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## Longstanding Businesses Oppose Purcellville's 21 Street "Phase II"

21st Street in Purcellville, which anchors the town's most historic commercial district, is slated to undergo significant changes. In "Phase I," completed last year, the area adjacent to Magnolia's at

the Mill restaurant and the historic train station saw the addition of new and wider sidewalks and several crosswalks, among other improvements. It also included the earlier installation of angled parking along

21st Street. Phase II includes much more sweeping and widespread changes and has several of the town's most prominent older businesses, including Nichols Hardware – which faces 21st Street – up in arms.

The major components of Phase II include wider sidewalks, a significant narrowing of 21st Street, an 18-inch lowering of the road bed, more crosswalks, an elimination

*Continued on page 35*

## Here A Cicada, Everywhere A Cicada

– By Andrea Gaines

We haven't seen them yet. But, experts say that starting in mid April to late May, residents along the eastern seaboard of the United States – from North Carolina to New England – will experience the emergence of billions of our most famous "singing insects," otherwise known as cicadas.

The "outbreak" as many call it, will begin in the Carolinas and work its way north toward our area. The 17-year phenomena causes the bug-phobic to squirm and the bug-lover to rejoice. But, however you feel about the buzzing flying insect, it is quite a sight to see.

Cicadas have been underground for almost two decades, maturing and waiting for nature's call to make their way to the surface and find a mate. Their bodies need



to sense that magic number of 64 degrees to make their exit from what are known as "escape chimneys," as they wriggle out of their shells, reach the surface and take wing.

"In places where they're going to be present, it's going to be spectacular. There could be as many as 1 billion cicadas emerging per square mile," said one noted bug expert.

Cicadas spend most of their lives underground, but do need the root systems of trees to survive those 17 years.

The insects can be annoying, even scary to humans. But, they are a bonanza to nature, providing much needed nourishment to birds and other animals.

The cicadas about to spring from the ground in 2013 are called Brood II, and are offspring from the last cycle that showed up in 1996. Quite a life!

## Woodgrove High School Appears Again On It's Academic

Woodgrove High School appeared in the first playoff round on *It's Academic* on Saturday, April 20. Woodgrove won again and by a wide margin.

At the beginning of the season 81 teams were chosen to compete. The numbers were narrowed down to 27 teams after the first round and then again to nine teams after the first playoff games. Woodgrove is one of nine teams remaining, and will compete in the semi-final round later in April. Their opponents in this second round were other first round winners: Osbourn High School from Manassas and St. Albans School from Washington, DC.

The team is coached by Louise Spicer, Robert Kane and John Lanham. Many parents, students, and teachers accompanied the team to Washington, DC for the taping. Also supporting the academic team was Woodgrove's Advanced Guitar Ensemble



directed by Romana Hartmetz, which was featured performing on the program. Their next appearance is June 1 at 10:30 a.m. on NBC channel 4.

From left to right are team members Keegan Ottoson, Christopher Miller, and Evan Smith, all seniors. On the right is *It's Academic* host, Hillary Howard.

## 23rd Annual Leesburg Flower And Garden Festival

Leesburg's 2013 Flower and Garden Festival drew tens of thousands of visitors in April, and, for the first time in several years enjoyed two days of sunny weather.

Prizes were awarded for the top landscape designs. Wildwood Landscape's farm-themed display – which included actual live chickens – won for best overall presentation. West Winds Nursery won for best craftsmanship. And, Rivers Edge Landscapes won for most creative.

Booths displayed all manner of garden supplies and accessories, including tools,

grills, decks, garden hats and clothing, outdoor furniture, watering systems, greenhouses, stone and brick, garden sheds, pottery and garden art, and more.

Visitors come to the show every year for lots of reasons – whether it is to scope out gift giving ideas for the gardener in their life, or to launch those grand plans for a landscape makeover for their property.

Local vendors dominated, but many companies and crafts people came from as far away as Alabama, the Carolinas, Georgia, Michigan and New York.



Happy Mother's Day!  
May 12, see letter page 24



3,000 miles on the wing

Flight of the Monarch

Wild Loudoun, page 15

THANK YOU to everyone who made our exhibit a great success at Leesburg's Flower and Garden Fest!

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## Recent 1 In 50 CDC Autism Rate Increases Parental Anxiety

- By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

With last month's Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (the CDC) reporting that as many as 1 in 50 children in U.S. schools have autism, the topic of autism has created an increase in parental anxiety in my practice as a psychologist. Parents want to know what the CDC's study and those numbers could mean for them and their own potential for having an autistic child.



The parents who are most concerned are those who are either planning for pregnancy or who are pregnant and expecting. One parent I met with recently expressed a profound sense of relief after learning that the sex of their fetus is female, reminding me that boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls. And, another parent indicated that, while they would love a fourth child, they do not want to "take any chances with autism being so rampant."

We have all watched the rates grow year after year, so I'm not surprised that parents are becoming more anxious about

autism. In 2000 the autism prevalence rate in the U.S. was 1 in 500 and over the past 13 years those numbers have climbed to today's CDC's finding that 1 in 50 U.S. children having autism. One explanation for the startling increases is that diagnosis is improving and older children are now being diagnosed at higher rates.

And the CDC's research findings have mirrored what I have been seeing in my practice for several years now, where I am diagnosing older children (who are usually male) who are generally high functioning. I have spoken to my colleagues whose experiences are similar, and I imagine that child psychologists all over the country are having the same sort of experience in their practices – that there is subset of children with high functioning autism, Asperger's disorder or Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD), that aren't being identified or diagnosed until later in childhood.

Presently, there is no medical test or genetic test that can identify autism during pregnancy. However, several factors are associated with higher rates of autism, including: premature births, babies low in weight at birth, low Apgar scores, parental

Continued on page 26

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## Historic Unison Store Donated As Community Center

The 1870s Unison Store, in one of Loudoun County's oldest villages, has been bought and donated to the nonprofit Unison Preservation Society as a community and history center.

Dr. Betsee Parker, preservationist and owner of the historic Huntland estate less than a mile from Unison, has purchased the restored store, for sale for two years. She is giving it to the nonprofit preservation society to make it a village community/history center and the land around it a village green.

Preservation society president Harry Bigley said "Dr. Parker's generous gift will guarantee that the store and its half acre of open space will continue to be the center of village and area life, as it has been for more than 140 years."

Settled in the 1730s, one of the first five Quaker settlements in Loudoun, the Unison area is today considered one of the best preserved places in Virginia.

The store is at the center of the Unison Village Historic District and the new 8,000-acre Unison Battlefield Historic District, both on state and national historic registers. The village is also at the center of Loudoun's Beaverdam Creek Historic Roadways District, the only one of its kind in the nation. More than half of the Unison area is under conservation easement and half its roads are still unpaved.

Other Unison neighbors are rallying



Dr. Betsee Parker is standing on the porch.

Photo: Mona Boswick for the Unison Preservation

around Dr. Parker's \$400,000 gift by starting an endowment to help create and maintain the new community/history center and the new village green. To support the gift of the store, neighbors already have pledged more than \$50,000 to start the endowment.

This is the second time in 12 years the Unison Store has been saved. In 2001, when the store was in derelict condition, bankrupt and slated to be sold at public auction, neighbors founded the Unison Preservation Society to help save it.

They did that by creating the village historic district, which made all historic buildings eligible for generous state and federal rehabilitation tax credits. Local builder Coe Eldredge, working with UPS, bought the store on the Leesburg Courthouse steps, outbidding two developers who planned to demolish it. Eldredge restored the store to National Park Service standards, the gold standard of historic preservation,

*Continued on page 5*

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## Attorney General Cuccinelli Visits Bush Tabernacle In Purcellville

In April, Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli attended the Loudoun Republican Spring Country Jamboree at the Historic Bush Tabernacle in Purcellville.

Cuccinelli, who is the current Attorney General of the Commonwealth, is running for Governor. He represented Fairfax County in the State Senate from 2002 - 2010.

Cuccinelli addressed the Loudoun County Republicans about the necessity for better and more affordable education, smaller government and lower taxes. He thanked them for the hard work they put into elections and



photo: Sarah Huntington

asked for their continued support in his gubernatorial bid. The attorney general emphasized the grassroots focus on his campaign and reminded the crowd he started his political career as a volunteer, putting up yard signs and door knocking.

After he addressed the crowd, Cuccinelli stayed and spoke with supporters. He also participated in and won the ping-pong tournament.

The election for governor is Nov. 5, 2013. To learn more about Ken Cuccinelli, visit [www.cuccinelli.com](http://www.cuccinelli.com).

### Unison, continued from page 3

using those state/federal rehabilitation tax credits.

Dr. Parker, a PhD in theology, philanthropist and patron of the arts, bought and restored Huntland and its stables, kennels and buildings and put them under conservation easement to protect them permanently. She is an avid competitor in hunter jumper shows and last fall she broke the record for the number of horse show championships won by a single owner at Pennsylvania's prestigious Devon Horse Show. Her Huntland team of hunter jumpers then won Junior Hunter championships at both the Pennsylvania National Horse Show and six championships at the Upperville Colt and Horse Show.

The connection between Unison, the

Unison Store and Huntland goes back a century to a meeting around the store's pot-bellied stove when the small Unison farmers hunt joined the historic Piedmont Hunt. Unison's hounds joined Piedmont's at the newly built Huntland and its kennels, owned by Joseph B. Thomas, master of the Piedmont Hounds and president of the American Foxhound Club. After restoring those kennels in 2011, Dr. Parker presided over the 100th anniversary celebration of their construction.

The Unison Store, like many rural country stores, went bankrupt because it lost its customers to supermarkets. Among the last, before it went bankrupt, were actor Robert Duvall, who lives locally, and singers Waylon Jennings and Willie Nelson, who arrived one day, in bill caps and blue jeans, for coffee.

## Alex Rossi Awarded Jefferson Scholarship

- By Randy Hollister

Alex Rossi (Loudoun Country Day School '09) was recently informed by the Jefferson Scholars Foundation at the University of Virginia that she has been awarded a Jefferson Scholarship. Alex participated among 115 top high school seniors from 32 states and seven foreign countries in an intensive, four-day competition.

Drawing directly from an article about the award by Joyce Carman, assistant director for the Jefferson Scholarship Foundation: "The criteria for a Jefferson Scholarship are demonstrated excellence and exceptional potential in the areas of leadership, scholarship and citizenship. Each finalist is required to speak directly to accomplishments in all three categories, many serving as student government leaders, honor committee members, varsity sports captains, school newspaper editors, highly skilled artists, actors and musicians, and class valedictorians. The average SAT score among the finalists is 2,209 (on a scale of 2,400), compared to a national average of 1,498.

"What makes the Jefferson Scholarship prestigious isn't simply the financial award that's tied to it," said James Wright, president of the Jefferson Scholars Foundation. "What makes it particularly special is the unique and highly competitive selection process finalists must undergo before being selected."

This year the Jefferson Scholars Foundation contacted approximately 4,000 secondary schools to invite nominations.



"We encouraged schools to nominate one or two seniors who stand out not only as exceptional students inside the classroom, but also as active citizens and effective leaders outside the classroom," said Ben Skipper, director of the Jefferson Scholars Undergraduate Program.

Nearly 1,500 nominations were submitted and reviewed by regional selection committees across the country. Finalists participated in essay and mathematics examinations, as well as

seminars led by University faculty members.

At the completion of the process, Alex was one among approximately 30 students to be awarded a Jefferson Scholarship.

At the LCDS 2009 graduation ceremony, she, along with classmate Spencer Gennari, was awarded the Headmaster's Prize for her commitment to the school's philosophy and for exuding a love of learning for its own sake. Alex's mother Stephanie Rossi said, "Both Mark and I believe that LCDS and Middleburg Academy helped to foster her love of learning and leadership, which led to her being nominated as a Jefferson Scholar." Alex has continued to excel in all areas at Middleburg Academy.

Dr. Randy Hollister joined the faculty of Loudoun Country Day School in 1988 and became headmaster in 1993. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Buffalo and completed master's degrees at the University of Buffalo and Plymouth State University. In 2002, he was the private school recipient of the Distinguished Educational Leadership Award sponsored by *The Washington Post*.

## View From The Ridge - Saturday, April 27, 2013

– By Andrea Gaines

On a beautiful spring day like today – or on any of the beautiful days we've experienced here in western Loudoun County lately – it's hard to imagine that one morning you might wake up and wish things were different.

The sun is out and the weekend is here. You've got lots of errands to run but that's OK. You'll hit more traffic than you are used to if you head into Purcellville or Leesburg, or Tyson's Corner, but you'll put up with it. Once back home, maybe you'll do a little gardening, take your kids to practice and then take a walk around the neighborhood, or maybe you'll head out to a winery or a local farm to enjoy what the still rural aspects of our area have to offer.

