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Purcellville Plan: Build A Roundabout ... Then Destroy It

– Plans Show Roundabout Will Be Built Then Razed And Replaced At a Later Date –

– By Valerie Joyner

Yes, that's the plan for the Southern Collector roundabout – build it, destroy it and then rebuild it at taxpayer expense ninety-four feet west of the original location. As seen in the Town of Purcellville's drawing on this page, which will be given out at the mandatory Southern Collector Road (SCR) pre-bidders conference on February 7, 2012 at the Town Hall, the original roundabout, which is currently being constructed by the developer of the Purcellville Gateway Project, is located below (east of) the final roundabout. The original roundabout will be proffered (at no charge to the Town) while the second one will be built with taxpayer money.

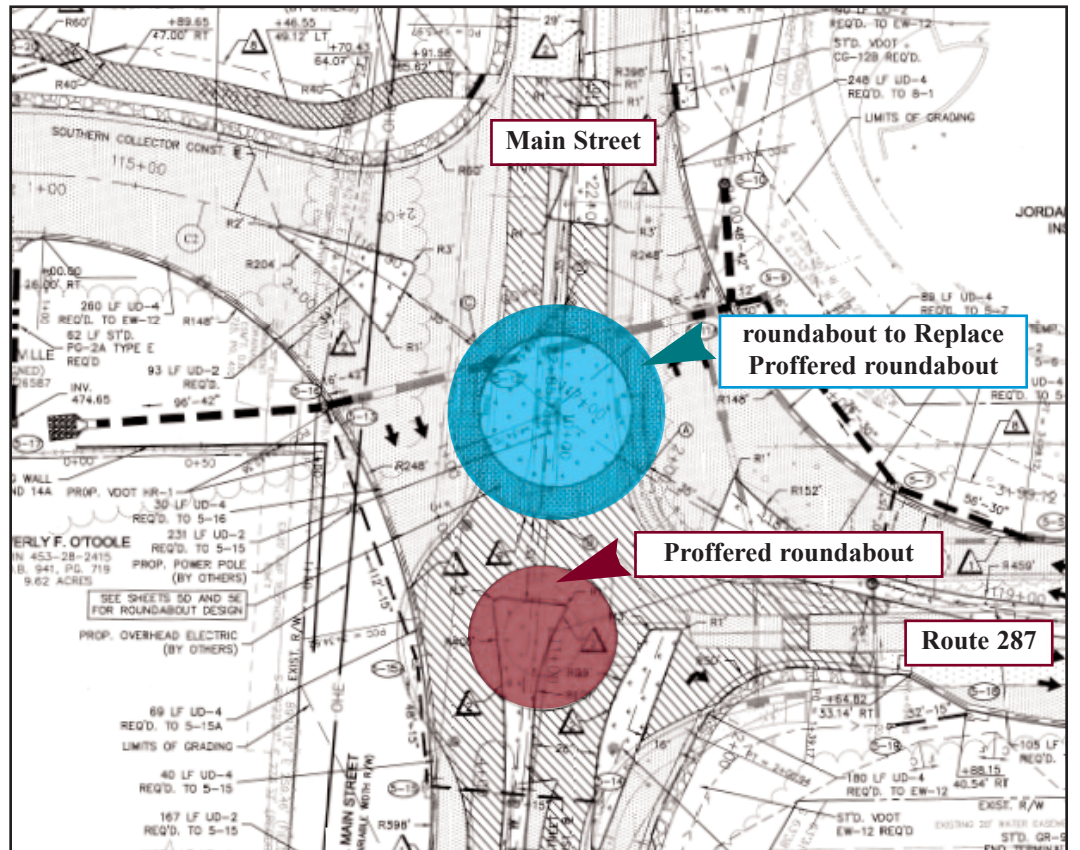
Not only will the original roundabout be demolished, but much of the concrete and asphalt road work being constructed will be modified and/or demolished. The invitation for bid puts it mildly by saying "The project also includes the reconstruction and widening of a roundabout at the intersection of East Main Street and Berlin Turnpike. ..." The drawing clearly shows that the original roundabout has to

"The drawing clearly shows that the original roundabout has to be completely demolished, resized and moved in the final plan."

be completely demolished, resized and moved in the final plan. The work also extends across Main Street into the Gateway Project with lane widening, median demolition and reconstruction.

So why is this happening? Perhaps some insight into the problem comes from a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) email dated May 25, 2011. In the email a VDOT official discusses the two roundabout situations with another VDOT official ... "The developer has a proffer to construct a single lane roundabout at the existing intersection. The way the proffer is written it must be construction and can not be money paid to the Town." "... Issue The Town believes that the developer is close to being ready to construct the one lane roundabout at the existing intersection.

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Wild Loudoun



Winter Weather Ways – Part 1

Winter Weather Ways will be presented in two parts – Part 1 this month and Part Two in March. Reprinted with permission of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy.

The human animal usually spends the winter in a home with some sort of heating; they put on extra layers of clothing and

heavy coats for added warmth when they go outside. When the need for food grips them, they go to the grocer's store. But what about the wild animals that live around us? The biggest problem for most animals in the winter is finding enough food. Wild animals

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McDonnell Asks General Assembly to Keep Uranium Mining Moratorium in Place

– Issues Directive to State Agencies to Analyze Scientific and Legal Issues and Report Back Prior to 2013

RICHMOND – Governor Bob McDonnell is asking the General Assembly to take no action to permit uranium mining during its 2012 session, calling instead for the continuation of the state's moratorium on uranium mining pending a comprehensive and on-site study of the issue to be completed by a newly-created multi-agency state workgroup. The Governor's directive that the state work group look further into the specific issues surrounding mining at a

particular site in the Commonwealth follows a thorough review by the McDonnell Administration of the recent National Academy of Sciences report that looked broadly at uranium mining in Virginia. The report noted, "At present, there are gaps in legal and regulatory coverage for activities involved in uranium mining, processing, reclamation and long-term stewardship. Some of these gaps have resulted from the

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School Budget Cuts Subject of Public Hearing

– Citizens Speak Out Against Closing Small Western Schools and Bus Driver Benefits Cuts

The Loudoun County School Board room was packed with Loudoun County Public School (LCPS) employees and residents who spoke during the public comments on January 31, 2011. Many of the more than eighty citizens and employees who signed up to speak were concerned with the proposed budget

cuts that would, among other things, affect part-time employees. Still others were concerned about the possibility that budget cuts would force the closing of western Loudoun County's four small public schools – in Aldie, Middleburg, Hillsboro and Lincoln.

Many full-time and part-time employees

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Ask Dr. Mike

Dr. Mike, My neighbor and I commute to the DC area for work. He feels that it is perfectly fine to illegally use the airport lane on the Dulles toll road to speed up his commute. I, on the other hand, am honest and my commute time is always so much longer than his. I want to tell him how I feel, but I don't think he will get it. I see him almost every morning when we leave for work, and it drives me crazy knowing what he is getting away with.
– O. in Loudoun County

O., You choose to live your life by a moral code that your neighbor does not follow to your liking. The bottom line is, however, that you are going to come across people in life that do not live up to your same moral standards or code. So, while it is true that your neighbor is wrong to break the law on a daily basis, the real point here is that it is not your business or responsibility to convert him to your perspective. I am sure that it burns you up sitting there bumper to bumper in traffic while imagining your neighbor breezing right by you. I think you should worry less about the behaviors of others, and instead take comfort in the fact that you are living your life the way you want.

Dr. Mike, I decided to donate my hair to Locks of Love. My husband is very much against my decision and wants me to keep my hair long. I have lost people in my



family to cancer, and I think this is something that I can be proud of on a personal level, and I can always grow it back. Any advice on how to handle my husband?
– H in Loudoun County

H., If donating your hair is important to you, you need to make sure your husband understands the satisfaction it will bring you. I admire that you are putting your vanity aside to help other people, and I think if you explain the importance of your decision to your husband, he would hopefully be more supportive. Ultimately it is your hair and your decision. Only you can know if the strife between you and your husband is worth the personal satisfaction you will gain.

Dr. Mike, I have been as patient as I can, but my husband's dedication to football is really wearing on me. It has gotten to the point where I can't count on him to do anything with me or the kids on the weekend. All of the household chores are dumped on me, while he's watching

games. While he is the main breadwinner of our family and works very long hours during the week, I don't think that means I am everyone's maid and servant on Saturday and Sunday. Help!
– L, in Loudoun County

L, Things do seem rather unfair given the way you have described them. Of course, your husband likely has a different perspective. As the main breadwinner, perhaps he feels entitled to do less over the weekend since he contributes so much during the week. Perhaps football is very important to him, and he feels you do not respect that. Your problem then is not about who is right or wrong but rather how to communicate better as a couple around important areas of need. I think you should approach your husband with how you feel about things – that you feel overwhelmed, that you would really appreciate his help, that it is important for you and the kids to spend time with him over the weekend, etc. I would stay away from arguing points of fact on how unfair the distribution of labor has become in the house due to his interest in football, as that will likely only lead to his taking a defensive position to argue things from his perspective. Instead, I would acknowledge that sports are important to him and that you will try better to respect his TV time. That respecting the time he spends viewing football on TV would become easier for you, if you felt respected with his increased involvement. I would then discuss your weekend expectations of one another in advance to pre-

pare and compromise where needed as a couple. In any event, football season is almost over and hopefully through improved communication you will have laid the foundation for a more satisfying arrangement next year.

Dr. Mike, I am a mother of a 14 year old boy. China King in Historic Leesburg is our special place for family dinner night out, and we recently celebrated my son's birthday there. We hadn't been to China King in quite some time, and my husband and I were shocked to see that a lingerie store opened near the restaurant. We were especially offended by the very visual store front, which displays several mannequins draped in sexy lingerie. I don't mean to sound like a prude, and I understand that they have a right to run their business, but do they have to be so graphic in a family focused town. Needless to say, we walked around the block to avoid exposing our teenage son to that garbage again after our dinner.
– T. in Loudoun County

T., While I appreciate your concerns as parents, Le Tache Couple's Boutique indeed does have every right to run its business the way it chooses, which appears to include displaying sexily dressed mannequins in their store front windows. Your strong, negative reaction to their store is interesting. Perhaps it is simply because you are conservative about sexuality. Another possibility is that their in your face marketing approach of sex really upset you as a mother. Walking by the store with

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Purcellville's Multi-Million Dollar Vote for Less Transparency

Should residents of Purcellville enjoy the rights to transparency and open government in the Code of Virginia? This paper says, YES.

For over one year now, there has been a movement, initiated by local resident and businesses owner Kelli Grim to request that Purcellville's Mayor and Town Council adopt what many localities, including Loudoun County have in place with respect to "Real Parties of Interest Disclosure."

These provisions require that the public have access to information detailing the individuals and/or companies who own or have an interest in, or are working on, the development of properties that are the subject of local government zoning decisions and actions. Real Parties of Interest Disclosure requirements are crucial, shining a light on potential conflicts of interest and giving the public confidence that decisions are made fairly, equitably and always in the public good.

Despite the urgency of the matter, Purcellville's powers that be, starting with the Mayor and Town Council have prevented Real Parties of Interest to be enacted as the law of the land right here, kicking the issue over to the Purcellville Business and Professional Association (PBPA) which has conveniently said, "NO" as well.

In early December (after a delay of over a year) the following letter was submitted to the Mayor and Town Council by the PBPA – kicking the can down the road, yet again.

"Dear Mayor Lazaro,

The Board of Directors of the PBPA recommends that the Town Council not

require applicants to provide a "disclosure of Real Parties in [sic] Interest" when asking for a special exception, special use permit, variance, or rezoning amendment.

Last summer, the Town Council through discussions in a subcommittee meeting and subsequent email from Town Councilman Tom Priscilla, asked the PBPA to comment on a proposal that had been presented to them to adopt a requirement that applicants for legislative approval of land use proposals publicly identify all real parties of interest in that proposal. The PBPA board solicited comment from all its members, and discussed the issue at one meeting open to the entire membership. Membership response was underwhelming. One email response was received. Only one general member appeared at the Board meeting and participated in the discussion. Our recommendation reflects the sense of the Board of Directors with consideration as follows:

1. Ownership should not be a consideration in determining land use matters: Ownership and parties of interest are not pertinent. They are not among the enumerated matters to be considered in drawing and applying zoning ordinances and districts set for in the code of Virginia. Decisions based on owners, whether favorable or unfavorable, may be subject to claims of unlawful discrimination. If it were practical, it would be more justifiable to require the applicants remain anonymous.
2. The purpose of such disclosures appears to be to combat corruption. This concern is already addressed more directly through extensive disclosures required of public officials, including

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View From the Ridge – by Andrea Gaines

Long Live Roadside Clutter!

