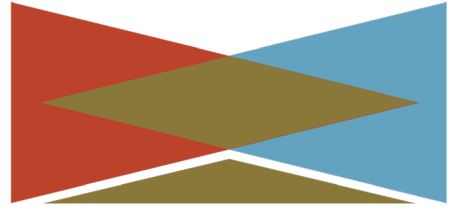


# THE RESTON LETTER



## Reston Welcomes the Holiday Season in a Big Way



Reston Town Center's Holiday Parade kicked off the season on Nov. 24. The parade has been on the USA Today's Top 10 Best Holiday Parades for the last seven years. Photos by Benjamin Burgess



## Lake Anne Holiday Festivities Draw Hundreds to the Plaza



Santa and his paddle-boarding elves arrive at Lake Anne on Dec. 2. Photo by Patricia Kovacs



### Christmas Trees, Delivered!

The locally-owned and family-run Reston Farm Garden Market is located in North Reston just off Baron Cameron and Route 7. The market has been in business since 1976. They sell premium Christmas trees, wreaths, swag, and holiday decor, and offer White Glove service delivering and setting up Christmas trees. Their market sells freshly baked pies, donuts, and gourmet foods. They are offering free pictures with Santa on the weekends of Dec 8 and 9 and Dec 16 and 17 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, go to [www.restonfarm.com](http://www.restonfarm.com)

By Caroline Ayres, Staff Writer

On Saturday, Dec. 2, the annual Jingle on The Lake drew hundreds of children, parents, and others excited to kick off the holidays, along with many of their furry friends. It was also the last day of the season for Reston Farmers Market at Lake Anne, Gifts from the HeART Holiday shopping event at the Lake Anne Community Center, and the first

Christmas Market on the plaza, which brought in many vendors with delicious food and wares. The foggy December morning cleared to an unusually warm afternoon, which allowed many to shed their parkas in favor of lighter Christmas sweaters and elf costumes.

Continued on Page 3

## Winterfest Lights up Reston Nights

### Reston Association debuts lighted festival over three nights at Browns Chapel

By Holly Weatherwax, Staff Writer

A holiday light trail, firepits, an Enchanted Forest, Vendor Village, a beer garden, Santa's Workshop. You could be forgiven for thinking this might be about Busch Gardens or Kings Dominion. This is about the Reston Association's very first Winterfest held at Brown's Chapel recreation area by Lake Newport last weekend

Co-sponsored by Reston Community Center and FGMArchitects, Winter-

fest is an event designed to bring the community together. Visitors enjoyed a 0.41-mile lighted trail walk that included flowers, snowflakes, playful animals, a picture frame and more. Attendees meandered through the Enchanted Forest and visited the Vendor Village that was festively decorated with luminaries, fire pits, musical performances. For those who have little ones, there was an

Continued on Page 2

### sports



South Lakes football pulls off an undefeated season, HHS fall sports recap, Reston Hoops kicks off

### education



Veterans Day celebration, Kurt Rose makes an impact, HHS and SLHS fall play highlights, a holiday crossword puzzle

### the bulletin



Business spotlight on New Trail Cycling, Famous Restonians exhibit, Mon Ami Gabi closing

### lifestyle



Bombay Velvet review, health tips for the holidays, seasonal advice in "Keeping Reston Green"

### opinions

New Year's Resolution pointers, Restonian recommendations, an anniversary message from the owner

STANDARD PRESORT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
**PERMIT NO. 82**  
WOODSTOCK, VA

ECRWSS  
Residential Customer

[www.therestonletter.com](http://www.therestonletter.com)

The Reston Letter, LLC

@therestonletter [therestonletter.com](http://therestonletter.com)

**RESTON FARM**  
Garden Market

Christmas trees, wreaths, swag & holiday décor

Fresh-baked pies, donuts & gourmet foods

Premium plants, pottery, garden supplies, firewood & sooooo much more!

**OPEN DAILY 9am - 6pm**  
10800 Baron Cameron Avenue  
[RestonFarm.com](http://RestonFarm.com)



# THE BULLETIN

## Fitness and Belonging: A Winning Combination at New Trail Cycling & Strength

By Meg Marsh,  
Guest Writer, New Trail Member

With the global pandemic coming just 18 months after New Trail Cycling & Strength opened in November 2018, the studio's survival was an uphill ride. "Community was the only thing that kept my business going," said owner Liz Kamp. "It was easy for people to turn to the free options from the big companies like Peloton®, but people stuck with us because it was important to them that we opened up again. I leaned on them, and they leaned on me."

Kamp's original mission was to create an inclusive atmosphere where people of all fitness levels would feel comfortable and get an invigorating, intense, and fun workout. Clients know the unofficial motto is "come as you are." That means, regardless of your muscle mass, BMI, off-brand workout wear, and any questions or insecurities, there will be a coach, staff, and community ready to welcome you and help you meet your

goals. Benefits include the comfort of community, the importance of strong muscles, and the safety of working with experienced coaches.

In childhood, most people learn to exercise by playing an organized sport. As we age, it can be harder to maintain musculoskeletal health because we may not have a good blueprint for safe and effective strength training or cardio machine workouts. For example, I played soccer until age 18, ran with friends in my 20s and by the time I had kids, I had no idea what to do to feel fit.

New Trail's early morning 50-minute cycling class quickly became my sanctuary. I enjoyed cycling with others – without a leaderboard or someone shouting at me. Instructors coach throughout the ride, cheering you on as you pedal uphill or sprint on a flat stretch. The music is the perfect counterpart. Sure, I might have used my own competitive spirit to pedal faster than the person beside me, but I never wondered where I

stood in the class. I simply felt stronger and happier as part of a small group of people sweating it out.

Kamp celebrates everyone who shows up and keeps track of cycling, yoga, strength, and personal training classes attended. Five-year New Trail veteran Melanie Miller-Cvilikas has attended more than 1,000 classes. "It is clear to me that the mission to be an inclusive community for exercise has expanded into a community where members support each other," she said. "Friends have turned into a family where we show up for the sad times and the celebrations. This invitation is always extended to everyone. The tagline on the wall, "I CAN.I WILL." has become "WE CAN. WE WILL."

Longtime member Jerri Lynn Wilson agreed. "New Trail is truly a supportive community. Showing up to exercise is like returning to a familiar place where people know your name and care how you are doing."



Liz Kamp opened her business in 2018 and has built an accepting community at her Lake Anne studio. Photo by Benjamin Burgess

### Continued from Page 1

opportunity to visit with Santa at the Lake House (a separate ticket was required).

Tickets for Reston Association members were free, and other community members paid \$18. Online tickets were timed-entry tickets meant for crowd control, and the slots filled up quickly, but whenever possible, RA worked to open up slots so that more people in the community could attend.

While parking was limited, shuttles from three locations were provided to facilitate the crowds.

How did an event like this come about? Cara O'Donnell, Director of Communications and Community Engagement for Reston Association, said that the team at Reston Association had been talking for several years about creating a "signature" event for the community, something that could be held annually. Once they decided to move forward with Winterfest, they signed sponsors through individual outreach.

"Winterfest has been a truly collaborative process for the entire RA community," said O'Donnell. "The generosity of our sponsors, the support from our community, and the enthusiasm from our team have all come together to create this wonderful event for Reston, and we look forward to Winterfest becoming a part of Reston's holiday traditions."

One especially amazing part of the event is



Lights illuminate the path along Lake Newport during Winterfest. Pictures by Benjamin Burgess

the Enchanted Forest. Each of these live trees is sponsored by a local group, company, or school who is responsible for decorating the tree. Once the trees have been enjoyed as part of Winterfest, they will be given to families in the community who might otherwise not have a Christmas tree.

It has been an all-hands-on-deck event for the Reston Association staff. Wednesday afternoon found the Executive Team, the Parks and Recreation team and the Central Services Team all on hand to create a magical environment. While it has been an intense effort, most aspects of setting up Winterfest went smoothly.

