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## Zoning War Coming To A Head

### Mayor Fraser: "I'm Tired of Just Talking about a Comp Plan Review"

- By Valerie Cury

At the November Purcellville Town Council Work Session, Mayor Kwasi Fraser, town council member Karen Zimmerman, and other newly elected officials of the town's political leadership made their mark as the new "pro planning, pro citizen" contingent in town government.

As discussed, at issue was the legal and practical status of Purcellville's Comprehensive Plan – whether the town can, at a developer's request, make significant changes to the zoning designation that applies to specific properties; changes many see as inconsistent with the plan itself.

#### Hirst Road Rezoning – 21st Street Rezoning Revisited?

In 2008, the Town of Purcellville approved a controversial developer request to rezone parts of its historic 21st Street corridor. This by right development – which could not be challenged by the public once it was rezoned by the Lazaro

Administration – resulted in the approval of over 100,000 square feet of intensive commercial/residential 4-5 story development opposite the historic Nichols Hardware Store. As long as the proposed development was consistent with the new zoning granted by the town, developers had the right to proceed.

Now, developers and investors of properties along Hirst Road, which parallel Route 7 and abut the residential neighborhood of Old Dominion Valley, are essentially asking for the same thing - mainly, a significant change in the zoning laws that currently apply to the area despite the fact that the proposed uses are either inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan or not yet defined by the developers and investors.

#### Three Efforts at Greater Transparency/Efficiency Dropped From Agenda

The town council work session began with Council

*Continued on page 5*



Anna Leonard modeling one of the sweaters from the collection at Re-Love It.

## Christmas Sweaters – Do You Have One Yet?

Re-Love It started with over 1,000 "ugliest Christmas sweaters" this holiday season. This is one of the hottest items this month and they are selling fast and furious. "Last year we sold out before Christmas," said Michael Oaks owner of Re-LoveIt. "And this year I have been buying these sweaters all year long," Oaks continued.

Many offices and residents are joining the fun and having ugly Christmas sweater parties, and keep in mind that Dec. 12 is the official National Ugly Christmas Sweater Day.

## Nichols Hardware Celebrates 100<sup>th</sup> Year

There is a store in Purcellville that has survived two massive fires, many family losses and withering retail competition and yet is poised to achieve a landmark few establishments ever do.

On Dec. 20 (the actual 100<sup>th</sup> birthday) Nichols Hardware will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. The public is invited to their open house on Dec. 20 and to show appreciation Nichols will offer 20 percent off of sales over \$100 on that day only. Lee Jacobs, one of their long time faithful employees, shared this comment with us, "On Dec. 20, 1914, our total sales were a whopping \$41 plus some change.

Along the way and through the years, consistency has been their greatest asset for success. It's been in the same location, been in the same family and had the same honest, no-frills slogan, "Your Most Dependable Source of Supply since 1914."

On Saturday Dec. 13, friends, customers, fellow Purcellville businesses and its many customers will pay tribute to Nichols with two floats in the Purcellville



photo: Sarah Huntington  
Frank Myers

Christmas parade at noon, and then with a birthday cake in the Nichols Parking Lot at 1 p.m. (when the parade ends). Former Senator Charlie Waddell will sing Happy Birthday, and there will be a giant card for everyone to sign.

Mr. Print's Nolan Barzee will grab the reins of his covered wagon, snap his whip and go down Main Street in the parade with Nichols' employees. "What an honor to take such wonderful folks who have served our community for 100 years," said Barzee. At the time of the Nichols Opening in December 1914, most Nichols customers rolled up to the front steps in horse drawn vehicles.

Re-Love It Consignment Shop's Michael Oaks and Kim Patterson-Oaks are in charge of a commemorative float along with Lori Connelly-De Franco who is working on the design and construction. Vintage tools, appliances and other other nostalgic items will decorate the float. "It's a rarity today to have a business in town that's celebrating its 100 year anniversary and owned by the same

*Continued on page 8*

*Hidden Treasures*  
in  
*Western Loudoun*  
see pages 17-19

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## How To Discuss Racism With Your Children After Ferguson

- By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

Protests regarding the grand jury's decision to not indict Officer Darren Wilson for fatally shooting 18-year-old Michael Brown continued for several days and even spread across the country. The ruling and protests (some peaceful and some violent) have left the nation with a very real sense of deep divide; for many, the grand jury's decision was correct and just, and for many others, the decision to not indict was a racially charged and unjust one.



Dr. Mike

Multiple polls following the Ferguson grand jury decision revealed the significant and clear divide between blacks and whites in the United States, with the majority of black respondents asserting that Officer Wilson was at fault for the shooting and that he should have been indicted. The majority of white respondents, in stark contrast, asserted the opinion that Officer Wilson's shooting of Michael Brown was lawful, and thus he should not have been indicted. The grand jury's decision (and its impact) has reverberated throughout the country, and as a clinical psychologist,

it has even entered my therapy practice. Interestingly, the most concerned clients have been parents who have wanted assistance with how to discuss the topic of Ferguson with their children. One parent, for example, mentioned that her 5-year-old daughter asked why a car was on fire during a Ferguson protest aired on TV, while another parent expressed uncertainty and confusion with how to discuss the images of looting and rioting with her 9-year-old son who discovered the story on the Internet.

Racial biases, prejudice, discrimination, bigotry, diversity and ethnicity are some of the most difficult topics for parents to successfully address with their children, but they are also some of the most important of topics to cover. While setting a good example is a fine start for parents, having an open and honest dialogue about these complex topics is imperative.

I offer the following four points for parents to consider in discussing racism with their children:

Know your racial biases and prejudices before having a discussion. Numerous social psychology studies have shown

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# Team Joe Raises Money For Fairfax Hospital For Children

Team Joe Charities was created in 2007 to raise money for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children. The primary fundraiser is an annual golf tournament held the first Thursday in October each year at Loudoun Golf & CC. The charity was named for Joe Petrella, who was born 12 weeks early and weighed only 1.5 pounds. He was in the NICU at Fairfax Hospital for Children for 104 days. Joe is now a healthy 8-year-old living in Ashburn. All of the money raised by Team Joe Charities will be given to the NICU at Fairfax Hospital.



Joe Petrella

“Loudoun Valley Floors would like to thank the doctors and nurses for their very kind touch with all the children. You make the world a better place and thanks to all the supporters of Team Joe,” said Steve Jacobus, partner of Loudoun Valley Floors and founder sponsor of Team Joe.

“Team Joe is very fortunate to have such wonderful sponsors like Loudoun Valley Floors, Bill Thomas, Dr. Chad Parsons, Loudoun Golf & CC, Cheers Sports, and many other local businesses. With their continued support we’ve raised \$250,000,” said Joe’s father, Denny Petrella.

The NICU at Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children is a Level 3 care facility, which is the most advanced of its kind in

Northern Virginia. The unit is one of the largest in the nation, and admits high-risk infants from all over the region. Plans are under way for the construction of a new NICU, and Team Joe will be funding the completion of a family lounge that will be inside of the new NICU. The lounge will be called “Joe’s Room” and create a nice, comfortable space to help families care for their miracle babies who enter the NICU. Team Joe Charities is a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation. Please visit [www.teamjoe.org](http://www.teamjoe.org) for more information.

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## Zoning, continued from page 1

Member Ben Packard proposing the removal of three items from the agenda: Real Parties of Interest guidelines, the opportunity for an efficiency review of town operations, and zoning use changes for the Hirst Road corridor.

### Real Parties of Interest

Municipalities with Real Parties of Interest in place – including Loudoun County and the town of Leesburg – require that all applicants coming before a government body for a zoning application must disclose all individuals, organizations, and companies with a financial and/or economic interest in the application.

Council member Ben Packard stated that he wanted to remove Real Parties of Interest from the night's agenda, placing him at odds with Mayor Fraser, who, in the interests of fairness and transparency, wants the town to require such disclosures by developers.

Packard's justification for this item's removal was that it had been previously discussed. Approximately three years ago, town resident Kelli Grim presented this matter to the former Lazaro council which rejected it. That same council then sent the Real Parties of Interest to the Purcellville Business Association Board. At a board meeting attended by Grim, developer and PBA board member John Chapman said he did not want anyone to know whom his "investors" were on projects. Further, he had a problem with Grim's attendance at the meeting and said he didn't want to read about what he was saying in the paper. At the time, the PBA did not favor the Real Parties of Interest, and after that particular meeting, the PBA board's discussions were held in executive sessions.

### Review of Town Operational Efficiencies and Work Product Outcomes

Since assuming office, Mayor Fraser has pushed for a review of how various town departments function. This review, an independent audit which would be put out to bid although there is one firm that is willing to do it at no expense to the town, would examine weaknesses and opportunities to increase efficiencies and could issue a brief report card on each department. Council member Packard made a motion to remove this item from the agenda, stating that he was concerned that council was "spending too much time discussing things." Mayor Fraser, Vice Mayor Nave, and Council Member Jimmerson voted to keep it on the agenda while Council members Packard, McCollum, McConville and Lehr voted to remove it.

### Zoning Text Amendment For Uses Matrix and Definitions - Rezone vs. Review

Mayor Fraser wants a discussion about why zoning changes are being proposed

along the Hirst Road corridor. Moreover, he wants the council to determine the implications of said changes to the citizens, businesses and overall Comprehensive Plan if they move forward with the proposed changes. For over a month, he has been asking for a list of the current uses, proposed changes and implications. The before and after pictures of the zoning uses should include a narrative about why the use changes are being proposed, the impacts of these zoning use changes, and the impacts they would have on proffers, economic benefits, and potential risks to existing businesses or residents.

As of this writing, community development staff have not produced said narrative.

For years, proponents of a more measured and citizen-focused approach to zoning in Purcellville have argued that the over use

*continued on page 14*

## Letters To The Editor

### Merry Christmas, Happy Holiday

Dear Editor:

As we approach this season of giving, I encourage you to reflect upon and to celebrate the multiple blessings afforded to us in this great nation, state, and town. Also, please remember our brave military men and women whose daily sacrifices on behalf of our nation enable us to maintain our freedom, live our dreams, and care for our families. If you can, support our wounded warriors and active duty personnel, stateside and abroad, this holiday season. Whatever you can do or give will be greatly appreciated.

I am truly blessed to have the opportunity to serve you, and I look forward to your continued support. So, from my family to yours, Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy New Year!

Kwasi Fraser,  
Mayor, Purcellville

### By Right – Only Practical Zoning For 32nd Street

Dear Editor:

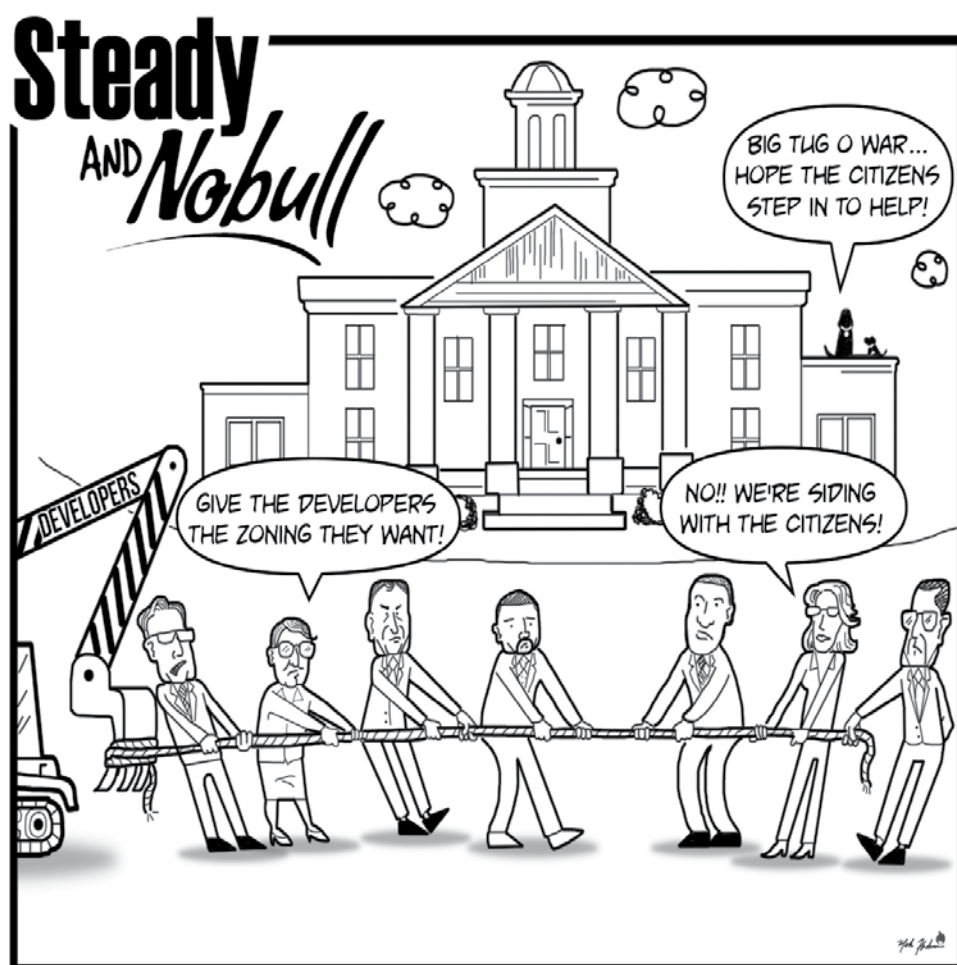
As a lifetime resident of Purcellville, I'm proud of my town and its unique character. Having grown up here I am

grateful that my family enjoys a quality of life where young children can still roam freely from yard to yard and play on the streets of our neighborhood as I did growing up. The design of our older historic neighborhood captures Purcellville's distinct character with its traditional street patterns that are in harmony with our lot and home sizes.

Unfortunately a recent proposal to the town council to increase the zoning of 10.08 acres on adjacent town entry road S. 690, known as S. 32nd Street in our neighborhood, would change all of this. The proposal is for a dense development of

duplexes completely out of character with the existing neighborhood. The entrances to the development would extend from our quiet one-lane neighborhood roads. These smaller roads would become routes for residents traveling in and out of the proposed development that would be a density totally unlike what we currently have. Not only would our neighborhood roads become unsafe for children playing and walking to and from school but the additional traffic would make driving in the area of S. 32nd Street,

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### WE WELCOME YOUR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

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

## View From The Ridge - Debt, Debt And, More Debt ... Or, Is There An Alternative?

– By Andrea Gaines

The entire trajectory of the Town of Purcellville can be summarized in one word. Debt.

