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Fraser To Run For Mayor Of The Town Of Purcellville

Kwasi A. Fraser is pleased to announce his candidacy for mayor of the Town of Purcellville in the upcoming May 2014 election.



Kwasi A. Fraser

Fraser states: "I am running for mayor of the Town of Purcellville because I want a better and lasting future for every citizen of our community. Having settled in Purcellville years ago, I understand the local challenges of fellow neighbors. What we face today is the fact that our town taxes are out of control. Last year alone, we saw our sewer rate increase by 20 percent and our water rate increase

by 7 percent. Town property tax has increased by 17 percent. Locally, we pay an 11 percent meal tax – the highest in all of Loudoun County.

"I believe local government should work for the people by providing the best service for the least amount of cost to the taxpayer. I have a plan for lowering our local taxes while both improving the quality of service to our residents and strengthening the financial well being of our town.

"The voice of the citizens must be heard and respected when it comes to the

changing face of our community. High density housing, increased crime, and unmanaged traffic delays are concerns for all of us. We are at a critical juncture when overcrowded schools and unwanted zoning changes can still be prevented. But we must act now to balance new development with the needs of our 'small town' community. As your mayor, I will implement a plan to accomplish our goals, and I am committed to working unceasingly to achieve the results the citizens of our town deserve."

Fraser, who earned an MBA in finance from Rutgers University following an undergraduate degree from Stony Brook University, has spent 19 years in the corporate sector as a highly successful

project management professional. He has served as a church treasurer and Sunday school teacher and currently serves as a board member of the United States Veterans Education Institute. Locally, Fraser was recognized as Purcellville's 2011-7th Grade Basketball Coach of the Year and has volunteered at the Loudon Homeless Service Center.

Fraser, his wife Angela and their three children reside in Locust Grove.

For the latest information about Kwasi Fraser, his campaign platform, and upcoming events, please visit www.fraserformayor.com, email fraser@fraserformayor.com, or call (540) 751-8338.

The Show Must Go On: Songwriting Team Triumphs Through Adversity

The musical theater program at Blue Ridge Middle School has a reputation for excellence, thanks to the dedication of theater veteran Dolly Stevens. Last year was a banner year for Stevens and her drama students. Blue Ridge Middle School was the first public middle school in the eastern United States to take on a full production of CATS. Not only did the show sell out all four performances in advance, it was honored with four National Youth Arts awards.



From left to right: Dolly Stevens and Jennifer Warren-Baker.

The grand success of CATS only inspired Stevens to raise the bar for the next show. She decided to follow her dream of writing and composing a full-length musical. Stevens decided to expand on a small production that she and Tom Sweitzer co-wrote in 1995 titled "The Little Mermaid." The show was an adaptation of the Hans Christian Anderson fairy-tale. Stevens approached her CATS musical director,

Jennifer Warren Baker, about arranging and scoring the show. Baker agreed, and the creative journey began.

Rehearsals were about to begin when tragedy hit. Stevens's oldest son died in a car accident on his way to work. Having lost her husband just two years

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100,000 Sq. Ft. Project Approved For Historic Downtown

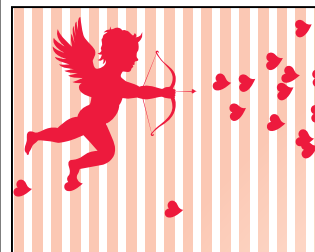
– Mayor Lazaro: "We have put this zoning in place to see it occur." –

– By Valerie Cury

For a second and final time, the Purcellville Town Council has dramatically overruled the Purcellville Board of Architectural Review recommendations and conditions of approval with respect to the Vineyard Square development. The town council vote

was 6-1, with Mayor Bob Lazaro, Vice Mayor Keith Melton and town council members Tom Priscilla, Jim Wiley, John Nave and Joan Lehr voting yes (overturning the BAR). Patrick McConville was the only council member to side with the BAR.

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Valentine's Sweetheart Notes, see page 10



Raspberry cheesecake recipe, see page 10



Snowy Owl Wild Loudoun, see page 22

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Ask Dr. Mike

- By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.



his body, and at 13, he needs to be in charge of it. Life and peer relations will teach him what works and what does not, and he will adjust accordingly.

Being Miserable But Cool At 13 Dr. Mike,

Q. My 13 year old son is driving me crazy with his wearing shorts in the middle of winter - even on the coldest day a couple of weeks ago. He also doesn't wear coats or jackets, but he finally agreed to wear a hoodie to please me. He tells me that he's not cold and to leave him alone, but I am fuming every time he heads to the bus stop in his shorts. We have had some pretty horrible fights over the topic, and yet he continues to defy us as parents. It's stupid and not safe. Help!

A. I understand your frustration, but being miserable but cool is part of being a teenager. Actually, the behavior you are concerned about, and the need to be cool, starts in middle school when self-awareness in identity formation begins to kicks in. Try to think of it this way. Your son is not defying you as much as he is separating. Consciously, he tells you that he is not cold, and he thinks he looks cool, but the behavior itself is really being fueled by his developmental need to separate from what you want of him and for him to begin to make decisions for himself alongside his peers. So, what should you do? Nothing. Let your son make the decision on shorts or coats. It is

Are All Men Are Dogs?

Dr. Mike,

Q. I am a divorced woman who is finally ready to date again. My friends convinced me to join a dating site, and I have gone on several dates now from the site. My dates all seemed to be gentleman at first but then turn out to be dogs! I've been wined and dined at the area's best restaurants but at the end of every date I've had these guys have all come on too strong for my comfort level. I've decided to take a break from on-line dating and maybe even from men again! I admit that I've been out of the dating scene for many years, so maybe I'm just old fashioned and this is just how things are now. Your thoughts are appreciated.

A. As human beings we are sexual beings, however, all men are not dogs! While you may have gone out with a couple of jerks, it is also possible for you to correct your dynamic and outcome with a few simple

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Town-Wide Elections May 6

Attention prospective town office candidates in Loudoun County – the next election in May might seem far away, but preparations need to start now for people interested in being on the ballot. If you are planning on running in any of Loudoun’s town elections, the filing deadline to be a candidate is Tuesday, March 4 at 7 p.m. Here is some information on how to run ... more information is found at: www.sbe.virginia.gov/BecomeACandidate. Forms need to be turned in to Loudoun’s General Registrar, Judith A. Brown, 750 Miller Drive, SE, Suite C in Leesburg.

Here are details from each town:

- Hamilton will be electing a mayor and three town council members. Candidates need to file a Declaration of Candidacy and Certificate of Candidate Qualification.
- Lovettsville will be electing a mayor and three town council members. Candidates need to file a Declaration of Candidacy and Certificate of Candidate Qualification.
- Middleburg will be electing a mayor and four town council members. Candidates need to file a Declaration of Candidacy and Certificate of Candidate Qualification.
- Round Hill will be electing a mayor and three town council members. Candidates need to file a Declaration of Candidacy and Certificate of Candidate Qualification.

At the Jan. 28 Town of Purcellville Town Council Worksession, the council voted 5-0-2, with Mayor Bob Lazaro and councilmember Patrick McConville absent for the vote, to allow a town employee to run for elected office without taking a unpaid leave of absence. Prior to this vote, if an employee wanted to run he or she would have been required to take an unpaid leave of absence. If elected, the employee would then have to resign from town employment. Lt. James Rust of the Purcellville Police Department has told *The Leader* that he intends to run for town council. Councilmember Keith Melton also confirmed that he will be running for reelection to town council.

- Purcellville will be electing a mayor and three town council members. Candidates need to file a Declaration of Candidacy and a petition with 125 signatures of qualified Purcellville voters. These need to be filed together. Candidates can get petitions from the State Board of Elections. Also needed is a Certificate of Candidate Qualification, Statement of Economic Interests, Statement of Organization for a Candidate and campaign finance reports.
- Towns of Hillsboro and Leesburg elections have been moved to November.

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Is The County's Word Worth A Plug Nickel?

— By Jim Burton

Should the county light all of Franklin Park's playing fields including the ones on the upper plateau, one of the highest elevations in the Loudoun Valley? This was the subject of a recent community meeting held by Blue Ridge Supervisor Janet Clarke and Loudoun County staff as they explained Ms. Clarke's proposal and the government process for implementing that proposal. However, the proposal raises questions about more than just lights. It also raises questions about citizen trust in government and the validity of promises made by a government to its citizens. In short, how binding is a Board of Supervisors vote two decades ago (a vote that carried the force of law) on a board today? A look at the history of Franklin Park offers one lesson, especially in light of the board's recent vote on Autumn Hill.

Over two decades ago when the county purchased the 203 acres of farmland that now constitutes Franklin Park, the land was already surrounded by homes. The county was very sensitive to the concerns of those homeowners and their desire to protect the peace and tranquility of their neighborhoods. After numerous

community meetings and a survey of 9,000 western Loudoun residents, a Master Plan was produced in January 1992 that laid out the proposed facilities for the regional park, emphasizing that the park would contain both active and passive recreational opportunities as well as cultural/community facilities. Appendix D, page 37, contains a one line entry dealing with the cost to light the ball fields, \$260,000 in 1991 dollars not including the cost of engineering. This is the only mention of lights for ball fields in the entire document.

On the other hand, the Master Plan goes to great length to call for vegetative screening and large buffers (up to 200 feet) around the borders of the park to protect the views of the surrounding neighbors. Page 17 deals with the placement of the ball fields and states explicitly that the fields "... will be buffered from the passive areas and neighboring residents. From an aesthetic standpoint, the fields are to be placed so their presence will not visually dominate the Franklin Park site."

On April 19, 1995, the Republican Board of Supervisors approved the Special Exception that permitted the

building of Franklin Park. The Conditions of Approval were crafted to ensure that the park was constructed and operated in a manner consistent with the Master Plan to minimize the impact on the neighbors. The conditions state that lights may be installed only on the baseball and softball fields on the lower level, but must be extinguished by 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday evenings, 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday nights and may not be used on Sundays. Condition 5 states "The ball field lights shall be located a minimum of 500 feet from the property boundary of any adjacent lot." This condition was adopted as an additional measure to prevent lights from being installed on the soccer and football fields on the upper plateau, thereby protecting those neighbors whose homes were built long before the park.

Although lighting technology has improved so that lights may not be as intrusive as in the past, they are nevertheless still intrusive and would adversely effect the aesthetics of both the balance of the park and the neighborhood.

The Master Plan and the Conditions of Approval represented a social contract between the county and the neighbors, a contract that allowed the park to be built but with safeguards to protect the peace and tranquility of the neighbors. It now appears that the county is going to renege on that contract. Supervisor Clarke is pursuing a new special exception that would overturn the old one and permit lights to be installed on the upper plateau, the tennis courts and the in-line hockey facility.

During the recent Autumn Hill debate, the current Board of Supervisors justified it's decision to settle the lawsuit in favor of the developer by claiming that it was captive to the 1991 board's decision to approve 492 residentially units, that if

it lost the law suit, it had no alternative but to permit those units to be built. The board refused to consider taking the necessary legislative action (a board vote to downzone the density) to change the 1991 board's decision in order to lower the number of units that could be built. But now this board appears willing to take the necessary legislative action to change the Conditions of Approval for lights at Franklin Park that were approved by a previous board. Don't change one previous board's decision because it would harm a developer by reducing his profit, but do change a different board's decision since it only effects a few citizens. Is there a double standard at work here?

Since the time for turning off the lights each day will not change, spending \$1.75 million for only about an hour of extra play time each evening during the week does not seem cost effective. Besides, the Capital Improvement Program contains \$12.25 million for a new park with many lighted fields on the southern end of Fields Farm next to an industrial park on the north edge of Purcellville. That should be enough.

There are those who say that, since there are so many people involved in youth and adult sports who want lights and since they outnumber the Franklin Park neighbors, the will of the majority should rule. According to the tenets set forth by our Founding Fathers, one of the duties of an elected representative is to protect the rights of the minority when the situation warrants. This is one of those situations.

Even more important, the question arises, is the county's word any good? We shall see.

Jim Burton lives in Aldie. He served on the Board of Supervisors for 16 years as an Independent representing the Mercer and the Blue Ridge Districts.

