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Homeland Security Justifications Behind Short Hill Blackout

– By Andrea Gaines

In January, the Loudoun County Department of Planning advised citizens impatient for details on AT&T's continuing activities on Short Hill Mountain that key aspects of the work – including the amount of power, and the number of new utility lines, generators, and more that might eventually be required – would remain under Freedom of Information Act blackout, not available to the public.

Said Deputy Zoning Administrator Michelle Lohr, in an email to Sam Kroiz of the Short Hill Rescue citizen's group: "The County is advised that the telecommunications facility that is the subject of [citizen inquiries] is deemed to constitute 'critical infrastructure' as defined in the Homeland Security Act, and, as such, information that reveals any details of the facility ... is protected from disclosure in accordance with the 'Critical Infrastructure Information Act of 2002'."

While under intense public scrutiny since AT&T abruptly withdrew a permit application related to a "continuing use" last year, the bind that Short Hill's immediate

neighbors are in is just now coming into view. The permitting process for upgrades to an existing use first flew off the rails when citizens turned out in record numbers for a series of public meetings. Things quieted down when AT&T withdrew the permit, but, heated up again as intense construction, night lights, and earth-moving activities continued. Spokespeople for the County and AT&T have routinely directed citizen questions to SPAM 2016-0067, a permit for "grading and electrical work."

The company has denied reports that Short Hill is being prepared as the site for a full-blown data center. And, concerned neighbors fear that many of the things the public has both the right to know – and the right to influence through the planning process – will be set in place before the public has the opportunity to mount a challenge. Since AT&T is operating legally under SPAM 2016-0067, none of the activities currently underway is subject to Board of Supervisors review or public scrutiny.

According to the Short Hill Rescue group, with the FOIA blackout in place, the potential for a use as intensive as a data center – with no further public input – is staring rural western Loudoun right in the face.

BRMS Brings Joseph's Technicolor Dreams To Loudoun Audiences

– By Andrea Gaines

What do you get when you combine a simple and timeless tale of love, betrayal and redemption ... a rock legend named Elvis ... a boy with the power to interpret dreams ... and local children exploring their delightfully unguarded dramatic abilities under an award winning director?

Find out by attending any one of seven upcoming performances of Blue Ridge

Continued on page 17



In Related News ... Wireless Companies Seek Relaxed Approvals

A proposal now before the Virginia legislature – House Bill 2196 – would strictly limit Loudoun County's zoning oversight with respect to the installation of "small cell" wireless facilities.

The bill, introduced by Del. Terry G. Kilgore (R) (House District 1) provides for "a uniform procedure for the way in which wireless communications infrastructure is approved by localities and installed in public rights-of-way."

Originating from the telecommunications giant SPRINT, HB 2196 would make the siting of wireless infrastructure much easier for all companies – limiting both the information given to a locality and that locality's power to require facilities to get approval for special exceptions, special use permits, or other zoning safeguards.

The bill is opposed by local preservation and conservation groups, including the Piedmont Environmental Council. And, these groups have another influential ally in the fight, the Virginia Municipal League. According to VML, the bill has "significant ramifications for local government including the use of public property without proper remuneration, loss of local land use control and blind permit approvals ..."

Speaking to the larger issue of community input with respect to how and where telecommunications service infrastructure is located, Michelle Gowdy, General Counsel for the League said: "While localities are working to bury public utilities to enhance the beauty of their communities, wireless providers want to inundate rights-of-way and public property with towers and unsightly structures ... These small cells may be placed on towers up to 120 feet tall and will have bulky cabinets along with antennae attached ... The wireless carriers say that these aren't cell towers, but to an ordinary eye, they sure look like them."



Valentine's Day 2017 Love In All Of Its Forms ... Ain't It Grand

– By Andrea Gaines

Americans exchange hundreds of millions of cards on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14.

The National Retail Federation estimates that we will spend some \$20 billion to mark the day and demonstrate to friends and family how much we love them – on what marketers call "Love's Holiday." Love. It's a big deal.

Happy Valentine's Day, Fido

Valentine's Day is not just about human love. Three percent of people give a Valentine's Day gift to their pets and other animals, spending some \$680 million a year.

And, Valentine's Day is popular with charitable causes, too – an important fundraising opportunity for everything from the local children's hospital to organizations

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**PRISCILLA APPOINTED TO
COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

See page 4



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ASK DR. MIKE

– By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

what to do. We know we need to act fast and hope you can respond to this letter.
Concerned Parents

Dr. Mike,

Our 15-year-old son is out of control and we don't know what to do anymore. He smokes pot and drinks, disobeys us left and right, is truant from school often, comes home whenever he wants to and screams at us when we try to correct him. He used to be an amazing kid and athlete, but he quit all sports and he's no longer himself. We've tried therapy, but he refused to go. The crazy thing is that we have no idea why he changed. His problems started in freshman year of high school and have gotten worse this academic year. We are very worried about him and we are also very worried about his younger siblings who are very upset their brother. My husband wants to send our son to military academy, but I am worried that he would hate us if we did that and that he would also probably do something crazy like run away or attempt suicide. The suicide of that freshman boy at Stone Bridge High School last month has really freaked us out. We don't want that to be our boy and we don't know



Dr. Mike

Dear Concerned Parents,

I'm sorry that your son is struggling as much as he is, and I appreciate the negative and painful impact his behaviors have had on you all as a family. Not having evaluated your son, my recommendations, as well as my support and guidance, will

be limited, but I hope the following is helpful to you.

While I understand your husband's thinking on getting control over things by sending your son to a military academy, your son is likely not a good fit for that sort of setting given his needs. More specifically, your son seems to be a very angry young man who is acting-out in a number of very concerning ways; his struggles may have an emotional or psychological basis (e.g., depression) and/or may be due to his substance use – irritability, anger and being oppositional and defiant can be symptoms of teen depression and/or substance abuse.

In my experience, military academies

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7th Annual Loudoun Grown Expo, Feb. 27

Loudoun celebrates the best of what it grows and makes this month with the 7th Annual Loudoun Grown Expo, Saturday, Feb. 27 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Bush Tabernacle in Purcellville.

Businesses represented will include the County's many wineries, farms, breweries, community supported agriculture, artists and more.

With over 30 vendors for this year's expo, there will be plenty to eat and lots of things to sample, taste and purchase – from wines to beers to fine foods, including sandwiches, local sausages and coffees.



Artisans represented will include wood turners, painters, jewelers and potters. The expo will also feature author Tonya Royston, Cannon's Baseball, Tree of Life Ministries and business sponsors.

Admission is \$2 per person or \$3 per family. Residents living within Town limits are free. Parking is available in Town

public parking areas, Emerick Elementary School and the Loudoun Valley Community Center – all within walking distance of the Tabernacle.

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Priscilla Nabs Plum Planning Commission Post Appointment Shocks Many

– By Valerie Cury

On Jan. 3 Supervisor Tony R. Buffington Jr. (R-Blue Ridge) nominated Tom Priscilla for the Loudoun County Planning Commission to represent the Blue Ridge District. Priscilla was confirmed on Jan. 19. This appointment took many current Purcellville Town Council Members by surprise. Said Council Member Kelli Grim, “I knew there was a temporary appointment, but I am surprised that Supervisor Buffington didn’t reach out to us before he made a permanent appointment. The person he selected is exactly the opposite of what the new Town Council elected in May stands for.”

In an email to Supervisor Buffington Council Member Ryan Cool said, “There is too much at stake for the future of all of Loudoun County, especially Western Loudoun, to allow a position to be filled with an individual whose prior decisions directly contradict the vision of Western Loudoun as expressed in both Town leadership, and the clear sentiment presented in Western Loudoun Envision [County Comp Plan review] workshops.”

Vice Mayor Karen Jimmerson in an email to Supervisor Buffington said, “Your

“There is too much at stake for the future of all of Loudoun County, especially Western Loudoun, to allow a position to be filled with an individual whose prior decisions directly contradict the vision of Western Loudoun as expressed in both Town leadership, and the clear sentiment presented in Western Loudoun Envision [County Comp Plan review] workshops.”

– Ryan Cool, Purcellville Town Council Member

appointment of Mr. Priscilla is completely at odds with your stated positions during your campaign for Supervisor.”

The seat had been vacated by Charles Douglas in October 2016, who resigned for health reasons. He was temporarily replaced by Chad Campbell who agreed to serve until January.

