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Rains Result In Six Overnight Water Rescue Emergencies

– By Andrea Gaines

Heavy rains marching across the country unloaded on western Loudoun County last week, causing massive flooding and putting drivers in life-threatening situations in six different incidents. Rescues took place between 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 30 and 4 a.m. on Thursday as local fire and rescue squads were called the scene to save stranded motorists.

- Purcellville, Neersville, and Round Hill

squads were called to Short Hill Road and Silver Brook Lane where one person was rescued from a vehicle while attempting to drive through a shallow water crossing.

- Crews from Philomont, Purcellville, Aldie, Middleburg, Hamilton, Leesburg and Lucketts responded to a Snickersville Turnpike and Hibbs Bridge Road incident where an individual in an SUV had been swept downstream.

- In the middle of the night on Thursday,

units were sent to Evergreen Mills Road and Belmont Ridge Road where a driver had attempted to cross a flooded area. Crews from South Riding, Moorefield and Arcola made the rescue.

- Another call Thursday night sent crews to Lime Kiln Road in the area of Goose Creek Lane. Units from Leesburg, Philomont, Aldie, Hamilton and Lucketts arrived to find an adult stranded on the roof of their vehicle after attempting to cross a flooded roadway.

- Units from Moorefield, South Riding, and Arcola rescued the two adults attempting to make a shallow water crossing in a pickup truck on Watson Road at Evergreen Mills Road. The Loudoun County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management instructs drivers to “Turn Around, Don’t Drown”! Deaths occur as people and their vehicles are swept downstream. Do not attempt to drive around barriers or signs warning that roads are flooded, the department warns.



“Cats” Coming to Blue Ridge Middle School

The musical “Cats” will be making its next stop on the stage of Blue Ridge Middle School in Purcellville. The school is about to become the first school in Loudoun County and one of the only schools in the Northern Virginia area to stage the full musical production of CATS, in cooperation with Rodgers and Hammerstein Theatricals.

The play is directed by Dolly Stevens,

who is in her fifth year of directing musicals at Blue Ridge. Past musicals have included “Annie,” “Seussical,” “Bye Bye Birdie,” and “Beauty and the Beast.”

She is the co-founding artistic director of The Growing Stage, a youth theatre company. She has taught numerous acting and improvisation classes to youth and adults and directed more than 50 main stage

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Don Rose: Remembering A Champion – And More – For Youth Sports

Donald Neff Rose, Sr. passed away on Jan. 24, 2013. He was born on Oct. 16, 1938, to Thomas and Esther Rose in Paris, VA. He was a generous man who dedicated his time to youth sports not only in Loudoun County but to the whole state of Virginia. He entered the Army after graduating from Marshall High School where he served as a paratrooper for the 82nd Airborne. He was vice president of LEO Construction, a Rose family business, and the Babe Ruth State Commissioner of Virginia. He embodied sportsmanship and wanted all youth to be able to play sports in Loudoun



County. And, his influence was large. His coaching and mentoring to youth spanned well over 40 years. “Don had a way of getting you involved,” said Gloria (Craun) Elgin, former president of Greater Loudoun Babe Ruth.

“It was always for the kids,” Elgin continued. “I picture him building a giant press box in heaven so Mickie Gordon, John Haske and Don could have a perfect view of every baseball game.” (Mickie and John were well known local sports advocates.) “He wanted every kid to play, and every kid to be treated

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Love Is In The Air, page 21



Loudoun's Nocturnal Flyer – Yes! Flyer!

Wild Loudoun, page 13

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Ask Dr. Mike

Dr. Mike,

I really enjoyed your interview with CNN reporter Moni Basu last week. I think your views on President Obama and Congress were very balanced and respectful. I am writing because I could use your help. My husband and I voted for Mitt Romney, and while I have moved on to accept Mr. Obama as my president, my husband remains bitter. He refers to Mr. Obama as “Captain Clueless,” “Obamanation,” “The Socialist,” etc. I am concerned since our 10 year old son is now repeating some of those derogatory nicknames, and to my embarrassment, in public. I’ve told my husband that he needs to curtail his negative, political statements around the kids, but he is adamant in his position that our current president is not good for his country, and it’s “good” for the kids to believe that. Help.

R in Loudoun County

R,

Thank you for the kind words on my interview. Based on what you have written, I do not think you can challenge your husband directly on his behavior since he is so passionate about what he believes

in. Instead, I think you could tell him that, while he may feel he is right in his position, his statements are upsetting to you. Let him know that there is nothing wrong with his having certain political views; however, he is a father to a young boy who is very impressionable. At age 10, children begin to identify strongly with their same-sex parents, and they internalize the messages they hear – positive or negative. Not surprisingly, your son is now repeating what he is hearing from his father because, in large part, he likely looks up to, respects and wants to be like his father. Rather than resort to name calling and insults regarding Mr. Obama or Democrats for that matter, why not ask your husband to express his thoughts on the topic more constructively with his boy. A good starting point could be for your husband to teach his son about the two major political parties. Age appropriately, he could discuss the main points of the Constitution or the Declaration of Independence, or he could take a trip down to DC with his son to teach him about our nation’s political history by visiting the monuments. Your husband could even discuss why he voted for Mitt Romney and his concerns for our current president.

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View From The Ridge
Preserving Lincoln Elementary and Loudoun's Last Great Public Schools

— By Andrea Gaines

A \$310,000 regularly scheduled maintenance project for the 160 student Lincoln Elementary School has turned into a very convenient way for politicians to turn some of the most historic and educationally relevant Loudoun County educational institutions into nothing more than surplus property.

Certain members of the Loudoun County School Board are arguing that these small old schools — including (in addition to Lincoln Elementary) schools in Aldie, Hillsboro, Hamilton, Middleburg, and Round Hill — cannot meet the relative per-pupil cost achieved by other more modern schools — that they should be closed. And, what we really need to do is build a large \$30 million or so new modern elementary school somewhere out in western Loudoun County ... really?

There are lots of politically correct arguments against these small schools. Out-of-date buildings that require too much maintenance. Staffing costs that can't be sustained. An unrealistic connection to yesterday that allows "elitist" children to attend a school right there in their own community ... while children in other schools get bussed far away from home.

But, if citizens in Loudoun County interact with their elected (and appointed) representatives on any level, it must be to demand that these representatives address the whole of what Loudoun County needs in the



name of governance and leadership in the area of education.

The schools under consideration for closure don't just educate our smaller communities' children.

They preserve history — living history and architectural history. The buildings and the communities in which they operate have been doing the same thing for 100 years or more.

They model and perpetuate the community-based school concept. No one would argue that what goes on in a small, community-based school isn't valuable to all of us.

They instruct us on the appropriate balance between what we spend on schools and what we get back.

As the School Board and, ultimately, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors makes a decision on these Loudoun County gems, they must understand they are making decisions on more than brick and mortar. Their decisions have meaning for all Loudoun County communities, not just the immediate communities these small schools serve.

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You Have A Target On Your Back

– By Valerie Cury Joyner

Those who live in the proposed Purcellville Joint Land Management Area (JLMA) are in the target area for the future growth of Purcellville. If this growth area is approved as part of the County's Revised General Plan, sooner or later you will become part of Purcellville, or, as the *Loudoun Times Mirror* called it "The Ideal Town."

Unfortunately, the newspaper didn't mention the almost \$70 million debt that the town carries (about \$9,000 per person). Nor did it mention the town water and sewer bills that increase approximately 25 percent annually. As reported here in January, Purcellville wants you in its JLMA ... regardless of your feelings on the subject.

Why, however, should you be in a "growth" area in the first place if your neighborhood is already built up? According to its definition, a JLMA is specifically designed to supply water and sewer from the town to surrounding areas, and also to separate regions that have "significantly different land uses." However, the proposed JLMA cuts right through the

middle of existing residential neighborhoods. The proposed JLMA is the same as the old urban growth area set up decades ago when Purcellville was surrounded by farms. To use an obsolete plan in a new amendment to the County's Revised General Plan is sheer folly, since hundreds of homes already exist in the JLMA.

If you haven't been following the saga of the Purcellville Urban Growth Area Management Plan (PUGAMP), you should be. The town voted to get rid of PUGAMP last year and now it's the county's turn to agree to dissolve it. The resolution (CPAM2012-0002) that the county is using to eliminate the PUGAMP still contains the JLMA, and if you are in it you can be the first to be absorbed by a simple "boundary line adjustment." Sure, you have a chance to protest that at a public hearing. But, if your public hearing goes the way the recent county planning commission went (9-0 in favor of the resolution) kiss your right to stay out of the town goodbye. You can't testify on your own behalf at the one-judge legal proceeding. And, if the judge

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Reducing Threats To Our Rural Economy

– By Malcolm F. Baldwin

Our Board of Supervisors has made lowering property taxes a key objective, to be balanced by higher commercial tax revenues. Several supervisors recently noted that each new Loudoun residence costs \$1.61 in schools and other public services for every dollar it contributes to property tax revenue, while commercial development costs only \$0.31 for every revenue dollar it contributes. The board justifies its approval of Metro into Loudoun by plans to ensure net positive returns from new commercial development around the two Ashburn Metro stations, despite cries of dismay and coming taxpayer doom.

Will our supervisors actually restrain costly residential development and foster more rewarding commercial growth? Loudoun has grown by over 15 fold in fifty years, so how will our Board make future growth rates and property taxes more manageable and allow Loudoun residents to continue enjoying their diverse suburban and rural "worlds?" How will the board ensure economic viability of

the future Metro station growth centers, vastly improve transportation in eastern Loudoun, and sustain and strengthen our rural economy?

It's no surprise that the board focuses on suburban issues, since six of our eight district supervisors represent Loudoun's suburban east, and nearly half the population of our two western districts of Blue Ridge and Catoclin lies in suburban neighborhoods. Long-term interests of rural Loudoun appear taken for granted, misunderstood or neglected.

Rural Loudoun's economy returns more to the county in property tax revenue, tourism, and other economic benefits than it requires in county services and infrastructure. Maintaining this net economic benefit to the county requires continued low density and demand for public services. But rural economic attributes remain undervalued. The rural economy "doesn't move the dial" in lowering taxes, one supervisor argued last year. But, of course Loudoun's costs and taxes will rise if the rural economy declines and the west becomes suburbanized.

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Letters To The Editor

Gerrymandering

Dear Editor:

In 2011, the Republicans got 60 percent of the vote while the Democrats received only 40% of the vote from statewide senate races. However, because the Democrats manipulated the districts, they were able to hold exactly half the seats in the senate. Thankfully Republicans in Richmond had the courage to fix the gerrymandering the Democrats had done to thwart the voters.

Democrats have been screaming "foul" because Republicans stood up for what was right and fixed it. When drawing district lines, lawmakers are supposed to keep areas of common interest together. What does Lowes Island have to do with Arlington? Democrats took a few thousand houses in Lowes Island (Sterling) and made them into an Arlington district that is represented by Senator Favola. It is gerrymandering like that, which the Democrats had hoped would go unnoticed or unchallenged, that erodes the integrity of our political process.

I hope the House passes the corrected lines so that Democrats aren't able to thwart the will of the voters in future elections!

– Jeff Brown, Leesburg, VA

Rural Utopia?

Dear Editor:

Malcolm Baldwin, in his article "Offsetting the Costs of Residential Growth," is way off the mark. Mr. Baldwin, I get it that commer-

cial consumes fewer dollars than residential, but that really depends on where you draw the line and what the development looks like. Your claim that adding the Metro and its mindboggling costs will protect anything is, in a word, absurd. It will bring development and trigger tax increases. Don't take my word for it. Just look east to Fairfax to see the proof.

Generally you are correct when you say commercial consumes less, but there is more to the story. You miss at least two important things.

First, look east to Fairfax County to see our future. They are raising taxes to cover the estimated \$3.1 billion cost to adapt Tysons Corner to the new Metro-centered city. Costs associated with modifying and maintaining infrastructure are too big to ignore and are piled on top of the specific Metro costs. \$3.1 billion, that's a lot of money for any county.