The event, from Thursday, Nov. 30 to Saturday, Dec. 2, ran each evening from 5 to 9 p.m. Friday rain cut down on crowds, but most of the evening ended up being pleasant anyway. During the three days, over 3,000 people had a chance to enjoy this magical adventure.

Reserve a spot early next year to ensure a festive night out. Since there was quite a bit of buzz in the community, this event is likely to be even more popular in 2024.



**K STREET PHOTOGRAPHY DC**

**CONTACT Benjamin Burgess with the Reston Letter NOW!**

571.509.7432 Benjamin@kstreetphotographydc.com

www.kstreetphotographydc.com

Let us help you capture the moments that matter most.

## Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston Adopts Section of W&OD Trail

Contributed by the Rotary Club

Saturday, Nov. 25 was a monumental day for the W&OD Trail, thanks to the unwavering dedication of the Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston, the Rotary Satellite Club of Herndon-Reston, and the amazing Interact Club members from Herndon High School. Joined by enthusiastic family and friends, this dynamic team took charge of transforming the trail into a safer, cleaner haven for all its patrons. Armed with determination and multiple bags, they conquered the challenge, clearing away trash and uplifting the environment to new heights.

But that's not all. In a momentous act of commemoration, a brilliant landmark now graces the W&OD Trail: the esteemed and distinctive marker of our very own Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston. The symbol of dedication and unity marks our commitment to the community and the trail's future. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who lent their hands, hearts, and time to this cause. Together, we've shown the world the power of Rotary, unity, generosity, and the impact of a community coming together for a greater cause.



Photo contributed by the Rotary Club



# THE BULLETIN

## Holiday Musical Performances

The fountain at Reston Town Center  
Jazz:12/9, Brass:12/16 12-2p.m.

## Mini Train Rides

Reston Town Center  
12/10 and 12/17 12-4 p.m.

## Holiday Carriage Rides

Reston Town Center  
12/9 and 12/16 4-9 p.m.

## Famous Restonians Exhibit Now at Reston Museum

By Renette Oklewicz, Guest Writer

The Reston Museum, a community organization dedicated to commemorating and preserving Reston's unique history, announces a new exhibit, on view through December. "Famous Restonians" celebrates the achievements of 25 individuals who spent the majority, if not all, of their formative years in Reston. Many are esteemed alumni of South Lakes High School, and all have achieved noteworthy accomplishments.

The exhibit highlights the remarkable career of Grant Hill, an internationally known NBA Hall of Fame basketball player, and other high achievers including Mikie Sherrill, second-term Congresswoman from New Jersey; Kim Crabbe, the first African American to play on the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team; Nate Mook, former CEO of World Central Kitchen; Benny Blanco, award-winning record producer; and Eddie Timanus, five-time "Jeopardy!" champion.

In addition, the exhibit showcases a



The Famous Restonians exhibit runs through Dec. 31 at the Reston Museum.

Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

number of distinguished, record-holding athletes, including Olympians Alan Webb and Mamme Biney, as well as television, radio, and entertainment personalities and corporate leaders.

"As the premiere organization in Reston focused on Reston's history, the museum is proud to recognize these people who grew up here and, we believe because of our community's unique diversity and culture,

were able to achieve accomplishments that deserve recognition," said Alex Campbell, the museum's executive director. "We encourage everyone to visit the museum to learn more about these outstanding individuals. This exhibit will delight and surprise you, and is sure to make you feel proud to call Reston home."

The exhibit will be on display through Dec. 31.

## Mon Ami Gabi Will Shut Its Doors Dec. 31

By Caroline Ayres, Staff Writer

Many in Reston recognize the name Mon Ami Gabi. Located in Reston Town Center, the classic French bistro has been a staple for 15 years. So, it came as a bit of a shock to many when Mon Ami Gabi announced in November that it would be closing on the last day of the year.

The restaurant was beloved by patrons for its ambiance and authentic French cuisine, including chocolate mousse, beef bourguignon, many steak options, and escargot. The restaurant, owned by the

company Lettuce Entertain You, is one of only four locations, the others located in Bethesda, New York City, and Las Vegas. Mon Ami Gabi has occupied a large space at Reston Town Center since it opened in 2008. In addition to its regular lunch and dinner menu, the restaurant was also a popular brunch option for holidays like Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Easter.

Mon Ami Gabi had been accepting reservations for its popular pajama brunch, a New Year's Day tradition at the restaurant, but notified those who had been planning to celebrate the first day of 2024

there that its last day of regular service would be Dec. 31. The restaurant will operate its regular hours and carry out until then.

Reston are lamenting the loss of a favorite spot in the community. Mon Ami Gabi was not only a restaurant, but also a place where many memories were made over its decade and a half long run. However, for those who will be missing their French fix, there is still a month left for Restonians to enjoy the bistro one (or a couple) more times over the holiday season.

## RESTON IS MY HOME AND MY COMMUNITY.

Whether you are a **first-time buyer** or **right-sizing** your home, I can help you navigate this crazy real estate market. Doesn't matter if it is a condo, townhome or detached home, having the right REALTOR® makes all of the difference!

**I promise you a GREAT real estate experience!**

Holly Weatherwax, Associate

Broker/Owner  
Momentum Realty  
571-643-4902  
holly@hollyweatherwax.com  
Licensed in VA



**MOMENTUM REALTY**  
Moving your dreams forward



The Grinch, played by a South Lakes theatre student, greets the shocked crowd at Lake Anne, before Santa made his grand entrance.  
Photo by Patricia Kovacs

ing elves came around the bend of the lake toward the plaza, the Grinch made an attempt to steal Christmas, arriving on the boat the audience assumed was Santa's. The crowd booed the green surprise, and kids were quick to chase the Grinch though the watching grounds and around the plaza before eventually sending him packing, much to the amusement of onlookers, "I really liked the Grinch," said Melissa Benett, a first-time visitor to the festival, "all the kids running after him. It was really cute!

After the impostor was evicted from the premises, the crowds cheered on the real Santa as he came into the docks, waving joyfully, with his many paddle-board-riding elves, who went as many as five to a raft (and miraculously, none of whom fell in).

Though Santa and his elves were certainly the main draw for many visitors, the festival offered many other activities. Vendors stretched from the plaza, to the parking lot, to the inside of the Lake Anne community center, selling everything from chocolate to meats to jewelry to artisanal creations of all types. Artisans working at the booths, such as Preeti Harris and her homemade quilting booth, were equally excited for the wonderful wares to be found: "Whatever I made, I'll probably spend here!" said Harris, "It's more about the community than the business for me." Such a sentiment seemed to be shared by all the visitors to Lake Anne's Jingle on The Lake, Christmas market, and art and craft show, as the doors open to the winter season.

### Continued from Page 1

At noon, crowds of excited children gathered around the docks to watch the boat procession, which brought not only holiday festooned contestant pontoons vying to win the prize for the best holiday decorations, but also four special additions to the holiday festivities. For the second consecutive year, Princesses Mulan, Jasmine, Anna, and Queen Elsa of Vienna Singing Princesses arrived on the docks. Bringing up the rear of the parade was Santa himself, but not before a nasty surprise. Before the man with the bag and his paddle-board-

THE RESTON LETTER	
<b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b> Emdad Swapan	<b>LAYOUT DESIGN</b> Samantha Baker Dylan Murphy
<b>GRAPHIC DESIGN</b> Sabine Soltys	<b>REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS</b> Laurie Dornak Chuck Cascio Restonian Hayley Sherwood
<b>STAFF WRITERS AND EDITORS</b> Holly Weatherwax E. Zirak Megan Schmid Christin Dougherty Debbie Anguizola Terri Wright Ellyn Wexler Scott L. Parkin Steph Drahozal Kat Salmon Sarah Golden Caroline Ayres Casey Menish	<b>AD SALES</b> Nicole Meade <b>DISTRIBUTION</b> Shaughnessy Pierce Brian Crosson Sue Crosson Lucas Menedez- Hassel
<b>PHOTOGRAPHERS</b> Benjamin Burgess Isadora Guerreiro Patricia Kovacs	<b>OWNER/EDITOR</b> Dawn Crosson



# THE CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2023						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
*Open daily in December*						
	*Ice Skating*	*Explore Lake Fairfax*	*Campfire Ring Rental*		1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 - School's out! (for FCPS)	16 - Sing Books with Miss Emily - Reduced Shakespeare Company in "The Ultimate Christmas Show" - Beltway Brass Holiday Performance - Saturday Storytime - Holiday Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides
17 - Santa & Grinch Holiday Brunch - Holiday Mini Train Ride	18	19	20 - Wednesday Storytime	21	22	23 - Saturday Storytime
24	25	26 - Holiday Break Brunch	27 - Toddler Storytime - Wednesday Storytime - Holiday Break Brunch	28 - Holiday Break Brunch - Puppet Show- How Turtle Tried to Fly South	29 - Holiday Break Brunch	30 - Saturday Storytime
31	JANUARY 1 - New Years Day 5K	2 - Back to school! (for FCPS)	3	4	5	6

## Family Events for Winter Break

By Megan Schmid, Staff Writer

If you're staying home during Winter Break, the panic may have already set in about how you will keep your children entertained for two weeks. But fear not! Check out these family-friendly events and activities to keep the boredom at bay right here in Reston.

