



PHOTOS BY MIRZA KURSPAHC/THE CONNECTION



The dancers of the GottaSwing dance school, which has locations in Herndon at the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport and in Reston at the Reston Sport and Health Club.



PHOTO BY MIRZA KURSPAHC/THE CONNECTION

Some residents believe the stream restoration comes at too steep a price for the trees being cut down for the work to be completed.

## The Good, The Bad & The Ugly

Restonians weigh in with opposing views on \$70 million stream restoration project.

BY MIRZA KURSPAHC  
THE CONNECTION

David Oliver has lived in his house on Old Trail Drive for nearly 40 years, all along enamored by the neighborhood's natural surroundings. Oliver put his home on the market for sale on Halloween, attributing the decision to the tree loss in his backyard, a result of the stream restoration project.

"It was beautiful to look at, it was beautiful to walk," Oliver said about his backyard prior to stream restoration work on Snakeden Branch. "What they did is ecological barbarism," he said following a Nov. 5 meeting about a walkway on Soapstone Drive.

Nineteen days later, on Monday, Nov. 24, a group of more than 60 Reston residents, gathered to discuss the merits of the stream restoration work. Not all of the residents gathered opposed the project, but those who did were concerned about the tree loss, which they believe to be excessive, that has resulted from the work. "I moved to Hunters Woods, I did not move to Hunters Streams," Ron Oklewicz, a resident of Triple

Reston's founder Robert E. Simon featured in the two-hour-long parade Friday, Nov. 28.

## Dancing In the Holidays

Civic organizations, youth clubs and businesses from throughout Northern Virginia paraded down Reston Town Center's Market Street Friday morning, Nov. 28, in the 18th Annual Reston Holiday Parade. Some of Reston's favorite entertainers and organizations — the South Lakes Marching Band, the Langston Hughes cheerleaders and Herndon-Reston FISH amongst them — took part in the two-hour-long parade.

Macy's-style balloons also paraded down Market Street as did The Hogettes — male Washington Redskins fans who wear women's clothing — and area Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts groups. Santa and Mrs. Claus made their way down the street in a horse-drawn carriage to bring the parade to an end.



Santa and Mrs. Claus enter Market Street via horse-drawn carriage at the conclusion of the 18th annual Reston Holiday Parade.



Pat Macintyre was the parade's grand marshal.

— MIRZA KURSPAHC



## NEWS

# Stream Restoration Debated

FROM PAGE 3

Crown Road, said. "Reston is the city of trees."

"It's not a restoration, it's a destroying project," Al Rider said. "They have taken one of the few pristine areas in this region and they are going to destroy it."

"We moved here for the woods," Abby Grissinger said. "Nobody has the right, they may have the authority, but nobody has the right to take away my backyard."

**"WE HAVE** a responsibility to everyone down the stream from us," said George Paine, a resident of Alsop Court, who defended the project. "To restore you have to start from scratch." He warned those gathered that they risk looking like NIMBYs (Not In My Backyard) to the rest of the Reston community.

The restoration work behind the Paines' house was recently completed and they did lose trees in their viewshed. However, Linda Paine, George Paine's wife, said the tree loss was necessary as the stream had cut away the root system "really badly." She said the

erosion had exposed sewer pipes and that the residents of her cluster agreed that some trees had to be sacrificed to "care for our neighbors down the stream." Linda Paine added that the project managers from Wetland Studies and Solutions Inc. (WSSI) and Reston Association (RA) staff had made themselves available to answer the Paines' and other neighbors' concerns.

Oklewicz said he is not against the restoration project, but against the way it is being conducted in parts of the area. "I want stream restoration, but I don't want it at a price of everything," he said.

Alfred Kromholz, another project opponent, warned of the health risks associated with standing water resulting from pools in the streambed designed to slow down the water rushing through the streams and causing erosion. "To what extent will Reston Association be held liable for health problems?" Kromholz asked.