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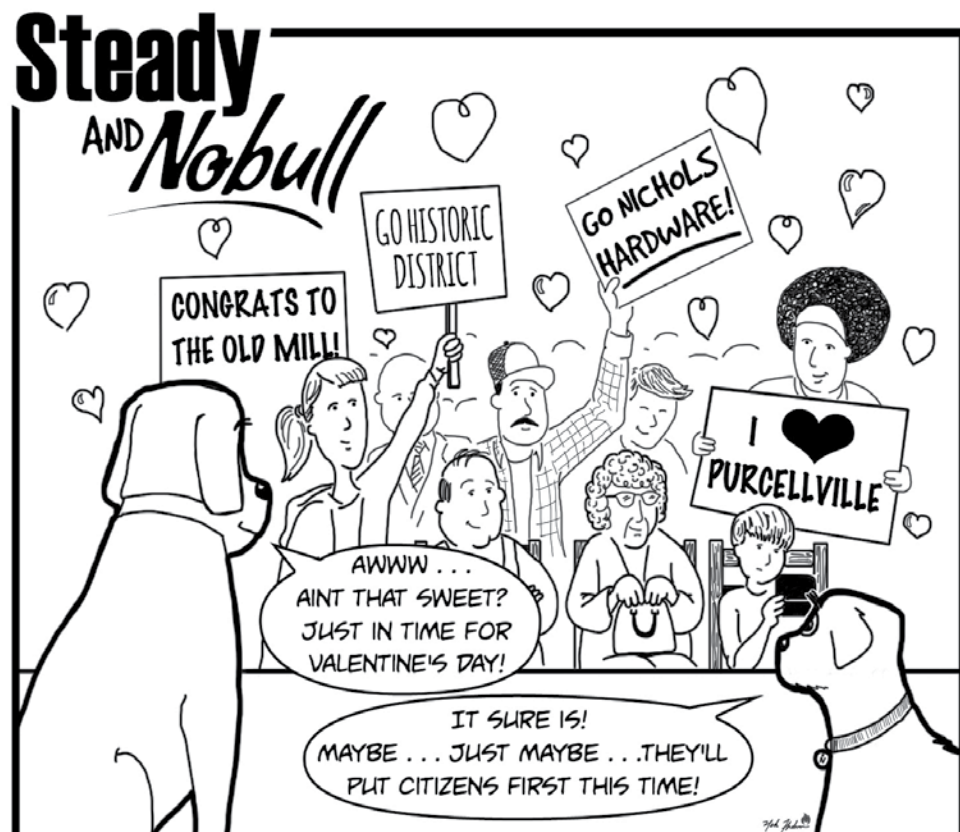
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View From The Ridge - Purcellville's Broken Heart

– By Andrea Gaines

It is both interesting and so disheartening to read Wikipedia's description of the place known as Purcellville.

It describes how in 1764 the town's first known settler, James Dillon made his way here from Buck's County, Pa. How an "early ox cart track" stretching west from Leesburg toward the Blue Ridge Mountains served as "the nucleus" of the town. How the first recorded business – "a combined store and inn" – arrived in 1799, followed by Purcel's Store and Post Office, the town's first stagecoach delivery (1841), a blacksmith's shop (1848), and the first public school (1883). And, how on March 14, 1908, the town was incorporated by an act of the Virginia General Assembly.

The language on Purcellville's official website pays homage to this fascinating and extraordinary history – describing the place as an award-winning town known for its green initiatives, flanked by the historic W&OD Trail and proud of its "historic old-town feel." "Everybody's Home Town" so the saying goes. And note, says the website, the town's restoration and maintenance of its many downtown structures ... and how Purcellville is a popular weekend destination for antiquing, entertainment, farmer's markets and wineries ...

Indeed, Purcellville – at least from the outside looking in – is a model for preservation. Its Downtown Historic District is on the National Register of Historic Places. The equivalent of royalty in preservation circles, the district boasts an incredible 498 contributing buildings and structures. The Purcellville Train Station, Locust Grove farm house, Rich Bottom farm, and the Tabernacle-Fireman's Field – historic companions to historic downtown – are also on the National Register. And, Purcellville's Historic District is also part of the Virginia Department of Historic

Resources' National Historic Landmarks of Virginia program.

So, how could it be – how could it be – that the Purcellville town council has just taken a vote to compromise all of this history by approving the 100,000+ sq. ft. mixed residential/commercial project known as Vineyard Square in the heart of historic downtown?

The vote – and we could all see it coming – has been winding its way toward this fateful conclusion for months, fuel by the developers' extreme inflexibility and the town council's feigned hands-off attitude. But, the excuse pushed by the town council, that the developers "had the zoning" is disingenuous at best. Not only did the town overrule its Board of Architectural Review in voting to approve Vineyard Square, Mayor Bob Lazaro and the council put the zoning in place to allow this as a by right development.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007, the Town of Purcellville has had seven long years to use its zoning power to protect historic downtown. But, with ambitious and competing plans for an award-winning downtown tourism district, complete with federal and state taxpayer funded grants and infrastructure ... it is clear that the town did not want to take any step to protect historic downtown. It had other plans.

When an area or property achieves National Register status, that status imposes no restrictions on what property owners may do with a designated property. Fair enough. But, you'd think that a town like Purcellville, which has promoted its preservation-friendly reputation for all it is worth and basked in all of that glory, would have had the courage to put its money where its mouth is. "Everybody's Home Town?" No. "Nobody's Home Town," now.

100,000 Sq. Ft. Project, continued from page 1

Vineyard Square is an approximately 100,000 sq. ft. mixed-use residential/commercial project, complete with underground and above ground parking to be located in the heart of the Purcellville Historic District. A highly valued area, the district is within Purcellville's Historic Corridor Overlay District and is also on the National Register of Historic Places, the Virginia Landmarks Registry and the U.S. Historic Districts listing.

The BAR had approved the project based on a significant height reduction in order to protect the integrity of the historic district, calling for 2-3 stories on 21st Street and 4 stories in the rear, as opposed to the original 5-6 stories proposed by the developer. The BAR's recommendations were based on the guidelines they are charged with following. Those guidelines call for gradual height changes between buildings and state that the "height and mass of new projects or construction should not create abrupt changes from those of existing buildings." More importantly, the buildings should also be compatible with adjoining buildings and the scale of downtown. Existing buildings on 21st Street are just 1-2 stories.

The town council rejected the BAR's recommendations for approval, allowing for 4 stories on 21st Street with a height of 47 ft. 6 inches – and 5 stories in the rear 59 ft. 6 inches.

The BAR's conditions of approval were also based on whether the proposed design blended and was compatible with existing commercial buildings and streetscape of North 21st Street. BAR Chairman Pat Giglio spoke before council and stated that "Article 14 Section 2.6 of the town's zoning ordinance authorizes the town's Board of Architectural Review to issue Certificates of Design Approval for development within the historic corridor overlay districts." He continued: "The Board of Architectural

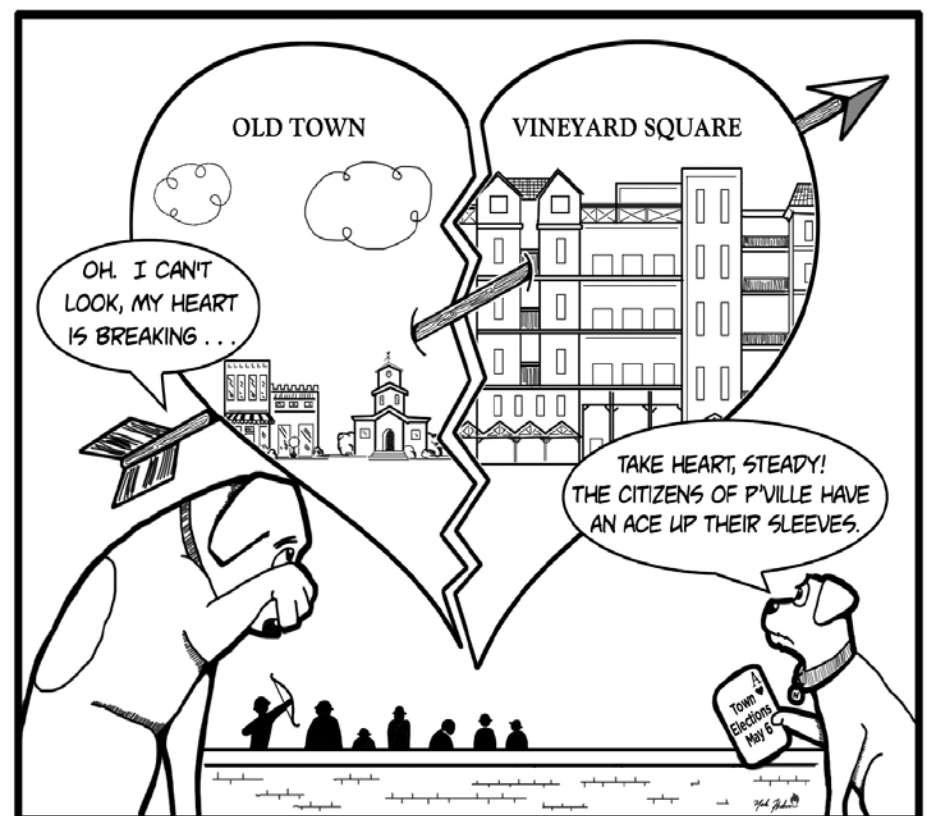
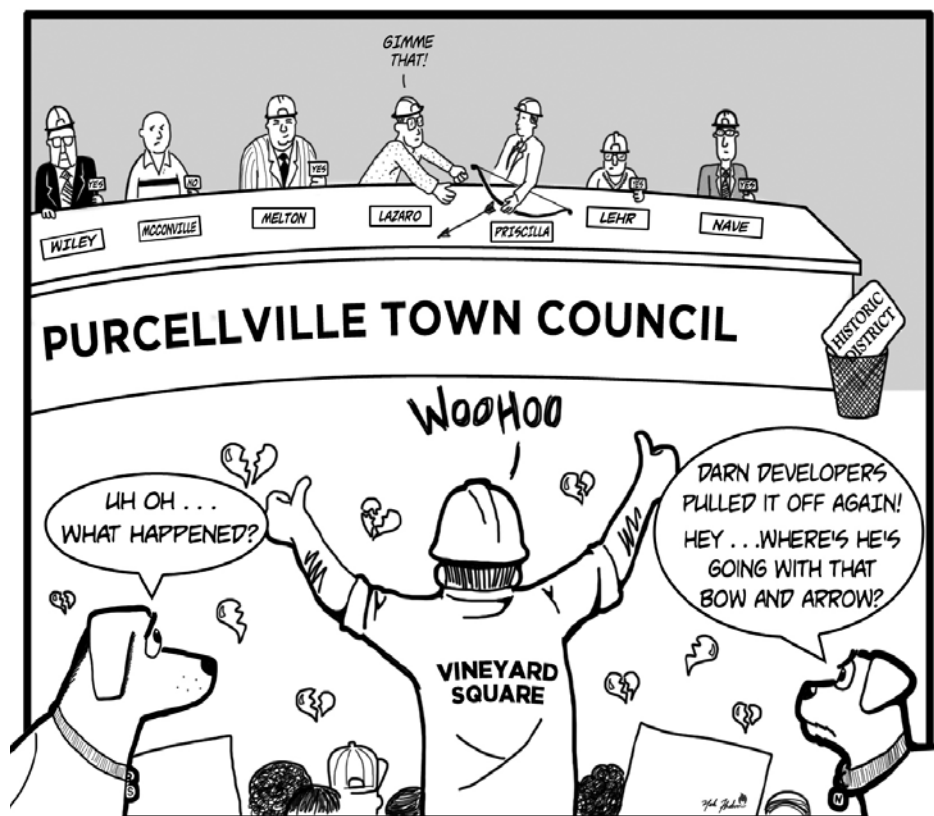
Review may specify any architectural feature as to appearance such as but not limited to motif and style, color, texture, materials, together with configuration, orientation and other limitations as to mass, shape, and height."

Chairman Giglio said that "Decreasing the height of the proposed building, as required by the BAR, will allow the proposed building to better blend with neighboring buildings and complement the existing streetscape in conformance with zoning ordinance criteria and the design guidelines."

The design guidelines also state that any new buildings should be compatible with the architectural character of the surrounding area. Vineyard Square developers Mark Nelis and John Chapman, varying little from their original proposal have steadfastly challenged virtually all BAR recommendations. Their vision for the project includes an agrarian/agricultural, Jeffersonian and "freight depot" flavor on 21st Street. However, as confirmed by the BAR, the downtown historic district is defined by late nineteenth and early twentieth century one, two and three story brick and wood commercial buildings, not the styles held to by Nelis and Chapman.