In the near future, Loudoun will raise property taxes, impose a commercial industrial tax on all business, and cut other spending to pay for Metro related expenses. If you look at Governor McDonnell's new transportation plan, it seems he, too, has acquired the train transit fetish and has asked for a sales tax and motor vehicle registration fee increase to cover the cost. Why? The answer is that trains mean more of what you see in Tysons Corner, and developers love that.

Second, Mr. Baldwin loves the pristine ru-

ral landscape. Who doesn't? Baldwin is right, that expanding residential development is likely to lead to tax increases. I agree completely that allowing increased density without the proffers to cover 100 percent of the costs that follow, is a mistake. But, Baldwin wants to live in a sparsely populated rural utopia and (like the developers) is scheming for taxpayer-funded subsidies to pay for it. I repeat, the Baldwin Plan needs payers to underwrite his elitist pipe dream for western Loudoun.

Trying to limit intrusive development with Metro is like trying to put out a house fire with a stream of gasoline. It's not gonna work. When you try to put out the fire the wrong way, it spreads. Metro screams for more development. Developers have lots of money and will use it to purchase more development by manipulating the government, just as they did to bring the Metro to Loudoun. As the costs of Metro accumulate and people protest, the pressure will mount and feed the call for more commercial development under the pretense that this will provide tax relief, but the dog never seems to catch his tail.

Politicians will be embarrassed by how low Metro ridership is and will be inclined to grant more residential development to compensate, and so goes the spiral of infrastructure expansion inducing growth as it always does. Businesses will love it, and property

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We Welcome Your Letters To The Editor!

Submissions may be sent to Editor@BRLeader.com, or via mail to PO Box 325, Purcellville, VA 20134-0325.

Please include your name, address and telephone number.

We reserve the right to edit submissions as necessary. Deadline for print edition is the third week of each month, or, online any time.

Open Letter From The Old Dominion Valley Homeowners Association & Board of Directors

To the Purcellville Town Council

Dear Council Members,

The Old Dominion Valley Homeowner's Association conducted a Board meeting on Sept. 19, 2012, and was informed of a proposed development to build an apartment complex along the south side of Hirst Road adjacent to our community. The application for this project has been submitted to Town Council and is currently slated to have 176 units (up to 205), with seven three-story buildings on 13 acres.

The Board of Directors and homeowners of ODV are opposed to this development and implore the Town Council to deny the application and consider other viable options for the property as well as the effects this development would have on the entire Town of Purcellville.

Residential concerns:

- **Environmental:** Purcellville's 2025 Comprehensive Plan places a high priority on open space preservation and this parcel of land was identified in the plan for public open space preservation and buffer for Cactocin Creek. This Creek is classified by Virginia's Department of Environmental quality as "impaired riverine water and special attention should be given to those areas that are environmentally sensitive, such as wetlands, steep slopes, floodplains, and poorly drained areas." This area contains mature trees and is an opportunity for the town to provide an educational and recreational resource for their residents to enjoy whose costs would be considerably less than constructing large parks or recreational facilities. Water tests show that water quality on the east side of Hatcher is measurably worse than upstream adjacent to the industrial parks and further development will exacerbate this and imperil a resource of distinction and environmental quality.
- **Traffic:** Hirst Road is a byway for the Town of Purcellville and the Planning Com-

mission has already recommended limits on traffic capacity in the area of the proposed development. The additional vehicle traffic from this high-density complex will add to the already congested commuter traffic during peak rush hour periods. Coupled with Loudoun Valley High School bus/student drivers and other general vehicular movement through town, this will undoubtedly have detrimental negative effects on the entire town and the residents who use these roads frequently. With limited space for widening the roads and the poor aesthetic that four lane roads would have within town limits, adding projects that would increase the traffic flow through this area needs to be highly selective and scrutinized.

• **School Impact:** The addition of several new schools has alleviated the overcrowding that existed at all grade levels and schools that serve the residents of Purcellville. Adding approximately five to ten percent to our town population so rapidly, in addition to other residential projects slated for development just outside of town limits, would put a burden on our schools once again and it will take years to alleviate this due to the time and money constraints for building additional schools.

• **Community Balance:** Purcellville currently has the highest ratio of "affordable apartments" to per capita population in the county. Although the county as a

“
The application for this project has been submitted to Town Council and is currently slated to have 176 units (up to 205), with seven three-story buildings on 13 acres.
 ”

whole may show a need for such housing, the direct need for it in Purcellville does not exist. The existing tax-credit properties in town are north of Main Street and west of Maple Avenue. Concentrating an additional complex in this area will create a lack of balance within our town as well as can be con-

strued as a form of segregation for certain races and income groups. Residential segregation produces negative socioeconomic outcomes for minority groups and Purcellville's public policy for housing should attempt to promote integration and mitigate these negative effects with better planning and placement of affordable housing.

• **Quality of Life:** ODV residents, as well as most residents in Purcellville, have concerns about the quality of their living experience here. They chose long commutes

to escape what they disliked about other communities in Loudoun and surrounding counties. The Comprehensive Plan directly asserts the community's desire to maintain a small town atmosphere and this proposed apartment complex is in direct opposition to the Comprehensive Plan as well as the Hirst Road charrette that was created for the town.

We urge the Town Council to evaluate this application on more than just quantitative measurements, such as properly filed applications or ordinance compliance, and exercise qualitative analysis in its evaluation. Affirm the voice of the residents who moved here for what the town is today and not for what developers wish to make it in the future. If small towns want to keep what sets them apart, they should not try to mimic something else but instead be true to what established them in the beginning and what continues to attract visitors and residents.

The ODV board and its residents, while adamantly opposed to apartments on the Stupar property, will be actively participating in the deliberations and the process for any and all development along the Hirst Road and Maple Avenue corridors.

Doing The Wrong Thing ... In Private

– By Kelli Grim

No citizen should have to go to the time and expense of a formal Freedom of Information Act request to find out the basics of what their local government is doing. However, because the Town of Purcellville routinely conducts public business under the shroud of private emails and other communications – as opposed to open discussion in committees where citizens can listen in – it has also become routine for ordinary citizens to have to avail themselves of the protections of FOIA, just to understand what is going on ...

For example, a recent FOIA request produced the following emails and letters on the subject of Hirst Farm II – an 84-acre parcel of undeveloped land outside of the Purcellville town limits directly across from the entrance to the original Hirst Farm development on 690. There has been no mention of this subject in a single town council or committee meeting. However, the correspondence clearly reveals that this issue has been discussed by the town council and staff in numerous emails, letters, meetings, and closed sessions.

Emails and Letters Revealed Through FOIA:

• In a letter dated May 15, 2012, a representative for the property owner of Hirst Farm II wrote to Town Manager Rob Lohr: "Your letter ... proposed an option of developing 14-20 acres in either the northeast or southeast portions of the property, and donating the remainder of the property to the town. Mr. Cangiano would like to proceed with that option, given the town would allow approximately 48 lots."

• In a May 2012 email, Town Manager Rob Lohr wrote [to Councilman John Nave]: "I believe that there is no immediate hurry but if we want to purchase the whole property [Hirst Farm II], he would probably want to know in the next 30 days but would be willing to wait for a reasonable time in order to close. I have this item on the Infrastructure Committee's close session for the next week. We will also be able to discuss at the Ways and Means or TC given final direction. I will also work with staff to explore funding options but believe the only alternative that would involve us having to purchase is the first which would have us owning all of the property. While the Town may not like being in this business, one way to hold down the cost would be to subdivide and sell some of the lots at a later point to help offset our cost. I will work with staff to try and get some other options identified for TC. Thanks, Rob"

• In a December 2012 email, Town Manager Rob Lohr wrote [to the Town Council]:

"Dear Town Council, The gentleman who purchased the property yesterday has already had his engineer contact us and the count to get background information. In a more relaxed environment, the Town could open discussions of purchasing the property if you are interested. While we are tight on funds needed for other capital projects (SCR), the price may be attractive enough that we could hold the property and sell some of it to help pay for the purchase cost. Since it sold for only \$615,000 we could offer a premium of \$50,000 to \$75,000 and he

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owners will wonder why they paid to transform their community into something they don't recognize ... or they will move out.

Transferring development rights sounds good, but it will involve the same politicians and developers who control the process. This guarantees that the interests of the little guy will receive little consideration.

Loudoun County was developing quite well even without the new train – so well, in fact, that the data showed that rejecting Metro would likely have yielded a windfall of revenue without the expense. But, instead of grasping that opportunity to shed our distinction as the most taxed county in the eastern U.S., we bought in so our quality of life will be strained even more.

By choosing Metro, Loudoun committed to an extremely costly remake where business development is drawn into station area clusters. This sounds consistent with Mr. Baldwin's vision for preserving western Loudoun but it will in the long run, drive up taxes

and stimulate high density development in western Loudoun county.

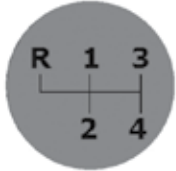
Loudoun County is at a cusp with two very powerful forces working together to advance their special interests. Developers want more development and they seem to always win. Mr. Baldwin promotes an elitist vision of a rural utopia, which, incidentally, also creates an imbalance as it consumes far more in services than it pays for in taxes. In that respect, the elitists and developers have something in common, they need you, the taxpayer, to turn a blind eye and pay up to enrich them both. Can we benefit from the coming Metro, or any new development for that matter? The answer is that it will take a lot more than imagination. It will require that we elect hard-nosed principled negotiators who are loyal to the citizenry, not those beholden to the powerful special interests that strive to dominate the growth of our beautiful and prosperous county.

– David LaRock, Hamilton

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Purcellville First Friday Coming Back With Men In Kilts – March 1

Purcellville First Friday will kick off its second season with March's theme – "Men in Kilts" – thanks to an idea from Realtor Janet Mulhern of Atoka Properties.

In late January, local business leaders donned Scottish kilts for a photo shoot with award-winning photographer Sarah Huntington (photo at right). The photo is on display at Above Ground Winery and other local businesses. Readers and locals are invited to guess whose legs belong to which business leader, and submit their guesses to win a \$100 gift card to Magnolias at the Mill restaurant. The photo and "Guess Whose Legs" forms are available at businesses around town and can be dropped in a box at Above Ground Winery (Thursday – Sunday noon 'til 5pm). A drawing of entries will start at 9 p.m. March 1 at the winery (105 Main Street, Purcellville).

"The community is invited to enjoy extended, later hours of local businesses on Friday, March 1. These businesses will be offering music, free appetizers and beverages along with special sales:

- Above Ground Winery – Live Music with Jason Masi www.jasonmasi.com;



Individuals pictured in photo above (not in this order!) are: Matt Barbagallo, Above Ground Winery; Rocky Westfall, Atoka Properties; Scott Harris, Catoctin Creek Distillery; and Shawn Malone, Magnolias at the Mill Restaurant. Photo: Sarah Huntington

- Around the Block Books – Open Mic Night with Poetry and Short Stories and Music;

- Other participating business – Atoka Properties, Its Bazaar on 21st Street, Piper Dan's Keltic Shoppe, RE-LOVE IT, and more.

Merchants encourage the public to wear kilts on First Friday to celebrate the upcoming St. Patrick's Day. Don't have a kilt? Visit Piper Dan's Keltic Shoppe for a selection of kilts and celebration items.

Follow Purcellville First Friday on Facebook for the updates.

(Drawing winner must be 21 or older to participate and winner must be present. Businesses, their employees and relatives may not participate.)



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Reducing Threats To Our Rural Economy, continued from page 4

Our rural economy has grown, not because of exclusionary efforts of the “elites” (an oft-repeated charge), but by productive economic use of rural resources. Rural businesses provide revenue of well over \$100 million a year, most obviously from our 34 wineries and 100-odd vineyards, our produce farms, bed and breakfasts, wedding venues, and the arts, culinary and equine sectors. Equine alone employs over 1,000 people and attracts growing numbers of tourists from all over the metro region. All rural sectors increasingly attract tourists into rural Loudoun, thanks in good part to vigorous efforts of Visit Loudoun and the county’s rural economic development staff.