*Events are open to all ages unless otherwise noted.*

**Sing Books with Miss Emily** Join Miss Emily for singing storytime with

illustrated songs (free) – **When:** Saturday, 12/16, 11-11:30 a.m., **Where:** Reston Regional Library

**Reduced Shakespeare Company in "The Ultimate Christmas Show"** It's Festive, funny, physical family fun as these Three Wise Guys send up and celebrate your favorite winter holiday traditions (Tickets start at \$53) – **When:** Saturday, 12/16, two showings: 3 p.m., 8 p.m., **Where:** The Center-Stage at Reston Community Center, Age: Recommended 13+

**Beltway Brass Holiday Performance** Beltway Brass will perform your holiday favorites with traditional, unique and musically humorous arrangements (free) – **When:** Saturday, 12/16, Noon - 3 p.m., **Where:** Reston Town Center

**Saturday Storytime** Join us every Saturday as we read three themed books! (free) – **When:** Saturday 12/16, 12/23, & 12/30, 11 a.m., **Where:** Reston Barnes & Noble

**Santa & Brunch** Holiday Brunch

Brunch and be merry with Santa and the Grinch (Reservations Required) – **When:** Sunday, 12/17, 10 a.m. - Noon, **Where:** Matchbox at Reston Station

**Wednesday Storytime** Join us every Wednesday as we read three themed books! (free) – **When:** Wednesday, 12/20, & 12/27, 11 a.m., **Where:** Reston Barnes & Noble

**Toddler Storytime** Join us for stories, songs, and fingerplays (free) – **When:** Wednesday, 12/27, 10:30-11

**Continued on Page 5**

## Let Your Light Shine, Lake Thoreau!

By Casey Menish, Staff Writer

Lake Thoreau shines brighter this time of year, and those twinkling bulbs reflecting on the lake represent thousands of dollars of donations to local nonprofits. The 11th Annual Festival of Winter Lights Lights, organized by the Lake Thoreau Entertainment Association, is taking place this month.

The concept is simple: residents on Lake Thoreau decorate their lake-facing homes and boats with lights, and generous Restonians pledge to make donations to local nonprofits. The pledges can either be per home/boat donations (for example, \$1 per lit home/boat) or a flat donation.

The goal of Lake Thoreau's Festival of Winter Lights is to "make it a community-wide thing where everybody can feel like they're contributing toward a common goal [supporting] local charities," said Dave Prochnow, organizer with the Lake Thoreau Entertainment Association.

The 2022 event was successful with "196 homes and boats lit up last year, with the total collection just slightly over \$10,000," says Prochnow. Those donations went to Cornerstones, Public Art Reston, Friends of Reston, South Lakes Food Pantry, Reston Scholarship Fund, and Blue Ridge Wildlife Center.

All Restonians can enjoy the twinkling lights by taking a stroll around Lake Thoreau in the evening in December. The view is especially beautiful when timed with the sunset, which you can enjoy from the benches along the path parallel to South Lakes Drive.

Lake Thoreau residents that want to participate should have their boats and homes lit on Thursday, Dec. 21 for the official count, weather permitting.

If you are interested in making a pledge, you can send that information to James Pan (jpanco@gmail.com) to have your donation included in the total for the 2023 Festival of Winter Lights.



Lights shine along Lake Thoreau in past years. Photos from Harbor Point website



# EDUCATION

## MAKING AN IMPACT: How Kurt Rose Gives Back

By Chuck Cascio, former South Lakes teacher, author

Growing up in Reston, Kurt Rose made a decision based on his positive life experiences. "I said if I ever have kids, I want them to grow up in Reston," he recalled. Years later, that is exactly what he and his wife Dianne provided for their son and daughter. "We bought a home on Salt Kettle Way in 1999, around the corner from the three schools that I went to – South Lakes High School (class of '85), Langston Hughes Middle, and Terraset Elementary."

Growing up in Newbridge and Green-skeeper Court, Kurt played on the near-by tennis and basketball courts and explored the bike paths regularly. At age 16, he took a part-time job at Reston International Jewelers, an opportunity that provided a direction for his life. "The business soon grew on me, and I knew it was the business I wanted to be in," he said.

Then in 1993, Rick Little, the man Kurt worked with at Reston International Jewelers, told Kurt he was opening his own jewelry store. "Rick wanted me to come along with him, which I did," Kurt said. "Best decision I ever made."

That decision resulted in establishing Aspen Jewelry Designs, located at the

Clocktower Center in Herndon where Kurt said, "I support the community I love with the work that I love." He began providing that support in 2005 through the Rotary Club of Herndon-Reston, when "fellow Rotarian Richard Downer and I introduced Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to the children of Herndon. We were the first in Virginia to establish the project, which delivers a free book every month to children, ages 0 through 5 years. There are currently 1,500 children in Herndon receiving free books monthly."

Kurt expanded that initiative by helping form the RoSigle Community Giving Foundation along with Dianne, who is a preschool teacher, and community volunteer Andy Sigle and his wife, librarian Kim Sigle. "Our first goal at RoSigle was to bring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to Reston, which we did in October of 2022," Kurt said. "Currently, 600 Reston children under age 5 receive a free book every month."

Kurt proudly cited other accomplishments of the RoSigle Foundation, including "the Reading With Roz program, which provides free books at the South Lakes High School PTSA Food Pantry.



Lifelong Restonian Kurt Rose at Aspen Jewelry  
Photo by Benjamin Burgess

Through the 'Kids R First' charity, we provide funds for children who are at or below poverty level at Dogwood Elementary School, so they can receive proper school supplies."

RoSigle is also the school sponsor at the Reston Museum's annual Lake Anne Cardboard Boat Regatta, which Kurt called "an excellent team-building exercise for young minds, and we are working with the Reston Community Center to create a bookmobile so we can get

free books to the elementary and middle school ages."

Kurt is firmly committed to making an impact. "It has been a wonderful ride at both Aspen and RoSigle, and my biggest goal is to keep the rides going and to get more books into the hands of more children and help as many young minds as possible."

