

December 28, 1991

SATURDAY

Sales are brisk

Post-Christmas business on Thursday and Friday was almost as good as the two days before Christmas, according to area retailers. Store managers reported twice as many shoppers as expected. **A6**

Dog bites Mann

Mayor Karen Vialle's terrier Midget didn't like the looks of the man who tried to put arms around the mayor. So dog bit Mann. Police Officer Mark Mann, that is. Mann, a member of the Tacoma, Wash., police force, was doing nothing more than trying to receive a Christmas hug. "The dog though he was trying to hurt me," Vialle said. "It wasn't any biggie. I was mad at the dog and told him to knock it off."

Clinton the favorite

Nearly half of the local Democratic chairmen in Virginia support Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton for president over their home-state candidate, Gov. L. Douglas Wilder. A survey released Friday revealed that 46 percent of the 88 chairmen favor Clinton for the Democratic nomination for president, while only 24 percent favor Wilder. One chairman said he supported Wilder "only because he's the homey." **A6**

NAMES IN THE NEWS

► Manassas Museum Specialist **Laura Peake** and Museum Technician **Dave Purschwitz** bring history alive in area classrooms. **A2**

► Columnist **Lewis Grizzard**

In the parks

Playschool program for youngsters begins soon

The Prince William County Park Authority Playschool program is designed to develop and provide group experiences for children ages 3, 4, and 5. Through socialization, play, music, games, stories, crafts, and field trips, children can learn yet have fun in a relaxed but planned program.

Playschool sessions begin Jan. 6 for Monday-Wednesday-Friday and Jan. 7 for Tuesday-Thursday and end the week of June 8.

Fees include program supplies, equipment and snacks each day. Field trip costs are not included in the monthly fee.

Registration is accepted monthly for new registrants. When programs meet capacity, a waiting list is established. Monthly fees must be paid in advance and are due by the 15th of each month.

Children must meet age requirements by Sept. 30. Birth certificates for all children must be shown at registration. Children must also be potty trained.

Classes are three hours each and take place either Tuesday and Thursday for three-year-olds or Monday, Wednesday and Friday for ages 4 to 5.

Classes at the Ben Lomond Community Center begin at 9 a.m. for both sessions; classes at Birchdale Recreation center begin at 9 a.m. for both sessions; and classes at the Chinn Center are at either 9 a.m. or 1 p.m. for both sessions.

Cost is \$62 for three-year-olds and \$90 for 4 and 5-year-olds.

For information call each center: Ben Lomond, 361-7126; Birchdale, 670-9118; Chinn, 791-2338.

Learn cross-country ski techniques at free workshop

The Fairfax County Park Authority is sponsoring a cross-country ski workshop at Cabell's Mill in Ellanor C. Lawrence C. Park in Centreville, Jan. 5 from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Reservations are required for this free program. The workshop includes tips on how to choose equipment, clothing and accessories; where to go skiing and how to have a safe and en-

Brentsville

By GREGORY TRIPLET

Brentsville Schoolhouse, with its trim, white, weatherboard exterior, was known as the White House when it was built in 1822.

Now owned and used for storage by the Prince William County Park Authority, the White House also has served as a private residence, a schoolhouse and a meeting room.

Places

The three-acre site of Brentsville Historic Recreation Area at 12249 Bristow Road was designated as the public square when Brentsville was established as the fourth Prince William County seat in 1822.

A courthouse and jail were built on the property between 1820 and 1822. During those years, Jane Dawe Williams, the widow of John Williams, Esquire, who served as county clerk from 1795 until his death in 1813, built the White House on the same property.

The building was intended to be used as a residence and clerk's office.

Philip Devereaux Dawe, brother of Jane Williams, qualified as clerk for his sister until his death in 1832.

The White House was originally constructed by Jane Williams using bricks brought from England, then hauled 18 miles from Dumfries.

The one-room building had a brick foundation, plaster-covered brick walls and a metal-covered gable roof. Brick window openings were flat-arched.

The building's present exterior is weatherboard with a pressed tin roof.

"The courthouse, clerk's office, and jail are handsomely situated on the main street in a public square of three acres. ... There is in the vicinity a common school in which the rudiments of English education are taught," wrote Joseph Martin in the *Gazetteer* in 1835.

After the Civil War, the White House became a girls' school. An academy was opened in the White House by Ezra Bauder in 1879. Bauder taught there for several years.

In an 1893 election, the people voted to relocate the county courthouse and

Schoolhouse offers history lesson



Brentsville Schoolhouse is one of the rare one-room school structures still standing in Prince William County.

jail to Manassas, a more central location since the railroad ran through town.

The courthouse building was used as a school beginning in 1893. Two teachers taught grades one through seven.

About 1910, the White House began to be used as Brentsville Schoolhouse.

Many one-room schoolhouses in Prince William County operated until the early 1930s when district or central schools came into favor.

Brentsville Historic Recreation Area, which includes the renovated courthouse, jail house, refined schoolhouse, picnic area, soccer field and unstructured softball-baseball field, opened to the public in October 1975.

Brentsville Schoolhouse was repainted and fluorescent lights were installed. The floor was stripped, sanded and revarnished by Richard Metz, Prince William County Parks and Recreation Center director at the time,

and another recreation employee, Reese Hoffman.

The one-room former schoolhouse was then used as a meeting place.

A traditional Arbor Day ceremony, of planting trees to replace trees that have come down, is tentatively planned for April, Park Authority Landscape Manager Dave Katz said.

The remains of big sycamore trees, more than 100 years old, have been removed and new sycamores may be planted.