Yes, it's pretty nice living here in western Loudoun County. And, although everyone knows big changes are afoot, you don't get the sense those changes will one day shock you.

But flash forward a year or two, or three, to Saturday, April 27, 2014 ... or 2015 ... or

2016 and imagine this scenario.

Your favorite old farm, the one trying to continue operations despite the road that was going through it, finally gave up and closed. Your favorite old time hardware is closed down, too – seemingly benign changes to the old downtown made it too difficult for their suppliers to get in and out of their loading dock. The woods that your yard backs up to got replaced. And, not just by another subdivision, but a huge apartment complex. The "back way," that gravel road you'd take to avoid the more congested commuting routes has been made wider and is now paved; no longer a road that blends into its rural surroundings, it's now just something that gets you from Point A to Point B. Looking out toward the west one night, instead of rolling hills and rooftops and the occasional horse farm, you see a big parking lot full of cars.

As we all enjoy our beautiful western Loudoun community today, new development projects in the works, new roads, and changes to how zoning decisions are made and government interacts with its citizenry are acting against the vision that is our rural and small town, quiet village way of life.

This includes the proposed 176-unit

Catoctin Creek Apartments complex in Purcellville; changes to the town's comprehensive and zoning plans; elimination of the special exception process, resulting in less public input on big box stores and other zoning changes; the Catoctin Corner commercial development that will add more drive-thrus and commercial strips near the entrance to Purcellville; the new hotel (or retail/condos) and parking complex planned for downtown Purcellville, and the plan to widen and level out this historic area's sidewalks ... all in the name of a new "Tourist District."

And, then, for people in Purcellville and the communities within the town's sphere of influence – including the towns of Hamilton and Round Hill and the villages of Lincoln, Philomont and Paeonion Springs, Waterford and others – will we see the open space buffers that now separate them from Purcellville shrink to the point where you don't have a sense of being in a distinct community at all, and western Loudoun looks more like a Leesburg or an Ashburn? (Nice places to live, but not necessarily what you had in mind when you came here or chose to stay as a long term resident of the area.)

As newer residents and as long time residents, as we enjoy what we came here for and stayed here for, it's important to remind ourselves that there are good forces of change and bad forces of change.

High-density development without regard to the quality of life of those around that development is not inevitable, unless we decide it should be.

Excessive new commercial development that enriches big national chains at the expense of smaller downtown businesses is the way most communities are going these days, but it doesn't have to be the way western Loudoun goes.

Our agricultural heritage – and the local economic engine it represents – can be ours to cultivate and keep, if that's what we want. (A Purcellville planning commissioner recently said that he couldn't see a farm in town ... is that how you feel?)

We elect our public officials to reflect what we want ... and we should hold them to task.

We should be able to wake up on April 27, 2016, and know that, while we saw lots of change in western Loudoun, it matched our vision for where we wanted to live and what we came and stayed here for.

## Blue Ridge LEADER & Loudoun Today

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## Letters To The Editor

### Town Intimidation

Dear Editor:

I cannot stand by and allow Purcellville Mayor Bob Lazaro to disparage the good reputation of yet another resident of this town. Call it silly and old fashioned, but I expect elected officials to actually uphold the Purcellville Standards of Conduct and Code of Ethics.

I attended the April 9th town council meeting, which was a public hearing for the proposed budget. I spoke about my concerns, and a few other residents came forward to speak about their concerns regarding spending, borrowing, and the proposed tax increase.

One of the residents who spoke is very well known for his strong fiscal conservative principles. This resident suggested that there were areas that could be cut from the budget for savings of roughly \$650,000. He also disagreed with the 17 percent tax increase from the new Fireman's Field tax district, and he asked why the town needed to hire its own detective when the Sheriff's Department provides this valuable resource to our community when it is needed. Besides, just how often does Purcellville experience crimes that require a full time detective?

Near the end of the meeting, the mayor

accused some residents of having made negative statements about the police chief and Purcellville Police Department, and said they had suggested that the Loudoun County Sheriff's Department take over law enforcement in Purcellville. Those accusations are completely untrue and outrageous. The absolute truth is that not one person that spoke said a single negative word about Chief Smith or the Police Department. That is completely made up.

There are enormous consequences when you express dissent of any kind against the policies, lack of transparency, or budget of the Town of Purcellville.

So, I salute the brave residents and business owners that stand up and speak out in Purcellville. Unfortunately it has become too obvious that Mayor Lazaro has a problem with the free speech provisions of our Constitution. It is sad and shocking that there are those that still provide support and cover for such bad behavior.

– Kelli Grim, Purcellville

### Choose Your Delegate Wisely – June 11

Dear Editor:

When Republicans consider who to cast a vote for in the June 11 primary, they should check the facts to make sure they

are voting for a true conservative.

A true conservative Republican ought to adhere closely to the principles of put forth in the Republican Party platform. They are, "lower taxes, less government, personal responsibility, creating opportunities for anyone, protection of life, empowering families, and defending freedom and liberty."

Joe May has supported four huge tax and fee increases since he began his 20 year career as a delegate. He broke ranks with Republicans in 2004 to join Gov. Mark Warner and cast the swing vote for higher taxes. High taxes work against families and businesses while diminishing liberty. High taxes also have the effect of impeding opportunity for working men and women.

The results of the tax hiking Mr. May supports? According to the Wall Street Journal, "... a major tax increase that was supposed to ease gridlock but instead financed a new, higher general spending plateau. The state's own audit commission reports that the budget swelled to \$39 billion in 2011 from \$23.5 billion in 2002, a 66 percent spending increase."

What values has May protected? Mr. May, in his printed fliers is, claiming to share the Pro-Life values that will ingratiate him to

*Continued on page 26*

## 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.*

## Guest Opinion

### Endless Taxation Won't Relieve Congestion – Sound Decision-Making Will

- By Dave LaRock

Dave LaRock is a 26-year resident of Loudoun County, where he built a successful small business as a general contractor. For the last few years, he has been fighting to protect taxpayers and toll road users from government regulatory overreach and wasteful transportation projects. He is running for the House of Delegates in order to protect taxpayers and bring some common-sense reform to Richmond. The Republican Primary is June 11.



LaRock

Tax Freedom Day is the day when Americans have finally earned enough money to pay off their total tax bill for one year. Virginia taxpayers this year worked until April 20th to pay their total tax bill. Why are Virginians so highly taxed?

Under the guise of "transportation funding," state officials have repeatedly raised our taxes in recent years. Our taxes are particularly high in Northern Virginia as a result of "special" regional taxes and increasingly high local tax rates.

Instead of these burdensome taxes being used to relieve our traffic congestion which is the worst in America, our tax dollars have been misallocated to less necessary projects in other regions of the state. Our

legislature and governors, Republican and Democrat alike, have passed tax hikes without ensuring that our dollars stay here, and without addressing the inefficiencies and failures of the current system in which suburban tax payers are forced to subsidize expensive roads in rural areas where the traffic problems that plague suburban areas simply do not exist.

Last month Virginia legislators passed the largest tax increase in Virginia history; \$6 billion, supposedly to fund our transportation needs. The truth is \$6 billion are already tied up in four recently approved projects that will provide little, if any, relief to Virginia drivers. These projects include: \$1.4 billion for a 55 mile toll road parallel to existing US 460; \$1.3 billion to convert 8 miles of US 58 to a four lane highway; \$2.8 billion for the "Coalfields Expressway" near the Kentucky border; and \$450 million for the Dulles Rail Project which stands to benefit developers more than commuters.

The Dulles Rail Project is a classic example of our broken system of funding transportation. The project's own studies show that spending \$6 billion on the Silver Line will not reduce congestion, but in fact, congestion may actually increase within the next five years as toll avoidance increases with the projected \$14 round-trip toll on

*Continued on page 9*

### Purcellville Increases Property Tax By 17 Percent – New Fireman's Field Tax District –

At the April 9 Purcellville Town Council meeting the council voted 6-0-1, with Councilwoman Lehr absent, to increase the town real property tax by 3.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value. For the first time, a special tax district has been enacted to fund Fireman's Field and other parks and recreational activities. In all previous budgets the costs associated with the park have been part of the town's general fund. Now, these costs have been allocated to the new "Special Parks & Recreation Fund." While the tax district had been voted on and in place since July 2011, this is the first budget with special tax district dedicated funds.

At the July 2011 town council meeting, Mayor Lazaro stated that the new special tax district would not be used to "mask" an overall increase in town taxes ... but it is. The town has now advertised a rate for a maximum of 26 cents per \$100 of assessed value – this applies to the general fund. In this announcement, the town identified that the effective tax increase would be 17.12 percent, based on a "simple" increase in assessments of 1.59 percent and last year's rate of 22.5 cents. This announcement did not state that a major portion of the town expenses being covered by the increase to 26 cents were being moved to another fund supported by a new and totally different real property

tax: the maximum of 3.5 cents per \$100 of assessed value for the new Special Parks & Recreation Fund. Neither legal notice referred in any way to the other. In other words, the town would be free to spend up to the increase to 26 cents, in addition to the new 3.5 cents for the park fund. An interesting aspect of the huge tax increase is it that it was enacted before the town council had held public hearing on the budget. It is expected that a public hearing on the budget will be held at the May Town Council meeting and that the final budget will be approved either at the May or June Town Council meeting.

So, before any attempt to cut the proposed budget is made, the tax rate to support this budget has been enacted. The town has been on a spending spree for almost 10 years. The town's total debt is approximately \$70 million, compared to about \$10 million ten years ago.

Previously, the town operated three distinct funds: General Fund, Water Fund, and Wastewater Fund. The total debt service for all three funds was approximately \$100 thousand ten years ago. Last year, the debt service for just the General Fund was approximately \$1.5 million with the utilities adding in another combined \$2.6 million. This year the town allocated \$254,000 of debt service to the

*Continued on page 9*

### More Commercial Development Coming To Purcellville

Paillion Center on Main Street is in the planning process. The address is 871 East Main Street and the concept design plans call for a two story building (with a portion one story), and a total of approximately 29,000 square feet retail and office space with approximately 80 parking spaces. The potential tenants are Mattress Warehouse, Auto Zone and Little Ceasers and other potential tenants are yet to be decided.

### Purcellville At A Crossroads

- By Karen Jimmerson

Development is a cyclical business, and the building boom we experienced in the last decade is different from those that preceded it. Housing was buoyed by relaxed lending standards and exotic loans, but after the 2008 recession hit, tighter mortgage lending settled in and now in 2013 higher transportation costs and government sequestration plays a hand as thousands have effectively had their pay reduced or lost their jobs creating another cycle in which the housing market may find itself.

With regards to multi-unit apartment buildings, the forces influencing the current rent cycle includes foreclosed homeowners re-entering the rental market, an economic recovery that was strong enough for young adults to move into their own places, and a growing disillusionment with homeownership among young adults. While most apartment developers are bypassing the suburbs in exchange for building near employment centers, public transportation hubs, and where infrastructure is already in place, the Town of Purcellville is within the sights of apartment builder S.L. Nasbaum for a 176-unit complex proposed on Hirst Road.

Even with the enormous growth of Purcellville in the last decade, the town remains a bedroom community to the D.C Metro and is one of the few small towns in Loudoun County that have not been completely over run by retail chain stores. During the 2000s building boom, eager builders managed to persuade towns and counties to adopt laws that allowed wholesale removal of trees, clearing of land, and rapid approval of their developments. Purcellville is a classic suburban trade-off: residents willing to endure death-march commutes in

exchange for an opportunity to own a nice house in a small town atmosphere.

Christopher Leinberger wrote an article in the *Atlantic* last year entitled "The Next Slum," discussing the possibility of the end of the suburbs, as we know them. Leinberger predicted that in the coming decades there will be fewer and fewer buyers wanting the American dream so popular over the past 50 years. He argues that younger people prefer cities or close-in suburbs for their higher paying jobs, choices in culture, and a social setting often within walking distance. People in their 20s and early 30s have always mostly been renters, and now they are more inclined than their predecessors to rent rather than buy, in part because the real-estate bust has made them wary and because renting gives them more flexibility to go where the jobs are.