After the Board of Supervisor's first month in office we speculate on what Loudoun has in store for the next four years – given the poorly reasoned Board decisions at its first and second business meetings. Without a change of course we see a disturbing pattern of narrow, partisan perspectives at work within our Board that won't benefit Loudoun.

Sadly predictable, but strangely counter to the Board's announced budget priorities, was its decision to eliminate Loudoun's Volunteer Sign Removal Program, which keeps road clutter at a minimum by removing signs from the VDOT right-of-way. (All but one member of the public strongly urged that the Board continue this highly successful, essentially cost-free program under which volunteers have removed tons of illegal signs along Loudoun's roadways.)

The Board voted to terminate the program (which only Supervisor Williams opposed) and replace it with an unfunded mandate for County staff to remove illegal signs, once a week, ignoring the desire of the County program manager to maintain it. The Board reached its decision without the cost-benefit analysis expected from an allegedly fiscally prudent body, resting its decision on:

- Unsupported speculation that the County might be liable for actions by the volunteers, despite there being no such case over the past five years;
- The conclusion of Supervisor Letourneau (whose campaign manager was the sole public advocate for termination) that some signs had been improperly removed;
- Expressed concern about the many signs ending up in Loudoun's land fill without recycling, despite evidence to the contrary.

Given the Board's fervor for "public service" and fiscal responsibility, how could it justify its lack of cost analysis or take away from both business and the public of clean, uncluttered roadways?

Those most familiar with the illegal signs plaguing Loudoun's roadways over the past year in particular note that Republican candidates excelled in sign violations in rights-of-way, on telephone poles and in median strips. The inevitable, sad conclusion: political petulance and debts to developer and real estate supporters prevailed over fiscal prudence and the value of clutter-free roadsides in attracting tourists and businesses.

The immediate result will be a county charged to remove signs that Virginia law considers a public nuisance ... sign removal that has kept Loudoun's roadways from looking like the cluttered roads of Fairfax.

We all want this new Board to succeed in achieving an ever more efficient and balanced county government. But in just a month we see a glaring need for course correction. For, in addition, this past month our Board:

- Authorized electric signs for a business off Route 7 without criteria or guidance for subsequent signs;
- Approved a narrow mandate for and largely partisan makeup of the Government Reform Commission;
- Failed to adopt ethical standards requiring Supervisors' recusal from decisions affecting donors to their campaigns.

We expect our Board to represent all citizens – not just those who elected them. We want a Board that pursues its goals for an increased commercial tax base through measures that will build on and enhance Loudoun's unique economic, social, and environmental attributes. We expect ethical behavior that makes citizens proud of our Supervisors' objectivity and capacity to hear, not just receive, citizen views.

Looking forward, how well can this Board balance the pros and cons of Virginia Delegate Ramadan's proposal to allow billboards on the Greenway ... stay tuned.

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Letters to the Editor

More Gov't Waste

Dear Editor: The "Invitation to Bid" for the Southern Collector Road put in the papers last week by the town of Purcellville reveals two curious problems.

For one, the ad calls for the "reconstruction and widening of a roundabout" at the 287 intersection. I was there today and a roundabout is just now being constructed. Does this mean the roundabout being made now will be taken apart and a new one built a few feet down the road? Sure looks like it. What a waste!

For the second, the bid calls for a "triple box culvert" presumably to get across the creek that runs through the Brown Farm. I challenge anyone to drive to the end of what has been built so far of the SCR and look

down the embankment. There is a 45 degree drop of some 20 or more feet and then a long stretch across the very wide gully through which the creek runs. Surely this will require a very large, and very expensive bridge, not a simple 3-pipe culvert across a creek. At least if they do build a bridge, Sam Brown might be able to drive his farm tractors under the road to the 40 acres he is being cut off from now.

This project from the start has been a classic government boondoggle that in no way justified the town of Purcellville seizing significant parts of the Brown farm by eminent domain. I hope the voters of Purcellville do something to reverse this mess when the town elections are held in the Spring. – David Williams, Lincoln

continued on facing page

Time For A Code Of Ethics

Loudoun County's previous Board of Supervisors, whose term ended on December 31, 2011 adopted a formal Code of Ethics, along with a separate Standards of Conduct. All members of that Board, except Supervisor DelGaudio (R-Sterling District), signed a pledge to conduct themselves in accordance with the provisions of these two documents. The need for a Code of Ethics was a direct result of the behavior of some members of the 2004 Board, who finished their terms with a cloud of suspicion hanging over their heads.

These two documents were crafted to insure members of the Board conducted themselves in the highest levels of moral and ethical conduct, commensurate with the public trust and stewardship their positions demand.

The current Board, thus far, has chosen not to adopt those same, or any, Code of Ethics or Standards of Conduct. Instead, several members of the current Board stated at the January 3, 2012 meeting that a Code of Ethics was not needed because, as Supervisors, their behavior was governed by current state law.

There are two sections of the Virginia Code that deal with Conflict of Interest:

- Section 2.2-3103 of the Virginia State and Local Government Conflict of Interest Act which, in paragraph 5, contains an exemption allowing Supervisors, essentially, to receive campaign contributions and then vote on issues associated with the campaign contributors, as long as the contributions were actually spent on campaign or constituent services.
- Senator Herring's (D-33rd District) bill (Section 15.2-2287.1 "Disclosures in Land

Use Proceedings") which partially closes that loophole, requiring Supervisors to recuse themselves if they have received campaign contributions from an applicant in the 12-month period prior to a land use proceeding involving that applicant.

The Herring statute is very narrow and governs only a small fraction of decisions coming before a Board of Supervisors. The Conflict of Interest statute is, basically, a "get out of jail free" card under which virtually anything goes.

The 2008 Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct, if approved and enforced, would close the contributions loophole further; Supervisors would be expected to recuse themselves on issues beyond the land use category if they had received contributions from individuals or organizations associated with an issue before them, and would extend the term of recusal beyond 12 months. Under the Code of Ethics, for example:

- Both Supervisors Janet Clarke and Ken Reid would have been expected to recuse themselves from the January 3, 2012 Board of Supervisors' closed session dealing with the lawsuit over the Aldie Firehouse, as both had accepted campaign contributions from one or more of the litigants who sued the County to prevent the Firehouse from being built near them. (Ms. Clark accepted \$2,990 from two litigants; Mr. Reid accepted \$150 from one.) Shortly after coming out of closed session, the Board directed staff to look for another site for the Aldie Fire House, essentially giving the litigants what they wanted.

- At its first Public Hearing on January 10, 2012, the Board voted (8-0-1, with Higgins absent) to approve a proposed day care center (SPEX 2010-0014) near Leesburg. The application lists Mr. Mark Nelis as the attorney representing the applicant. Mr. Nelis was present for the hearing but did not speak. According to the Virginia Public Access Project records, Mr. Nelis contributed to Janet Clarke's campaign on April 4, 2010, ten months before this vote. Ms. Clarke did not disclose this fact at the hearing, nor did she recuse herself from the vote as required by the Herring bill. Since this was a land use application and it took place within twelve months of receiving the contribution, Ms. Clarke owes the public an explanation as to why she did not violate Virginia law in voting for this application, as well as the 2008 Code of Ethics adopted by the previous Board.
- Supervisors Clarke, Volpe, Buona, DelGaudio, and Letourneau would be expected to recuse themselves from any discussions dealing with the previous Board's decision to deny the Open Band franchise agreement. In fact, if all members who received campaign contributions from Open Band and/or its principals recused themselves, there would not be enough members for a quorum and the Board could not even address the issue.

There are other examples, but the point is made. In a recent *Loudoun Times Mirror* article, Mr. York claimed that the Code of Ethics could not be enforced. This is not true. In 1996, his first year on the Board, Mr. York was part of a

Board majority that imposed sanctions on Sugarland Run Supervisor Steve Whitener (R) for unethical behavior.

Mr. Whitener's behavior against two women supervisors, Eleanore Towe (D) and Joan Rokus (R), was so egregious that the Board appointed an ad hoc Ethics Committee to investigate his actions. The Committee, composed of Supervisors Dave McWatters (R), Jim Burton (I), and Helen Marcum (R), in a public forum, took testimony from Mr. Whitener, Ms. Towe, and Ms. Rokus. The Committee concluded that Whitener's behavior warranted disciplinary action, and the Board majority, including Mr. York, voted 8-1 to publicly censor Mr. Whitener for one year, and 5-4 to remove him from all committee assignments for one year.

Mr. Whitener sued the Board of Supervisors in Federal District Court. The Federal District Court dismissed Mr. Whitener's case. Mr. Whitener appealed, and the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Board of Supervisors, in fact, had the power to discipline its own members, saying: "We hold that a legislative body's discipline of one of its members is a core legislative act, we affirm [the District Court's dismissal of the suit]." (Whitener vs. McWatters II, et al, No. 96-1515)

Obviously the Code of Ethics could be enforced if five members of the Board have the courage to do so – and clear evidence that a breach of ethics has occurred. The public deserves the highest level of moral and ethical conduct from its elected officials. Thus far, Chairman York has refused to place the Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct on the Board's agenda for adoption. We have to wonder why.

(Liar, Liar) Pants On Fire

The Winter 2012 Purcellville Citizen Update is out.

The headline article is such a whopper that a more accurate title of this article might be that "The pants have burned completely off."

Contrary to what is claimed, Purcellville did not end the fiscal year with a surplus.

Contrary to what is claimed, the auditor did not state in the audit report that the town had a surplus either.

The simple fact is that the General Fund "Operating Budget" had \$5,000 left unspent. However, the General Fund went into debt by more than \$6 million last year. With the huge payments on the sewer plant, the utilities actually reduced their debt by \$2 million for an overall Town debt increase of \$4 million last year.

The numbers printed in our last edition gave a summary of the Town's budget structure to help the public understand

what is happening.

What Purcellville did is the equivalent of a person refinancing their house and taking money out, thereby increasing the amount of mortgage and then leaving the money sitting in their checking account.

One would question the wisdom of such a financial move. A similar standard should be applied here.

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Letters to the Editor, continued from facing page

Why Is Purcellville Separating Me From My Farm Land?

Dear Editor: Last week I reviewed the Town's plan to build the unfinished section of the Southern Collector Road, connecting the completed section from the Baptist Church to the intersection of Route 287 and Main Street. Nowhere on that route did I see a crossing to get my farm equipment across the road, despite many reassurances from the town manager, Rob Lohr, that such a crossing would be installed. Why is there no crossing shown on the plans? Taking a farm tractor, with a top speed of twenty miles an hour across a busy commuter road is dangerous for both the farmer and the commuters. Since I am absolutely forbidden to cross any of the

land the town seized on April 29, 2011, I am now forced to go onto the roads, often during rush hour traffic, hauling expensive equipment and making many trips per day in order to prepare my fields.

Since my survival as a producer of local food depends on my ability to cultivate my back fields, I have no choice but to use the road whenever I am planting cover crops, pumpkins, beans and many trips in the summer time making and hauling hay, which only slows the progress of the tractor down, and makes sight distance even less for the commuter.

– Sam Brown, Crooked Run Orchard

Thank You Sally Kurtz

Dear Editor: I wanted to write and publically convey my sincere appreciation to

outgoing Catoctin Supervisor Sally Kurtz. Not only has she tirelessly represented the Catoctin District for the past twelve years, but Sally and her staff assistant Naomi Lithgow-Foidl have been extremely helpful with the transition of myself and my staff aid Callie Chaplow into the Catoctin Supervisor's office.

Since the election they have kept us informed of relevant meetings and issues that were going on within the district. Additionally, they spent at least six hours of their time, in two separate meetings, walking us through every single item of unfinished business pending in the Catoctin District. They have also offered to assist us if we have questions in the future. I am not personally aware of any other incoming Supervisor getting this kind help and

cooperation from their predecessor.

Accordingly, I want to publically thank Sally and Naomi for their service to the citizens of Loudoun County, their gracious help in getting us acclimated to the new position and to wish them the very best in the future. – Geary M. Higgins, Catoctin District Supervisor

Always Good Samaritans in Loudoun County

Dear Editor:

My husband and I would like to extend our gratitude to all the strangers who helped round up our three escaped horses who were running loose on Airmont Road in the pitch dark of Friday evening. The way drivers fly down the hill towards the bridge

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What's That?



