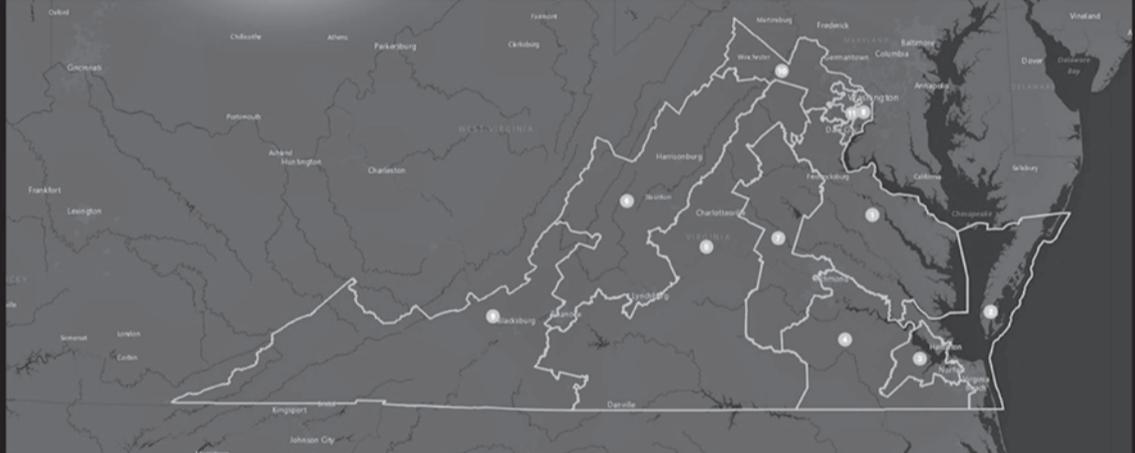


"I think Bob Simon is looking over this," said Marjorie Lane of Reston.

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE CONNECTION

Diane Canney, a local business owner and founder of the COVID19 US Honor Quilt, installed the quilted letters of “HOPE” for the first few weeks of December at Reston Hospital Center to honor and thank caregivers for their compassion and service during the pandemic.

HOPE for the Holidays at Local Hospital

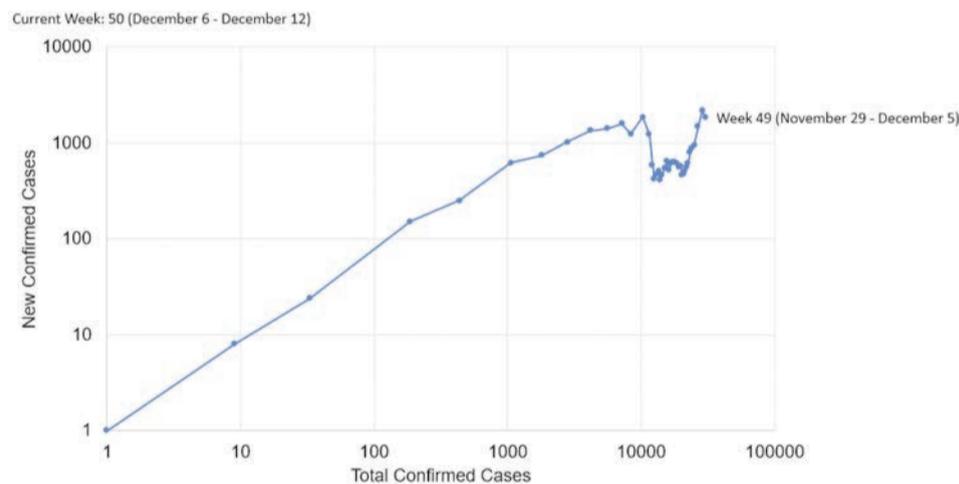
Quilt installation unexpectedly concurrent with FDA vaccine authorization; Fairfax County cases four times they were in May.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Since March, healthcare workers at Reston Hospital Center, like their counterparts elsewhere at county, state and national levels, as well as globally, have fought relentlessly risking their own lives to treat and save their coronavirus patients. More often than not, during these past nine months, the patients recovered and went home to their families, but many died. Like other healthcare workers, those at Reston Hospital did something to control their negative emotions. They strengthened their resolve believing, holding onto hope, that circumstances would improve even in the face of adversity.