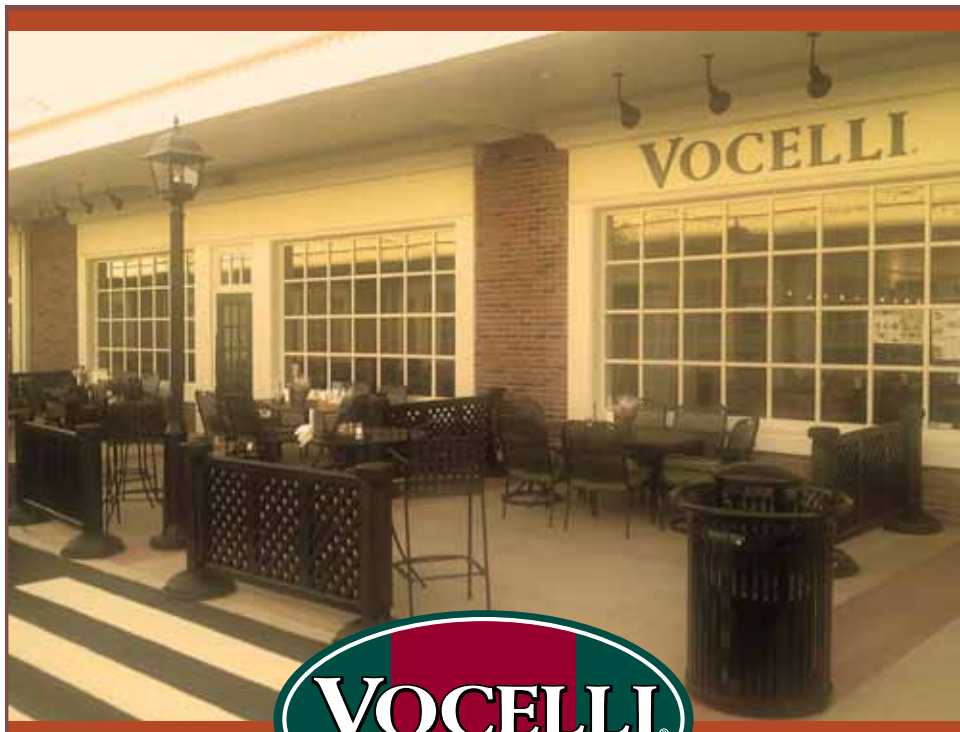
There are people who believe that as soon as young people reach childbearing age, they will opt for a big house and big yard. But as the 2010 Census has already revealed, household size is at an all-time low. Younger people are delaying marriage now five years longer than when they typically would marry a decade ago. With traffic still a headache, living close to work — perhaps without a car — will continue to have appeal.

The hard sell for more apartments in Purcellville is that the town already has the highest ratio of tax-credit apartments in Loudoun. The developer is touting Catocin Creek Apartments as housing "for teachers, fire fighters, and service sector employees in close proximity to their jobs." But, the starting pay for a Loudoun teacher would not qualify to rent in these apartments and other young professionals will not

*Continued on page 14*

### Interesting Aspects of Purcellville's Proposed Budget

- The General Fund budget shows a decrease of 2.2 percent from last year due to the fact that the town put \$420,000 from the General Fund into the new Park Fund. (If the Park Fund is included, the budget is increased by 2.3 percent.)
- Even with the 17.12 percent real estate tax increase, the proposed budget is short by \$197,970. Last year, the approved budget required a withdrawal from town reserves of \$583,907.
- Town fiscal year 2012 legal expenses were \$371,439. The current fiscal year had an initial budget of \$10,000 but is now estimated to be approximately \$140,000. The proposed total legal budget has been increased to \$250,000 plus the cost of a full time lawyer.
- The Capital Budget shows expenses of \$13 million in the current year but is reduced to \$325,000 in the proposed budget.
- Water and sewer rates were recently increased by 7 percent and 20 percent respectively. The new proposed budget includes additional increases of 8 percent for water and 15 percent for sewer. Both of the utility funds are operating at deficits; the water fund has a \$407,482 deficit and the wastewater fund a deficit of \$893,106.



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**Remembering David William Farrey**

David William Farrey, of Round Hill, died April 6, 2013 at INOVA Loudoun Hospital at the age of 68. Farrey was born in Waupun, Wis. on Dec. 6, 1944, to the late James and Marilyn Farrey. He was a member of the Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Middleburg, for more than 20 years and a member of the VFW. Farrey served in the military from 1967 – 1974 as a ranger, paratrooper, special forces, and a Vietnamese airborne advisor while serving two tours during the Vietnam War. During Farrey’s time in the military, he was a recipient of one Silver Star, five Bronze Medals, two Purple Hearts, and an Airborne Medal. Farrey was an educator, a horse enthusiast, a stockbroker, and a bridge and concrete project manager prior to his retirement.



Farrey is survived by his wife of 42 years, Billy Jo Farrey, son Derek Farrey (wife Jennifer) of Round Hill, daughter Stacy Mallonee (husband Chris) of Round Hill, brother Richard Farrey of Tucson, Az., sister Rachelle Totin of Butler, Pa., and four grandchildren Kimberly and Mackenzie Farrey of Round Hill, and Ellie and Kate Mallonee of Round Hill.

A memorial service was held April 20 at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Middleburg.

The family requests contributions to Emmanuel Episcopal Church of Middleburg, 105 East Washington, Middleburg, VA 20118; or the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, KS 667675 ([www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org)).

Funeral arrangements Hall Funeral Home, Inc., Purcellville Va. 540 338-5561.

*LaRock, continued from page 7*

the Dulles Toll Road. Instead of providing a return on investment, this \$6 billion project rolls along, debt-financed by up to \$18 billion in tolls while at the same time depleting our limited state transportation resources.

While Northern Virginians remain stuck in our nation’s worst traffic, these wasteful projects continue to be funded by our tax dollars. My opponent has been chairman of the powerful House Transportation Committee for too long without providing relief for his constituents. Northern Virginians remain under-represented on the Commonwealth Transportation Board, which currently continues to use districts drawn from the 1930’s. As chairman, he has allowed that out dated system to continue. As a result, the areas of our state with the worst traffic problems are forced to subsidize areas with no congestion.

Unfortunately, this year’s tax increase isn’t the first time my opponent voted to raise taxes instead of cutting wasteful spending. He has supported a long line of these tax increases starting back in 2002, when he voted for a

*Tax Increase, continued from page 7*

new Park Fund, thus reducing the General Fund debt service by an equal amount. Last year the town increased the meals tax by 25 percent. With the meals tax at the state maximum, other sources of revenue were necessary to satisfy the spending appetite of the town.

This year they finally came after the real estate taxes. These seem to be the most politically sensitive taxes to increase, so other options appeared to have been exhausted first. Councilman James Wiley has long proposed increasing the real estate tax. It appears that he got his wish this year. He is correct in one aspect; the town cannot continue to spend without eventually having to pay for it in the form of increased taxation.

\$5 billion Northern Virginia sales tax hike. Then there was the massive \$1.4 billion tax increase under Democrat Gov. Warner in 2004, where my opponent was one of the deciding yes votes. And who can forget the “Abusive Driver Fees” as high as \$3,000 on a speeding ticket he also supported in 2007 (later declared to be unconstitutional).

People who sit in Northern Virginia traffic may not know that as chair of the House Transportation Committee, he is more responsible than anyone else for diverting tax dollars we need now for new roads in Northern Virginia to much less needed roads in the rural areas of the state. My opponent has held his current office for 20 years, as he and the “business as usual crowd” in Richmond have refused to fix our transportation funding system, preferring instead to raise our taxes. This is unacceptable.

It’s time to elect someone who will stand up for taxpayers against the cronyism crowd in Richmond. It’s time for new leadership. I am asking for your vote on June 11 so I can fulfill my Taxpayer Protection Pledge to stand up to special interests and work to lower our taxes.

For more information about Dave, go to [www.VoteLaRock.us](http://www.VoteLaRock.us).

Here are a few of the recent tax increases:

- 25 percent increase in the meals tax
- A shift in the due date of the car tax to June which gave double car tax revenue for that fiscal year
- And, now they have broken off expenses associated with the parks into a separate tax fund

With the tax rates as passed, the town council can honestly say that the General Fund tax rate is the same this year as last year. Of course there is a minor increase caused by the 1.59 percent average assessment increase. The Park Fund will be treated as a separate entity this year even though the two were combined last year. The citizens, however, will see the bottom line of a 17.12 percent increase.



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## Bachelor Buttons - Harbingers Of Spring

– By Donna Williamson

Spring is here. My winter sowing experiment was amazingly successful and I have bachelor buttons, broccoli raab, dill, scallions, lettuces, - all ready to go into the normal garden.

I love how this frees you to start the growing season while the cold winds of January and February are howling and it snows again and again.

It was my first attempt so I was not ready with lots of great perennial seeds to start. Next January, however, I will be ready and start butterfly weed, flax, digitalis, some nice goldenrods, native verbena hastata, mountain mint, and other lovely perennials.

Seeds are much less costly than plants and I like to plant in multiples so this is a perfect approach.

Butterflies can find their host plants more easily if there are several in a group. Even though I have dry soil, I am building a bog garden in a galvanized tub so I can grow the main host plant for monarch butterfly caterpillars – *Asclepias incarnata* – the pink swamp milkweed.

Besides that pink one, and the orange perennial *Asclepias tuberosa* that likes dry soil, I also plant the tropical milkweed – with red and yellow flowers. I want to do all



I can to help the monarchs survive. They are in steep decline since the introduction of herbicide-ready seeds used across vast agricultural areas in the soybean and corn growing areas and the excessive tidiness of highway departments mowing the common

milkweed growing in medians in mid-summer.

So I can take the seeds of all these milkweeds that I am growing and use them in next year's winter sowing extravaganza along with tomatoes and bachelor buttons and goldenrod.

*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](http://dwfinegardening.com), 540-877-2002.*

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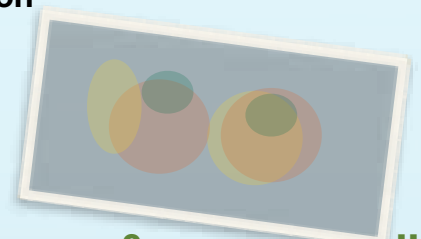
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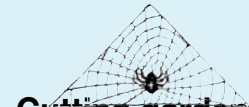
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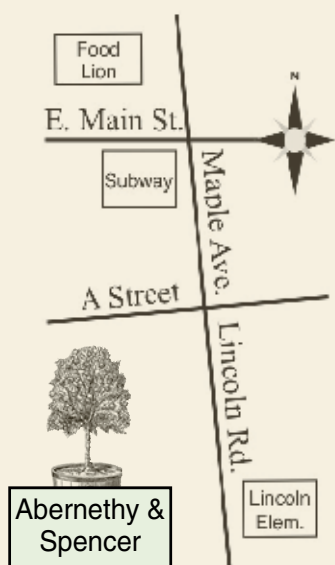


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## It's Almost That Time Of The Year Again

— By Hannah James

“Summer-mode” is a term used loosely to describe the attitude most students get toward the end of a school year. Easily defined and understood, “summer-mode” is a characterized by actions such as skipping class, excessive day dreaming and not completing homework assignments or studying. Students fall into this anomaly of both despair and anticipation soon after spring break or mid-April. This “just about but not quite” mood that blankets the atmosphere of schools is terrible for both the grades and general happiness of students.

Summer-mode is much like senioritis, the only difference being that senioritis lasts the entire year. The Class of 2013 has much to look forward to this summer. Beach week with his senior class, Young Life camp and a long vacation in California are just the main highlights of what Joey Lehning plans to do in last summer before college. He is especially excited to spend so much time with friends.

“I want to get as much time with them as I can, because after that [summer] we’ll be scattered,” he said.

Mid-August will mark his college orientation and the beginning of his higher education focused in computer science. When asked about his feelings towards school at this time, Lehning said, “I’m ready to get out, but I still have a lot of motivation to finish up well.”

Juniors, rising seniors, are perhaps affected by summer-mode more than any class. They’re ready to be top dogs in their school, but are also not looking forward to the stresses told to come with their last year in high school. Many juniors are planning to find good-paying jobs in order to save up for senior year and the summer that comes after, and Amreen Khan is no exception.

“I like working; it gives me something to



HANNAH JAMES

do so I’m not at home all day,” she said. She plans on continuing her position at Red Lobster as a hostess, as well as making a trip to Bangladesh.

Summer-mode affects not just students but teachers as well. As their students begin to get edgy and restless, some teachers find themselves wishing summer, a nice break from grading, would arrive just a little bit faster.

“It stops being fun when students go into summer mode,” said Jonathan Ackerman. “It’s hard to get them excited about learning when all they’re focused on is the beach.” An AP class teacher, as well as chair of his department, Ackerman said he enjoys instilling a sense of adventure into education. He plans summer educational trips around the world for any students interested, including alumni. As well as spending two weeks in Europe this summer, Ackerman will be spending a lot of time in the United States with his family and wife.