But our rural economy remains fragile because current rural zoning has not fully protected it from disruptive development pressures. The recession has merely disguised and postponed its vulnerability. Today we have at least 15,000 additional houses that can be built by right in rural Loudoun, and we continue to lose farms and farmland. In 2002, we had 1,516 farms on 164,753 acres; in the ensuing five years we lost over 100 farms and 22,000 farmland acres. The rural zoning put back in place in 2007 does not maintain the protections established by the earlier rural zoning in 2003 that the Virginia Supreme Court rejected two years later because of alleged flaws in public notice. New vulnerability resulted because:

- The 2004-2007 Republican-majority board of supervisors, being development-friendly, was unwilling to appeal that decision or re-advertise to correct any notice deficiency. So, rural Loudoun reverted to 3-acre zoning for 21 months;
- During that time the county processed 172 subdivision applications for 3-acre zoning in the previously down-zoned rural sector; and
- Finally, the agreed-upon rural zoning “compromise” allowing 5-acre “cluster” development on 20-acre lots in the northwestern sector (AR-1) actually resulted in essentially the same overall density as the 3-acre zoning it replaced, because density there had previously been allowed on net acreage available for development (minus floodplain, steep slopes, etc.), but the new zoning was based upon gross acreage (not excluding such unbuildable lands).

Not surprisingly, therefore, last year every rural business sector participating in the Rural Economic Development Council’s development of a business strategy reported significant problems dealing with the threat and reality of suburban development.

What can be done to reduce threats to our rural economy? First, it requires support for the new Rural Business Strategy to strengthen entrepreneurship in rural Loudoun. Second, rural businesses will also need continued protection through conservation easements. Loudoun has some 51,000 acres in conservation easements – virtually all in our rural section – that allow

rural business to continue with greater security. But, not all properties have the attributes required, and many farmers look toward future sale of their development lots for retirement income.

A third strategy has been adopted in 2010 by Frederick County, Virginia: a Transfer of Development Rights program. Unlike the Purchase of Development Rights program that requires county funding, this program uses free-market practices and requires no taxpayer funds. The right to develop one’s land has market value, so owners in the agricultural area may sell such rights to an owner or developer in the county’s urban area designated for increased development density. Frederick encourages preservation of farms with the best soils by granting them double the number of saleable development rights for possible transfer. The program’s implementation has been delayed by the recession, but it is well received and not seen (as it might be perceived by some in Loudoun’s heated political arena) to be some kind of gift to the landed “elite.” Working farmers and developers view the program as a practical market-driven tool.

Might Loudoun adopt such a market-based program? One concern is that TDRs do not bring proffers from developers because they stand as a direct exchange of development rights from the agricultural “sending/selling” area to a designated “receiving/purchasing” area. But, in fact, we know that Loudoun’s proffers do not now pay for the capital facilities required, nor do they ever cover the high operating costs of schools and other public services.

Another concern is that TDRs will only be suited to receiving areas where transportation and other services can keep pace with greater density. But, TDRs remain a viable tool; development pressures on rural Loudoun, forestalled by recession, will increase from approved subdivisions, bringing higher valuation of agricultural land, adverse impacts on agritourism and increased costs to the county from each new home.

Since our article last month, the Planning Commission has rejected two of the eight pending developer proposals to shift zoning from commercial to residential. But, the fate of all of them – totaling over 10,000 units – depends on board decisions. Given the board’s announced commercial priorities and understanding of residential costs, we should expect either rejection of all rezoning proposals or, at the very least, approval only under conditions that will not increase net residential growth and costs to the county.

TDRs warrant serious consideration as a means toward that end. We need our supervisors to direct the county staff to assess the ways in which a TDR program might effectively reduce residential development in rural Loudoun. Addressing this issue will further board’s desire to reduce residential costs through greater commercial development.

Just Like Nothing (Else) on Earth: Middleburg

By Tim Jon



JON

I never thought I’d be doing this, but I really need to issue a formal apology here. I am very sorry, Middleburg. Yeah – you heard right; I feel I’d been neglecting one of our most charming places in the County (heck, one of the most charming little Towns in America, when you come right down to it).

You see, I’m very good at excuses, if you hadn’t already noticed. I can come up with an absolutely iron-clad explanation for having failed to perform some of the most painless tasks; but, on the other hand, I’m probably even better at apologizing. “Take responsibility!” I often say, and I’ll stand by my words on this one. It’s



my own fault for not having answered the call of Middleburg’s many offerings over the past couple of years in this column – but no more. No, sir.

So, I grabbed the bull by the horns early one morning, camera and coffee in hand, and I made my touristic way down to the fabled center of the “Hunt Country” in Loudoun’s southwest corner.

And that oft-quoted phrase triggers another of my excuses: “Oh, it’s just a bunch of idle rich people down there – out of touch with the lives of us REAL Loudouners.” Yeah, I’ve probably felt that way more than once (admit it - many of us have).

But on countless other occasions, I’ve been completely “romanced over” by my many experiences in Middleburg over my years in this very varied locality. Let’s see: there was the coverage of political events at the historic community center during my first months on the job as News Director for what once was another charming little institution in these parts: Wage Radio of Leesburg. I made some long-lasting friends at some of those initial events in those days – many of which were held right there – in Downtown Middleburg. Gee – that’s pushing 20 years ago, now. Then

there was the time we took my parents out for dinner at the fabled Red Fox Inn on Main Street (the place which still exhibits damage from Civil War cannon-balls, so I’m told). We had some wonderful times in and around that little town. And, on the “artistic” side of my life, there were countless times I offered my Readers Theatre services for the local library on Reed Street. I think I enjoyed those occasions as much as any audience member – others of which I joined (audiences – that is), in order to watch performances of my friends in shows at the Hill School Theater. Hallmark moments, all (and far too long ago!). In fact, I can’t think of a single time I’ve been in that locale when I had anything but an extremely rewarding time. I’ve just scratched the surface in the old memory bank in those preceding sentences.

So – back to the ‘here and now’ – why the more recent neglect, excuses, distance & the rest?

Well, life brings change: time and energy being at a premium these past few years, coupled with the geographic distance from my home in Leesburg – I took this combination and cooked up a real recipe for procrastination.

But, as I said, I took the initiative and placed myself back in what’s really one of my favorite places on earth early that one morning – checking in on some of the old sights, re-discovering a few I’d let fade away, and discovering others for future experience. I was reminded that what many of us allow ourselves to think and feel of Middleburg – that it’s just a ‘place for the rich’ – out of reach for those of us with ‘real lives’ – is really NOT what I’ve found to be the case. Ever. This historic little community is made up of a large proportion of what I’d call “humble” (yet very charming) dwellings, streets, public facilities and untraveled corners.

Yes, there are the high-profile attractions in Middleburg, of course. And, some of the landmarks exhibit facades – just like people I’ve met in some places. But I’ve yet to encounter a ‘false’ person in this Town. And, hopefully, it’ll never feel that way about me, either.

Student Selected for Journalism Conference

Loudoun Valley High School student Alexandra Rood has been nominated to represent Virginia as a national youth correspondent to the 2013 Washington Journalism and Media Conference at George Mason University in July.

Rood has been awarded the opportunity to join a group of 250 students from across the country to participate in an intensive week long study of journalism and media. Rood was chosen based on academic accomplishments and a demonstrated interest and excellence in journalism and media studies.

National youth correspondents participate

in hands-on, experiential learning through decision-making simulations that challenge them to solve problems and explore the creative, practical, and ethical tensions inherent in journalism and media. The experiential portion of the program is complemented by speakers who are well-known leaders in the media community. Presenters include prominent journalists, CEO’s of major media outlets, researchers and recent college graduates successfully entering the field. Last year’s conference included Hoda Kotb, Chuck Todd, Brian Lamb and Neil Leifer.

Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church Breaks Ground on New Parish Center

A new Parish Center is in the future for Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church in Purcellville. The church broke ground Jan. 24 on the 26,465-square foot building.

When completed, the Parish Center will provide 11 classrooms for religious education and other classes, a multi-media center and youth ministry and religious education offices. In addition, the center will feature a 6,491-square foot multi-purpose hall that can host basketball games and other large events.

"After many years of planning, we are delighted to start the next phase of our Building Our Faith campaign with the start of construction on our new Parish Center," said Saint Francis de Sales pastor Father Ronald Escalante. "We long ago outgrew our current facilities, and the new Parish Center will let us expand our youth and education programs, provide a great place for teens to hang out, and provide a new place for large parish events right on our church grounds."

Hughes Group Architects designed the Parish Center and Chamberlain Construction will oversee its construction.

"The architects designed a beautiful facility for us that is incredibly functional and that perfectly suits our campus setting," Escalante said. "We are also excited to have the opportunity to work with Chamberlain to see it come to fruition."

Saint Francis de Sales Catholic Church was dedicated in 1921 at 16th and Main Street in Purcellville, and for the next 46 years served



Left to right: Father Tewes (St. Francis), Eliel Alfon (Hughes Group Architects), Mike Bromley (Chamberlain Construction), Father Escalante (St. Francis de Sales), Geary Higgins (Board of Supervisors), Purcellville Mayor Bob Lazaro, Mark Anthony (Arlington Diocese), and Jack Burden (St. Francis de Sales Parish Center Building Committee).

as a mission church in western Loudoun County. In 1967 it became a full parish, with 99 families, after the Capuchin Franciscan Friars, New Jersey Province, and the Diocese of Richmond, offered to serve here. By June 1992 the congregation had grown to 250 families, and moved to its current location with a church that can seat 500. In January, 1997, after 30 years with the Capuchin Friars, an old era ended and a new era began as the church said goodbye to its last friar, and welcomed its first Diocesan Pastor. Today, Saint Francis de Sales numbers more than 1,470 families.

The church expects construction to be completed in early 2014. More information about the Parish Center building project -- including architectural renderings of the building -- can be found at the Saint Francis de Sales Parish Center building website, www.buildingourfaith.org.



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Starting Seeds Outside ... Early



– By Donna Williamson

Recently, I learned of a new way to start seeds outside – early. The idea came from a blog I routinely read and the idea involves milk or water jugs, with holes in the bottom, burned with a red-hot screwdriver. The jug is cut almost in half so the uncut portion can act as a hinge opening the top on hot days (frequently common in February and March). The plastic top is left off entirely. Or you might use the almost transparent plastic bottle-type kitty litter containers, which are larger and heavier than milk jugs.

Potting mix – slightly moist – is placed in the bottom half of the jug along with seeds that are NOT buried. Seeds can include perennials – columbine, digitalis, larkspur, delphinium, hollyhock, nepeta, lupine, bachelor buttons, and the edibles like spinach, kale, peas, broccoli, oregano, cilantro – in February. In March, we could try more tender plants such as cosmos, zinnia, marigolds, lettuce, basil, parsley, carrots, and beets. Label with magic markers on the jug.

The blog author also grows tomatoes this way, starting in March, and tells readers that the tomatoes are equal to those started inside and seem stronger.

I have not tried yet, but, I am eager to see if it works well. This approach would also take the seed-starting tray and heat mat off the dryer.

Setting the jugs in a broad, flat plastic bin keeps them from toppling over in the wind. That bin should also have drainage holes. The seeds are permitted to freeze and get rain and snow through the top hole and are only half-opened on very warm days.

For good photos and more detail, check *A Garden for the House* blog full of recipes, plant info, and decorating ideas by Kevin Lee Jacobs. Go to <http://www.agardenforthehouse.com/> and search for milk jugs – he has written several blogs on this topic.

Should you try this, I will be eager to hear of your experiences. Old dogs, new tricks!

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

Amy V. Smith's Money Talks 12 Financial Resolutions

– By Amy Smith

Review and revamp your financial plan all year long

Instead of hauling out those familiar New Year's resolutions about eating less and exercising more, how about focusing on something that's also very good for you in the long run – and even sooner? I'm talking about your financial plan – your fiscal health, if you will. The approach of a new year – or any time, for that matter – is a great time to review your plan and make whatever revisions might be indicated. With that in mind, here are 12 suggested resolutions that, if followed, could help you go a long way toward attaining your financial goals.

Get your balance sheet in order – You can't realistically expect to reach a goal without knowing where you're starting from. Using Dec. 31 of last year as the effective date, update your personal balance sheet (assets versus liabilities, broadly speaking).