People passing by Town Center Drive and New Dominion Parkway in Reston can see it from a distance - the four large block letters H-O-P-E, brilliantly illuminating the steep hill at Reston Hospital. It may be the best holiday light display ever, not because of its size but its meaning now and in the COVID months ahead.

On Dec. 1, local business owner and founder of the COVID19 U.S. Honor Quilt, Diane Canney, installed the quilted letters there. “I know this is a very difficult time for all hospitals in the nation. We hope our letters could serve as a large ‘thank you card’ of gratitude and hope from local residents and people across America to the employees at Reston Hospital Center,” she said. The installation showcases 150 art panels from across America honoring front-line workers and remembering those lost to COVID-19. It was displayed at the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials in Washington D.C.



COVID-19 Case data for Fairfax County Health District - Current Week, Dec. 6-12.

According to Canney, her 95-year-old mother challenged her to “help others” when she asked her what she would like for her birthday. “The quilt tells the story of frontline health workers in their relentless fight to treat and save their patients infected by the highly contagious airborne virus. The quilt also remembers and honors those who succumbed to COVID-19. For close-up detail viewing from the sidewalk, binoculars are a good idea. More information can be found at www.hopequilt.org.

On Thursday, Dec. 10, the week after Canney installed HOPE at Reston Hospital Center, the United States Food and Drug Administration advisory panel gave the green light to recommend that the Food and Drug Administration authorize Pfizer and BiNTech’s coronavirus vaccine for emergency use in people 16 and older. The vote was 17 to 4

with one abstention. The panel’s approval was second to the last step in the process of rolling out the vaccine for emergency use. It opened the door for the FDA to give the final authorization.

FOLLOWING THE GOOD NEWS, that same evening, Jeffrey C. McKay, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Fairfax County addressed the Fairfax County community in a newsletter. It proved a reality check. McKay said, “It’s sad that during the holiday season we must continue to fight this disease, but that’s the reality we are in...I’ll be blunt about how we are doing. Fairfax County’s and Virginia’s COVID-19 case numbers aren’t looking good. Our percent positivity and the state’s percent positivity rates are both at 11 percent. Cases per day in Virginia are almost four times higher than they were in

May. Community transmission is high across the state. While we still have hospital capacity in Fairfax County, should cases continue to rise at this rate, that could easily change.” According to McKay, the county’s rise in cases was caused by “spending more time inside with those out of your household, more family gatherings, increased travel, and mitigation fatigue.” He said that as much as possible, “we need to stay home, wear a mask and social distance when not home, and limit activity to those within your household.”

McKay said that the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) was preparing to receive 480,000 doses of vaccine by the end of the year. Distribution in Fairfax County would follow those announced by VDH along with those from the CDC. Health care personnel and long-term care facilities would be among the first to receive the vaccine.

Friday evening, Dec. 11, the FDA announced in a news release that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued authorization for emergency use for a vaccine for the prevention COVID-19 caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in individuals 16 years of age and older. FDA Commissioner Stephen M. Hahn, M.D. said, “The FDA’s authorization for emergency use of the first COVID-19 vaccine is a significant milestone in battling this devastating pandemic that has affected so many families in the United States and around the world.”

While not an FDA approval, according to Peter Marks, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, “The emergency use authorization of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine holds the promise to alter the course of this pandemic in the United States.”

SEE HOPE. PAGE 6

A Green New Deal

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



COMMENTARY

In accepting the Democratic nomination for president, Franklin D. Roosevelt promised a "new deal" for the "forgotten man." In the midst of the Great Depression the country responded to Roosevelt's promise by electing him president four times. The ensuing legislation in the first hundred days of his administration and throughout the subsequent years as president produced a new deal that transformed the government from a laissez-faire approach to a broader role of government in the economy.