Making Sense of the Stuff We Find in Our Back Yards — By Bob Shuey & Mike Clem

The Mills of Loudoun County

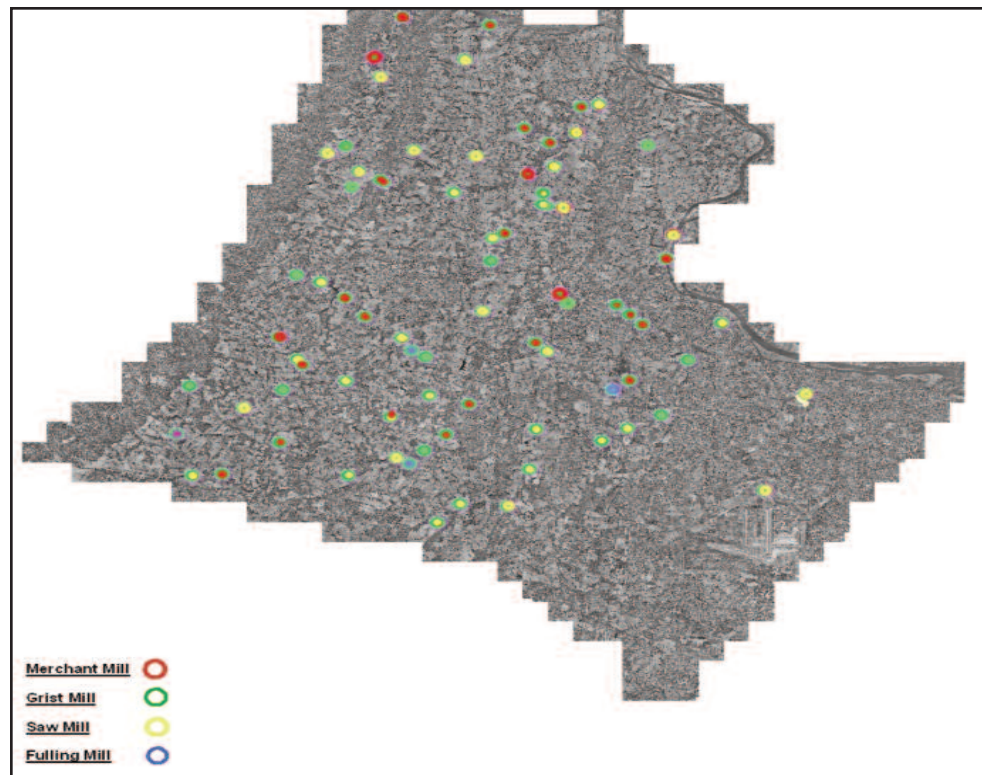
Several local groups of archaeologists, preservationists, conservationists, scholars, and government officials are combining their efforts to locate, identify, and describe the mills that have operated in Loudoun County. More than 80 grist mills, saw mills, and woolen mills are shown on historic maps of the county; well over 100 mills are mentioned in historic documents. Of the water-powered mills, some employed overshot wheels, undershot wheels, turbines, or tub mills. Many had a series of

owners whose names were associated with the mills for various periods. Many were destroyed or burned, and some of those were rebuilt on the premises or nearby. The mills increased the value of grain and timber grown in the county and provided employment for those who built and operated the mills, hauled the grain, timber, and milled products, and ran stores, tanneries, potteries, black smith shops, and other craft shops and services that were located at these hubs of economic activity.

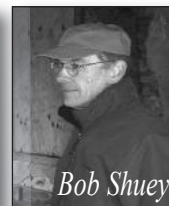
If you have old family or business records describing a Loudoun mill or if you know the location of an unrecorded mill in the county, please let us know so that we can combine that information with library and archive documents and with what we can verify on the ground. We will update the archaeological and architectural-history records at the Virginia Department of

Historic Resources and make the information available to the public and to researchers.

Send your information to asvban-sheereeks@gmail.com or to the Blue Ridge Leader.



Send a photo and brief description of your unusual backyard finds to carolbrleader@yahoo.com or mail it to the Blue Ridge Leader, PO Box 325, Purcellville, VA 20134-0325. Mike Clem is a member of the Banshee Reeks Chapter of the Archeology Society of Virginia (BRASV.org) and the Loudoun County Archaeologist. Bob Shuey is an archeologist active in local historic preservation efforts.



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Hunt Country Gourmet's RESTAURANT REVIEW – Wine Kitchen, Leesburg, VA

“Our goal is to tell you where good food can be found ...”

Midweek nights are often slow for restaurants, especially those in a “downtown” location. If you visit an eatery on a wintry January evening on the main street of a small town, particularly when there are no shops open, the wait staff may equal or exceed the numbers of diners. Not so at the Wine Kitchen in the center of Leesburg.

We stopped by for a meal fairly early on a Wednesday evening, only to find standing room only around a crowded bar. We were first on the waiting list, but a crowd soon gathered behind us also waiting for seats. Of course, the Wine Kitchen is in a fairly narrow storefront at a single digit spot on South King Street in Leesburg, but other nearby restaurants in the same block were all but deserted. “If you build a better mousetrap ...” or “serve a better meal...”

Although the name Wine Kitchen indicates that it features the fermented juice of the grape, the restaurant is indeed a kitchen with a distinctive flair. Chef Christopher Casey is experienced, inventive, and consistently very good. Each of the entries that we have ordered has been an excellent rendition of the named dish.



The Wine Kitchen prides itself on fresh local ingredients, many of them organic. Three of us started our meal by sharing the artisan cheese selection featuring sheep, goat, and cow milk cheese (\$12). The menu also offered a charcuterie plate (\$10) and a selection of sides (\$4 each) including marinated olives that had our non-olive-eating companion feasting on them.



Michael Foote is the Leesburg Wine Kitchen manager.

Continued on page 16

Letters to the Editor, continued from page 5

over Butcher's Creek it was only with the help of everyone who stopped their cars, alerted us that our horses were out, and offered their assistance that we averted disaster. We feel extremely lucky that no traffic came around the curve from the South as the escapees were trotting down the road until we were able to safely herd them back into the barn. The chestnut horse with the blanket was in particular danger as he obviously had not passed his road test and insisted on trotting down the left lane. As often happens in times of crisis, once we had them in the barn, I was so busy trying to get them closed in that I did not take sufficient time to thank all our helpers and even find out who they were. We have discovered how the equine culprits managed to open the gate and feel certain they will not get another opportunity to break out. Many thanks to

all our helpers.

– Leah Ferguson, Middleburg

Let's Focus On Helping People In Need

Dear Editor: The Christmas decorations are finally packed away, and the international sensation of crucified Santa Clauses put to bed, or at least to a committee where it can lie dormant until next November.

I can't help but wonder what would have happened had all the people so intent on securing a display of a cardboard cut out of a humble family sheltered in a stable, actually turned their attention to the humble families living in our midst.

We have people living in a homeless shelter across from the airport (for 90 days at least) who are tasked with finding jobs and regaining their budgetary "footing."

But, how hard should it be? How can someone accept a job in retail and restaurant work if there is no public bus for transportation on the weekends or evenings? A small obstacle that we as a Christian community who want a Christian government, can surely remedy.

We have elderly residents standing in 18 degree weather trying to buy groceries and pick up prescriptions, using the M-F bus service, who have no shelter to guard them from the bitter wind. A small obstacle that we as a Christian community who want a Christian government can surely remedy.

"The kingdom of heaven is all around you," said Jesus. "Even as you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto me."

It is much easier to preach about prayer in public places (something Jesus warned against) and to feel self-righteous about

cardboard cut outs. But, those are not the things that Jesus actually asked us to do. Think about it.

– S. Ann Robinson, Leesburg

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to the Editor ...*

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Phone: 540.338.6200

Roundabout, continued from page 1

Their concern is that the SCR construction is potentially a year out. Therefore, the roundabout will get constructed and then ripped out a year later for another, just to the west. As you can imagine there is some concern with public perception on this." ... "Does VDOT have a concern about building a roundabout (through permit) and it being removed a short time later?"

The answer from the other official was: "Yes, I would think it would be bad public perception for the developer to build a roundabout and then have the Town rip it out a year later. I would think every effort should be made by the Town to prevent this."

The Town has apparently ignored the advice from VDOT and decided to go ahead anyway. After all, it's only money.

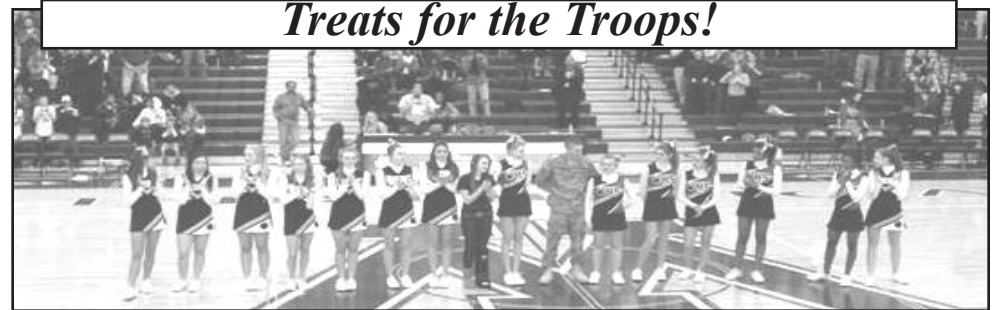
Background on the Purcellville Roundabout

The roundabout that is currently being constructed is aligned with the O'Toole property, which was annexed along with approximately 67 acres of Patrick Henry College and part of Sam Brown's 45 acre Crooked Run parcel (Crooked Run Orchard is comprised of three parcels of over 90 acres total). These properties are in Phase II and are required to have County participation when annexed since they are not in Phase I. This is required

because the Town must show that they have adequate utilities, and they must also show that they are growing in an orderly pace so as not to overwhelm the Town.

The Town did not communicate with the County, nor did they show up to the required joint meetings. Consequently, the previously mentioned properties are part of the current Town/County lawsuit.

Treats for the Troops!



Woodgrove is pleased to recognize the Winter Cheer program for their community service project with "Treats For Troops" during the Winter Season. The effort included sending care packages to soldiers stationed in Afghanistan. The Cheer program sent over 5 care packages filled with greeting cards, candy, games, hand warmers and other hygiene products. They were distributed to the 4-1 Field Artillery Army Unit based in El Paso TX which was deployed to Afghanistan in September of 2011. Collection for "Treats for Troops" will continue throughout the winter season. Items can be sent in to Woodgrove High

School to be placed in the collection box outside the front office. Pictured is the Winter Cheer squad as well as a special guest, Private First Class Justin Charlton, home on leave with the 4-1 field Artillery Army Unit. Thank you Cheerleaders with your support efforts and thank you Private First Class Justin Charlton for serving the United States of America!

Girls right to left: Hayleigh Sternberg, Vanessa Oruma, Raquel Noel, Gracie Zurschmeid, Becky McCormick, Samantha Tinsley (PFC Justin Charlton in center), Amanda Lough, Meagan Diana, Sidney Greene, Megan Kopack, Sarah Dofflemeyer, Addie Segerdahl, Emily Beisler, Maggie Stillman, Jessica Murter.

Uranium Mining, continued from page 1

moratorium on uranium mining that Virginia has in place; others are gaps in current laws or regulations, or in the way that they are applied." The Governor also consulted with agency heads, legislators, business leaders and others concerning the prudent course of action on this complicated issue.

Speaking about his decision to seek greater information regarding the efficacy and safety of uranium mining in Pittsylvania County, the Governor stated, "Over the past month I, along with members of our administration, have analyzed the NAS report on uranium mining in the Commonwealth in great detail. We have spoken with local legislators, agency heads, scientists as well as business and community leaders in and around the potential mining region. To further understand the issue members of our administration, including technical experts, traveled to Coles Hill to view the property personally. They also traveled to a uranium mining site in Canada to gain a greater understanding of the scientific and legal

issues that must be addressed if Virginia were to move forward. Yesterday, I received a letter from a bipartisan group of Virginia legislators from the Uranium Subcommittee of the Coal and Energy Commission of the General Assembly asking that our Administration delay any action on uranium mining until such time that a more thorough and on-site review of the issue could take place. As a result of our analysis, and consideration of the points made in the letter, I believe that such an on-site study must take place before any action is taken. The NAS study was broadly helpful in providing a better understanding of the associated economic benefits, which are potentially significant, as well as the possible risks, which are potentially serious, associated with uranium mining in this geography and climate. However, in order for an informed decision to be made by state lawmakers, we need more detailed information. Before we make any decisions about whether or not to proceed down the path to development, we

must be certain that uranium mining can be conducted safely and responsibly. Public safety must be the primary factor in the ultimate determination as to whether to proceed with uranium mining.

To attain that information, I have today sent a letter to my Secretaries of Natural Resources, Commerce and Trade and Health and Human Resources asking them to create a working group, comprised of the appropriate technical staff from the Departments of Health, Environmental Quality, and Mines, Minerals and Energy, which will develop a draft regulatory framework for presentation to the Coal and Energy Commission next year. My letter sets out more than a dozen issues that need to be addressed by the working group. Further, I have directed the group to report their progress to the legislative Uranium Subcommittee no fewer than three times over the next year, and to allow thorough opportunity for public participation in its work.