For more information about the work of the RoSigle Foundation, go to <https://www.rosigle.org/>

**Continued from Page 4**

a.m., **Where:** Reston Regional Library, Age: Recommended 18 months-2 years  
**Holiday Break Brunch** Spend a cozy afternoon in the bistro (Reservations Required) – **When:** Tuesday, 12/26-Friday, 12/29, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
**Where:** Mon Ami Gabi

**Puppet Show-How Turtle Tried to Fly South** Enjoy a creative puppet show about how the animals at the Nature Center are enjoying their winter break. Sing songs, and feel animal feathers

and fur (Reservations Required: \$7) – **When:** Thursday 12/28, 10-10:45 a.m. & 11:15 a.m. - Noon **Where:** Walker Nature Center, Age: Recommended 3-8 years

**Holiday Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides** Enjoy a journey along the magical, twinkling streets of RTC, and benefit local charities (Reservations Required: \$30 per group of 6) – **When:** Saturday, 12/16, 4-9 p.m. **Where:** Reston Town Center

**Holiday Mini Train Ride** Enjoy a mini train ride with the family through

the streets of RTC, and benefit local charities (Reservations Required: \$20 per group of 4) – **When:** Sunday, 12/17, Noon - 4 p.m. **Where:** Reston Town Center

**Ice Skating** Skate the RTC pavilion now through March 10, 2024 (Adult: \$11, Youth 12 and under: \$9) – **When:** open daily **Where:** Reston Town Center Ice Rink

**Explore Lake Fairfax** 476 acres of parkland! Campground, playgrounds, skate park, pump track, hiking and biking trails, and athletic fields (Park

entrance is free. Camping starts at \$37/night) – **When:** Open daily, 10 a.m. --7 p.m. **Where:** Lake Fairfax

**Campfire Ring Rental** A great place for comradery and s'mores! Rental includes a fire ring, 4 picnic tables, bench seating and a small shelter (Reservations Required: \$25) – **When:** Open daily **Where:** Walker Nature Center

**New Years Day 5K** Kick start the new year with a virtual or live 5K (\$50 per registrant) – **When:** Monday, 1/1, 10 a.m. **Where:** Reston Town Center

## Crossword Corner

By Reston crossword constructor, Joe O'Neill

Joe O'Neill, a 40-year Reston resident, is a retired former English professor and IT executive who recently began writing and submitting crossword puzzles to major U.S. daily newspapers. Several have appeared in the Wall Street Journal and one is upcoming in the New York Times. This is O'Neill's fifth crossword puzzle creation, made specifically for The Reston Letter readers!

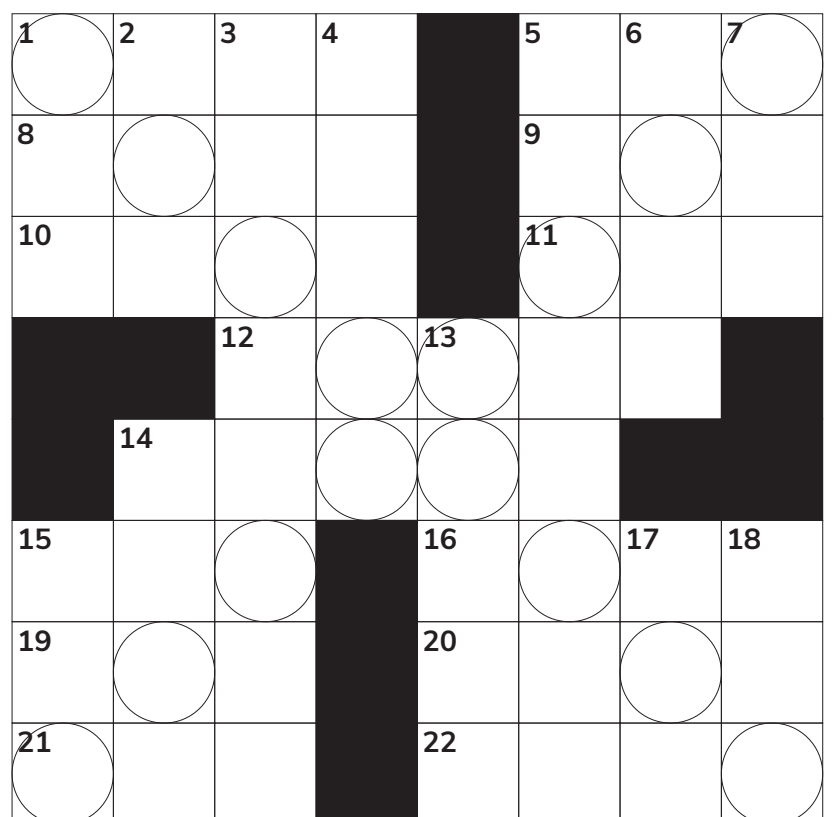
**ACROSS**

- 1 Tach readings
- 5 Pro camera initials
- 8 Cry of pain
- 9 Eensy, in Edinburgh
- 10 Icelandic saga
- 11 Long, long time
- 12 End-of-book listing
- 14 Otherwise
- 15 Tire-related metric
- 16 Norwegian capital
- 19 Wide shoe size
- 20 Regretted
- 21 Hi or Lo \_\_\_
- 22 Papaya discard

**DOWN**

- 1 Reuben bread
- 2 \_\_ XING sign
- 3 Acts like an adjective
- 4 Steelers legend Lynn
- 5 Sugary "Susan" of song?
- 6 Pope defied by Luther
- 7 Stimp's pal
- 13 "Light My Fire" band
- 14 "Ah, yes!"
- 15 For each item
- 17 Director Spike
- 18 Uneven, in math

### Where's Rudy?



© RedHand Assocs.

(Answers on back)



# EDUCATION

## It's Winter Concert Season: Here's Where You'll Find The Seahawks

By Caroline Ayres, Staff Writer

As the holiday season rolls over Reston once again, so does the Winter Concert season for South Lake's many acclaimed music and theater arts groups. The docket for this year is full of events sure to pack the South Lakes auditorium.

Starting off strong, the South Lakes Orchestra held a top notch concert on Dec. 5, featuring songs such as O Come, O Come Emmanuel and Radezky March, which was played by all orchestra classes. Students were excited to showcase not only their prowess, but their love for creating music: "I really like orchestra," said Victor Winterstein, Concertmaster within the orchestra program. "It allows me to escape from the craziness of school for a bit and just make music."

Coming in fresh off an excellent marching band season and assessment is the South Lakes band. The concert featured South Lakes Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble. The winter concert, which took place on Dec. 7, included pieces such as "Hymnsong Variants" by R.W. Smith and "Sleigh Ride" by Leroy Anderson. "Sleigh

Ride is a really fun piece to play," said Amulya Sundaresan. "I really enjoyed it!" The concert even roped in past figures in the community in featuring Joyful Chanukah by Mitch Bender, the former band director of Langston Hughes Middle School.

Next on the tour of winter songs comes a more unconventional choice: South Lakes Chorus's Jazz holiday concert. Restonians still have the opportunity to set their calendars for this tour through classics and contemporaries on Dec. 14. The song line-up features classics like "Our Love is Here To Stay" as performed by South Lakes Select Treble, and a rendition of Silent Night with the combined treble and bass Vocal Arts choirs. The concert will also feature the return of last year's closer, "Sleigh Ride," which will leave the community to decide if Band or Chorus did it better.

As the holiday season comes and goes again, South Lakes Band, Chorus, and Orchestra look forward to assessment and the long-anticipated Broadway night. As the concerts finish, it seems clear that South Lakes Musical Arts will continue to bring the thunder well after the snow thaws.

## Herndon Theatre Performs "Fools"

Contributed by Herndon Theatre Department

Herndon High School's fall mainstage play – Neil Simon's "Fools" – was a huge success. Many classes enjoyed preview performances on Friday, Nov. 17, with an average of 200 students per showing. The show weekend was filled with such dignitaries as HHS alumni, administration, and the Fairfax County School Board chair and Dranesville District representative Elaine Tholen. Herndon's Theatre Department sold more than 600 tickets to raise money for theatre boosters with new merchandise and concessions.



Fools cast, crew, and director Photo contributed by HHS Theatre



HHS actors in "Fools" Photos by Chris Pinover

## South Lakes Theatre Arts Shines in "The Legend of Sleepy" Hollow Production

Contributed by South Lakes Theatre Arts Boosters

South Lakes Theatre Arts recently performed the classic tale, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." The play showcased not only the enduring charm of the story, but also the exceptional talent of the cast and crew.

The meticulous attention to detail brought Sleepy Hollow's eerie atmosphere to life. The set design, lighting, makeup, and costumes all worked in harmony to create an immersive experience, complementing the performances and enhancing the overall impact of the play.

Josh Lewis's portrayal of Ichabod Crane was a standout. Lewis captured the essence of Crane as an eccentric and complex character, making the schoolmaster both relatable and intriguing.

