

Great Falls CONNECTION

Great Falls Celebration Is Home

HOLIDAYS, PAGE 6-7

The Langley Madrigals
from Langley High
School at the Great
Falls tree lighting.

SHARE of
McLean
Cares
For Needy
NEWS, PAGE 3

HOMELIFESTYLE

PAGE 5

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BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

DEC. 5-23

NVFD Santa Runs. 5:30-8:30 p.m. The McLean Volunteer Fire Department holds its annual "Santa Runs," with Santa visiting community neighborhoods aboard an antique fire truck. You can find his location each evening checking <https://www.mcleanvfd.org/santa/>

FRIDAY/DEC. 10

"Traveling While Black." 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. At McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. McLean Community Center will hold an opening reception to celebrate the start of the "Traveling While Black" Virtual Reality Experience that will be on exhibit in the center's lobby from Friday, Dec. 15, 2021-Saturday, Feb. 12, 2022. In "Traveling While Black VR," the immersion of 360° footage draws viewers into living history lessons told around a booth in Ben's Chili Bowl. The Washington, D.C. restaurant has been a mainstay of the African American community since 1958, bearing witness to significant Civil Rights milestones that are woven into the film in powerful snippets of footage. Call MCC at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Night in Bethlehem. 5-7 p.m. At Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. Families can enjoy a re-created outdoor city marketplace and experience hands-on activities like pottery making and bread baking. Then, encounter the wonder of the Nativity with live animals. Visit the website: <http://andrewchapelumc.org>

TUESDAY/DEC. 21

The Longest Night. 7:30-8:30 p.m. At Lewins-

ville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road, McLean. The Longest Night Service, also referred to as a Blue Christmas Service, is a worship service in Advent on the longest night of the year that honors folks who are grieving or have lost loved ones. You may think it odd to have a somber service in the middle of the

Christmas season. However, if you have experienced loss in the last year all the holiday festivities can make that grief more poignant. Grieving the loss of a loved one or coming to terms with so much loss during a global pandemic will be centered in this worship service. This service will intertwine Jazz and Blues music with scripture and reflection. Visit the website: <https://www.lewinsville.org/events/longest-night/>

TOYS FOR TOTS COLLECTION

The McLean Community Center will be accepting toy donations for Toys for Tots from now through Saturday, Dec. 11.

Toys can be dropped off at the drop box in the MCC lobby, or at the "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" event on Saturday, Dec. 11.

Toys for Tots, a 70-year national charitable program run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, provides happiness and hope to disadvantaged children during each Christmas holiday season. The toys, books and other gifts collected and distributed by the Marines offer these children recognition, confidence and positive memories for a lifetime. For more information, visit www.toysfortots.org.

FREE NATIVE SAPLING GIVEAWAY

Thanks to its relationship with Plant Nova Trees and Fairfax ReLeaf Inc, Meadows Farms has obtained hundreds of saplings of native plants that they are able to give a way to its customers. The sapling trees will only be available for free at the following locations: Leesburg, Dulles/South Riding, Route 7, Great Falls, SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

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DECEMBER 11 - OPEN HOUSE

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NEWS

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS



A Share client decides what frozen meat she wants to take home.



Nicki Watts, Share's office manager and co-chair of the Food and Clothing Program at the pantry site, McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Road, McLean.



Share clients shop the canned and boxed goods, bread, and paper goods room.

Share Inc. of McLean Request the Community's Help

Gift cards and more needed for clients this holiday season.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

Share of McLean is asking for help from the community because the needs and numbers of the economically disadvantaged and those facing crises have recently been unprecedented. Share serves people in need in zip codes 22101, 22102, 22066, and the Pimmit Hills region of 22043.

Share is in the midst of its second COVID-19 pandemic holiday season and is feeling the crunch. The strain on the organization's supplies became evident when it recently experienced not one but two of its busiest days ever at its Food and Clothing Room located at McLean Baptist Church, 1367 Chain Bridge Road, McLean.

"We've definitely grown since the pandemic in the number of people that come in," said Nicki Watts, office manager and co-chair of the program. "I've been here for about three years. We had 76 families one day, and the day before that, 74 families, so it was crazy," she said.

Share administers its Food and Clothing Program for approximately 1,500 families, totaling 4,000 household clients, in a space donated by the McLean Baptist Church. Share takes donations on-site at a donation shed and a satellite facility, The Redeemer Lutheran Church, located at 1545 Chain Bridge Dr., McLean, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Share receives clients referred from partner faith communities, county social services, and various nonprofit organizations that serve special-needs populations, such as victims of domestic abuse or people who formerly were experiencing homelessness.



Elder Woodward (left) and Elder Sherwood of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints volunteer as Spanish translators at Share.