Summer. So many memories can be made during this rather short period of time from the beginning of June to the end of August. Whether students find themselves traveling the world, hanging out with friends or getting a fun job, summer is a time to treasure as teenagers and students. Before we know it, college will be imminent and there won’t be as much time to simply chill by the pool or eat popsicles in backyards. We should all try to approach this summer of 2013 as though it is a rare cache of jewels, treating every second as a piece of gold, and every opportunity as a prize unparalleled.

Hannah James is a junior at Potomac Falls High School, and a member of the GSA School Board.



Left: Officer Lockstock (Jackson Lessler) and Officer Barrel (Ashlyn Custer), seen here in “Cop Song”, lead the URINETOWN Cops in their search for lawbreakers in Loudoun Valley High’s spring musical, May 3-5, 2013.

Above: The poor stage a rebellion against big government, and hold Hope Cladwell (Sarah Midolo) hostage in Loudoun Valley High’s musical URINETOWN, May 3-5, 2013.

## Loudoun Valley Viking Players Present Award Winning Musical

Loudoun Valley High School brings you Urinetown, the Tony Award winning musical. Chock full of satire and wit, the story transports the audience to the future, where a 20-year drought has pushed citizens to their limits. There’s only one toilet in town and people have to pay to use it. Mayhem ensues, but not without comedy,

clever songs and lyrics, and a thoughtful message, so appropriate for our times.

Performances are 7 p.m. on May 3 and 4, and 2 p.m. on May 5. Tickets are \$10 and available in advance at [www.wepay.com/stores/lvhs-drama-box-office](http://www.wepay.com/stores/lvhs-drama-box-office), or at the door. Don’t be put off by the cheeky title; it’s a privilege to see.

## Sadie’s Race Is Back This Year!

Sadie Smile Foundation is holding its second annual 5K run, walk and kids fun run at 8 a.m. Saturday, May 11, in Purcellville. This event is in memory of Sadie Grace Ablard who lost her life at the age of five to a head injury in August of 2011.

Sadie had a contagious, joyful smile and loved to help others.

This is a fun, family-oriented event that includes goodie bags, technical T-shirts, a water stop, and snacks for all participants. Bring your children to enjoy the Kid’s Fun Run, a petting zoo, face painting, and a balloon twister.

Last year, more than 500 people partici-



pated in Sadie’s Race, and raised \$20,000 for Smile Train, a charity that repairs cleft lips and palates for children for as little as \$250 per surgery.

Registration is open on [www.active.com](http://www.active.com).

For more information and to donate, visit [www.sadiesmilefoundation.org](http://www.sadiesmilefoundation.org). Contact Sadie’s mom, Sara Ablard, to learn more about the event, to

volunteer or become a sponsor: [sablard@gmail.com](mailto:sablard@gmail.com).

Sign up today to support this wonderful cause and to enjoy a fun morning with your family and community!

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— Bethany Allen-Perez, Sunfire Energy Solutions



## Purcellville At A Crossroads, continued from page 7

choose to commute 30-60 minutes from employment centers to live in a tax-credit apartment in the outer suburbs. The Maple Avenue Apartments in Purcellville have consistently had vacancies, and Purcellville could double its population and still have the highest ratio of tax-credit apartments in the county.

While the economy is booming, these new developments always seem like good investments. But, during a downturn the developments will have trouble finding buyers or renters. Growth can be a good thing, so long as it is balanced, but more tax-credit apartments in an already apartment-saturated area of Purcellville is not balanced.

Purcellville’s housing within the town limits is high-density with a mix of apartments, townhouses, and a majority of single-family homes on ¼ acre lots.

Successful towns are places where people want to be and Purcellville continues to attract residents due to its small town atmosphere and lack of fast food/fast retail-chain environment.

Many residents worry about the influence that developers have on our local government and how hard pressed they are to turn away seemingly viable development projects even if the project doesn’t coincide with the public good or create public spaces that are meaningful to residents. This includes both residential and commercial development.

Those bothered by a landscape of look-alike housing projects, mega-structure office complexes and strip malls know the town is at a crossroads: Does it want to be a center of healthy civic life and common good for residents, or a place that mimics what people moved here to get away from?

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## Amy V. Smith's Money Talks

13 Financial Planning Strategies for 2013-part two of a series

– By Amy Smith

Congress passed the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 on New Year's Day. A number of changes came out of the act that will affect your tax bill. In this month's column, I will be offering financial planning strategies for you to consider in 2013 that by taking appropriate action may help you avoid an unexpected tax bill next April.



SMITH

**3. Align Investments with Account Types**  
Certain investments may be better suited for certain account types from a tax standpoint. For example, carry income-producing investments in a tax-advantaged account such as a 401(k) or IRA where taxes are deferred until later years and opt for stocks held long term or tax-advantaged municipal bonds in a traditional brokerage account.

**4. Take Advantage of Opportunities for Tax-Deferred Growth**

Tax-deferred growth is even more advantageous when taxes are higher. You can lower your taxable income now and reduce taxes by capitalizing on the following strategies:

**Qualified Plans** – Defer up to \$17,500 a year, \$23,000 if you're age 50 or over, into a 401(k) or 403(b) plan.

**Individual Retirement Accounts** – You may also be able to deduct IRA contributions, even if you participate in a retirement plan at work, if your modified adjusted gross income is under \$69,000 for individuals or \$115,000 for joint filers. The maximum contribution to a traditional or Roth IRA in 2013 is \$5,500, \$6,500 if you're age 50 or over.

**Annuities** – Annuities also offer an opportunity for tax-deferred growth on assets.

**Life Insurance** – Accumulating cash value in life insurance can also offer tax-deferred growth and tax-advantaged retirement income.

**5. Consider ROTH 401(k) Conversions**

Since 2010, eligible participants in a Roth 401(k), 403(b) or Roth 457 plan were permitted to convert, or roll, vested amounts into their designated Roth account within

the plan. ATRA allows every participant to do so going forward within plans that allow for it. Keep in mind, however, that you will not be allowed to re-characterize or undo, the conversion and that a conversion is a taxable account. The advantage of making the conversion now is you pay the taxes today for a tax-free distribution later in life when you could be in a higher income tax brackets or taxes may have risen further.

**Ask yourself the following questions in deciding if a conversion makes sense for you:** Will the converted assets remain in the Roth environment for at least 15 years? Will you be in a lower tax bracket when you begin withdrawing the Roth funds?

Unless certain criteria are met, Roth IRA owners must be 59-1/2 or older and have held the IRA for five years before tax-free withdrawals are permitted. Each converted amount is subject to its own five-year holding period. Investors should consult a tax advisor before deciding to do a conversion.

**6. Use Deferred Compensation**

Deferred compensation strategies in qualified 401(k) and nonqualified (supplemental retirement plan [SERP] life insurance) plans – available through many employers – are an excellent way to defer or minimize income taxes over the long term. By using a deferred compensation plan, you can defer compensation into future years when our income may be lower, you may have more deductions or tax rates may be lower due to legislative changes.

*Amy V. Smith Wealth Management, LLC, is an independent firm. Amy V. Smith, CFP, CIMA offers securities through Raymond James Financial Services, Inc., member FINRA/ SIPC. Her office is located at 161 Fort Evans Road, NE, Suite 345, Leesburg, VA 20176. (Tel: 703-669-5022). www.amysmithwealthmanagement.com. Any opinions are those of Amy V. Smith and not necessarily those of RJFS or Raymond James. Expressions of opinion are as of this date and are subject to change without notice. The information contained in this report does not purport to be a complete description of the securities, markets or developments referred to in this material. The information has been obtained from sources considered to be reliable but we do not guarantee that the foregoing material is accurate or complete. Any information is not a complete summary or statement of all available data necessary for making an investment decision and does not constitute a recommendation. You should discuss any tax or legal issues with the appropriate professional.*

## Wild Loudoun

Flight of The Monarch ... 3,000 Miles On The Wing



– By Andrea Gaines

What is more arresting ... the warm kaleidoscope colors of a Monarch butterfly's wings, or the mind-blowing fact that the insect you are looking at might have flown 3,000 miles to get where it is?

Monarch butterflies start out life as tiny, fragile eggs laid on the underside of a milkweed leaf – eggs just about the size of a sesame seed. Female Monarchs rely exclusively on milkweed to lay their eggs. Part of a survival strategy, milkweed contains a natural toxin that makes Monarch caterpillars and adults inedible, or at least unpalatable, to predators.

Four days or so later the life force in the egg produces an inconspicuous little "worm." But, with the milkweed's leafy nourishment, that worm will grow into a chubby and very distinct green and black striped caterpillar – a voracious eater on it's way to gossamer wings.

Along the way, the growing caterpillar will repeatedly shed its skin as the remarkable biology that will eventually produce those wings and other structures works its magic in the caterpillar's body. In its last shedding stage the skin forms a chrysalis, the beautiful green glassy structure that contains the immature butterfly. Hanging still within the chrysalis for a

week or more, the adult Monarch butterfly emerges, spreads its wings and begins its life's work.

At the beginning of spring, millions of

adult Monarchs leave small patches of fir forest in the central mountains of Mexico, making their way to the northeastern United States and southern Canada in search of milkweed. Some also overwinter in and head north from southern California.

In their northward migration the butterflies perform a multigenerational dance designed to ensure that fresh and healthy populations of Monarch reach their final destinations. Adults lay eggs along the way and as these eggs hatch, new Monarchs continue their migration north. Spring and summer adults have a lifespan of just a month or so, and up to four generations of the

butterfly may be born and die along the way. But the last generation – born at the end of summer or early fall – is different. These Monarchs live up to 9 months as they reverse course and head back down to their wintering grounds in Mexico ... and the following spring, the northward migration starts again.

This generational migration cycle is not only breathtakingly beautiful, but, as with all of nature's inner workings, biologically remarkable. The individual Monarchs that survive to make the southward journey may be several generations removed from the individuals that left Mexico's forests the previous spring. Although not visible to us, something guides them. Biologists have documented that some

Monarchs return to the exact tree that members of their family used in previous years!

3,000 miles on the wing and then back home. Unbelievable.

### Giving Back To The Monarch

*As noted by the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy, rural land in the United States is being developed at a rate of approximately 6,000 acres per day, destroying huge swaths of the milkweed and other wildflowers and nectar-bearing plants Monarchs depend upon for survival. This is bad news for the Monarch, because when they are in the caterpillar stage, they feed exclusively on milkweed, consuming the foliage and flower buds. Facts like these can be very intimidating, and one wonders, is there really anything I can do?*

*There is.*

*The Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy (LWC) has launched an ambitious campaign to support Monarch populations by releasing 2,013 adult monarchs this year, while encouraging the creation of Monarch "way-stations" – small and large areas of habitat that will help them along in their journey.*

*For more information and to participate in LWC's efforts, go to [www.loudounwildlife.org](http://www.loudounwildlife.org).*

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## Lady Viking Laxers On Five Game Win Streak

– By Mac Shuford

The Loudoun Valley Lady Vikings Lacrosse team moved to 10-2 on the season with wins over John Champe (22-1) and Dominion (23-5) and three win earlier: Monday, April 15 over Potomac Falls (14-7), April 17 over Kettle Run (17-10), and April 18 over Briar Woods (16-7).

The young John Champe team was no match for the Lady Vikings on Monday as they cruised to an easy victory. Sophomore Samantha Mendiguren led all scorers with four goals while juniors Corley Simons and Anna Munford added three each. On Thursday, the Titans of Dominion proved more challenging, but not by much as Valley won easily 23-5. Junior captain Ashlyn DiLoreto led all scorers with four goals and three assists while sophomore Maya Ebrahimnejad tossed in four and juniors Courtney Schollian and Megan Williamson added three goals apiece and

two assists. Haley Shuford was impressive in goal stopping six.

Valley was dominant against cross county district rival Potomac Falls. After taking a 7-5 lead into the locker room, they pulled away in the second half finishing the Lady Panthers off 14-7. Junior Ashlyn DiLoreto led all scorers with four goals and one assist with seniors Cortney Inman and Megan Williamson adding two goals and two assists each. Juniors Sarah Ashworth and Courtney Schollian each had two goals, while junior Brittany Raffa and freshman Lindsay Sweet added one apiece. Junior Kelsey Greene had seven saves in goal on the night.

The Lady Vikings had little trouble defeating district contender Briar Woods, starting off with a three goal run and building on that lead to 10-4 at halftime and then closing out the game 16-7. Junior Corley Simons led all scorers with five goals followed by DiLoreto with four plus three assists. Senior Attack Cortney Inman added



Maya Ebrahimnejad taking shot on goal

three, sophomore Maya Ebrahimnejad tossed in two, while junior Sarah Ashworth and sophomore Katie Davis had one apiece. Sophomore Samantha Mendiguren and freshman Haley Voell each had an assist and both were key on ground balls allowing

Valley to maintain possession for most of the second half. In goal, Shuford had five saves and junior Kelsey Greene stopped one.