Dozens of bills over as many years set up new agencies of government including the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) that put people to work on public projects, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) that provided cash subsidies to farmers while controlling the production of staple crops, and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) that provided cheap electricity and flood control over seven states. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) acts

moved the federal government actively into monetary policy. There are many more.

Increasing concerns in recent years over climate change and economic inequality have led to a call for a "green new deal." While there have been many statements at the national and state levels as

to what constitutes a green new deal, the most comprehensive definition is a resolution introduced in Congress in 2019 that calls for transitioning the United States to use 100 percent renewable, zero-emission energy sources, including investment into electric cars and high-speed rail systems, and implementing "social cost of carbon" policies as part of addressing climate change. The resolution also addresses universal health care, increased minimum wage, and preventing monopolies as well as the needs of poor and disadvantaged people.

The Green New Deal Virginia is a coalition that includes environmental organizations as well as civil rights and social justice groups and community-based organizations. For the groups that make up the coalition as well as their ob-

jectives, go to <https://www.greennewdealva.com/>. A recent article on the movement written by some of its leaders explains that "Virginians right now are facing a multitude of crises that Green New Deal Virginia directly addresses, including the economic downturn, racial and social inequities and the public health emergency. The Green New Deal is innovative because it is not trying to address each crisis in isolation, but instead it is building community around a collective response to these problems, and prioritizing community voices. . ."

In many ways the challenges facing our country and our state—climate change, income inequality, hunger, COVID19 and health care generally, criminal justice reform and others are somewhat different but at the same time of a similar magnitude as those faced by President Franklin Roosevelt when he promised a new deal to the nation. I support a Green New Deal and like the first New Deal it faces many years of legislative action to be accomplished. A single omnibus bill that promises to meet all its objectives in one action will not be successful. A commitment now to recognize the problems we face and taking the multiple steps to deliver a green new deal can be successful even faster than the dozen years it took President Roosevelt to deliver on his promise.

LETTERS

Covid Alerts Via Mobile?

To the Editor:

Given the evolving COVID-19 restrictions and guidance in response to another wave of infections, I believe I have an idea for information proliferation. We should leverage mobile device push notifications like we do for severe storms and Amber Alerts. This could reach citizens who don't have TVs, don't watch or listen to local news, and don't follow any state political accounts on social media. We are fighting a ton of misinformation during this pandemic, which necessitates clearer and widespread communication. I urge Gov. Northam, Del. Simon and Sen. Saslaw to consider leveraging this technology that we already use. We need mobile device push notifications, to communicate changes in COVID-19 restrictions and potentially guidance in a way that could reach more people.

Katharine Weintraub
Vienna

December is Puppy Mill Awareness Month

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

Third article in a series.

A puppy store's assurance that it buys only from licensed breeders is no better than suggesting anyone who has a driver's license is a good driver. Puppy mill breeders are required to be licensed under the national Animal Welfare Act (AWA). However, federal animal regulations for breeders are well known to be woefully lacking, requiring only the most basic care. Inspections are few and random, and violations are not dealt with severely, allowing a cited breeder to continue operations for all but critical problems.

Buyers should be wary of puppy stores' claims that all is well with their sourcing. Under Virginia's regulations, stores can not buy from breeders who are not licensed, or who have had a number of critical violations in recent years. Unfortunately the limited staffing of US Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspectors and the estimated more than 10,000 facilities that must be inspected, mean that inspections are few and chances of problems going undetected are high. The USDA's "risk-based" inspection model translates to inspections as seldom as once every two to three year for many breeding operations.

Neither does the AWA ensure that dogs are happy or live a quality life, only that facilities meet minimum humane standards. Those standards include, for example, cage size must be six inches larger than the size of the dog, no more than 12 dogs in a cage, must be provided food and shelter. Only recently has USDA



PHOTO COURTESY MONICA GOOD

Animal activists picket one of Virginia's only 18 puppy stores

proposed that dogs have a continuous water supply, instead of twice daily water offerings. Further there is no uncaged time requirement, no limit of the number of dogs kept, and no limit on the age or number of times bred. And significantly, no requirement for socialization to humans. What level of care, quality, and socialization to humans do you think is even possible when breeding operations have hundreds of dogs and profit is the operating goal?