Purcellville's own downtown master plan calls for two and three story buildings on O Street (behind 21st Street), as supported by the BAR but now rejected by the town council. The master plan called for the design to "utilize elements that are relative to the industrial theme" similar in design to the Mill at Magnolias. The tallest buildings in the area are the Dillion building on 23rd Street, which is 40' in height, and Magnolias, which is 40' at the lower roof (not counting the copula which is approximately 50' at the top). The town council's vote allows the developers the much higher stories of 47

Continued on page 6



February 20 Public Hearing For Catoctin Creek Apartments/Town Center

– By Karen Jimmerson

Local opposition continues to grow as the public hearing for the Catoctin Creek Apartments and Town Center development on Hirst Road/Maple Avenue approaches. Residents feel the development is a threat to the rural character of Purcellville and not in keeping with the surrounding area and comprehensive plan, and are raising their voices in opposition online – creating a Facebook page, a blog, and an online petition at GoPetition.com with over 835 signatures.

In separate applications, developers from the Franklin Johnston/S.L. Nausbaum Group and Tilley Entertainment want to rezone roughly 33 acres along Hirst Road and Maple Ave. The proposal includes a 176-unit apartment complex on 13.72 acres and an entertainment complex encompassing 18.71 acres with outdoor space for concerts and events, bumper boats, miniature golf, batting cages, and a go-kart track. Additional facilities will include an ice-cream parlor, a food court, and a 35,000-square foot main building with a full service restaurant, sports bar, bowling alley, laser tag course, and a game arcade, open until 1a.m.

The apartments portion of the project requires a comprehensive plan amendment and a rezoning amendment. The entertainment portion requires a special use permit, as do some of the other buildings. Each of these amendments and special use permits may be approved at the full discretion of the Purcellville Town Council. While town staff is positioning the development as “one proposal,” it is in fact made up of three separate formal zoning requests and will require three separate public hearings and town council votes.

January 16 Planning Commission Meeting

At the January 16 Planning Commission meeting, multiple developers gave presentations on their updated plans and answered questions from the commission as well as the citizens in attendance.

Residents are concerned about the traffic study indicating 9,000 additional vehicles per day travelling the Hirst/Maple corridor

and how that would exacerbate the already congested two lane roads. Additional concerns include added pollution in Catoctin Creek, noise disturbance to nearby residences, and overcrowding in local schools.

Old Dominion Valley resident Karen Ray lives directly adjacent to the proposed development, has attended several informational meetings at town hall, and has also signed the petition in opposition to the project. “We bought our property almost 7 years ago with the reasonable assumption that the properties behind our home would remain zoned as they are and developed in a similar manner. We never imagined that there would be a venue like they want to build located within feet of our house. This development would directly and adversely affect the value of our property and the quality of life for us and many of my neighbors.”

Residents are concerned about apartment developer plans to create cut-throughs within the existing nature preserve and Chapman-DeMary Nature Trail system. Linking this trail to the informal dirt path that extends onto the Old Dominion Valley HOA property and behind several homes to the W&OD trail would create a short cut for residents of the apartments to shops on Main Street. Residents worry about the potential negative effects of this foot traffic through their neighborhood.

In 2008, a medical practice located on Main Street was granted permission by the Architectural Review Board to “build a fence to protect their property from being used as a cut through by residents living in the 16 Street apartment complexes who want to get to the nearby shopping center.”

Entertainment Complex

At the recent planning commission meeting, a resident voiced concern about how the entertainment complex could possibly meet noise ordinance requirements in such close proximity to housing. Mr. Tilley stated that the nearest housing was located “behind the firehouse more than 600 feet away.” It was pointed out to Mr. Tilley that the plans show that the entertainment venue will be less than

100 feet from two proposed apartment buildings and 350 feet from residences in Old Dominion Valley (provided the adjoining parcel is not eventually developed into the entertainment complex, then it would be less than 20 feet).

Tilley Entertainment developed Kimball Farms in Massachusetts and used it as an example of the kind of facility this would be. Aerial photos of Kimball Farms show that it is on the outskirts of a town much larger than Purcellville and located much further away from homes. Kimball Farms confirmed they use a PA system as part of their daily operations, and the addition of an amphitheater for concerts and outdoor events located in close proximity to residences may create a continued nuisance for those who live in close proximity.

This is not the first time William Tilley has tried to build an entertainment venue of this nature in Loudoun County. In 2010, Mr. Tilley explored three separate locations for an entertainment complex: Loudoun County Parkway and Route 7, Sycolin Road south of Leesburg, and Evergreen Mills Road and Ryan Road south of Leesburg. Planning Commission comments regarding the application expressed concern for the environment and traffic, even in these more developed areas. Commission notes about the location off Evergreen Mill Road indicated that they “don’t see an amusement center as supporting the rural economy.”

Catoctin Creek Apartments

In their statement of justification, the apartment developer said, “Essentially there is no comprehensive plan adopted by the town for this property.” Mayor Bob Lazaro requested the Hirst Road Charette in 2009 to develop a plan for this area of town. While the Charette was never added to the town comprehensive plan, it did recommend this area for mostly professional office development, vs. high-density residential/entertainment.

Developer S.L. Nausbaum claims that Purcellville has a direct need for more affordable housing. However, a detailed analysis of apartments in the county contradicts this assertion. Leesburg’s ratio of saturation for affordable units is 32 percent

and Ashburn is 17 percent, with Purcellville’s ratio at 100 percent. S.L. Nausbaum built and manages the Abbey apartments in South Riding. The Abby is the only tax-credit complex in South Riding and has 188 units serving a population over 24,000 while Purcellville has a population around 8,000 and has a current supply of 194 tax-credit units. Catoctin Creek Apartments would increase the supply to 370.

Tax And Population Implications

The Eastern Gateway Charrette commissioned in 2010 predicted a population of 7,250 in 2014. Purcellville is trending 10 percent ahead of population predictions. The Catoctin Creek Apartments will have 30 one-bedroom, 113 two-bedroom, and 33 three-bedroom units. With a maximum occupancy of 2 people per bedroom, the apartments could have up to 710 residents. The recently annexed Autumn Hill/Mayfair subdivision (just north of the proposed Catoctin Creek Apartments) will generate approximately 600 residents, and the new townhouses on 21st Street another 120. This will add 18 percent more to Purcellville’s population.

Some developments place a greater burden on public services than they contribute in new taxes. For every \$1 in tax revenue from a residence, we spend \$1.70 in public services. Though Tilley’s proposed entertainment venue will generate revenue for the town, many residents who have signed the online petition have expressed the notion that “zoning is to be used to protect neighborhoods and municipalities from encroachments by land uses inconsistent with its character, regardless of the positive or negative effects of a proposed development.” With no proffer from Tilley for transportation improvements, it is clear the town will be left to pay for traffic mitigation that will be needed as result of this project.

Those who have signed the online petition gave a myriad of reasons to protest this development, but the main sentiment is that Purcellville should remain a small town. Wrote one signer, “If you decide to build it, you’re against the small town my ancestors helped create.”

100,000 Sq. Ft. Project, continued from page 5

ft. 6 inches and 59 ft. 6 inches, respectively.

In numerous previous deliberations on the project, BAR members had tried to work with the owners of the property. However, Nelis and Chapman refused to compromise, instead, insisting on a BAR vote on the original application so they could file their appeal to the town council. The town council, was, in fact, responsible for giving the developers the original zoning and predisposed to approve.

Mayor and Town Council Justifications

Councilman Tom Priscilla, who is also vice president of the Purcellville Preservation Association, said that the downtown charette in 2005 addressed, among other

things, the height of the buildings on 21st Street, and that greater height and scale was envisioned. That charette did envision 21st Street as a one-way street with angled parking. However it did not signal public approval for anything higher than 2 stories on 21st Street. As former councilman Karl Phillips said recently, “What came out of the charette was protecting the historic buildings and historic character of that part of town. There was never a mention of dramatic or otherwise increases in height.” Before his motion urging rejection of the BAR’s recommendations, Councilman Priscilla sidestepped and downplayed the height issue, saying: “Probably the single biggest issue of this project is what people

characterize as mass and scale which is general ... I don’t know what that means, but I know what the height is ... mass and scale is much more subjective ... [just] make sure it provides for a gradual transition. Again, everybody in the room tonight is probably reasonable – I don’t know what that means to everyone, but it probably means something different. There isn’t a specific number that would solve the problem [of] what height is OK and what height isn’t OK ...”

In attempting to justify his vote in support of the 4-5 story part of the project – which includes 45 apartments/residential units – Mayor Lazaro said, “If you want to have a successful downtown people have to live in it, you have to live in the downtown

to be successful.” He also noted that in the past the town had taken 1,000 residential units off the planning map. This statement was in reference to residences that could have potentially been built if Loudoun Valley High School, Emerick Elementary, Loudoun Valley Community Center, the Purcellville Library, Purcellville Town Hall, and all the town parking lots had been sold for development. Supporters of reducing residential development in Purcellville have long argued that these properties were never at risk of being developed. However, Mayor Lazaro continued to defend the project, stating: “We have put this zoning in place to see it occur ... It’s not the town council’s job to design the building.”

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Break: 8:15 – 8:30

Town Council Candidates Debate/Forum: 8:30 – 9:30





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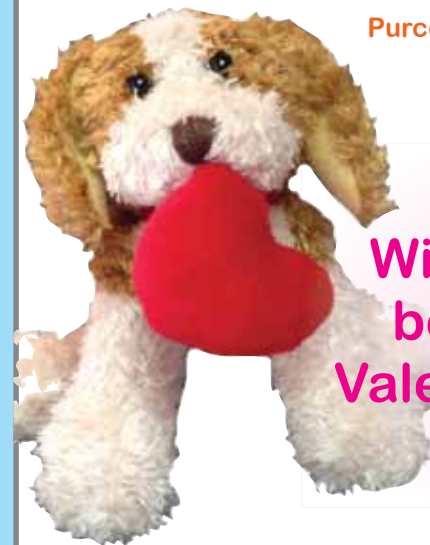
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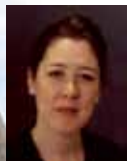
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Preservationists Push To Preserve Rural Roads

– By Andrea Gaines

Loudoun County has 330 miles of unpaved roads, more than any county in the state. While many see paving as the only sensible option for these roads, preservationists see their centuries-old roadbeds, steep banks, stone walls and one-lane bridges as a part of early Loudoun's history that should be protected. Indeed, these roads in effect present a map of early Loudoun outlining its oldest settlements, farms, towns and villages.

Over the years, many of these roads have deteriorated.

According to the Virginia Department of Transportation, it costs between \$3.5 million and \$4 million to pave a mile of roadway. In contrast, unpaved roads cost just \$40,000 a mile to maintain.

The Loudoun County Preservation and Conservation

Coalition, a working group of 27 preservation, history, conservation and environmental groups took the issue up with the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors last year, which sent a request to the Virginia General Assembly to adopt a funding package to address the maintenance of Loudoun's 330 miles of unpaved roads.

The Assembly took up the package in January and a bill, HB 416, has now been referred to the Assembly's House Committee on Transportation.

The 27-member preservation and conservation coalition has made seven recommendations with respect to how to care for our unpaved roads:

- Maintain all unpaved roads in safe and usable condition;
- Maintain unpaved roads in traditional alignment, surface treatment and width and protect banks, stone walls and roadside trees in all rural, agricultural and historic areas;

Make improvements to selected sections of unpaved roads to reduce severe maintenance problems, when needed, without significantly altering their appearance and alignment and avoid paving and widening;

Only consider paving when there is a combination of very high traffic, significant maintenance and safety issues, no historic or scenic significance and clear community support;

Apply VDOT "rustic road" policies in any paving program in rural, agricultural or historic areas;

Focus limited paving resources primarily on highly traveled roads in developed areas; and

Encourage VDOT and our State delegation to provide more resources and appropriate legislation to support proper maintenance and preservation of these roads. Include additional unpaved rural road maintenance funds in the legislative agenda.

Loudoun Habitat For Humanity Opens New Habitat ReStore In Leesburg

Loudoun Habitat has opened a large new Habitat Restore shop in Leesburg, relocating their operations from Purcellville.

According to owner Bill Hack, the goal of the move is to help Habitat reach a larger customer base from this more central location.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held in late January at the new location – 700 Fieldstone Drive in northeast Leesburg.