According to Watts, once a client is approved, they can visit the Food and Clothing Program twice a month. The Food and Clothing Pantry is typically open on Wednesday and Saturday mornings for shopping and is entirely operated by volunteers and supported by the community.

However, the space is not conducive to large numbers of people being inside at one time, given its narrow hallway leading to shopping rooms. But the nonprofit is thankful for the use, said Watts, and makes it work. Clients enter, qualify through registration, and receive a colored card designating



Volunteer Ron Parks in the storage room.

the number of family members. They return outside to queue and enter in as capacity limits allow.

On Wednesday, Dec. 1, volunteers from the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, Elder Woodward and Elder Sherwood, wore their red Share aprons and assisted the organization by interpreting for Spanish clients. "I love being here and serving the community," said Elder Woodward.

Ron Kelley, another volunteer, assisted in the warehouse area by storing donated canned and boxed items after they were inspected for expiration dates.

An industrial freezer in the retail hallway had fish and meat supplied by a local Walmart. Other rooms offered bread, fruit, and miscellaneous supplies such as cooking oil, diapers, hygiene products, coats, and



Visit the Share Inc. of McLean's Holiday Wish List Tree at Giant Food at 1454 Chain Bridge Rd in McLean and purchase gift cards for Share's holiday giving

HOW TO HELP

❖ Gift cards for clients can now be purchased at McLean Giant and left at the Giant front desk. Giant or Target cards are available. Share also accepts Walmart cards bought at other locations.

Many people want to help those in need by donating food. Here are some options:

❖ Donors can donate money online by credit card, PayPal or by mailing a check. Share volunteers will purchase what is most needed and available. <https://www.shareofmclean.org/donate>

❖ Grocery Gift Cards can be left at the McLean Giant front desk for pick up by Share.

❖ Purchase Share's most needed items at this website: <https://www.myregistry.com/organization/share-of-mclean-mclean-va/2380279> Deliveries are sent directly to a safe location where they are loaded into a Share food truck.

SEE SHARE, PAGE 11

GREAT FALLS CONNECTION ❖ DECEMBER 8-14, 2021 ❖ 3

The Most Important Thing We Do

DELEGATE KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM



Last week I attended the Virginia Education Summit 2021 at Old Dominion University in Norfolk. I could hardly recognize the location where I attended undergraduate school in the early 1960s when it was the Norfolk College of William and Mary. Unfortunately I could recognize many of the topics on the agenda for they were the same topics discussed during my 30-year career in public education that ended with my retirement from Fairfax County Public Schools in 1996.

The Summit was designed to educate legislators on current education issues, but it was not organized by the Virginia education establishment. It was organized by the Hunt Institute, a non-profit institute named for former four-term North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt who has been described as America's first education governor. Governor Hunt was known for saying, "Education can't be just another thing we do. It's the most important thing we do!"

The Summit was held at a critical time in the Commonwealth's history. The last two years have seen amazing advances in early childhood

education that a whole body of research has shown to be critical to an individual's future success in schooling and in life. Presently fewer than half of Virginia's three and four year olds attend preschool. Under legislation passed by the General Assembly and signed by the Governor the multiple programs related to preschool education have been brought together creating a unified public-private early childhood system that needs continuing financing and monitoring in order to ensure that all children have access to programs and services.

Not surprisingly a major theme permeating the Summit was the impact of COVID on our schools. The increased stress of teaching in an often changing environment that included virtual learning has resulted in many retirements and in increased difficulty recruiting teachers to teacher-training programs and to employment as teachers. There are about 106,000 teachers in Virginia whose average pay is 34th lowest in the country. There is a serious need to recruit more men and more persons of color into teaching positions.

Every school system faces the challenge of dealing with learning losses among children

as a result of interruptions in their schooling from the pandemic. I was so impressed with the teachers and school administrators at the Summit and their stories of heroic efforts to continue to deliver schooling to their students during a time of unprecedented challenges. They deserve our commendation and support as we move forward with schooling that has been changed in many ways during the pandemic. Some of those changes are worthy of continuation.

Virginia has made progress in the last several years in reducing excessive testing that limits time for instruction and provides little useful information. We can measure how our schools are doing without the large number of high stakes tests that have been given in the past. A study of our educational system for children with special needs has been shown to have major deficiencies that are now being addressed.

We are about to move to a new administration of state government. The rhetoric I hear about cutting taxes indicates that a sizable chunk would come from education and that charter schools would divert public monies to private schools. These issues cause me a great deal of concern as does the call to strip libraries of books. The new administration and legislators need to heed Governor Hunt's admonition that education is the most important thing we do.

Red-Letter Day

BY PAUL A. FRIEDMAN, JD

Tuesday, Dec. 14 is the 9th anniversary of the Newtown shooting that took the lives of 20 first-graders and six educators. Just days ago, on Nov. 30, another school mass shooting cost the lives of four more young people. Sadly, there have been so many mass shootings in recent years that we can barely keep one tragedy straight from another.