The massive debt the town incurred to build the wastewater treatment plant – which currently operates at just 40 percent capacity – stands at \$33 million. There was a \$6 million mandated upgrade to the facility – which was paid for with a taxpayer funded grant. But, the balance of the \$33 million spent was a choice by the town to dramatically increase the capacity of the facility- on the hope that the rapid growth in and around Purcellville would continue. Tap fees – the cost to be hooked up the system – now run about fifty thousand dollars apiece. And, that would keep the debt manageable.

But with the additional extravagant and ill-advised spending by the town (including the \$8.5 million for the new town hall) and

the housing crash recession, town debt has now ballooned to \$61 million in less than a decade ...

There is no looking back, but there is a way to look forward.

Davenport, the financial adviser to the town says we need to build, build, build. And, that is exactly what the present town council intends to do, if actions by the new majority are any indication. Build, build, build despite the forced spending that goes along with it.

For example the approved Mayfair development includes 262 residential units and 19 acres of commercial/industrial building in an environmentally sensitive area. It is well north of the present boundary lines of the town and will spur more development. This in turn will give a good excuse to build the Northern Collector Road. The initiation of the NCR was negotiated by the Town of Purcellville

and the county as proffers from Brookfield Autumn Hill/Mayfair. People along the road who want to be annexed will ask for boundary line adjustments – moving land from county to town control – because they are easier to negotiate than annexations. Those who do not want to be annexed could have their property confiscated by eminent domain. Wright Farm residents will be affected as well.

Growth used to be financed by proffers from developers – funds needed to pay for the expensive infrastructure, including roads that would serve the new development. In recent years the Loudoun County region has encouraged growth by offering much less burdensome terms for builders. Now, rather than the investor paying for the impacts a development has on the community ... your and I, the taxpayer, pay for it. Look at your water bill - the fees have gone up because the residents are paying

for the increase in the facility capacity- something that was a deliberate choice of the town - to accommodate future growth. Roads and schools and fire and rescue are now largely paid for by us. Every citizen of this state also pays for every grant this town receives.

The citizens of Purcellville have a decision to make. Do they want to live in a massively bigger town, with chain stores you can find anywhere and fewer small businesses?

Or, do they want to keep citizens in the growth and development driver's seat – as staying informed and vocal gives the citizens a choice in their future? Engage with today's town council and mayor. There is hope in our newly elected leaders. Tap into that and get involved in the future of your town. The solution to paying down the debt is to consider the costs that come with explosive and rapid development.

## Letters To The Editor, continued

Nursery Street and Main Street more chaotic and congested. It is difficult to even imagine what the construction process alone would involve much less the addition of possibly 229 more vehicles in such a small area.

The town council should vote against any application, including the current one, that would change zoning on Purcellville's S. 32nd Street. The current zoning is in place because it is the only practical zoning for this area. We can and we must preserve our way of life in this charming old town!  
Jen Ducharme  
Purcellville

### Let's Consider Franklin Park For A Park And Ride

Dear Editor:

I'm writing this because you have provided valuable insight into a number of Loudoun County issues that the towns or Loudoun Board of Supervisors (BOS) have railroaded past us. There was the quick take of the Brown's Farm for the Southern Collector Road, the power lines down Route 7 and now the Red Hill water towers and the proposed Purcellville Crossroads development.

But there is one more: The Franklin Park Park and Ride and the resulting perfect storm of traffic at St. Andrew Park and Ride. If you go to the Loudoun County website you can find the completed plans for Franklin Park Park and Ride, which the county paid over \$120,000 for. And then there were the additional expenses of archeological verification, environmental research, county employee involvement, etc. so that the final overall cost of the plans was easily over \$300,000. Then Janet Clarke got into office as the Blue Ridge representative and the plans were killed. We, the Loudoun County bus riders, would have to continue using the overcrowded St. Andrew lot, being reduced twice down to 78 parking spots. Her rationale was that children going to the pool could get hit by a car.

Faulty reasoning on several counts:

1. If a child is old enough to go to the pool by themselves, they are old enough to know how to cross the road.

2. Explain the child safety at the Harmony Park and Ride and building a baseball field next to it. Leesburg's Park and Ride was built with the Philip Bolen Rec Center down the street, and then the soccer field was built next door.

3. The pool is only in use June-August, three months. The Park and Ride is a better use of the park, being used every week day.

4. At St. Andrew the bus has to continue 2 miles down the road before turning around to get on Rt. 7. Franklin Park has a much closer access to route 7 and the western Loudoun and West Virginia bus riders are closer to the bus stop. Riders can board the bus free of the Main Street traffic. And there is room for cars to pick up their riders without blocking the driveway.

5. A number of times St. Andrew was not available and the pool parking lot at Franklin Park was used. Funerals, summer church programs lasting a week and many other church functions can relocate us, the bus riders, to Franklin Park.

But again, the main problem with staying at St. Andrew is there is only one entrance/exit driveway. To prevent accidents the bus drivers have been instructed to block the entrance to prevent cars from entering or leaving the parking lot. One day we will read about some lives lost from the dangers of the St. Andrew Park and Ride lot when it could have been avoided at Franklin Park.

Kerry Young  
Purcellville

### A Time Of Gathering And Reflection

Dear Editor:

It seems like December is all about Christmas. And that means Black Friday, endless renditions of "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," Grinch, Scrooges,

dysfunctional family stories with happy endings, after-midnight shopping, and dancing snowmen.

But let's not forget that it's also a time of gathering and reflection. It's a time to gather together with family and friends. And it's a time to reflect on our lives, the meaning of our lives, and how we can give and make a difference in our communities. Remember, even if we don't have money, we all have something to give and contribute.  
Kevin O'Neil  
Leesburg

### Put Family Farmers Back Into Farm To School

Dear Editor:

Farm to School programs appeared in the 90s with a three-way focus: fresh, local foods in schools; agriculture and nutrition education in classrooms and purchases that support local family farms. Years since have seen these programs grow to include 40,000 schools and 23 million students.

However, the focus has slipped from 'local family farms' to 'local food.' Schools and program administrators alike don't know the difference between nearby corporate, industrial farms and smaller, family farms that derive their income from the management and daily labor on their own land. It's far easier for schools and administrators to define 'local' than it is to define 'family farm.'

Family farmers, schools, and rural communities are losing out. Family farmers lose out on income from sales when schools don't make the distinction between food grown by a farm family and food grown by a corporation. Schools lose out when they don't choose a farmer who can demonstrate how crops and livestock are raised. And communities lose when food dollars go to a corporation headquartered elsewhere instead of to a local family business that buys its supplies right there

in the community, where the money can recirculate. In fact, family farms generate among the highest economic multipliers of all industries, which should make them the darling of economic development directors.

Hazy Farm to School program goals are a part of the problem. Goals should define a preferred local food supplier to ensure 'local family farms' are truly supported.  
Wyatt Fraas  
Center For Rural Affairs  
Coleridge, Neb.

### Dense Development Doesn't Belong On 32nd St

Dear Editor:

Purcellville is a town loaded with character and charm. Increasingly residents seem keen to preserve what makes our town distinct from others. This is true in the town's central commercial district and in residential neighborhoods alike. Efforts to turn available property over to dense, national-chain development have been rejected by the town's citizens.

Purcellville has its own celebrated local businesses and it would be nice to see vacant commercial rental space occupied by more of such local businesses. A focus on more dense development, with potential to be occupied by national chains, would damage the unique character of the town and its neighborhoods. While residents increasingly appreciate this, efforts to increase density persist.

For example an application is currently under consideration to rezone 10.08 acres on S. 32nd Street, which is S. 690 and just off West Main Street (in back of the west side of the 711). The rezoning request is for dense mixed-use development. The developer M/I Homes is currently proposing to build duplexes or "cottages". The developer is proposing an age-restricted setting that is defined as at least one

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# Bob Ohneiser To Run For Loudoun Commonwealth Attorney

Bob Ohneiser, Esq. of Ashburn, a lawyer with many years of legal experience has decided to run for Loudoun Commonwealth Attorney.

Ohneiser is admitted to both the New York bar and the Virginia bar well as to practice before the United States Supreme Court. He has worked on the defense side of the law, but also has extensive experience dealing with prosecutors and the police. Ohneiser decided to run out of exasperation with the current Commonwealth Attorney, and that individual's seeming refusing to support sincere investigatory efforts into insuring that police don't act improperly against citizens. One example he cites is the May 2013 incident where a Costco employee was shot dead after five deputies claimed they were in mortal and immediate danger from 38-year-old Mhai Scott.

As a defense lawyer, Ohneiser has also commented that "We need to stop overcharging citizens in the name of protecting them and serving them. It's only appropriate to charge someone with [a] crime [when] there is sufficient evidence to prove [the crime] ... NOT to hike [up] the charges to scare the citizen into going for a plea out of fear of the risk of a felony conviction."

As a Loudoun County School Board Member for eight years, Ohneiser indicates he was painfully aware of the witch hunt



Bob Ohneiser, Esq.

against a highly respected assistant principal which seemed to be both ethnically and politically driven.

Ohneiser is married to Susan Ohneiser and they have three sons who graduated from Loudoun County Schools. The family attends St. John The Apostle Church in Leesburg.

More information on Ohneiser can be found at <http://ohneiserlaw.com.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/>.

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# FOCUS ON: MR. AND MRS. CLAUS



Photo: Sarah Huntington

## Surprise Visit

Mr. and Mrs. Claus found time to stop by Photographer Sarah Huntington's studio in Purcellville. They are very busy this time of year and have many elves in and around Purcellville, Bluemont and Round Hill who work tirelessly to help. They will be making many appearances in and around the area before they head back to the North Pole to get ready for the big day. Mr. Claus said, "Yes, boys and girls the elves report back telling me who has been naughty or nice."

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Nichols, continued from page 1

family and in the same location. What would we do without Nichols?" said Oaks who is co-organizer of the event. Dave Levinson of Wicked Design is helping with graphics and photography for the float.

A sheet cake made by Joy Dream Bakery of Purcellville will be cut and champagne toasts made at 1 p.m.(after the parade) in the iconic Nichols parking lot alongside the mountains of mulch that have been part of the Purcellville landscape for decades.

Walk into Nichols and you'll see no bar codes, no scanners, no computers. OK, there's one computer to keep up with on-line inventory, and a clerk occasionally checking email. All receipts are handwritten and stuffed into non-imprinted brown paper bags.

This isn't a faux recreation of the past. This is just the Nichols family holding onto the way things that have always worked just fine for them.

Sarah Huntington of Lincoln Studios will have the documentary film by Lincoln Studios, "The Last Hardware Store" on sale that day. "We are looking forward to celebrating the 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary and hope a lot of people show up for the celebration," said Huntington.

Here's one last anecdote Ted Nichols recounts in the documentary: There was one particular busload of DC-area folks attending the Waterford Fair that stopped by Nichols on the way back home. One nice lady asked Ted, "So. How often do you 'recreate' this store for visitors?" Ted's reply was, "Oh we're open every day except Christmas, m'am."

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Letters, continued from page 5

resident per unit being 55 years of age or older. Introducing dense housing in the existing neighborhood, particularly in the historic overlay district, makes no sense. It would completely compromise the unique character of the old road and neighborhood, that currently accentuates the town's natural beauty and history.

Additionally the zoning request for mixed-use development indicates that eventually this property could become dense retail space, or even be available for light industrial or utility development. The existing multi-generational neighborhood has large numbers of homes dating to the earlier part of the 20th century. A dense development, whether residential or eventually commercial, would be a radical departure from

the neighborhood's historical origins. In other words there is no room for dense development in such a setting. One only has to drive through Herndon's old town and similar regional towns to see what fate awaits Purcellville if such rezoning requests are approved: Anonymous concrete buildings, traffic congestion, crowded living, driving and shopping conditions. The land in question should remain zoned as-is at low-density residential, complimentary to the long-standing design patterns in the charming old neighborhood.

The tricky term PDH-8 utilized by the developers and bureaucrats is thoroughly confusing to the average citizen. Don't be fooled: This is a large new project that will radically change the neighborhood.

David L. Eno  
Purcellville

## Girl Scouts, Wegmans And Tree Of Life Help Feed Loudoun

Girl Scouts Ambassador Troop 6245 received a very generous donation of 30 turkeys and 30 hams from Wegmans in Leesburg. The 654 pounds of meat will help the Tree of Life in Purcellville feed those in need throughout the holiday season.

Girl Scouts (L-R) Ashley Dubey, Robin Dezagottis and Amanda Dukinfield with Wegmans employees accepting the turkeys and hams. Girl Scouts not pictured: Emily Covington and Taylor Reed.



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# A Message From Delegate Dave LaRock

With Thanksgiving behind us and the days still growing shorter and colder, I'm thinking ahead to some relaxation time. It's always nice to be able to sit down by the fire after a workday with a warm drink in hand, and maybe get the chance to read a book to one of my grandkids. I think we all really do appreciate the chance to catch up on what's going on with friends and family, and there's something about the cold that literally brings us all closer together!

Serving as your delegate over the last year has been an adventure. Please allow me to take this opportunity to thank you for enriching my life by allowing me the privilege and honor of serving you. It's a humbling responsibility, and, in addition to my day job as a contractor, it keeps me on the run from Winchester to Leesburg. At each meeting there are new faces and experiences, all connecting me to the good people of this area. I've learned more about my neighbors in the last year and a half than in any other time in my life, and it's an experience I'm truly grateful for.

I recently reminded myself and my supporters that our community has much to be thankful for. We have a God who loves us, a nation and state founded on principles



Delegate Dave LaRock

I'm looking forward to starting the 2015 session in mid-January. You have my word that I'll do what I can to help guard our liberty and serve the best interests of the citizens and businesses of Virginia.

of virtue and justice, and a level of material prosperity that enables many of us to not only be comfortable, but to give to those in need. We live in a nation where we still have the right to practice our faith almost entirely without legal repercussions; our government and our legal system still work.

We still enjoy what our Founding Fathers called the "blessings of liberty." To the degree that our leaders and our laws still serve our citizens and protect their freedoms, we reap abundant blessings of peace, prosperity, and happiness. These blessings have been bought with a heavy price and parents and teachers have to work diligently to pass on the truths of liberty from one generation to the next. Most of the parents I know understand that it is their duty and privilege to teach their children to uphold what is right, and this gives me great hope for the future of Virginia. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, both on our borders and around the kitchen table.