Priscilla’s History

Tom Priscilla served on the Purcellville Town Council for approximately 9 years, appointed Jan. 11, 2005. He also served on the Purcellville Planning Commission for 12 years. Working closely with Mayor Bob Lazaro, Priscilla’s record is one of higher debt, higher taxes, questionable Town expenditures and runaway growth, including:

- **Debt:** When Priscilla took office, the Town debt was \$10 million. By the time he left in 2014, the Town’s debt had grown by approximately \$60 million. To make matters worse, the Town’s citizens were saddled with enormous balloon payments due in 2020 and 2021.
- **Wasted Millions:** While on council, he voted to purchase a vacant boarded-up building for a new Town Hall, appraised for approximately \$750,000. The Town purchased the building for \$2 million and with renovations the entire project cost \$8.5 million; a project originally estimated at \$3.5 million.
- **Runaway Lawsuits:** Priscilla voted consistently as a member of the Purcellville Town Council to delay the building of a much needed second western Loudoun High School – suing the County 6 times, suing Purcellville’s own Board of Zoning Appeals and taking the cases all the way to the Virginia Supreme Court. Even though Purcellville lost the cases, the Town, in negotiations with

the County, said they would continue the lawsuits regardless of their merit unless the County paid the Town \$5.78 million. As a new high school was so desperately needed due to overcrowding, the County settled. In the end, the Town of Purcellville also incurred \$500,000 in legal fees and the County, \$1 million.

- **Raising Taxes:** Due to the lawsuits Priscilla and fellow Council Members raised the Town’s meals tax 1 percent and earmarked it to pay for the lawsuits. He also voted to create the Fireman’s Field Tax District, which raised real estate taxes 17 percent.
- **Developer Favors:** Priscilla voted along with the Council to make zoning use changes to Purcellville’s downtown area, on the National Register of Historic Places. Due to the advocacy of one developer, he voted to raise the height limit from 35 feet to 65 feet, allowing for a 6-story building which would overshadow the existing two story structures. When the Board of Architectural Review voted to preserve a lower height – because the scope and mass of the building did not fit in with the area – he voted to overrule the decision.
- **Breaking Contracts:** While on Council, Priscilla violated the Purcellville Urban Growth Area Management Plan and annexed property out of phase, ignoring the process and the Town’s contract with the County.
- **Didn’t Follow Comprehensive Plan:** Priscilla voted for many land use decisions that were against the will of the residents, and in direct conflict with the Comprehensive Plan and multiple charrettes.
- **Roads Over Farms:** He voted to condemn by eminent domain a portion of a historic 90 acre working farm –

Crooked Run Orchard, a Virginia Century Farm – to build the Southern Collector Road. This action was without consent of the farm’s owners. Along with the Town Council, he changed the original alignment of the road, dividing the farm in two and making access to orchards very difficult.

- **Wasting Proffers:** The Harris Teeter development at the gateway of Purcellville proffered a traffic circle. The circle was built, immediately torn down, and then a new one was built just 90 feet west of the original one. This happened because Priscilla, along with the rest of the Town Council, changed the original alignment of the Southern Collector Road. The second roundabout was paid for by the citizens of Purcellville.
- **Loudoun Pays More:** Along with Town Council, Priscilla created 17 water rate tiers that charged Loudoun County facilities in Purcellville the highest rates.
- **More Developer Favors:** In 2012, Priscilla voted to create a “Tourism District” solely for one developer’s property, allowing for multiple tax breaks over a period of 9 years. None of the other properties in the area received this designation.
- **Runaway Development:** Priscilla and Council approved the largest development in the history of Purcellville – Mayfair (formerly known as Autumn Hill). With this action, Purcellville broke through its longstanding northernmost boundary.

Appointments Have Consequences

Priscilla’s appointment is particularly important given that Loudoun County is now reviewing its Comprehensive Plan through the Envision Loudoun process.

The Blue Ridge Leader reached out to Supervisor Buffington and asked what criteria he used for his selection, and as of the publication deadline, he has not responded. But on the *Tony Buffington, Blue Ridge Supervisor* Facebook page he stated the following: “Congratulations to Mr. Tom Priscilla for having been sworn in as Blue Ridge District Planning Commissioner for Loudoun County! As a long time western Loudoun resident, former Purcellville Town Councilman, former Purcellville Planning Commissioner, and certified Planner by trade, Tom is well qualified for the position and I look forward to working with him to ensure the rural, historic, and scenic character of western Loudoun County for generations to come.”

On the surface, Priscilla’s credentials are impressive, but his record reflects reckless spending, developer favor, working against the County and ignoring the citizens’ voice. For those of us who know his record, this is hardly someone who will protect “western Loudoun County for generations to come.”

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PUBLISHER & EDITOR

Valerie Cury

CREATIVE DEPARTMENT

Meredith Hancock, Layout/Design

ADVERTISING

Judy D. Harbin
(703) 727-1321
JudyDHarbin@gmail.com

Here’s How to Reach Us!

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EDITOR:

(letters to the editor & press releases):
editor@BRLeader.com

SPECIAL EDITORIAL

Andrea Gaines
andrea@andregaines.com

HOT NEWS TIPS:

Valerie Cury, (703) 943-8806,
tipline@BRLeader.com

WEBMASTER:

webmaster@BRLeader.com

MAILING ADDRESS:

PO Box 325, Purcellville, VA 20134-0325

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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.

Purcellville Town Council Meetings – Jan. 10



– By Valerie Cury

Senior Campus Concept: Mayor Kwasi Fraser, Council Member Nedim Ogelman, and the Town Attorney met with the representatives of the Stupar property in January. The property is located at Maple and Hirst Road. The owners are interested in putting a senior citizen campus on the land, providing different entry points for seniors, to live, work, and play. Mayor Fraser said he encouraged the owners of the property to engage the community, and get feedback to see if there is support for the proposal to move forward.

Waste Water Solutions: Mayor Fraser also recently met with the Israeli firm Emefcy. The company has a turn-key waste water treatment modular solution, which may complement Purcellville's state-of-the-art plant, Fraser noted. The firm has a way for the Town to "augment our capabilities at the pump level ... [so] we can process the raw sewage before it gets to the plant ... We see it as a potential way to increase our operational efficiencies." Following the meeting, Fraser said that the Emefcy's solution saves 90 percent of the energy used in wastewater treatment, and avoids energy-intensive pumping, which will mean energy savings for the Town. Fraser said that the Town will need to further evaluate a pilot program with Emefcy and the Department of Environmental Quality to determine the viability of this solution.

Staff Vacancies: At the Jan. 10 Council meeting, the topic turned again to staff vacancies – notably, that of an assistant

director of public works, a paralegal, and a part-time event specialist. (The Town already has one part-time event specialist.)

Council Member Kelli Grim said that it was long overdue to have an assistant director of public works. "Regarding the paralegal, we are paying as much to outside firms, currently, as our staff attorney... Are we attempting to do things that are not the Council's priorities?"

Said Council Member Nedim Ogelman, "This is a town – judging from the election we just had – that is not looking to grow. A town where people do not want taxes to increase. And, we are a town that is trying to manage debt ... This is a new Town Council that was brought in through an election where these values were expressed strongly. As a new Town Council [member], I don't want ... strategic decisions to be dictated by previous budgeting decisions."

Ogelman said that he looked at some other towns in Virginia, and he found data that broke down staff by general functions. He looked at the Town of Warrenton, and noticed that the staff from 2006 to 2015 fluctuated very little, and is slightly smaller now. He noted that the public works, and water and sewer departments were intensive – 56 percent of staff was focused on that department. The public safety departments were significant, leaving other departments at 20 percent. "I would say if the public works, and water and sewer – if those were needs that we had in the past and we need to replenish, then that makes good sense to me."

Mayor Fraser said he wanted to look at hiring as it relates to efficiency. "I look at things from an operational and process perspective. When I see a request, for example, for an assistant director of public works, my first thought would be – can we promote someone into that position and if the answer is no – I will say, 'Why not?' If we had a director functioning in that role for many years, someone should have been taught to replace that director." Fraser pointed out that if the Town has to hire someone new, it has to spend resources on advertising and training. The new hire "can't hit the ground running."

In reference to these issues, Fraser also said he did not vote for the budget last year, because he wanted certain items in the budget, such as an operational audit. Also, he said, there were budgeted items he did not support.

An operational audit would have shown what the Town's needs were "within the Town of Purcellville," said Fraser. "Absent that, I trust staff. I trust your judgment. But, when we are requested to take the taxpayer's money to pay for something, I need more than just trust to drive my decision. So, that's where I am with several of the positions." Fraser said in a prior meeting he was made aware that some staff positions didn't have descriptions of their functions. "Those are red flags for me. Let's get our house in order, so I can understand where the needs are. We can then determine ... if we need to hire for these positions. Right now, I am not convinced there is a need."