Thankfully, in 2020, Virginia passed laws to try to stop the flow of blood. Virginia became the 19th state to pass a law that gives every one of us a chance to help reduce gun violence. It's a terrific law supported by many in law enforcement across the state but won't be fully effective unless we all know how to use it – and right now very few people even know it's on the books. That's why Fairfax County is launching a new campaign to alert people that it exists so they can use it to save their own lives and others.

Initiated by and contributed to by the Alexandria-based gun violence prevention non-profit, Safer Country, the County's campaign aims to draw attention to

the state's new "Red Flag" law. Its slogan is "Prevent A Gun Tragedy - Speak Up!" Details may be found at the campaign's website, fairfax-county.gov/topics/red-flag

The law empowers the police to disarm a person for up to two weeks if a judge believes there is an imminent danger that person will use their guns to harm themselves or others. In one high-profile case, Richard Sherman, a star football player for the Seattle Seahawks and now the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, repeatedly threatened to kill himself. Sherman's family asked for help under a Red Flag law in Washington state and the local police were able to take possession of four handguns and a semi-automatic rifle, defusing the immediate danger. Sherman has since received mental health counseling and resumed his football career without harming anybody.

There's no way to know for certain that Sherman would have carried out his threats, but we know that the Red Flag law made it much less likely. However, had he lived in one of the 31 states that lack such laws it would have been a lot harder for families and public safety officials to keep Sherman

and his family safe.

In most states, there are few options for public safety officials or family to act in advance, even when there are clear signs that somebody is on the verge of using a gun to do harm. That's why this law is so valuable. In the words of Fred Guttenberg, whose daughter Jaime

died in the infamous mass shooting on February 14, 2018 at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida: "If Red Flag laws had existed then, my daughter would be alive today." The confessed Parkland shooter had spoken in advance that he had thoughts about using his rifle to kill.

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PHOTO BY GREG POWERS

Interior designer Tracy Morris uses a gray tweed wallcovering in the dining room of her McLean home to create a sophisticated atmosphere.



IMAGE BY STACY ZARIN GOLDBERG AND ANNIE ELLIOTT

Designer Annie Elliott covers the floor of her office with an Oriental rug, which offers a variety of options for pairing with colors in other parts of the room.

Inside the Home of an Interior Designer

Local tastemakers offer a glimpse of their personal style.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Interior designers spend their days helping clients create beautiful aesthetics without compromising functionality. Whether deciding to paint a living room azure or cerulean or top a counter with Soapstone or quartzite, the job of a tastemaker requires creativity and ingenuity. Now, a few local designers allow cameras into their own home for a glimpse of their personal style.

Those who enter the Bethesda home of designer John Wagner of Designs by Wagner, learn quickly that nothing about it will be subtle. An oversized pink ottoman sits in the center of the room. A plush sofa in a soft beige is positioned in front of a wall that is dotted with more than a dozen family photos, each hung with soft-pink velvet ribbons.

"I'm a maximalist through and through," Wagner said. "I help my clients create spaces that reflect their taste. You should feel comfortable in your home. It should be a haven from the outside and it should make you proud. For me that means vibrant colors and plush fabrics."

A variety of colors, textures and patterns can be found throughout the home of designer Annie Elliott of Annie Elliott Design. "A house filled with shades of gray just doesn't make me happy," she said. "I also like mixing antiques with modern pieces. In my dining room, for example, we have a 19th-century English sideboard and Oriental rug paired with leather chairs...and a glass chandelier from the '80s. The mix takes the edge off of whatever formality people might associate with classic pieces."

A powder room is a space where Elliott suggests that one might experiment. "I believe that every powder room should be wallpapered," she said. "I have Cole & Son's Cabaret in mine, and I encourage my clients to be as daring as possible in their own powder rooms."

An Oriental rug aficionado, Elliott often recommends this accessory to her clients. "They can be



IMAGE BY JENN VERRIER AND ANNIE ELLIOTT

When designing her dining room, Annie Elliott paired a 19th-century English sideboard with an Oriental rug with leather chairs and a circa 1980s glass chandelier.



IMAGE BY ANGIE SECKINGER AND ANNIE ELLIOTT

Annie Elliott says that Oriental rugs can be paired with traditional or contemporary furniture.

paired with traditional or contemporary furniture, they give you lots of colors to play with, and they're brilliant for hiding dirt, red wine spills, and dog fur," she said.

Tracy Morris of Tracy Morris Design describes the style of her McLean home as "timeless with an edge." She creates the look using textured wallpaper in her dining room. "It creates a great base for the rest of the room," she said. "We used...a gray tweed with gold accents. This allowed the room to be enveloped in sophistication.