I'm looking forward to starting the 2015 session in

mid-January. You have my word that I'll do what I can to help guard our liberty and serve the best interests of the citizens and businesses of Virginia. I won't go into detail today, but I am focused on improving the quality of our public education system, protect our hard working citizens from higher taxes and striving to keep our area business-friendly.

Every effort that our legislature undertakes – great or small, good or bad, relies on the informed participation and support of many for success. I encourage you to stay informed this session, as there are a great many proposals already making headway that can impact our Commonwealth for decades to come. I greatly appreciate your prayers for wisdom for our leaders, for safety as we travel back and forth, and for success as we do our best to accomplish what's right.

The LaRock family wishes you all a blessed Christmas, a happy holiday and a wonderful New Year!

Delegate Dave LaRock represents the 33rd House District, including parts of Loudoun, Clarke and Frederick Counties, and the towns of Leesburg (partial), Purcellville, Berryville, Lovettsville, Round Hill, Hamilton and Hillsboro. LaRock serves on the Transportation Committee, the Science and Technology Committee and the Counties, Cities and Towns Committee. Dave and his wife, Joanne, have lived in Loudoun for 28 years, building a successful family-owned general contracting business. The LaRocks reside near Hamilton with Abby and John, the youngest of their seven children.

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Zoning, continued from page 4

of special exception requests, rezoning applications, and the like have resulted in a process which favors developer interests over the interests of the citizenry.

The sweeping zoning change that produced the yet-to-be-built Vineyard Square development in historic downtown is one example of this, as citizens who intended to protect this area saw a town-granted zoning change that gave developers approval on a 5-6 story underground garage, retail and residential project - despite strong opposition from Purcellville's Board of Architectural Review Committee.

Similarly, the zoning changes proposed for the Hirst Road corridor are significant. Over the last 5 months, developers and their investors have proposed converting an area set aside in the Comprehensive Plan for light industrial to high density developments that would accommodate everything from mixed use commercial, low income housing, and entertainment features such as bumper cars and go carts.

Mayor Fraser, who favors a Comprehensive Plan review (which takes a year) prior to making any major zoning

use changes, said, "What I am saying is that we have a comp plan that is outdated ... we need to get started on it if we all agree that the comp plan is the voice of the citizens. If we don't, we can do all of the use changes we want [but] this is what I'm hearing from folks ... that we're going forward with the use cases without getting their input."

Likewise, Council member Karen Jimmerson favors putting a comp plan review before major changes in zoning, saying, "From my understanding, our comp plan gives us leverage when deciding whether to approve or deny a project. We need to have a good basis [to approve] ... and we have all of the developments that want to ... change [uses]."

Council member Joan Lehr sees zoning changes and a comp plan review as something that should take place simultaneously, stating, "I see two very ... separate tracks. Two plus years ago, the council initiated the text amendment process that the planning commission is currently in. It was done by a vote of council, sent it to the planning commission, so that they would work on it."

# Comp Plan 101

Completed in 2006 after hundreds of hours of public input - including multiple formal public hearings - Purcellville's Comprehensive Plan, as provided for in Section 15.2 of the Code of Virginia is intended " ... to provide guidance for the coordinated and harmonious development of the territory in accordance with present and future needs and resources that will best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the community."

To this end, Purcellville's Comprehensive Plan - while providing for flexibility through an amendment process - establishes, in broad terms, which areas are suitable for residential development and at what density, which areas are suitable for commercial development of various kinds (professional office, retail, industrial, etc.) and which areas that, based on historic and/or environmental considerations require specific protections. Comp plans also serve as the basis for a town's zoning code, as these various uses are then controlled via detailed zoning regulations that guide things such as the height and size of buildings, lot sizes, parking requirements, the ratio of landscaping to pavement, etc.

In well-planned, well thought out communities, the demands of market, the rights of property owners and the will of the citizenry all work together to produce places that welcome the new while setting a future course upon which everyone can agree.

The two primary purposes of zoning are to prevent landowners - including investors and developers - from using a property in a way that harms the community as a whole, and to ensure a balanced pattern of land use, i.e., one that avoids the negative property tax and other burdens the public is required to absorb when development occurs in a haphazard way.

In fast-growing areas such as Loudoun

County, a comprehensive plan forms the very basis of citizen-directed zoning and government. When a proposed development fails to conform with the comprehensive plan public officials have - on behalf of the citizenry - a legal basis for rejecting the project and/or requiring specific changes. In many areas the comprehensive plan has a status akin to what some call "a local constitution," and local zoning and development decisions that do not conform to the plan can be challenged in court.

Importantly, it can be a slippery slope when using a comprehensive plan to justify or object to a particular use at a particular location.

In the last Purcellville Town Council Work Session, for example, council member Doug McCollum said that he had met with the developers of the proposed project on 32nd Street - "The Cottages at 32nd Street." The property is zoned for 19 homes by right, but now proposed for 42 duplexes.

McCollum indicated that this proposed development conformed with the town's comprehensive plan because it is a proposed adult community, a use generally permitted. He gave great importance to this fact. But, further along in the same meeting - when discussing the zoning use changes he wants for the Hirst Road corridor - council member Jimmerson pointed out that the town needed to do a review of the comprehensive plan before making any changes to the zoning along that area. In response McCollum said that the comp plan is way down on the list of what the council must look to when considering a zoning change.

A comprehensive plan is the product of very intensive work and input from the community, and meant to deliver on the vision citizens have for their town, but is often easily dismissed for its lack of importance, depending on the pressure to enable a particular development to go forward.



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# Holidays – The Season Of Giving

- By Mark Gunderman



GUNDERMAN

Besides the many commandments in the Torah instructing us to love our fellow man, there is also an explicit commandment to open your hand to the poor and to give or loan them whatever they need to keep from spiraling into poverty. In Judaism, giving to the poor is not considered a generous act; it is called “Tzedakah,” the Hebrew word for charity, and is seen as simply an act of fairness. The word “tzedakah” is derived from the Hebrew root “Tzadei-Dalet-Qof,” meaning righteousness or justice. Four thousand years ago ancient Hebrews paid an obligatory tax to provide for the needy. Today many renowned charities of the world have their roots in the efforts of charitable-hearted Jews.

The English word charity is derived from the Latin word “caritas” meaning “generous love.” The Bible reminds us that though it might appear the more we give to others, especially if it requires painful sacrifice on our part, the less we ourselves would have, but actually just the opposite is valid. Service to others produces value and fulfillment in our lives in a way that wealth, power, possessions and self-indulgent behavior can never equal. One of the best known passages comes to us from Paul’s instructions to the elders at Ephesus. He

said, “... remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

It’s often the little things in life that can have the greatest impact on a person’s being. People in need of emergency services are often facing daunting challenges and feel very much alone. Some families just need a little temporary help. These are families where both parents often work, but just can’t quite make ends meet because of medical bills or temporary unemployment and the cost of living has overwhelmed them. A used winter coat, four bags of non-perishables, or a grocery gift certificate can make a world of difference.

Two thousand years ago, the gospel writer Luke informs us in another well-known Bible verse that if we are of a giving and a forgiving spirit, not judging others, we shall ourselves reap the benefit: “Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you” (Luke 6:38).

The holidays are often the time of year we think of donating time and money. It is the season of giving after all and volunteer programs are their most active.

*continued on page 20*

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# Loudoun Valley Is Where Jones's Heart Is

- By Hannah Hager

If the home is where the heart is, then Loudoun Valley High School is home for Rodney Jones and its students and staff are his family.

A life in education felt like second nature to him because Jones, who is Social Science Department chair and presents lectures on both psychology and modern world history, comes from a long line of educators. His mother is a special education teacher and his father is an assistant principal in Stafford County.

"I like helping," he said. "I'm big on service. It felt natural to [teach]."

The foundation of teaching stands the test of time – you plan a lesson, teach the class and grade the papers. But, as a graduate student teacher at the University of Virginia where he received both his bachelor's and masters in history and teaching respectively, Jones discovered that it takes much more than the basics to make a house a home.

"Rodney has steadily worked his way up in leadership roles in the school and isn't shy about offering his insight and opinion but always in the most professional ways. He seems very knowledgeable about current educational trends



Rodney Jones

and supports Loudoun County Public School's mission and vision," said Leanne Johnson, director of school counseling at Loudoun Valley High School.

A self-professed "history nerd forever" who "can tell you most all of the Senators in the U.S. Senate right now," Jones's passion for history and his desire to know why things happen as they do, is delivered with such exuberance you can almost imagine him telling stories of the separation of church and state and freedom rights in mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century – an idea foreign to some high schoolers – as if he were at the head of the dinner table instead of in front of a whiteboard.

The conversation isn't one-sided. Most of his "awesome students" enjoy talking about themselves in psychology class where the discussions center around how they're growing as individuals; physically, socially, cognitively and morally.

Perhaps walking students through the perils of adolescence is a difficult task, but it's one in which Jones thrives. For the last five years, he has pitched in with the county's CAMPUS program, which is a college prep course that serves historically underrepresented and first-generation college students. From this view, Jones has a front row seat to watch them grow in maturity, realize the value of hard work and understand the importance of college in being successful.

"I want to be a person to them, not just a teacher," he said.

"[Teachers need] to show that we care about them and their performance in school and outside of school and helping to build a whole and active community participant."

One student Jones considers fondly was a first time athlete participating in track and field. Although it was his first sport and he wasn't the fastest runner, the boy worked hard to slowly lose a couple of seconds off his time. Eventually, he reached a personal record, gained his confidence and started greeting Jones in the hallways.

"I saw his confidence build, which was great. For me, it made me know that it was all worth it," he said.

He's not the only one watching. Johnson describes "Rodney as a natural go-getter with never-ending enthusiasm, always putting students first. He will go to battle for anyone, including staff and students." It should be noted that Johnson also pointed to Jones as "the best when it comes to emcees for pep rallies."

After five years, he's still settling into his adopted home at Valley, a school that has a long tradition within Purcellville where "everyone's family out here in Western Loudoun." He's also still striving to be an excellent teacher. His hope is to one day be fortunate enough to have a student come up to him to say, 'Mr. Jones was a great influence on my life.'

"I've been fortunate enough to have some kids already say that to me," he said. "I'm really blessed about that."

## For The First Lesson, Listen To Your Inner Voice

- By Hannah Hager

The path to reach one's calling in life doesn't always build at a crescendo, but rather *poco a poco* – little by little – as we learn to embrace our inherent talent.

Such was the path taken by Jessica Morgan, the director of choral activities and advanced orchestra at Woodgrove High School. Maybe it should have seemed obvious for Morgan to one day become a professional music director; she was a singer at four years-old and a violinist at five.

But, to whom much is given, much is expected and it was perhaps those expectations that initially drove Morgan away from sharing her talents with others. A Winchester native, she started out at James Madison University as a Biology major. However, a little birdy wouldn't stop singing the song of music in her ear. She tried out for JMU's School of Music and it's of little surprise she was accepted. Any initial resistance melted into acceptance and today she realized that her role as teacher also poised her to be a lifelong student of music herself.

"If you're a truly great educator then you're a lifelong learner. You must be willing to change because there are



Jessica Morgan

always new methods and new techniques," she said.

Perhaps there is no greater success than witnessing the growth and development of a student. One of Morgan's pupils, Scott, appeared one day to audition for the Jazz choir. He had never before so much as carried a tune, was unable to sight read music and had never taken a private voice or piano lesson. But, he possessed an intrinsic motivation and passion. Throughout his years at Woodgrove he's become a natural leader and is now a member of one of the top choirs in the state.

"It's amazing to see that much of a transformation from someone who has never sang a note in their life and here they are one of the best singers in the state three years later," Morgan said.

The same transformation could be said of Morgan herself. Woodgrove's chorus program has grown tremendously under her leadership, most notably by the selection of five seniors for the All-State Choir and the 49 students were chosen for All-District selections this year. "She is such an outstanding, positive and influential teacher," said Woodgrove Principal William Shipp. "I believe she is able to make this happen because she has very high expectations for them and for the program – and she creates wonderful and meaningful relationships with her students."

Morgan requires a high level of work, discipline and skill

of her naturally very talented students. Their sight reading skills are constantly being tested with new sheet music and she builds on the foundations and the technique of singing, the vocal pedagogy, the way the voice works and the way they should breathe and produce a tone.

She has high expectations of her choir who she describes as "boisterous, loud and outgoing" and her orchestra students, who are "a bit more disciplined and very, very sweet." While she expresses her own joy for music upon them, she also ensures that they are music literate, that they are able to site read and have a choice in performance selection. Most notably, she works from a base of mutual respect.

"The students have tremendous respect for her and work hard to improve their skills and the level of their performances. I believe the students do this not only for their own self-improvement, but also for her because they know they have a teacher who believes in them and wants them to be successful," Shipp said.

For Morgan, teaching high school chorus has been a warming up exercise. Each year, the more she does it, the more she falls in love with it.

"I really love the students. I really love making music every day," Morgan said. "You should form relationships with your students and motivate them to go above and beyond."