After winning five games in row, the Lady Vikings will face district foes George Mason and Tuscarora this week.

### Little League Players Invited To High School Games

Woodgrove and Loudoun Valley High Schools are hosting Little League baseball nights. All Upper Loudoun Little League players may attend at no cost when wearing their ULLL uniform shirt and hat as well as being accompanied by a paying adult. The Valley game against Briar Woods will be Thursday May 2 at Fireman's Field. The Woodgrove game against Tuscarora will be at Woodgrove High School on Tuesday, May 7. Both games begin at 6 p.m.



Photo by: Rene Pettit

### Upper Loudoun Little League Opening Day - Round Hill

The Round Hill area of Upper Loudoun Little League had their Opening Day Ceremony on April 20 at the Round Hill #1 baseball field. Blue Ridge Supervisor Janet Clarke threw a ceremonial first pitch and Round Hill Mayor Scott Ramsey introduced the barbershop quartet, Mint

Condition, who sang The National Anthem along with a few more songs. More than 120 players were present for the third annual 'Running of the Tees', directed by Majors Red Sox Manager Frank Piliere. The day concluded with games on both Round Hill baseball fields.

### Upper Loudoun Little League Accepting Scholarship Applications

Upper Loudoun Little League is currently accepting applications for their 2013 Home Town Heroes scholarship. The qualifications are that the applicant need to have played baseball for ULLL as well as currently be a LVHS, WHS, western

Loudoun private school or home school graduating senior. The application deadline is May 6, 2013. The form can be found online at ULLL.org or in the guidance offices of Loudoun Valley High School and Woodgrove High School.



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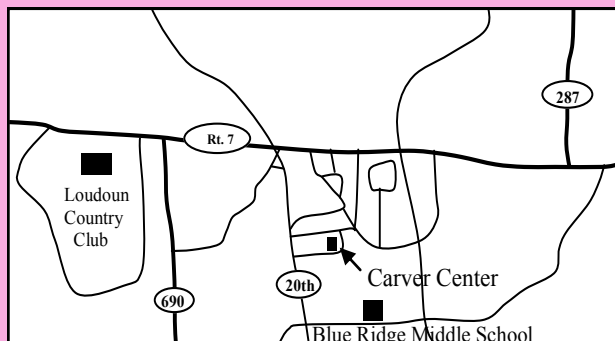
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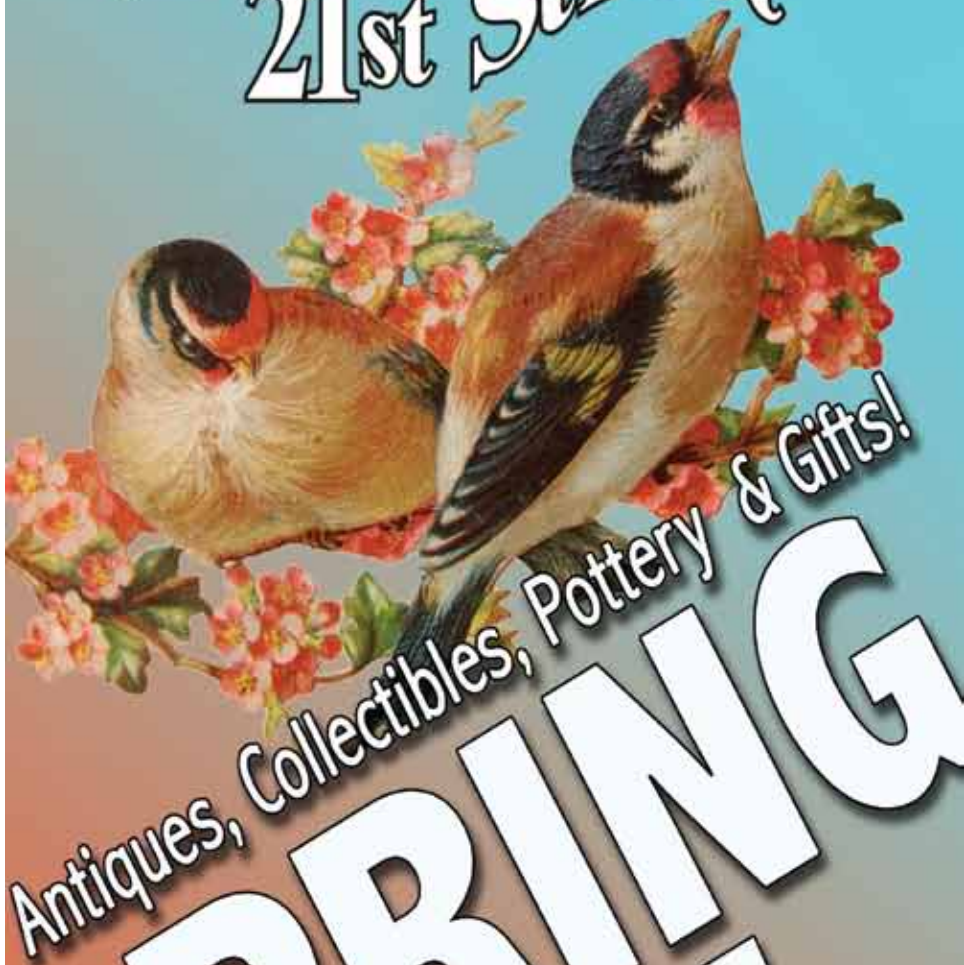
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# THANK YOU!

I would like to thank: Sue Nathman for the exhibit idea; she came in last fall with magazine clippings and a sketch of the concept; Paul Pronske, an amazing carpenter out of Bluemont, who helped us get the chicken coop and tool shed started; Courtney Fair, who came down from his home in central New York, to do the finish work on the chicken coop and tool shed; Julie Miles, who brought the vision to life with her painting expertise; The Wildwood Team, who put the display together; Polly Ahalt, who did a fantastic job on plant selection; and, my wife, Neville, and son, Andre, for all of their support.

— Jason Dengler, Owner, Wildwood Landscape.



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## SOME GARDEN TIPS FOR MAY

- Thin seedlings
- Pull any weeds that show during your morning garden check
- Set up garden structures like bean tepees for summer growth



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**2013 Spring Farm Tour**  
 May 18th & 19th • 10am-4pm

Enjoy the flavors of Loudoun County!  
 Animals, Wine, Local Produce and More!



[www.LoudounFarms.org/FarmTour](http://www.LoudounFarms.org/FarmTour)

**FOCUS ON:**  
**NICHOLS HARDWARE STORE**



Nichols Hardware store has been in the same location since it opened in 1914, and was started by Ken Nichols' father, Edward E. Nichols, Sr. It's the oldest continuously operating retail business in Purcellville. Anything you need – you can find at Nichols and if you can't find it, then you probably don't need it. You can get seeds for the garden, paint for your favorite project, items for the kitchen, nails and so many items too numerous to mention. Old time customer service is a given – and a visit to Nichols Hardware Store makes us realize why we moved here to this special town. Pictured left to right: Robert Seidelman, Rick Barton, Landen Warner. Photo by Sarah Huntington, 540 338-7809



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Sponsored by the  
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**BRING THIS AD FOR  
 1 FREE ADMISSION!**

# FOCUS ON: PHILOMONT GENERAL STORE



Madeline Skinner has owned the Philomont General Store since April 2003. It's the last country store in Loudoun County to have a full operating post office. Skinner wanted to preserve the tradition of the country store, and her motto is "A Little Something For Everyone." She has a small gift section and she works with local artisans to promote Loudoun County products. You can find over 100 different wines including local – and more than 50 kinds of beer. Hungry? There is a deli with a choice of sandwiches from turkey to pulled pork barbecue. The Philomont General Store is charming and has groceries, gourmet food and ice cream and popsicles, too.

Photo by Sarah Huntington, 540 338-7809

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Dear Mom,  
I love you because you get me gum balls and because you call me Geeta. You read me stories about Clifford the big red dog and you cook good dinners. You give me great birthday parties and you taught me how to swim! Sometimes you even let me cuddle in your bed with you and Dad!

I love you Mommy - Happy Mommy's Day to the best Mom ever!

Abby, your Geeta!

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**ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT**

**Bill Testa – An Artist “At Home”**



– By Andrea Gaines

Knowing that local craftsman Bill Testa and his wife see the family’s home as their very own piece of western Loudoun paradise, you are prepared for something special.

But, once inside you realize that you are looking at, not just a very unique space, but an art gallery in the form of one of the most comfortable home environments you have ever entered.

Everything in Testa’s home is very functional. Kitchen cabinets with lots of convenient storage, all in the right place. Perfectly appointed fireplaces in just about every room. A large, two-story sunroom in back that is toasty warm or beautifully cool regardless of the season and decorated with all manner of interesting old farm implements and family memorabilia. A dark and quiet study with wonderful antique furniture and old world paneling.

Then you start asking questions – “This strip of carved wood here ... was that your idea? The mantle, what kind of wood is that? That little stained glass cobweb – is that from an old window somewhere?” – and you realize that everything unique and beautiful about the home is 100% hand-crafted by the man himself.

Bill Testa is a builder by trade, but he’s also a cabinetmaker, a furniture maker, a maker of mantles and paneling, a window finisher and a designer. Many of the wood features and hand-crafted furniture in his home came from wood felled on the

property. And his eye for things unique and worth salvaging are everywhere; including the antique stained glass cobweb set into a window transom in his dining room, the chairs around the dining room table, several of which are true antiques and several of which he made to replace chairs missing from the original set, and the beams in the sunroom, salvaged from an old barn.

And, it is not just wood that is transformed by Testa’s artistic hand.

In one corner of the living room is a wonderful oil painting with a European master’s feel, an image of an old stone city bridge flanked by quaint buildings that looks like it might have been painted in the 13th century. He liked an old advertisement he saw in a magazine somewhere, and so he copied it in the form of an oil painting. Just like that.

Stone is also part of the Testa home; rustic patio spaces, a stone-edged pool and broad hand-laid stone walls with graceful archways and decorative nooks, all of which blend into the back yard’s rural landscape. (Looking at one of the stone walls on his property I remark on the beautiful curves and archways he’s designed into it, and Testa says that yes, with stone “It’s all about the curves.” He’s smiling, so I leave it at that, allowing the twinkle in his eye to close the *Blue Ridge Leader’s* visit with a little mystery).

It is truly amazing that this man never saw a material he couldn’t transform into something even more beautiful, for his family and for himself. An artist “at home.”

**Franklin Park Performing & Visual Arts Center, May 2013**

**Friday, May 3, Loretta Swit Stars in Eleanor Roosevelt: Her Secret Journey**  
Solo performance drama is based on a play by Rhoda Lerman revealing Eleanor Roosevelt’s journey from the White House to the United Nations.

**Saturday, May 4, The Immortals**  
Teen musicians who have achieved amazing success in Loudoun County, formed from students of Frank Keims’ Loudoun Music Instruction in Lovettsville.

**Sunday, May 5, Loudoun Symphony Chamber Players**  
The Loudoun Symphony Chamber Players return to the Arts Center for another season of classical performances; musical groupings include duos, trios and quartets, often featuring guest artists.

**Friday, May 10, Last Ham Standing**  
Hilarious show full of laughs for the entire family; talented performers take suggestions from the audience to create wacky scenes and funny improv games.

**Saturday, May 11, The Bitter Liberals**  
The Bitter Liberals – with focused concentration and joyful collaboration – play all original music of texture and matu-

rity, featuring rich story-telling and fine vocals.

**Saturday, May 18, Shamrock Showcase**  
Enjoy the illusion as the Franklin Park Arts Center Stage is magically transformed into the Shamrock Music Shoppe. Let the shop’s teachers dazzle you with everything from highland bagpipes and bluegrass, to rock n’ roll and jazz.

**Sunday, May 19, Loudoun Symphonic Winds**  
Enjoy! The Loudoun Symphonic Winds has become one of the area’s most exciting musical ensembles, giving the Loudoun community an opportunity to play and hear concert band music.

**Friday, May 24, Alfred Hitchcock’s The 39 Steps**  
Alfred Hitchcock meets Monty Python in Patrick Barlow’s superbly ridiculous, award-winning Broadway play. The four-person cast plays over a 100 characters as they romp through downtown London, train depots and Scottish moors in search of the mysterious 39 Steps.