I have been clear that we must base all

decisions on this matter on public safety and science. While uranium mining could mean the creation of high-paying jobs for our citizens, a boost for the important nuclear power industry, increased economic development for the region, and the generation of significant tax revenue for the entire Commonwealth, we must prudently study this issue to ensure that such mining would not impair the health of our people, or the condition of our environment. The NAS study, while broadly helpful, left many questions still unanswered. Some of those questions can only be answered through an on-site evaluation of Coles Hill and the surrounding area. I look forward to receiving the draft statutory proposal and regulatory framework from this working group. This analysis will arm the Commonwealth's policy makers with more information and data so that they can soundly determine the proper course of action moving forward."

Less Transparency, continued from page 4

the Purcellville Town Council and all official Town Committees, board, and commissions. There is no practical mean for town staff to verify the accuracy of an applicant's disclosure, whether purposeful or inadvertent.

3. The forms can be difficult to complete in as it can be difficult to obtain signatures and certifications from: 1) Minor parties, who lack motivation to execute a document of little purpose to them, or perhaps oppose the proposal and see refusal to execute such a disclosure as means to thwart it. 2) Parties that are not local or out of the country and therefore difficult to reach. 3) Estates in the process of settlement. 4) Members of a participating partnership or limited liability corporation whose identities are shielded through registered agents.

The disclosures violate the privacy of applicants who do not wish to be exposed to potential public controversy. Potential lenders and participants can be scared off by potential criticism. Those with minority interest, who might even be opposed to the proposal, should not be exposed to these controversies.

The proposed disclosures are one-sided and only target the applicant. What about all those who participate in the debate, whether in the public hearing or by phone, email, and letter to the editor? If such disclosures are to be required, shouldn't an opponent have to disclose

whether they represent or are compensated by a competitor, interest group, or other interest party?

We appreciate that the Town Council was so thoughtful as to request our opinion. We do try to reflect the broad range of concerns of Purcellville businesses and support the Purcellville community.

Sincerely,
Lindy Perry, President"

From the idea that ownership and parties of interest are not "pertinent" ... to the concept that a real party of interest was "not local or out of the country and therefore difficult to reach", none of the considerations or objections put forth by the PBPA, the Mayor or the Town Council have prevented other localities (nor the State) from enacting simple, clear and easy to comply with Real Parties of Interest Disclosure. What's more, while certain individuals or businesses may prefer that their involvement in a zoning matter – or their relationship to the elected decisionmaker ruling on that matter – not be known, this information is essential to residents and other businesses in the area. Such disclosures make government – particularly local government – better, not more burdensome. Purcellville and its partners in the PBPA should just get the job done.

Film Review: Dolphin Tale

– Bob Rutzel

This movie was inspired by the true story of Winter. Sawyer (Gamble) helps a wounded dolphin (Winter) on the beach. A call to 911 puts Winter at the Clearwater Marine Hospital. Sawyer keeps checking on Winter as they share a bond. So there I was rushing to see another Ashley Judd movie ... Hold on Bob, this was not an Ashley Judd movie.

Yeah, I found out. She had a small role as Lorraine (Sawyer's mother) and did good; and, with a possible romantic angle with Dr. Clay Haskett (Connick, Jr), in charge of the hospital, you would expect a romantic thing between them. But, this is a kids' story and the two young actors Nathan Gamble and Cozi Zuehlsdorff (as Hazel) carried this movie all the way to the end. Very good. Most of the movie centered on healing

Winter who severely injured her tail in a fisherman's cage and netting. If the tail was not fixed, Winter would die in time. Dr. McCarthy (Freeman) is brought in to see if he could help with some kind of prosthetic to help Winter swim properly. And, with that voice, you just believe things will be all right in time. Morgan Freeman has that affect.

Rufus, a pesky pelican, makes some unexpected appearances and provides frequent comic relief. A very nice movie the whole family can enjoy, but bring a box of Kleenex with you. You might need it in places. Winter, the dolphin, is real. Go to www.seewinter.com to learn more. Watch all the way to the end to see live shots of Winter and the medical team that helped her. Violence: No. Sex: No. Nudity: No. Language: No. Rating: B.

Goodstone Inn & Restaurant Wins Condé Nast Award of Excellence

Condé Nast Johansens Luxury Travel Guides has named GoodstoneInn and Restaurant in Middleburg, Virginia a finalist in the "Most Excellent Inn-2012" and "Most Excellent Romantic Hideaway-2012" for the USA and Canada – after last year winning the "Most Excellent Inn-2011" for the USA and Canada.

Lesley O'Malley-Keyes, Vice President and Publishing Director of The Americas, noted, "The Awards for Excellence winners represent the very best of the best. Our readers are discerning and experienced travelers who know what they want when they travel – exceptional accommodations, outstanding service and good value for money.

Condé Nast Johansens only recommends properties that meet these very specific standards."

The Goodstone Restaurant also won the prestigious 2011 OpenTable Diner's Choice Award for Top 100 Restaurants in the United States. The Goodstone Inn & Restaurant is a luxurious country inn and French restaurant in the heart of Virginia's wine and hunt country. Drawing inspiration and purpose from its location on 265 acres of rolling hills and farmland, the Goodstone Restaurant provides its guests with an unparalleled dining experience. For further information, contact Goodstone Inn & Restaurant at (540) 687-3333.

Amy V. Smith's Money Talks

– Modestly Optimistic in 2012? –

– By Amy Smith



"We are suffering just now from a bad case of economic pessimism. It is common to hear people say the epoch of enormous economic progress which characterized the century is over; that the rapid improvement in the standard of life is now going to slow down; that a decline in prosperity is more likely than an improvement in the decade which lies ahead." — John Maynard Keynes

I recently read this paraphrased quote in an investment letter by Raymond James Market Strategist Jeffrey Saut. While it sounds like it could have been written this past year, it was actually penned in 1930 and titled Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren.

And no wonder investors are pessimistic. In 2011, stock market indices experienced some of the highest volatility in years. Many macroeconomic events fueled wild swings—from the Japanese earthquake and tsunami to the "Arab Spring," from the debt ceiling debacle and subsequent U.S. credit downgrade to the ongoing European sovereign debt crisis, all causing equities worldwide to falter and making fixed income the place to be in 2011.

Considering the wave of anxiety that covered investors during much of 2011, it may be somewhat of a surprise to many of you that the stock market staged a solid year-end rally and has continued this momentum into mid-January. So, why am I modestly optimistic in 2012?

- Corporate profits margins are at a recent high due to cost-cutting and reduced debt levels.
- Interest rates continue at historic lows, making stock valuations attractive relative to bonds.
- The presidential election year has historically witnessed a stock market increase

in 15 of the last 21 elections since 1928, some say in part because the incumbent administration is focused on trying to stimulate economic growth.

- While long-term fears remain, inflation is expected to be well contained in 2012.

Of course, there will be the inevitable surprises and potential swings with some dire predictions (European recession, fears of a euro-zone breakup, Doomsday prophecies for 2012).

My message to you as investors is that we should think more about making good decisions and being patient enough to let investments work out.

When pessimism has been at such high levels, equity investors have been susceptible to positive surprises. I believe that the world as we know it will survive in 2012 and markets will recover on the receding gloom.

For additional investment insight, please visit my website amysmithwealthmanagement.com and see under "News and Resources" Investment insights from Raymond James Experts and the most recent "Investment Quarterly."

Remember, slow and steady wins the race. I welcome your comments. Just send me an email at amy.v.smith@raymond-james.com. All names and identifying questions will be kept strictly confidential unless written permission is given for their use.

© Amy V. Smith Wealth Management, LLC, is an independent firm. Amy is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and Certified Investment Management Analyst (CIMA) and offers securities through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/SIPC. Her office is located at 161 Fort Evans Road, NE, Ste 345, Leesburg, VA 20176. www.amysmithwealthmanagement.com. The opinions and recommendations here are those of the columnist. Past performance does not guarantee future results.

School Cuts, continued from page 1

spoke to oppose the potential loss of health insurance benefits for school system employees who do not meet a certain threshold in terms of the number of hours worked per week.

Fran Lettington, a bus driver for LCPS for 10 years said: "This board wants to take away the benefits of the bus drivers and others, that is a want, that is not a need." Lettington has also worked as a substitute teacher. Lettington continued, "Loudoun County Public Schools is not a private club where you can make decisions just to cut corners. This is a county government job. If you need to cut, cut it across the board from the top of the crop to the bottom of the basket. It doesn't matter the hours we work, it's the job we were hired for. What others do doesn't make them any better than I am at mine. It takes a special person to drive students to school and like what they do ..."

Priscilla Godfrey, former Blue Ridge District School Board member said that,

out of all the questions the board members asked, six questions were about western Loudoun's small neighborhood schools. She pointed out that there are many approved subdivision projects in the future near these western Loudoun schools. Also, most of the western school buildings have Energy Star ratings. "Leave these schools alone!", said Godfrey.

Ten of the speakers came from Hamilton elementary alone. This is the most public input on an operating budget the School Board has ever had." Supporters of Lincoln Elementary School – an historic 125 year old plus school that is one of only seven schools in the State of Virginia to win the national Blue Ribbon School Award – were also out in force.

The newly elected School Board members did not have school system reductions costed out to the dollar, and, therefore, had to postponed action until February 7, 2012.



Purcellville Packers Savor the Win

The Purcellville Packers won the 2011 Upper Loudoun Youth Football League C-Division Championship November 12, 2011.
 Team Members: #1 Ronan Kilrain, #8 Daniel Huskey, #9 Cody Oliver, #15 Matthew Cronin, #16 Blake Moore, #22 Matthew Balaban, #24 Evan Remick, #25 Mason Raymer, #28 Matthew Collier, #32 Dustin Talwar, #37 Luke Stanley, #45 Wyatt Marvil,

#46 Daniel Arbogast, #47 John Hunter Lohr; #48 Liam McCarthy, #65 Lawson Laverty, #75 David Cypher, #82 Colby Collier, #96 Shane Washko.
 Head Coach: Mitchell Huskey Assistant Coaches: Mike Laverty, Rob Lohr, Mike Kilrain, John Washko, Chris Oliver, Ron Moore, Mark Collier.

Appalachian Trail Conservancy Selects Community Ambassadors For Virginia

Anna Sherrill has been selected to serve as the volunteer ambassador to the designated Appalachian Trail (A.T.) Community of Damascus, VA and Diana Billips will serve as the ambassador to Bland County, VA. In this role, each will serve as a community liaison to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and the respective local volunteer A.T. maintaining club to bolster volunteerism and stewardship of the Trail the local level.

“The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is excited about building off its volunteer base by providing A.T. Ambassadors to designated A.T. Communities to help increase local stewardship of public lands and support healthy lifestyles for community citizens,” stated Julie Judkins, Community Program Manager of the ATC.

Anna Sherrill is a member of the ATC and

Continued on page 17

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Digging Deep into The Power of Plants

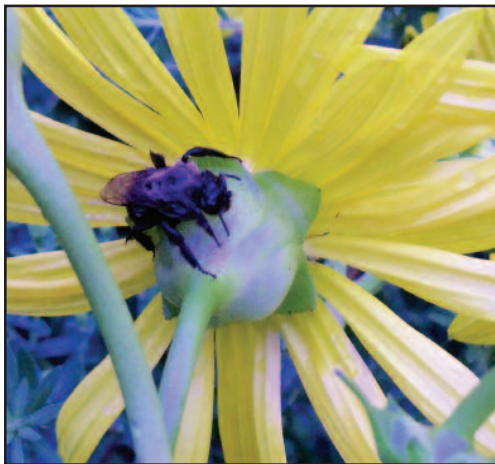
– By Donna Williamson

Only plants can convert the sun's energy to food, either for us directly, or for the creatures we eat. Fruits and vegetables almost all need to be pollinated by insects and it's become clear that if we are unwilling to share our spaces with them, we will not survive. That's why the Piedmont-Blue Ridge Horticulture Society is sponsoring a conference in Winchester on April 14 to talk about pollinators and birds in the landscape.

The speakers who are lined up for that day have each taught me a lot over the last several years. Ten years ago I didn't particularly worry about natives or invasives or birds – I worried a lot about whether the plants were doing well. As a designer, I wanted to provide the best plants for any given situation and often explained that a particular plant was pest – or disease-free – a quality of most Asian species.