Noah Kennedy, as the dashing Brom Bones, brought robust charm and subtle humor to the stage, perfectly complementing Lewis's portrayal of Ichabod Crane.

Anna Leo as Katrina Van Tassel was enchanting and strong, showcasing the character's intelligence and independence beyond the traditional love trian-



Student actors Josh Lewis and Anna Leo

gle. Her dynamic chemistry with Lewis and Kennedy added a dynamic energy to the performance.

August Rivers and Henry Carter, who played Hans Van Ripper and Parson Van Pastor, gave strong performances that added realism and humor to the play's more fantastical aspects, like the ghostly gossips played by Lily Ingraham, Sitina Tocherman, Zaara Kapadia, and Itsuko Scoville.

South Lakes Theatre Arts' production of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" was a beautiful blend of intrigue, mystery, and humor. It highlighted the talents of the cast and crew while presenting a unified, compelling narrative that captivated the audience from beginning to end. A well-deserved "Bravo!" to the cast and crew for a memorable rendition of this classic tale.

A recording of the show is on YouTube via the QR code.



Josh Lewis, August Rivers, and Henry Carter in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" Photos by John Talley



# EDUCATION

## Armstrong Students Celebrate Vets on Veterans Day

Contributed by Armstrong Elementary

After a four-year hiatus, Armstrong Elementary returned to the tradition of honoring and celebrating families of veterans with a Veterans Day breakfast and celebration. Reston's Wegmans generously donated a breakfast of eggs, sausage, biscuits, fruits, coffee, and juice that was served to more than 40 parents, grandparents, an uncle, and students. Sixth-grade students dressed to the nines, greeted, and presented veterans with letters and talked with each one about which military branch they were in and their service.

Kindergartners joined in on the fun by singing a song and presenting the veterans with handmade paper medals. Other grade levels provided handmade thank you cards and decorations for the event.

The entire school had a hand (literally) in making the event a success. Students created a giant flag with red and white stripes made of cut-out and traced hands of every student in the school.

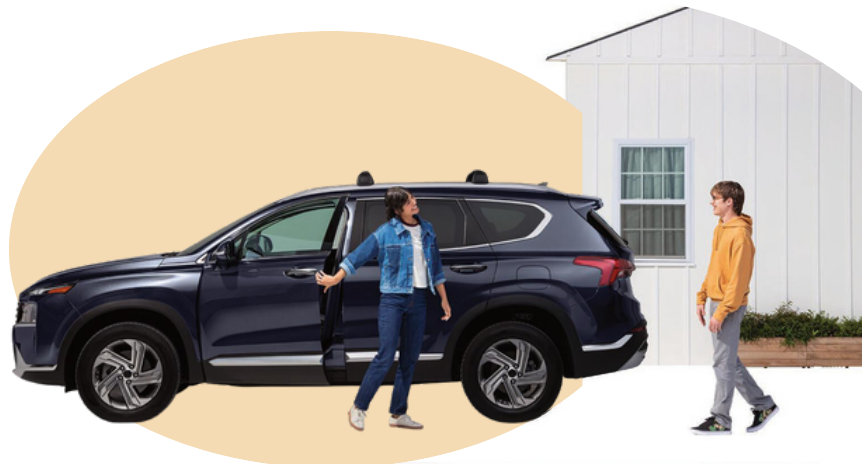


Mrs. Shivers' kindergartners at Armstrong Elementary sing in front of the student-made flag for their Veterans Day celebration. Photo contributed by AES



Aldrin Elementary sixth-graders joined other students from across the county at a Food Expo, where they got to taste test potential new cafeteria food, share their feedback, and learn about nutrition. Photo by AES

# I'm here to help you bundle your home & auto



I can save you time and money when you bundle your home and auto insurance. Call, click or stop by for a quote today.

Availability and amount of discounts and savings vary by state.

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company  
State Farm Indemnity Company  
State Farm Fire and Casualty Company  
State Farm General Insurance Company  
Bloomington, IL

State Farm County Mutual Insurance Company of Texas  
State Farm Lloyds  
Richardson, TX

State Farm Florida Insurance Company  
Winter Haven, FL



**Kyle Knight Ins Agcy Inc**  
Kyle Knight, Agent

11736 Bowman Green Drive  
Reston, VA 20190-3501

Bus: 703-435-2300

kyle.knight.gton@statefarm.com

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®^^



# SPORTS

## Seahawks Football Delivers a Season of Firsts to Reston

South Lakes High School football team puts together an undefeated season for the first time in team history

By Laurie Dornak, Seahawks Boosters and Misha Zarechnak, SLHS Athletic Leadership

Fall sports in Reston were exciting for South Lakes Football fans and for the alumni who came back to cheer on their Seahawks. The Seahawks won their first-ever Concorde District Football Championship and also completed their first ever perfect regular season 10-0 in school history. These two achievements marked a turning point for the school, which joined the Concorde District in 2021, after leaving the Liberty District.

The Seahawks finished a spectacular, flawless regular season— one that embedded core memories for these players and the 37 seniors on the roster. The team navigated through the usual stiff Concorde competition that included Madison Warhawks and Westfield Bulldogs, two powerhouse teams with strong football histories. The championship-clinching victory against Westfield, which was the last game of the season, will be remembered for years to come.

The media coverage was strong for the final game of the season. Seahawks hosted the Bulldogs and enjoyed the coverage from ABC7, FOX5, DCNEWS from pre-game to the end with several podcasts analyzing and predicting the matchup, and web sports content creators captured the action that night. Seahawk Athletics welcomed the Washington Commanders community to the Seahawk vs. Bulldog matchup. Commanders Legends Eddie Mason, Josh Wilson, Ricky Ervins, and Josh Morgan were on hand, and presented \$1000 to each football program on behalf of the Washington Commanders charitable foundation and Northwest Federal Credit Union.

In his fifth season with the team, Coach Jason Hescocock led his squad with unwavering determination, citing a powerful mantra: "Find a way to win." Hescocock's approach emphasized embracing challenges and adversity with a resolute spirit. It was applied well in the thrilling and closely contested Bulldog battle on Nov. 3. The Seahawks emerged victorious, securing their place in the school's history books and completing a season filled with hard-fought battles, including a significant upset over Madison.

Senior running back Isaac Copeland, overcoming injuries in his high school career, had a breakout season, becoming an instrumental part of the team's success. Senior captain and quarterback Nick Harris led the Concorde District in passing yards and passing touchdowns, orchestrated an explosive offensive attack with senior receivers James Zschunke (captain) and Brian Kennedy contributing to the touchdown tally. Showcasing the team's offensive prowess also included junior Xvavier Swain, who anchored the offensive line, providing essential protection for Harris and opportunities for Copeland to shine.

The heart and soul of the Seahawks' success originated from the senior-heavy defense, led by captain safety Jack Schnabel and linebackers Jacob Kyger and Cameron Theis. Senior cornerback Misha Zarechnak made his presence felt by leading the district with interceptions. Defensive end Savion Grante contributed many game-changing sacks and crucial tackles which proved pivotal to the team's victories.

This remarkable win was a testament



Seahawks finish a perfect season, 10-0.  
Design by Jenny McArthur

## Reston Hoops Basketball Season Begins

By Terri Wright, Staff Writer

The whistles on youth soccer fields have moved to toasty temperatures and the noisy din of gyms for recreational and house league basketball for the winter.

Reston Hoops kicked off their house league games on Dec. 2. Matches are held between 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. on Saturdays at South Lakes High, Langston Hughes Middle, as well as Armstrong, Dogwood, and Terraset elementary schools. The league fields teams for both male and female participants according to grade level. Players participate in an evaluation process to craft equally competitive teams. Early season scrimmages provide a basis for the establishment of grade level divisions.

Earlier this fall Reston Hoops ushered in the upcoming basketball season with a 3v3 Tourney open to any and all Reston Hoopers from 3rd-6th grades. The free event was an opportunity to get back into the gym and have fun. In all, over 70 participants showed up for the event. While admission to the event was free, donations were solicited for breast cancer awareness, and Reston Hoops matched contributions, eventually raising \$2,000.