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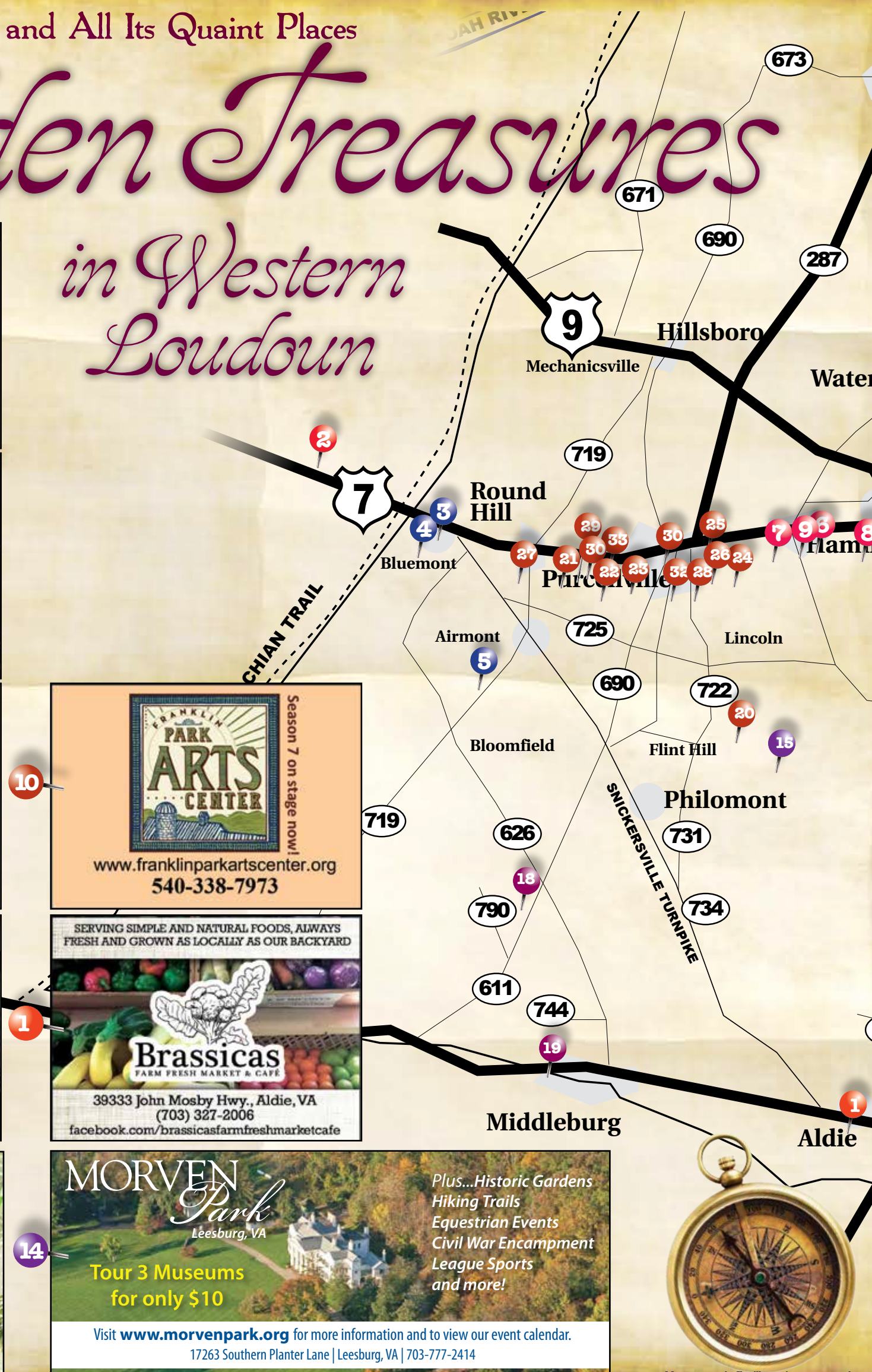
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Holidays, continued from page 15

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*continued on page 23*

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## Just Like Nothing (Else) On Earth: Point Of Rocks

- By Tim Jon



JON

Yeah, I know; I seem to be coming up with a list of contradictions for this particular place: Imposing yet stimulating, simultaneously calming and invigorating, ethereal and grounding, still and moving. Those are just some of the pairs of opposing impressions and sensations I recall from my last visit to the banks of the Potomac River at the spot we call Point of Rocks.

Now, I know that the village by this name lies across the way in Frederick County, Md., but the views afforded by the place (in my opinion) are far more rewarding from the northern shores of Loudoun (yes, I know that's the south bank of the river). You can get there easily enough: take the boat landing access from Lovettsville Road – immediately off Route 15 just before the bridge – and you can get out of your car and traipse around – and under – the huge pylons that support the structure for some inspiring sights – both natural and man-made.

After the initial impact of the size and shape of the high overhead bridge (and the slowly moving water it spans), the most obvious visual attraction stands on the opposite shore: the very 'rocks' which sprouted the name of this area. From what I've read of the history and geology of the site, it took a lot of water and a lot of time to leave those exposed stone surfaces peering out over the Potomac. And, just to the left of those cliffs sits Paton Island, flanked by Heaters Island on the downstream side; these two 'sentinels' seem to add just a bit more focus onto the aforementioned steel and rock.

And – at one of my favorite times of day – early morning



– the sun first hitting the bridge, then the partially hidden cliffs on the opposing shore, and finally the Islands and River (and its low-hanging fog) gives the entire area an almost mystical quality, and elevates the Point of Rocks Bridge to heights found only among certain rare sights amid dawn's colors. Seeing otherwise humdrum steel change from deep blue to black to rose and then settle down to its usual robin's egg hue lets this hulking, inanimate structure 'dance' in the light for just those few seconds each morning and evening. Well, if it doesn't exactly dance, at least it glows.

And, in the dream landscapes to which so many of the elements found at Point of Rocks can lend themselves – the bridge, the river and its fog, the promontory and surrounding

hills, the islands, the blanket of woods, and even the railroad across the water – these images can plasticize, animate, and even take on human characteristics. Well, depends on the dreamer, I guess. But even an objective examiner would agree that this spot's filled with mythic symbols – which can merge with an enlarged imagination and become something to behold. It's easy for me to believe that some of the first humans in the area may have referred to Point of Rocks (even without its more modern amenities) as a place of 'Big Medicine' – a location in which they could visit to recharge their first American batteries, so to speak.

That cathartic power that even this humble storyteller experienced one early morning not so long ago lent itself to that file of seeming paradoxes fumbled for in the opening paragraph: Imposing to the point of monstrosity, stimulating with the subtlety of a river at sunrise, calming with its cool, fresh air and immobility, invigorating in the way all the large elements seem to send out a challenge to match their energy level, ethereal in the height offered by parts of the whole – or my own dwarfishness in comparison, grounding in that I felt in the presence of something at least close to eternal, and finally – still and moving in the river itself: the downstream current under the water somehow leaves what appears as a motionless, undisturbed surface.

And: do I like it here – some may ask?

I prefer to answer in my usual, cryptic manner: This place is part of what I am, and I choose to allow these elements to perform their work upon me. I've never left Point of Rocks worse for the experience.

## December A Time To Look Back – A Time To Plan

- By Donna Williamson

December is a great time to look back on the gardening year and remember what went well or failed miserably.



Last winter's winter-sowing of seeds went very well in spite of the polar vortex and I was able to test the seed of a couple of woody plants including the Carolina rose, all of which germinated well. Though winter is not my best season, being able to start seeds of perennials and shrubs outside with hopes for the spring makes it much more tolerable.

After reading an article about delaying a second planting of tomatoes this spring, I held back some of my little ones in containers and planted them in the ground a month after my first tomato planting. Since I grow many heirloom tomatoes, diseases always hit them in late summer and they start to dwindle. The later planted tomatoes were robust and productive until killed by the frosty temperatures in November. So that is a tip to pass along – make two plantings of tomatoes a month apart and see for yourself.

Our Blue Ridge Wild Ones chapter worked with David at Abernethy & Spencer, identifying and tagging native woody shrubs and trees among the huge offerings available. We have also worked with him on selecting native perennials for sale next year. Our criteria are species that do well here in northwestern Virginia and will likely be successful without a lot of

fuss for folks wanting to help the pollinators. David will be carrying a large selection next spring of beautiful and resilient native perennials and we will again be tagging the native woody plants.

Garden design classes are scheduled for February 4 – March 25 this winter at the Village Vineyard in Waterford. We will be covering pruning, landscape design for homeowners, ornamental grasses, planting to reduce maintenance chores, specialty gardens, evergreen care, perennials, and more. Classes will be every Wednesday, from 10–2 p.m. For more information, go to [dwfinegardening.com](http://dwfinegardening.com)

It's a good time to prune that boxwood and big fat Southern magnolia leaves are always beautiful for some holiday arrangements. Everything in the garden has quieted down and I know these are the dark days but take heart – before you know it all the grocery stores will have hyacinths and spring will come. Happy holidays!

*Donna Williamson is a garden designer and coach. She has taught gardening and design classes at the State Arboretum of Virginia, Oatlands, and Shenandoah University; she continues to hold classes in Waterford each winter. She has two e-books on Amazon-one is an updated version of her Virginia gardening book and her new perennials book. Email [donnawilliamson2002@earthlink.net](mailto:donnawilliamson2002@earthlink.net) or call 540-877-2002.*

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## Amy & Dan Smith's Planning For Life: Explaining Process Of Probate

The term "Probate" derives from the Latin Probatio meaning "proof." The term came to be applied specifically to proof of wills. In common practice, when a person dies, the proponent of a will takes it to court (usually a probate clerk) and "proves the will"; that is, the proponent submits the will as the true and authentic last will and testament of the deceased person (the "decedent"). In addition, a death certificate or an obituary notice must be produced and a "list of heirs," which consists of the names and addresses of the people who would take an estate if the decedent died without a will.

The term "probate" now is commonly used to refer to the process of administration of a decedent's estate whether he/she died with or without a will. If there was no will, the decedent is said to have died "intestate," in which case the estate will pass to the "heirs at



AMY & DAN SMITH

law." Each state by statute lists the order of family members who will take the estate of a person dying without a will.

Once an estate is opened, a person is "qualified"; that is, he, she or they is/are appointed to settle the estate. If there is a will, he is "executing" the will. The person is given a Certificate of Qualification by the clerk which proves his authority to

act on behalf of the estate. Traditionally, the person who administers an estate with a will is called an "executor," and the person appointed to administer an estate where there is no will is called an "administrator." The term "personal representative" (the "PR") is becoming more common as a generic name for both an executor and an administrator.

The PR is sworn in and must give a "bond" for the performance of his duties. A bond is simply a person's word reduced to writing. In some cases a "surety" may be required. That

is, an independent insurance carrier must guarantee the performance of the PR's duties. This will entail an annual premium payment until the estate is fully settled.

A probate tax is imposed on estates in excess of \$15,000. The state rate is 10¢ per \$100 of value and the county can add 1/3 to that. So, for example, an estate of \$15,500 would be taxed at \$15.50 (state) plus \$5.17 (local) for a total of \$20.67. A common misconception is that avoiding probate avoids estate tax. No so. (More on taxes in a later article.)

The personal representative is required to provide a notice to certain people who may be affected by the probate of the estate and must prepare and file with the commissioner of accounts an inventory of assets in the estate and annual accountings for the estate until it is fully settled.

Probate consists of collecting all the assets of the estate, paying all the debts, and disbursing the balance of assets, and may be concluded in a matter of months. If there are delays in the process, typically they are caused by events outside of probate, such as

disputes among heirs.

Probate is easily avoided as, for example, by the titling of assets "joint with survivorship," by beneficiary designations, by adding "pay on death" or "transfer on death" designations to accounts, and by living trusts, topics to be covered in future articles.

Next column: The Will

*The foregoing article contains general legal information only and is not intended to convey legal advice. For legal advice regarding estate planning, the reader should contact his/her lawyer. 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. (703-669-5022, www.amysmithwealthmanagement.com) Any opinions are those of Amy and Dan Smith and not necessarily those of Raymond James. Raymond James does not guarantee that the foregoing material is accurate or complete and does not provide legal advice. Dan Smith is not affiliated with Raymond James.*

## Author Examines Nelson Rockefeller

- By Samuel Moore-Sobel

A few weeks ago I found myself sitting in a lecture hall listening to noted presidential historian Richard Norton Smith discussing his new book entitled, "On His Own Terms." Smith argued that despite his many flaws, Nelson Rockefeller had a profound effect on our nation.

As I listened to this man as he discussed the life of Nelson Rockefeller, I thought back to the many other lessons that Smith had taught me. I was struck by the timing of it all—this time last year I was sitting in class listening to this same man illuminate the American presidency. I remembered the anecdotes about our presidents including the 25<sup>th</sup> president William McKinley. In an effort to show the decency of the



MOORE-SOBEL

man, Smith told of the deep love McKinley had for his wife, Ida. Although she was sickly and frequently ill throughout their marriage, McKinley's love for her never abated. Whenever he had the chance our 25<sup>th</sup> president would tell everyone around him, "If you had only seen Ida when she was young, she was so beautiful."

My thoughts shifted to Herbert Hoover's presidency, one that is often forgotten and ignored. Yet Professor Smith has a knack for shattering preconceived notions or indifference. I came away with a more positive view of a man who Smith noted saved countless lives through humanitarian work that he engaged in during both world wars in Europe. Hoover undoubtedly had,

as Smith rightly claimed, "one of the most extraordinary lives that ever happened to include the presidency."

Our class studied Teddy Roosevelt and his bravado, William Buchanan's incompetence and Abraham Lincoln's greatness, and I loved every minute of it. We looked at president's successes, failures, hopes, dreams and even fears. The great lesson I took from this class was that no matter how insignificant a president seemed to be, they still made an indelible and unique contribution upon our country, whether for good or bad.

Last fall he was putting the finishing touches on his biography of Nelson Rockefeller, and he used to talk about how the project was coming along. When I found out that Professor Smith would be in Washington promoting his new book, I couldn't resist stopping by after work. He brought to life a flawed and controversial figure, and helped me gain more of an appreciation for an influential player in American history. Although there are many negative things that can be said about Nelson Rockefeller, he was a champion of civil rights, helping to secretly fund a young African-American's college education when Rockefeller was just a teenager and later quietly paid for Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral arrangements.

Smith said that Rockefeller's father had advised him to "only show the surface," and only show the surface he did. Smith joked that this project took him 14 years to complete because it took him "14 years to understand Rockefeller imperfectly,"

which was exactly as Rockefeller intended it to be. Smith's great gift is to expose the complexity of the individuals he aspires to explain, while at the same time articulating his subjects in a way that everyone can understand.

Rockefeller died believing he was a failure because he had never achieved his goal of ascending to the presidency. Yet Rockefeller made an indelible mark upon New York and on the country as a whole. Smith detailed how Rockefeller insisted that Article 51, the right to collective self-defense, be included in the United Nations charter. This article went on to inspire the creation of NATO, and the Cold War might have had a very different ending if Article 51 was left out of the UN Charter.

As Smith exited the stage, a Smithsonian employee soon stood by his side, ready to usher him to sign copies of his book. No, hang on, Smith said, "I must say hello..." As his voice trailed off, there he was, standing right in front of me. He greeted me and said, "Oh, it was so kind of you to come." Shocked that he would remember me, we spoke for a few minutes, and our conversation ended with him wishing me good luck and signing my copy of his book in which he kindly inscribed the words, "With best regards." Same to you, Professor Smith, keep inspiring future generations to understand the past as they help to shape the future.