Of course, I loved beautiful birds like everyone else, but I figured that filling bird feeders was really enough. Bees were fun to watch with those huge fat bodies of carpenter bees flying with impossibly small wings. Butterflies were lovely and I knew enough to leave the parasitized tomato hornworm caterpillar alone so it could provide a new crop of tiny wasps that would parasitize again.

I also figured out, based on experience, that tilling the soil was a mistake in gardens; destroying the structure of the soil and turning it into a flour-like substance might be an easy way to plant, but it did not have the



long-term positive results I was looking for. And it churned up a zillion weed seeds, especially lamb's quarters. Now I know why.

We all evolve, if we are lucky, and let go of the practices of the past that no longer work. So come and learn some new gardening tricks from a group of talented, dedicated national experts in their fields who are helping to building the gardens and landscapes of the future.

Donna Williamson is a master gardener, garden designer, and garden coach. She has taught gardening and design classes at the State Arboretum of Virginia, Oatlands in Leesburg, and Shenandoah University.

Author, The Virginia Gardener's Companion: An Insider's Guide to Low-Maintenance Gardening in Virginia, dwfinegardening.com, 540-877-2002.



Doug Tallamy, author of *Bringing Nature Home*

Janet Scott Davis, owner of Hill House Nursery

Vincent Simeone, Director of Planting Fields Arboretum

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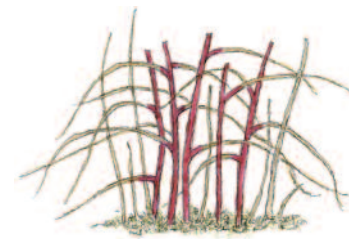
TIME TO DREAM OF WARMER WEATHER?

Boy! This really has been an unusual winter. It is looking like we may be able to get out in the garden a lot earlier than expected!

For sure, it is a great time to cut back your raspberry bushes and ornamental grasses to get them ready for new growth.

Soon the nurseries will have plants ready to set out; think about where you'd like to add some new perennials like lilies or cone flowers that will add lively color to your landscape.

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While your raspberry plants are still dormant, remove the weak and lanky canes as well as any suckers that have grown in between.



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For most varieties, you can trim your entire plant back to about 6" - 10" tall. Starting from the outside, use hand-held shears and cut thin sections until you are done.

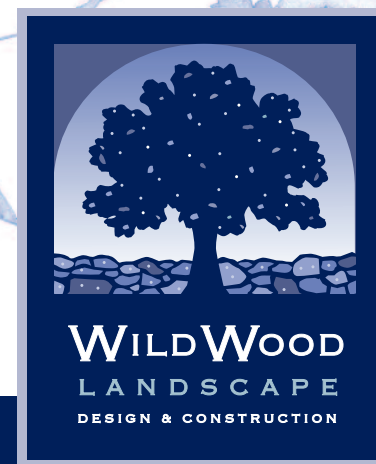
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► REAL ESTATE TICKER ► MARKET'S MIXED MESSAGE

– By Carl Fischer



It's certainly true that residential sales in our area in the under \$500,000 price range have hit new highs as far as market activity is concerned. That's a good thing.

But what's not so good is the fact that the price levels are not rising as a result of that activity.

Inventory levels of these "affordable" houses (only in Loudoun County would we say that) are lower than they've been in some times. And mortgage loan rates are still unbelievably low. I was just party to a transaction where the 30 year interest rate was 3.85%! It's amazing how much buying power you have with that kind of rate.

But the opposite side of that price pendulum is the continuing emergence of short sale, and increasingly foreclosure properties that hold prices down.

Not every distressed property is necessarily a "good buy", but rest assured, every buyer looks at the most recent SOLD price for these, and ALWAYS compares that to the house he is considering. And he should.

What's important to keep in mind is the fact that time continues to march along. Although it seems like only yesterday that we all became aware of the fact that "something bad" was happening to our local economy, and that the "recession-proof" notion of home values here in Northern Virginia, for the first time since the early 90s was somehow under siege.

But pay attention to today's date! It has been over four years since we learned that the "Great Recession" was upon us ... but

life goes on.

And more and more, your neighbors and friends have finally had enough of hunkering down and waiting for a better tomorrow; they have given themselves permission to move forward with their lives. Hence, resale activity.

"For the first time in many years, I am beginning to sell building lots.

That market has been dead and gone since 2006. And most of the folks who are buying lots intend to build within the next six to eighteen months."

The FEDs recent announcement that they would keep interest rates at, or near, zero until the END of 2014 should tell you all you need to know about the state of our economy ... it isn't good.

In a recent article in the Washington Post by Peter Whoriskey, he said:

"Since the depths of the recession, key aspects of the economy have rebounded.

The nation's output has grown. The stock market began an ascent. The unemployment rate drifted down.

But housing?

When it comes to the value of what many Americans consider their biggest financial asset, no such return appears in sight.

Data released Tuesday showed that seasonally adjusted housing prices have reached a post-bubble low, as the minor surge that began in 2009 fizzled, to be followed by the almost continuous slide of the past 18 months.

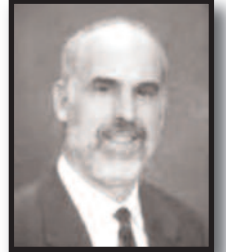
The housing bust, in other words, appears to be even worse than it was at the nadir of the recession ... "

Continued on page 14



Dear Doug

– Real Estate Q&A –



Dear Doug,

I am not happy with the returns I am getting from my money in the stock market, but I am nervous about taking it out and putting money into real estate after the meltdown of the market since 2005 and 2007, where people lost SO much equity. Can you give me your opinion on investing in real estate in these unpredictable times? Thank you. – William

Dear William, You views and doubts are shared by many people these days. SOOO many people are still upside down on their houses. They sure better like their homes, since they can't sell them unless they go the "short sale" route, and risk damaging their credit.

But, what about current real estate investors who are now "bottom-feeding?" They are picking up some great deals. I just sold a condo in Fairfax to an all-cash buyer for \$122k. It originally sold for over \$200,000 in 2006! Quite a drop, wasn't it?! My client paid all cash, and now rents it for \$1200 per month. So, he takes in \$14,400 rental income per year, and pays out \$5784 in taxes and various fees. His rental income: \$14,400 - 5784 = \$8616. His return on his \$122,000 cash investment would be \$8616 divided by the cash investment, which equals 7%. That is before any appreciation he sees, which should start accumulating soon, since there are no 1 bedroom condos being built anywhere near \$122k.

Is 7% a good investment? Better than most savings, right? It's a nice apartment. Great views, nice fireplace, bus to the Vienna Metro, close to Fair Oaks Mall. Yes, I'd say it is a great long-term investment, as long as you believe Fairfax County is going to keep growing. Is it risk free? No--no investment is. Buying any piece of real estate has risks, so you study your rental numbers and the price of comparables, and the more you do your homework, the better the chances are that your investment will pay off.

Bottom line, William- there are still plenty of investors and regular buyers out there who are taking the plunge and buying properties at discounted rates.

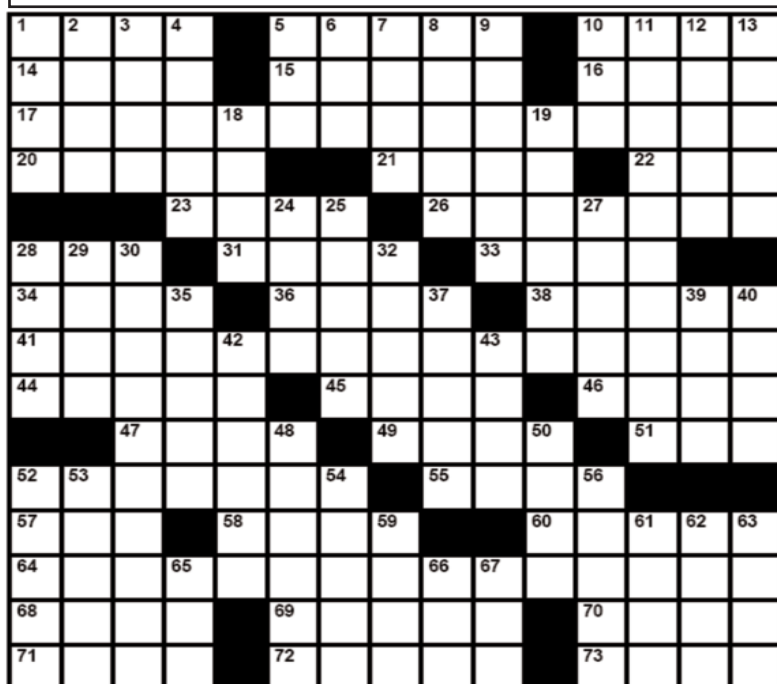
Good luck if you decide to take the plunge. Do beware however: there can be bumps along the way and an experienced management company is advised to help you navigate .

Happy sailing, and I will see you out there!

– Doug Frank

Douglas Frank holds a BA degree in English from Rutgers University and is a licensed realtor with over 20 years experience. Doug works with Prudential Carruthers Realtors in Fairfax, Virginia. He also has his Home Improvement License and owns a number of investment properties including houses, townhomes, and condos . Doug and his wife and two sons live in Fairfax, Virginia. (Opinions expressed here are ... only opinion!)

Weighty Matters – By Myles Mellor



Across

1. Expert
5. Catch, in a way
10. Center of authority
14. Cuckoos
15. Impede
16. Bridge toll unit
17. Easy to pick up
20. Baffled
21. One of the Simpsons
22. Supply with ammo
23. Marriage, for one?
26. Raw liquors
28. "China Beach" setting
31. Capture
33. Lagerlöf's "The Wonderful Adventures of ____"
34. "Right away!"
36. Applications
38. Hotel posting
41. Ghost whisperer?
44. Money in the bank, say
45. Case
46. Peeved
47. "How ____ Mehta Got Kissed, Got Wild, and Got a Life" (Kaavya Viswanathan novel)
49. "My ____!"

Down

1. Apple variety
2. Condo, e.g.
3. Fixes, in a way
4. "Confessions" singer
5. Grassland
6. Balaam's mount
7. Attempt
8. As yet
9. Genetic material
10. Took a load off
11. Extreme fatigue
12. Notify
13. College units
18. Detective, at times
19. Clothing
24. Drawn tight
25. Arise
27. Sword lilies, for short
28. Astronaut's org.
29. Deadly biters
30. Small house, in London
32. End
35. Warms up
37. Turned sideways
39. 100 cents
40. Old World duck
42. Bologna home
43. Bog
48. Chinese fruit tree
50. "That hurt!"
52. Full of gossip
53. Son of Simon the Just
54. Noblemen
56. Bundle
59. Minus
61. Diamond Head locale
62. Some Olympians, nowadays
63. Eye affliction
65. "____ Town Too" (1981 hit)
66. Go for the gold
67. Appetite

Just Like Nothing (Else) On Earth – by Tim Jon

Hillsboro, VA

Didn't somebody say, "Every word's worth about 10,000 pictures"? Well, they should have, if they didn't, and it would really apply to one of my favorite spots in the heart of the heart of this County. I don't have to think about the little Town of Hillsboro very long before I'm inundated by images, images, images: the narrow "Main Street" lined by historic homes, a curiously picturesque cemetery on the edge of the community, the landmark Old Stone School, and the reassuring shoulders of the nearby hills themselves.

It's a good place to take time to reflect and to assess where one's sentiments lie. If you can't afford a two-week vacation in the Caribbean, and if you feel the ol' Northern Virginia stress levels are reaching straight-jacket proportions, you could do far worse than spending a quiet Sunday morning in the hush of little, old Hillsboro.

It may be because I've compiled such a trove of good memories in this small space, but here, I always feel at least a bit of the "Balm of Gilead" for the soul (chicken soup, for you non-historians), even if I'm just rushing through on my way to further deliveries on a postal route. Kinda like a quick visit to Granny's house. Or a shot of your favorite elixir, whichever's handier.

See, I've visited, or passed through, Hillsboro literally hundreds of times since I moved to Loudoun in 1997: I covered events here as News Director for Wage Radio (like the time Secretary of State Madeline Albright [who has a place up on Harpers Ferry Road] paid a visit to the Elementary School, and talked to the kids about how to get along with world leaders- or anyone else, for that matter). I directed plays at the Old Stone School (I probably staged the most commercially unsuccessful show in Loudoun County community theatre history – Sam Shepard's True West, in 2001– but I was very proud of its artistic merits) and watched many others here. I toured private art galleries in some of the stately homes along Charles Town Pike, and attended many to-do's at friends' houses in and around this memorable community.