"I'm a maximalist through and through."
— John Wagner of Designs by Wagner

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Kendall Fiocco, 4, of Great Falls, drops her letter into the mailbag for Santa as dad, Bryce, lends a hand. "I want a Barbie car," says Kendall.



The petting zoo draws the children close.



A pony ride for Drew Grider, 5, of Great Falls. "I held onto the horn and went bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce."



A member of the popcorn-making team from sponsor John Nugent & Sons shows popping the corn can be as much fun as eating it.



The Folk family of Great Falls- (from left) Cora, 2, Helen, Josh, and Charlotte, 4



The work crew from Sexton Christmas Trees carry a tall one to a waiting U-Haul truck.



Santa waves from the window of Engine 412, Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Station #12, Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department.



Santa and Mrs. Claus make their way to the tree. Being a reported 1,750 years old, according to the blog Email Santa, Santa Claus needs a walking stick to maneuver the uneven ground.

PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

31st Annual Tree Lighting at the Village Field

The Great Falls Celebration of Lights returns.

MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

The 31st annual Christmas tree lighting in Great Falls reunited family and friends as they celebrated the start of the holiday season. Local school choirs sang Christmas classics while young musicians gave their debut orchestra performances, much to the joy of family members who could only see their children on their cell phone screens held high in the air due to the crowds. Event sponsors offered complimentary hot chocolate, cookies, and even popcorn to families patiently waiting in line for the treats.

Josh Folk of Great Falls, his wife Helen, and their two young children came to a halt at the foot of the slope leading to the yet-to-be-

lit tree, and the activities assembled by organizer Celebrate Great Falls.

To his right, the Sexton Christmas Trees' team was chain-cutting a half-inch of wood from the base of a newly purchased conifer, reopening the resin-covered cells so the tree could absorb water. They carried it to the rooftop of a Suburban. To his left, middle schoolers, unattended, sprinted about the Village Field playing tag. At the same time, smaller children deposited their letters to Santa into the mailbag tied to an antique U.S. Mail truck. In front of Josh, a petting zoo and pony rides awaited his two little girls, Cora, 2, and Charlotte, 4.

"This village feels like a Hallmark movie," Josh said to his wife, Helen.

A few moments later, at 5:06 p.m., lights flashing, Engine 412



Students from Forestville Elementary School

of Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Station #12, Great Falls Volunteer Fire Department, arrived with two

special passengers, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus. Waving from the opened window of the firetruck,



The Langley Madrigals from Langley High School.

Santa greeted his fans, young and old. He climbed down and, holding tight to a hand-hewn walking stick,

Santa and the Missus made their way through the crowds of people to the Great Falls Christmas tree,



The Langley Madrigals

waiting in the darkness.

"Count down," he said.

"Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five

four, three, two, one. Lights," Santa called out. And the light shone down on everyone.



Children bounce into the snow globe creating a powder flurry to fall within.



A portion of the crowd



Santa reaches out to hug a young boy.

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The Live Nativity scene.

PHOTO BY BILL CANIS

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THE CONNECTION Alexandria Gazette Packet Mount Vernon Gazette Potomac ALMANAC

Children's & Teens' Connection 2021



During the last weeks of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children's Connection (including Children's Gazette and Children's Almanac) is a long-time tradition.

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Challenged Books, Ballooning Waitlists for Mental Health, ADA Playgrounds

What you might have missed at the Dec. 2 School Board meeting.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE CONNECTION

School Board Member Tamara Derenak Kaufax (Lee) thanked the members of the Challenged Book Committee at the Fairfax County School Board regular meeting held on Thursday, Dec. 2, for their recent review and decision to reinstate the books in question, “Gender Queer: A Memoir” by Maia Kobabe and “Lawn Boy” by Johnathan Evison. The books were temporarily removed from FCPS high school libraries following a challenge in September.

Kaufax said teachers, parents, administrators and students comprised the committee, and she, too, read both books in question.

“These books were not obscene, and there is absolutely no pedophilia in either of these books. As an educational system, it is our duty to provide materials for children to better understand their identities, as well as those of their classmates,” Kaufax said. She added that having access to books reflective of their own lives helps mitigate the real risks of bullying, social isolation, and suicide that LGBTQIA+ students are known to face.

Laura Jane Cohen (Springfield District) said if someone believed that certain books were not appropriate for their child, that was probably a conversation for the person to have with their child. Cohen said she would not dream of parenting someone else’s child and could only share how she parents her own children. According to Cohen, in her home, they believe that our schools are responsible for making sure all children know they are okay. “That they are normal. That they are, as Psalm 139 says, “wonderfully made.”

Then Cohen read a passage by journalist and LGBTQIA+ activist George M. Johnson from his 2020 book, “All Boys Aren’t Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto.”