Review your budget and spending habits – Although some budget items are fixed, a sharp pencil can produce significant savings on other costs.

Review the titling of your accounts – review your account titling and determine if that's still the arrangement you want.

Designate and update your beneficiaries – If you don't correctly document and update your beneficiary designations, who gets what may be determined not according to your wishes, but by federal or state law, or by the default plan document used in your retirement accounts.

Evaluate your cash holdings – Everyone should have a certain amount of cash assets – six or more months of living expenses is a common rule of thumb – that can be accessed quickly and easily.

Revisit your portfolio's asset allocation – Many investment professionals believe market volatility is here to stay. If it is, are you comfortable with the level of risk in your portfolio? You want to make informed



SMITH

choices here. Review your overall asset allocation and make whatever adjustments are indicated.

Evaluate your sources of retirement income – most retirees have several sources of income such as Social Security, pensions, retirement portfolios, rental properties, etc. If too much of your retirement income is from sources you consider less than solid, it may be time to reposition your assets.

Review your Social Security statement – If you're not yet retired, you need to go online and establish an account with the Social Security Administration – the SSA no longer sends individual statements of accrued benefits in the mail.

Review the tax efficiency of your charitable giving – Give, but do so with an eye toward reducing your tax liability. Think strategically about your contributions.

Check to see if your retirement plan is on track – Losses incurred during the most recent recession may have derailed and/or delayed the retirement plans of many investors. The important thing is to respond and determine – promptly and realistically – what changes might be needed.

Make the indicated changes – By now you should have a good idea of where you stand overall. Go after any problem areas – or opportunities – systematically and promptly.

Set up a regular review schedule with your advisor – Advisors can't help you with what they don't know. Establish a regular schedule of getting together and reviewing your portfolio, your financial and retirement plans, and what's happening in your life.

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Vocelli Pizza Reopens

Randy Fox, award winning Vocelli Pizza multi-unit franchisee, is very excited about recently re-opening a completely redesigned Purcellville Vocelli Pizza location – with updated dining space and a range of flavorful artisan pizzas and other “craveable” menu items. Randy, who also operates three other Virginia locations including Reston, South Loudoun, and Herndon has been a Vocelli Pizza Franchisee since 1997.

Vocelli Pizza is a family-owned business and takes pride in making a positive contribution to the communities they serve, including

Purcellville. “Purcellville is a family friendly community. Families need a casual place they can eat pizza without the bar-type atmosphere. We are that place. Families come join us and eat together,” said Randy.

Vocelli Pizza is inviting the community to stop by their first annual Taste of Vocelli Day on Saturday, Feb. 16 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. A free sampling of the new menu items will be available. *Vocelli Pizza, 721 E Main St, Purcellville, VA 20132*

Phone: 540-441-7464;

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A Moment of Silence

– By Mary Rose Lunde

For the first and very likely only time in the entire day, most of the school is completely quiet. There is no sound of pencils scratching the paper or feet tapping the ground. Observing the halls,



LUNDE

there is no movement there either. The few students that have lagged behind the bell are motionless, watched by teachers. Then a voice sounds over the PA system and the minute of silence is complete.

If a person wandered into a class just before the morning announcements came on, he or she would find mass chaos. Teachers often struggle to quiet their classes before the announcements in order to hear. The moment of silence is, however, respected by most students.

“I respect it and try to keep quiet until after,” said sophomore Dhara Viradia.

The minute of silence is thought of as a time to reflect, and even if the student does not wish to engage in silence, staying quiet as respect to others is of key importance. Sadly, some students do not honor the moment of silence and instead hold whispered conversations, disturbing the moment of silence.

“I think it's crazy when kids can't just be quiet for 60 seconds,” said a junior.

Another side of the moment of silence reflects upon religion. Despite what people may believe, during the minute of silence, religion and education are connected. A common view of the minute of silence is that it gives students a chance to pray in silence without the distractions of opinionated responses and educational standpoints.

“It's a time when kids of all religions can do whatever religious ritual they want at school in the company of their peers,” said sophomore Rachael Greenman.

“This time is when anyone can observe a prayer to whatever they believe in,” said junior Garrett Fraino.

The minute of silence observed in the public school system is interpreted differently by every student and staff member. For some, it's a time of peace and quiet. Many students see it as a way to express themselves, or reflect upon their daily lives and the news. The quietest times often occur right after a natural disaster or tragedy, as students take time to process those who have fallen. A few students and teachers can be seen bowing their heads to pray. The moment of silence is a way for students to engage in silent activities of their choosing. Said junior Carolina Chung, “It's a short but important time for people to meditate or pray if they want.”

Mary Rose Lunde is a junior at Potomac Falls High School.

Support Our Local Food Banks

— By Mark Gunderman



The escalating cost of living combined with the loss of higher paying jobs has put many people in our area in a financial dilemma. Lower wage jobs appear to be a larger share of our community's total employment. The surge in population and rising cost of housing in our community have added stress on resources and make it much harder for lower wage earners to make ends meet. Those with modest income struggle to pay for housing, groceries, childcare, health care, and education among other essentials. Imagine the difficulty of choosing whether your family eats or has clothes on their back? Many families with children living in at-risk situations depend on local food banks in order to have enough money to make rent. Keeping families stable in the same home helps children remain in one school and prevents them from experiencing the loss of family members, friends and familiar neighborhoods.

In our community, the nation's wealthiest county by median household income, about 11,000 children qualify for subsidized meals — about 16 percent of the total student population. More than three years after the 2007-2009 recession officially concluded, more Americans are now receiving food subsidies than at the end of the recession.

It's been well documented since the recession began in December 2007 that poverty levels have risen and homes and jobs have been lost. Demand for food, for dental and medical care and assistance for rent and utilities has dramatically increased. Middle class families are economizing and shopping at thrift stores as they attempt to tackle an unfamiliar and uncompromising economy. For many people, it just doesn't make sense.

Due to the extraordinarily high demand for food to support our neighbors, the local food bank pantry shelves require your



Photo: Mark Gunderman

donations to fill them to the maximum. Food and monetary donations are desperately needed to serve needy families. Foods that will help the most are peanut butter, jelly, cereal, cake and cookie mixes, canned tomato products, bagged beans or rice, canned black beans, canned chicken, canned fruit, oatmeal, canned chili and all types of soups.

As we begin a new year, the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are behind us; however, there are many families in the county that still require emergency support from our Loudoun-based food banks. LINK against Hunger is an all volunteer-run organization providing food and financial assistance to people in need in the Herndon, Sterling and Ashburn areas for more than 40 years. LINK, along with other area food banks in Loudoun, reach out to all four corners of the county and are as follows:

- Mt. Olive Baptist Church - Five Loaves Two Fishes, Leesburg (703-286-5030)
- Loudoun Interfaith Relief, Leesburg (703-777-5911)
- Messiahs Market at Community Church, Ashburn (571-209-5000)
- Grace Ministries at Crossroads, Ashburn (703-729-5100)
- Guilford Baptist Church, Old Sterling (703-430-6444)
- LINK against Hunger, Sterling (703-437-1776)
- Tree of Life Ministries, Purcellville (703-554-3595)
- Seven Loaves Services, Middleburg (540-687-3489)

This year, the faith community asks every man, women and school child living in Loudoun to please be conscious of the needy that live among us. Be strong in your faith and above all things do everything in love. Please, once a day, once a week or even once a month, be a Good Samaritan!

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Wild Loudoun

Loudoun's Nocturnal Flyer



– By Andrea Gaines

We know that pigs can't fly and most of us would say the same thing about the creature called a "flying" squirrel. You hear about them ... but you've never seen one and you don't believe they really exist. But they do, and right here in some of the more protected places in Loudoun County.

I think of them as quite fanciful – a combination bat/chinchilla, with a sort of snubbed nose, big black eyes and webs of fur-covered skin called *patagia* that stretch from the front leg to the ankles of the back leg.

They have muted but exceptionally pretty coloring with a dark stripe that runs from their wrists to the tips of their feet, whitish undersides and a soft brown back and tail. They look like the everyday squirrel you

see sitting upright chomping on a nut, but somehow chunkier and more petite.

But it is their habits – and not just their travel habits – that make them so unique.

First, flying squirrels are nocturnal, and more elusive to us daytime creatures than our many nighttime hunting owls. They hide away in protected places such as tree cavities and nests of leaves and bark during the day, coming out at night to forage on acorns, beechnuts, hickory nuts and other seeds. Some varieties also eat fungi and lichens, insects and bird eggs.

The flying part of a flying squirrel is actually a glide. To set up the motion the squirrels climb a tree, push off with legs and arms outspread and glide to a lower position, steering by moving their tails from side to

Continued on page 18

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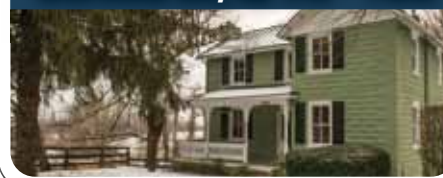
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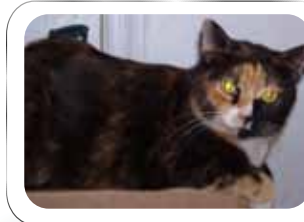
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REAL ESTATE UPDATE: 2013 is off to an amazing start but there is still an Inventory Shortage. In December, **average sale price was up 13.28%** over December 2011. Interest rates are fantastic! Whether you are buying or selling it is a great time to get into the Real Estate Market... Source: RBA, an NREIS company.

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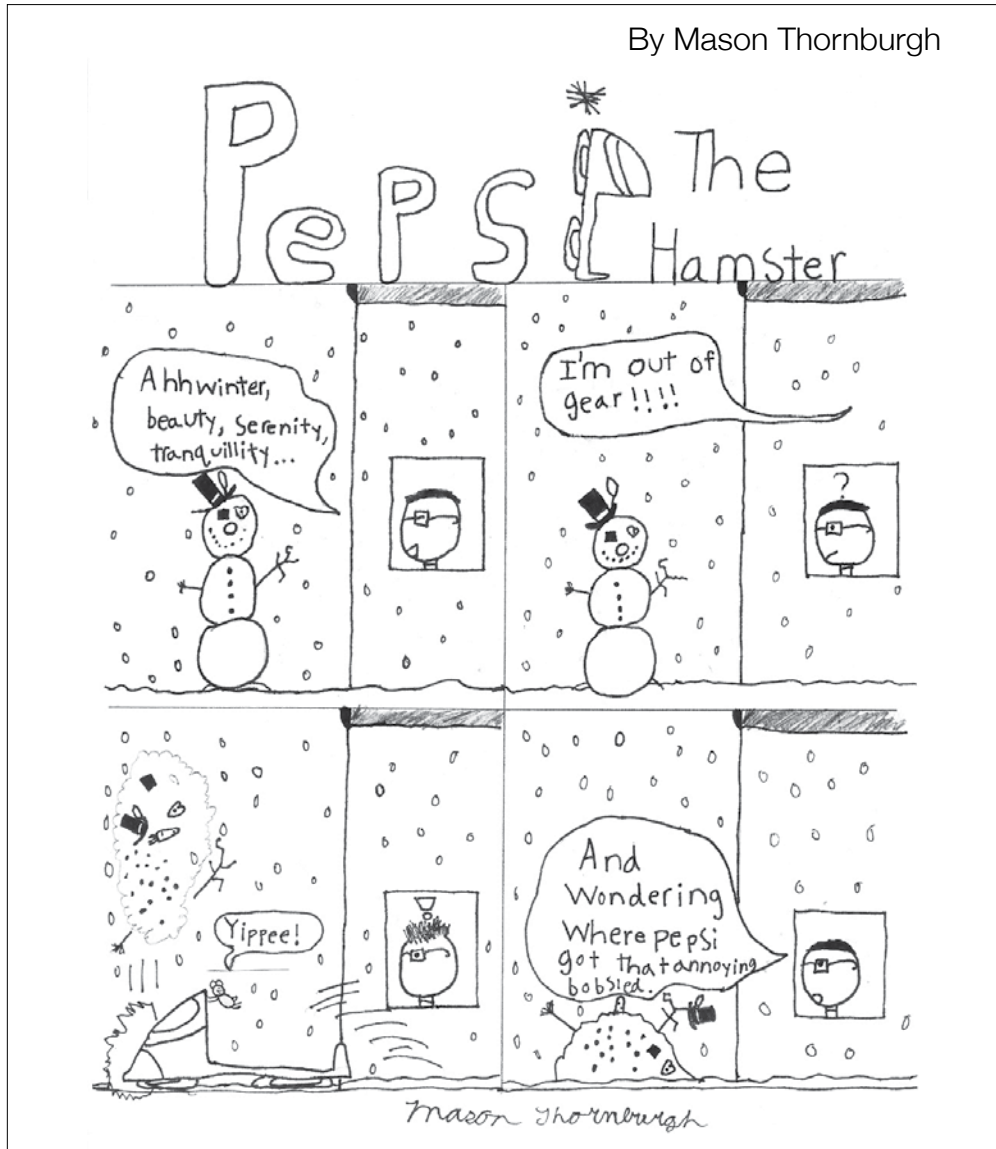
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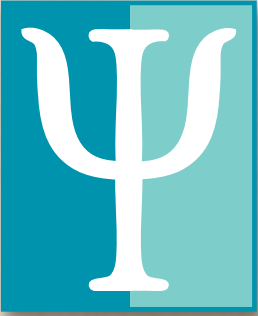
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Lovettsville Union Cemetery Launches Monument Restoration Drive