And, speaking of Route Nine, I know – I know – many of the residents of Hillsboro will wonder at my choice of their

home town as a spot for solitude; anyone trying to get from one end of this tiny 'burg' to the other on a late weekday afternoon would have cause to wonder at my sanity. No, I didn't choose Hillsboro at rush hour as my place for peace; I'd rather get up before dawn on a Sunday and experience the day's awakening here – even if it means I need to shake a few cobwebs as I tool up the "Pike" – than get caught along a busy Charles Town Pike. Been there, done that – I've tried to deliver mail along the stretch from Hillsboro to the West Virginia Line on late (dark) after – noons, and it's no picnic, I assure you; I do empathize with those who probably think about selling their beloved homes every time an oversize truck rumbles through town and shakes the plaster from the walls.

But that's not my Hillsboro. My version is always quiet, uncrowded, filled with the friendly pastel colors which would have possibly been selected by a visionary such as Maxfield Parrish – or maybe even Claude Monet. The images I've been blessed to experience in and around Hillsboro are truly worth more than a moment's pause.

But understand, these peaceful micro-seconds that I cherish exist in stark contrast to the greater portion of my (at least, adult) existence of regimentation, self-sacrifice, frequent turmoil, and near-constant work – and perhaps a lack of the sublime – or maybe just my ability to make it so. I'm glad I've always been able to muster the feeling of magic in Hillsboro. It lives there.

It's the wonder I imagine Thomas Wolfe felt in the times and places which inspired works like *Look Homeward, Angel*, or *Of Time and the River*. I hope I'm being neither evasive or obvious when I say the sparkle is on the trees, in the sky, the rocks and rivulets of Hillsboro. At least in my version.

You'll have to find – and write – your own. It's right there – just up Route Nine from the Route Seven Bypass– about 11 miles west of Leesburg. But I also hope that you find that it's much further than the mere physical distance – make it a journey for the heart, for the soul; you won't find a straight line to take you there – or directions from MapQuest. You may never get all the way to the heart of the heart, but, at least you'll know when you're on the way. You may even see me.



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Winter Weather Ways, continued from page 1

cope with the changes in weather and availability of food in one of three ways: adjusting, hibernating or migrating.

Most land-bound animals are forced to remain and stay somewhat active during the winter. They must adjust to our changing weather. Many make changes in their behavior or bodies. Cold-blooded animals (i.e., insects, reptiles, amphibians, and fish) must hibernate if they live in environments where the temperature and therefore their own body temperature drops below freezing. Box turtles burrow into the soil or mulch piles. Reptiles like lizards and snakes seek protective cover under rocks, leaf litter and mulch piles. Many others hoard food stores to get them through the winter. Squirrels and mice stash their food in tree cavities, under leaf litter, or in holes in the ground. Still other animals, such as voles, have communal food storage areas underground.

Most animals prepare for winter by undergoing physiological changes - accumulating body fat is the most cru-

cial, a vital insulator for warmth and source of energy. Many of these animals, like deer, squirrels, and raccoons, spend the fall feasting on energy- and fat- rich acorns and other nuts that help them put on an insulating layer of fat beneath their skin. Their sparse summer coat is gradually replaced by a warmer one made up of a dense layer of under fur and a thick surface layer that helps to trap body heat. These species, as well the rabbit, otter, muskrat, fox, and bobcat, remain active throughout the winter, foraging or hunting daily. For other species, such as opossums and skunks, winter activity is temperature dependent. During extremely cold periods they spend their time in their nests or dens, curled up in a semi sleep dormant state. Certain insects and spiders stay active if they are in frost-free areas and can find food, while others are normally active in winter (i.e., winter stone fly, crane fly, and snow fleas).

(Catch the Second Part of Wild Loudoun's Winter Weather Ways in our March issue.)

Real Estate Ticker, continued from page 13

But you should also take heart in the knowledge that employment, ever so slowly, continues to improve, and businesses are once again starting to expand.

For the first time in many years, I am beginning to sell building lots.

That market has been dead and gone since 2006. And most of the folks who are buying lots intend to build within the next six to eighteen months.

For rest of us, it comes down to a simple question: "Do I continue to be held hostage by the uncertainty that is all around me? Or do I sit down rationally and consider what would be in my best interest at this time, then move boldly forward?" Life is far to short to ever endure feeling "trapped" for long; it's contrary to our basic nature.

So if your family situation has changed (added or lost a member), your need to grow and expand is constantly on your mind, or your date for retirement is slowly drawing nearer, think

about "trying on" a few changes. Look at

What's important to keep in mind is the fact that time continues to march along. Although it seems like only yesterday that we all became aware of the fact that "something bad" was happening to our local economy, and that the "recession-proof" notion of home values here in Northern Virginia, for the first time since the early 90s was somehow under siege.

some homes to buy that may hold the promise of a new life together.

See what your present home is worth now, so that you can take advantage of the market on the "buy" side. And if either direction feels right, take the next step to enjoying your time here on earth. It's good for you.

Leave the "status quo" to others; there are plenty who are very good at being "victims" of a "down economy" or "bad breaks" and worrying about the future.

Enjoy!

Carl Fischer has lived in Loudoun since 1969. Formerly in residential construction management and land development. He has been in real estate since 1989.

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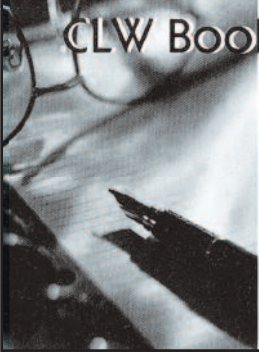

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Hunt Country Gourmet, continued from page 6

Midweek nights are often slow for restaurants, especially those in a “down-town” location. If you visit an eatery on a wintry January evening on the main street of a small town, particularly when there are no shops open, the wait staff may equal or exceed the numbers of diners. Not so at the Wine Kitchen in the center of Leesburg.

We stopped by for a meal fairly early on a Wednesday evening, only to find standing room only around a crowded bar. We were first on the waiting list, but a crowd soon gathered behind us also waiting for seats. Of course, the Wine Kitchen is in a fairly narrow storefront at a single digit spot on South King Street in Leesburg, but other nearby restaurants in the same block were all but deserted. “If you build a better mousetrap ...” or “serve a better meal...”

Although the name Wine Kitchen indicates that it features the fermented juice of the grape, the restaurant is indeed a kitchen with a distinctive flair. Chef Christopher Casey is experienced, inventive, and consistently very good. Each of the entrees that we have ordered has been an excellent rendition of the named dish. The Wine Kitchen prides itself on fresh local ingredients, many of them organic. Three of us started our meal by sharing the artisan cheese selection featuring sheep, goat, and cow milk cheese (\$12). The menu also offered a charcuterie plate (\$10) and a selection of sides (\$4 each) including marinated olives that had our non-olive-eating companion feasting on them.

Some of the entrees we enjoyed were: A pan-seared arctic char with Dijon butter,

greens, couscous and a warm crab salad (\$15); The moist and tender Ayrshire Farms roast chicken breast, accompanied by basmati rice and a squash-eggplant caponata (\$15); The Martin’s beef sirloin steak, flavorful, tender, and accompanied by a charred onion demi, green beans and mushrooms, and fingerling potatoes. The steak dish was the most expensive, yet only \$19.

The Wine Kitchen offers at least 15 wines from seven foreign countries, eight from four U.S. states, including a number from Loudoun County, which incidentally, has more vineyards now than any other Virginia county. One of our party had a “flight” of white wines – a Pinot Grigio from Italy, a Sauvignon Blanc from France, and a California chardonnay. The idea of offering a healthy taste of three wines is an

excellent way to compare similar wines. Some of the other flights offered included Tuesday Night Reds, the Plains of Spain, Staff Flight, and Local flavor.

Flights of three wines range in price from \$9 to \$15. Individual bottles range from \$22 to \$60, and individual glasses from \$6 to \$14. You can even get a “taste” from \$2.25 to \$6.50.

Weekly specials include afternoon “pantry snacks” at only \$4 each; weekday \$8 lunch specials; and live music Sunday afternoon. The restaurant also offers nutritional Lunch and Learn classes.

George Humphries is a retired Navy aviator who began cooking at the age of 10 and has managed several large restaurants. He has lived in Loudoun Country since 1984.

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This Week: Valentine Fitness
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February is the month to fall in love with fitness!
Good 4 You Valentine's Day Cards

Create some healthy Valentine cards by filling in the missing vowels. Then cut out each message, paste it on some construction paper and give to a good friend!

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

TO: _____ FROM: _____
 P _ _ S _ B _
 M _ _
 V _ L _ NT _ N !

TO: _____ FROM: _____
 _ R _ NG _ Y _ U
 GL _ D _ T _ B _
 M _ V _ L _ NT _ N ?

TO: _____ FROM: _____
 Y _ R _ TH _
 _ PPL _ _ F
 M _ Y !

Love Your Heart and Your Heart Will Love You!
 How do you love your heart?
 Well, first of all you need to understand that your heart is a muscle. And, like all of your muscles, it works best when you exercise, rest, drink water and eat healthy food.
 Circle the healthy food item that should come next in each row.

Heart Puzzle
 Which two hearts are exactly the same?

Valentine's Day Healthy Heart Tag
Materials: Cut out the 10 cards at right. (Paste them onto construction paper to make them sturdier if you wish.) A watch with a second hand will be needed as well.
Directions: Give the stack of activity cards to the person who is “It.” When “It” tags someone, that person selects a card and performs the named activity for the amount of time stated. After the person completes the activity, he or she becomes “It.”

Standards Link: Physical Education: Use a variety of basic and advanced movement forms.

Hop on one foot for 30 seconds.
Flap your arms like a bird for 30 seconds.
Run in slow-motion for 15 seconds.

Jump up and down in place for 60 seconds.
Tiptoe in a circle while quacking for 10 seconds.
Pretend to carry an elephant for 60 seconds.

Stand on one leg while singing for 45 seconds.
Pretend to be a motorcycle for 30 seconds.
Do jumping jacks for 20 seconds.

Ad Transformer
 Look for newspaper ads that encourage kids to eat or drink things that are unhealthy. Rewrite the ad so that it is advertising something good for your health.
 Standards Link: Health: Students understand essential concepts about nutrition and diet; know healthy eating practices.

The Kid Scoop Puzzler
 Draw a line from each piece of broken heart below to its other half. What compound words did you create?

heart match bow beat
 heart light moon sweet
 rain maker

Standards Link: Language Arts: Identify compound words.

Double Double Word Search
 Find the words in the puzzle, then in this week's Kid Scoop stories and activities.

VALENTINE
 HEART
 MUSCLE
 EXERCISE
 HEALTHY
 TEACHER
 CARDS
 PLACE
 SECONDS
 STACK
 FITNESS
 GOOD
 REST
 CARE

S E E X E T R K C H
 S N E E I S R C E E
 E I R T C M P A X R
 N T A E U N L T E E
 T N C S S T A S R H
 I E C D H T C D C C
 F L R Y O H E E I A
 E A S D N O C E S E
 C V H E A R G T E T

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognized identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY
 www.kidscoop.com

Valentines from the Headlines
 Cut out five or more words from the headlines in today's newspaper. Use these to write a Valentine message to your teacher!

Standards Link: Writing Applications: Write in a variety of genres and forms.

Write On!

Veggie Valentines
 “Lettuce be friends!”
 Write a Valentine message using the name of one or more vegetables (or fruits).

Kid Scoop Together: Proof It!
 Are you an eagle-eyed reader? Read the article below and correct the ten errors you find. The first one is done for you.

Do you feel with your heart?
 Are
 Is you making pictures of hearts and fiving little heart-shaped candies to your friends for valentine's Day?

When you make a promise you really, really meant, do you cross your heart? do you listen to songs about feelings and emotions?

This time of year, we hear about and saw hearts everywhere. Long ago, people thought our feelings came from our hearts, maybe because strong feelings can make our hearts beated faster. now we know feelings come from the brane, not the hart.

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Understand the meaning of words from context clues.

Kid Scoop VOCABULARY BUILDERS
 This week's word: **HEALTH**
 The noun health means being without sickness or pain.
 Exercise and eating right will keep you in good health.
 Try to use the word health in a sentence today when talking with your friends and family members.



– By Dane Mullins

Mark your calendars ...

February 18th- 6:30-9:30 pm – 2nd Annual Mardi Gras Auction and Showcase Fundraiser for Woodgrove Music and Arts Association. Tickets are \$10 and available at Haute Dog & Fries, Re-Love It and on Woodgrove HS Website. Students free with accompanying adult. Contact Rhonda Allen at daverhon1@aol.com for more information.

February 24 - 7 pm - 2nd Annual Mountain View Moose Scholarship Spelling Bee. Now the adults are in the hot seat! Admission is only \$1.00 per person. Scholarship fundraiser to support one Mountain View graduating senior from Woodgrove High School and one from Loudoun Valley High School. ALL proceeds go to the scholarships!