The event epitomizes what the league does best: brings people together, fosters a love for the game, while creating lasting memories. It is about more than losing or winning; it is about the shared passion for basketball and community. The echo of bouncing basketballs and the squeak of shoes on the wood floor began Saturday, Dec. 2 and runs through March. Cruise by a local gym and take in the fun!



Another event that kicked off youth basketball season in Reston was "Late Night at the Byrd," a night for youth basketball players to meet and play ball with the high school players.  
Photo by Isadora Guerreiro

to the unwavering resilience of the Seahawks. The team's journey from a 4-6 record in the 2022-23 season to a perfect 10-0 this year showcased how the players "embraced challenges." With a culture of excellence and strong senior leadership, the football team set a new standard for success.

The team finished its season in the first round of region playoffs losing in the final minute to #7 ranked Yorktown Patri-

ots. Nonetheless, their journey to winning the Concorde District championship has been a source of inspiration for the South Lakes community, a testament to what can be achieved through determination and teamwork. They etched their names in the hearts of the community and the record books with a perfect season. Congratulations to the South Lakes High School football team on their historic achievement.



Herndon Freshman football team finished their season in first place in the Liberty District this fall. Photo by Brett Fox

HSL HOCKEY

### HERNDON/ SOUTH LAKES ICE HOCKEY CLUB SCHEDULE

FRIDAY DEC 8 9:40PM  
vs. Chantilly HS @ Skatequest

TUE DEC 19 6:20PM  
vs. Madison HS @ Skatequest

FRIDAY JAN 26 TBD  
vs. Rock Ridge HS @ Ion Center

FRIDAY DEC 15 6:20PM  
vs. Tuscarora/Loudoun HS @ Skatequest

FRIDAY JAN 5 6:30PM  
vs. Bishop O'Connell HS @ Medstar

FRIDAY FEB 9 6:10PM  
vs. Paul VI HS @ Skatequest

FRIDAY JAN 19 9:40PM  
vs. Langley HS @ Skatequest



# SPORTS

## Highlights from Herndon High School's Fall Sports Seasons

Contributed by HHS Coaches

### GOLF

The golf team finished another successful season with seniors Austin Collie (MVP Award winner) and Luke McDermott (Sportsmanship Award winner) leading the way. Junior Ryan Jones had a hole-in-one during one of the team's practice sessions. He is expected to lead the team next year along with junior, Luke Albers.

### CHEER

Cheer placed third in the district and seventh in the region. Sean Campbell made first team all district and all region. Wyatt Anderson and Abby Kloehn made first team all district.

### GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

The Hornets girls cross-country team was led by team MVP Junior Megan Sullivan. She was able to capture the Liberty District Championship, placed 2nd at the Northern Region Championship, and finished 9th in the VA State Cross Country meet.

### BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

At the boys Liberty District Championship, these Co-MVPs, Andrew Janetsky and Bo Chatterjee, finished second and third. At the Regional Championship they placed fifth and 12th. At the VHSL State Championships, they were 20th and 29th place.

### FOOTBALL

The Herndon Hornet football season began last December and finished Friday, Nov. 16, at Madison in the Northern



Herndon High athletes celebrate accomplishments at fall sports awards night. Photo contributed by HHS Sports Boosters

Region Semifinals. The Hornets won 8 games, made a second trip to the playoffs in two years, and won a playoff game against McLean, which Herndon has not accomplished since 1990. Countless players were named to the Liberty District Team and three players received All Northern Region Team recognition (Logan Lopez and Exodus Anderson, Northern Region 2nd Team; Brayden Humpherys, 1st Team Liberty District and 1st Team Northern Region as a junior defensive back). The coaches are trying to build something that everyone can be proud of; freshman and JV teams who also had winning seasons. The success of feeder teams reflects the overall health

of the program. The future of Herndon football is bright. The 2022 team pointed the program in the right direction, and the 2023 team took it another giant step forward. Go Hornets!!

### FIELD HOCKEY

The Herndon Field Hockey program shined throughout the entire season led by Liberty District Coach of the Year Nicole Kimtis and assistant coaches Lara Runz and Victoria Friend. The varsity team ended with a 5-9 record and the JV team went 6-5. Liberty District Team recognition was awarded to Ellie Patton (First Team All Liberty-District), Audrey Ferguson and Emily Griffiths (Second Team All Liberty District), Sa-

vannah Baker, Kate Keane, Milan Patton, Sofia Rivarola, and Cadence Godshalk (Liberty District Honorable Mention). Additionally, Fall Sports Awards were presented to Kenley Fairhurst for Most Improved, Thaleia Khader for Sportsmanship, Audrey Ferguson for Most Valuable Player, and Emily Griffiths for Sportsmanship. The coaches are most excited for the future of the program and can't wait for next season!

### VOLLEYBALL

The volleyball team fought hard this season, led by captain Piper Xeller - 2nd Team All-District, Coco Lewis-Honorable Mention All-District, and Sara Kwitowski- Honorable Mention All-District.

## Seahawk Athletics Volunteering at Its Best

By Laurie Dornak

The Seahawk Chain Gang was more than happy to mug for the camera after the 2023 Mount Vernon vs. South Lakes Varsity game. The dads are the ones who manage the chains on the sidelines every game, marking yardage.

These long-standing volunteers began like many parents do. They rolled up their sleeves to help out when sons, Matt Hochstrasser and Ian Hostetler, were on the JV squad. Eric and Aaron have been a constant on the sidelines for over 17 years. Ian joined the gang about five years ago. How fantastic to have a squad of friends (with a built-in backup) for this important job.

Their faces told their Friday Night Lights story best—they love every minute of it. Introducing the Seahawk Chain Gang from left to right: Eric Hochstrasser, Pete Aldrich, Aaron Hostetler and primary back-up, Joe Jansen.

We also found them in the background as Seahawk Battalion presented the colors at the same 2023 game. Seahawk parents, athletes, and boosters are grateful for the generous service of the Seahawk Chain Gang all these years and the community looks forward to next year and all the continuing volunteers.



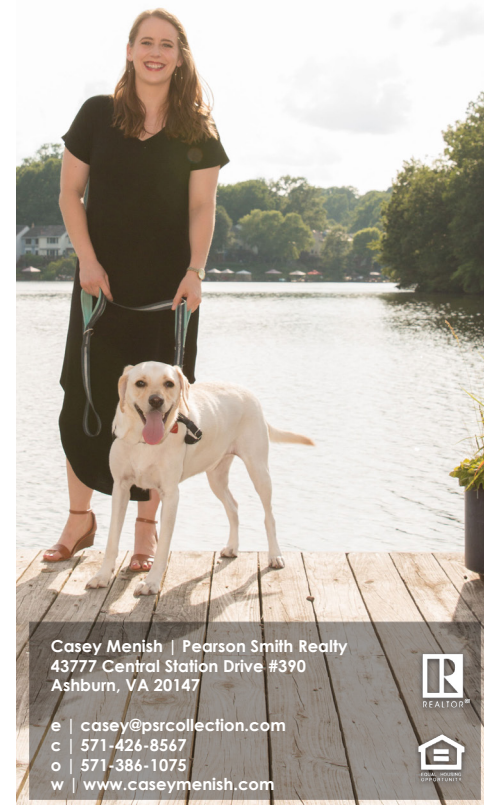
"The Chain Gang" is seen in the background, as they often are. Photos by Phill Dolinger



**My greatest investment is in Reston.**

I live, work, and play here and would love to help you find your perfect home here, too.

- Casey Menish, REALTOR®  
70+ 5-Star Zillow Reviews



Casey Menish | Pearson Smith Realty  
43777 Central Station Drive #390  
Ashburn, VA 20147

e | casey@psrcollection.com  
c | 571-426-8567  
o | 571-386-1075  
w | www.caseymenish.com





# OPINIONS

## Thank you, Reston, for a Wonderful First Year!

By Dawn Crosson, Editor, Owner, Publisher

It's been a little over a year since, on a whim, I sat down and Googled "How to start a community newspaper." Things haven't quite been the same for me since; it set me on a course that has opened doors, allowed me to see so much good in this community, introduced me to amazing people, and given me a trial-and-error crash course in owning my own business.