Habitat ReStores sell new and used items at substantial discounts of as much as 90 percent off retail. Much of their stock is made up of home and office items, including furniture. They also feature lots of items popular with contractors and do-it-yourselfers, including plumbing supplies, cabinetry, lumber and flooring, and appliances and fixtures such as lighting, bathroom toilets and mirrors.

All Habitat Restore sales items are donated ... making the endeavor a great opportunity for both buyers and those wanting to help with Habitat for Humanity's mission of closing the housing gap – keeping people in their homes and helping to provide families with affordable housing.

See www.loudounhabitat.org for more information. Donors should call the store at 540-579-4508 to arrange for the pick up of their donated items.



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Raspberry "Cheesecake"

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This is a no-bake, dairy-free "cheesecake." Makes: one 5-inch round cake or 12 mini cakes.

Ingredients:

FILLING

- 1-1/2 cups unsalted cashews
- 1/3 cup lime juice
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1/3 cup coconut oil
- 1/2 cup raspberries
- 2 tsp., vanilla
- A pinch sea salt

CRUST

- 3/4 cup raw almonds
- 1/8 cup raw coconut flakes
- 1/2 cup pitted dates
- A pinch sea salt

Directions:

First, make the crust (needs to refrigerate for 2 hours before adding filling): in food processor, blend crust ingredients until they form a sticky dough. Line a 5" round spring-form cake pan with parchment and press in the dough to line the bottom. For minis cheesecakes, divide crust into 12 balls and press into standard size muffin tin lined with cupcake liners. Freeze or refrigerate the crust(s) for 2 hours.

Then, make the filling: put all filling ingredients in a high-powered blender and blend until very smooth. Remove the crust(s) from freezer and pour the filling into pan/muffin tins. Freeze or refrigerate another 2 hours or until set. Let stand at room temperature 10-15 minutes before serving if frozen. Garnish with raspberries or shaved organic chocolate or candied ginger and serve!



Winter Orchid Hunting With Your Sweetie

(Excerpted/adapted from an article by Hayden Matthews)

A rarely appreciated gift of winter in Virginia is that it is the best time to go looking for several of the 40-plus species of native orchids that are found in the Mid-Atlantic states. The Crane-fly Orchid is one such beauty.



Crane-fly Leaves

The Crane-fly favors beech/maple forests and grows in the rich leaf litter beneath the tree canopy. While it would never be used to grace a bouquet or prom corsage, it has lovely little flowers that bloom later in the year. But now, rather than later, is the time to go searching for this wild orchid. Unlike most flowering plants, it puts out its green leaves in the cold weather months to take advantage of the sunlight. That sunlight will rapidly disappear as soon as the trees above the flowers leaf out in the spring.

This time of year the orchid's low green leaves stand out against the brown leaves all around them. The dark green leaves with 'warts' on the top and a striking reddish purple underside are the giveaway traits that tell you have found this orchid and not another plant. Make careful notes about exactly where you found the leaves if you



Crane-fly Flower



Crane-fly Seed Cases

want to find the plants when they flower.

I have found this orchid in most county parks in Northern Virginia so you will not necessarily have to travel a long distance to find the Crane-fly. Do not remove or attempt to transplant these or any other wild orchids: Many are endangered to begin with, and the chances of getting the orchids to survive in a new location is very small, as they are heavily dependent of specific species of ground fungi that assist in their nourishment and germination of seeds and are not likely to be found in the new location.

Happy Valentine's Day.

Hayden Mathews is an environmental historian and educator from Purcellville who offers programs on regional history, educational travel, and natural history for schools, PTAs, the Loudoun Public Library, community groups and the Smithsonian Institution. See Mathews's website for more information: www.bayhistory.net.

Sweetheart Notes

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| Happy Valentines to the angels who escorted Kiki Riki to the clouds of doggie heaven. With love, Scott and Jeanne | Happy Valentines Day to my dear border collie, Stella. You sustain me body and soul! | To F... Roses are red, Violets are blue, I've never known A love so true. From S | Dear Hannah, You are engraved on the palm of my hand, Love Nana | To "The Pack": Thanks for all the many miles of scenic wonder, care and support. Love with every cell, Claire |
| To Pokey from Poppy and Mom, we love you and are so proud of you! Happy Valentine's Day! | To Sylvia from all of your four-legged friends ... Happy Valentine's Day and speedy recovery! | To the Hammer from the Nails - speedy recovery and Happy Valentine's Day! | To Jess, in honor of our upcoming 20 years together - Happy Valentine's Day, Love R | Happy Valentines Day to dear Annie ... a Cairn with a heart the size of the sky - Laura L. |
| To Joan M. from Chipmunk - Happy Valentine's Day! | From My Puma to Coconut - there will never be another Burmese like you! Happy Valentine's Day! | Dear Nana, You are engraved on the palm of my hand, Love Hannah | From Lincoln to Kassie for all of your years of love - Happy Valentine's Day! | Godspeed and many more miles to the Lincoln Pack in 2014. Love you! Andrea |

Rowley Signs With William and Mary



Paul Rowley playing for Virginia Elite July 2013.

Loudoun Valley High School senior Paul Rowley scored his 1,000th point during the Woodgrove game on Friday, Jan. 10.

Paul recently signed to play college basketball for William & Mary where his sister Tess is in her first year of law school. Paul scored 28 points at the game against Woodgrove to make the 1,000 mark. He currently holds the LVHS records for game blocks, season blocks and career blocks. Paul is pictured with family, friends and coaches at the signing in ceremony at Loudoun Valley High School. He is also pictured playing with the AAU team, Virginia Elite,



Signing Ceremony - Rowley surrounded by family, friends and coaches.

at a tournament in Philadelphia last summer. Rowley broke the career three point record last week - currently has 122.

One Student's Perspective: Latin Lives!



– By Tashi Treadway

Studying Latin and the classics can be a catalyst that leads us towards a new direction of clearer understanding of our society today. This is evident in our language, our government, our architecture and even in our contemporary literature. Many people may feel surprised to learn that the author of Harry Potter, J.K. Rowling earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in the Classics. Other significant authors throughout the centuries such as Dante, Milton, Swift, Tolkien and Lewis were students of the classics. Perhaps their undertaking of the Latin language boosted their vocabulary, strengthened their grammar skills and sharpened their mental acuity as Latin is known to do for students' SAT scores.

Students and parents who look upon Latin as merely a source of higher SAT scores might want to look again at the plethora of benefits awaiting a student who undertakes the study of Latin and the classics in earnest. A classicist's knowledge and appreciation of literature alone extends

far beyond the amazing epics of Homer and Vergil. Many of Shakespeare's timeless works are the retelling of ancient Greek and Roman mythology. We can even find reference to classical mythology in the works of several contemporary popular writers, among them, Pete Billmann, who authored *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and Rick Riordan, who authored the *Percy Jackson* and the *Olympians* series.

People ask, "Why do you study a dead language such as Latin?" My response is, "Latin lives!" Knowledge of Latin and the classics demystifies legal, medical and scientific jargon; makes the five romance languages easier to learn and gives greater meaning to much of fine literature.

Through his study of the classics, George Washington found his role model in the Roman farmer and leader, Cincinnatus. I believe there's something in the study of Latin and the classics for each of us.

Tashi Treadway is in her junior year at John Handley High School in Winchester. Presently, she studies Latin and the classics with retired John Handley High School teacher Susan Schearer and Adam Williams of Flint Hill School.



Left to right: Sue Johnson, Amanda Bowers and Aaron Kahn at the annual banquet.

PVRS Gives Awards

Purcellville Volunteer Rescue Squad held its annual banquet Jan. 11. They elected officers for 2014 and recognized some members for special achievements.

Stephen Whitcomb received the Chief 'Gutz' Award (in memory of Jim Guiterrez).

"Stephen showed outstanding service to our community and membership with his positive attitude, covering extra duty shifts, and mentoring members," Sue Johnson said. Earl Hall received the President's Award.

"Earl showed outstanding service in handling all the intricate demands of EMS scheduling to ensure our ambulances get out the door 24x7, 365 days a year; covering extra duty shifts and setting a positive

example for our members," Johnson said.

Amanda Bowers celebrated 25 years of volunteer service.

Officers for 2014 are President Aaron Kahn, Vice President Sue Johnson, Secretary Jill Morris, Treasurer Joe Bullock, Chief Linda Curtis, Assistant Chief Earl Hall and Captains Tracey Senate and Mike Senate.

"Our members invested over 40,000 hours of duty hours, 14,000 hours of training time and continue to serve our community in a multiple of ways," Johnson said. "Their commitment is beyond expectations."

For anyone interested in volunteering with PVRS, please contact sjohnson@purcellvillerescue.org.

Michael McDonnell National FaceOff Champion

For the second year in a row, senior Michael McDonnell of Middleburg Academy was named the National Champion High School FaceOff Specialist (Class of 2014) at the invitation-only National FaceOff Combine. The event was held Jan. 18 - 20 in Connecticut.

McDonnell's domination of the previous year's event, combined with his academic and co-curricular success at Middleburg Academy, resulted in his Division 1 offer from the University of Michigan, to which he signed a letter of intent at a ceremony held on the school's campus in mid-November.

McDonnell, a captain of last year's Dragons boys varsity lacrosse who was also named first-team All-MILL, is the son of Kathy and John McDonnell of Centreville. He is also a product of the Nova West club organization. Middleburg Academy's Head Coach Rob Horne says, "Mikey is a fierce competitor who knew what he wanted out of Middleburg Academy. In his two years at Middleburg, Mikey has studied hard, taking



many advanced courses, as well as work diligently to become one of the premier face-off men in the country. Mikey is certainly reaping what he has sown in terms of being offered a spot to play and study at one of the top universities in the nation."

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Get Moving in 2014

– By Andrea Gaines

The fitness industry is booming. Gym memberships alone hit a high of over 50 million in 2013. More and more people are finding very gainful employment in the industry as personal trainers, weight loss coaches and more.

These positive statistics are reflective of the negative health trends our country is experiencing. Obesity has doubled in children and more than tripled in adolescents in the last 30 years. Today, nearly 30 percent of the 6 to 11 and 12 to 19 age groups are considered obese.* Among Americans 20 years and older, over two-thirds – or over 150 million people – are obese or overweight.

Children and adults who carry around excess weight are at risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes or pre-diabetes, cancer, bone and joint problems and sleep apnea, just to name a few. Diseases once considered problems for adults and older Americans are now showing up in children and adolescents.

The modern American diet is certainly a factor. But so is our sedentary lifestyle.

Both children and adults need regular exercise and activity. Here are some guidelines with respect to the kinds and amounts of exercise and activity that are recommended for various age groups:

The 6 To 17 Age Group: Experts recommend approximately 60 minutes of physical activity per day for this age group. The majority of the exercise/activity should be “aerobic” – focusing on sports and movement that increase the child’s heart rate and breathing. This includes bicycling, ice-skating, inline skating, soccer, swimming, tennis, brisk walking, and jogging and running among other things. This kind of exercise and activity builds muscle, increases endurance and promotes flexibility. It’s also a good idea to bring the intensity of the activity/exercise up a notch 2 to 3 times a week.

The 18 To 64 Age Group: Here, experts recommend a minimum of 2-1/2 hours of moderate aerobic activity every week. This translates to approximately 30 minutes of activity 5 days a week. The aerobic activity should be supported by muscle-strengthening activities 2 or more days per week. Adults need to make sure and work all of their major muscle groups – legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms. If the aerobic activity/exercise is more vigorous, an hour and 15 minutes per week will suffice – but again, that’s the minimum.

The 65 And Older Age Group: The recommendations for older Americans are similar to that recommended for the 18 to 64 age group with slight variations: 30 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise 5 days per week, or more vigorous activity for 20 minutes 3 days per week. This is

in addition to the routine activities of daily living that are reflective of light-intensity exercise – self care, cooking, casual walking or shopping, etc. The older adult’s aerobic activity should also be supported by muscle-strengthening activities 2 or more days per week – again, focusing on working all of the major muscle groups. Experts also recommend that older adults pay attention to activities and exercises that promote flexibility and balance – two things that can help seniors maintain their independence longer.