At the Jan. 24 Town Council meeting,

Council voted against discussing the paralegal position for the third time, since a vote had already been taken and failed. The Council did vote to hire an assistant director of public works, and voted for a part-time events planner. (Mayor Fraser and Council Member Nedim Ogelman voted no, commenting that the position can be filled by volunteers).

Backup Sewer Policy: At the Jan. 10 meeting, Council also moved forward to fix the Town sewer backup policy.

Most Virginia municipalities are only responsible for backups that occur in the main sewer pipes/system. The Town had been paying for backups from residences to the main, and is only one of two localities to do so. Consequently, Purcellville will be revising its policy so the Town is only responsible for backups that occur at the main.

Council Member Kelli Grim said that she strongly supports changing the policy, and would like to put that information in Town water bills. Mayor Fraser said that it is important to do outreach, and inform the citizens of this change. Making this policy change will save the Town at least \$100,000 over a ten-year period.

Town Manager Evaluations: For the first time in 23 years, a formal written process has been developed for the town manager annual evaluation. The process began Jan. 31 with the Town Manager's Annual Report. All council members will complete their evaluations, and conclude the process in a closed meeting with the town manager by mid-March.

Big Decisions Ahead For O'Toole Property

– By Valerie Cury

Packie Crown of Bowman Consulting presented her company's conceptual architectural design proposal for the rezoning of the O'Toole property at the Jan. 17 Board of Architectural Review.

The O'Toole property was annexed into the Town of Purcellville in 2008 by the previous Lazaro Town Council. Located at the southeast corner of Rt. 287 and Business Rt. 7, near the traffic circle on Main Street, the property consists of two lots totaling 12.46 acres. When under County zoning, the property had one residence on it. Now under Purcellville's control, the property is zoned Transition X – and located within the Historic Corridor Overlay District. A portion of the site is also located within the minor flood plain – a Federal Emergency Management Agency flood zone.

Through Bowman Consulting, the owner

With the addition of the O'Toole property, the Town is at 93-95 percent water capacity.

of the property is asking for one of the most dense zonings – MC – Mixed Use Commercial, to consist of 72,000 square feet of commercial, to include restaurants, retail offices, an assisted living facility, and a three-story hotel.

Access to this site would be from the existing entrance on Business Rt. 7, with a secondary entrance from the Southern Collector Road. A memo from the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Transportation stated, "It should be noted that most of the left-outs from the site are turning right at the roundabout after crossing two opposing lanes of traffic, and then weaving through two lanes in a short distance, which would create not only congestion but safety problems as well."

In addition to potential traffic safety problems, water resources are also being raised as a concern.

In a memo to the Purcellville Planning staff, Purcellville Capital Projects and Engineering Manager Dale Lehnig said, "Although the mass balance for water shows that using a peak factor of 1.2, there is sufficient water, the Town will need to work towards developing additional water sources. With the addition of the O'Toole property, the Town is at 93-95 percent capacity."

Town Council Member Nedim Ogelman, the liaison to the BAR said, "I just want to make clear for the record that this review of architectural design for a mixed use commercial complex with a three-story hotel on the O'Toole property is happening before

the Town Council has even considered the rezoning necessary to pursue this project. So, there have been no public hearings, no votes on this proposed rezoning."

Town Planner Daniel Galindo said that it's a good idea for the applicant to get an idea for the design guidelines before the project could be approved, and the Town has allowed for pre-submission meetings. Ogelman's responded by saying, "The exercise at the BAR seems to put the cart before the horse. I am not sure it's right for taxpayer dollars to spend all the time that you are spending on this. This discussion is based on the assumption that there is going to be a rezoning. There need to be public hearings. There needs to be input from citizens. There need to be deliberations on that part of the discussion ... I would suggest that you be selective on hearing these things before they are approved or denied. I am thinking about our Town's resources."

Envision Loudoun's Biggest Task Is Ahead

– By Andrea Gaines

Envision Loudoun's series of public Listening & Learning workshops – part of the County's 18-month process to rewrite the Comprehensive Plan – wrapped up Jan. 11. The interactive website is now also officially finished with this initial learning phase. According to the Envision Loudoun website, citizen participation in the effort has been very good; "generating over 4,500 unique ideas and opportunities."

So, now what?

If you've ever been involved in a planning charrette, or work session or public hearing, you know; When you ask people's opinions on a subject, you have to show how and why you acted on those opinions. So, how will citizen comments inform the nitty-gritty planning details that determine how land is used and developed in Loudoun County?

If you asked the children who participated in Envision Loudoun workshops by "drawing" their future, you'd see both the positive and the unknown. Animals and trees and buildings live in harmony with each other. Large, unknown structures sometimes dominate the landscape. Parks and swings are everywhere, as are bright colors and favorite stores. And, you'd know you are being lobbied – for more parks, more shopping, more space between houses, a healthier environment, even for lower rents.

For the professionals trying to direct the process – all of whom have preferred Comprehensive Plan outcomes and policies

... how will citizen comments inform the nitty-gritty planning details that determine how land is used and developed in Loudoun County?



of their own – the picture emerging from Envision Loudoun will be much more complicated.

The County's planning consultants – the Ohio-based consulting firm of Planning Next – are focused on collecting, documenting and organizing all Envision Loudoun input with the goal of getting their client to the endpoint; a new Comprehensive Plan.

The real test will be how to translate

the hours and hours of input, and stacks and stacks of maps, drawings, letters and suggestions into something that reflects Loudoun County, the long planning journey that has gotten it to this point and what kind of future it wants.

For some, the three part Rural, Transition and Suburban Policy Area strategy – focusing suburban development in the east ... maintaining a protective,

lower-density buffer in the middle ... and preserving the rural west – is Loudoun County's zoning bible. For others, this three-part strategy is not "trendy" enough. Said a consultant who helped the County launch the Envision Loudoun process, "Mixed-use in all its forms is really the rage right now ..."

But, despite what is seen as modern and new, the continuous planning discussion Loudoun County has engaged in has focused not so much on the latest trends as the similarities between newcomers and people who have been here for generations. People stay in Loudoun and come to Loudoun, often, for the same thing.

Envision Loudoun's most powerful developer interests, including builders, real estate investors and their consultants occupy key positions on the Stakeholder Committee and ZOAG – the Northern Virginia Building Association, Bowman Consulting and the Dulles Association of Realtors, for example. Community, historic preservation and wildlife conservation champions are represented, too – the Loudoun County B & B Guild and PEC, for example.

Businessman Mike Turner, appointed to the Stakeholder Committee by BOS Chair Phyllis J. Randall (D-At Large), sees the Comp Plan review as "a tension between what is and what will be."

But, it may be the people in the middle – everyday Loudouners new and old – that will determine where Envision Loudoun takes us. If they speak loud enough.

Purcellville Man Hits It Right: Gets Front Row View At Inauguration



When Purcellville businessman John Fuog suddenly received an invitation to participate in the Inauguration of President Donald J. Trump less than three weeks before the ceremony, he had no idea he'd end up with one of the best ring-side views. Not only did he end up on Pennsylvania Avenue, but adjacent to the President's reviewing stand.

It all started when he received the invitation from a member of the Presidential Inaugural Committee whom he did not know. "The PIC was looking for volunteers to assist in the events," Fuog told the Blue Ridge Leader. "I was very proud to be a volunteer,

and it was a great opportunity."

When Fuog responded to the invitation, he received a questionnaire from the U. S. Secret Service, and a request for a picture. Then just five days before the Inauguration, he received clearance, and was asked to report to the Commerce Department early on the morning of Jan. 20. He found scores of other volunteers there, and Fuog wondered what kind of task he would be assigned to. It turned out he would be along 15th Street. Later, a supervisor put out a call for volunteers to "go to another location." The supervisor didn't say where, but Fuog and about five others were delighted to comply,



and were directed to another federal building.

So, he was ready for the Inauguration, and was responsible for checking badges for seating and close-in standing at the Inauguration. He worked the entire day at Pennsylvania Avenue and 15th Street. "I met many military personnel, Secret Service officers, law enforcement officers from all over the nation. The highlight of my day was being just 30 feet away from the President and his family and Vice President Pence and his family," Fuog said. "I was very proud to be a part of this momentous day."