The trustees of the Lovettsville Union Cemetery Company have launched a drive to raise money for a Monument Restoration Fund designed to repair broken and unsafe monuments and grave markers – some dating back to the late 1800s.



by an act of the Virginia General Assembly. It is the final resting place for over 4,000 people from Lovettsville and surrounding communities, including many of the founding families of “The German Settlement.” Approximately 250 military veterans from Lovettsville and surrounding communities are buried here; the cemetery’s trustees carefully mark all known veterans’ graves with flags on Memorial Day.

Many monuments in the cemetery have become damaged over the years through gravesite settling, weather damage, and other factors. Upright headstones have become detached from their bases, and larger monuments have fallen or are leaning to one side and in danger of falling and being damaged. Others are cracked or broken.

The number of monuments and grave markers needing repair, particularly in the cemetery’s older sections, has exceeded the company’s ability to fund repairs out of basic operating funds. Lot owners are responsible for maintaining the site and monuments. But, many monuments go back many generations and it is often not possible to locate a lot owner’s descendants.

Union Cemetery was established in 1879

Individuals interested in contributing to the effort may send their gift to Lovettsville Union Cemetery Company Monument Restoration Fund, PO Box 146, Lovettsville, VA 20180.

Funds contributed to the general Restoration Fund are tax-deductible under the Internal Revenue Code, so long as they are intended for the maintenance and improvement of the cemetery as a whole. Donations intended for a specific gravesite, while welcome, are not tax deductible. For more information email Jack Burden at jack.burdens.org.

Doing The Wrong Thing ... In Private, continued from page 5

could walk away. Just something to think about over the holidays. Thanks, Rob”

• In a December 2012, Councilman James Wiley wrote [to Rob Lohr]: “Absolutely make every attempt to acquire this property. Can we not offer conservation easements, tax considerations, etc. far in excess of his purchase price?? Buy it as you suggest as a last resort!! Jim Wiley”

The Loudoun County Comprehensive Plan Amendment 2012-002 states, “In 2012, recognizing that the Town did not desire any increased density and growth outside the current incorporated town boundaries into the JLMA [Joint Land Management Area overseen by the town and the county], the Purcellville Joint Policies Review Committee and the Town of Purcellville called for the repeal of the PUGAMP” [Purcellville Urban Growth Area Management Plan].

The Hirst Farm II project is only one of

many examples of things being discussed in private letters and emails among town council members and staff, and with developers. These private discussion deal with very public issues, including possible amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, annexations, boundary line adjustment schemes, and re-zonings that may allow very high density projects in areas that would be better served by existing zoning.

In a recent planning commission work session discussing the PDH zoning (high density zoning) Planning Commissioner Cathy Bowman said that there is not enough vacant land inside the town to allow for such zoning. One of the comments made was that there are hundreds of acres outside the town limits and all you have to do is annex them.

Private communications on issues of public importance – communications previously “open” to the public – are wrong. Plain and simple.

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Loudoun Country Day School To Add Lower School Director

As Loudoun Country Day School approaches its 60th anniversary in Loudoun County, as well as its fourth year on its new campus, the administration now seeks to expand its administrative team with a lower school director. According to headmaster Dr. Randy Hollister, “As we continue to grow in numbers and expand our programs, we want to add a dynamic educator to lead our prekindergarten through fifth grade faculty to help us as we continue to expand our vision, explore new uses of technology to support instruction and learning, and educate our students to be productive members of our changing global community.”

For the past several years, assistant headmaster Tim Beauchemin has been filling

the roles both as lower school director and assistant headmaster. “Although I have enjoyed the dual role, having someone to work exclusively with our lower school faculty will be a tremendous resource for them, especially as we continue to increase our enrollment and evolve our program.” Dr. Hollister continued, “We are excited to be moving ahead with this important position, which will greatly benefit our lower school faculty, the education of our lower school students, and the overall experience of our lower school parents.”

The listing for this position can be found under the employment section of our Loudoun Country Day School web site at www.lcds.org.

2013 Loudoun Grown Expo Ready To Go

The exhibitor lineup for the 2013 Loudoun Grown Expo has been finalized and this year’s event has expanded again. The 2013 Expo has 36 exhibitors including nine wineries, five CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture growers), and many other rural economy entrepreneurs – including Purcellville’s own Catactin Creek Distilling Company and Corcoran Brewing.

The Expo will take place on Saturday, Feb. 16, from 2 pm to 6pm at the historic Bush Tabernacle at Fireman’s Field, 250 South Nursery Avenue, Purcellville. Admittance to the event is free.

Local musical talent will be featured including: Miguel Aubertin (reggae), Brade & Ami Byers (soulful R&B), and Sheila Marie (Patsy Cline review).

New to the event this year are food vendors that will be located outside the tabernacle, so that guests can have a meal while enjoying the event. Food can be purchased from Fun Country Kettle Corn, Good Grubbin’, Magnolia’s at the Mill, Monk’s BBQ, and the Roving Italian.

“This year’s Expo has all the makings of a great event,” said Purcellville Mayor Bob Lazaro. “Last year, nearly 2,000 folks joined with us to take in what the best of western Loudoun has to offer ... I am confident that folks will enjoy what will be offered at the Expo this year. We wish to thank our sponsors: Shamrock Music Shoppe and Dulles Greenway.”

For details on the Expo, please visit www.loudoungrownexpo.com.

Ask Dr. Mike, continued from page 2

Dr. Mike,

I was shocked to find my husband’s friend’s wife, who is 7 months pregnant, smoking cigarettes on our deck at a party we recently hosted at our home. She actually smoked several cigarettes throughout the course of the evening, and it was very upsetting to me. How can someone be so irresponsible and reckless? While my husband agrees with, me he is loyal to his friendship, and he told me that I had “to get over it” because she is the wife of his friend, and I am occasionally be expected to do things as a couple with them. I refuse to continue to spend time with someone that I have absolutely no respect for, which is where I am with this as woman and mother. We, of course, are in a huge fight. What are your thoughts?

T in Loudoun County

T,

Smoking while pregnant, with what we know about the effects of smoking on prenatal development, I agree, is simply unacceptable. Nicotine addiction, however, is one of the most difficult addictions to overcome. Beyond the poor choice to smoke while pregnant, I think you are also bothered as much as you are by this person’s behavior because she is doing it openly in public with no hesitation or explanation. Not knowing anything more about your husband’s friend’s wife’s background or decision to continue to smoke, I think you should temper your strong position. It also does not seem that your husband is asking you to become best friends with his friend’s wife, so I think you need to adopt a more tolerant approach to the situation. I think you should ask your husband to give you some time and to not plan anything social with these friends for a while given your upset. Why not plan a visit with them after the baby is born. Maybe this woman who has offended you so much with her smoking, will surprise you later and turn out to be a good mom in other ways.

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 clinician. 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.

Umpires Needed!

– By Bill Roth

It might be the coldest days of the winter thus far but already we can faintly hear in the background, “Com-on blue”! A holler from the stands coming from the fan, parent or coach on a warm spring day who believes they have a better view of the pitch or play than the umpire. And, not long from these blustery cold days, will the once again time hardened tradition of second-guessing the umpire be in full swing. It matters not the sport, as fans of all ages always know more than the official on the court or field. However, with the NFL as example, fall 2012 gave us a snapshot of life without trained officials of a game, showing the fairness of the contest comes in question.

So every spring, amid the fresh cut grass, those brave few dust off their equipment, find earplugs and take to the field to umpire for America’s pastime, baseball. For this upcoming spring season, Upper Loudoun Little League (ULLL) is in need of adding to our umpire crew. Needed are kids 13 years of age or older as well as adults of any age. ULLL provides training to all those who step forward so they fully understand the rules and nuances of the game. And, in the end, it is a rewarding experience, an enjoyable two hours of your time. The players appreciate your time and expertise and the coaches

realize how hard you work. Even those bellowing fans from the sidelines that earlier in the game could see better than you, are there at the end with a “Good job blue”.

Not only does your service to our community provide a healthy environment in which children can learn teamwork and sportsmanship along with the great game of baseball, but the umpire skills you learn can help you move on to a larger venue if you choose. The time put into learning the mechanics of the game gives you possibilities outside of Little League baseball. Umpiring gives you job skills, management training as well as upon occasion the good fortune to carry it to a national level for either youth or paid players. Quite a few of our current and former umpires have gone on to officiate high school, college, and semi-pro baseball.

So, if you believe you have what it takes to be an umpire, Upper Loudoun Little League wants to hear from you! Training clinics will begin in February and March. Check out the information about upcoming instruction on our web site, www.ulll.org or email the Umpire in Chief, Bill Roth, at cabrillo22@gmail.com. Com’on, Play Ball!



Don Rose, continued from page 1

equal,” said his son, Donny Rose.

Mr. Rose also helped build playing fields and other athletic facilities, including the stadium and field at Fireman’s Field in Purcellville. In addition, he donated lights and scoreboards to various schools in Loudoun County. His generosity will be felt and experienced by youth for decades and decades to come.

Rose successfully brought the Babe Ruth World Series to Loudoun County. It was Rose and the late Mickie Gordon who made good on the dream of many to host this prestigious youth sports event in Purcellville.

Mr. Rose is survived by his four children, Donald N. Rose Jr. (Donny), Mark A. Rose (Dawna), Robin Rose Bland (Mason), and

Boomer Rose, three brothers Tom Rose, Mike Rose, Penny Rose, five sisters, Helen Stevens, Dora Hardy, Sherry Garrison, Debbie Fogle, and Pam Gaal, 8 grandchildren, 9 step children, 8 step grandchildren, and 3 step great grandchildren. Also surviving him was his companion Ruby Rose. He was predeceased by his wife, Brenda Rose and 2 grandchildren.

Services for Mr. Rose were held at the Purcellville Baptist church, with interment at Ivy Hill Cemetery in Upperville. The family requests memorial contributions to the Greater Loudoun Babe Ruth, P.O. Box 836, Purcellville, VA 20134 or the Lower Loudoun Boys Football League, P.O. Box 163, Sterling, VA 20167.

Cats, continued from page 1

musicals and plays. In 2009, Dolly opened Spotlight Productions, an auditioned youth-theatre company.

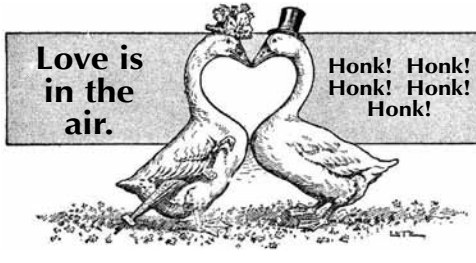
“Cats” is based on T.S.Eliot’s book of light verse, “Old Possum’s Book of Practical Cats. Blue Ridge has a cast of 43 students, ages 11-14. Rehearsals started in early November. The students have been working two hours a day, five days a week.