This December issue is our 12th publication; we have one full year of printing at least 15,000 copies of a community paper each month—copies that have been written, edited, managed, marketed, and directed by volunteers. Our only revenue to pay for printing and shipping comes from Reston advertisers. We have no sponsor or outside funding. We haven't lost a single penny this year, and the business can now pay several people who are helping in key capacities at the job. I'd say it's been a successful year.

My promise to the community was to keep this paper Reston, and I think it's fair to say my staff and I have delivered. It's also fair to say that this community has responded in a heartwarming way to this paper. People send in story ideas constantly. I get compliments and creative suggestions all the time. You Restonians have welcomed The Reston Letter with open arms— which is why I, as a busy full-time teacher and mother of three, keep on trucking.

We're happy to announce that we will be expanding our circulation to 2,000 more households in Reston this January. We are becoming what I wanted us to become from the beginning: a service to the community free of charge, and a service to Reston businesses whose exposure is now delivered directly to over two-thirds of all Reston residences!

As we head into 2024, please take a moment to consider what this publication means to you, and how we can help you

spread news about your organization, club, cause, or business, and consider helping us offset our increasing costs with your donations and advertisements.

Thank you for a wonderful first year. Thank you to readers for your positive feedback, advertisers for trusting us to deliver on our promises, and thank you to all the volunteers who have stepped up to make this community service a reality with your writing, your photography, your graphic design skills, your marketing ideas, and your advertising sales experience. Thank you to all the friends and family members who have helped me deliver papers around town, the moral supporters who've picked me up at some low times, and to my husband, who has been supportive from the beginning, and picked up so many day-to-day tasks to allow me time for this whim that's lasted a year. I could not have done any of it without you. Reston is an amazing place to live, work, and play.

Advertising

The Reston Letter Website

Donations



## Going Round and Round in Reston

By Restonian, Reston Blogger

You may have missed it amid the firehose of current events, but we were struck by the recent announcement that a newly arrived Reston business was naming different areas of its office after parts of the Beltway, because what people love most about their work day is the part where they sit in bumper-to-bumper traffic on the "Outer Loop," whatever that is, to get to some midrise office building in time for the "team sync," whatever that is.

But we digress. Why doesn't Reston, a famous planned community, do the same thing, renaming different parts of itself after a famous round highway? After all, would you rather live in a neighborhood with some outdated 1960s name like "Thistle Down Misty

Meadows Parkview Cluster (Reserved Parking Only)" or in a place with a name that gives off vibrant 2020s sounding vibes like, wedunno, "Chevy Chase?" So get your can of spray paint in one of two DRB-approved colors, and get ready to do some renaming!

*Tysons Corner.* A brilliant rebranding of Reston Town Center, especially since we now have more steakhouses and less free parking than that clump of office buildings to the east.

*Old Town Alexandria.* It's essentially Lake Anne, only slightly older and with more functional utilities.

*The Mixing Bowl.* We could mention one of Reston's finer midscale watering holes, but Mrs. Restonian would likely disapprove.

*The 270 Spur.* An array of signs and turns designed

to confuse and irritate drivers? It's gotta be the area around the Wiehle Metro Station.

*Silver Spring.* Any of the tennis courts where people play pickleball.

*HOV lanes.* Also known as "Lexus lanes" for their high tolls, we'd say any of the roads leading out of Reston to "Great" Falls or Loudoun County.

*National Harbor.* Wherever the casino winds up being built, with the nearest stormwater retention pond serving as the "harbor."

We forgot to mention that the aforementioned office has something called the "Blues Cafe," a work area inspired by D.C.'s jazz scene. Of course, when we think of the blues and Reston, the only thing that comes to mind is the DRB, the end.



## Resolutions Don't Have to Start on New Year's

Each year, many people make New Year's resolutions, determined to start a new diet or exercise regimen, commit to sobriety, learn a new skill, show more gratitude, or overcome a multitude of bad habits. By some estimates, as many as 80 percent of people fail to adhere to their New Year's resolutions by February. James Clear, the author of "Atomic Habits" notes that the systems we have in place, or the small, consistent steps we take daily (and not the actual goals), play the most important role in creating change. The first of the year seems like an ideal time to "start fresh" or "reset," and, with these intentions in mind, here are some potential ways to set yourself up for success:

1. Set a realistic plan. No one can overhaul and maintain multiple lofty goals at once. So, no, do not set yourself up to get to the gym, keep your house clean and never yell at your kids, seven days a week for the

next 365 days (or 366 since 2024 is a leap year). Think about what you CAN do and focus on that.

2. Write down your resolution in several places where you look daily, such as a post-it note on your bathroom mirror, inside a cabinet, on your glove compartment or freezer door, to hold yourself accountable.

3. Break down your resolution into smaller pieces. Focusing on one change at a time tends to lead to long-term success. For example, I will express gratitude for my partner once a day or I will choose to eat more fresh vegetables with lunch.

4. Each morning, commit to maintaining the new behavior for 24 hours, as in "TODAY I choose to eat protein three times," or "TODAY I will limit my screen time to one hour in the evening." When you

awake the next day, make the same commitment.

5. Stay the course, even if you were not able to stick to your plan for the day. If you tend to get stuck in all-or-nothing thinking, you might think you have "blown it" with one poor decision and give up. You have not failed if you eat fast food or forget to thank someone on a particular day. "Tomorrow is a new day, and I can begin again" is a useful mantra for your slip-ups and also worth writing down someplace handy.

6. Remember that you can begin a new habit anytime. January 1 or March 3 or Sept. 15 all have 24 hours in them, and you get to decide when it is best for you to start.

OAK HILL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES PLLC

T. 703-214 4924 • F. 703-214-4925

frontdesk@oakhillpsychological.com

drsherwood@oakhillpsychological.com

Visit our website!

www.oakhillpsychologicalservices.com

2579 John Milton Drive, Suite 210, Herndon VA 20171



Wishing everyone a wonderful 2024! Psych'd to see you next year!

Dr. Hayley B. Sherwood is a longtime Clinical Psychologist in Reston/Herndon. To learn more, please visit her website at [www.oakhillpsychological.com](http://www.oakhillpsychological.com).



# LIFESTYLE

## Restaurant Review

### Bombay Velvet at RTC West

By Sarah Golden, Staff Writer

Dark, moody, and delicious are three words that describe Bombay Velvet, Reston's go-to restaurant for progressive Indian cuisine. When my husband and I walked into the restaurant at 7 on a Friday evening, we were surprised to see that it wasn't overly crowded. It seems that Bombay Velvet comes alive around 8 p.m. when the restaurant was bustling with families, friends chatting over a few drinks, and a couple or two sharing a romantic night out.

One of the first things we noticed is that the menu has a lot of choices. They offer popular dishes like Butter Chicken and Tandoori Chicken; traditional and regionally-inspired dishes like Amritsari Macchi, a fried cod dish from the Punjab region, and Biryani. We opted for the Malabar Prawn Curry, a flavorful, creamy shrimp dish, and the Sarso Ka Saag, yummy, simmered mustard leaves best served over a bed of Ghee Rice.

We loved the attention to detail and thoughtfulness clearly put into each dish. This was particularly evident in their Nimish dessert, a cloud-like concoction with a name that means "wealth," because of the time spent preparing it. Bombay Velvet chefs spend hours caramelizing milk and then charging it with nitrogen, resulting in its airy, foam-like

consistency.

Although Bombay Velvet has, without a doubt, a delicious selection of both Western-influenced and traditional dishes, their cocktail menu is a stand-out. I would not describe myself as a "cocktail person." Instead, I often opt for a dry wine. However, with ingredients like chili chutney, tamarind, rose, and chai, I had to give their cocktails a try. They did not disappoint. The Lychee and Rose Petal Martini was light, delicate, and velvety. Those looking for something a little spicier should opt for the Mausam, a complex profile of passionfruit, spices, and pepper. For something dangerously delicious, cocktail aficionados should look no further than the Backwaters. Don't be fooled by the overly-decorated glassware; this drink is not kidding around. It is a grown-up version of a Pina Colada – it has a 401K and everything!