For more insights into the dog breeding industry, readers may wish to read, "The Doggie in the Window," by journalist and national Emmy Award-winning television producer, Rory Kress.



Laitinen Gives Sully Police Station Update

Warns residents to lock their cars to prevent thefts.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION
Lt. Josh Laitinen

At the Dec. 2 meeting of the Sully District Police Station's Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Lt. Josh Laitinen, the assistant station commander, gave local residents an update on crimes in the community. And as always, larcenies from vehicles are a continuing problem.

"We have about 40 per month in the Sully District," said Laitinen. "Typically, items are taken from unlocked vehicles – so lock your cars and don't leave any valuables inside. Airbags are being stolen, as well."

In addition, he said the police have received calls regarding bill-payment checks being stolen from mailboxes. Then, said Laitinen, the thieves altered these checks and cashed them for a higher amount than the sender intended.

Another recent problem has been some tire slashings in Centreville's Crofton Commons and Compton Village neighborhoods. "Our officers are working hard to identify the individual responsible for these crimes," said Laitinen.

"But the community is the Police Department's eyes and ears," he continued. "So if you see anything sus-

picious – even on your home-security cameras – please let us know. Check that footage. Every little bit of information you can give us helps."

He said police are also following up on a spate of robberies along Route 50. "People purchase something, like a cellphone, for example, over the Internet," explained Laitinen. "And then, they arrange online to meet up with the seller, who robs them, instead. Whenever you're doing such a transaction, you should do it in a public or well-lit area. There are two spaces, right here, in the police-station parking lot designated specifically for Internet exchanges."

In other station news, he announced that the current Sully District Station commander, Capt. Todd Billeb, will be leaving this month to take charge of the Fairfax County Police Department's Internal Affairs Division. The new commander will be Capt. Jason Allegra, presently assigned to the county Police Department's Narcotics Division.

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THURSDAY/DEC. 17

Lunasa, a Celtic Holiday. 8 p.m. Irish band Lunasa brings its holiday show to the CenterStage, along with Dublin-born bouzouki player Daoir Farrell and rising star MALINDA. Part of the 2020 – 2021 Professional Touring Artist Series (PTAS) at the CenterStage. \$25 Reston/\$50 Non-Reston. All performances take place at the CenterStage, located at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods. Visit www.restoncommunitycenter.com/ptas.

C.A.R.E.S FUNDRAISING CONTEST

The Clifton Community Woman's Club Homes Tour had to be canceled due to the pandemic but thanks to its wonderful sponsors they were able to donate this year. Since a Homes Tour in 2021 was not feasible, they developed a new on-line fundraising contest, C.A.R.E.S, which has 5 categories:

CREATIVE - Crafts, Fiber, Paper, Wood
ARTS - Painting, Sculpture, Poetry, Creative Writing, Photography
RECORDING - Video of Music, Dance, Stories, Dramatic Reading, Acting
EDUCATION - Video or PDF of any type of Class, Teaching or Instruction

SERVICE - Photos of person with materials being created
Contestants will pay a \$25 entrance fee for each on-line submission via the competition website <http://cliftoncwc.org/cares> that will become active January 1.

HOPE

FROM PAGE 3

FDA EVALUATION of available effectiveness data stated, "At this time, data are not available to make a determination about how long the vaccine will provide protection, nor is there evidence that the vaccine prevents transmission of SARS-CoV-2 from person to person."

The authorization set off a coordinated effort to get the first week's batch of about three million doses to the "1A" tier, health care workers and nursing home residents as quickly as possible.

On Dec. 11, COVID-19 case data for the Fairfax Health District showed the Trajectory of Cases of the pandemic growing exponentially, displayed by the TOTAL CONFIRMED CASES on the horizontal axis and the NEW CONFIRMED CASES PER WEEK on the vertical axis for the week: 50 (Dec. 6- Dec. 12).