“So as heavy as these subjects may be, it is necessary that not only are they told, but also read by teens who have to navigate many of these same experiences in their own lives. ... I released the deepest and darkest things about my past in the hopes that some-



Fairfax County School Board meets on Dec. 2, 2021.

one might see a reflection of themselves in the words and know that they are not alone. And that they, too, can grow and thrive.”

Cohen said she was glad for all children to get an opportunity to see themselves in the work that the Fairfax County librarians do and in the over 3 million books the county has in its libraries.

Karl Frisch (Providence) said he was grateful to the students who came to the school board meetings hoping that adults would hear them and that their courage was inspiring. Frisch said that he never dreamed of speaking up for LGBTQ inclusion at school as a teenager. “I couldn’t even tell my friends I was gay,” Frisch said. “I was worried, if I acknowledged my truth, I would lose the love of my friends and my family.” He told how when the conversation about LGBTQIA+ first started, he told the board he would never back down.

Fritsch said he got over 1,000 emails, voicemails, letters, and social media comments in the days after, labeling him a pervert and worse. He told of threats of violence against him and his partner and how there were days he didn’t want to touch his phone or look at his inbox.

When non-LGBTQ young people become aware of the diverse and complicated lives of LGBTQ people as a result of the history they study or the novels they read, they do not become LGBTQ. “LGBTQ is not conta-

gious, but being more acceptable to different people certainly can be,” said Fritsch. “That scares some people, which is precisely why this work must continue. It is for everyone.”

More Resources for Mental Health

Megan O. McLaughlin (Braddock) provided an update as the board representative to the Fairfax County Successful Children and Youth Policy Team (SCYPT) during School Board member committee reports. SCYPT serves as the policy team for a broader, community-wide approach to ensure the success and well-being of children and youth in Fairfax County.

According to McLaughlin, one of the topics covered was a request for financial assistance for mental health upgrades and training additional therapists in Fairfax County to shorten the waitlist for families needing help. McLaughlin said that the committee recommended acceptance, but the Board of Supervisors must eventually approve it.

The second section of the mental health discussion dealt with hospitalizations. “We’ve got some really heartbreaking data about it even here in Fairfax County, the number of students who are requiring hospitalization for mental health needs,” McLaughlin said.

Explaining because there were not enough beds at any given time, McLaughlin said, “We had 17 students and their families wait-

ing with an average of seven days in order to get a bed.”

She added that SCYPT was trying to get additional funding for multidisciplinary services. That would be an alternative to having students in the hospital emergency rooms.

15 Contracts

At the Fairfax County School Board regular meeting held on Thursday, Dec. 2, the board awarded 15 contracts. Four contracts will provide hands-on installations every student at four elementary schools will enjoy for years to come. The Major Maintenance Fund will provide ADA-compliant playground installations at four elementary schools: Fairfax Villa-\$339,396; Floris-\$365,370; Oak Hill-\$362,105; and Vienna-\$314,897. While not as much fun but surely appreciated, major maintenance will also fund a chiller repair at Centre Ridge Elementary School for \$577,954.

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II Fund under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 provides funding for automated temperature controls at two elementary schools, Bush-\$587,600 and Spring Hill-\$821,530; and for a rooftop unit replacement at Forte Support Center in Springfield-\$791,000.

Two elementary schools received roof replacement projects, Westbriar-\$159,324 and Fairfax Villa-\$304,972 through the Infrastructure Replacement Fund.

The board approved synthetic turf field replacement projects at two high schools. One is at Langley for \$871,055, funded by Fairfax County Public Schools, and the other is at South Lakes for \$960,000 funded by Fairfax County Public Schools and Fairfax County Park Authority.

Finally, the board awarded the contract for Kahua Software and professional services with a projected initial software cost of \$165,000 annually for a three-year term and a \$40,000 approximate startup cost for professional consulting services to implement the software and train staff on Kahua Software License and Professional Services. Kahua will assist the Office of Design and Construction to govern and streamline document management.

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU JAN. 2, 2022

LuminoCity Festival. 6-9 p.m. At Roer's Zoofari, 1228 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. The LuminoCity Festival, immersive light display experience, unforgettably spectacular night of lights. The festival includes African, Asian, Arid, and Ancient-themed exhibits of spectacularly lit art displays set up in the zoo's walk-through area. www.roerszoofari.com.

NOW THRU DEC. 12

"Secret Things." Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. At 1st Stage, 1524 Spring Hill Road in Tysons. "Secret Things," a deep and heartfelt story of truth, discovery, and romance imbued both with gorgeous magical realism and fascinating true history of Sephardic Judaism in the American Southwest. General admission tickets are \$50. Senior (65+) tickets are \$47. Student, educator, and military tickets are \$15. Tickets can be purchased online at www.1ststage.org or by calling the 1st Stage box office at 703-854-1856.