*Samuel Moore-Sobel is a junior at George Mason University and an intern with the Office of Senator Marco Rubio.*

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# Two Kitchen Cousins Present ...

## Easy Hors d'oeuvres To Take You Right Through New Year's



– By Lisa Wasson & Andrea Gaines

The nibbles and assorted hors d'oeuvres you serve your family and guests over the holidays can be memorable, even with the limited time we all have this season.

Everyone always appreciates the chips and dips and vegetable platters. But imagine the difference it would make if sprinkled in among those classically easy offerings were other things such as wild mushroom and goat croustades (tarts), tortellini on skewers with pesto sour cream or savory Swedish meatballs? These bits of fancy-sounding deliciousness are actually quite easy to make, especially if you rely on good quality store-bought ingredients.

“Tell me,” your family and guests might say, “Is there a professional chef hiding in your kitchen?”

### Swedish Meatball On Toothpicks (makes 30 meatballs)

#### Ingredients:

1/2 cup of unseasoned bread crumbs  
1/4 cup milk  
3 tablespoons melted butter  
1/2 cup finely chopped yellow onion

A pinch + 1 teaspoon salt  
3/4 pound ground chuck  
3/4 pound ground pork  
2 large egg yolks  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
1/4 teaspoon allspice & 1/4 teaspoon  
grated nutmeg

1/4 cup all-purpose flour

3 cups beef broth

1/4 cup heavy cream

Sprig of fresh parsley for garnish

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 200. Pour the breadcrumbs into a small mixing bowl with the milk. Melt the butter over medium heat, add the onions and a pinch of salt sautéing until onions are soft, then take off heat. Add the bread crumbs/milk mixture, ground chuck, pork, egg yolks, 1 teaspoon salt, black pepper, the spices and softened onions to a standing mixer and beat on medium speed for 1-2 minutes. Using a small ice cream scoop or your hands, make the mixture into 1-ounce meatball rounds, and place on sheet pan. Heat the remaining butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat and add the meatballs. Make sure each is browned on all sides. Place meatballs into the warmed oven on an oven safe

dish, reserving the sauté pan and juices. Turn the sauté pan to low – add the remaining butter and the flour to the pan – and whisk until lightly browned. Add the beef stock and continue whisking until the sauce has thickened. Then, add the heavy cream while continuing to whisk turning the heat to low/off when ready. Take the meatballs out of the oven, choose a deep serving dish and pour in the slightly cooled, finished sauce. Add the meatballs and garnish with the parsley. Serve with toothpicks.

### Artichoke-Spinach-Basil Dip (serves 12)

#### Ingredients:

4 tablespoons of olive oil or butter  
6 ounces of fresh whole baby spinach  
1 cup (packed) of fresh whole basil leaves  
3/4 cup of drained/rinsed cannellini beans  
6 ounces of cream cheese (room temp)  
2 cloves garlic  
1/2 cup chicken broth  
1 can (14-16 ounces) artichoke hearts, drained  
and finely chopped  
1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese  
3/4 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

Pinch cayenne pepper

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 450. Melt the olive oil or butter in a large sauté pan. Add the spinach and basil and stir until wilted. When cool, roughly chop and set aside. Puree the beans, cream cheese, garlic and chicken broth until smooth. Transfer to a large bowl and add the spinach/basil, artichoke hearts, parmesan, 1/2 cup of the mozzarella, cayenne, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper. Spray/oil a 1-quart baking dish and add the mixture, topping with the remaining 1/4 cup of the mozzarella. Bake until golden brown and bubbling – about 20 minutes. Serve with pita chips or crackers.

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**About Andrea & Lisa:** Andrea and Lisa are cousins who grew up on Long Island together. Andrea is a well-know writer for the Blue Ridge Leader & Loudoun Today. Lisa is a private chef and caterer who has been making people's mouths water ever since she started baking fresh muffins for her office mates in New York City. We hope you enjoy this delicious new chef/writer cousin-to-cousin feature.

### Propane, continued from page 20

don't own their tank pay significantly more than those who own their tank - in some cases, \$2.00/gallon more. In effect, people who don't own their tanks are subsidizing the price of those who do own their tank. In building custom homes for nearly 28-years in our area we never built a home that the owner did not own the tank when they moved in. Our clients would never have accepted such an arrangement. Over the lifetime of homeownership, you could pay \$15,000 - \$20,000 more for propane if you don't own your tank than your neighbors who do own their tank.

#### What is a Minimum Usage Fee?

**DS:** If you are leasing a tank and don't use what the propane company has projected you should use, you will be charge a Minimum Usage Fee (“Muffie”) at the end of the winter season. The #1 reason for your not using the minimum is typically due to a warmer than normal winter. This fee can be \$200-\$300. The winter was milder than usual in 2011-2012 and thousands of propane users were billed for a Minimum Usage Fees in April. Hunt Country Propane does not have a MUF. Never has. Read your contract and see if you have a Minimum Usage Fee. It's not reasonable – you don't control the weather.

### What can I do to make my home significantly safer at minimal cost?

**DS:** The number #1 thing you can do to improve the safety of your home is to purchase and install a combination CO/propane detectors in areas of the home you have gas appliances, for example, the basement. These carbon monoxide/propane detectors can be purchased local or online from Home Depot and Lowes. They cost approximately \$40/each. Have a CO/propane detector is as important, maybe even more important, than having smoke detectors in the home. If you have gas appliances in multiple locations purchase detectors for all these locations. They could save your life.

*Hunt Country Propane is a local propane company and delivers to Loudoun, Fauquier, Prince William, Clarke and Frederick Counties. Dale Schulz, a long-time custom builder founded the company in 2012. They are also one of the largest KOHLER generator installers in the area. As a propane company, they can provide both a 500 and a 1,000 gallon tank for the generator which will allow it to operate up to 8-16 days continuously due to a loss of power. Unlike others, KOHLER generators have commercial-rated engines. Call 540 687-3608 for more information.*

## Carbon Monoxide - The Silent Killer

Loudoun County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management reminds residents to exercise caution when using gas operated appliances in and around the home. When gas appliances are not used and maintained properly they can release a toxic gas called carbon monoxide. Carbon monoxide occurs when fuels such as gasoline, wood, natural gas, propane, etc. burn incompletely.

Heating and cooking appliances are some of the most common offenders but running vehicles and generators inside a garage can also emit the toxic gas. Carbon monoxide is especially dangerous and is commonly referred to as the “silent killer” because it goes undetected due to its invisible, odorless, colorless, tasteless nature. The easiest way to protect yourself from this poison is to practice safe behaviors and install carbon monoxide alarms in your home.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention more than 400 people die in the United States from carbon monoxide poisoning each year.

In Jan. 2014, according to the Loudoun County Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management, fire and rescue personnel were called to a townhouse with 14 occupants who had been exposed to carbon monoxide. The residents began experiencing headaches and called 911. The cause of the exposure was a vehicle which had been left running in a garage adjacent to the townhouse.

Lt. Mike Taylor of the Loudoun County Fire Marshal's Office said “Virginia is unique in that the building code is uniform across the commonwealth. Currently the building code requires carbon monoxide detectors in new residential construction having an attached garage or fuel burning appliance, either gas or oil.

Bottom line is we recommend carbon monoxide detectors any time you have a potential source regardless of the age of the home.”

Lt. Taylor has an all electric home but he also has a portable CO detector. Why? In times of emergency or when the region experiences a power outage emergency generators and fireplaces are often used by citizens. Both of these heat sources have the potential to cause CO poisoning.

We live in an area which is subject to ice storms resulting in widespread power outages around the region. Too often people do not think about the fireplace or the generator as potentially dangerous. Gas stoves should never be used as a source of heat inside the home.

It is recommended that both a smoke detector and a carbon monoxide detector be located on each level of a private home. All units should be checked monthly to assure they are in good working order and the batteries replaced twice each year.

**Safety Tips:** Have fireplaces and heating equipment serviced annually. Ensure all dampers for fireplaces and fuel burning stoves remain open until the fire is completely out. During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove, and fireplace are clear of snow build-up. Never run a vehicle or other fueled engine or motor indoors, even if garage doors are open. Ensure gas generators are located in a well-ventilated area outside the home away from doors or windows.

Install CO alarms in a central location outside sleeping areas and on every level of the home. If CO alarm sounds immediately move to fresh air and call your emergency number.

Possible Signs and Symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning are the following: Headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness.

## Contributions For Ray Family

A fund-raising website has been started by friends and neighbors of Rusty Ray of Purcellville. Ray suffered a stroke on Nov. 12 while on business in Bradenton, Fla. He has partial paralysis on his right side and is currently in a rehab center in Florida; he will likely be released from rehab in early December.

His friends are asking for contributions to help with his long recovery. Contributions are being sent through Pastor David Milam with St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Purcellville and through go fund me at



<http://www.gofundme.com/RustyRay>. Also grocery gift cards or meals are welcome.

## Carver Center December Events

The Carver Center is at 200 Willie Palmer Way in Purcellville. Please call 571-258-3400 to sign up for the following programs.

**Dec. 10, Wednesday, Town Hall Meeting** from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Carver will once again be holding a Town Hall Meeting to allow participants to raise questions, and make suggestions concerning anything to do with Carver Center.

**Wednesdays, Dec. 10 to Feb. 11, Watercolor Basics class** for 55 and older. From 12:30-2 p.m. RecTrac # 230647-01. Join Diane Raitt for an introduction to watercolor painting. All supplies will be provided.

**Wednesdays, Dec. 10 to Feb. 11, Watercolor Phase Two class** from 2:30-4:45, RecTrac #230655-01. A class for students who have completed Diane's Watercolor Basics class.

**Dec. 12, Friday, performances by the Heritage Girls** from 12-1:30 and Bella Ballerina from 1:45-2 p.m.

**Dec. 14, Sunday, Big Bad Drama Company** presents "The Little Town of Christmas" at 2 p.m.

**Dec. 19, Friday, Holiday Party** from 12-1:30 p.m. For ages 55 and older. Come enjoy a meal during this annual holiday event. Santa will be there and the Carver Drama Group will perform "The Twelve Daze of Christmas."

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### Upcoming Events

**Rising 9th Grade Parent Dinner**  
Wednesday, January 14 at 6 p.m.

**Open House and Student Shadow Day**  
Monday, February 16 at 9 a.m.

Visit [wakefieldschool.org/rsvp](http://wakefieldschool.org/rsvp), call (540) 253-7600, or email [admissions@wakefieldschool.org](mailto:admissions@wakefieldschool.org) to RSVP.

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## BLOOD PRESSURE SCREENINGS

☉ **Inova Loudoun Hospital Mobile Health Services** will be providing countywide blood pressure screenings at a variety of locations during the month of December. For more information visit at [www.inova.org/mobilehealth](http://www.inova.org/mobilehealth).

☉ **Thursday, Dec. 11, 10 a.m. – noon, Carver Center**, 200 Willie Palmer Way, Purcellville

☉ **Saturday, Dec. 13, Purcellville Christmas Parade**

☉ **Thursday, Dec. 18, 11 a.m. – noon, Lovettsville Community Center**, 57 E. Broad Way, Lovettsville

☉ **Monday, Dec. 22, 10 a.m. – noon, Carver Center**, 200 Willie Palmer Way, Purcellville

☉ **Monday, Dec. 29, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Levis Hill House**, 1000 West Washington Street, Middleburg

## ONGOING EVENTS

☉ **Nov. 16 to Dec. 30, holiday tours at Oatlands**, 6 miles south of Leesburg on Route 15. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Saturday, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays. Go to [www.oatlands.org](http://www.oatlands.org).

☉ **Weekends in December, The Bluemont Mill Train Station** is open for history tours and has local artisans crafts for sale from 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. at 18293 Railroad St. in Bluemont.

## DECEMBER EVENTS

☉ **Dec. 12 Friday and Dec. 14 Sunday, Christmas Lights Trolley Tours** from 6-9 Friday and 5-8 on Sunday. The tours will leave from the Bush Tabernacle, 250 S. Nursery Ave. Tickets for tours will be handed out on a first come first serve basis.

☉ **Dec. 13, Saturday, Christmas country breakfast** from 8-10:30 a.m. Between the Hills Community Association at the Community Center at 11762 Harpers Ferry Rd., (Rt.671) Purcellville.

☉ **Dec. 13, Saturday, Holiday Open House at Town Hall** and the train station and the annual Christmas parade. Many activities begin at 10 a.m. Pictures with Santa (bring your own camera), face painting, balloon twisting and the Lego train display. Parade begins at noon. Go to [www.purcellvilleva.gov](http://www.purcellvilleva.gov)

☉ **Dec. 13, Saturday, annual holiday craft fair** from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Old Stone School in Hillsboro. Go to [www.OldStoneSchool.org](http://www.OldStoneSchool.org).

☉ **Dec. 13, Saturday, Christmas in Hillsboro Historic Homes Tour**, from noon to 6 p.m. with candlelight tours starting at 3 p.m. Tour four historic homes in Hillsboro. Tickets may be purchased in advance by calling 540-668-6192.

☉ **Dec. 13, Saturday, Breakfast with Santa at the George Washington Hotel**, 103 E Piccadilly St, Winchester. To reserve your spot call (540) 771-2743.

☉ **Dec. 13, Saturday, Birding Banshee** at 8 a.m. at Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve. Bring binoculars if you have them. [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org)

☉ **Dec. 13, Saturday, Hill Holiday Market Place** from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Hill School, 130 S. Madison St. in Middleburg. Shop for art, crafts, jewelry, skin care, baked goods and more.

☉ **Dec. 17, Wednesday, Purcellville Business Association holiday mixer** from 6 to 9 p.m. at Catoctin Creek Distillery, 120 West Main St. \$10 admission to join the Jingle Bell Rock. Ugliest Christmas sweater contest. All proceeds go to local charities.

☉ **Dec 20, Saturday, Gustafer Yellowgold's "The Tooth Will Set You Free" Tour** at 1 and 3:30 p.m. at Franklin Park Arts Center, 36441 Blueridge View Lane, Purcellville. Tickets are \$8 with a pancake lunch at 2 p.m.

☉ **Dec. 20, Friday, Polar Express** from 6-9 p.m. for \$10 per family at the Middleburg Community Center, 300 W Washington St, Middleburg. Families will watch the favorite holiday story while enjoying hot chocolate. Call 540-687-6375.