After experiencing Bombay Velvet, I was not surprised to hear that they're expanding to a new location in Columbia Heights. General Manager, Satyam Rai, said Reston was chosen for its first location because it is a good community that offered Bombay Velvet the opportunity to get on the map. This reporter couldn't agree more. I am so grateful to have a new close-to-home date night spot.



Indian food is served in Bombay Velvet's "dark and moody" dining room. Photos by Sarah Golden

## Tips for Staying Healthy During the Holiday Season

By Tiffany Graham, Guest Writer, MPH, RDN, LDN

From family gatherings to New Year's Eve parties, the holiday season is a time of joy and celebration, filled with delicious food and holiday cheer. However, the holidays can be hectic, making it a challenge to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Follow these tips to keep your health on track this holiday season.

### Plan Ahead

Take time to plan your meals to promote healthier choices and reduce the stress associated with last-minute meal decisions. It's easy to eat whatever is convenient when you're busy and short on time. Prepare food ahead of time for quick, nutritious weeknight meals. Have cooked chicken for soups, salads, wraps,

or tacos, frozen vegetables and whole grains for simple side dishes, ready-to-eat raw vegetables and dip, fresh fruit, nuts, and salad greens for quick snacks and meal starters.

### Eat Regular Meals

Don't skip meals or arrive ravenous to holiday parties. Instead, eat a protein and fiber-rich breakfast such as a vegetable omelet, whole grain toast with avocado, or Greek yogurt with nuts and berries. Have a light lunch or snack, depending on the time of your event.

### Choose Wisely

Prioritize nutrient-rich options such as lean proteins, vegetables, and whole grains, and sample a bit of everything



Photos top to bottom: Prawn Curry and Sarso Ka Saag, Amritsari Macchi, Rose Lychee Martini.

else. If you're hosting, offer a variety of healthful choices, such as a vegetable platter with hummus and a charcuterie tray with lean meats, cheeses, and whole grain crackers as appetizers.

### Indulge Mindfully

Allow yourself to enjoy holiday treats, savoring every bite while staying mindful of the balance between indulgence and self-control.

### Stay Hydrated

Don't forget to drink plenty of water

Continued on Page 12

**SYNERGY**  
DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

Your RESTON Remodeler

Kitchens | Basements | Bathrooms | Whole Homes



"I can't recommend them highly enough. They were on time, reliable, excellent communicators and stand by their work."  
- Avery



Woman-Owned  
Women-Lead

Get the personal attention you deserve

RenovateHappy.com  
703-766-6333





# LIFESTYLE

**Continued from Page 11**

throughout the day. Good hydration is essential for staying energized and feeling your best.

**Make Time for Movement**

While it's easy to forgo exercise during the holidays, you'll feel better staying active. Physical activity has numerous benefits, including improved mood, stress reduction, lower blood pressure, and heart health. Research shows that just 10 minutes of walking after meals improves blood sugar control. So, grab a friend or family member and take a walk after meals or whenever you have time.

The holidays are an excellent time to take advantage of Reston's many miles of trails. Walk, jog, or bike through the woods, around the lakes, or to a trailside playground with the kids. Fit in some strength training – try push-ups, pull-ups, or step-ups at home or on one of the many playgrounds or benches along the trails.

**Prioritize Sleep**

With the holiday hustle and bustle, it's easy to neglect sleep. However, getting enough rest is crucial. Lack of sleep can increase hunger and cravings, making it more difficult to resist all those holiday cookies. Over time, poor sleep can wreak more havoc, decreasing immunity, raising blood sugar and blood pressure, and increasing the risk of diabetes and heart disease. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep a night to stay alert and make healthier daily choices.

**Manage stress**

Managing stress can be challenging but crucial for a joyful season. Be sure to plan ahead to reduce the last-minute rush and set realistic expectations about what you can accomplish each day. Take time for activities you enjoy, whether with friends, exercising, or quiet time at home. Also, remember it's okay to say no – you may not have time to fit everything in. Focus on gratitude and the true holiday spirit for calm and perspective amidst the chaos.

By following these tips, you can enjoy the festivities without guilt and start the new year feeling your best. Savor the delicious flavors of the holidays while caring for your body and mind – it's the best gift you can give yourself!

*Tiffany Graham is a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist with a Master of Public Health in Nutrition. She is the Vice President of Research and Education at Theralogix.*

**Keeping Reston Green**

## Carbon Monoxide Home Hazards

**Reston Environmental Advisory Committee**

The winter home heating season brings risks of carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is an odorless gas that is a result of incomplete combustion. It replaces oxygen in the blood. In high enough doses, it will cause death within minutes.

This is why it is important to have fireplaces and furnaces maintained for efficiency and proper ventilation. Installing a functioning carbon monoxide detector with alarm in appropriate places can alert you to such dangers.

The danger is significant. According to the CDC, more than 400 people die annually in the United States from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning. More than 100,000 people visit the emergency room from accidental poisoning.

The first symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can include mild headache and breathlessness. People with chronic heart disease, anemia, and respiratory problems can be more susceptible to poisoning. In addition, carbon monoxide exposure and poisoning can be very dangerous for unborn children, increasing the risks of developmental disorders and fetal death.

Carbon monoxide is slightly lighter than air, but not enough to rise to the top of a room. Rather it disperses itself, evenly mixing with the air. This is be-

### CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING



**CAN'T BE SEEN    CAN'T BE SMELLED    CAN'T BE HEARD    CAN BE STOPPED**

The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention posts a Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Fact Sheet on their website

cause the difference in density between air and carbon monoxide is minimal.

Some people mistakenly think carbon monoxide is heavier than air. However, it is carbon dioxide that is heavier than air. Hence, there is a myth that carbon monoxide alarms should be installed lower on the wall. Instead, take the time to read the detector's instructions for placement as specified in those instructions.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), the Consumer Product Safety Commission, and most building codes recommend one detector on each

floor level and within 10 feet of each bedroom. The IAFC also suggests a detector near or over every attached garage. The EPA recommends that detectors be placed on a wall five feet above the floor or at eye level. It is generally recommended to replace detectors every five to seven years.

Be mindful of other places carbon monoxide can accumulate, such in a closed garage with an automobile engine running. Never run a generator in an enclosed room without proper ventilation. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, call 911.

**EXTRA! EXTRA!**

THE RESTON LETTER IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE ON ITS

**1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary**

2,000 MORE RESTON HOUSEHOLDS WILL BEGIN RECEIVING COPIES OF THE NEWSPAPER IN THEIR MAILBOXES IN JANUARY 2024!

**COMPASS**

**YOUR HOME TOWN RESTON REALTORS FOR 20+ YEARS**

Debbie Anguizola 571-438-7035  
Marnie Schaar 703-509-3107

11943 Democracy Dr. Reston, VA 20190  
o 703-783-7485

[www.marnieschaar.com](http://www.marnieschaar.com)

**THE RESTON HOUSING ROUNDUP**

**\$589,000**  
Median Sales Price  
in November 2023

8 Days  
Median Days on Market  
in November 2023

100.7%  
Median Sales Price / Original List Price  
in November 2023

Compiled by Casey Menish, Realtor with Pearson Smith Realty  
Data Accessed on December 1, 2023

7  
Coming Soon Listings

51  
Active Listings

53  
Pending Listings

Nov 2023 vs Nov 2022

**+10%**  
Median Sales Price  
\$535,000 in November 2022

**-6**  
Median Days on Market  
14 Days in November 2022

**+0.7%**  
Median Sales Price / Original List Price  
100% in November 2022

**Ruddy Rudolph?**

R	P	M	S		S	L	R
Y	E	O	W		W	E	E
E	D	A			E	O	N
		I	N	D	E	X	
		I	F	N	O	T	
P	S	I			O	S	L
E	E				R	U	E
R	E	S			S	E	E

© RedHand Assocs.