**According to the Centers for Disease Control, “Overweight is defined as having excess body weight for a particular height from fat, muscle, bone, water, or a combination of these factors ... [while] obesity is defined as having excess body fat.”*

*** Kaiser Family Foundation*

Encouraging Kids To “Unplug” And Get Moving

Children ages 8 to 18 spend an average of 7-1/2 hours a day on their cell phones, computers, televisions and other electronic devices ... more time than they spend in school.** Parents worry about this, as do educators. The dinner table has become the I Pad station ... the family room couch the laptop platform ... Facebook the kids’ gossip column. Electronic devices promote sedentary behavior and also eat mercilessly into family time. The American Academy of Pediatrics, in fact, recommends no screen use for children younger than two, noting that excessive media use has been shown to contribute to attention problems, school difficulties, sleep and eating disorders, and obesity.

As you reflect on the idea of getting your child to “move” in 2014, consider how their use of electronic devices might either hinder and/or support that goal.

Some quick internet research for this article turned up lots of information about how individual parents are looking at both their own ability to “unplug” and how they can help their kids do the same. Some innovative summer camps are even building this idea into their programs, setting strict media use rules and tackling issues such as how TV affects children, how to get kids to “unplug,” how to limit screen time, how to provide a much-needed break from technology, how to create a no cell phone rules, and more.

Kids are curious, and, if encouraged are actually eager to get active. A good romp in the yard – or a well-structured spring or summer camp – might be just the ticket!



Sheila Johnson with the Blue Ridge Middle School travel basketball team at Salamander Resort.

Blue Ridge Team Visits Salamander Resort

The Blue Ridge Middle School travel basketball team recently got a tour of the new Salamander Resort in Middleburg from the owner herself, Sheila Johnson. Team mom Deb Cadenas contacted Johnson asking for a sponsorship to buy some spirit wear for the team.

“I was shocked when I got a call personally from Dr. J. at my home saying she wanted to not only help our school but the whole Western Loudoun Basketball League with a gold sponsorship,” Cadenas said. “This is a \$10,000 gift that helps over 100 teams. She said she loves basketball and wanted to help the kids play sports and knew it was expensive to pay for court time. Our team was so taken back by her generosity that it made a profound impact on both the players and their parents.”

Cadenas said the team was so moved

by Johnson’s generosity that when the coaches’ wives Michelle Thompson and Shelly Franco heard there were families without food the week before Thanksgiving they organized efforts to help. Helpers also came from the Catoctin Basketball League teams. The teams gathered more than six van loads of food and more than \$1,200 in gift cards which they shared with Loudoun Valley High School to help families in need.

Jan. 11 the team, their coach Roy Thompson and his assistant Greg Franco visited Salamander Resort.

“The boys will never forget how kind and personable she was with them,” Cadenas said. “She offered them some very good advice in life too as she told us she was a teacher for many years. She said to always ‘give back’.

Johnson also invited the team to be her guests at a Washington Wizards game.

Homeschoolers Compete In Spelling Bee

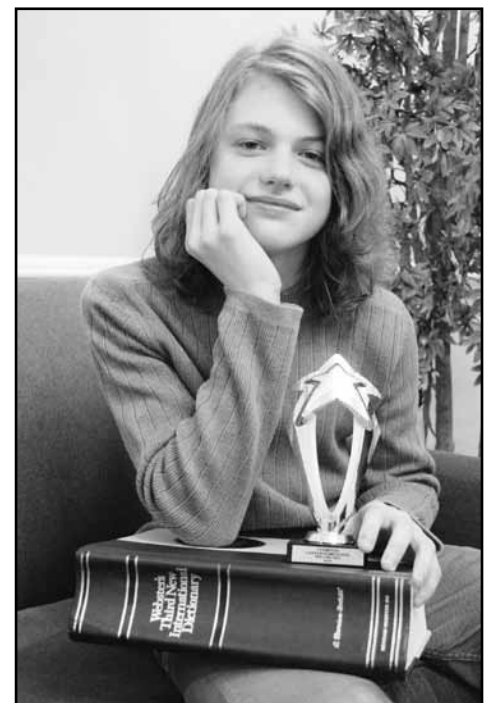
The 2014 Loudoun Homeschool Spelling Bee was held on Jan. 18 at the Purcellville Library. The junior bee was open to first through fourth graders, and the senior bee was for fifth through eighth graders. A total of 18 students competed.

The junior bee first place winners were Ethan Maher (first grade), Ethan Gonzalez (second grade), Samantha Stock (third grade) and Cayla Marino (fourth grade).

The senior bee first place winners were Kaitlyn Maher (fifth grade), Melissa Turner (sixth grade), Nino DeBarros (seventh grade), and Luke Thornburgh (eighth grade). These spellers will advance to the next level of the Scripps competition which is the Loudoun County Regional Bee.

Luke Thornburgh was also the 2014 Homeschool Spelling Bee Champion. He has won the last two regional bees. As an eighth grader, this is the last year he will be eligible to compete.

Luke said spelling is not his favorite subject. “Actually, math is. But when I read the dictionary, I enter difficult and unusual words into my TI-nspire graphing calculator and it helps me learn them.”



Luke Thornburgh will advance to the next level of competition.

The Loudoun County Regional Bee is on March 6 at 6:30 pm, at Stone Bridge High School.

Thursday, February 13th - Saturday, February 15th, 2014
5-9 pm



Valentine's

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IJ Canns American Grille opened last year in the Gateway Shopping Center in Purcellville. IJ Canns American Grille was founded by three brothers, Charlie, Wael and Neal who have a passion for great food, and five star service. The name IJ Canns came from the first letters of the nephews and nieces of the three brothers. Charlie, who lives in Purcellville, runs the Winchester IJ Canns, while Wael and Neal work out of the Purcellville location. They chose Purcellville because they love the charm and friendly people. They have been in Loudoun County since 1970. The menu is extensive and sure to please.

Pictured from left to right: Charlie and Wael (Neal not pictured)

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LVHS To Present A Midsummer Night's Dream

Loudoun Valley High School's Drama Troupe, the Viking Players, is proud to present a fresh, new take on Shakespeare's classic, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The masterful combination of traditional Shakespearean verse, modern music and movement will be combined by having the audience onstage amidst the action. This production will be a blast for the whole family.

Come out and enjoy this production Valentine's Day weekend: February 14 and 15 at 7p.m., and February 16 at 2p.m. Tickets are \$10.00 at the door.

Kitchen Science Kids: Corny Quick Sand

– By Leah Enright

Kitchen Science Kids know that I love Isaac Newton. Isaac Newton lived a long time ago in England, and had no television, video games, or even comic books to fill his time. Being a smart guy with lots of questions about the world, he played with ideas, constantly experimenting and trying new things. Eventually, he became one of the greatest thinkers our world has known, discovering patterns that help explain colors, the way objects move, and how liquids flow from bottles. These may not seem like important ideas, but they are used every day by scientists around the world who design cars, manufacture liquids, and keep work places safe. Newton noticed that liquids and solids had a certain way of behaving, but he didn't consider the subject of this Kitchen Science Kids Article – Corny Quick Sand! Corny quick sand is easy to make, fun to play with, and yes, even educational. So, let's make some.

Mix these ingredients in a bowl:

1 cup of cornstarch

½ cup of water

Cornstarch is solid, and water is liquid. What do you think they will become when mixed, a liquid or solid? What should happen when you squeeze it, or hold it in an open hand? Make these predictions, then pick it up and play away. How does your quick sand feel? What if you slap it hard, or move your fingers through it slowly? Is it wet or dry?

Hopefully you discovered that this is a tricky mixture. It looks wet, but feels dry; flows between your fingers when you make a fist, and drips through them when your hand is open. In short, this stuff doesn't behave the way it should. That's why it is fun to play with, and that is also why it is considered a "Non-Newtonian



Fluid.” It does not flow like water, which is the way Newton said that fluids behave. Other Non-Newtonian liquids include blood, shampoo and ketchup. Thin motor oil and air join water in the Newtonian fluid category. That means that they flow, and don't get stopped up anywhere – thank goodness.

So, there you have it, another reason Isaac Newton was a really cool guy. He gave us a great excuse to make a mushy mess, play with mysterious mixtures, and call it science.

I'd like to hear from you. What kinds of science activities would you like to try?

Email mizbeytac@yahoo.com, with comments and suggestions.

Leah Enright spends her time trying new science things in the kitchen, writing and working as a hair stylist at Hair Cuttery in Purcellville.

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Honoring America's Presidents

This year the oft-forgotten President's Day falls on Monday, Feb. 17. The holiday was originally created to commemorate President George Washington's Birthday in 1885. Today it is accepted as a holiday celebrating all of our presidents.

When discussing the importance of presidents we must keep in mind the enormity of the job. Sometimes it is easy to underestimate the weight of the decisions that they are forced to make on a daily basis. There is a lot of pressure on the officeholder to make big and grand changes to our nation. But our system was not set up that way. Our presidents are rightfully limited in the things that they can accomplish, yet they are blamed if anything goes wrong.

There are many lessons to be learned from the presidency. Last semester I took a class with the presidential historian Richard Norton Smith. One of the measures of success our class used in identifying successful presidencies was the occupant's ability to rise to the occasion. Every president has found themselves in situations beyond their control. They are forced to play the hand they are dealt, reacting to what has been thrown their way. Isn't this a measure of success in our own lives? We can join the ranks of Washington and Lincoln if we courageously choose to take on the challenges that confront us. Or we can instead opt to embrace the obscurity of James Buchanan and Franklin Pierce by giving up in the face of great adversity.

It is easy to judge the presidents for the wrong decisions they made, but this class taught me to see them as men of their time. I came to truly appreciate all the presidents in their own way. They each chose to serve their nation at a critical time in our nation's



MOORE-SOBEL

history since every time is truly critical. Every one of them has left behind a complicated legacy, having made a contribution to society whether good or bad. Even our worst presidents made some good decisions.

Presidents are often remembered first and foremost by their biggest failures. President Bush will be forever associated with the troubles of the Iraq War, Clinton with Monica Lewinsky, George H.W. Bush, Jimmy Carter for losing their re-election bids. Nixon will be forever linked with Watergate and his subsequent resignation while Lyndon Johnson is remembered for the failure of the Vietnam War. Ronald Reagan still remains popular in the minds of many Americans, but his image was tainted by the Iran Contra affair. The presidency is a hard job, and it leaves its occupants tired and accelerates the aging process. The least we can do is to give them our respect and see them for more than just their failures.

It is easy to forget that our presidents are complex, not just the caricatures that the media boils them down to. There are things to admire about each and every president and things to abhor about them as well. But that is all a part of the human experience. We shouldn't divorce the good from the bad but instead look at the complete picture of our leaders. So as we celebrate our presidents this month, let us bring their strengths and weaknesses to light in an effort to learn the lessons they have left behind. To all presidents past, present and future, we salute each and every one of you and thank you for your service to our great nation.

Samuel Moore-Sobel is a sophomore at George Mason University, and a development intern at Wolf Trap.

Courage Has A Complicated Definition

— By Mary Rose Lunde

Courage is the most valued trait a person can have, but what really is courage? "I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand." This famous quote written in Harper Lee's "To Kill A Mockingbird" teaches readers the ideals of courage. It is not in fact a man with a gun but far much more. Having read this as a freshman in English, I was baffled at first about the true meaning of this quote. I only now realize, as I'm about to head off into a new adventure, college, that if I am to succeed I need to have real courage.

Real courage has no official definition. A Potomac Falls freshman, Cassie VanGorder, who just recently finished reading "To Kill A Mockingbird" believes that "courage is doing something no matter how hard or how long it takes, like a soldier going off to battle." Courage is, thus, described as 'a man with a gun' willing to fight for his



LUNDE

country. Though this definition does not fully describe courage, it still represents the ideals that physical courage represents.

Courage, however, is both mental and physical residing in each and every person in various ways. "It takes courage do to something, yes, but it also takes courage to not do something. In that sense, mental courage is often rare and should be respected," said Mrs. Hawley, an English teacher who teaches "To Kill A Mockingbird" at Potomac Falls High School. That being said, courage is found in the darkest of corners, "it's when you know you're licked before you begin, but you begin anyway and see it through no matter what." This quote, also said by Atticus Finch of "To Kill A Mockingbird" supports the theory that mental courage is also present in all of us. We can "begin again" and stand up once more, despite how hard it is. It's an uphill battle, a constant struggle, but the rewards are endless.

Continued on page 23

Amy V. Smith's Money Talks

Realities Of Income Investing In 2014

— By Amy Smith

Introduction

Income producing investments traditionally play a very important role in investors' portfolios. And, just like every other aspect of a well-maintained investment plan, these investments should be reviewed regularly to ensure they are still appropriate given ever-changing circumstances. Markets today are presenting investors with challenges that should be considered when evaluating these fixed income investments, most predominantly interest rate and credit risks.