☉ **Dec. 21, Sunday, Candlelight Classical Concert** with dinner, art show, and drinks, at 7 p.m. Featuring a quartet of singers from George Washington University. Catered by It's a Peace of Cake with wine from Breaux Vineyards. Call 540-668-6192.

☉ **Dec. 22 to Dec. 29, Schools out** from 7:45 a.m. to 6 p.m. for \$100 per child per session. A full day of games, crafts and activities at the Middleburg Community Center, 300 W Washington St, Middleburg.

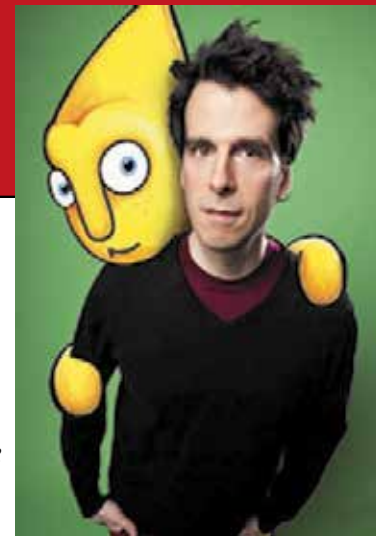
☉ **Dec. 27, Saturday, Central Loudoun Christmas Bird Count** sponsored by Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy. The count-circle has a 15-mile diameter and covers 177 square miles. Contact Joe Coleman [jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org](mailto:jcoleman@loudounwildlife.org).





## Franklin Park Arts Center

### Go out without going far!



#### Gustafer Yellowgold

Sat, Dec 20

1:00 PM & 3:30PM

*Gustafer Yellowgold's Show is a multi-media performance of live music, animated illustrations and storytelling. With its unique crossover appeal, the show has been the wild-card opening act for Wilco and The Polyphonic Spree. Gustafer has appeared off-Broadway in his own productions of Gustafer Yellowgold's Mellow Sensation and Gustafer Yellowgold's Infinity Sock. In addition to touring nationally to arts centers, children's museums, theaters and music venues, Gustafer has ventured abroad for performances in the U.K and even Korea! A Gold Star Performance Sponsored by Friends of Franklin Park Arts Center.*

**Tickets: \$8/person Reserved Seating**

[www.franklinparkartscenter.org](http://www.franklinparkartscenter.org)

#### John Gardiner: World War II Stories

Fri, Dec 12 8:00PM

*Loudoun author John Rolfe Gardiner teams with "Furnace Mountain" musicians David VanDeventer and Morgan Morrison for an evening of story and music reprising the World War II years. John will read "The Voyage Out" his fateful tale chosen for the O Henry Prize and Best American Short Story collections. He'll be accompanied by the musicians playing classics such as "White Cliffs of Dover" and "When the Lights Go On Again".*

**Tickets: \$10 All Seats — Reserved Seating**

[www.franklinparkartscenter.org](http://www.franklinparkartscenter.org)

#### The Bitter Liberals

Sat, Dec 13 7:30PM

*The Bitter Liberals features Allen Kitselman, Mike Jewell, Clark Hansbarger & Gary McGraw playing all original music. The show will also feature Richmond troubadour Charles Arthur.*

**Tickets: \$15 advance/\$20 door** [www.franklinparkartscenter.org](http://www.franklinparkartscenter.org)

#### Last Ham Standing

Fri, Dec 26 8:00PM

*Don't miss this hilarious show full of laughs for the entire family. A group of talented performers take suggestions from the audience to create wacky scenes and funny improv games.*

**Tickets: \$12 Adults, \$10 Seniors, \$8 kids — Reserved Seating**

[www.franklinparkartscenter.org](http://www.franklinparkartscenter.org)

#### Family New Year's Eve Celebration

Wed, Dec 31 7:00-9:00PM

*Watch classic cartoons, laugh with LVHS Comedy Cult improv and The Funny Guy, Paul Hadfield. Refreshments and party favors, glow necklaces and more surprises will have the whole family ready for our countdown to 2015!*

**Tickets: \$10/person \$35/family**

Register on Webtrac using activity# 263712-01 or call 540-338-7973

#### The Immortals

Sat, Jan 10 7:00PM

*The first full concert with the new Immortals lineup for 2015. Senior members for 2015 are Tyler "T" Scheerschmidt and Ryan "House" McCall. Tickets: \$7 All Seats at door — General Admission*

#### Penguin's Playground

Wed, Jan 14 10:00AM

*Join Puppeteer Bob Brown for an Awesome Arctic Adventure exploring a Super-Secret Playground, hidden at the very bottom of the world! To get through the long gloomy winter, Bob's clever creatures lift their spirits by putting on a spectacular show, right out among the icebergs!*

**Tickets: \$5/person General Admission**

Call to Reserve 540-338-7973

#### Bright Star Touring Theater

Sat, Jan 17

*This touring theater company from Asheville, NC brings two 55-minute musicals to the stage. Aesop's Fables 4:00 PM and a second show for audiences 8 & up Stories from the Underground Railroad at 7:00PM.*

**Tickets: \$12/person-one show or \$20/person-both shows** [www.franklinparkartscenter.org](http://www.franklinparkartscenter.org)

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## ARTIST'S PROFILE

## Milan Ball – Tuscarora High School Fashion Design Student

Milan Ball, Tuscarora High School student, would describe her fashion designs as eclectic. She likes to combine disparate elements and try to make them work together. Her portfolio is evidence of this style. Milan combines a floral mini with an ordinary tank top and ankle boots. She also looks at the ordinary and transforms it. One of Milan's designs highlights jeans which she has cut and re-styled from the knee down and now ordinary jeans become the perfect backdrop for high heels. The fact that her aesthetic is theatrical comes as no surprise to those who know her. When asked about Milan, Mr. Justin Daniel, Tuscarora HS theater director and teacher said: "Milan is not just a leader at Tuscarora; she is also an asset to the theater department. It is a huge undertaking to design, build and manage costumes for a show and more uncommon to see high school students take on the task. Her dedication and creative designs have made our recent productions a success. Milan is so talented and will go far in the world of fashion design."

At the age of 11 Milan took her first sewing class out of necessity. She was a Girl Scout and a member of Junior ROTC. "Although my aspirations at that time were far from fashion design, I took on the responsibility for taking care of my uniforms. As the years went on, my interest in fashion grew as I learned to build my own garments in addition to repairing them."

As a high school student Milan continues to take on responsibilities. Currently she is the THS SCA president and the student representative on the PTSO. She is also the National English Honor Society committee chair, the International Thespian Society costume officer, the Key



Fashion Designer Milan Ball



Club committee chair, a student athletic trainer and a member of the THS Breast Cancer Awareness Chapter.

Milan now looks forward to her college career. She has already been accepted for admission to the Savannah College of Art and Design where she has been offered a scholarship for academics and resume achievement. Milan has also applied to a number of other fashion design schools and looks forward to hearing from them.

What does Milan see in her future? "I hope to work toward a bachelors degree in Fashion Design in New York City. I also hope to intern with a major fashion house that can offer me experience in the industry that will further my dream career as a creative director for an international brand."

Milan is a motivated self-starter who will certainly realize her dreams and ambitions. Thank you Milan and Mr. Daniel for taking the time to speak with us.

## Quilts For Art's Sake

"Quilts for Art's Sake" opened Dec. 5 in Middleburg's newest contemporary art gallery. The show and sale runs through Dec. 28. Middleburg Arts Project Gallery brings together three exceptional quilters for this unique show. Local artist Kathie Ratcliffe creates framed miniature quilts. DC artists Frederick Nunley and West Virginia's Jane Frenke have an eye for patterns and a real feel for the fabric - even if it may be coloring outside the lines.

The new gallery, located at 4 East Federal St., on the back street of Middleburg is part of the new nonprofit Middleburg Arts Project. The organization will create opportunities for artists to achieve a sustainable living and promote the understanding and appreciation of contemporary arts while stimulating economic development through art-tourism.

While "Quilts for Art's Sake" falls outside of what a typical Middleburg visitor might expect to find in this historic, hunt country town, the show is both inviting and exciting.

Find these impressive artworks at the Middleburg Arts Project Gallery, along with sculptures by Peter Wood, pottery by Jason Alexander and Barbara Allen and furniture designs by Chris Mann.



## Local Author Writes First Book In Series

Devon Porter, a Virginia farmer and banker, has signed a four-book deal with Prepper Press. The first novel in the series, "After the Crumble," was released on Nov. 21.



Author Devon Porter

"This book is a labor of love; I've been working on it for two years," Porter said. "I have always loved books in the sci-fi and dystopian genres, and I'm honored to finally make my first contribution."

The novel touches on several of Porter's hobbies, such as hog farming, gardening and self-sufficiency. The story is set in Northern Virginia in the year 2037, where Porter merges northern Fauquier and southern Loudoun counties into the fictional "Colton County."

Porter is working with Prepper Press, a Maine-based publisher of dystopian fiction



and survival-oriented nonfiction.

Porter's first book signing is scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 13 at the Fair Oaks Mall from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Porter will be signing and selling copies from the Comics and Gaming store next

to the Coldstone Creamery, and a prize will be raffled off each hour starting at 11 am.

"After the Crumble" is currently available at Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com, Second Chapter Books in Middleburg, and all Comics & Gaming stores throughout Northern Virginia. "After the Crumble's" sequel will be published in fall 2015.

Go to [www.afterthecrumble.com](http://www.afterthecrumble.com) for more information.

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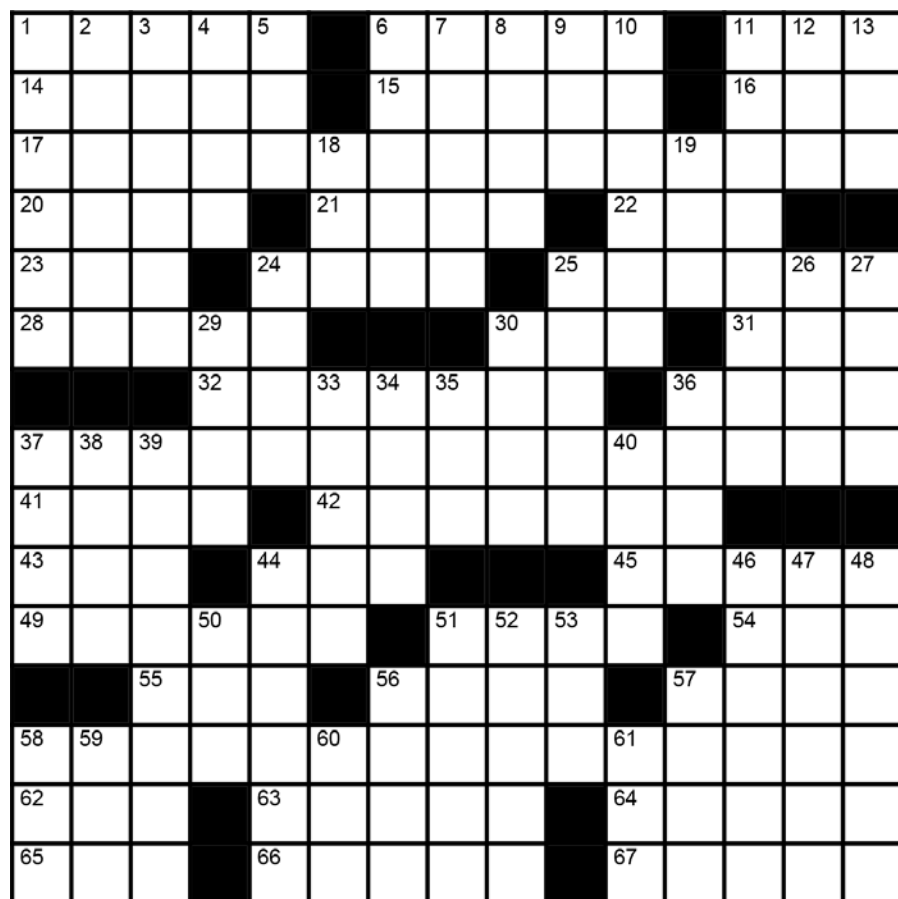


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## Wardrobe Basics – By Myles Mellor and Sally York



## ACROSS

1. Italian beverage  
6. Black  
11. Calphalon product  
14. They were created in 1912  
15. Mountaineer's tool  
16. \_\_\_ Rancho (suburb of Albuquerque)  
17. Be in charge  
20. Go for  
21. Egg  
22. Faint  
23. Bass, e.g.  
24. Castle part  
25. Diminutive  
28. Turning chisel accompanier  
30. N.B.A.'s Unseld  
31. Be off base  
32. \_\_\_ physics  
36. Carbamide  
37. Fancy frocks  
41. Indian tourist site  
42. Annoying  
43. Debate position  
44. Ribosomal \_\_\_  
45. Dummkopf  
49. Six-line poem  
51. Achievement  
54. \_\_\_ power  
55. Cal. col.  
56. Ostrichlike birds  
57. Atlas section  
58. "Calm down!"  
62. Brown, for one  
63. Adhesive  
64. Bait  
65. Pipe joint  
66. Gas additive  
67. Challenges

## DOWN

1. Lite  
2. Interstice

3. Afternoon service  
4. Cause for a lawsuit  
5. D.C. setting  
6. It doesn't hold water  
7. Carry on  
8. Road shoulder  
9. \_\_\_-tzu  
10. Oozes  
11. Chief administrative officers  
12. Cause of inflation?  
13. Discouraging words  
18. Furrow maker  
19. Remain unused  
24. Set aside  
25. California's San \_\_\_ Bay  
26. Elder, e.g.  
27. Pitching stats  
29. Maori war dance  
30. Rings up?  
33. \_\_\_ the town  
34. 100 kuras  
35. Breed  
36. Drew on  
37. Beanies  
38. Beast  
39. Ocular problem  
40. Discharge  
44. Enter again  
46. Insect stage  
47. Idle  
48. Hamlet et al.  
50. Call on  
51. \_\_\_ Thieves  
52. Chart holder  
53. Old English character  
56. Corn dish  
57. Atlas stat  
58. Do-it-yourselfer's purchase  
59. Party time, maybe  
60. Buttermilk morsel?  
61. Common contraction

Answers on page 32

## Dream Of A Good Death

- By Eric Werling

I am drawn to a weeknight performance, "Dream of a Good Death" by Clark Hansbarger and the Bitter Liberals. It is my first time in Purcellville's Franklin Park Arts Center, a theater worthy of a small city.