Meeting The "Other America"

– By Nicholas Reid



Ever since the presidential election last November, there has been a lot of talk about the "two Americas": coastal and continental America. The many differences between these two sections of the United States are numerous and oftentimes divisive. In this article, I shall explore continental America from the viewpoint of a coastal American living in the heart of Continental America, Rapid City, SD.

One of the defining aspects of continental America is an intense patriotism and love of the United States. Most continental Americans are patriotic, and the American flag is prominently displayed in and outside many houses, businesses, and public places. Continental America is a place where the crowds at football games will join the singing of the national anthem after the microphone for the choir cuts out so that everyone can still hear the national anthem. Continental America is also very supportive of the military and most people are, have been, or are related closely to a member of the military.

Another defining characteristic of continental America is that it's deeply religious. Churches

Continued on page 14

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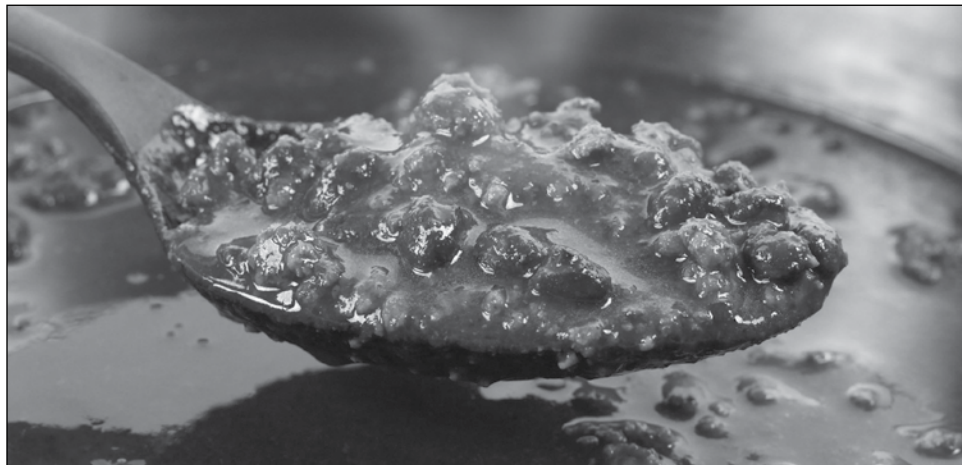


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Watch The Heat And Go For The Sweet Chili-Out



Fun Chili Terms:

- **“Dumps”** – different combinations of chili powders and spices that get added to the dish during cooking.
- **“Adobo”** – a dark red sauce made from herbs, chilies and vinegar.
- **“Capsaicin”** – the substance in a chili that gives the fruit its heat .
- **“Brick Chili”** – dried chunks of beef, fat, spices and salt pounded and then rehydrated for cowboy food.
- **“Scoville Scale”** – measures mouth hotness of pepper by concentration of Capsaicin.

– By Andrea Gaines

National Chili Day is Feb. 23. What better than to “chili-out” with a bowl on a cold winter’s day? (And, then have some cherry pie.)

Chili itself is not a particularly old dish. It became popular in the late 1880s and was featured at the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago. From there, chili became an American staple as chili parlors popped up across the country. It is also said to have literally saved lives during the Great Depression. “The chili was cheap and the crackers were free,” the old

saying goes.

As we celebrate President’s Day this month, as well as National Chili Day, it seems fitting to provide our readers with a chili recipe once found at the top echelons of power in America – Lyndon Banes Johnson’s Perdernalles River Chili, named after the late president’s ranch.

Chili and similar dishes regularly cross partisan lines – so try it out. President Nixon had his favorite condiment – Sweet Onion & Chili Ketchup.

So, here is President Johnson’s Perdernalles River Chili recipe.

Lyndon B. Johnson’s Perdernalles River Chili

(right from Lady Bird’s hand with minor editing)

Ingredients:

- 4 pounds chili meat (coarsely-ground round steak, well-trimmed chuck, or Johnson’s favorite, venison)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 teaspoon ground oregano
- 1 teaspoon comino seed (translation, cumin seed)
- 6 teaspoons chili powder (add as much as you dare and use your own favorites)
- 1-1/2 cups canned whole tomatoes
- Cooked beans (optional)
- 2-6 generous dashes liquid hot sauce (again, you are the boss)
- 2 cups hot water
- Salt to taste

Everyone wants to know this: What is the world’s hottest pepper? The pepper which most scientists agree is No. 1 in hotness is the Trinidad Scorpion Butch T. Hmmm. Would not want to run into one of them in a dark alley.

Directions: Place meat, onion and garlic in large, heavy pan or dutch oven, cook until light in color. Add oregano, comino seed, chili powder, tomatoes, hot pepper sauce, salt and hot water. Bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer for about 1 hour. Skim off fat during cooking. Serve with cheese, sour cream, etc. as you like.

George Washington himself combined both sweetness and honesty when he admitted to his father that he had cut down the family’s beloved cherry tree. And, so we say – in deference to that honesty and this spectacular fruit – “Cherry pie please!”



Cinnamon ice cream rocks cherry pie, yum!

“I Cannot Tell A Lie ... I Cut Down The Tree (For Pie)”

– By Andrea Gaines

Monday, Feb. 20 is National Cherry Pie Day. It is also President George Washington’s birthday – which we honor with the federal holiday of President’s Day.

After a long campaign season – and as homage to a new year sweet with possibilities – here at the Blue Ridge Leader we humbly ask our presidents to step to the back while we do what we really want to do: Eat and celebrate cherry pie.

Tart and sweet ... flaky and fragrant ... just warm from the oven – or strait from the pie tin with our hands when no one’s looking – cherry pie deserves as much praise as we can heap upon it.

As a child, red was my favorite color and cherry was my favorite flavor – I think lots of kids felt that way.

All of the great New York diners and family restaurants we frequented featured their own version, and I lived for the moment when the words “Yes, you’ve eaten enough meatloaf and lima beans, you may have a piece of pie.”

America’s most favorite pies include apple, pumpkin, cherry and blueberry. But, our food tastes are notoriously changeable. And, while apple pie is the consistently strong favorite, cherries are getting new attention and cherry pie’s stats are going up. The “don’t eat that!” surveys, articles and websites that haunt us today are

giving cherries and cherry pie another look, pointing out the fruit’s abundance of anthocyanins, a phytochemical believed to strengthen blood vessels and protect lung tissue from smoke.

Now, a slice of cherry pie contains somewhere in the neighborhood of 350 calories, and can be high in fats and sugars, depending on how it is made – so don’t go crazy. But, there are lots of ways to enjoy this super health fruit in pie or semi-pie form.

A few of the more interesting recipes we unearthed can be found on these websites:

At tasteofhome.com – look here for a classic country fair cherry pie recipe; minimal ingredients, incredible taste, pretty star-studded crust.

Momendeavors.com takes a more European approach – for example, French recipes for cherry pie use ingredients such as cream cheese, whipped cream and graham cracker crusts. More pastry-like and just outstanding.

More adventurous? Try notenough-cinnamon.com – this site is frequented by cooks looking for more adventurous recipes, including those in the low-sugar paleo sphere. Their recipe for cherry pie is gluten, dairy and refined sugar-free.

If you don’t have time to bake – the best cherry pie we have eaten is from Mom’s Apple Pie Co. in Round Hill (540 338-1800), Leesburg and Occoquan.

Enjoy!

Vacant Chairs Remembered

Ball's Bluff Battlefield Expanded To 3,300 Acres

– By Andrea Gaines

On October 21, 1861, approximately 3,400 Civil War soldiers faced off on the Potomac River shoreline known as Ball's Bluff, just north of Leesburg.

In a decisive Confederate victory, nearly 50 percent of Union soldiers were killed, wounded, or taken prisoner.

The battle cost the life of a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln, Edward Dickinson Baker, the only sitting United States Senator ever killed in battle ... but, spared the life of a young man named Holmes, Oliver Wendell Holmes. Holmes was wounded at Ball's Bluff, again at Antietam, and a third time at Chancellorsville, surviving it all to continue his service to his country as one of the most influential Supreme Court Justices of all time.

These stories are known backwards and forwards by the relatively small number of Civil War historians who labor tirelessly to preserve history in all its forms for future generations. And, on January 11, 2017 – over 150 years since the Battle of Ball's Bluff – these historians saw a very special dream come true when the United States Department of the Interior approved Loudoun County's nomination to recognize thousands of additional acres at Ball's Bluff Battlefield as worthy of National Historic Landmark status.

The action expands the 76-acre nationally recognized site to include 3,300 acres of riverfront land on both the Virginia and Maryland sides of the Potomac River, including Harrison Island, Maryland.