For Details/Ticket Information go to [www.franklinparkartscenter.org](http://www.franklinparkartscenter.org)

**Vintage Base Ball Doubleheader!**

Historic Long Branch, one of the premiere historic sites in the area will host a vintage base ball (originally two words) doubleheader on Saturday, May 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The event will give visitors the opportunity to take a step back in time as they watch the Chesapeake Nine of Baltimore take on the Old Dominions of Virginia in a series of games played by the 1864 rulebook. Cranks (the 1860s term for fans) will feel as though they have returned to the late 19th century as the ballists (baseball players) – outfitted in old-style uniforms – recreate the game of the time. A combination sporting event/history lesson/

The entry fee is just \$5 per carload, and there will be food and entertainment available in between the games. For more information go to [www.historiclongbranch.com](http://www.historiclongbranch.com)

[historiclongbranch.com](http://historiclongbranch.com) or call 540-837-1856. Long Branch is located just west of Purcellville.

## Sheriff's Department Facts

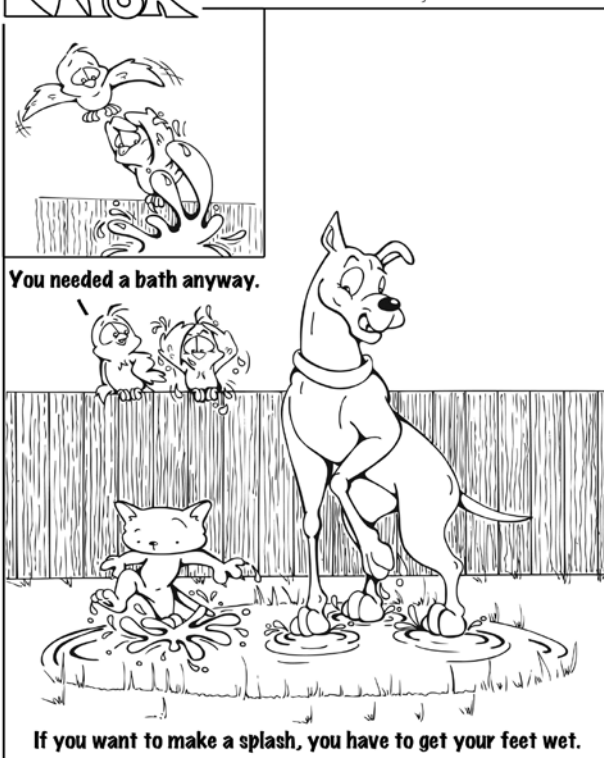
The Loudoun County Sheriff's Department provides numerous services to county residents. Here is quick overview:

- 21 Sheriff's Department officers patrol the county; in western Loudoun there are five deputies and one sergeant working the day shift, and eight deputies and one sergeant in the evening.
- There is one station detective for Purcellville, as well as a captain station commander and a 1st lieutenant assistant station commander.
- The public is served by two community policing deputies, four school resource officers (Loudoun Valley, Woodgrove, Blue Ridge and Harmony) and an administrative assistant. In addition, there is a traffic safety unit and truck safety unit. There are also Drug Abuse Resistance Education officers who teach in the elementary schools.
- From Jan. 1 to April 10, 2013, the department answered 512 calls inside the town of Purcellville – covering traffic stops, warrants, foot patrols and building checks. Deputies also take their breaks in town to reinforce the department's public presence.
- Anytime a presence is needed, the sheriff's office's units are on the scene.
- "Part 1 Crimes" go to the county sheriff's office (these include: murder, rape, robberies, auto theft, and financial crimes) as do 911 calls.
- Other functions of sheriff's office include: investigative services, motor units (speeders, accident reconstruction), traffic unit and truck safety unit (inspections, accidents), crime prevention units, internet safety, criminal investigations, crime team unit, swat team and community policing officers.

"We have a record of strong commitment to service throughout the county and the towns, and work well with the police in the towns of Purcellville, Leesburg and Middleburg. We are available 24/7 and always respond when needed," said Mike Chapman, Loudoun County Sheriff.

# Ask

by T. Michelle Thoburn



© 2012 T. Michelle Thoburn

## Sheila C. Johnson Launches Middleburg Film Festival

Film festival will bring the best in independent films, world-renowned filmmakers, actors, and film industry experts to unique venue on Oct. 25-27, 2013

Sheila C. Johnson has announced the launch of the Middleburg Film Festival on Oct. 25-27. A carefully curated selection of narrative and documentary films will screen in an intimate theatre environment, followed by conversations with world-renowned filmmakers and actors, film subjects, and opinion leaders. Films will include current festival favorites, premieres, and Academy Award contenders.

Special guests already confirmed include Director Lee Daniels (*Precious*, *The Butler*); Vanity Fair special correspondent Maureen Orth; former U.S. Senator and now CEO of the Motion Picture Association of America, Chris Dodd; and Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell.

The weekend kicks off with a "Meet the Artists" dinner where guests can enjoy an evening of casual conversation with distinguished filmmakers and actors. Other events throughout the festival include panel discussions and conversations with filmmakers, artists and industry representatives.

"As an avid filmgoer, film producer, and member of the Sundance Institute, I have wanted to bring a film festival to



From left Susan Koch, Middleburg Film Director and MFF founder, Sheila Johnson. Photo: Jonah Koch

Middleburg for a long time," said Sheila Johnson. "I am delighted to be able to announce the beginning of this annual event." MFF Executive Director Susan Koch adds, "We hope the Middleburg Film Festival will be distinguished by a carefully selected slate of films, the spectacular setting and insightful and thoughtful panels and conversations."

### Ask Dr. Mike, continued from page 2

age (for both fathers and mothers), high maternal stress, maternal use of certain medications, maternal hormonal and genetic status and fetal hypoxia. Some research has even shown a correlation with autism and cesarean section delivery and having a baby in less developed countries than the U.S. or Europe.

Unfortunately, most of the abovementioned factors for autism are not in one's control, and the rise in autism rates is raising parental anxiety. Pediatricians, child psychiatrists, child psychologists, and other professionals who work with parents who are planning for pregnancy or expecting or parents of young children need to be prepared to discuss autism.

My advice to my clients at this point is for them to focus on what is in their control -- good maternal health at birth and good prenatal care. I also discuss the importance of early intervention and its proven positive impact for

children on the autistic spectrum. I also support and work with parents whose children are being diagnosed later inasmuch as older children and adolescents on the spectrum can benefit from behavioral therapy and social skills interventions.

I also tell parents that autism is an epidemic on a global level, but it is not a curse on an individual one. Some of the happiest parents I know (both personally and professionally) have children on the autistic spectrum. And it has been my honor and pleasure to work with many children, adolescents and adults with autism over the years.

*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](http://www.ashburnpsych.com) or call (703) 723-2999.*

### Letters To The Editor, continued from page 6

the voters of a solidly conservative district - but what are the facts?

Note this: As of 3/31/2013, there are 5,046 "Choose Life" license plates on Virginia roads according to the Choose Life website. People who choose to pay a premium for those plates provide steady stream of financial support to expectant moms as they cope with a pregnancy. I'd hope that the values of any person with a heart, whether they are pro-life or not, would want to help a mother in need. Joe May voted to block the "Choose Life" license plates.

State government spending has soared in the 20 years Joe May has been in Richmond. May consistently votes with the big spenders, to grow government and shrink freedom, yet he wants two more years to raise our taxes even higher, to block other wholesome initiatives like raising money and visibility for mothers in need.

I sincerely hope that the families who want to see jobs grow as our communities prosper, will consider May's big-spending past, and choose their candidate wisely.

– Charles Cole, Sterling

### Keep Our County Clean

Dear Editor,

I am very concerned about the state of a major thoroughfare in Loudoun County.

Route 690 South or Silcott Springs, by which it is now "grandly" known, is littered with trash and even some dumping can be seen.

I contacted (and have communicated with) Keep Loudoun Beautiful. Ellen Barnes is also concerned and had some good suggestions, but volunteers doing a clean-up with their orange bags on this very busy and bendy road is dangerous.

Sadly, there is a lot of construction of housing estates along this route and could be the cause of excess plastic bags, cups and containers.

Surely, there is a part of Loudoun County Services with equipment and road signs to successfully do the task of tidying up their roads.

We are losing so much of our rural areas to housing and unwanted entertainment facilities; let's keep green what is meant to be green.

Please help us to keep our beautiful county clean.

– Ernestine Gates, Purcellville

## Carver Center May Events

### Mother's Day Celebration

10 a.m. -1:45 p.m., Friday, May 10  
Ages 18 and up \$3

Carver's celebration of mothers is centered on Mother Earth this year, and begins with a guided tour of Leesburg's absolutely charming Rust Sanctuary (transportation provided). After our sanctuary visit we will return to Carver for a luncheon with musical entertainment. An educational presentation on birds by a guest lecturer for the Audubon Society will end the afternoon. Space is limited.

### Presentation on Shade Gardening

12:30-2 p.m., Wednesday, May 29  
Free/member, \$2/non-member

(Ages 18 & up) Master Gardener Carol Ivory will be visiting Carver to speak about gardens whose light is tempered by the shade of Virginia's great natural ground-cover: Trees. These gardens, with their subtle variations in texture and color, provide a cool retreat from the heat of summer. During the first half of the presentation, Carol will explore different types of shade and the specific ways they influence plant care and selection. The second half of the talk will introduce you



to native Virginia plants that flourish in low-light environments.

### Ballroom Dance Social

7-10 Friday, May 24  
\$10 (if pre-registered), or \$15  
Lesson from 7-8 p.m.

Learning to social dance gives you a skill that will serve you well for the rest of your life. We all know that dancing can improve your mood and that it helps you to stay physically fit. But the greatest benefit of social dancing may simply be that it is social. Come dance with us. Call 571-258-3400

**Recurring Events** Free to Carver Center members. All others pay \$2 drop-in fee.

**VERY BEGINNER LINE DANCE**  
Wednesdays 1-2 p.m.

Very basic class for absolute beginners, taught by Carolyn Bledsoe.

### BEGINNER LINE DANCE

**Mondays** 1-2 p.m.

Leader: Carolyn Bledsoe.

### TAI CHI FOR 55 & Better

**Tuesdays** 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Slow-motion routines practiced in a group to promote strength, balance and flexibility. New students welcome.

Instructor: Trudy Weaver.

### BELLY DANCE for 55 & Better

**Wednesdays** 11-11:45 a.m.

A class that will combine the rhythms and beats of Mediterranean music with basic Belly Dance moves. Tighten your core muscles as we progress to intermediate level moves and make the hip scarves dance. Instructor: Laura Thompson.

### JERRY'S JUKEBOX

**2nd Tuesdays** 7:15P-8:30 p.m.

(Ages 14 & up) Enjoy a beautiful, large dance floor, music, a relaxed atmosphere, and a helping hand for people who are learning to dance. Instructor: Jerry Smith.

### TEXAS HOLD 'EM

**Fridays** 12:30-4: p.m.

This group meets each week in the Carver Library.

## Open Burning Ban Takes Effect May 1

Effective May 1, 2013 all open burning is prohibited within all areas of Loudoun County and is in effect through Sept. 30.

The regulation on open burning is based upon air quality standards developed by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and is enforced locally by the Loudoun County Fire Marshal's Office.

- The only allowable burning, without prior approval from the Fire Marshal's Office, is campfires. Campfires can be no larger than 3 feet in diameter by 2 feet in height and used for cooking purposes, provided they are no closer than 50 feet from a structure.

- On a year around basis, open burning (to include campfires) is always prohibited in the town limits of Leesburg, Lovettsville, Middleburg, Purcellville, Round Hill and subdivisions ("urban or built up areas") throughout the county.

The Loudoun County Fire Marshal could impose regulations, at any time, based upon complaint, atmospheric or other environmental circumstances, to restrict or extinguish any fire that is otherwise permitted according to these guidelines.

Violations on open burning may result in a conviction as a Class 1 Misdemeanor. In addition, the responsible party might be held liable for all damages and the costs of firefighting operations. Questions, call 703-777-8600.

## May

### ☼ Saturday, May 4, Saturdays in the Garden with the Loudoun County Master Gardeners.

"Preparing the Garden for Summer Vegetables" is the topic at the Master Gardener Demonstration Garden at Ida Lee Park, Leesburg, 10 a.m. to noon. For more information visit [www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org](http://www.loudouncountymastergardeners.org) or call the Loudoun Extension Office at 703-777-0373.

### ☼ Saturday, May 4 and Sunday May 5, MaiFest at Doener Bistro.

Come to 202A Harrison Street SE May 4 from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday May 5 from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Food and drink specials and live entertainment. Go to [Doener-USA.com](http://Doener-USA.com).