As the lights dim, Civil War era paintings fill the big screen. Clark recites a stark fact about the war that took more American lives than all other conflicts in our history. I've always been disinterested, even embarrassed by the Civil War. Yet Clark proclaims the War Between the States was the most just war in our history. And here we sit, a houseful of conservative looking white folk, paying to see the Bitter Liberals play us that history.

The show begins in Port Royal Harbor, South Carolina. The first major sea battle of the war resulted in the capture of Beaufort, the flight of rich rice plantation owners and their families, and freeing of thousands of black slaves who had worked the 100,000 plus acres of rice paddies.

But this is no history lecture. Clark turns the show over to the band and characters whose lives were changed forever by the events. The first song tells the story from the perspective of a Port Royal resident, with the refrain "It's the end of all that we once knew down in the Rice Kingdom." The song portends the end of the war many years beforehand.

The band is talented and eclectic and very tight. Their style is part traditional, part jig. But they play these Civil War stories with the memory of Vietnam. Clark sings his original compositions like a melancholy Paul Simon, his voice sad yet happy in character. Gary McGraw's fiddle takes us back to the time of Clark's stories, his bow drawing us through the moods of each narrator. Alan Kitselman caresses the resonator guitar like a man in love. Mike Jewell drums many of the songs with his hands, finessing congas and brush snares, his head bobbing like Zoot, the Muppet musician. Together they artfully weave

Continued on page 30

Dr. Mike, continued from page 2

that racial biases are more common than we may wish to believe. Racial biases, subtle or overt, can occur for anyone, regardless of skin color, and they do not discriminate across socio-economics; one can be poor or rich and possess racial biases. Racial biases and prejudice are a product of one's upbringing and one's experiences in life. So, before having a discussion about Ferguson or racism with your children, it is important to first examine your own shortcomings in these areas.

Minimize your children's exposure to the media. Turn off the news! News agencies have been covering the Ferguson story extensively, and while it is a newsworthy topic, the graphic images and video footage have depicted aggression and violence that is inappropriate for children to see. Certainly, younger children do not possess the internal resources – cognitive or emotional -- to put the images or the story, and its complexity, in full context. Very young children, for example, will not understand why police officers (who they are taught to believe do only good for citizens) could be accused of breaking the law and of doing bad things.

Keep your statements age appropriate. Research has shown that toddlers notice racial differences and tend to even prefer individuals of their own race at a very young age. Thus, it is important to take an inclusive and positive approach as parents when topics regarding racial similarities and differences come up. It is not until 5 to 8 years of age, however, that children begin to categorize things or people as being all "good" or "bad" or "best" or "worse." Children in this age range also begin to think about social issues and are impressionable. Thus, this is an extremely

important period of development for parents to respectfully address racial topics as they arise; with discussing racial differences toward increased understanding and compassion as the goal. Pre-teens and teens possess greater intellectual capacity, including abstract reasoning skills. Thus, addressing racial biases and prejudice in the context of history and real life social context (e.g., Ferguson) is appropriate. Of course, beyond chronological age, parents should also always consider their children's emotional maturity and threshold for worry/anxiety when determining what they discuss regarding complex and charged topics, such as race.

Keep communication open. What happened in Ferguson can be a teachable moment for parents and children, however, discussions regarding race and race relations should be an ongoing process. Parents can take action in a number of ways to foster awareness and compassion in raising their children's comfort level with diversity – purchasing toys or reading books that include other races or cultures, visiting museums of different cultures, taking part in cultural, ethnic or religious events that differ from one's personal experience, signing children up for integrated sports, social or academic programs or even simply trying out an ethnic restaurant as a family are just a few proactive ways.

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. Go to [www.Ashburnpsych.com](http://www.Ashburnpsych.com) or call 703 723-2999 to learn more.

# Party Positive

- By Mary Rose Lunde



LUNDE

When you think of Virginia Tech what do you think? Most would say prestigious academics, known football team and maybe even the school motto of Ut Prosim- that I may serve- but does anyone think beyond that?

Yes, we are academically strong and have a football team, but that isn't all that constructs Virginia Tech. Our motto may be Ut Prosim, but do we focus on what lies beyond the surface? What happens on the weekends, or even "thirsty Thursdays?" Why don't we ever talk about what happens on the weekends?

I live in Pritchard Hall, which is known as the "party dorm" on campus. Throughout the semester I have become accustomed to hearing strange noises and loud voices booming outside my door late at night, especially after football games. This isn't limited to the weekend either, Thursdays have become "thirsty Thursdays" where people will drink to celebrate the "beginning" of the weekend. I, myself have spent many weekend nights doing homework instead of experiencing the typical college student weekend full of drinking, partying, hooking up and getting so drunk you have to sleep on the floor. Though I have no reservations against this lifestyle, I chose not to follow it due to my personal morals. I have many times watched my hall mates go out and party and come back so wasted that they pass out on the floor. One person usually has to be the "mom" of the group and provide others with water, food and sometimes a garbage bag.

My roommate is the "mom" normally for my hall. Although I have seen her pretty drunk a few times. What I appreciate about her is that she is respectful. Neither of us judge the other, she may go out and get drunk on weekends and I may party in my own way (with Chi Alpha), but neither of us ever argue which weekend is better. She worries about me and I worry about her. She came back tonight explaining to me that she was supposed to get so drunk she wouldn't remember tonight because "big brother reveals are never supposed to be remembered." Although I am fairly happy she didn't end up passed out on the floor

tonight, I know that someone out there is.

On the weekends, more people go out and get drunk wearing highly inappropriate clothing attempting to "look cute" as my roommate told me. She explained that she feels more comfortable drinking when she knows multiple people. She is fairly careful and knows her limits, unlike a lot of freshmen who begin to drink their first year without prior knowledge of their limits. My roommate explained that she usually takes buses to get around to parties at local apartments or frat houses. She told me that the bus drivers won't say a word when people are obviously drunk. That bugs me, but who am I to judge? I don't go out partying on weekends and avoid the bus at all costs.

I asked one of my other friends, who will remain anonymous, about her experience with partying this year. She stated that she hated the experience and that "everyone was drunk and girls were hooking up with any guy they could get their hands on." My friend explained how she went in a group because she had never been to a party and wanted to "see what it would be like." When I asked her how her overall experience was she responded with a simple, "It was gross and uncomfortable and scary. I never drank and I'm glad I didn't." I commend her for sticking with her morals and I admire her strength. It takes courage to go to a party and not drink.

The "party positive" campaign around here is one that I hope everyone at least thinks of. It is important and can save a life. Counting standard drinks is a good idea to keep in control at parties. Each time I hear the door open and see my roommate sneak in late at night I smile. She's safe again and that's all that matters. At this time, I'm glad that I am writing this in the dark and that my roommate is sleeping on her lofted bed, safe and sound.

*Mary Rose is a freshmen at Virginia Tech studying biology and creative writing. She is a part of the integrated science program and a member of VT Chi Alpha campus ministry. She hopes to make a difference by applying to become a resident advisor for next year.*

## Loudoun Residents Grant Christmas Wishes

For 35 years the Salvation Army has partnered with local businesses and area residents through the Angel Tree program to provide Christmas gifts for children 12 and under who otherwise might not receive anything.

You'll find an Angel Tree at Dulles Town Center and in many other locations, like churches and meeting places for civic groups. Anyone who would like to grant the wish of a child can pick a tag off the Angel Tree. The tag lists the child's sizes and suggests a few gifts the angel would like to receive. Ideally, each child will receive at least two gifts and an article of clothing.

Once the donor purchases the gifts they can return them unwrapped to the Angel Tree or drop them off at the Salvation Army at 10 Cardinal Park Drive in Leesburg.

According to Allen Tanner, Captain of the Salvation Corps in Loudoun, all of the angels designated to receive gifts have met specific guidelines to be included in the program.

"This year's goal is to provide gifts to over 1,000 children from 400 different families," Tanner added. "I've always been amazed at the generosity and willingness of Loudoun residents to grant an angel's wish."

For additional information call 703-771-3371.

## Kitchen Science Kids: Stanley And The Gassy Bags

- By Leah Enright



ENRIGHT

My family and I welcomed a very special visitor yesterday. He is small, and not a big eater or talker, so I don't think he will be much trouble as a houseguest. In fact, the only thing we were asked to do was to keep him busy and write about it. You see, my niece Brooklyn, who lives in Nevada, sent Stanley Lambchop to us in an envelope. He didn't mind, because he is made of paper, and is a cut-out inspired by the book *Flat Stanley*, by Jeff Brown. Of course, I immediately welcomed Stanley to my home in Round Hill, and set about making him a bona-fide Kitchen Science Kid. Looking around, I knew I had to work with whatever I had at hand. It came to me in a whoosh-Gassy Bags. Stanley loved making his Gassy Bag, and you can too. Just grab a few simple ingredients:

1. A plastic, zip-style sandwich bag
2. A tissue
3. One tablespoon of baking soda
4. ¼ cup of warm water
5. 1/2 cup of vinegar
6. Your kitchen sink

Place the baking soda into the tissue and fold it into a ball. Set aside. Then, add the warm water and vinegar to the bag. Without getting the tissue wet, or allowing the baking soda to fall into the vinegar, place the ball

inside the bag, and while holding it through the bag, zip it, keeping the ball high and dry (you may need help from an adult for this). Finally, set the bag in the sink, allowing the tissue ball to fall into the vinegar. Watch and wait to see what happens.

How did it go? If your experience was anything like Stanley's, you saw your bag slowly fill with air, until it was firm, like a helium balloon. Then finally, when there was too much gas and not enough room - Pop. The gassy bag burst open.

Why did this happen? It's what scientists call an "Acid-Base Reaction." That means that vinegar is actually a chemical, called an acid, and acids have a certain way of reacting with other chemicals that scientists call "bases." Baking soda is a base. Anytime you mix an acid (like vinegar, citrus soda pop or lemon juice) with a base (like baking soda) you'll create gas. In this case, gas filled the bag, and when there was not enough room to contain it - Boom. (Fortunately, I don't think this frightened Stanley. He kept his smile on his face the whole time, even when he had to smell the stinky vinegar). I think Stanley liked this one - I hope you will too.

*Leah Enright is a specialist writer from Virginia who loves kids, science and nieces Brooklyn and Lauren who live in Nevada. She has now grown fond of Flat Stanley, as well.*

## Loudoun's Season Of Alternative Ways To Give

Loudoun Gifts for Good, formerly known as the Loudoun Alternative Gift Fair, is gearing up for another year. Loudoun Gifts for Good was founded on the premise that sometimes the most thoughtful gift you can give someone is a donation to an important charitable organization in their honor.

"During this holiday season the Gifts for Good concept is a way that one single gift can have a rippling effect across numerous human service organizations in Loudoun," said newly elected chair of the Loudoun Human Services Network Susan Mandel Giblin. "This can make a huge difference for so many people affected by diverse issues, from domestic violence, illness and job loss, to caregiver relief, supporting people with disabilities and women's and children's rights and needs. There are few similar opportunities that reach as far, with one contribution, as Gifts for Good does."

Loudoun Gifts for Good is a collaborative program started by Loudoun Interfaith Bridges and coordinated through Loudoun Cares, under former executive director and long time community leader Andy Johnston. The community is encouraged to make a donation to Gifts for Good in Johnston's honor for his many years of service to various Loudoun groups,

including Loudoun Cares and Loudoun Gifts for Good.

This year 13 local human services organizations have been selected specifically because their services—and all donations to them—help neighbors in need right here in Loudoun County. Participating charities provide a wide variety of services, but one thing they all have in common is that they help the local community. The 2014 participating nonprofits are:

All Ages Read Together  
American Red Cross  
Blue Ridge Speech and Hearing Center  
Crossroads Jobs  
Healthworks! For Northern Virginia  
Help for Others  
Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter  
Loudoun Cares  
Loudoun ENDependence  
Loudoun Interfaith Relief  
Loudoun Literacy Council  
Loudoun Volunteer Caregivers  
Paxton Campus  
Red Cross

More information for Loudoun Gifts for Good can be found by visiting [www.LoudounGiftsForGood.org](http://www.LoudounGiftsForGood.org) and make an online donation anytime between now and the end of the year.

## Restaurant Review: Magnolias At The Mill

The reservation was for a Sunday evening as this critic's experience is that Sunday evenings can be difficult for restaurants. The executive chef is usually not in the house and the staff is generally not from the A-List. Chef Chris Carp who recently joined Magnolias as executive chef was not in the house on the evening we dined but his presence was felt. The menu Chef Carp has created is varied, seasonal and wonderfully tempting. Magnolias has several menus including gluten free and one for kids. The restaurant caters to varied tastes and dietary needs.

My guest and I were seated immediately upon our arrival and within 5 seconds Alex, our waiter, was at the table. Within 5 minutes we had ice water with lemon wedges served on the side. The entire staff was efficient and friendly. Now if the food is as exceptional as the customer service we were in for a wonderful evening.

Choosing an appetizer was difficult because the selections are so varied and all sounded wonderful. We decided on the buccaneer nachos and the local cheese board. The nachos are covered in a cheddar cheese sauce which tasted like the cheese had been forgotten. The chips were tasty but under seasoned and cold. The meat while salty and crisp was sparse. The local cheese board was quite another matter however. The chef's cheese selection was excellent as was the



fresh fruit chutney which added just the right amount of cold sweet fruitiness to the cheese when both were combined on the perfectly toasted croustades.

The entrée selection is varied and seasonal. There is truly something for everyone on this menu. My guest ordered the black angus New York strip steak medium and it arrived hot and cooked perfectly. The steak was tender and was complimented with an Irish whiskey sauce which added just the right amount of interest without overpowering the taste of the meat. The sides for the steak are asparagus and garlic whipped potatoes. The asparagus was cooked to the tender/crisp state and the potatoes were light and fluffy. My guest thoroughly enjoyed his entrée.