The expansion was lobbied for vigorously by the Loudoun

One Vacant Chair

We shall meet but we shall miss him.

There will be one vacant chair.

We shall linger to caress him

While we breathe our ev'ning prayer.

(Part of a famous Civil War poem by Henry S. Washburn commemorating the bravery of 18-year-old Lt. John William Groat, who died at the Battle of Ball's Bluff.)

County Heritage Commission under the direction of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, and received indispensable support from Friends of Ball's Bluff Battlefield. Friends of Ball's Bluff has worked with the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to educate the public about the site, and to provide ongoing interpretations and publications that describe in detail how what happened there influenced trends and outcomes in the Civil War.

As a result of the Department of the Interior's actions, the land and earth formations on both sides of Edwards Ferry Road, Federal positions above the Maryland shoreline, Harrison Island, and other areas now carry the formal historic designation shared by 2,500 sites in the United States. Other local National Historic Landmarks include Oak Hill (President Monroe's home on Rt. 15), Oatlands, the George Marshall House in Leesburg, and the Village of Waterford.



What's Your Presidential IQ, And Who Is Your Favorite?

True or false, one US President once worked as a hangman? (Answer: True. Grover Cleveland, who served from 1893 to 1897, was once the sheriff for Erie County, NY and had to "spring the trap" as they say, twice.)

And, how about this, who was the first US president to talk on the phone and who

did he talk, to? Answer: James Garfield. And, who did he talk to? You can probably guess this: Alexander Graham Bell!

And one more question ... multiple, multiple, multiple, multiple choice. Which of the following was NOT a pet owned by the first family?: A) a dog named Checkers, b) a lizard named Bill, c) two canaries

named Nip & Tuck, d) a ram named Old Ike, or, e) a cat named Tigger?

Answer? Well, Nixon's dog's was name Checkers, Teddy Roosevelt had the lizard named Bill, Calvin Collidge had the canaries and Woodrow Wilson owned the ram. As far as we know, no first family ever had cat named Tigger.

We love presidential trivia and so do our roving reporters Tim and Wyatt. So, this month, in honor of President's Day, they asked a sampling of people off the street this question: Who was your favorite president, and why?

So, here we go. Here are the presidents who made the cut in Tim & Wyatt's poll:



"Jimmy Carter, because the ones we have been having haven't been too good. He was a good man."
– Barbara



"Abraham Lincoln. He got us through the most turbulent times."
– Kim



"I would have to say Thomas Jefferson. I didn't know him too well, but I'd say the Louisiana Purchase was the greatest land deal ever made."
– John (descendant from Thomas Jefferson)



"Ronald Reagan. In my younger days, America was really messed up, and he helped fix the economy and put everything back in order."
– Josh



"Roosevelt, because he got us through World War II. He started many social programs. Without him I wouldn't have my Social Security."
– Craig



"George Washington, for all the work he did for Virginia. He also had great humility as a leader."
– Mary Ellen



"Jefferson. He was iconic, an artist, a thinker, and good looking. That was a rare combination back in the day."
– Patti



"Abraham Lincoln. His ghost still haunts the White House!"
– Simon

"I don't have a favorite president, but my favorite would-be president is my man, Bernie Sanders."
– Ian

"Reagan. He turned around the economy. He instituted low taxes, so businesses and people thrived. He did lots of things: Strong military, got us through the cold war, and tore down the Berlin Wall."
– Bradley

"Truman ... have you got that one yet? A lot happened during his term: Korean War, he started the Air Force and the CIA, and many intelligence agencies. He was his own man and the reason we instituted the presidential pension – because he had no money when he retired."
– Steve

"TJ, because I went to UVA. Wahoowa!" – Ken
"Eisenhower. He picked up our country after the World War." – Ben



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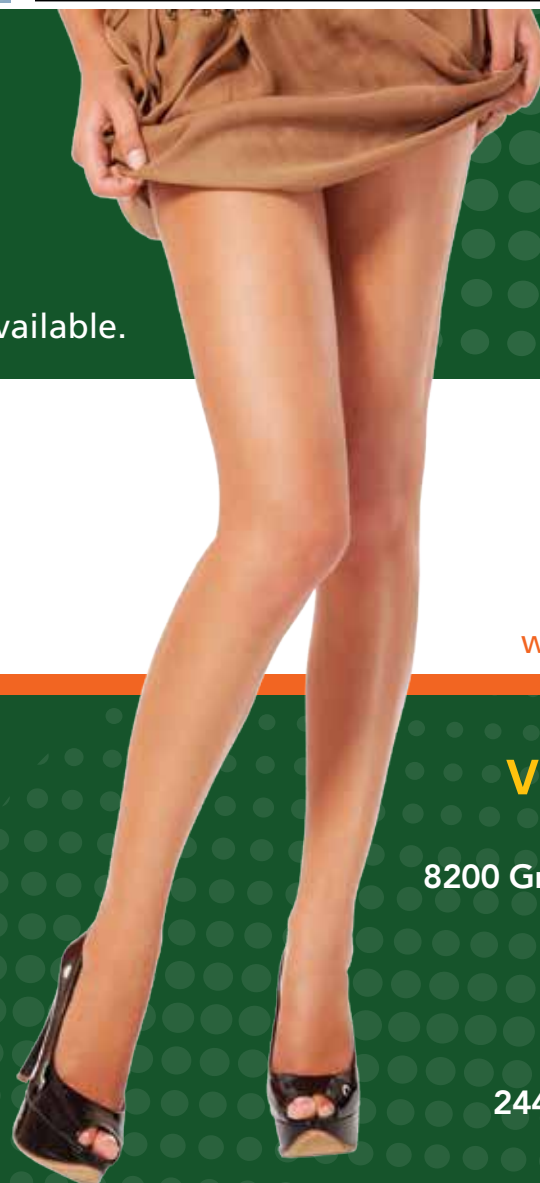
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Amy And Dan Smith's Planning For Life – It's Time To Review Your Estate Planning Basics

Beginners and billionaires alike should refresh their knowledge of these basic estate planning terms and concepts.

The word “estate” tends to conjure up images of billionaires and aristocrats, but estate planning is not just for the wealthy. It's widely believed that estate planning in one form or another is needed by everyone, and it doesn't need to be sophisticated, complex or costly to help fulfill final wishes and protect assets. Whether you are a prince or a pauper, refreshing on estate planning basics can help make sure your legacy is left the way you intended.

Keep It Simple

An estate is the net worth of a person at any point, including all land, possessions and other assets. A good estate plan passes on your assets to intended recipients in a manner and timing that reflects your wishes.

A will is not sufficient to protect your assets. Wills are outdated as a form of comprehensive estate planning because they only take effect at death- and with life expectancies higher than ever, the challenge of protecting your assets begins much earlier. An estate plan should ensure that the cost of long-term care for a disability won't devour your assets, which could occur well before a will would come into play.

Your estate plan should protect your assets from nursing homes. This can be achieved by purchasing a long-term care insurance policy. The IRS considers the



AMY & DAN SMITH

insurance premiums for “qualified long-term care plans” to be medical expenses, which means it's possible to deduct them from federal taxes. Many states offer tax breaks as well. And because benefits paid under long-term care insurance policies generally aren't taxable, long-term care insurance can help avoid a nursing home laying claim to all your assets until Medicaid kicks in. Check with a tax advisor to be sure.

Power of attorney specifies who will represent you in the event that you're unable to make or communicate decisions about all aspects of your healthcare.

Assigning joint power of attorney to two parties allows one to keep the other in check. The “two heads are better than one” approach acts as a safeguard in case one individual becomes unable or unwilling to make important decisions. Common options include selecting two family members, a family member and a lawyer, or a bank or trust company.

A durable power of attorney differs from a traditional power of attorney in that it continues the agency relationship beyond the incapacity of the principal.

The laws for creating a power of attorney vary from state to state, but there are certain general guidelines to follow. If no power of attorney is appointed, the state appoints guardians, conservators or committees, depending upon local state law. Before you or your loved ones sign any documents,

however, consult with an attorney concerning all applicable laws and regulations.

While the most of us will never have huge fortunes to worry about, we should still pay attention to our own legacies, how we'll protect them, and how they'll affect our loved ones. A legacy is not just about leaving what you earned- it's about leaving what you've learned.

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, 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. Contact 703 669-5022 or 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.