“Cats” is an ensemble show – there is no one star. Everyone has their time in the spotlight. The music, though challenging, is exciting and fun to perform. The most intimidating thing is the choreography, but we’ve enlisted some help from two dancers (and BRMS alums)

from Loudoun Valley High School who have created some visually stunning choreography,” Stevens said. “The bottom line is, I’ve never been one to shy away from a good challenge, and I like to set the bar for middle school theatre very high. It has been my experience that student-actors will always rise to the occasion. The result is that our shows usually exceed everyone’s expectations! For me, that’s the most fun of all. That, and giving our cast and crew members the memories and experience of a lifetime.”

“Cats” will be performed on March 1, 2 and 3. For ticket information contact: blueridgecats2013@gmail.com.

Sushi – Tails from the Barnyard



Dead of winter you say? Too cold outside, too warm outside, clearly Mother Nature can’t make up her mind regarding what she wants the weather to be – winter or spring, it is all mixed up.

Tiki, our dear little Chihuahua, is barking impatiently to Mrs. B that she has locked her out of the mudroom, keeping her from cuddling in her cozy bed. Running up the stairs, Mrs. B opened the mudroom door. Tiki joyfully climbed under her doggy blanket, just her nose sticking out. She was now content.

Mrs. B gave me (the Mighty Farm Cairn Terrier, Sushi) the nod to join her. Obediently, I followed Mrs. B out the farmhouse door and jumped in next to her in the four-wheel drive Rhino (a small Jeep-type thing we use to zip around the farm). I love riding on the Rhino with the wind blowing into my shaggy Cairn Terrier face. I gave my best white tooth grin and wagged my wiry Cairn Terrier tail. We are headed to the barnyard. Yippee!

Winter may seem dead to most, but there is a lot that goes on during this time of year, especially here at the Fields of Athenry Farm.

Clover the bullmastiff lays loyally on the front porch keeping watch around the farmhouse, while Nelly the border collie races around the yard having a very difficult time practicing patience. (Mrs. B looks on laughing at all of our absolutely ridiculous yet perfectly appropriate farm behaviors.)

Hopping off the Rhino, Mrs. B gives me a quick pat to my head and beckons me to follow her toward the barnyard, and Quackery Pond. Hokie and Mountie – the ornery barn cats – watch from the hayloft. Those cats always have a mischievous twinkle in their eyes and I don’t trust either one of them for one split second. They promised to “respect” me (as their new year’s resolution) ... but I sure haven’t seen it yet. Do you think I am prejudiced towards felines? Well, maybe I am, but those barn cats are bad, I tell you. They’ll grab a baby duck before you can blink an eye. “Respect my authority,” I say, but all they think about is pounce and kill.

Well, ok, ahhh, enough about cats! (I know it’s a love/hate relationship. They keep the

mice population down, but – enough said! I glared right back at them.)

Then, oh goodness! Honk, Honk, Honk! Honk, Honk, Honk! Just as Mrs. B reached for the hose to get fresh water for all the birds, Old Gnarly Gander Goose came flying up behind her quite unexpectedly. He swung his neck around, opened his big honker and slammed Mrs. B right in the knee. “Oye”; she screamed. “Gnarly Gander you bad, bad, Goose!”

UGGGG!!! Grabbing a rake, Mrs. B swung right back at Gnarly! And, Gnarly and the goose gang screamed and honked, waddling in circles together as if the entire world was coming to an end. The male geese tossed their necks round and round, while the female geese danced in the middle hissing and gossiping amongst each other. I stayed as close as possible to Mrs. B. (A goose neck can do some powerful damage and nothing hurts worse than when Gnarly Gander gets you in the knee cap!) But, poor Mrs. B. I knew she was in a world of hurt. Limping along, she headed straight toward Quackery Pond. Gnarly and the goose gang backed up away from Mrs. B as she swung the garden rake at them.

They never stopped screaming and honking. They stuck their tongues out, they hissed, they yelled, but it did not stop Mrs. B ... or did it? For she sensed something, and, stopped. And, just then, just then, Lord Percy, the barnyard rooster, crowed from high upon his perch – he had seen something the rest of us had missed – the love Mrs. B had sensed was there. For, off in a dark corner far away from of all of this goose and gander clutter (and swinging rakes!) – were a mating pair of geese; the female (with a lovely flower on her head), and the male (with a very stylish top hat) quietly playing out their centuries old courtship rituals. Dipping and diving, prancing and preening, each trying to impress the other, oblivious to the silly chaos around them.

At that moment, all in the barnyard instantly paused, settled in and watched their sweet display. Yes, love was in the air, and it was worth taking in. Ah, yes, worth taking in.

The moral of my barnyard story? Take in love as you celebrate Valentine’s Day this month. Take it in. It is only once a year and worth pausing for. Worth pausing for. – My fondest and most romantic regards, Sushi.



Wild Loudoun, continued from page 13

side. Most trips are fairly short – 20 to 40 feet – but some have been filmed gliding up to 300 feet.

The squirrels we see most often weigh up to 2 pounds, but flying squirrels are much smaller and seldom weigh more than a quarter of a pound.

But, how elusive, really? As one researcher said: “If you live near woodland, or even in a suburb where lots of trees were left standing, check your bird feeder at night ... flying

squirrels are shy, but they often frequent bird feeders for the seed. Shine a light there and you may get the pleasure of seeing one.”

Reforestation of previously logged areas is helping this rather fragile creature rebuild its dwindling numbers. And, when previously logged or degraded areas are restored, streams and the species that depend upon them, such as native fish, also rebound.

Here’s to catching a glimpse of Loudoun’s nocturnal flyer.

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February Events At Franklin Park

Loudoun Lyric Opera: The Mikado, six performances, Feb. 8 through Feb. 17

Combine masterful comic writing, extraordinary music, colorful characters and a good old fashion love story, and ... if you happen to be the incomparable Gilbert and Sullivan ... you'll have an international sensation on your hands! The comic opera *The Mikado* features musical gems such as "A Wand'ring Minstrel I," "Behold the Lord High Executioner," and "Three Little Maids from School are We." Directed by James Campanella and Musical Director Cuong Hung Van, with choreography by Kelly Gray.

Tickets: \$22 adult, \$17 senior, \$12 student. Performances: Friday, Feb. 8, 8 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 9, 8 p.m.; Sunday, Feb. 10, 3 p.m.; Friday, Feb. 15, 8 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 16, 8 p.m.; and Sunday, Feb. 17, 3 p.m.

Last Ham Standing: Friday, Feb. 22, 8pm

Don't miss this hilarious show full of laughs for the entire family. A group of talented performers take suggestions from the audience to create wacky scenes and funny improv games. If you like *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, you'll love *Last Ham Standing*, the other comedy meat!

Tickets: \$12 adult, \$10 student, \$8 child.

Buncaroo Presents: Paint the Music, Saturday, Feb. 23, 8 p.m.

Each musician is paired with an artist. We start the night with each musician playing ONE song. The artist they are paired with will start to work on a painting that they feel represents that one song. They have until the end of the show to finish the painting. Once all four musicians are finished with the initial song and the artists have started painting, we continue the night with each musician playing a full set while the crowd gets to enjoy the music, as well as watch the artists work. Paintings can be purchased at the end of the night via a silent auction. Tickets: \$15 in advance.

Go to www.franklinparkartscenter.org for details.

Jessica Wilson: Chasing The Light

— By Andrea Gaines

To sit down with Mt. Gilead landscape artist Jessica Wilson is to know right away that you are in the presence of a really remarkable soul.

The outdoor scenes that surround her mountaintop studio, and the exquisite layers of paint she leaves on her canvases, are really one in the same — broad, sweeping limbs of ancient trees, lichen covered stone walls, weathered farm buildings — all dancing with subtle earthy colors.

As Jessica describes it, landscape painters "chase the light," following a process — a path — through shade, shadow, space and structure to create their works of art. And, that concept actually says quite a bit about the artist herself. For, she too has been on quite a journey.

Jessica was born in New York and educated in Europe. After college, she found herself back in New York where she worked as an usher, and, in what she describes as "a fancy retail store." From there Jessica went on to do design and graphics work for an advertising agency and, ultimately, the *Washington Post*. Then, one day, she saw a tiny little landscape that looked like a piece from an artist she had always loved. It was at an out of the way place called the Washington Studio School, and that's the moment that convinced her she wanted to launch a career as an artist. In the place, Jessica



Photo: Richard Hamilton

says, where she was always meant to be.

She trained at the Washington Studio School in a number of disciplines including painting, printmaking and stone carving. But, she soon found her career's niche as a perceptually based landscape artist — an artist who uses her eyes and hands to, as she puts it, "show what is observed."

Jessica has artists and musicians in her family going back at least to her grandfather's generation ("That guy knew how to paint!" she says). She was also encouraged to draw at an early age. Her mother and father (Dagmar Wilson and Christopher Bernard Wilson) met as teachers in London, England — where he was a mathematician and she an artist. Their union produced not only Jessica, but, two very creative sisters and a series of children's books including *Poems To Read For The Very Young* — with Dagmar as the

illustrator and Christopher as the writer. One of Jessica's most fond early memories is working with her sisters to paint a large streetscape mural along the staircase of their home. The making of art was always in her midst.

When you interview an artist with the intention of writing an article about them you find yourself wanting to describe their art. There was a painting in Jessica's studio that day (not yet finished) that really caught my eye. It featured a huge tree against a very simple outdoor background. The tree's shape was so prominent it seemed to be trying to be extending its branches beyond the edges of the canvas — as if it were growing

Continued on page 27

Wed., February 13th - Sat., February 16th, 2013

5-9 pm



Valentine's WEEK AT SAVOIR FARE

Celebrate, commiserate or curse (quietly, please) the day of love with your spouse, soulmate or BFF at Savoir Fare. We're featuring a special menu in honor of St. Valentine—all week long!

FEATURED ENTRÉES:

Boneless Chicken Leg Stuffed with Prosciutto Spinach Stuffing 22

Cold Water Lobster Pot Pie 24

Filet Mignon of Beef with Cabernet Sauce & Bleu Cheese Butter 25

Pan Seared Rockfish & Crab Cake Duo 25

Market Fish Mkt

Rack of Lamb with Sea Salt & Black Currant Sauce 24

Wild Mushroom Pappardelle Pasta 20

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For the full menu, visit
savoirfarelimited.com/restaurant.html

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WELCOME TO CARVER CENTER

Unique to Loudoun County, we combine full Community Center offerings in the afternoons, evenings and on Saturdays, with Senior Center programming weekdays from 9:00-2:00.

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Community Center programming includes such offerings as Kickboxing, Tai Chi, Body Sculpting, Zumba, Yoga, Dance Fitness for Girls, Ballroom Dance, Belly Dance, Line Dance, Computer Classes, Spring Seminars on Gardening for Fun and Profit, and Musical Theater for Young People.

Check us out at www.loudoun.gov/carver

Love Is In The Air ... And The Kitchen

Tempt, treat and tame all of the loves in your life with these Valentine's recipes (We won't tell a sweet soul ...)



Valentine's cookie recipe makes 3 dozen

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions: In a medium bowl, combine the flour and confectioners' sugar. Stir in the melted butter, egg, and vanilla until well blended. Cover, and refrigerate dough for at least 2 hours. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough out 1/4 inch thick. Cut into desired shapes using cookie cutters. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes in the preheated oven. Allow cookies to cool on baking sheet for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.



Valentine's Cookie Icing Recipe

- 1/3 cup egg whites
- 1/2 cup butter
- 5-1/2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 tsp. clear vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp. almond extract
- 3-4 Tablespoons milk or heavy cream
- Natural food coloring (optional)

Directions: Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Add butter, sugar, and extracts and whip for 3 minutes. Add milk or cream to thin. Chill well covered for 15 minutes. Decorate cookies and leave to "dry" for 24 hours.