Starting at 12:01 a.m. Mon. Dec. 14, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam's updated COVID-19 measures go into effect. "All individuals must remain at their place of residence between the hours of 12-5 a.m. Exceptions include obtaining food and goods, traveling to and from work, and seeking medical attention...All Virginians aged five and over are required to wear face coverings in indoor settings shared with others and when outdoors within six feet of another person...All social gatherings must be limited to 10 individuals both indoors or outdoors."

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Announcements

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DINING



A look from the dining area into the bar area and seating.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Outstanding Meals, with a View

Restaurant Review: Red's Table

BY ALEXANDRA GREELEY

For the past several years, as Reston has welcomed new eateries, some of the old-timers still deserve a golden crown. One of these is the picturesque Red's Table positioned to overlook Lake Thoreau off of South Lakes Village. The view plus the outstanding chef-created meals—and bartender's drinks—assure patrons of a memorable experience.

Started by three brothers who had grown up in the area, Red's Table has since its beginnings featured fresh and sometimes rather unique offerings, such as the goat cheese fritters served with chili-apricot jam. These have been featured probably since the restaurant's opening, and that is symbolic of the kitchen keeping the best on hand.

The lunch menu offers enough treats to keep midday folks coming along. Besides the fritters, the fried coconut shrimp (probably enough to work as an entrée) and duck confit spring rolls can start off any meal with a bang—as will the clam chowder with oyster crackers and bacon.

Sandwiches are also star entries on the lunch menu. Although the choices are limited to only four offerings, perhaps the best knock-out dish—and skip past the dry-aged burger—is the Red's Fried Chicken Sandwich. A boneless breast has been dunked in an ultra-crispy coating before frying and then being paired with cheddar cheese, loads of crispy bacon, lettuce, tomato and

chipotle ranch dressing layered on a roll. If any sandwich could be addictive, this would be the one.

Salad selections include an entrée-sized Cobb salad with the usual add-ons plus diver scallops, an unusual twist on the classic. Other smaller offerings include a Tuscan kale and barley salad; roasted beet and goat cheese salad; and as a side offering, a baby wedge salad with smoked bacon. Salad lovers are offered the option of adding steak, shrimp, market-available fish, and chicken to enrich the salad offering.

For the super hungry midday, Red's kitchen puts out five hearty entrées, from the fish catch of the day; steak frites; blue jumbo lump crabmeat; a roasted half chicken; and a “fall” harvest pasta with pappardelle, pomodoro sauce, squash, and spinach plus more.

As for dessert offerings, sadly the once always-present Key Lime pie has vanished, and in its Red's Table presentation, it was one of the best iterations around town. However, the kitchen does put out other options, including a New York cheesecake with strawberry compote and toasted pecans and a chocolate layer mousse cake.

Whether for lunch or dinner, be sure to check out the drinks and wine offerings. Their house cocktails include a mojito and something called a Harvest Mule. Check out holiday offerings and book a table ASAP.

Red's Table, South Lakes Village Shopping Center, 11150 South Lakes Dr., Reston, Phone: 571-375-7755; Open daily for lunch and dinner and weekend brunch. <http://redstableva.com>

Heads Up, Centreville Route 29 Drivers

As part of the I-66 Outside the Beltway Project, starting this Friday, Dec. 18, at 9 p.m., through Monday, Dec. 21, at 5 a.m., Route 29 in Centreville will be reduced to a single travel lane in each direction under I-66 for bridge demolition.

On Dec. 18, two-way traffic will run in

the northbound lanes of Route 29, with all southbound lanes closed. Then, on Dec. 19, beginning at 9 p.m., two-way traffic will run in the southbound lanes of Route 29, with all northbound lanes closed. During the overnight hours, a flagger will alternate a single lane of traffic in both directions.