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Inspiring Young Investors

– By Dylan Winick

The Wakefield Investment Club is a fantastic opportunity for students of the upper school to learn about investment and finance. For many students,



DYLAN WINICK

this club serves as their first exposure to information and skills pertinent to the investing world. The club began as the brainchild of Wakefield School's Chairman of the Board of Trustees, John Neff. As a professional investor, he feels that understanding the value of a business is a necessary tool to offer students. By gaining some background in investment, members of the Investment Club are able to supplement their education with real world experience in a unique way. In the words of Neff, “There is real learning, real responsibility, and real opportunity for those interested. We've only scratched the surface of the Investment Club's full potential.”

The club works as an investment firm with Portfolio Managers, Co/Assistant-Portfolio Managers and Sector Analysts,” explains Grace Sacripanti, '18. Through

discussion and application, the students determine the qualities of a good investor and successful business, and then through critical analysis they propose their recommended investment. Members of the investment club are entrusted with a great deal of responsibility. Wakefield School has generously gifted the Investment Club \$50,000 to invest. By entrusting the Investment Club with real money, the students are building confidence in the responsibility that comes with handling money; and under the guidance of Neff, have a chance of achieving success. The student-investors have demonstrated exceptional intelligence and understanding, learning the basics of investing over the course of only a few days. Chloe Osborn, '19, states, “I have learned that investing can be risky, so I look forward to learning how to prevent failure before it happens.”

The club spend its time learning about equity, debt, leverage, and all of the necessary things that go into running a business. Wakefield investors learn how to notice events in the news that affect the stock portfolio and recognize companies they have researched. The Wakefield Investment Club is the beginning for many future investors.



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Just Like Nothing (Else) On Earth: George Marshall Center

– By Tim Jon

I used to wonder why – after an assignment to visit the interior of this place, I'd return feeling exhausted – both mentally and physically worn out – as if I'd been carrying an extra couple hundred pounds or so – and gone sleepless for days – for the duration of my stop. Now – jokes about my waistline aside (I'm no Tarzan, but I'm not that rotund!) – and having studied the enormity of responsibilities placed on the former occupant at this address – I no longer marvel at whether my imagination weighed me down – so to speak – or if I actually absorbed some of the former Secretary of State's energy while touring his house; either way it makes perfect sense to me that I'd feel a bit like Atlas in trying to identify with the late George C Marshall at Dodona Manor in Leesburg. I'd notice – upon returning from these trips to the quaint little Newsroom at Wage Radio – that my usually bright, peppy energy level (in those days, anyway) had settled into a more contemplative, 'grandfather-ish,' and almost dreamy state after communing with the modern-day stewards at the five-star General's home.

I recall noticing this effect for the first time after I'd been shown the very desk at which George Marshall had penned what would later be called the Marshall Plan – his design for rebuilding Europe after the destructive (yet very necessary) forces of World War II. I remember having some pretty spooky sensations in going over this sequence of events – and I remind you that I'm more high-spirited – and even spiritual – than one quickly jumping to conclusions about spirits and such!

Now – after the benefit of a more objective viewpoint – almost 20 years later – I no longer really care – one way or the other – whether some of the energy of a military genius reached out and grabbed me, or if I simply (and unconsciously) employed some of the more creative juices from my even earlier times on theatre stages in the Midwest and New York. Whatever the case, I've gained – over all the intervening years – an ever-increasing respect for the visionary work performed by the former US Army Chief of Staff, Secretary of Defense and head of the Red Cross.

And whatever I felt inside Dodona Manor – and from whatever source it came – I certainly enjoyed a sharp contrast in strolling around the exterior of the place; the expansive yard, guarded by stately trees and softened by the manicured gardens served only to lift



TIM JON



the spirit and inspire the soul. Perhaps this was the whole idea behind the General's passion for cultivation; we heard – in repeated interviews with everyone connected to his activities – that his time spent out in the flowers, vegetables and other greenery took him away from all the stress of Washington, international affairs and world conflicts – and formed a relaxing and revitalizing tonic to the man. I'm thankful that it did – and I trust that not only Dodona Manor and its beautiful grounds – but our larger world – enjoyed the benefits of his regenerating activities.

Now – when I add all this together – the massive workload undertaken by George Marshall – along with his list of accomplishments – and the legacy of this treasured estate and outside grounds – and even my mysterious energy empathies with the spirit of the man – it leaves me recalling that a synonym for our country's Armed Forces is 'the Service;' and I wish we had more leaders – in 21st Century America – with a bit more – or a lot more – of the type of dedication possessed by the former resident at 217 Edwards Ferry Road Northeast. He was very much a product of his time, but also – that era was greatly affected by his efforts.

On my last visit to Dodona Manor, I took the pleasure of taking a leisurely stroll around the exterior of the home – soaking up the calming energies of all the plant life in the yard and gardens – under the warmth of an early-morning sun – and gave thanks that the General and his wife Katherine were able to spend as much time as they did (in the 1940's and 1950's) at this little oasis away from Washington and the wars. This was his only permanent home in a lifetime of military engagement on behalf of his country; it's easy to imagine a resident of Dodona Manor accepting the Nobel Peace Prize; George Marshall was the first-ever professional soldier to do so. You could certainly say that – in eternity – he rests in Peace.

A Rainy Romance

– By Samuel Moore-Sobel



MOORE-SOBEL

"If you've seen one, you've seen them all" – a simple phrase uttered in an acclaimed musical that helped birth a star. The movie's Kathy Selden (Debbie Reynolds) catches his attention so completely that Don Lockwood (Gene Kelly) pursues her. He works his way into her heart; and the rest is history.

With her recent passing, Debbie Reynolds has proven that Don Lockwood wasn't the only one whose heart had been stolen. The moment seems historic not only because of her storied life, but because of what her performance represented in *Singin' in the Rain*. The era of dancing featured in film has been long over. Reynolds was a living symbol of that seemingly modest time.

Reynolds big start at the tender age of 19 turned out to be much harder than expected. "Making *Singin' in the Rain*, and childbirth were the two hardest things I have ever done," she often said. The famous scene involving dancing on couches and singing, "*Good Morning, Good Morning*" caused her feet to bleed. Reynolds was not the only one struggling with physical ailments. Gene Kelly reportedly had a 103-degree fever when shooting commenced on the unforgettable "*Singin' in the Rain*" sketch. Perhaps the largest challenges help reap the biggest rewards.

When moments of doubt enshrouded her, it was Fred Astaire who calmed her anxious nerves. "That's what it's like to learn to dance," he told her. "If you're not sweating, you're not doing it right." I guess my great-grandfather was right when he often described Astaire as "smooth." Years later, Reynolds reflected on the challenge. "I didn't know that I couldn't do it. So, I did it, and I was terrific," she said.

Terrific she was – dancing her way into the hearts of millions of Americans, including my own decades later. My grandmother introduced me to many classics through her collection of old movies. My love of the song "*Just the Way You Look Tonight*" came from watching "*Swing Time*" dozens of times. Fred Astaire was always my favorite, for his elegance appeared effortless. In the words of my great-grandmother, Gene Kelly possessed more athleticism, but Fred Astaire exuded "grace."

There is something about watching Gene Kelly dance in the rain. The expressive joy seen on his face is contagious. Magically, something often viewed in our everyday lives as an inconvenience becomes something to be celebrated. The "child-like wonder" exhibited over a natural occurrence captured my imagination. Rain was no longer something to be dreaded, but rather, longed for.

For my brother and me, acting out scenes from this gem was a constant throughout our childhoods. "*Make 'em Laugh*" made quite

an impression on me, especially Cosmo's (played by Donald O'Connor) thrashing about as he brought forth laughter from the audience through physical acting. I even went so far as to attempt his routine, continually throwing myself down on the floor, leading my parents to express concern for my future health.

As the final chapter of Debbie Reynolds' life closed, it caused me to reflect upon movies of the past. What was it that so completely drew me to love a film captured in a time from long ago? Things have undoubtedly changed since 1952. No longer does an audience member visit the movie theater to be entertained primarily by dancing and singing. Dialogue plays a much more important role now. Sex and violence do as well. Love stories are no longer acted out; the man, wooing a woman who almost always shuns him at first. Hearts and emotions are exposed, while skin is kept concealed.

A sense of purity emanates from these older love stories, something lost in modern translation. When was the last time you went to a movie where the most physical contact between two lovers was kissing? It would be naive to think that this is how all sitting in those 1952 audiences acted in their own personal lives. One could argue that entertainment today is more true to reality; but, do we go to the movies to be reminded of reality, or to view and enjoy a simpler, more idealistic version of human existence?