**"WE THINK DEVELOPERS** are getting a hall pass in this," Oklewicz said of the project, adding that developers had not in-

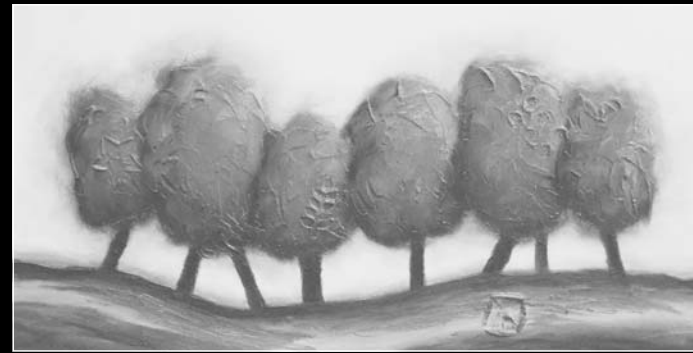
stalled proper storm drains while building up Reston. He questioned the financial agreements that make the \$70 million stream restoration project possible. The funding is secured through a mitigation bank created for Reston.

WSSI sells mitigation credits to developers who cannot offset the natural impact in their areas of operation, for example the fourth runway at Dulles Airport or the High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes on the Capitol Beltway bought credits in Reston's Stream Mitigation Bank. The money from the credits is then used in the restoration project. Under the formula, Reston residents are not paying for the restoration work, most of which is planned on RA property. In addition to the \$70 million first phase of the project, Restonians are benefiting from direct contributions from the bank, including \$400,000 donated to RA and \$650,000 donated to the Friends of

Reston. "Money can't just go out to private firms," Oklewicz said. "It has to come in to some sort of a general

SEE RESPONDING, PAGE 19

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at Sunrise of Reston Town Center

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# HOLIDAY EVENTS

## ONGOING EVENTS

**Holiday mini-book sale, Dec. 3-8.** Friends of the Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. 703-689-2700.

**Holiday concert,** the Herndon High School and Herndon Middle School Orchestras will perform a holiday concert Wednesday, **Dec. 3**, in the Herndon High School auditorium at 7 p.m. Free; all are welcome. Visit [www.herndonorch.org](http://www.herndonorch.org).

On Thursday, **Dec. 4**, from 5-7 p.m., at the Hiddenbrook Clubhouse, 1508A Saddlers Wells, Herndon, **holiday shop** that will benefit a needy family takes place. This family just lost the father to brain cancer and is now losing their home to foreclosure. A portion of all sales will go directly to the family, as well as the proceeds from the raffles. For more information or to donate a raffle item, contact Marybeth Henry at 703-766-0294 or [mbbeauty@cox.net](mailto:mbbeauty@cox.net).

Saturday, **Dec 6.**, **holiday craft fair** and secret shop, at Fox Mill Elementary School, 2601 Viking Drive Herndon, from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free admission, open to the public.

The **Holiday Homes Tour of Herndon** will take place Saturday, **Dec. 6**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tickets on sale at the Herndon Dulles Visitor's Center and the Herndon Florist both located on Lynn Street. \$10/advance; \$15/day of. Home locations: Quail Hollow, 761 Dranesville Road; 866 Vine St.; Merrybrook, 2346 Centreville Road; 630 Nash St.; 835 Elden St.

**Traditional Christmas carols** and other live music will be performed at the Washington Plaza Church, 1615 Washington Plaza, Reston, Saturday, **Dec. 6**, 8 p.m., in the church sanctuary. Visit [www.washingtonplazachurch.com](http://www.washingtonplazachurch.com).

**Holiday celebration**, Lake Anne is celebrating the holidays with a petting zoo, entertainment, ornament making and a visit from Santa at Lake Anne Village Center in Reston. **Dec. 6**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Visit [lakeanneplaza.com](http://lakeanneplaza.com) for details.

The Herndon Chamber of Commerce stages its **annual holiday celebration** featuring the lighting of Herndon's Christmas tree, Herndon High band leading a in a carol sing-along, holiday music for the children and Santa Claus comes to town with presents for the little ones. The event takes place Saturday, **Dec. 6**, 5-6 p.m., on the lawn of the Old Town Hall Square, 730 Elden St., Herndon.