### ☼ Sunday, May 5, Riding Tour.

Offered by the Mosby Heritage Area Association at 10 a.m. Civil War re-enactors will accompany riders on a circuit ride. \$50 for non-members (includes lunch), \$45 for members, \$30 for non-members for lunch only (non-riders), \$25 for MHAA members for lunch only (non-riders). More information is at [www.mosbyheritagearea.org](http://www.mosbyheritagearea.org).

### ☼ Saturday, May 11, vintage baseball

at Historic Long Branch in Millwood, Va. The double header will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, visit [historiclongbranch.com](http://historiclongbranch.com).

### ☼ Saturday, May 11, Community

**Breakfast at Neersville Firehouse** from 8-11 a.m. or until food is gone. Buffet meal featuring a wide variety of options, plus a Children's Corner for the kids. 11762 Harpers Ferry Rd., (Rt.671). Free will offering.

### ☼ Sunday, May 12, Mother's Day Tea Party at historic Welbourne.

Hosted by The Mosby Heritage Area Association. Two seatings, 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. at 22314 Welbourne Farm Lane, Middleburg, Va. Tickets are \$60 for non-members, \$50 for MHAA members, and \$20 for 12 and under. See [www.mosbyheritagearea.org](http://www.mosbyheritagearea.org) or call 540-687-6681 to register.

### ☼ Saturday, May 18, all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast

from 8 a.m. to noon. Sponsored by Roszell Chapel United Methodist Church at Hunter Oaks Farm, 19530 Silcott Springs Road, 4-1/2 miles south of Purcellville on Rt. 690, free-will offering. Call 540-338-5861 or 540-338-5862 to donate or for information.

### ☼ Thursday, May 30, Local Leaders

**Speakers Series** from 7-8:30 p.m. Doug Fabboli, co-founder and winemaker, Fabboli Cellars, will speak at Morven Park, 17263 Southern Planter Lane, Leesburg, Va. He also founded the Piedmont Epicurean Arts Council. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door. Register at [morvenpark.org](http://morvenpark.org).

## Round Hill Now Accepting 5K Applications

Registration is now open for the 11th annual Round Hill Hometown Festival 5K on Saturday, May 25, starting at 8 a.m. The course begins at Round Hill Elementary School



on Evening Star Drive and winds through the town of Round Hill before finishing back at the school.

Prizes will be awarded to the first overall male and female finishers. Awards will be given to the top two male and female finishers in each of the following age categories: 11 and under, 12-17,

18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69 and over 70.

Children are invited to participate in their own 1/2 mile Fun Run, to be held immediately following

the conclusion of the 5K (usually around 8:45 a.m.). There is no registration or fee required for the Fun Run; all participants will receive ribbons. After May 1, including the day of the race, all registrations will cost \$25. Registration information and payment through PayPal is available online at [www.hometownfestival.org](http://www.hometownfestival.org).

## MS inspiration

### Arm yourself: Goals of MS treatments

Finding inspiration to fight multiple sclerosis (MS) comes in many forms. One way is by asking questions, such as: How do I know if my current treatment is doing enough?

During this event, MS specialists and patients will address topics like this and more to help you fight your best fight. After all, questioning your health is a sign of strength.

**To register for this free event:**

- Call 866.955.9999
- Visit [www.FighterEvents.com](http://www.FighterEvents.com)

**Event Information:**

Wednesday, May 15, 2013  
Check-in: 6:30PM-7:00PM  
Seminar: 7:00PM-9:00PM

Magnolias at the Mill  
198 North 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Purcellville, VA 20132

Complimentary dinner will be served.  
Complimentary parking is available.

**Featuring:**

Mark Landrio, MD  
Neurologist  
Neurologic Associates, PLC  
Winchester, VA

This program is sponsored by Biogen Idec and Eian Pharmaceuticals, Inc. © 2013 Biogen Idec. All rights reserved. 02/13 TYS-1000993

# We Are All Part of the Solution

## If we do our share, we can breathe cleaner air!

Help do your part  
to keep the air clean  
for all of us to enjoy  
by incorporating  
these actions at  
work and at home.

On the days that are designated Unhealthy Air Quality Code Orange or Air Quality Code Red, employees and citizens are encouraged to:

1. Cancel or postpone outdoor programs and activities, particularly those involving children or the elderly.
2. Postpone the use of any gasoline powered equipment, including lawn mowers, tractors, construction equipment, etc.
3. Cancel, postpone, or significantly limit local and long-distance use of vehicles. Ride the local or commuter buses or carpool!
4. Refuel all business and personal vehicles after dusk or the day before unhealthy air quality is predicted.
5. Consider Telecommuting.

This message is brought to you by the Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure.

[www.loudoun.gov/commute](http://www.loudoun.gov/commute)

703.771.5665

# Think of our little farm as your own private butcher.

## Fields of Athentry Farm healthy eating tips for May

1. **Eat your spring greens!** Baby or spring greens are loaded with vitamins A and C, and some B vitamins and have higher levels of nutrients than "adult" varieties. Eat them raw if possible, as cooking reduces their nutritional value.
2. **Don't overlook the nutritional benefits of pasture-raised meat ...** it contains less total fat, has higher levels of omega 3, and is also richer in vitamins A, D, E and B12.
3. **Replenish after exercise/outdoor work with nutrition in mind.** Avoid sugary sports drinks. Instead, flavor water with a squeeze of lemon or lime or a drop of lemon oil/orange oil. Or, serve your favorite tea over ice with a sprig of mint.

- **PASTURE-RAISED, HORMONE & ANTIBIOTIC-FREE MEATS CUT FRESH PER YOUR ORDER.**

*Any cut your heart desires!*

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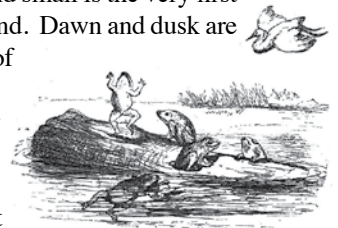
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## Sushi – "Tails" from the Barnyard ... And They All Danced

Sometimes even a Mighty Cairn Terrier farm dog like me needs to take a little break.

Each and every day, start to finish, my concern for all of the farm creatures great and small is the very first and last thought on my mind. Dawn and dusk are the most prevalent times of a day when trouble will start and end one way or another for livestock on a farm.



I must always be alert for these are the hunting hours of our livestock's most dreaded predators. So, although I choose what I call my "break away" moments carefully ... I do take them. Even I need a little sunshine sometimes, you know those moments when you lay on your back, paws up and drift off into the wonders of a billowy-clouded sky? Best times of all, best times, ahhh, just to let the world go away ...

I'm going to take one of those moments right now. Trotting down to the Beaverdam Creek as the sun sets, I am headed to get myself lost into the magical serenade of what I call the "vernal pool wilds."

Did you know, I'm a scientific sort in many ways? I yearn to understand how a creek side area – quiet and still and cold in winter – is transformed into a riot of sound and marshy scent as the spring arrives. Don't you want to know how that all transforms itself? I certainly do! I find it mesmerizing.

What I've come to know (Well, don't you know?) is that the spring peeper frogs, toads and salamanders I hear in and around the vernal pool wilds – the temporary wet areas you see in early spring – had spent the winter in a near frozen solid state, only to be brought back to life as the air warms and the vernal pools appear. Okay – do not call me a Sushi Science nerd! It really is cool!

I am taking my moment. I am lost in this amphibian song and the trickling music of the Beaverdam Creek. But, ever keen to what is going on at the barn, my ears perk up and make note of the distant contented cooing of farm geese performing their mating dances, and I make the oh so wise Carin Terrier connection. It's spring, it's new life; it's the start of a new year's cycle. The vernal pool wilds are performing a dance, too, as frogs, toads and salamanders gather 'round their warm lifesaving waters calling out with joy to their fellow amphibians "It's here, it's here, spring is here!"

And, I ease into that moment, refreshed by my time in the vernal pool wilds. AHHHHHHHHHHH ...

Oops. Ok. I'm back. The peeping and croaking and salamander laughter by the creek is downright deafening by now and will continue well into the dark night. It is my time to go home. I shake my wiry coat flinging the salty mud from the creek bed off of me and head back up the hill where my Mighty Cairn Terrier duty calls ...

Upon my return to my favorite barnyard of all, the geese are still dancing, but slower and closer now as night falls. Large male turkeys strut towards their protected nighttime coups. Our little lambs cuddle with their mothers in the warm hay. And, my farm dog companion – the Border Collie Nellie – stretches in sleepy satisfaction as I approach the farmhouse.

What a contrast I say to myself, the growing riot of spring sound, down by the vernal pool wilds, and a contented farm putting its self to sleep for the night. AHHHHHHH ...

Sleep will be excellent tonight for this little farm dog. And when I wake up tomorrow the geese will be dancing again, while the peepers, having raised their voices all night long, will be quiet. AHHHHHHH ... and they all danced.

All my love, Sushi



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## Just Like Nothing (Else) On Earth: Sagle Road

– By Tim Jon

'Floating' lakes, stands of mature pine trees on Hitchcockian slopes, log cabins, wild-looking long-horn cattle, lots of solitude, and a hush that's almost audible: Those are some of the things that come to mind when I recall my times and experiences along Sagle Road. I also think of rainy afternoons, when the slippery clay of the roadway leaves little to be desired by the occasional motorist, a variety – and density – of wildlife encountered in few other places in Loudoun County, and wide open spaces of both air and land lending inspiration to the sometimes lonely traveler. Lonely – heck – the place conjures up images from Jack London's stories of cold and deprivation from the Canadian north. Some of the views you get out here could easily be substituted otherworldly vistas.

If I remember correctly, the first time I laid eyes on the sights along Sagle Road (lying North of Charles Town Pike and west of Harpers Ferry Road) I was tasked



JON



with a mail delivery assignment in the dead of winter- just after one of those 'historic' snow events of recent times. The road conditions were white-knuckle slippery, driveways practically nonexistent, and the 'ditches' looked frightening enough to – well – not want to look at them. It's hard to use the word ditch when the elevation changes so fast you get dizzy looking at the images sweep past your window. You go off the road on a day like I just described and you'll sit there who knows how long. (I don't – and I really don't want to find out.)

Well, I made it through that day with no mishaps – at least none sufficient to remain in memory – and notched the experience – and the geography – down as a nice place

to visit under more bearable conditions. And I've been back on some glorious days: in springtime, when the air is so fresh out there that your lungs feel revitalized, the hot days of midsummer, when temperature, humidity and other air particles combine to make a relaxing syrup so thick you can almost taste it – and you might wish you had the opportunity to just pull over, lay down on the grass, look up at the sky for a spell, and take a well-earned nap (but, you keep moving, because that's just what you do), and then, maybe the most 'intoxicating' time of all in the wilder parts of our locality – autumn – when the hillside colors go crazy, and the air crisps up to make brisk movement a welcome habit, and the whole area smells like fall (piles of leaves, wood smoke and maybe some of that herby scent of nearby maturing crops.

Yeah – all of those times are your big rewards for making it through those tough winter days of treacherous negotiation through the lands along Sagle Road – but before you know it, the celebrations of spring, summer and fall are over and the north wind tells you that you're going to be asked to work through the possibilities

of ice, deep snows, bitter cold, and biting wind that saps your energy and limits your visibility. On those days, you hope to avoid the driveways (Are they plowed? Can I turn my vehicle around? Will I make it back up that hill? What other unexpected conditions can ruin my day?), the sides of the road – and just about anything else that can come between you and a safe return to the office.

Yeah – that's about as tough as it gets; it's also the time to remember how nice it can be during the flush of spring, the laziness of summer, and the ripening of fall. Yup, my current line of work provides uncommon experiences – at times unique – some which others might wish and even pay good money for; then again, the thought – or dream – might cross my mind: Wouldn't it be nice to just be able to come out to places like this without the risks and responsibilities? And I generally answer: Maybe. And, then again - maybe not. At this time, my experiences are vital – and, at least in my opinion – well-earned in the extreme.

And, if you need me to explain about the floating lakes and Hitchcockian slopes, well – you just haven't really been there.

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## ► Real Estate Ticker ►

— By Carl Fischer

### The 2013 “Spring Market”

Since the first of the year, both buyers and sellers in Loudoun County and surrounding jurisdictions have second-guessed what the spring would bring. It's here now, and opinions differ widely as to what it means in the current residential real estate market.

#### If you're a buyer...

Buyers on the “affordable” end of the home spectrum (under \$500,000), for the most part are experiencing challenges finding the right home at the right price. As I mentioned eight months ago, re-sale inventories have steadily declined, and prices have begun to creep up, with many listing receiving multiple offers, often with escalator clauses. For buyers, this has been pleasantly absent in the market for many years.