This isn't to say that all old movies are masterpieces. Admittedly, many Fred Astaire movies, while featuring wonderful dance scenes and compelling music, failed to deliver when it came to plot and character development. The beauty of "*Singin' in the Rain*" is that it combines the two, delivering a well-rounded picture. Not to wax nostalgic about an era I did not experience, but it is hard to imagine many of the movies churning out of Hollywood in our present day being able to stand the test of time.

Movie theaters around the country are showing this movie, honoring the life of Debbie Reynolds, and commemorating the 65th anniversary of its making. I hope it marks a moment in which the old can be infused with the new. Perhaps it already has – "*La La Land*" made some unmistakable references to this classic, and Hollywood reportedly has many more in the offing. Either way, I'll still smile when watching movies that helped form precious childhood memories. And you can guarantee that if raindrops begin falling from the heavens, there will be at least one young man in Northern Virginia who will be "*singin', and dancin', in the rain.*"

Samuel Moore-Sobel is probably one of the few of his generation who appreciates old movies. He plans on forcing his future children to endure hours of watching this classic film.

Dream, Build, Believe Notaviva Vineyard Could Be Yours

– By Hannah Hager

When it comes to historical structures, there are those who step into history ... and then there are those who make it. The owners of Notaviva Vineyards were the ones who made it.

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times for Stephen and Shannon Mackey to carve their way into Loudoun's storied history during the Great Recession of the mid-aughts. At the time, the young couple dreamed of a reimagined world of synergies between wine and music that would demonstrate their passion and will to succeed.



They planted the vineyard, founded the winery, started a family and held down corporate careers all in front of the cameras of the HGTV reality television series, *Dream House*. The rise of Virginia's fast-



growing wine industry is further detailed in their tell-all memoir, "Dream. Build. Believe. Love, Wine, Music and the Founding of Notaviva Vineyards," as is the construction of this home and winery that

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continued on page 16

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Meeting The Other America, continued from page 4

and chapels can be found at almost every block, and many of them are packed so full on Sundays that there are not enough pews for all of the people. Many local businesses are also closed on Sundays, making the city downtown almost like a ghost town.

Continental America, as a whole, isn't racist, or at least they try not to be. Of course, due to the current practice of accusing people of such myriad transgressions as "white privilege," "microaggressions," "implicit bias," and "cultural appropriation," many people in coastal America (and some in continental America, too) consider continental Americans to be backwards, racist hicks deserving only of contempt for their rejection of modern, progressive values. These people have obviously never met (or cared to listen to) a continental American. Continental Americans, particularly those near reservations, are acutely aware of the plight of Native Americans in modern America. Many of these people also volunteer their time to try and help alleviate some of the extreme poverty found on many reservations. Far from being nasty, continental Americans are generally quite friendly to complete strangers, regardless of ethnicity. It's not uncommon for two complete strangers to ask each other how they're doing while just passing each other on the street.

However, continental America is not in good shape. Years of poor economic conditions have taken their toll on the area. Even in the nicest areas of Rapid City, business turnover is high and many storefronts are empty at any one time. Most of the people in the area live in houses built before 1980, and few are the first owners of their houses. Drug epidemics, particularly the current opiate epidemic, have hid the community hard. Drug related arrests make up a majority of the cases of the Rapid City Police Department, surpassing even DUIs in terms of volume. Continental America has been mishandled, ignored and sometimes openly disparaged (remember the "basket of deplorables"). Maybe it's time to stop and listen to them.

Nicholas Reid is a graduate of the Loudoun County High School system and is currently pursuing a degree in geology at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. He wants to become a paleontologist.

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Real Estate continued from page 13

winery. Words on paper pale in comparison, however, to the in-person views of this estate. Nevertheless, it's easy to envision the rows of grapevines streaking the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It's not difficult to imagine the feeling of overlooking the pond outside the steps of the winery while sipping on vino of your own making.

You could probably picture the design of the exposed beams spanning the cathedral ceilings that open up two stories of seating areas. Try to visualize the gleaming hardwood floors circling the central serving station as they reflect light from the large windows, including one in the shape of a North Star. Standing there, perhaps you



foresee a foundation for your own family becoming grounded just like the planters outside.

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Joseph, continued from page 1

Middle School's production of Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat – produced by Dolly Stevens, sponsored by the BRMS PTO and running Feb. 24 through March 5.

With captivating characters such as Joseph and brothers Reuben, Simeon and Judah – and songs from Andrew Lloyd Webber – Technicolor Dreamcoat is a drama-lover's work of art, a concert piece that over the years has evolved into a celebrated musical.

As Stevens relates it, Webber wanted to use a lot of musical styles in Dreamcoat – including country western, calypso, rock and roll, French bistro and everything in between.

With masterful choreography, and wonderful costumes and sets, the production will be nothing if not visually stunning and thoroughly professional. Stevens wanted a pit band, for example ... and she got it, through a rare combination of professionals and student musicians.

All the children will, as always, steal the show. Hailing from Blue Ridge Middle School and four different local elementary schools, there are 48 BRMS students and 12 younger students in the production.

Stevens gives a big shout out to Jacquelyn Volker, costume designer and Greg Powell, set designer. As a parent, Powell had such positive past experiences with BRMS, that he wanted to help again, said Stevens. Gretchen Lamb is returning for her second year as the production's choreographer.



BRMS students practicing.

Also involved the production is Catina Anderson – photographer, part of the scenic crew and assisting with the choreography. Notably, each production crew is also staffed with parents who have volunteered to help pull the show together.

“Parents are an integral part of the process, and I could not do what I do without them,” said Stevens. “In requiring the parents to be involved behind the scenes ... it becomes a shared memory.”

Including 10 National Youth Awards, accolades that recognize dramatic excellence in youth as well as the adults

who work with them. In this category, Stevens shares with her students a National Youth Award for Best Ensemble, a National Youth Award for Best Leading and Supporting Actors and a National Youth Award for Outstanding Production.

“The diversity of the music, the many elements, attracted me to this show,” said Stevens. “There are some who take a simplified approach to producing a middle school musical ... but I am not one of them.”

Thank you Dolly – ahead of time – for the dramatic beauty you bring to Loudoun County, and thank you, kids for the sweet

star power we'll all enjoy in your upcoming production of Joseph And The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

Performance & Admission Details: Tickets can be purchased on-line at <http://brms.ticketleap.com/joe>. Or email BRMSplay@gmail.com. On-line ticket sales will close at midnight the night before each show. Tickets are \$10 for all ages. Fri., Feb. 24 and Sat. Feb. 25 at 7:30 PM, Sun. Feb. 26 at 2:30 PM; Fri., Mar. 3 at 7:30, Sat. Mar. 4 at 2:30 and 7:30 PM, Sun. Mar. 5 at 2:30 PM (the final show).

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Remembering Carolyn May Green

Jan. 11, 1944 – Jan. 12, 2017

There was nothing simple about Carolyn Green. She could be stubborn and compassionate. Mischievous and demanding. It was exactly this complex, fascinating mix of personality traits that made her the person she was. She had a strong will and an ability to be funny, joyous, and irreverent.

Green was lit with vibrant energy. Energy that led her into situations you would never have thought possible for a woman born in 1944 in a small town at the very bottom of the state of Georgia.

When Green threw herself into a project, there was no stopping her, or telling where her initial steps would lead. Her heart, her sense of loyalty and of right, her love of adventure, and her fearlessness propelled her throughout her entire life.

So, for instance, in 1977, when the van came to deliver a new pony to the Farm in Hamilton, and out stepped a starving thoroughbred mare that had been brought along to keep the pony quiet during the ride, she stepped right up and said she wouldn't let the horse leave. She and her husband, Bud, were buying it. And they did. Next thing you knew, the Greens were in the race horse business, breeding foals from that mare, who turned out to have pretty good bloodlines. And, if having foals meant sleeping in a freezing barn in January during snowstorms because the vet might not be able to make it in time, so be it. Green hated the cold. But she'd do what she had to, to have an adorable foal kicking up its heels.

Or when Green walked into the office of *Leesburg Today* to complain that the paper wasn't doing stories on land use around Hamilton. The editor, Brett Phillips, listened



Carolyn May Green

to her, understood that she had that grasp of people's motivations that is the hallmark of a real journalist, and asked her if she wanted to be a reporter. Her first assignment, a trial run, as she told it, was to do a piece on homelessness in Leesburg. There isn't any, she protested. Go look, he replied. Sure enough, she got the story. She went on to become one of the toughest investigative reporters around. But then she'd pivot, and write an entertaining feature about a local artist, easy as you please.

She was an extraordinary gardener. And she didn't just spend her time crafting that garden; she was also a fearless decorator. But then again, she was also a gracious, fun hostess who put together extravagantly perfect parties for her friends.