NOW THRU DEC. 19.

Holiday Lights on the Farm. Fridays thru Sundays 5:30 to 8 p.m. At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. What is "Holiday Lights on the Farm"? It's where you tour Frying Pan Farm Park in the safety and warmth of your car and see an amazing display of holiday decorations lighting up the 135-acre park. The cost is \$20 per private vehicle. Or you can take the tour on a tractor-drawn wagon ride with up to 20 of your family or friends for \$150 per group. Last year this event sold out, so get your tickets early at <https://bit.ly/FPLights>.

NOW THRU FEB. 19

New Art Exhibits. At McLean Project for the Arts, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. MPA will open its two newest exhibitions on Dec. 2, 2021. Give and Take: Building Form (Emerson Gallery) will feature abstract wood sculpture by Emilie Benes Brzezinski, Rachel Rotenberg, Foon Sham, and Norma Schwartz, while the Atrium Gallery will feature Intersectional Painting: Works by Sheila Crider. Both exhibitions run through Feb. 19, 2022. Visit www.mpaart.org/ or call 703-790-1953 for gallery hours.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 18

"A Child's Christmas in Wales." Presented by Vienna Theater Company, Vienna. This holiday season, experience a musical celebration of Welsh poet Dylan Thomas' iconic story, A Child's Christmas in Wales, the "never to be forgotten day at the end of the unremembered year," when songs are sung, cakes and sweets are abundant, and the frozen city parks are laden with mysteries and adventures for wild boys and girls to explore. Performance Dates and Times: 7 p.m.: Fridays and Saturdays: Dec 17, 18; 2 p.m. matinees: Sunday Dec 5, 19; and 10 a.m. matinee: Saturday, Dec 18. Tickets: \$15/\$10. Visit <http://www.viennatheatrecompany.org>.

THROUGH DEC. 19

"Every Christmas Story Ever Told (And Then Some)." At NextStop Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Santa Claus, Rudolph, the Grinch, and just about every other seasonal

character you can think of make an appearance in this racy comedy that will have you laughing all the way to the New Year. <https://www.nextstoptheatre.org/>

DEC. 10-12

Capital Art & Craft Festival. At Dulles Expo Center, Chantilly. Featuring 150 juried artisans. Friday, Dec 10: noon - 5 p.m.; Saturday Dec 11: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Sunday Dec 12: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tickets: \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door Senior discount available; children under 12 free. Ticket information: www.CapitalArtAndCraftFestival.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

"The Snowman in Concert. 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. At James Madison High School, Vienna. The JMHS Choral and Orchestra Departments will again host this magical family holiday event. Watch the film based on Raymond Briggs' "The Snowman" book - but with live choral and orchestra music accompaniment. After the film, walk through the winter wonderland and enjoy crafts, visiting with the Snowman and Santa, and a delicious treat on the way out!

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

"A Klezmer Hanukkah." 7 p.m. At The Alden at McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Hanukkah comes early this year, but Seth Kibel and the Klezmet keep the party going with festive klezmer tunes with a little jazz thrown in. Features traditional klezmer music as well as jazz favorites. Tickets are \$20/\$15. Visit: www.aldentheatre.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Virtual Auction Extravaganza. 5-7 p.m. Via Zoom. At 6462 Gristmill Square Lane, Centreville. The Fairfax County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will hold a Live Virtual Auction. The Auction will be held via Zoom and winning bidders must pay online. Auction items will include goods from local bakeries; professional services, such as car detailing, personal training, and leadership coaching; beach rental, and holiday gift baskets containing everything from artwork, and expertly crafted wares. Visit www.fcacd.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Storytime with Santa. 9 - 10 a.m. At Tysons Corner Center, Fashion Court, Level 1, McLean. Who else is better to read all our favorite Holiday stories? Join us for an intimate story session with Santa for an experience your child will never forget while he reads many of our prized classics. Reservations are not required.

DEC. 11-31

Holiday Sparkle. 12-5 p.m. At Reston Art Gallery and Studios, 11400 Washington Plaza W at Lake Anne, Reston. Enjoy the gallery experience at a show of giftable art - authentic, local works of paintings, mixed media, jewelry, mobiles, fine craft objects, cards, and more created by the 8 artists of RAGS. Open weekends and by appointment. Visit the website: www.restonart-gallery.com

SUNDAY/DEC. 12

Sensory Santa. 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. At Tysons Corner Center, Level 1,



"A Klezmer Hanukkah" with Seth Kibel and the Klezmet will be held on Saturday, Dec. 11 at the McLean Community Center.

Fashion Court, McLean. Tysons Corner Center is partnering with Cherry Hill photography and Autism Speaks to welcome children with special needs for a low impact, time with Santa. The mall will open its doors early, exclusively for families, and give them private time with the Big Man in Red. Reservations are not required.