Recent History

Bonds have enjoyed a multi-decade rally since the early 1980's, when interest rates began their long, steady decline from all-time highs to historic lows. Over this period, the yield on 10-year U.S. Treasury Bonds declined from a high of 15.84 percent in September 1981, to 1.39 percent as of July 2012. During this cycle, the Barclay's Capital U.S. Aggregate Bond Index* had an average annual return of 9.23 percent. With interest rates near historic lows, it would be very difficult for these kinds of returns to persist.

This performance combined with risk aversion sparked by recent stock market volatility and an aging population seeking income during retirement has caused more than \$1 trillion to flow into bonds fund over the last five years.

Following this move into income-producing investments, now may be a good time for investors to revisit what they own and why. Do you own individual bonds, bond funds, exchange traded funds or other managed products? Do you own them to generate income, to balance risk of stocks or for safety and preservation of capital? While traditionally serving as a safe part of a portfolio, bonds are generally subject to price declines in a rising interest rate environment and the answers to these questions will impact the steps you take to prepare for changes in interest rates.

Although rising interest rates may provide an opportunity for increasing income, the value of many fixed income investments may decline as rates begin to rise.

Investors should work with their financial



SMITH

advisor to analyze the fixed income investments in their portfolio, re-evaluate the role they plan in their overall financial plan and consider strategies available to manage risks.

**The Barclay's Capital U.S. Aggregate Bond Index represents securities that are SEC-registered, taxable and dollar denominated. The index covers the U.S. investment grade fixed-rate bond market, with index components for government and corporate securities, mortgage pass-through securities, and asset-backed securities. Keep in mind that individuals cannot invest directly in any index, and index performance does not include transaction costs or other fees, which will affect actual investment performance. Holding bonds to maturity allows redemption at par value. Past performance does not guarantee future results. However, if bonds are sold prior to maturity, proceeds may be more or less than your initial investment. Materials produced by Raymond James are for use by its advisors. Bond prices and interest rates have an inverse relationship.*

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. 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.

Songwriting, continued from page 1

earlier, the loss of her son was unbearable. Knowing the challenge ahead would be difficult, but thinking of it as salvation, Stevens sent an email to the cast families, assuring everyone that "the show must go on."

Around the same time the accident happened, Stevens's musical arranger was facing some challenges too. Baker was leaving her piano teaching business to focus exclusively on solo performing and creative work, an avenue that would give her more time at home with her children. But being at home more brought a new kind of challenge.

"Finding the solitude needed to arrange music is extremely challenging with three young children. I used to have a studio

in town, and I had to move this to a small room in my house."

In order to write her musical arrangements, Baker keeps late work hours, recording and writing sheet music on her computer while her children are sleeping.

"I usually work from 10 p.m. to 1 or 2 in the morning. There were times I thought I would not get it done, but we're almost there," Baker said.

Stevens and Baker are grateful that they persevered. "Theater and music are a gift to people, and every gift of any value involves sacrifice to some degree," Baker said. "Along with blood, sweat and tears", Stevens adds. In spite of her loss, Stevens remains committed to her students and audience with unwavering tenacity: "At the end of the day, the show must go on."

Just Like Nothing (Else) On Earth: Sterling Veterans Memorial

– By Tim Jon

The first thing you notice is the flags – I guess it’s their movement that catch the eye and ear – then the silent, immobile shapes of the obelisks bearing insignias of the various branches of military service; yeah, you see those (to me) statues of pride and sadness sheltered under the waving flags as you walk up a little closer – and that’s when you notice the names etched upon the bricks you almost trod upon. And I can’t say that I’m familiar with any of the names I gazed upon on my last visit – but I have heard about the conflicts in which they served: Iraqi Freedom, Desert Storm, Vietnam, Korea, World War I and II- and even back as far as the Civil War.

I can recall my attendance at many Memorial Day events at the Sterling Veterans Memorial at Holly Avenue and Sterling Boulevard; those services always included words of inspiration, comfort and honor for those who served, for those who offered support, and of course for those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. And I guess there were always words of safety and security for the common man thrown in there – but that feeling of being safe and secure seemed to come from a source beyond the sentences, the verbal communication, the sound of human speech, even. Maybe the subconscious created those sensations; I guess an hour or so under those flags, among the aforementioned pillars denoting the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and so on – surrounded by strong, valorous American men and women – that should make just about anybody feel safe and secure. Might be that that’s all it took.



Or – just maybe – there’s much more there than met the eye and the ear and the rest of the senses. And, what do we call this stuff?

In a word – Spirit. No: it doesn’t receive a lot of federal funding, it’s not worth much per hour in the marketplace, and you don’t need to worry about spiritual credentials in filling out a job application. We hear about it all along our lives: school spirit, team spirit, the spirit of play, and of the law, and of course the Holy Spirit of Christianity and the similar counterparts from other religions – or Spiritualities – of which the Great Spirit is one. So obviously, a lot of

other, much smarter guys have given this concept some serious thought, time and effort. And, if I conclude that at least part of my perceptions from an hour’s devotional at the austere but attractive Sterling Veterans Memorial may be derived from unseen, intangible yet somehow apprehended source – I may have some rational backing in the annals of our country’s founding, its courts of law and its most highly revered religious texts. At least I trust I do. For me, I know it to be true because I have found it to be so, and that’s good enough.

So, I guess even fighting spirit can be seen in a positive light – it’s ends justified – and the same could be said for the time-worn, but still applicable Spirit of America. It could be a very powerful collective force – if you add up all the individual acts precipitated in its honor. Not a bad energy to tap into – and, just like ‘creating your own weather,’ it seems to be there for the taking. If you know where to look... and, one such place is on the southwest corner of Holly Avenue and Sterling Boulevard – nestled under those flags (yeah, those are bald eagles perched on top of the posts), right among the monuments for military services. And make sure you take a moment and gaze upon those names etched on brick under your feet. You may not be any more familiar with the individuals than I am, but I’ll bet you’ve heard just as much as I have about the scope of the wars in which they served.

You may find that Veterans Memorial a quiet and very welcome oasis in the midst of whatever you’re struggling to do and wherever you’re intending to go. And I never even had to mention the concept of patriotism, or the ‘Stars and Stripes’ or made you stand up and sing the Star Spangled Banner. But you could.



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See website for displays and exhibits in the Franklin Park Gallery and for performance schedule details.

Friday, Feb. 14, 8 p.m., Last Ham Standing. A group of performers take suggestions from the audience to create wacky scenes and funny improv games. Reserved seating. Tickets: \$12 adult, \$10 student, \$8 child.



★ **Saturday, Feb. 15, 8 p.m. The Dan Cray Trio, An Evening of Jazz.** Join us for a perfect evening of jazz for you and your Valentine. Be

there as noted jazz pianist Dan Cray makes his debut in the Washington D.C. metro area. Legendary jazz drummer Billy Drummond joins the trio for this unique performance as a special guest performer. Adam Côté will be featured on bass guitar. If you love jazz, you won't want to miss this performance. \$19.99, all seats.



Sunday, March 2, 3 p.m., Franklin Park Big Band.

If you enjoy jazz and swing music and dogs, boy do we have an event for you. The FP Big Band will perform a charity concert for the local Save The Tails dog rescue. Save the Tails rescue group is an all-volunteer foster-based non-profit organization. They specialize in personal service, matching the right dog or puppy to you, your lifestyle and needs. They purposely have only a few dogs at any one time, so the right match is made from the thousands of shelter dogs looking for their forever home. Tickets: \$10 per person and can be obtained through Save the Tails, 888-379-5558 ext. 1, Lisa@savethetails.org.

In the Gallery ... Puzzle Pieces, through Feb. 9. Artists were asked to incorporate a puzzle piece, riddle, game clue or other puzzle into their artworks along with their imagination and creativity. Exhibition sponsored by the Friends of Franklin Park Arts Center

★ Gold Star Performance

Got Cabin Fever? Get Up And Go

— By Andrea Gaines

This kind of cold could give anyone cabin fever. But, set aside your fear (and your shivers) and check out the Middleburg Arts Council's juried show "Cabin Fever" at the Byrne Gallery in Middleburg, Feb. 8 to March 2.

Cabin Fever, as the council describes it, will treat visitors to "a variety of works from several local artists as they loosely

interpret 'cabin fever' with thoughts of warmth and hints of spring." Seventeen local artists will be represented.

Cabin Fever is a first for the organization. The lead juror for the show is William Woodward, professor emeritus of fine art at the George Washington University where he taught and directed the painting program for graduate students. "A special thanks to William Woodward, the lead juror, and Susan and Bill Byrne of The Byrne Gallery

for championing our first juried member show," notes the organization's website.

An artists reception will be Saturday, Feb 8 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. The gallery is located at 7 West Washington St. in Middleburg and is open Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. (Closed Monday and Tuesday). For more information and a list of artists that will be on display go to www.middleburgarts.org.



Watercolor "I'm Flying", by Catherine Hillis.

Loudoun School Of Ballet Under New Ownership

– By Andrea Gaines

Cheri Maroni, a dancer, teacher and non-profit entrepreneur, is the new owner of The Loudoun School of Ballet.



Cheri Maroni

Maroni began dancing at the age of 3 in her native New England, studying ballet, tap, jazz and lyrical throughout New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. She has more than 20 years of teaching and performing experience as well as a degree in exercise science from New Hampshire Technical College. She is also a certified fitness instructor.

Prior to taking over the ownership at the school Maroni taught in all three of its dance departments, serving as both assistant director and director of the Rising Stars Department, director of student guidance, and costume and merchandise sales supervisor. She is founder and president of the Rising Stars Foundation, a not-for-profit program which offers mentorship opportunities to young dancers, and Barre and Pointe, a dancer's shop providing dancewear and accessories in the Tollhouse Center in Leesburg.

The Loudoun School of Ballet has trained over 10,000 dance students, providing a tradition of excellence in dance instruction since 1977. Call 703-771-3200 or go to www.loudounschoolorballet.com for more information.

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Sushi – “Tails” From The Barnyard

Love Is In The Air – Or Not?

- By Sushi

Now we all know the month of February has a mysterious way of stirring the love in our hearts. The farm is not exempt from February fever so let me tell you how it all went down.

Sammy the bull and the love of his life, Miss Ashley, were in their own field on this clear February day. It was a pleasant change from the cold grey winter we were having. Miss Ashley was lying up against an enormous round hay bale enjoying the sunlight on her gorgeous face. She is an elegant heifer and lady like, even when she's munching her hay. She was getting close to calving and was resting quite a bit now. Miss Ashley has a reserved and confident demeanor. She is a trusted friend, you will never find a better one and boy can she bat those baby brown eyes and stare into the depths of your very soul. Don't ever cross her or her family or you will be an enemy for life. She has incredible family values and these characteristics are what Sammy loves so much about her.

Sammy had been hanging out lately with Big John and his lady friend Loretta. The three of them had been working closely together munching the fence line down for the past few weeks. It seemed as though Loretta and Sammy had been together a little too much. Miss Ashley watched her dear Sammy from the comfort of the big hay bale. If she was concerned she certainly didn't show it. I thought to myself, "Oh Sammy, you can be so 'gulli-bull!'"

I sat back and observed as the dynamics of engagement took place and kept a careful eye to see how each one would respond as these events started to unfold. It was clear Loretta was playing the vixen with Sammy. Miss Ashley was in-waiting for their new calf to be born. I think Sammy was enjoying the flirtatious, impulsive Loretta and his ego was getting quite the lift. Big John didn't even seem to notice. He's a gregarious, high on himself kind of fellow that loves being the center of attention. In fact he and Loretta's personalities are perfect for each other. Big John was preoccupied working the fence line with the other cattle. He was having a hay day entertaining all of them and was in his own world.

Loretta was working hard on leading Sammy her way. Loretta loves being a leader, even when she is only leading herself. She's one of those heifers, you know the type? She is brash, bold and flirtatious. When she is offended she becomes very pushy to get her way, yet at the same time she can charm and suck you right in, just like a child.

Sammy was getting sucked in alright and Miss Ashley did not like it one bit. Her heart broke, I could see her eyes go into that deep mysterious place and her very soul



was about to make a few changes here on this farm. I am so glad I am not Sammy. I was witness to the response from these events and watched them unfold before my very eyes. I wondered what the outcome was going to be.

