

# Christmas Trees Cut Only for Taxes

BY KEN MOORE  
THE CONNECTION

**D**ranesville Planning Commissioner John Ulfelder described the enjoyment a 22.13-acre contiguous parcel of land at 910 Utterback Store Road gives Great Falls.

“For many years, Great Falls residents have found just the right tree for Christmas, fresh vegetables and eggs for their table, and pumpkins for Halloween at Krop’s Farm,” said Ulfelder.

When he said, “It’s fun for everyone, along with the fresh produce and the reminder of a slower-paced time in Fairfax County,” Ulfelder drew a smile from Lee District Planning Commissioner James Migliaccio.

Fairfax County offers reduced real estate tax assessments in exchange for “a commitment to preserve significant tracts of agricultural and forested land a commitment to preserve the land for the length of the term.”

Lawrence Krop applied for the Krop Local Agricultural and Forestal District to renew its A&F District status for another eight years. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the application with an unanimous vote on Thursday, Sept. 29.

“The property owner is to be commended for the dedication to the ongoing stewardship of this prop-

erty,” said Michael Lynskey, with the Fairfax County Department of Planning and Zoning.

The property is located in Great Falls at the intersection of Georgetown Pike and Utterback Store Road, not far from Route 7.

The property, comprising five contiguous parcels, was established in 1999. The Krops grow Christmas trees, corn, tomatoes, potatoes, squash, beans, peppers, cucumbers and pumpkins, according to planning commission documents.

Part of the property was used as a large dairy farm until 1977 when the applicant acquired the property and began growing Christmas trees for its seasonal “cut-your-own Christmas tree” operation. “Fields of Canaan Fir, Douglas Fir and Blue Spruce are maintained, harvested and replanted,” according to the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Krops also sell produce and eggs from the property at a roadside farm stand.

As promised, Krop has not substantially altered the property since the creation of the district in July 1999; Lawrence Krop renewed his status in 2008.

Five acres of the site are in agricultural use, 15 acres remain forested or in Christmas tree production and two acres are devoted to the owner’s residence.

The Board of Supervisors is scheduled to hear the request on Oct. 18, at 3:30 p.m.



KEN MOORE/THE CONNECTION

**Great Falls residents pick pumpkins, Christmas trees, fresh vegetables and eggs, and even go for hay-rides at Krop’s Farm off Utterback Store Road. Here, youth enjoy a hay-ride around the Krop property Sunday, Oct. 16.**

## Planning Ahead

**OCT. 19, 2016, 8:15 P.M.**

Decision only: The Gulick Group has applied to rezone the 11-acre property at the “terminus of Challedon Road” from R-A to R-1 in order to permit development of a 10-lot cluster single family subdivision at a density of 0.91 dwelling units per acre. The 11-acre parcel is currently undeveloped, forested, and composed of moderate slopes that steepen towards the Piney Run floodplain.

The property is part of Lexington Estates.

Fairfax County Planning staff have recommended approval of the redevelopment. Planning Commissioner John Ulfelder deferred a decision only hearing on the application from September to Oct. 19, 2016.

# Brightview Great Falls, Madeira School Partner for Off-Campus Internships

**B**rightview Great Falls, a popular senior living community in Great Falls, is partnering with The Madeira School, an all-girls day and boarding school in McLean.

Volunteers from the tenth grade will experience a variety of roles and job responsibilities at the community during the fall and spring semesters in what is known at Madeira as Sophomore Co-Curriculum.

The off-campus internship experience connects students to their local community and to the concepts of social responsibility and civic engagement.

“A pillar of Madeira’s founding was the notion of Service,” said Kerin Hamel, Director of Co-Curriculum. “We find that students acquire valuable knowledge about and empathy for underserved populations/issues when immersed in that social situation. As a device for learning, it is of the utmost importance. Young women in particular have innate empathy that makes them good stewards of the community.”

“The benefit of having partners such as Brightview is that they help supplement the natural willingness with context [and] real-life experiences for understanding and growth.”

In groups of 5 to 14, the students volunteer at area schools, various nonprofits, and local government organizations. The Co-Curriculum Fall semester runs each day from Oct. 11 – Nov. 10.

Brightview Senior Living’s President Marilyn Duker will host a meet and greet



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**Student interns dance at Dancing Queens Group.**

for the six Brightview interns on Oct. 25. The community will also host other guest speakers including Buckley Fricker, local author and owner of Buckley’s for Seniors.

“This program allowed me to experience a professional environment apart from my family and friends,” noted Carolyn Pennington, Community Sales Director and Madeira Alumna. “Learning something en-

tirely new was intimidating but realizing I could develop ideas and strengths through participating was empowering.”

“I am thrilled that Brightview can offer these girls the same opportunity.”

Other sites for Co-Curriculum include Special Olympics, Garfield Elementary School, The Kilmer Center, Calleva Farms, NOVA Family Service (a Head Start Center)



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and Claude Moore Colonial Farm.

Brightview Senior Living and its parent company, The Shelter Group, successfully create and manage innovative, award-winning senior living communities in the mid-Atlantic to New England region. For more information on Brightview Senior Living, visit [www.brightviewseniorliving.com](http://www.brightviewseniorliving.com)