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Three Strikes ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... and now I'm out - of the Handel's Messiah sweepstakes. The sweepstakes being to write in 50 words or less "Why do you love Handel's Messiah?" All I can answer is one word: Hallelujah, and I don't mean the chorus either. 'Three strikes' refers to the number of times I have now been subjected to this "holiday tradition." The first time I was an attendee - with thousands of other Washingtonians. in a jam-packed National Cathedral one Christmas season. The second time, while visiting my father-in-law in Manhattan during Christmas, he suggested going to Carnegie Hall to listen to Christmas music (not specified). I jumped at the chance to go to Carnegie Hall. Little did I know until I was handed the program that the Christmas music that night was Handel's Messiah. And most recently, I was sitting on my couch at home channel-surfing when I came across a "Handel's Messiah" rebroadcast from some famous venue in Salzburg, Austria featuring a lead singer, a mestro, an orchestra and choir, all of whom shall remain nameless to protect their stature. Whatever criticism/less than glowing reaction to hearing "Handel's Messiah" a third time should be a reflection on me, not the performers.

I freely admit my cultural deficiencies. I am not inclined to tolerate - too well, these intrusions into my rather mundane world. I have never been to the ballet, rarely have seen a play/musical, never attended a concert

featuring the Four Italian Seniors (as but one example) and am not so inclined to listen to the classics on WETA 90.9 FM in Washington, DC either, especially since Dennis Owens retired in 2005. In my defense, I am a card-carrying (Three Stooges Fan Club) member of the hoi polloi. And to be perfectly honest, I don't feel as if I'm any the worse for the wear of it - or the why. However, you all might disagree.

I am not a complete dunce though. I can appreciate the talent and discipline it takes to master the skills necessary to sing, dance, play an instrument, memorize pages of dialogue, et cetera. The closest I've ever got to enjoying this kind of entertainment occurred at Wolf Trap during the summer concert season. Twice, if I'm not mistaken, I attended the yearly July 4th concert when the National Symphony orchestra performed Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture with 105mm cannons. It's not exactly equivalent to the old Quaker Oats puffed wheat commercials of my youth but it was entertaining nonetheless. However, having now attended a few times, I'm not so inclined to attend again. And believe it or not, I don't feel at all diminished having said so.

I wouldn't say that the three experiences I've had listening to "Handel's Messiah" has thoroughly convinced me that such cultural forays never be considered again. On the contrary, there is a part of me, a small part, that feels as if I'm missing something. Still, I don't feel incomplete, uneducated or clueless somehow. Instead, I feel like one of the bad guys Clint Eastwood gave an advisory to in one of his "Dirty Harry" movies: "punk. A man has got to know his limitations." And I feel as if I know mine. Perhaps there are cultural areas where I could co-exist but I cannot co-exist with "Handel's Messiah." As I titled an earlier column I wrote for Connection Newspapers while actually attending/hearing "Handel's Messiah" - for the first time, at the National Cathedral one holiday season: "Can't Handel It Anymore."

Two more listens since the original, and I can say with certainty, I still can't "Handel" it. I thought that when I realized what I was listening to at home: "Handel's Messiah," having the freedom to get up, move around et cetera, might possibly enhance the experience. Well, it worked. I didn't feel the least bit trapped so after listening for 10 minutes or so, I got up, turned off the television, left the room, came into my home-office and wrote this column. Apparently, I found a way to "Handel" it after all: stop listening and start writing. I feel better already.

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

Sheila Olem Sworn in as Town of Herndon Mayor

Councilmembers sworn in during COVID-19 restricted ceremonies.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Mayor Sheila A. Olem was administered the oath of office and sworn in as the duly elected Mayor of Town of Herndon for a term commencing Jan. 1, 2021, and ending Dec. 31, 2022 by Town Clerk Viki Wellerhaus on Wed. Dec. 10. Currently Olem serves in the position as Vice Mayor. Olem was first elected to a two-year Councilmember term in 2010. She received 61.23 percent of the vote in the Nov. 4, 2020 general election. Her stated candidacy priorities included further work with Virginia elected officials to support the town's funding and with residents to encourage greater involvement. Olem will succeed Lisa C. Merkel, who has served as the town's Mayor since 2012 and did not seek reelection in 2020.

Olem's son Michael and friend Danielle Miranda accompanied her to the private ceremony. Son Matthew and 92-year-old mother Gracie Milstead in Alabama participated by video due to COVID-19 restrictions on the number of attendees. Olem's late husband, Dr. Harvey Olem, was onboard a plane that disappeared in Bolivia in May 1994.