Miss Ashley slowly got up and bellowed from the depths of her very pregnant belly. Sammy glanced over his massive handsome Black Angus shoulder and turned back to Loretta ignoring Miss Ashley. He was totally smitten with Loretta and there was some serious body chemistry going on between them. That body language sent chills right through to Miss Ashley's core. I thought again to myself: "Not a good move buddy. You are treading on thin ice if you want to lose the love of your life. Really – how could Sammy be so 'gulli-bull' for that outrageous, impulsive Loretta? Not a molecule of the class of Miss Ashley; what was he thinking?"

Here it came, what I was waiting for, the response from Miss Ashley. First she went for the kill and completely dressed Sammy and Loretta down with looks that could kill. Then she blew a hissy fit of anger directed only at Sammy, totally ignoring Loretta. A hissy fit so ferocious that even the heavens above shook. Then she inhaled a deep and prolonged breath, pulling herself together like a lady, exhaled her sweet steamy hay breath right into Sammy's nostrils. Then she swished that derriere of hers right under Sammy's nose, batted those gorgeous baby browns, flashed those forever long lashes, flicked her tail in Loretta's face and had Sammy following her back home like a high school boy in love. Gosh I love that heifer; she has class like no other. She can flaunt it just at the right moments in life. No wonder Sammy loves her. She isn't going to let Sammy go for anyone else, no way, no how. That my friend is the truest of love stories.

Love,
Sushi

My master, Elaine Boland lives with her husband and five daughters in Purcellville, at Fields of Athenry Farm. She cherishes farm life and the joy of providing her customers with fine fresh meats and products.

She can be reached at www.fieldsofathenryfarm.com or 703.926.8444.



Wild Loudoun

Snowy Owl – Interrupted Beauty, Flashing White



- By Andrea Gaines

Imagine winding your way to Dulles Airport on one of our recent cold January days. You can't wait to get on the plane and wake up in sunny Florida the next day. Palm trees, warm breezes, ahhhh. But, as you drop off the last highway ramp and into the parking lot you notice a large snowy-white bird perching on an airport fence. It's big. And, "Wow," you think, "What the heck is that?"

Once in the airport, sipping your coffee and waiting to board your flight you see the news report about a snowy owl that was sighted in Washington, D.C. near a Washington Post building in January, and then taken to a local wildlife hospital after being hit by a bus. The bird appears to be OK, and veterinarians hope to release it, soon. Wow, you say to yourself, I just saw one of those birds. Wow.

Loudoun County is developing, and quickly. But, for now, it is still a place to see some of the most magnificent members of the natural world, including the mesmerizing snowy owl. Many months ago I wrote a column about the magnificent barn owl – the bright-white snowy owl's creamy white cousin. I had been driving down a country road when for about 3 to 4 seconds a barn owl glided right beside me before darting down a stream channel and disappearing into the trees.

I've never actually seen a snowy owl. But, they are here, and, I find it simply amazing that a creature that mostly makes its living in the arctic tundra and parts far north, could find it's way to Loudoun County, much less neighboring Washington, D.C.

Snowy owls nest in the northernmost arctic tundra of Alaska, Canada, and

“Five snowy owls have been reported in Virginia, including one near the Dulles Wetland, in this 2013-2014 season.”

Eurasia, but they have been reported occurring, if intermittently, as far south as Texas and Georgia and the southern parts of Russia and in northern China. They are rare breeders in the Shetland Isles and Scotland, and the British Isles. If venturing south, they seem to seek environments that are similar to tundra, including coastal dunes, prairies and agricultural areas. In 2009 a snowy owl was spotted in, of all places, Tennessee. Five snowy owls have been reported in Virginia, including one near the Dulles Wetland, in this 2013-2014 season.

An owl watch group is reporting that data going back to the late 19th Century shows that snowy owls have what's called a winter "interruption" every 4 years or so. So, what's an interruption?

An interruption is a change in an animal's behavior. In the case of snowy owls, wildlife biologists see a sort of cascade of events: 1) lemmings, the snowy owl's favorite food increase in number in a particular

Continued on page 27

Courage, continued from page 18

“Courage can scare us. No one wants to step outside of their comfort zone, but if we can bring ourselves to overcome our fear, doubts, and sometimes even logic, we will find that the result can be better than we could ever have made it if we hadn’t given up on control and comfort. Courage is the key to really living.” This quote, said by senior Gabby LeRiche of Potomac Falls, depicts the truth about courage. Without courage, humans would be afraid of their own shadow, unwilling to take any risks. Courage thus, is a way to be daring, a way to “really living.”

Real courage is not truly defined by the dictionary, nor is it defined by any one person. Real courage is defined by the individual. What it means to me is different

than what it means to you. That being said, the ideals of courage are still there, in all of us. We can claim to be courageous, in battles of all sorts, but real courage isn’t just “in the moment” or at one particular time. Courage is something that is just there, a part of us that we need to use more. Courage is present in everyone, yes, the issue is finding out how to use it in the right ways. Sometimes, it’s OK to take risks. Sometimes, it’s OK to hold back. Sometimes, it’s OK to have courage.

Mary Rose Lunde is a senior at Potomac Falls High School and will be attending Virginia Tech in the fall. She is planning on becoming a marching Virginian and will be majoring in biology and creative writing.

Dr. Mike, continued from page 2

changes. First, I recommend that you do not go out to dinner or drink alcohol on a first date. The evening and a fancy dinner make for an intimate setting, and a first date is too early to foster intimacy. On top of that, alcohol lowers one’s inhibitions, so whatever you or he may be thinking or feeling may come out more freely in conversation. Instead, I recommend meeting for coffee or lunch – you want to keep the first date simple, casual and time limited. If there is mutual chemistry and an interest to meet again, you can always step things up slowly. Second, I also recommend taking another look at your on-line profile, and you might even consider having a friend or two help with this. First impressions can mean a lot, and perhaps there is something that you are revealing through your photos or biography or interests in a partner that is misleading. Thus, I urge you to stay away from photos that could be perceived as being too suggestive or sexy. You also might just want to emphasize your values and morals and your intentions in dating in your write-up. Third, if you are truly fed up with on-line dating, I recommend looking into affinity groups where you can meet like-minded men with like-minded values and morals and similar interests. Meetup.com is an excellent resource for singles.

It’s The Thought That Counts, But Not When It Comes To Ugly Earrings

Dr. Mike,

Q. My husband bought me a very expensive but very ugly pair of earrings for Christmas that just aren’t me. I decided to take them back to the jeweler to buy something that I really love, and now my husband is angry. I guess I can see the point that it was his gift to me and now I’ve turned it into my gift for me, but the earrings weren’t my taste at all. I

thought he’d want me to like what I wear, but I guess this is more about him than the gift? Got any advice on how to make my angry husband love me again?

A. First of all, keep in mind that your husband’s gift was thoughtful and loving. He could have insensitively bought you power tools or a new vacuum! We, as husbands, are fully capable of doing dumb things like that for our wives. You write that “this is more about him than the gift” but *your* actions, in response to his gift, caused the turmoil. Certainly you have a right to your feelings, but it seems that your communication (or lack there of) is the real problem. And while your husband is angry, I think you should consider that his anger is probably secondary to his feeling hurt. For now, I recommend doing some damage control by apologizing for not speaking to him first about your wanting to exchange his gift for another. I would also acknowledge his thoughtfulness and generosity with emphasis on the issue being solely about personal taste. With care and time, he should likely come around to the idea that you did not want to have something so expensive and nice that you would not want to wear. Moving forward, however, I recommend communicating better with your gift purchases since there will be many more gifts to give and receive in your marriage. You might also consider creating short wish lists for each other prior to special occasions. Yes, with this approach the gift you or he opens will be less of a surprise, but you will also both avoid more unpleasant earring moments.

Michael Oberschneider “Dr. Mike” is the founder and Director of Ashburn Psychological Services, a private mental health clinic comprised of 12 MD and PhD level mental health clinicians. To learn more go to www.ashburnpsych.com or call 703 723-2999.

Animal House – By Myles Mellor and Sally York

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ACROSS

1. Oomph
4. Wake Island, e.g.
9. It’s a snap
14. Blvd.
15. Female demon
16. Traversed a strait, e.g.
17. McCarthy quarry
18. Elevate
19. Rechargeable battery
20. Dangerous one
23. Cuba’s ___ of Youth
24. Bad to the bone
25. Button material
30. New York Times employee
34. Bathroom installation
37. Excitement
39. Auto parts giant
40. “Everyone knows the truth!”
44. Confess
45. One step
46. 1965 Ursula Andress film
47. Fashioned anew
50. Young’s partner in accounting
52. Lover of Aeneas
54. Every which way
58. New Guinea crooners
65. Ticket category
66. Purposeful
67. Cacophony
68. Big name in grills
69. Cut into
70. One of 100: Abbr.
71. Catch, in a way
72. Gunpowder ingredient
73. Prosecute

DOWN

4. Downwind
5. Checker, perhaps
6. Arabian Sea nation
7. Light air
8. Carpenter’s machine
9. Anthropoid ape
10. Crack type
11. Shamu, for one
12. Some are green
13. 15 and 23, e.g.
21. Grasp
22. Twelfth Night, vis-à-vis Epiphany
26. Flurry
27. French vineyard
28. Refuse visitors
29. Ham it up
31. Checks
32. Colorful fish
33. Latest thing
34. Kind of tissue
35. Cover, in a way
36. Energy source
38. Beginning to cry?
41. Restrains an infant?
42. Like some ears
43. Store posting: Abbr.
48. Linux system
49. Shogun’s capital
51. Modicum
53. As a rule
55. Thick
56. Willow
57. Rogers or Chesney
58. Wail
59. Noodle concoction?
60. Chafes
61. Prefix with scope or meter
62. Buckets
63. Tease
64. Super server

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Carver Center Events

The Carver Center is at 200 Willie Palmer Way in Purcellville. Call 571-258-3400 for more information about these events.

Valentine's Day Dance

Friday, Feb. 7 from 1-3 p.m. For ages 18 and older, cost is \$3. Attendees are encouraged to kick up their heels to the mix of slow jams and upbeat tunes brought to them by DJ Sky Dantine. Seniors are encouraged to bring their adult children to join in on the fun.

Conversations About Carver

Thursday, Feb. 27 at 3 p.m. for ages 18 and older. There is a \$2 facility drop-in fee for non-members. The Carver Center has invited 46 people to participate in interviews in front of a camera. The topic is Carver. Carver as a historic school for African-American children before integration, Carver as the hub of a vibrant African American community in the 50s and 60s, and Carver in its current reincarnation as a combination Senior Center and Community Center.

Those being interviewed have included past pupils and teachers of the school, members of the Carver Alumni Association, community organizers and volunteers, instructors, and members using the center today. Those conducting the interviews have all been individuals who play an active role in what goes on at Carver.

The resulting clips are now being edited into a short film to be shown in honor of Black History month. Carver has a rich history that is alive in the people who have spent time between its tall, airy ceilings and its narrow plank floors. The brief interviews in this film attempt to reach into that dense stream of activity and scoop out little bits for you to taste and ponder.



Vivian Ramey and Reggie Simms

"The Little Mermaid" Comes To Blue Ridge

Blue Ridge Middle School is presenting "The Little Mermaid," the world premiere of an original musical opening Feb. 28. This musical, written and directed by veteran stage director Dolly Stevens, is based on the Hans Christian Anderson's fairy tale of the same name.

Join Haley the mermaid as she turns 15 years old and leaves behind her seven mer-sisters and travels to the ocean surface with her trusty sidekick, Maxwell the puffer fish. She travels beyond the beautiful mer-world filled with goldfish, dolphins, rainbow fish, starfish and many other awesome sea world creatures. Along the way she encounters trouble as she falls victim to the underworld and Mona the sea witch with her singing seaweed and evil sharks. Haley and Maxwell make it to the surface and meet Prince Frederick, Alfred and the other "humans."

This is the sixth musical writer/director Stevens has staged at BRMS. She has taught and directed youth of all ages for the past 20 years in Loudoun County and is the founding artistic director of The Growing Stage, Inc., as well as Spotlight Productions.

The show has a cast of 47 middle school students and eight elementary-aged mermaids and seaweeds. Don't miss out, as previous performances have had a history of selling-out before opening night. Tickets are on sale, see the Blue Ridge website, [http://](http://cmsweb2.lcps.org/brms)



Little Mermaid performers

cmsweb2.lcps.org/brms. Performances are Friday, Feb. 28 at 7:30 p.m., March 1 at 2:30 and 7:30, March 2 at 2:30 p.m., March 8 at 7:30 p.m. and March 9 at 2:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY

• **Registration for the Spring Adult Softball League** through Friday, Feb. 28. The league includes men's, women's, coed and church divisions. The team entry fee is \$750, with an additional fee of \$29 for each non-resident player. Games will begin the week of April 7, 2014. Go to www.loudoun.gov/adultsports.