SUNDAY/DEC. 12

Master Singers of Virginia. 4 p.m. At Epiphany Episcopal Church, 3301 Hidden Meadow Drive, Herndon. The Master Singers of Virginia (MSVA), Northern Virginia's premier mixed a cappella ensemble under the direction of Dr. Erik Reid Jones returns to the stage the first time in 21 months with

Serenity and Renewal holiday concert. Tickets are \$25 for Adults, \$20 for Seniors (65+) and \$15 for Students. The Take 4 package provides 4 tickets for \$60 or \$15 each. Visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/master-singers-of-virginia-8547780534>

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 9

SUNDAY/DEC. 12

Traditional Celtic Concert. 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At the Old Brogue Irish Pub, 760-C Walker Road, Great Falls. Featuring Jody Marshall's Holiday Celebration. Part of a five-concert series of top quality music from the British Isles, Brittany (France), the Celtic areas of Northern Spain, and the Americas, staged in the listening room Snuggery (dining room). Tickets must be purchased in advance at oldbrogue.com - \$20 general admission.

DEC. 13, 20

Take Photos of Your Pets with Santa. At Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Monday, Dec. 6, 6 - 8 p.m.; Monday, Dec. 13, 6 - 8 p.m.; Monday, Dec. 20, 6 - 8 p.m. Fashion Court, Level 1. Bring your favorite pet in their holiday best for photos with Santa. This much-loved event has become

a signature and well-attended theme night for Tysons Holiday.

MONDAY/DEC. 13

A Bluegrass Christmas With Sweet Yonder. 7:30 p.m. At Jammin Java, 227 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. Join local bluegrass favorite Sweet Yonder and special guests for joyful night of bluegrass and Christmas music favorites narrated by Santa himself. Fun for the whole family, dinner and drink menu available. Tickets \$20/\$22. Tickets: <https://www.jamminjava.com/shows/bluegrass-christmas-with-sweet-yonder-special-guests/>

THURSDAY/DEC. 16

Jennifer Nettles: Broadway Under the Mistletoe. 7:30 p.m. At Capital One Hall, 7740 Capital One Tower Road, Tysons. Jennifer Nettles stops by for a night of holiday favorites and Broadway hits. Leading with her powerhouse vocals and

vivacious energy, this dynamic entertainer recently released Always Like New, a collection of Broadway tunes reimagined as only she can do. Visit CapitalOneHall.com.

DEC. 18-19

Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker. 4 p.m. At GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra joins The Fairfax Ballet in their sixth collaboration to present the timeless class holiday favorite, The Nutcracker. This production is unique in the Washington metropolitan region as one of few presented with live musical accompaniment. The Fairfax Ballet Company dances to Tchaikovsky's score performed live by the Fairfax Symphony. Enjoy a winter wonderland of dancing snowflakes, sugar plum fairies and epic battles between heroic toy soldiers and mischievous mice.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

Seven Corners, and Annandale.

WEGMANS OFFERING

MODERNA AND J&J/ JANSSEN COVID-19

Wegmans Pharmacy locations are now offering the Moderna and J&J/ Janssen vaccine booster doses to eligible individuals by appointment only. Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Individuals 18 years and older who received the J&J/ Janssen COVID-19 vaccine can

receive a Moderna, Pfizer-BioNTech, or J&J booster at least two months after their primary vaccination. Appointments for a COVID-19 vaccine or booster shot must be reserved in advance. Customers can schedule an appointment by visiting [Wegmans.com/pharmacy](https://www.wegmans.com/pharmacy) or calling 1-800-207-6099.

ONGOING

In-Person Worship. 10:15 a.m. The Church of the Good Shepherd (United Methodist), 2351 Hunter Mill Road, Vienna. In-person wor-

ship services are held with some restrictions. Details at: https://faithconnector.s3.amazonaws.com/goodshepherdva/files/revised2_in_person_worship_begins_june_13.pdf

COVID-19 TEXT

MESSAGES IN SPANISH

As part of its efforts to provide coronavirus-related information and assistance in multiple languages, Fairfax County now provides COVID-19 text alerts in Spanish.

To sign up, text FFXCOVIDESP to 888777.

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THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Share Inc. Request the Community's Help

FROM PAGE 3

clothing, all well-organized. Clients shopped using utility wagons and, when finished, checked out with the clerk.

Share's Christmas Holiday Celebration, a party event with light refreshments, decorations, a visit from Santa, and wrapped gifts fulfilling "wishes" for the children, is halted in 2021 owing to the pandemic. Instead, a Christmas tree at the Giant Grocery Store on Chainbridge Road will serve to fill wishes this year. Donors can help their community with Share by buying Giant, Target, and Walmart gift cards and turning them in at Giant customer service.