March 10 – 7 pm Hypnosis – Woodgrove High School Auditorium. THE SHOW Tickets \$10 – Available Online www.lcps.org A fun-filled evening for the entire family. Woodgrove Project Graduation Committee. Watch the volunteers do INSANE and completely OUTRAGEOUS stuff!!

March 17 – 6-9 pm – Bowl-a-Thon, Village Lanes Bowling Center, Leesburg. Strike Up Some Fun! Gather your friends, team mates, club members, class mates, and colleagues, form a 4-6 member team and Play to Win! \$25.00 per player-includes food, shoes and unlimited games and fun – Register on-line www.lcps.org.

WOW. Congratulations to the

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy February Programs

Discovering the Wild in Winter – Saturday, February 4, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. To register, sign up online at <http://www.loudounwildlife.org/SignUp.htm> or contact Phil Daley at pdaley@loudounwildlife.org or 540-338-6528.

The Geology of Loudoun County – Wednesday, February 8, 7:00 p.m. Location: Rust Library in Leesburg. This program will be followed by an all-day field trip on Saturday, February 11.

A Field Trip to Explore Loudoun County's Geology – Saturday, February 11, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. To register, sign up online at www.loudounwildlife.org, or contact Joe Coleman at jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org or 540-554-2542.

Birding Banshee – Saturday, February 11, 8:00 a.m. Questions: contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.

Frogs: The Thin Green Line – Saturday,

Undefeated Woodgrove Academic Team. They not only won the Dulles District title but also each of their tournaments and will compete February 4 at the Region II tournament. Team members had a brilliant win on NBC It's Academic show on December 17th. They will return to compete again April 28.

Congratulations to Woodgrove Music Department Wolverine Pep Band under the direction of Mr. Paul Westray. The band received accolades from the It's Academic show, "the best band we've had all season." Team Woodgrove enjoys and appreciates the support and the "Wild" spirit the Pep Band brings to each event. BIG WOW. Joseph Keim, jazz band drummer placed 2nd in the Percussive Arts Society Drum Fest Competition and received a scholarship to summer drum camp. The following students have been selected to participate in the Virginia Music Educators Association District 16 Honor Band: Hannah Chambliss-French Horn, Michelle Guarnieri-Flute, Jillian Lineburg-Clarinet, Cayla Sherrell-Bass Clarinet. Jocelyn Westray-Bassoon-advanced to the state audition, Luke Vacca-Trombone-alternate.

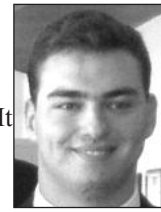
Winter Sports Update: Woodgrove Athletes thank their "Wild" supportive fans. Detailed information regarding sports standings and more available online at www.BRLeader.com.

Dane Mullins is a native of western Loudoun. He attended Loudoun Valley High School and is dual enrolled at Woodgrove High School and Northern Virginia Community College. Dane grew up on a farm and has a passion for tractors. He has been the owner and operator of Dane's Hometown Services since 2008 (estate maintenance, landscaping, farm & welding services, etc.)



Seniors Welcome February ... and a Leap Year

– By Samuel Moore-Sobel



February is known as the month after January. It also is famous for Valentine's Day. But what is not always given a lot of press is February's relationship to the "leap year."

February 2012 is a leap year. A leap year occurs every four years. Why? Because it takes the Earth about 365.24+ days a year to go around the sun – so the normal 365 days, plus an extra quarter of a day or so. Leap years are used to take up the slack of the extra day created every four years.

Following the Gregorian calendar, there are rules for when a year can be a leap year: 1) the year must be evenly divisible by four; 2) the year cannot be a leap year if it is evenly divisible by 100 ... unless the year is also evenly divisible by 400.

Ok, enough with the history lesson. There are several points that can be drawn from the leap year.

It adds an extra day to a year only once every four years, so clearly it is a special day. Although a high school senior may have a unique perspective on the upcoming leap year.

The first thought for a high school senior is that we now have an extra day of school because of it, an extra day in between where we are now and arriving at graduation. As the second semester has begun, seniors are hoping to graduate as soon as possible. The only reason to do well in school now is to be able to get exemptions from final exams (which are granted if one misses only two days of school and maintains a 70% average or higher in a class) and also to make sure

"Our days on earth are short enough, and this year we are being given the gift of another day ... given another day to enjoy the things we have been given, to spend another day as high school students, because very soon we won't have that opportunity."

that colleges do not revoke the acceptances that one has already received. But, most 2012 high school seniors are lamenting their bad luck that the leap year happens to fall this year.

But as with all things, there is also a positive side to a leap year for seniors. An extra day is an extra day. It is another day to live, to see family and friends, to make an impact in the lives of others. Our days on earth are short enough, and this year we are being given the gift of another day. And, while many are eager to graduate and to start lives of their own, we are being given another day to enjoy the things we have been given, to spend another day as high school students, because very soon we won't have that opportunity.

So, regardless of how badly "senioritis" has set in, we still have another day standing in the way of graduation. But, as seniors we should make the most of the extra day of our lives as things will be very different in a short amount of time. As for everyone else, it is an extra day of life. So celebrate by doing something good for someone else, and count your blessings for being alive this February 29th.

Samuel Moore-Sobel is a senior at Stone Bridge High School, and serves as a member of The Good Shepherd Alliance Board of Directors.

Appalachian Trail, continued from page 9

the Mt. Rogers Appalachian Trail Club. She leads hikes for the club as well as for the College of Older Adults in Abingdon. Hiking is a primary recreational activity for Anna, and as an ambassador she hopes to encourage current generations to discover the physical fitness benefits of hiking and fill them with a sense of wonder through nature.

Diana Billips is a lifelong resident and avid hiker in southwest Virginia. Diana is an active member of the Piedmont Appalachian Trail Hikers, as a section maintainer of the Trail and as a member of the club's board of directors. She operates the club's hiking program, including monthly hikes and the "70 Mile Club." She is also a member of the Bland County Community Advisory Committee as part of the county's A.T. Community designation. Diana owns and operates a purebred cattle farm, is active in her church and her daughter's school and athletic endeavors, and is a market analyst for an international manufacturer located in Bland County.

The Appalachian Trail Community™ program is designed to recognize communities that promote and protect the A.T. Towns, counties, and communities along the A.T.'s corridor are considered assets by A.T. hikers and many of these towns act as

good friends and neighbors to the Trail. The program serves to assist communities with local initiatives such as sustainable economic development through tourism and outdoor recreation, while preserving and protecting the A.T. The A.T. Community Ambassador opportunity is the first of its kind within the A.T. cooperative management partnership.

The ATC was founded in 1925 by volunteers and federal officials working to build a continuous footpath along the Appalachian Mountains. The A.T. is approximately 2,185 miles in length, ranging from Maine to Georgia, making it one of the longest, continuously marked footpaths in the world. Volunteers typically donate more than 220,000 hours each year on Trail-related work and about 2 to 3 million visitors walk a portion of the A.T. each year. This year also marks the 75th anniversary of the completion of the A.T.

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy mission is to preserve and manage the Appalachian Trail – ensuring that its vast natural beauty and priceless cultural heritage can be shared and enjoyed today, tomorrow, and for centuries to come. For more information please visit www.appalachiantrail.org.

– Sushi ... “Tails” From the Barnyard

On a clear crisp morning I made my way into the surrounding woods of Fields of Athenry Farm. A nip was in the air, the kind of cold nip that pumps into every bone in your body. As I came to the clearing of the vast open fields I caught the scent of hounds, horses and their masters. Master of the hunt ... master of the hounds ... my head keeps ‘spining round. *Keeping all the hounds together and the riders all in form, so many traditions and teachings to follow before the ride to the trumpet of the horn (I’m a poet!)*.

A shiver went down my spine as I shook my wiry cairn terrier back. I deeply inhaled the smells and held my paws steady to the ground stretching and loosening the muscles in my legs. I knew on a day when most were warm and snuggled still in their beds a few of our great Virginia huntsmen would be off to the beat of a different drum. “Hunting” season was here and teaching the young hounds and young huntsman to hunt with the pack and team would be a chore in and of its self. A chore filled with love of a sport that few ever really understand. There is nothing like the energy of the Virginia hunt. I could feel my adrenaline pumping and could not hold myself back from joining in the excitement.

I ran steady on my short but sturdy Cairn terrier legs; a pretty little red hound drifted off course, the “field master” cracked his whip in the air to guide her back into the pack. He counted them out as “couples” to account for each and every hound. Not only did he watch the hounds but he kept the riders from interfering with the hounds. A lot goes on in our countryside and the hunt

in all its glory is poetry in motion and sometimes not so poetic. Racing across the great country side, the wind in your face, trusting your steed to ground as you glide across, rider side by side, a “burning scent” is hit upon, a scent so hot, so strong that the hounds howl and without hesitation the hunt is on.

In a burst the hounds are quickly on the fox, a stone wall is in front of us and I scramble to climb over. I see the “bush” of the foxes tail leap on top of the wall and off. The horses and riders fly through the air, hounds baying in full cry. Getting over the stone wall I find myself in “blind country” where the terrain is so overgrown it is impossible to gauge your footing. This is where I so admire the skills and the tenacity of the Virginia huntsman. I decide I must climb back onto the wall and watch from there. I could not go any further in territory this dense and keep up safely.

“Tally – Ho”, Tally – Ho the huntsman cries and sounds the horn to the hounds encouraging them on. Come see me ride papa; squealed one young rider. I’m flying. The papa yelled back in encouragement to the youngster; On with the hounds ... Galloping, galloping through the fields, thundering hoofs beneath, branch cracking, hounds howling, riders racing with skill beyond most – a “whip” out in front assisting the “huntsman” with the hounds, watching for the fox, goes down with her horse. Rolling, rolling, rolling, silence ... the hounds carry on – the riders come to a halt. The young resilient “whip” quickly checks her mount and walks it out to see signs of any lameness. Horse and rider are game. The hunt goes on, whip quickly

mounting again, for you see – the hunt stops for no one.

The Sly One, the red foxes nickname, is sly indeed. Well, I’ll be dog gone dumb founded – that fox double back before my very eyes during the commotion when the young whips horse fell while hitting a fox hole. The fox’s sneaky defense in any field, a hole that could kill a rider and horse in an instant was it not for the keen sense of the horse so aware of the ground it treads; poetry in motion and sometimes NOT; the thrill, the skill, the sportsmanship of the ride – something powerful to watch, something to be proud of in our Virginia heritage – real men, real women, real riders. (A real appreciation for the land and the open space we live on. The open space we have left. Are you willing to fight for the heritage of and preserve our open space before it is gone? That is true conservation and God Bless the landowners that have preserved and have given us the Virginia heritage and trust to hunt – to preserve a sense of camaraderie and community in common sense.)

That fox is coming right at me – the horses are headed in the opposite direction, following the hounds whose scent on the fox had become “spotty” at best. I slink behind the wall – is this true – is what I am feeling in my bred and born Cairn Terrier heart really happening? I see the lungs and nostril of this young fellow flaring – I feel the burning in his lungs, I see the determination in his eyes to outsmart the whole gang of Virginia fox hunters. I am

admiring his smarts. What is wrong with me! I let this Sly One slip past but as he slinks past, I shout out; you owe me, and I will collect dear foxy sir!

And so, the end of a brilliant Virginia day – a day steeped deep in tradition of sport – SPORT – which breeds family togetherness, compassion, wholesomeness, A NOBEL SPORT – where hard work and determination is learned by the experience of training, discipline and doing. A sport that breeds compassion and understanding of what it means to be a strong community in giving and sharing through true socialization – for it understands the hunting instincts in man and animal that we become a truly social society. In Virginia heritage I believe, Yours Truly, Sushi

P.S. MY MASTER, ELAINE BOLAND RUNS FIELDS OF ATHENRY FARM. ORDER HER FRESH MEATS AND PRODUCTS AT WWW.FIELDSOFATHENRY-FARM.COM AND DO COME SEE US AT THE FARM!