Chocolate Covered Strawberries

(or raspberries ... or pineapple ... or apricots)

- 1 dozen ripe strawberries with stem (chilled)
- 1 cup chopped chocolate (preferable) or good-quality chocolate chips

Directions: Prepare a baking sheet by lining it with parchment paper. Wash the strawberries and carefully dry them (thoroughly). Place the chocolate in a double boiler on the stove and warm (at low heat) until it is melted, stirring after every 30 seconds (Overheated chocolate gets thick and hard to work with, so it's important to keep a careful eye on the chocolate!). While chocolate is still warm, holding a strawberry by the stem, dip it in chocolate, twirling it in a circular motion to evenly cover most of the berry. As you lift it from the chocolate, twirl it so that any excess chocolate drips back into the bowl. Place the berry on the prepared baking sheet and repeat with remaining berries and chocolate. Once all of the berries are dipped, refrigerate them for 30 minutes to set the chocolate.





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(This is great financial news if your furnace is over 10 years old)

Dear Friend,

Yes, it's absolutely true. You can actually replace your old (and probably very inefficient) furnace and air conditioner (heat pumps also) as a package for an average of \$1,963 less than you would have to pay in-season.

Let me explain.

Every year, the months of **January and February can "Kill" my business.** I can end up losing a ton of money during these "Killer" months and it can take me the remaining season to make up for them. And, I'm willing to do what it takes to make sure that doesn't happen this winter.

My Problem Is Your Opportunity

I've decided to stop focusing on making a profit during the "killer" months. If I can only keep my doors open and all of my employees working **during these months, I will hopefully come out ahead for the remainder of the winter.**

Here's how this (*admittedly daring*) offer came about.

As I said before - every year **January and February** can really slow down. However, I refuse to let my technicians (who I have invested a considerable amount into their training) go home without work. **So, I placed a purchase order with a major distributor for 98 complete home comfort systems and significantly discounted them for immediate installation.** This way I can pay all of my overhead and insure my technicians will not go home without work.

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, I am extending this offer to include High-Efficient, Tax Credit eligible systems. **These are brand new, factory fresh air conditioners and furnaces (I also have heat pumps and air handlers) and have a full factory warranty.**

Here's How To Get A Furnace For Peanuts

By putting this furnace, air conditioner and coil package together (heat pumps and air handlers also) and then combining my purchased price for an Air Conditioner and Coil with only the labor and materials to install the furnace, **98 homeowners will receive the deal of a lifetime to buy a complete home comfort system for an average of \$1,963 less than our in-season prices!**

So, if you buy one of these **98 new, air conditioners (or heat pumps), I am "giving" you the furnace (or air handler)** and all I ask for is the \$995 in labor and extra materials to have your indoor unit installed.

Here's How

Just call me at 540-905-7799. One of my Comfort Advisors will come out and perform a complete energy analysis. The Comfort Advisor will show you the in-season price of the air-conditioner (*heat pump*) that fits your home.

Then, he will show you the **substantial savings you can take advantage of now.** And, it will include all labor and installation materials. Nothing is left out.

Don't forget, I only have **98** complete systems. When they are gone, this remarkable offer ends.

The Concept Is Simple Really

By letting you win big now, I will win in the winter months. I'm betting that if my **Comfort Advisor makes you an offer that is "irresistible"** (*it should be if your furnace or air conditioner is over 10 years old*), I will accomplish two things:

1. I will cover my rent, utilities, insurance and taxes in these "killer" months.
2. I can pay my professional staff of technicians to work instead of sending them home.

If I can accomplish these two objectives, I will hopefully avoid any losses and the rest of the winter, I can be a winner.

No Obligation

Even after my Comfort Advisor performs a complete energy analysis and explains this incredible opportunity, **there is absolutely no obligation.** If you decide you don't want to take advantage of the spectacular savings...that's okay. At least you'll be better prepared to upgrade your home comfort system when the time is right for you.

You Can't Lose

I am so confident that these 98 systems are the best on the market that **I will give you a Two Year complete satisfaction guarantee and up to a 10 year Full parts and Labor warranty. You Can't Lose!**

Why This Offer Can't Last

You must act now. Here are two reasons why.

1. **I am only offering 16 of each of the most popular systems.** When all of the air conditioners are sold and all the furnaces are "given" away for a particular system, that's it. There are no more at this price.
2. If I have any of the 98 systems left **when business picks up (although I doubt I will), this offer still ends.**

Here's why. The only reason I am offering this incredible discount is because of the "killer" months. My business always starts to improve, and when this happens

I can begin to sell systems at in-season prices.

Give us a call now at 540-905-7799 and we will set an appointment for your no-obligation survey.

Thank you for reading this rather long letter. **I hope you will profit greatly** because of it.
Warmly,

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Jim Dean

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February

☉ **Fridays, Feb. 1, 8, 15 & 22, Open Mic Night** for high school students, 7-9 p.m., Around the Block Books. Share your music, poetry or short stories; contact Jodi or Laura to schedule a Friday date and time slot. 540-751-9161 or email atbb2013@gmail.com.

☉ **Saturday, Feb. 9, Birding Banshee.** Join Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy & the Friends of Banshee Reeks on the 2nd Saturday of each month. Contact Joe Coleman, 540-554-2542/ jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.

☉ **Sunday, Feb. 10, foxhunting panel discussion,** 3-5 p.m., National Sporting Library and Museum, 102 The Plains Road in Middleburg. Panelists will speak to the history and future of the sport.

☉ **Sunday, Feb. 10, The Philomont VFD Auxiliary Valentine's Brunch,** 8 a.m. to noon. Adults \$9, children (5-12) \$4, under 4 free. Philomont Firehouse – for information call 540-338-5792.

☉ **Sunday, Feb. 10, 2 p.m., Lovettsville Historical Society Lecture:** "1863: Hoofbeats in the Heritage Area." St. James United Church of Christ, 10 East Broad Way, Lovettsville. For information, call 540-822-9194.

☉ **Sunday, Feb. 10, 2 p.m., Food of the Gods** Valentine's Day chocolate and wine tasting and workshop. Barns of Rose Hill, 95 Chalmers Ct. in Berryville. Go to www.barnsofrosehill.org.

☉ **Wednesday, Feb. 13, Loudoun Amphibian Monitoring Program (LAMP)** kickoff, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., at the Purcellville Library. Registration required: Contact Nicole Hamilton at nhamilton@loudounwildlife.org.

☉ **Thursday, Feb. 14, "Love is in the Air"** musical revue. Leesburg Senior Center, 102 North St. in Leesburg. Part of the inaugural season of Loudoun Centre Theatre. Free to the public, donations welcome.

☉ **Saturday, Feb. 16, indoor yard sale,** 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Benefits the Loudoun 4H Leaps & Squeaks Rabbit and Cavy Club. Sykes Hall at the 4H Fairgrounds, 17558 Dry Mill Road, Leesburg.

☉ **Sunday, Feb. 17, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Historical Reenactment for Black History Month.** Follow newly freed slaves on their journey to establish the historic Grace Church in Lincoln and their new church in Purcellville. Grace Annex, 331 South 12th Street in Purcellville. Call 540 338-4185 for more information. Good will donations accepted. Proceeds go to the Grace Multicultural Center.

☉ **Saturday, Feb. 23, Birding the Blue Ridge Center** at 8 a.m. Bird walk at the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship. Detailed directions at www.brces.org. Questions: Contact Joe Coleman at 540-554-2542 or jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org.

☉ **Saturday, Feb. 23, Bluebird Nestbox** Monitoring Program kickoff at 1 p.m. at the Purcellville Library, 220 E. Main St., Purcellville. Registration required: Contact Janet Locklear at jlocklear@loudounwildlife.org.

Events at the Carver Center, 200 Willie Palmer Way in Purcellville

☉ **Wednesdays, Feb. 6 through March 13, Belly Dance class,** 7:30-8:30 p.m. For ages 16 and older. To sign up, go to Loudoun.gov/webtrac and register for #230701-02. Cost of this six week class is \$60.

☉ **Friday, Feb. 8, Chinese New Year Celebration,** 11-1:30. Cost is \$3; for ages 18 and older. Day begins with Tai Chi and a film by a young Chinese-American film-maker.

☉ **Friday, Feb. 15, Legal Aspects of Alzheimer's Disease,** 12:30-2 p.m. Presented by the Alzheimer's Association. Free.

☉ **Tuesdays, Feb. 26 through April 2, Gardening for Pleasure and Profit,** 6:30-7:30 p.m. For ages 18 and older. To sign up, go to Loudoun.gov/webtrac and register for #230713-01. \$49 for six week class.

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► Real Estate Ticker ►

The Great Recession Is Over, Isn't It?

- By Carl Fischer

For the past six months, the media has been filled with "promising signs" suggesting that our long housing nightmare is over ... and based on personal observation, in our area of Northern Virginia, that certainly seems to be the case.

To be sure, affordable single family homes and townhouses are becoming very hard to find.

So when a new listing hits the market, you need to be fully prepared to act on it promptly, if the property meets your needs. This shortage of inventory has had the to-be-expected impact on prices ... they are definitely going UP!

So what's there to worry about?

We somehow got past the "fiscal cliff" without losing body parts. There is talk of a "deal" to extend the debt ceiling issue rather than rattle the markets. What more do we need to be concerned about?

The "sequester" issue is still unresolved.

To date, the biggest defense spending cuts in 40 years in October thru December of 2012 has already taken a huge toll. The Commerce Department reported on Jan. 30, 2013, that our economy contracted at an annual rate of -0.1 percent in the last quarter of 2012, compared to the 3.1 percent growth the preceding quarter. And consumer confidence is sharply down as well.

The "sequester", scheduled to kick in March 1, promises to drain 9.4 percent of the entire military budget, along with an 8.2 percent reduction in social safety net programs like Head Start, Air Traffic Control operations and community development block grants if not modified or negotiated away. But a huge negative impact appears to be assured.

From my vantage point, this spells "T-R-O-U-B-L-E" no matter how you look at it.

The "recovery" thus far has just been way too tentative.

So what does that mean to me regarding house values?

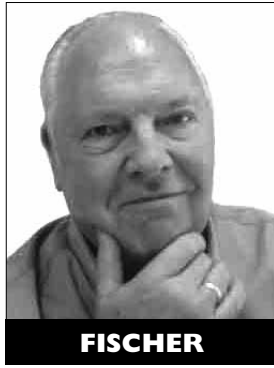
Hard to say exactly, but there's one thing I'm absolutely sure of: You can't kick back and relax knowing that the worst is over, just because you happen to live in one of the highest per-capita-income counties in the United States. Many local executives and two-income families are at considerable risk as the military complex winds down post Afghanistan. All you need to pay attention to is the sharp increase of upscale houses newly on the market to understand that even the most affluent among us are beginning to try and downsize as best they can, without leaving too much equity on the table. For most of these folks, prices have not recovered nearly as much as they had hoped for, and a surge of new listings will only worsen their plight.

Bottom line: If you are a "move-up buyer", do it now!

Take advantage of the ongoing extremely low mortgage rates to tie down your home purchase, knowing that further delay may actually cost you \$\$\$\$ due to rising prices of both re-sale and new homes, as well as the risk is of escalating mortgage rates. Not anticipated now, but unlikely to stay this low in perpetuity.

If you're holding a big-ticket home you know that you no longer need or want ...

Do "whatever it takes" to make that change now. There is little reason to believe there will be any price recovery of substance in the next 12 to 18 months on homes now worth \$800K or more. If the "unknowns" in this economy heighten capable a buyer's predisposition to make NO CHANGES during times of great



FISCHER

Continued on page 25

Kid Scoop.com THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE

Puzzle answers, games, opinion polls and much more at: www.kidscoop.com

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Kid Scoop FIT & FUN

Play Like Lovebirds

Lovebirds

Lovebirds are a playful and affectionate type of small parrot. They are only about five inches in length and are sometimes called pint-sized bundles of joy.

Put this sentence back together to find out why they're called lovebirds.

time snuggling close together when

These little African parrots are

pairs, they spend long periods of

sleeping or resting.

called lovebirds because, if kept in

Lovebirds are little clowns and they love to play for hours at a time. They hang upside down, spin toys and dance on shoulders.

How many hearts can you find on this page?