• **Friday, Feb. 7, Valentine's Day Dance**, 1-3 p.m. at the Carver Center, 200 Willie Palmer Way in Purcellville. Cost is \$3 for ages 18 and older. Seniors are encouraged to bring their adult children to join in on the fun. Call 571-258-3400 for information.

• **Saturday, Feb. 8, Sweet Bids and Bites**, at 711 W. Main St. in Purcellville. Dinner, dancing and silent auction to benefit TMLC playground upgrades and St. Andrew's Youth Ministry. For tickets, call 540-338-3956.

• **Saturday, Feb. 8, Valentine Breakfast** from 8 to 10:30 a.m. or until they run out of food. Biscuits and sausage gravy, scrambled eggs, sausage patties, home fried potatoes, pancakes, fruit, coffee cake and more. Hosted by Ebenezer UMC at the Firehouse, 11762 Harpers Ferry Rd., (Rt.671) Purcellville. Free will offering.

• **Saturday, Feb. 8, Lucketts Bluegrass Concert Series**, 7 p.m. at the Lucketts Community Center, 42361 Lucketts Road, Leesburg. Featuring Tony Holt and Wildwood Valley Boys. Tickets are \$15 at the door, and doors open at 6 p.m. Go to www.luckettsbluegrass.org.

• **Saturday, Feb. 8, Lovettsville Garden Club's second annual seed exchange** from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Lovettsville Library. Email mollyhafner34@gmail.com to request guidelines. Seeds are not required to attend. Everyone is welcome.

• **Saturday, Feb. 15, Lovettsville Historical Society Lecture: "1864: Loudoun's Year of Total War."** At 2 p.m. at St. James United Church of Christ, 10 East Broad Way, Lovettsville.

• **Saturday, Feb. 15, The James Boys** perform classic country and rock music from 8 p.m. to midnight. At the Lovettsville Game Club, 16 South Berlin Pike (Rte. 287). Tickets \$10 each. For information, call (540) 822-5147. Proceeds benefit the Game Club, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to community service and conservation.

• **Friday through Sunday, Feb. 14-16, Middleberg's Ultimate Winter Weekend Sale.** Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday as posted by shops. Go to www.visitmiddleburgva.com.

• **Saturday, Feb. 22, Snowflake Ball at the Lovettsville Community Center** from 1-3 p.m. For ages 3-10 years. The fee is \$11 per child and you must register by Feb. 14. Get pampered like a princess in the "glamour area." Children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, call 540-822-5284.

• **Saturday, Feb. 22, huge indoor yard sale** from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., to benefit the Loudoun 4-H Leaps & Squeaks Rabbit and Cavy Club. Sykes Hall at the 4-H Fairgrounds, 17558 Dry Mill Road in Leesburg. Clothing, toys, housewares, tools, books, CD's/DVD's, pet/animal care items, furniture and much more. All items half price after 1 p.m.

• **Thursday, Feb. 27, Conversations about Carver**, at 3 p.m. for ages 18 and older, \$2 facility drop in fee for non members. At the Carver Center, 200 Willie Palmer Way in Purcellville. In honor of Black History Month, a short film about Carver will be shown highlighting its history as a school for African-American children before integration, the hub of a vibrant African American community in the 50s and 60s, and Carver in its current reincarnation as a combination Senior Center and Community Center. Call 571-258-3400 for information

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Planning Our Gardens For Spring

– By Donna Williamson

This winter has given us a good opportunity to assess our landscapes. When snow is on the ground, we can visualize the “bones” of the place – the fence, the tree trunks and canopies, the statues of gnomes, the walkways where we shovel a path, the sunny slopes that clear snow early and more.

This winter, you might think about adding a shrub border or two. Shrubs provide a background, a windbreak, a snow fence where drifts collect, and an opportunity for salamanders and over-wintering butterflies to snuggle into leaf litter.

The showy stuff – perennials, annuals, low groundcovers – are invisible in the snow. The stalwart shrubs enclose our gardens and, if chosen well, provide nesting space for the birds and food for the baby birds coming in the spring.

There are some workhorse shrubs that I like to grow and often recommend to folks working to redesign garden spaces. It is also called Virginia sweet-spire. When happy, itea will gently colonize an area, spreading nicely to cover the space. It has beautiful summer flowers and fabulous fall color – burgundy leaves hold on for several weeks in the fall. Perfect for those hard-to-mow areas of lawn...just turn them over to this beautiful shrub.

Think about elderberry – a bit taller than itea, more like a small tree, with beautiful



Elderberry flowers

white flowers in spring and choice berries in late summer that birds love. You might choose a colorful ninebark, an upright and slightly arching shrub with spring flowers.

Or you might consider the oak leaf hydrangea – an architectural beauty for a semi-shady area. Gorgeous conical flowers grace this lovely plant in summer and again, fall color is fantastic. The gray

dogwood is a nice choice. It’s a shrub rather than a tree and while the flowers are not showy like the taller flowering dogwood, it fits in a smaller space and has great white berries in late summer that the birds really enjoy.

Fothergilla is another wonderful shrub, with brush-like white flowers in spring – very fragrant – and fabulous fall colors of orange, red, and purple. Or you can plant high-bush blueberries and feast with the birds in summer, and enjoy great fall-color.

You have so many options to help the birds feed their babes and enjoy the spring as nature unfolds its leaves, flowers, and fruits.

Donna Williamson is a garden designer and coach. She has taught classes at the State Arboretum of Virginia, Oatlands and Shenandoah University. She continues to hold classes in Waterford each winter, and is working on a revision of her book The Virginia Gardener’s Companion. She can be reached at donnawilliamson2002@earthlink.net or 540 877-2002.

Planning Those All-Important “Hardscapes”

– By Andrea Gaines

Patio entertaining, or lazing by the pool seems months and months off – especially when the wind chill is hovering at about zero, as it has been for weeks.



But despite our wintery mindsets, this is a good time of year to put together your spring and summer landscape wish lists. If you are planning to make big or even more modest changes to your garden, outdoor areas or yard, one of the most important considerations is how your hardscape will be put together and function.

Hardscapes are described as the inanimate part of landscaping – the stone walls, woodwork, patios, arbors, decks, water features, etc. The softscapes, of course, are your plants and trees.

When planning to create or modify existing hardscapes on your property, here are some things to keep in mind:

Decide What Outcome And Functions You Want:

Even if you’re just changing, creating or fixing up one bit of the place now, consider the entire area that will eventually be included in your outdoor project. Also, be clear on how you’ll want the area or areas to be used. Are you looking for a family friendly gathering place, a quiet nook for reading, a more formal place, a place to exercise your gardening skills, a large and productive vegetable garden or

some combination of two or more of these?

Understand The Issue Of Drainage: Softscapes absorb water while hardscapes, for the most part, shed water. You may be skilled enough to direct water to places where it

will be absorbed and not cause problems. Or, you might want to leave this issue to a professional, particularly if your hardscape areas are extensive. This goes double when considering how to go about site preparation.

Allow Hardscape Areas To Relate To Each Other:

When you come around the bend of a sidewalk or to the edge of a patio what’s there – a water feature, a prominent, beautifully shaped tree, a statue or a riotous, overflowing wildflower garden? When you are sitting on your patio, what do you want to be able to see, and what do you prefer be lost in the background?

What’s Your Style?: Do you like a sleek modern look, a simple and uncomplicated outdoor living space, a homey, country like setting or a combination of things? This will help you decide on both your hardscape’s features and the materials that will be used.

February’s the time to dream and plan and imagine just what you want your outdoor spaces to look and feel like. Budgeting is key, but let’s tackle that later. For now, get a pad of paper and pencil out and start sketching and jotting down ideas for your “hardscapes” to come.

Mulch Day At Woodgrove

The Woodgrove Wolverine Athletic Booster Club (WWABC) would like to announce that March 22 is MULCH DAY at Woodgrove. You can order your spring mulch now online at www.gotmulch.org. Double Shredded Hardwood Mulch (3 cubic feet bags) is available at \$4.50/bag for 1-39 bags and \$4.00/ bag for 40 or more bags. Free Delivery by Wolverine athletes on orders of 10 bags or more within a 10 mile radius of Woodgrove High School. Or you can pick up your mulch at Woodgrove on Saturday, March 22 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. All monies raised will go toward the Woodgrove athletics end of year celebration, scholarships, and supporting the mission of the WWABC.

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Wild Loudoun, continued from page 22

season; 2) because of the more plentiful quantity of food, more snowy owl chicks survive to adulthood; 3) because there are more adults, food sources become stretched and certain snowy owl adults, desperate for food, mostly male, head south in search of it. Studies confirm that many of the snowy owls found in more southerly parts of their ranges are indeed undernourished, forced further south in an attempt to survive.

Snowy owls are among the heaviest of birds of this kind. They weigh in at up to 6+ pounds, are somewhere between 20 to 28 inches long, and have an enormous 4 to 6 foot wingspan. Males are almost pure white while females and young birds have dark scalloped markings. A snowy owl's feet resemble furry white boots, with thick plumage around heavily feathered talons.

Snowy owls nest on the ground, creating a mound or packing natural materials atop a boulder. Sometimes snowy owls use abandoned eagle nests. The owls breed from May to June and lay 3 to 11 eggs over the course of several days. Eggs hatch about 5 weeks after they are laid,

with both parents caring for the young chicks – feeding them and defending the nest against dogs, foxes, wolves and other predators. Snowy owls prefer lemmings but feed on a wide variety of other small to medium sized mammals, including voles, mice, muskrats, and other birds.

Video footage on the Washington Post's website shows January's snowy owl calmly peering down on a group of passersby ... cooing and snapping photos of the birds with their smartphones. The bird seems quite calm, and delights everyone with its remarkable ability to turn its head almost 3/4 of the way around, or up to 270 degrees. (FYI, people and other animals move their eyes or use side or "peripheral" vision to follow things. Owls have fixed eye sockets and must move their heads to follow objects – hence their supernatural head rotation ability.) But, maybe it's actually thinking about its next meal, wondering if there are any lemmings in all of those backpacks and purses. What a sight, in any case. Hope this bird is successful in making its way back to the tundra when the time is right. Seriously. What a beauty.

Answers to crossword puzzle from page 23

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | P | E | P | | 4 | A | T | O | L | L | | 9 | P | H | O | T | O | | |
| 14 | A | V | E | | 15 | L | A | M | I | A | | 16 | O | A | R | E | D | | |
| 17 | R | E | D | | 18 | E | X | A | L | T | | 19 | N | I | C | A | D | | |
| 20 | S | N | A | K | 21 | E | I | N | T | H | E | 22 | G | R | A | S | S | | |
| 23 | I | S | L | E | | | | | | 24 | E | V | I | L | | | | | |
| | | | | | 25 | N | A | C | R | E | | 30 | E | D | I | T | O | R | |
| 34 | S | P | A | | 37 | D | R | A | M | A | | 39 | N | A | P | A | | | |
| 40 | C | A | T | 41 | S | O | U | T | O | F | 42 | H | E | B | A | G | | | |
| 44 | A | V | O | W | | 45 | S | T | A | I | R | | 46 | S | H | E | | | |
| 47 | R | E | M | A | 48 | D | E | | 50 | E | R | N | S | T | | | | | |
| | | | | | 52 | D | I | D | 53 | O | | 54 | A | 55 | M | 56 | O | 57 | K |
| 58 | B | I | R | D | S | O | F | 61 | P | A | 62 | R | 63 | A | D | I | S | E | |
| 65 | A | D | U | L | T | | | 66 | T | E | L | I | C | | 67 | D | I | N | |
| 68 | W | E | B | E | R | | | 69 | E | R | O | D | E | | 70 | S | E | N | |
| 71 | L | A | S | S | O | | | 72 | N | I | T | E | R | | 73 | T | R | Y | |

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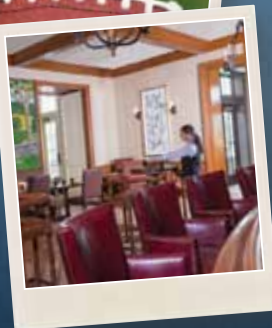
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