"I am thankful to the community for their trust and support for me as Mayor and look forward to my new role on the Herndon Town Council," said Olem. "I am also thrilled to be serving as Mayor when the Herndon Metro Station opens, and the new Downtown Development begins."

Current councilmembers Signe V. Friedrichs and Cesar A. del Aguila were also sworn in for their third and second terms, respectively. Friedrichs said, "I am looking forward to serving the town, and grateful that the citizens have granted me another term. I will do



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Sheila Olem prepares to sign her Commonwealth of Virginia document attesting she was duly elected Mayor of the Town of Herndon as Olem's son Michael and friend Danielle Miranda look on during her swearing in ceremony held Wed. Dec. 9, 2020.

my best on their behalf and work cooperatively with my colleagues."

"It was a humbling ceremony for me to be sworn in for another term to serve the citizens of Herndon. I look forward to solving our budget and housing challenges and to position us for long term success in this ever transitioning region," said del Aguila.

Sean M. Reagan was administered the oath of office, sworn in for his first term as one of the six seated Councilmembers on the Town Council. Reagan could not be reached by press time for comment.

The remaining three Councilmembers 2021-2022, freshman Councilmember Naila Alam, current Councilmember Pradip Dhakal and former Councilmember Jasbinder Singh will be sworn in the week of Dec. 14, as part of onboarding meetings with the town manager, according to town spokesperson Anne Curtis.



Sean Reagan will serve as a Member of the Town Council Town of Herndon 2021-2022.



Current Herndon Town Councilmember Cesar A. del Aguila is sworn in for his second term.



Top (left to right): Maya Berry (Ghost of Christmas Past), Elizabeth Ashby (Jacob Marley and Ghost of Christmas Future). **Bottom (left to right):** Lilah Skoy (Ghost of Christmas Future), Aaron MacDonald (Ghost of Christmas Present), Josh Lewis (Ghost of Christmas Future and Tiny Tim)

South Lakes High Presents 'A Christmas Carol'

South Lakes High School (SLHS) Theatre Arts recently presented the holiday classic, A Christmas Carol, virtually on Dec. 5 and 6, 2020. The production was directed by Eva Forman who was assisted by Music Director Rita Gigliotti and Video Editor Harrison DeWolfe. SLHS was one of just a few Fairfax County high schools presenting a full-length virtual fall play this year. The cast and crew of 48 students performed four full-length live virtual productions at both the matinee and evening hours on Saturday and Sunday. The play was adapted by Russ Staggs.

The classic tale of A Christmas Carol features Scrooge (Delia Hartman), a bitter and greedy man who is uncaring to others, including his only living relative Fred (Jonah Kossoy), on Christmas Eve. On this special Christmas Eve, Scrooge is visited by the ghost of his old business partner, Jacob Marley (Elizabeth Ashby), who warns him that three spirits will visit him and teach him the error of his ways. Marley tells Scrooge that he will be doomed the same fate that Marley faced if he does not change.

The Ghost of Christmas Past (Maya Berry) shows Scrooge Christmases from his



Delia Hartman as Scrooge

past, taking Scrooge through memories of his unhappy childhood and losing the love of his life due to greed. The Ghost of Christmas Present (Aaron MacDonald) shows Scrooge his clerk, Bob Cratchit (Kiran Drew), and Cratchit's family (Abigail Jamison, Abby Wyland, Hannah Donnis, Katelyn Mehlenbeck, Alina Cook, Sabeen Mir, and Josh Lewis). The Ghost then takes him to see his nephew Fred's Christmas celebrations which he had refused to attend earlier that night.

Finally, the Ghost of Christmas Future (Elizabeth Ashby, Josh Lewis, Lilah Skoy) haunts Scrooge by showing him visions of what will come if he cannot change. After this nightmare, Scrooge awakes on Christmas Day a changed man. He is full of excitement and a determination to be kind to his family, charitable to those in need, and embrace his new life.



Gossip Woman from top to bottom: Ellie Lyon, Alina Cook, Hadley Whitman, and Caitlin Quigley