Answers to crossword puzzle from page 13

G	U	R	U		L	A	S	S	O		S	E	A	T			
A	N	I	S		E	S	T	O	P		A	X	L	E			
L	I	G	H	T	A	S	A	F	E	A	T	H	E	R			
A	T	S	E	A		B	A	R	T		A	R	M				
					R	I	T	E		R	O	T	G	U	T	S	
N	A	M		L	A	N	D		N	I	L	S					
A	S	A	P		U	S	E	S		R	A	T	E	S			
S	P	I	R	I	T	U	A	L	M	E	D	I	U	M			
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					O	P	A	L		H	E	R	O		N	O	W
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E	N	E			I	C	E	S			C	H	O	P	S		
W	I	T	H	A		H	E	A	V	Y	H	E	A	R	T		
S	A	T	E		E	R	N	I	E		A	H	O	Y			
Y	S	E	R		E	S	S	E	N		F	U	S	E			

Ask Dr. Mike, continued from page 2

your son that evening then may have challenged you to think about his own burgeoning sexuality. Thinking of our children’s sexuality can indeed stir all sorts of thoughts and feelings. I recommend using the store experience as an opportunity for you as parents to discuss sexuality with your son. Rather than shielding him from the “garbage”, I think he should know why the store offends you so much as parents – is it because you feel that the mannequins as displayed objectify women, or are you offended because Le Tache as a business is making something private too public for your taste? You may also wish to discuss where your son is sexually and what his behaviors and plans are in this area as a young teenager. By discussing your thoughts on the topic with your teenage son, you will encourage him to become comfortable discussing his own. Your conversations on sexuality with your son now should serve to support his developing values and morality throughout his teenage years and beyond if handled well.

Michael Oberschneider “Dr. Mike” is the Founder and Director of Ashburn Psychological Services (APS), a private mental health clinic comprised of 12 MD and PhD level mental health clinicians. He and his team are here to serve our Loudoun children, teens and adults. To learn more about Dr. Mike and the APS team, please visit: www.ashburnpsych.com or call (703) 723-2999.

News From the Village of Lincoln!

– By Ann Tiffany

On Sunday, January 22 the Lincoln Community League hosted a talk by Rich Gillespie entitled *The Potomac Frontier: 1862 in the Mosby Heritage Area*. 42 persons gathered in the Goose Creek Meeting House to hear Mr. Gillespie read from diaries of Loudouners as they recounted the happening around Leesburg and Balls Bluff during the first four months of 1862; and at the same time he showed slides taken of the grounds of Morvern Park, Balls Bluff and historic homes of Leesburg. 19 year old Virginia Miller wrote, “Oh God, when will this fighting cease and peace reign supreme?” 15 year old Mary Elizabeth (Molly) Black was “in love” with a soldier named Tommy McGee. In the winter months of 1862 the Mississippian soldiers enjoyed some good snowball fights while waiting for the enemy to approach. When the Federal soldiers marched from Waterford into Leesburg, across the fields to where the Rust Library now stands, they were shunned by the ladies of Leesburg who “turned their bustles (the backs of their skirts) on the troops” as they marched by.

On Saturday, February 18 at 7:30 p.m., the Mosby Heritage Area Association will be presenting “Cavaliers, Courage, and Coffee” as part of their dramatic program. This will again be taking place at the Goose Creek Meeting House.

Congratulations go out to Jean Brown of Oakland Green. She has been appointed by the Board of Supervisors to

represent the Bed and Breakfast industry on the Rural Economic Development Committee. This group focuses on development and protection of rural business such as wineries, B&Bs, rural restaurants, meat producers as well as producers of home-grown fruit and vegetables. This committee is following the economic contributions these businesses make to the overall economy of Loudoun county. Other sectors of the economy represented are: parks, equine, historic properties and the arts.

Chad Maloney, the son of Chip and Carole Maloney, was recently promoted to Captain in the U. S. Marine Corps. Chad, a 2009 Temple Law School graduate, is a member of the USMC JAG Corps and assigned to the USMC Miramar Air Station in San Diego. He and his wife, Rosa Catania, live in Pacific Beach, CA.

Erin Faroe has been in France for a month getting to know the country and her future in-laws. Her travels can be followed on her blog, <http://erincaise.blogspot.com/>.

Leah Cole, a Lincoln area artist and writer has just released her newest book, *The Victor Way*. She will have a book signing on February 3 at Earthworks in Leesburg.

The students at Blue Ridge Middle School need scraps of fabric to use in order to learn to sew. They make pillow cases and drawstring bags. If you have any cording, or fabric that would appeal to younger children, you can drop it by the school, attention Sue Whitlock.

Towns & Villages News

& Community Announcements

February

For a complete listing, please visit our Events Calendar on our website at www.brleader.com.

To see your community event here, please send us an email to: advertise@brleader.com!

☉ **Thursday, February 2, 11AM - 1PM Interactive Groundhog Day Celebration, Carver Center, Purcellville.** Cost: donation for Wildlife Ambassadors. Must pre-register by calling 571-258-3400 (Ages 55 & up) Who doesn't love groundhogs (well, except dogs and gardeners)? Learn more about this underappreciated rodent with an educational presentation by the Wildlife Ambassadors. Enjoy a special lunch with groundhog favors. 11:00-11:45: Wildlife in Winter Presentation by Wildlife Ambassadors; 12:00-12:30 Lunch with Groundhog favors; 12:30-1:00 Guests read groundhog-related poems aloud at podium.

☉ **Saturday, February 4, 8AM - 11AM Neersville Fire & Rescue Auxiliary Country Breakfast.** Country biscuits & sausage gravy, scrambled eggs, sausage patties, home fried potatoes, pancakes and more. 11762 Harpers Ferry Rd., (Rt.671). Free Will Offering. Contact: Val (540) 668-7005. Please bring a can good to be donated to the Interfaith Food Pantry.

☉ **Monday, February 6, 7:30PM Celebrate Ronald Reagan's Birthday by attending the opening lecture bearing his name on.** Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli will give the opening address for the 2012 Ronald Reagan Lecture Series on the relevance of the 10th Amendment to the US Constitution – often mentioned, but rarely explained. Elks Lodge, 401 W. Holly Ave, Sterling, VA 20164. Contact Pete Fagan at 703-403-1976. The lectures are free and open to the public. Sponsored by the Loudoun Country Republican Committee. Watch for future monthly lectures, March through June.

☉ **Friday, February 10, and every Friday night from 7pm – 10pm – The Friday Night After Hours Teen Center at Cascades Library** exclusively for middle and high school age students. Cascades Library, 21030 Whitfield Place, Potomac Falls, VA 20165. Details: Every Friday night from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m. the After Hours Teen Center at Cascades Library is open exclusively for teens. Every Friday includes pizza and a special event in addition to the gaming, computers, music and art

supplies that are always available. Participation is free with a signed permission slip that is kept on file for returning participants. February special features: February 10: Valentine Party; February 17: Mardi Gras Masquerade; February 24: Mobiles inspired by Calder. For more information visit <http://library.loudoun.gov>.

☉ **February 17, 7pm-10pm: Mardi Gras Masquerade – The Friday Night After Hours Teen Center at Cascades Library** exclusively for middle and high school age students. (See February 10 listing)

☉ **Friday, Feb 17, 8:00pm DANNY KNICELY at Franklin Park Arts Center: DANNY KNICELY returns to Franklin Park Arts Center** in Purcellville for his 6th annual "Big Winter Concert". Danny continues to dazzle audiences with a variety of world-class musical performances, some of which are put together just for this special event. This show is always one of a kind and is not to be missed! This year's concert features three great songwriter/multi-instrumentalists: TIM O'BRIEN, JAMES LEVA, and DAVID VIA.

☉ **Saturday, February 18, from 8PM til 11:00AM: All You Can Eat Country Breakfast with Pancakes.** The Hillsboro United Methodist Women are sponsoring an on. at the Hillsboro United Methodist Church fellowship hall located at 37216 Charles Town Pike. A freewill offering will be taken. All proceeds will benefit missions

☉ **Monday, February 20, 7PM. Marine Corps League Meeting: Marine Corps League, Loudoun Detachment 1205,** meets the third Monday of each month. Meeting starts 7:00

Street, Purcellville, Virginia. The detachment has been active for many years, providing a continuing home for Marines of all ages and backgrounds, keeping alive our links with The Corps and serving the community. Contact www.loudounmarines.org.

☉ **February 24, 7PM – 10PM: Mobiles inspired by Calder The Friday Night After Hours Teen Center at Cascades Library** exclusively for middle and high school age students. (See February 10 listing)

Oh the weather outside is frightful,
but the bus is warm and delightful!



Call Loudoun County Office of Transportation Services today for Commuter and Local bus information or visit our website.

703-771-5665 www.loudoun.gov/commute

On the web with daily updates at www.brleader.com



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Community Announcements, continued

Loudoun County Public Library Short Story Writing Contest and Workshops for Teens: Submissions Accepted January 2 through March 1

The Loudoun County Public Library second annual "It's All Write" short story writing contest for teens began January 2, 2012.

Writers are limited to one entry per person which must be submitted via email between January 2 and March 1, 2012. Cash prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place

for grades 6 through 8 and 9 through 12.

Writing contest guidelines and details may be found online at <http://library.loudoun.gov>, or visit any branch and talk with a staff member. One entry per person should be submitted by March 1, 2012 via email to: allwrite@library.loudoun.gov.

Author, Sharon Flake will announce the winners and present the awards at the "It's All Write" award party at 6:00 pm on April 22, 2012 at Park View High School in Sterling.

Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy Geologist and Field Trip - February 8

What do you know about the geology of Loudoun County? If your answer is "not much," you should plan on attending the program by Dr. Scott Southworth of the U.S. Geological Survey at Rust Library in Leesburg on February 8, 7:00pm. Dr. Southworth will describe Loudoun's geology and how it affects

us in ways we never imagine. The presentation will be followed by an all-day field trip on Saturday, February 11.

If you are participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count during February 17-20, LWC would love to receive your data for the Loudoun County Bird Atlas. Send your data to Spring Ligi at sligi@loudounwildlife.org. For more information about the Count, see <http://birdsource.org/gbbc>.

CA\$H Bingo American Legion Post 293

Purcellville Doors open at 9:00 AM, first game starts at 10:00 AM, 1st and 3rd Saturdays of month, 34 total bingo games with early birds, specials and TWO \$500 Progressive JACK-POTS, food and beverages available, American Legion Post 293, 112 N. 21st Street Purcellville, VA 20132, Phone: 540-338-0910, alpost293.web.officelive.com. CA\$H Bingo calendar events for 2012:

Month	1st Saturday	3rd Saturday
Feb.	Saturday, Feb. 4	Saturday, Feb. 18
Mar.	Saturday, Mar. 3	Saturday, Mar. 17
April	Saturday, April, 7	Saturday, April, 21
May	Saturday, May, 5	Saturday, May, 19
June	Saturday, June, 2	Saturday, June, 16
July	Saturday, July, 7	Saturday, July, 21
Aug.	Saturday, Aug. 4	Saturday, Aug. 18
Sep.	Saturday, Sep. 1	Saturday, Sep. 15
Oct.	Saturday, Oct. 6	Saturday, Oct. 20
Nov.	Saturday, Nov. 3	Saturday, Nov. 17
Dec.	Saturday, Dec. 1	Saturday, Dec. 15

On the Market ... with Sam Rees



Round Hill, Purcellville, Bluemont, Hamilton, Leesburg, Lovettsville, Waterford



FEATURED LISTING



FEATURED LISTING

Lakefront home in Shenstone - Leesburg \$1,095,000

Motivated seller has reduced this six bedroom home by 200K! Incredible 4 acre property with paddocks and custom barn with kitchen and bath. Professional office, putting green, gardens, play area and top of the line 8000SF home! 600 yards from WO&D trail. LO7594571



SOLD!

SOLD - Multiple Offers - Listed for \$319,900 - Round Hill



SOLD!

SOLD - Listed for \$325,000 Sweetgum Place - Round Hill



SOLD!

Round Hill

5 bedrooms and 3 full baths on upper level .54 acre lot - located on heart of old town! \$444,700



UNDER CONTRACT!

Historic Sunnyside, 25.1 Acres

Restored & Updated! Five bedrooms/3 baths upper level. Barns, Creek & Fenced for Horses! NEW PRICE \$1,145,000



SOLD!

Waterford

Waterford - 6 bedroom estate on 35 acres. Listed for \$1,650,000



NEW PRICE!

Lot 6 Sunny Ridge Road, Round Hill - Bring Your Own Builder

3 acre lot (new paved road) Beautiful Views! Minutes to downtown. \$149,900

Sam's Market Update The 2011 market finished very strong with Closed Sales up 23.1% and Median Sold Price up 2.5% (from November 2011!). BUT NEW LISTINGS WERE DOWN 25.4% IN DECEMBER WHICH MEANS OUR WINTER INVENTORY IS VERY LOW OFFERING A STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE FOR HOMES THAT COME ON THE MARKET BEFORE SPRING.

Call Sam Rees, Associate Broker, Prudential Penfed Realty

Cell: 703-408-4261 sam.rees.pfragent.com samvrees@yahoo.com



Sam.Rees.PFRAgent.com

Every Real Estate Market has Great Opportunities