A **seasonal celebration**, the Reston Chorale will perform **Dec. 6**, at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m., at the Reston Community Center. \$20 adults, \$15 seniors and youth. Visit [www.restonchorale.org](http://www.restonchorale.org).

**Horse-drawn carriage rides**, Saturdays, **Dec. 6, 13, and 20**, at Reston Town Center, from 12-4 p.m., to benefit local charities.

**Holiday Book Drive.** Barnes & Noble, Spectrum Center, 1851 Fountain Drive, Reston, is supporting The Embry Rucker Community Shelter with a display and suggestions for those wanting to make a purchase and add to the boxes of gifts. The shelter asks that all gifts be new and unwrapped to make it easier for them to match the gift and recipient.

**Holiday Performances.** Community groups will present music and dance performances at Fountain Square, Reston Town Center. Schedule on [www.restontowncenter.com](http://www.restontowncenter.com).

The **Bargain Loft Holiday Shop**, 336 Victory Drive, Herndon, is open for business **through Dec. 24**. Store open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.; Thursdays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. All proceeds go to Herndon-Reston FISH Inc. to help people with emergency needs. Visit [www.herndonrestonfish.org](http://www.herndonrestonfish.org).

**Visit Santa.** Visit Santa and take photos with him next to M&S Grill on Democracy Street at the Reston Town Center, **through 24**, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

**Holiday luncheon**, an event for the family includes lunch and a reading of Christmas stories at Jasmine Café at Lake Anne Village Center, 1609 Washington Plaza, **Dec. 6**, at 2 p.m. Call 703-471-9114.

**Light Up Lake Anne.** See the lakefront, plaza and a flotilla of boats lit up for the holidays and watch the Christmas tree lighting at Lake Anne Village Center, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston, **Dec. 6**, 6-6:30 p.m.

Spirit of Giving open house at **JJDeli**, located inside the Herndon Centennial Golf Course, Sunday, **Dec. 7**, 1 p.m., to help the soldiers at Walter Reed & Fisher House

Collection items being sought include hoodies, sweatshirts, T-shirts, boxers, winter hats and gloves, sweatpants, men and women pajamas, deodorant, Walmart and Target gift cards or monetary donations to Fisher House. Children can decorate an ornament and meet Santa. Collecting takes place through Dec 14.

**Congregation Beth Emeth**, 12523 Lawyers Road, Herndon, is holding a Sisterhood Chanukah Boutique, Sundays, **Dec. 7 and 14**, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Gifts, candies, candles, toys and more will be available. Call 703-860-4515.

**Holiday Decorating.** This workshop, part of the Reston Town Center's Pottery Barn Series, will be held **Dec. 7**, at 10 a.m. RSVP to 703-437-6001.

# Responding to Citizens' Concerns

FROM PAGE 5

fund and then be appropriated out to them by an act of a board.

“Reston Association, I don't believe, has been completely transparent about this.”

**THE FIRST PHASE** of the stream restoration project will also complete 40 new pathway bridges, estimated to cost about \$3 million, according to Larry Butler, RA director of parks and recreation. Butler presented the project to the Reston Citizens Association board at the same time the 60-plus residents were meeting to have their own discussion. Butler said the stream restoration project was implemented because of bad degradation of Reston's streams, which then affected, among other things, Reston's lakes. In the past 10 years, he said, RA has spent nearly \$1 million dredging the lakes and most of the sediment removed came from

the degraded streams. “The stream restoration project is very popular in the community, amongst most folks,” Butler said.

Ken Andrews, a former member of RA's Environmental Advisory Committee, said the stream restoration project has been in the works for years and came in response to citizen concerns. “It is entirely a member-initiated project,” Andrews said.

In 2002 RA published the Reston Watershed Management Plan. Since then a series of steps were taken for the mitigation bank to be located and approved in Reston. The Reston Design Review Board, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality and Fairfax County all approved the construction plans. The groundbreaking took place in February 2008.

For more information on the stream restoration project, visit <http://reston.wetlandstudies.com>.