New homes are once again emerging as primary considerations for buyers. Though asking prices for new construction are generally higher than re-sales, the glitz, amenities, and low financing costs make these properties very attractive to many buyers, but at a price.

#### Sellers are feeling better...

Month-over-month sales for March according to the MRIS showed significant upswings in all metrics: total dollar volume, number of closed sales, as well as median and average prices. The number of active listings (763) is down from 863 in March of '12. The average days on market dropped 12.5 percent, from 64 in March of '12 to 56 last month.

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

Buyers are still very focused on value.

| Statistic                   | Values        | YoY      | MoM      |
|-----------------------------|---------------|----------|----------|
| Total Sold Dollar Volume    | \$205,206,699 | + 34.66% | + 59.23% |
| Closed Sales                | 461           | + 18.21% | + 55.22% |
| Median Sold Price           | \$410,000     | + 17.14% | + 2.76%  |
| Avg Sold Price              | \$445,134     | + 13.92% | + 2.58%  |
| Avg Days on Market          | 56 days       | - 12.5%  | - 22.22% |
| Avg Sold to Orig List Ratio | 97.92%        | + 1.84%  | + 1.99%  |



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For all these reasons, buyers are uncomfortable with the changes they are experiencing in the market, and this discomfort generally makes them more cautious in deciding to take that next step, no matter where they are in the process.

Escalating prices are a concern, and there is so much uncertainty in so many areas of their lives at the moment, that they are taking increasingly longer to make up their minds. The changes they see tend to be “incremental” in nature, little by little. There is no “sense of urgency” to act now. Interest rates seem unlikely to climb any time soon. Prices, while rising, are doing so slowly; and the purchase of new homes has so many factors to consider that no decision seems to be made quickly.

What this condition often produces is a self-fulfilling prophecy: Afraid to act too quickly, they hesitate. And when they do act, often someone else has done so at the exact same time, and they lose the home they were wishing for.

#### But sellers, too, are challenged

Having believed for too many years that they had no say in the transaction, many sellers suddenly feel that “the ball is in their court”, and the prices they couldn't get for the past five years suddenly appear “too cheap” now. So many ask prices today that would not be supported by appraisal. Remember, most appraisers use past sales as a primary source for price determination.

Just recently, my office closed a transaction where the appraisal came in \$30,000 under the contract price on a \$300,000 purchase. Both buyer and seller were aware that there was a high probability that this would be the case, but agreed to “work it out” if the problem arose. It did.

Fortunately, in this instance, both parties wanted the outcome they envisioned when they signed the original agreement, so the buyer dug deeper into his pockets and came up with enough additional cash to close the deal!

Everybody won. Finding solutions to challenges of this type is what real estate professionals get paid to do.

*Carl Fischer is the Broker/Owner of United Country Real Estate, which specializes in commercial, investment, and unique residential properties in Northern Virginia, the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia and Northern Neck 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), and can be reached at 703 727-5025.*

## Food Drive May 4

Eleven local churches are preparing to participate in an initiative to feed the hungry in our area.

The churches are combining to execute a multi-faith, countywide food drive titled, “Love Your Neighbor, Feed Your Neighbor.” The food drive is Saturday, May 4 and will support six local food pantries.

Those pantries are Seven Loaves, Loudoun Interfaith Relief, Messiah's Market, Tree of Life, LINK and Catholic Charities. As a part of this effort, Chairman Scott York and the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors have issued a proclamation declaring May 2013 as Hunger Awareness Month.

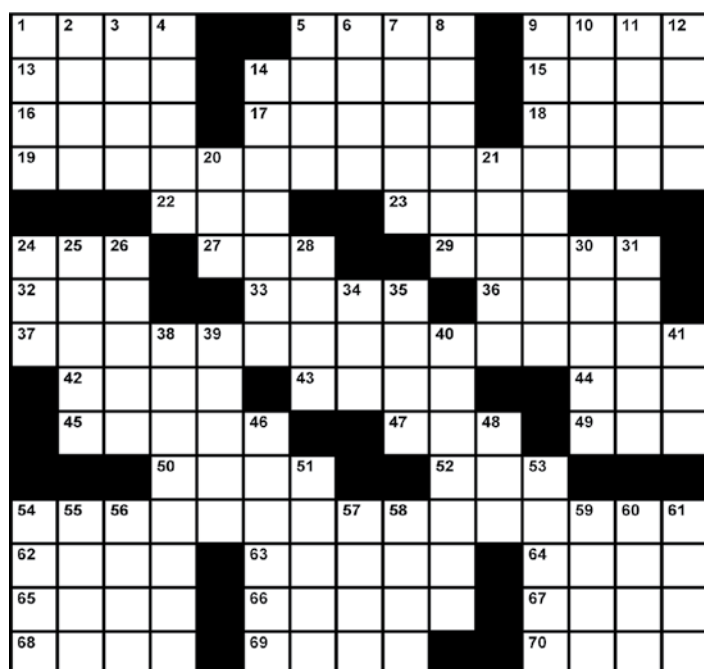
Last year, this highly successful interfaith countywide food drive had more than 1,100 volunteers, collected more than 55,000 pounds of food and raised more than \$12,000 in monetary donations

Volunteers placed door hangers at houses April 28 - May 3. Remember to leave out a few cans of non-perishable food for pickup Saturday morning.

Especially needed are boxed cereal, hearty soups, canned meat, 100 percent juice, spaghetti sauce, canned fruit, mac and cheese, rice, pasta, granola bars and peanut butter. For more information, visit [www.lynfyn.org](http://www.lynfyn.org).

The churches participating are: All Dulles Area Muslim Society, Ashburn Presbyterian, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Community Church Virginia Academy, Community Lutheran Church, Galilee UMC, Middleburg UMC, St. David's Episcopal, St. James' Episcopal, St. Matthew's Episcopal and Saint Frances de Sales Catholic Church.

### “It's A Snap!” — By Myles Mellor and Sally York



#### ACROSS

1. Middle \_\_\_\_  
5. Federal org.  
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13. Pull partner  
14. \_\_\_\_ Boothe Luce  
15. Clickable image  
16. “Someone \_\_\_\_” (2006 movie)  
17. Attack  
18. Swiss painter Hans

19. Site of illicit bar for the leisure class?  
22. Jam  
23. Deodorant brand  
24. Second sight  
27. Unburdened  
29. Out of style  
32. Taiwanese girl group  
33. Chesterfield, e.g.  
36. Sparsely populated North Dakota city  
37. Simply relax?  
42. Contemptible one  
43. “The Open Window” writer  
44. Factor XI (abbr.)  
45. OK, in a way  
47. Undertake, with “out”  
49. Az \_\_\_\_, R&B group from Philly  
50. Bypass  
52. Journal  
54. A soft touch brings relief?  
62. Mythological ferryman  
63. Cunning

64. Popular Serbian folk singer  
65. Gunks  
66. Broke off  
67. Experienced  
68. Brickbat  
69. Check  
70. Reno calculation

#### DOWN

1. Primatologist's study  
2. Mouthful  
3. Cigarette brand  
4. Bundle  
5. Long bone  
6. Back talk  
7. Hunts  
8. Establishes  
9. Diacritical marks  
10. Israeli port city  
11. Fully cooked  
12. Agitated state  
14. Live peacefully together  
20. White wine aperitif  
21. Start of a refrain  
24. Jolting therapy, for short  
25. Wrap  
26. Black tea  
28. Buck passers?  
30. Mawkish  
31. A-list  
34. J.F.K. overseer  
35. Says “When?”  
38. Poisoning from tainted grain  
39. Mosque officials  
40. Gave way  
41. Bother, with at  
46. Feudal sovereigns  
48. Excessively  
51. Jeer  
53. Ptychozoon  
54. Musical pieces  
55. Carbon compound  
56. Ancient colonnade  
57. Fries, maybe  
58. Posited Big Bang substance  
59. E-mail, e.g.  
60. \_\_\_\_ coffee  
61. Hebrew letters

answers on page 38...

*Phase II continued from page 1*

of the loading zones businesses on the street routinely use for deliveries and the elimination of select parking places. At the same time, developers John Chapman and Mark Nelis have been in discussions with the town over the potential for either a retail/hotel complex or retail/condominium complex of up to 115,000 square feet that will be accessed from the same area.

Purcellville's downtown is unique in that it is both a vibrant commercial area harkening back to the town's agricultural roots and an area that has seen the continuing success of old time businesses such as Nichols Hardware and the addition of new small businesses. The area is currently listed on the Virginia and National Register of Historic places, and is also part of a "Historic Corridor Overlay District" the town created to protect its character.

The town has sited many reasons for the Phase II work, including the fact that "sidewalks vary in width significantly on both sides of the street. The narrow width of the sidewalks combined with the cluttered assembly of utility poles and street furniture almost completely blocks passage at times." The town also asserts its desire to make "safety and aesthetic improvements" and has said, "Constituents of the Downtown District and the town are excited about implementing the concept." Town grant proposals also claim that there has been an "extensive and ongoing public input process" related to the changes.

Businesses like Nichols Hardware and others see things differently. "In January

2012 I learned that the mayor and town council of Purcellville had plans to 'renovate' the historic area of 21st Street and had, in fact, already applied to the state of Virginia for funds to begin this project. I knew nothing of this project at the time because the town had NEVER contacted me to ask for my opinion on this - even though the proposed destruction of the street and sidewalks on 21st Street would have devastating impacts on my business," said Ken Nichols in a letter to the Virginia Department of Transportation Commonwealth Transportation Board.

Nichols' letter went on to say: "Furthermore, it appears that very few of Purcellville's residents or residents of the surrounding communities - who shop Purcellville and thus would be affected by the destruction of the historic downtown shopping area - are aware of these plans. The Town appears to be intentionally keeping this information "not easy" to find. In my view, this certainly does NOT seem like a good way to make and proceed with plans that will completely alter the appearance of the most historic area of downtown Purcellville!"

Other opponents of Phase II also cite the fact that the majority of letters submitted in support of the grant that would fund the project came from businesses operating on 21st Street only seasonally - just 4 months out of the year, 1 day a week.

The Commonwealth Transportation Board has not yet voted on the grant application that would supply the remaining funds needed for Phase II.

## First Friday Pie Contest Results




Top Left: Judges are Bonnie Inman, Father Escalante and Pastor Dave Milam. Bottom Left: Debbie Randazzo of Butterfly Gourmet. Right: Best Presentation winner, Gerry Earl

Chilly weather brought out people from near and far for the Purcellville First Friday Pie Baking Contest. There were eight entries ranging from fruit filled to extremely decadent. Judges Father Escalante - St. Francis Catholic Church, Pastor David Milam - St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, and Bonnie Inman, Loudoun Interfaith Relief nibbled and analyzed the entries for presentation, crust and filing. Each judge scored the pie on a scale of 1 to 10 for each category. The highest score in each category qualified for the category winner, and tiebreakers were determined by the pie's overall score.

Best Presentation winner was Gerry Earl of Leesburg for her sugar-free, flour free Peanut Butter Fudge pie. Anne Davis of Purcellville won Best Crust for her Lemon Meringue pie. "The crust seems to always

be my favorite part of the pie," said First Friday organizer Mary Beth Barbagallo. "It was so much fun tasting the delicious desserts." Gerry Earl knows a little about pie baking. Her stevia sweetened, flour free Turtle Pie won for the best filling. The Grand Prize with the highest overall score was Gerry Earl's Peanut Butter Fudge Pie.

"It wasn't just about the competition, but giving back to the community," said Barbagallo. Each entrant paid a \$5 entry fee and slices of pie were sold at \$1 each, and additional contributions were collected that evening. A big thanks to Debbie Randazzo, owner of Butterfly Gourmet, for hosting the pie contest. Oh, by the way, if you are looking for a great Mother's Day gift she has an assortment of presentation dishes and pie servers that would greatly compliment any pie.

  
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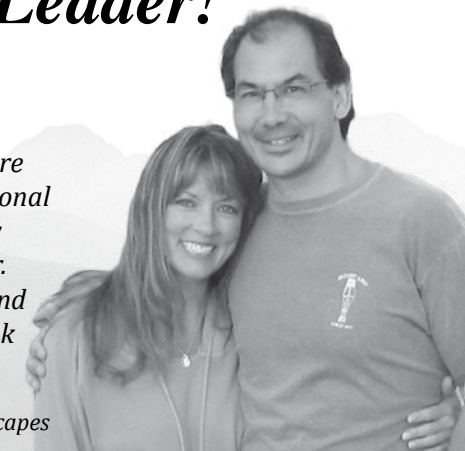
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Answers to crossword puzzle from page 34 ...



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