My entrée selection was the main lobster risotto. The dish is layered with the butternut squash on the bottom, the risotto on top of the squash and the lobster on top of the risotto. The presentation is lovely and quite appetizing. The squash when eaten alone was rather bland but when the squash is scooped up with the perfectly

seasoned and cooked risotto with shitake mushrooms and parmesan the experience was warm and comforting. The lobster was claw meat which I happen to prefer. I did squeeze a bit of lemon on the lobster which improved the taste for this diner. Thank you again Alex for providing us with the small dish of lemon wedges at the beginning of the meal. This is the perfect entrée for a chilly winter evening.

Dessert selection was difficult as all of Marcy Mengler's offerings are tempting. My guest settled on the cookie sundae. The chocolate chip cookie is intentionally served partially baked and piping hot. Atop the cookie is vanilla bean ice cream and homemade caramel sauce. This dessert satisfies the craving we all have for cookie dough. As you dig down through the sweet caramel and the perfectly smooth ice cream you reach a chocolate chip cookie with chocolate chips which are at that glorious molten state. The cookie sundae was worth the caloric indulgence.

Magnolias at the Mill is a restaurant which pays attention to detail. The service is outstanding, the portions are just right and the presentation is both appetizing and artistic. Even the coffee is served at the perfect temperature. My guest and I both look forward to our next visit.

Magnolias at the Mill is located at 198 North 21<sup>st</sup> Street in Purcellville.

*Dream, continued from page 28*

Civil War history with Clark's original songs that take you directly to the heart of his characters.

We see a painting of the surreal trenches dug in front yards by Southern landowners near Vicksburg, during relentless Union attacks - and the song laments "the siege is with us still."

A deeply sorrowful Confederate soldier knows he's going to die a thousand miles from home, but has lost the picture of his wife and his Bible - the only things that offered him any comfort - in the "Dream of a Good Death."

How do they make this deep sorrow so beautiful?

"Too many hardships and too many days.

And not enough water now to wash it away."

Clark's daughter Kara's lovely voice is still repeating the last line in my head,

"And not enough water to wash it away..."

I won't be able to wash away "Dream of a Good Death," the music so beautiful, the history so stark, the two together so unique. By feeling so intensely for people and a time in our history I wanted to avoid, Clark and the Bitter Liberals have taught me what I did not learn in high school. The Civil War was lived by real people with deep sorrow. Their stories are worth taking the time to hear and sing and what a performance.



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## Remembering Sayers Brown

Sayers Brown, 67 of Jupiter, Fla., passed away peacefully on Wed., Nov. 5.

After attending Sidwell Friends School and obtaining his undergraduate degree from Haverford College, Brown received his MBA from Harvard, served six years as a US Army Reserves staff sergeant, three years as consultant and instructor at Tatung Co. and Institute in Taiwan, and nine years as an officer of Chemical Bank, NY. Brown was a former president of the Board of Directors and author of the bylaws for the YMCA in Montclair, NJ. In his leisure, he was an avid reader and sports fan participating as a soccer dad and coach, marathoner, basketball and rugby player.

Brown is predeceased by his parents Ray Brown and Joan Sayers Brown, eight



generations of the Brown Family of Lincoln, and the Royd R. Sayers family of Washington, D.C. He is survived by his son, Joshua Sayers Carveth Brown, his sister, Lindsley Keith Brown Oehlert, his stepmother, Virginia Brown, and Joshua's mother, George Anne Brown. He leaves behind a large family of stepbrothers and sisters, nieces, nephews, and cousins.

A memorial service, to be determined at a later date, will be held at the Brown family gravesite, along with a tree planting at the family home in Lincoln. His family has requested that in lieu of flowers, contributions be made to the Goose Creek Friends Meeting, 18204 Lincoln Road, Lincoln, Virginia 20160 or Montclair YMCA, 25 Park St., Montclair, NJ 07042.

### Answers to puzzle from page 28



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## Sushi – "Tails" From The Barnyard

- By Sushi

Dear Friends of the Farm,

As Christmas approaches, everyone on our little farm is cheerfully decorating and working toward the many holiday orders, orders that are sure to make wonderful feasts to be shared with family and friends.

This Christmas Fields of Athenry Farm family wishes you a holiday blessed with love and goodness. Mrs. B saw this placard and decided to hang it in the farm shop. I am not sure I could teach the barn yard any better than this when it comes down to how best to share the love and how to connect with one and all.

- Listen without interrupting (Proverbs 18)
- Speak without accusing (James 1:19)
- Give without sparing (Proverbs 21:26)
- Pray without ceasing (Colossians 1:9)
- Answer without arguing (Proverbs 17:1)
- Share without pretending (Ephesians 4:15)
- Enjoy without complaint (Philippians 2:14)
- Trust without wavering (1 Corinthians 13:7)
- Forgive without punishing (Colossians 3:13)
- Promise without forgetting (Proverbs 13:12)



In the spirit of the Christmas season and the Holy Family

To love, to life, to family, and the time to enjoy them!

Merry Christmas,  
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.*

## Backpack Coalition Helps Students

This holiday season, as people sit down with family and friends for holiday feasts, Loudoun County-based 100WomenStrong, a group of women who strategically invest in organizations and programs that enrich the lives of Loudoun County citizens, is reminding area citizens that many will not feast during the holidays, and will remain hungry throughout the year.

According to the Loudoun County Public Schools Office of Outreach assessment, there are approximately 19,000 students in Loudoun County schools eligible for the free and reduced lunch program, which means their household income is at or below the poverty level. Only 2,561 of those students are currently enrolled in the Backpack Coalition Program, which is designed to send food home with food-insecure students over weekends. 100WomenStrong is partnering with Loudoun County Public Schools, the Loudoun Chamber of Commerce, Loudoun Education Foundation, Blue Ridge Area Food Bank and area residents and businesses to change that.

"When we started our Backpack Coalition Program last year, we were surprised to find that only 6 percent of students in Loudoun

County who were eligible for free and reduced lunches were receiving backpacks of food for the weekends," said Karen Schaufeld, founder and president of 100WomenStrong. "That was alarmingly low, given that the remaining 94 percent of food insecure students were likely arriving at school on Monday mornings very, very hungry.

"We have been able to raise the percentage of children receiving lunches by 17 percent in less than a year through the generous donations of many people, businesses, and organizations," she said. "While 23 percent of students receiving food is better, there is much more to do. Our goal is to provide backpacks to 100 percent of the 19,000 students in Loudoun County who are eligible for free and reduced lunches by the end of the 2015 school year. We are hoping the community will help rally to make that happen."

A local business that supports the LCPS Backpack Coalition is Palmercare Chiropractic, which has donated more than \$15,000 this year. Owners Corey and Vivian Malnikof support the program because, "The Backpack Coalition has been an absolute pleasure to work with. My team and I wanted to find a local charity that would make an instant impact on our

community and Backpack Coalition has done just that. We could not be happier supporting Backpack Coalition and we look forward to doing so for years to come," said Corey Malnikof.

100WomenStrong is calling on Loudoun County area residents and businesses to join organizations such as Palmercare Chiropractic, Panalpina and Leesburg Moose Lodge to support the Backpack Coalition program. 100WomenStrong matches every dollar that is donated up to \$100,000.

"This is the time of year that area food pantries and other charitable organizations will see a spike in donations," Jennifer Montgomery, executive director of Loudoun Interfaith Relief, said. "Unfortunately, after the holidays, many of these children will go back to being hungry and unable to focus on their schoolwork. Hungry children cannot do as well in school as those who are starting the day well fed. We want all Loudoun County students to be successful at school and that starts with a full stomach."

*2014 tax-deductible donations are being accepted through: LEF (Backpack Coalition Program), Attn: Dawn Meyer, 21000 Education Court, Ashburn, VA 20148. Learn more about the LCPS Backpack Coalition Program go to [www.lef.org](http://www.lef.org) or Facebook/Loudoun County Public Schools Backpack Coalition Program.*

## Loudoun County Offers New Homeless Prevention Program

Loudoun County is offering a new program aimed at preventing homelessness. The Homeless Prevention Program is a state-funded assistance program through the Department of Housing and Community Development for the prevention of homelessness in Virginia. Rental arrears, security deposits and utility assistance are available through HPP for eligible applicants. The program is administered locally by the Loudoun County Department of Family Services. HPP is designed to divert households from homelessness by providing targeted and limited assistance to households, who without this assistance are likely to become homeless.

Eligibility requirements are:

- Virginia residency
- Income must not exceed 30 percent of area median income
- Resident who is currently housed but at imminent risk of becoming homeless
- Resident who needs assistance with back rent in order to maintain housing

To be pre-screened for HPP assistance, call the Department of Family Services Emergency Support Services Unit at 703-771-5851.



## Wild Loudoun

### The Red-Legged Partridge – Here In Song, Spirit, And ... The Flesh?

- By Andrea Gaines

“The Twelve Days of Christmas” was first published in the late 1700s. Celebrating a wealth of gift giving and other activities that take place from late December through early January, the famous carol is most well known for its iconic opening verse, “On the first day of Christmas my true love sent to me a partridge in a pear tree.”



downs and rocks. Adults are sandy-brown above with a pinkish belly, a pale grey breast, prominent streaking on the side, and a prominent front neck ring – black – that extends up to the back corner of a bright red eye ring. A cream throat and bright pinkish red legs completes the holiday colors spectacular.

Now, people who know partridges argue that the song is talking about the common grey partridge, for it – in contrast to its more colorful, rocky habitat cousin the red-legged partridge – is a tree-dweller.

However, the famous carol is thought to be of French origin, and that settled it for me.

You see, the red-legged partridge is a French species while the more common grey partridge is native to England. And, in both myth and fact the red-legged partridge is the bird most often pictured and discussed during the holiday season, appearing, not just in the famous Christmas carol but also on holiday cards and in every manner of holiday imagery. This bird also has some 13 subspecies worldwide, and so, it follows quite easily that it rather than the common grey partridge would be the subject of a Twelve Days of Christmas song – thrill your one true love with 12 different subspecies of red-legged partridge, and hold the 13th in reserve for the extra guest that happens to drop by your house over the holidays.

So, what are the real facts and myths about this most celebrated holiday bird, and, if you were strolling the woods and forests of Loudoun County, might you see one?

To start, the red-legged partridge – more commonly known as a “Chukar” – is a game bird from the family Phasianidae. It shares this family with pheasants, turkeys and peacocks, among others. The common name for the bird comes from its distinctive call: *Ka-chu-chu*.

Partridges themselves are sturdy and compact, and have strong feet for walking and “scraping a living” off the ground, just as their domesticated chicken relatives do. They use a wide variety of habitats, including forests, fields, prairies, tundra, bare mountaintops and deserts, and while they do eat insects and other invertebrates, most of their diet consists of plants, especially seeds and buds.

Each species within the family Phasianidae has special adaptations that help it survive in its particular natural habitat and range.

Red-legged partridges, for example, don’t migrate, preferring, in the winter, to gather in flocks for warmth, to get to know each other in preparation for the breeding season and who knows, maybe for the opportunity to sing the song in which they are so prominently featured. They are very colorful birds, but blend remarkably well into their preferred habitat of heaths and

With its colorful plumage and endearing behaviors the red-legged partridge is sought after by sportsmen and gift-givers alike – all of those wanting to impress. It’s no wonder that, as the carol goes, a partridge was the gift that one’s true love would give on the first day of Christmas and for 11 days thereafter. I’m also thinking that our most favorite holiday wrapping papers might just have been inspired by the red-legged partridge’s most impressive coloring.

So, are red-legged partridges here, here in Loudoun County?

Well, historians dedicated to the life and times of Virginia’s very own Thomas Jefferson recorded how in November 1789, as the gentleman departed the French port of Le Havre aboard the ship Clermont he brought to Virginia a small band of “foreign emigrants.” We know he brought a very pregnant German Shepard dog with him, part of his plan to raise naturally talented farm dogs. And, we also know that he spoke frequently of adding red-legged partridges to his beloved Monticello. So, perhaps one of those “emigrants” was indeed one of these celebrated birds. (We do know for sure that he loved all things French.) We also know that his good friend Benjamin Franklin was competing with him to populate his own property with red-legged partridges, as were others. Said one partridge historian: “The first releases [of partridges] were done in the late 1700’s by Benjamin Franklin’s son-in-law at [a family] plantation in New Jersey. Releases were conducted all through the 1800’s and early 1900’s. They were released along the entire eastern seaboard from Maine to Florida (including Georgia, South and North Carolina and Virginia).”

Biologists note that the birds released down south didn’t so well, as the red-legged partridge prefers a rockier, drier climate and habitat.

If I were a red-legged partridge brought all the way over here from France by one of our state’s most favorite sons, I’d find a way to both survive the ocean voyage and make a living among the stone walls at Monticello and beyond. Would I have made it to Loudoun County? Perhaps. After all, Monticello is just a stone’s throw over 100 miles from Loudoun’s southern border with Clarke County. Plus, the birds love to forage for stray seed and corn in agricultural fields, of which we have a plenty. Sing the “The Twelve Days of Christmas” carol and perhaps a red legged partridge will grace your winter window.

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### TUX

Very sweet and tolerant of children. Male, 3 yrs, Neutered and shots up to date. [info@caseyhouse.org](mailto:info@caseyhouse.org)



### MACKREL

Laid back and loves to play with toys. Male, 10 months, Neutered and shots up to date. [info@caseyhouse.org](mailto:info@caseyhouse.org)



### DOREY

Very Sweet and tries hard to get your attention. Female, about 3 yrs, Spayed and shots up to date. [info@caseyhouse.org](mailto:info@caseyhouse.org)

## These are just some of the homes Sam Sold in 2014:



PURCELLVILLE  
\$799,900



ROUND HILL  
\$799,900



LEESBURG LOT 10  
POWERS HOMES



PURCELLVILLE  
10 ACRES



BLUEMONT  
Five Acres \$499,900



THOMAS MILL  
COTTAGE  
\$379,900



BEACON HILL -  
0 DAYS ON MARKET!  
\$1,025,000



WATERFORD  
\$318,000



LEESBURG  
\$469,700



HAMILTON  
\$817,000



PURCELLVILLE  
\$537,500

**THERE ARE ADVANTAGES  
TO SELLING YOUR HOME  
DURING THE HOLIDAYS:**

less inventory, beautiful decorations and jolly people! Call me to discuss whether or not now is the right time for you to list your home



**ATOKA**  
PROPERTIES  
MIDDLEBURG REAL ESTATE®

Call Sam Rees  
**703.408.4261**  
Associate Broker  
[Sam@atokaproperties.com](mailto:Sam@atokaproperties.com)