Face a friend and pretend one of you is the mirror image of the other. Try to "mirror" each action your friend does.

Lovebirds often hang upside down. Find a large grassy area and try to stand on your head. Don't give up, it takes practice and balance.

SAFE!

Lovebirds love to chase each other from tree to tree. Play a game of tag with some friends. Choose a tree to be "base" where you can't be tagged IT.

Lovebirds love to dance, too. Put on some of your favorite music and dance, dance, dance!

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

Where do lovebirds come from?

Read about which parts of Africa are home to each of the nine varieties of lovebirds. Then use different colors to show where each kind can be found on the map of Africa.

- Madagascar Lovebird** is found on the island of Madagascar.
- Red-Faced Lovebird** is found in equatorial Africa, ranging from Sierra Leone to Uganda.
- Abyssinian Lovebird** is found in central and eastern Ethiopia and southern Eritrea.
- Swindern's Lovebird** is found in Liberia, Cameroon and Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Peach-Faced Lovebird** is found in Angola.
- Nyasa Lovebird** is found in parts of Zambia and Malawi.
- Black-Checked Lovebird** is found in Zimbabwe.
- Fischer's Lovebird** is found in northwestern Tanzania.
- Masked Lovebird** is found in northeastern Tanzania.

Extra! Extra! Play with Shapes

Select three photos from the newspaper. Measure the sides and compute the perimeter and the area.

Standards Link: Measurement: Calculate area and perimeter.

Standards Link: Geography: Use map skills to locate places.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Draw a line through every lovebird without lifting your pencil or passing over the same bird twice!

Solution at: www.kidscoop.com/kids

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

Double Double Word Search

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

LOVEBIRDS PERIMETER PLAYFUL CLOWNS MASKED AFRICA PARROT ISLAND LITTLE PEACH NYASA DANCE CONGO HANG SPIN

ECNADNALSIP
PNIPSBUDNN
HADDLARHWL
ECREEIYAOU
LOARBKSNLF
TNOEOFSGCY
TGVJPTOAYA
IOACIRFAML
LRETEMIREP

Standards Link: Letter Sequencing: Recognize identical words; skim and scan reading; recall spelling patterns.

The Online Scoop

Kid Scoop cartoonist Jeff Schinkel shows you how to draw a pair of lovebirds in a new video at: www.kidscoop.com/kids

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

www.kidscoop.com

Lovebirds in the News

Find an article about people in love in today's newspaper or newspaper website. Identify who the article is about as well as the what, when, where, why and how.

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Identify main idea and supporting details.

What is a bird after it is nine days old?

ANSWER: Ten days old.

Kid Scoop-doku™

Complete the grid by using all the letters in the word CLOWN in each vertical and horizontal row. Each letter should only be used once in each row. Some spaces have been filled in for you.

	C		
	W		
C	L	O	N
	N		
	L		

Write On!

My Favorite Bird

What is your favorite bird? Tell three facts and three opinions about this bird.

Real Estate Ticker,
continued from page 24

uncertainty, this could be a tough year for sellers.

Here's a look at Loudoun numbers for December from the MRIS:

Statistic	Values	YoY	MoM
Total Sold Dollar Volume	\$192,896,860	+ 32.64%	- 0.29%
Closed Sales	432	+ 19.34%	+ 1.65%
Median Sold Price	\$400,000	+ 9.74%	- 1.21%
Avg Sold Price	\$446,521	+ 11.15%	- 1.91%
Avg Days on Market	58 days	- 15.94%	- 3.33%
Avg Sold to Orig List Ratio	96.75%	+ 1.79%	- 0.23%

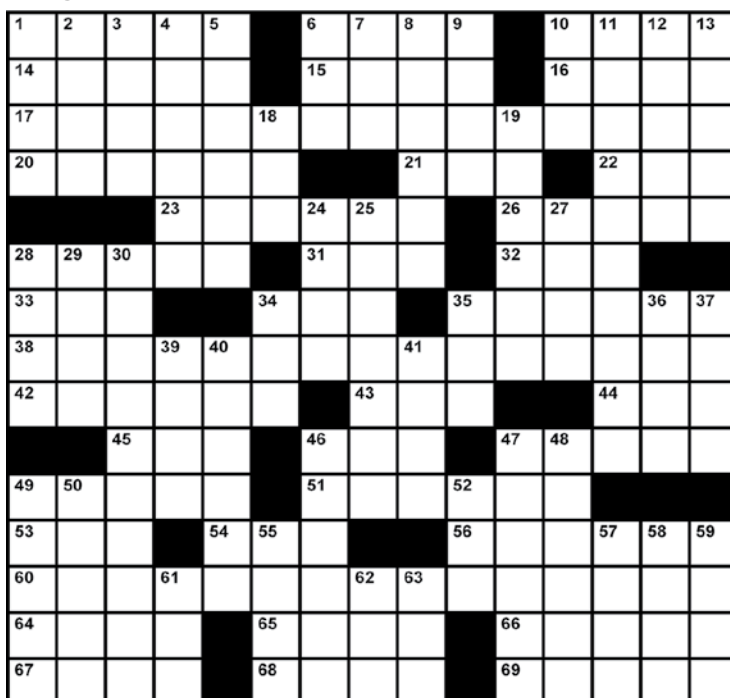
As you can see, December's numbers showed declines over the preceding month, but a significant upswing year-over-year. The residential market continues to improve, for now.

On a personal note:

This past month I listed over \$20,800,000.00 in residential and commercial real estate, a new all-time one-month high. Sellers now sense activity in the market, and many have decided that NOW is the right time to sell what they've got to get more liquid.

Carl Fischer is the Broker/Owner of United Country Real Estate, specializing in commercial, investment, and selected residential properties, as well as Northern Neck of Virginia waterfront homes. He is licensed in Virginia and West Virginia, and is a member of the Dulles Area Association of Realtor (DAAR) as well as the Northern Neck Association of Realtors (NNAR)

High Enders — By Myles Mellor and Sally York



ACROSS

- 1. Monroe's successor
- 6. Yammers
- 10. "Hamlet" has five
- 14. Storyteller
- 15. Unsilently
- 16. Binary
- 17. High enders
- 20. Fifth-century scourge
- 21. Border monitors (abbr.)

DOWN

- 22. Absorbed, as a cost
- 23. Caesar's meal starters?
- 26. Bach composition
- 28. ___-l'Eglise, France
- 31. E or G, e.g.
- 32. International language
- 33. ___-time low
- 34. "Seize ___!"
- 35. Arctic jacket
- 38. High enders

- 42. ___-proof
- 43. Caviar source
- 44. Afflict
- 45. Gathered dust
- 46. Black gold
- 47. Dutch pottery city
- 49. 1940s-60s world leader
- 51. Dorm room staple
- 53. "We ___ the World"
- 54. Dash
- 56. Plaudits
- 60. High enders
- 64. 1952 Olympics host
- 65. Home, informally
- 66. Heart chambers
- 67. Western or Buy
- 68. Arabic miracle
- 69. Leather whip

- 13. Cold shower?
- 18. Spicy stew
- 19. Corn dish
- 24. Like, with "to"
- 25. Mark for misconduct
- 27. Aroma
- 28. Truth
- 29. Scat queen, to friends
- 30. Hinged dredgers
- 34. "And I Love ___" (1964 tune)
- 35. Mature
- 36. "___ I care!"
- 37. Early European
- 39. Bandy words
- 40. Hoaxes
- 41. Lady Macbeth, e.g.
- 46. Fish hawk
- 47. Strip of potency
- 48. Crude stone artifact
- 49. Bigwig
- 50. Clear, as a disk
- 52. "Andy Capp" cartoonist Smythe
- 55. "Empedocles on ___" (Matthew Arnold poem)
- 57. City on the Yamuna River
- 58. Dilute
- 59. Alone
- 61. Auction offering
- 62. ___ Today
- 63. Utmost

DOWN

- 1. Eastern pooh-bah
- 2. "Dang!"
- 3. Common contraction
- 4. Fashionable
- 5. Funeral slabs
- 6. Pursue relentlessly
- 7. "Give it ___!"
- 8. Disheveled
- 9. Harmonize
- 10. Play title word
- 11. Relating to a steward
- 12. Spoonful, say

answers on page 27...

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- SPECIAL EVENTS

Jessica Wilson, continued from page 20

right there in front of me. Another landscape shows a simple scattering of Black Angus cattle grazing in a field. Her deft painter's hand had somehow embedded the scene with silence, just as if I were right there leaning against the farm's fence, standing motionlessly so as not to disturb the cattle. She has been working very hard at this painter's journey, and it shows in ways you almost feel before you see.

And, where is Jessica headed next with her art? "I want to go back to barns," she says. "I love the geometry that occurs in art. I love the shadows in the architecture and the buildings."

Sounds exciting. I can't wait to see what comes out of her next set of canvases. What is revealed as she continues to chase the light.

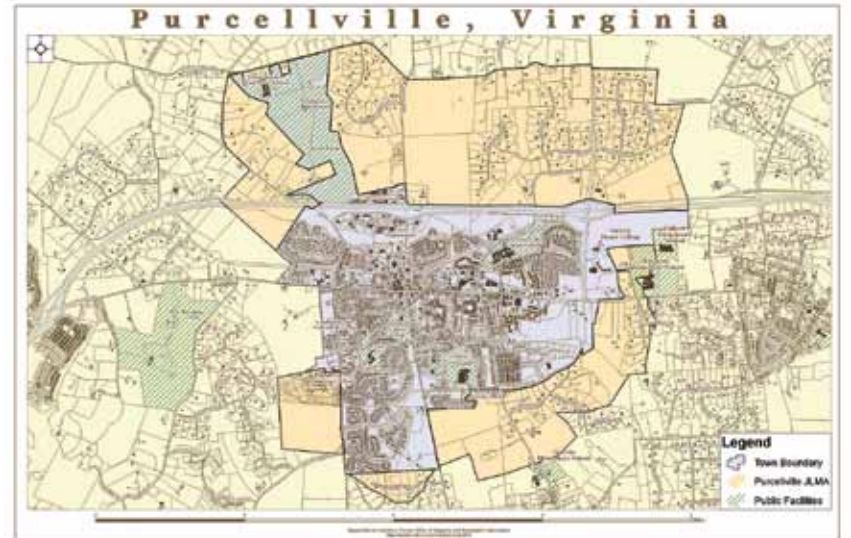
A gallery of Jessica Wilson's work can be viewed at jessicawilsonfineart.com; her work is also currently on display at the Government Center (Gallery 1) in Leesburg through March 1 as part of the "Women's Work" group exhibition organized by the Loudoun County Arts Advisory Committee. Jessica teaches drawing as part of the Loudoun County Adult Education Program, serves on the outdoor committee of the Loudoun County Sketch Club, and shows her work in venues such as Oatlands Plantation, ArtSquare (Leesburg), and Art at the Mill (Clarke County). Jessica lives on Mt. Gilead with her husband Richard Hamilton.

Target, continued from page 4

agrees with the town and county's boundary line adjustment, overnight, you're in the town.

It's been said that you don't have to be in the JLMA to be annexed and that's true. However, the town can still bring you into its boundaries under the following scenario. Let's say someone has a farm or plat of undeveloped land that's not attached to the JLMA. Under the CPAM2012-0002 resolution, the town can extend water and sewer service to that isolated piece of land, and, within five years, the properties sandwiched between the town and the isolated piece of land – including your house – can be annexed into the town. Don't worry, you can keep your well and septic system ... unless the town and/or county says they don't meet "public health standards," in which case you will be required to hook up to the town's system (current cost approximately \$49,000).

Look carefully at the associated map of Purcellville and the proposed JLMA area and see if your property is in it. If it is, and you don't want to be part of the JLMA, now's the time to



say something. There will be a public hearing on adopting the CPAM2012-0002 resolution on February 13 at 6 p.m. at the County Center in Leesburg. This will be your last chance to let the board of supervisors know your wishes. Call the clerk of the board of supervisors to sign up to speak: (703) 777-0200. Advanced sign ups will be taken until 12 noon the day of the meeting, or sign up in person at the meeting.

Answers to crossword puzzle from page 25 ...


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

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