Each family or individual who registered on time receives gift cards that can be used to purchase items that the family most needs. Many parents used the cards to buy gifts for their children from Santa in the past. The amount of money delivered to each client is contingent upon donations received.

Along with its Food and Clothing Program, Share has expanded its services to include an annex at the 143-unit Lewinsville Retirement Residences on Great Falls Street in McLean. Residents who receive government-subsidized housing qualify to come to the Share Annex, as do residents who qualify at The Fallstead Senior Center at Lewinsville in McLean.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/CONNECTION

Share's shelves are well stocked and organized for shoppers.

Visit Share's donate page to see how to help those in need by making an online donation of food or money via credit card,

PayPal, or mailing a check. Volunteers from Share will purchase what is most needed and available.

HOLIDAY CALENDAR

HOLIDAYS IN THE MOSAIC DISTRICT

At 2910 District Ave., Fairfax.
Santa at Mosaic -- Now Thru Dec. 23
Holiday Toy Drive -- Now Thru Dec. 13
Santa's Motorcade -- Dec. 17 at 5 p.m.

NOW THRU DEC. 19.

Holiday Lights on the Farm. Fridays thru Sundays 5:30 to 8 p.m. At Frying Pan Farm Park, 2739 West Ox Road, Herndon. What is "Holiday Lights on the Farm"? It's where you tour Frying Pan Farm Park in the safety and warmth of your car and see an amazing display of holiday decorations lighting up the 135-acre park. The cost is \$20 per private vehicle. Or you can take the tour on a tractor-drawn wagon ride with up to 20 of your family or friends for \$150 per group. Last year this event sold out, so get your tickets early at <https://bit.ly/FPLights>.

NOW THRU JAN. 2

Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Open nightly 5 to 10 p.m.; January 8 to February 27, 2022 (ice skating only), open Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featuring an ice rink, multiple new holiday light displays perfect for Instagramming, a retail area, food, music and more. Admission: \$9 for general admission to Village; \$22 for village admission and skating; beginning January 8, \$14 for ice skating; free ages 2 and under. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

DEC. 3-12

Fairfax City Holiday Market. In Old Town Square, 10415 North Street, City of Fairfax. Friday, 5-8 p.m.; Saturday, Noon-6 p.m.; Sunday, Noon-5 p.m. Join the Annual City of Fairfax Holiday Market in Old Town Square. Come and shop at the market of craft vendors



Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon will be held Dec. 17-18 in Mount Vernon.

as you enjoy Old Town Square in the heart of Historic Downtown Fairfax covered in holiday lights. The festival will include live holiday music, hot drinks, and gourmet treats and more.

DEC. 9-12

Winter Wonderland Holiday Experience. At Tysons Corner Center, 1961 Chain Bridge Road, Tysons. T-Mobile will bring to life its "Winter Wonderland Holiday Experience" at Tysons Corner Center. Located in front of the food court, the 20x20 display is intended to inspire visitors to stay connected, share moments, carry on traditions, or create new ones during this holiday season. Visitors will have the opportunity to take a fun holiday photo, and then receive free printouts, a T-Mobile keychain, and either a snow globe or tumbler.

DEC. 10-11

Colonial Holiday Nights at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Experience the holiday season with Carlyle House focusing on how the Car-

lyles and their enslaved workers observed the holidays during the 18th century. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Tours offered of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour. Space is limited and reservations are required. All participants including those under the age of 5 must be registered. Visit novaparks.com

DEC. 10, 11, 19

Mount Vernon by Candlelight.

At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Take a candlelit guided tour and learn about holiday traditions in 18th-century Virginia. Visit with Mrs. Washington and other 18th-century residents of Mount Vernon in a 45-minute candlelit tour of the Mount Vernon estate, followed by a reception. Hear stories of Christmases past from costumed character actors portraying Washington's family, friends, and enslaved or hired staff. Admission: \$36 for adults (ages 12 and up); \$28 for youth (ages 6-11); for members, \$26 for adults; \$18 for youth. Visit the website: mountvernon.org/candlelight

DEC. 3-19

"A Child's Christmas in Wales." Presented by the Vienna Department of Parks and Recreation and Vienna Theatre Company. From a story by Dylan Thomas and adapted to the stage by Jeremy Brooks and Adrian Mitchell. Dates: Fridays and Saturdays, Dec. 3, 4, 17, 18 at 7 p.m.; Sundays, Dec. 5 and 19 at 2 p.m.; and Saturday, Dec. 18 at 10 a.m. Visit the website: www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

SATURDAYS, DEC. 11, 18

Holiday Market and Winter Village at The Parc in Tysons. At 8508 Leesburg Pike, Tysons. Save the date to purchase your holiday gifts from local artisans and small businesses.

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