There was plenty about where Green came from that made sense in this woman, raised by a strong woman in a family that



loved each other fiercely. She learned about dedication from her mother, Elizabeth May, and the grandparents who helped raise her after her mother was left widowed with three young children. Carolyn, Betty, and Johnny teased and took care of each other from the beginning, cooking dinner, cleaning, and minding the garden. They had a childhood rich in love and the knowledge that the people they loved believed they were special, part of a clan that persevered through strong will. They were devoted to each and supported each other throughout their lives.

Green's mother showed her how women could and should break down barriers. In 1946, to earn a living, Elizabeth May became the first woman in her Georgia county to open a store, turning her talent for smocking into The Tiny Princess shop. That clothes store had a 52-year run, becoming a model for businesswomen throughout the state.

She and Bud turned a rundown farmhouse into an elegant, beautiful home made for entertaining their friends and raising children and grandchildren. Carolyn and Bud's attack on the place – the dry walling, stripping of bricks, painting of walls and doors, sanding of floors, recovering of furniture, and sewing – turned that rundown

house into a showplace, a happy home.

But her understanding of people also meant that Green fought for what she thought was right. She never backed down on her convictions. She had no patience for people who thought themselves better than others. She hated injustice. When people tried to intimidate her, she dug in harder. But she also believed people could learn, situations could change. Rather than turn her back on what she thought was wrong, she acted.

Green loved her family completely and was there for them no matter what. She worried over them, but she was also just as vocal in her pride in their accomplishments. She went to endless tennis matches, band concerts, riding lessons, and play performances. She arranged the most amazing weddings for her children in the bank barn, and, with Bud, the most fabulous fundraisers for Habitat.

The end of her life was the final demonstration of Green's strength and determination. She was just on the verge of coming home to the Farm and her family. She'd fought and dug in for more than two months while she was at the rehabilitation center in Charlottesville. She'd worked so hard to come off of the ventilator, showing that grit that made her who she was. And then, the wrong antibiotic in her body at the wrong time ended her fight for her.

Green is alive in the memories of her husband, Bud Green, children Craig and Heather Green, sister Betty Warwick, brother John May, and grandchildren Marley and Meghan Green, and Lilly Greer. Memorial gifts may be made in her honor to the Virginia chapter of the Sierra Club and Keep Loudoun Beautiful.

Remembering Daniel Everard Juraschek



Daniel Everard Juraschek

Daniel E. Juraschek died Thursday, Dec. 22 after a fall in his home in Charles Town, WV.

Juraschek, 36, earned a Master's Degree in Environmental Science and Policy from Johns Hopkins University in 2007 and had worked in a number of environmental management positions in the Washington area and West Virginia, most recently as an environmental engineer and industrial health and safety consultant with the Martinsburg VA Medical Center; DuPont, BP Solar, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Town of Leesburg. Just before his death he had accepted a new position in environmental engineering with Booz Allen Hamilton.

He was born on April 25, 1980 in Washington, D.C., grew up in Manassas and Hillsboro, and graduated from Loudoun Valley High School in Purcellville. He

received a Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Longwood University in 2003. During his college years, he trained as an emergency medical technician.

Best known for his wonderful sense of humor, he was also an enthusiastic cook who loved entertaining in his home on the banks of the Shenandoah River where he opened his house, his heart and his life to one and all.

Juraschek is survived by his wife Dayna Wilhelm Juraschek; his daughters, Evelyn and Eliza, a foster child Kayla Gaydosh; his mother, Wanda Munsey Juraschek of Berryville; four siblings, Nathaniel Juraschek of Olathe, KS; Millie Shipe of Charlottesville; Amanda Balas of Middleway, WV, and Bethany Davis of Denver, CO; and by his grandparents, Ann and Everard Munsey of Leesburg and by his grandmother, Marcia Juraschek of Dumfries, and many uncles,

aunts, and cousins.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to a charity of your choice or one of these that most impacted his life: Missionary Jason Hamilton (C/O The Bridge Community Church, 112 S. Fairfax Blvd., Ranson, WV, 25438; www.modernday.org/field-workers/jason-adelayne-hamilton); Servants 4 Him (PO Box 597, Hamilton, VA, 20159; www.servants4him.org); Ashley Addiction Treatment (800 Tydings Ln, Havre De Grace, MD, 21078, <https://www.ashleytreatment.org>). Please share with his family which charity you choose and how it reminds you of him.

A viewing of Daniel E. Juraschek was held Monday, Dec. 26, at Hall Funeral Home. The memorial service was Wednesday, Dec. 28 at The Bridge Community Church in Ranson, WV.

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OR

Parents can plan an evening out and drop kids off for dinner and a show!

Performance only: \$8 /person (ages 3 and up) 6:00PM
Kids Night Dinner & performance: \$20 /person (ages 5 and up) 5:00-8:00PM

GALLERY COFFEEHOUSE: Writers' Night Out
Sunday, February 12 6:30-8:00PM

(Ages 16 & up) Give your Muse a night on the town! Respond to fun, innovative writing prompts and experiment with different forms of poetry, fiction, and memoir. All writers, both novice and experienced, are invited to join the party!

Tickets: \$8/person

BOB BROWN PUPPETS: DRAGON FEATHERS
Wednesday, February 15 10:00AM

(Ages 2 & up) Long ago and far away when folks wanted to proclaim something as silly, ridiculous or just complete nonsense, they would shout out the phrase "Dragon Feathers"! This production is filled with silly, ridiculous and nonsensical dragons doing all sorts of hilarious things!

Tickets: \$5/person

GALLERY COFFEEHOUSE: Readers Theatre, Love Letters
Sunday, February 19 6:30-8:00PM

Imagine That! Readers Theater presents the play "Love Letters", a story of childhood friends whose lifelong correspondence begins with birthday party thank-you notes and summer camp postcards and follows their romantic attachments, boarding school antics, and college. Their letters continue despite their different paths in life and end with one final letter that makes it eloquently clear how much they really meant, and gave to, each other over the years – physically apart, perhaps, but spiritually as close as only true lovers can be.

Tickets: \$8/person



COMING IN MARCH

LÚNASA
 Wednesday, March 8 8:00PM

VIRGINIA OPERA:
 An Evening Of Arias And Duets
 Friday, March 10 7:00PM

MARK FORREST,
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 Saturday, March 11
 7:30PM

Leesburg Mayor Kelly Burk To Deliver State Of The Town Address

Wednesday, Feb. 8

On Wednesday, Feb. 8, at 6:30 p.m., Mayor Kelly Burk will deliver her first annual State of the Town address. The address will take place in the Council Chamber on the second floor of the Leesburg Town Hall, 25 West Market Street. The public is encouraged to attend.

Mayor Burk's address will be broadcast on the Town's local government access cable channel, Channel 67 on Comcast and Channel 35 on Verizon FiOS. In addition, the address will be streamed live from the Town website at www.leesburgva.gov/webcasts. The video will be archived and available for on-demand viewing at the same web address.

Four Young Historians Discuss Civil War Turning Points



The Mosby Heritage Area Association will hold a talk featuring a panel of four young historians who will discuss turning points in the Civil War. The talk will be held at Unison Methodist Church, 21148 Unison Road, Middleburg, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 12. Tickets will be sold at the door or online at www.mosbyheritagearea.org/events for \$15 each. These young historians/scholars/authors are members of the group "Emerging Civil War," and provide fresh perspectives on the Civil War, 152 years after the fact.

Music With A Cause Continues Feb. 26 – St. Andrews

Feb. 26, 4 p.m. A Taste of Spring! Beethoven's "Spring Sonata" for violin and piano forms the heart of a recital by Venezuelan violinist Marjory Serrano and Taiwanese pianist Hsin-Yi Chen, featuring additional classics by Mozart, Coleridge-Taylor and Albeniz. The 7th concert in the *Music with a Cause* series at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Purcellville, will benefit Mobile Hope of Loudoun. Tickets are \$15; ages 17 and under free. Go to, www.standrew-pres.org or call 540 338-4332.

Hillsboro Planning More Big Changes

– By Amanda Clark



L to R: Catoctin Supervisor Geary Higgins, Center – Hillsboro Mayor Roger Vance, Congresswoman Barbara Comstock and Blue Ridge Supervisor Tony Buffington.

After recently expanding its boundaries, Hillsboro is set to initiate more changes for the community. At a Hillsboro State of the Town community breakfast and open house Jan. 28, residents discussed what is in the offing.

The largest of the planned projects is the complete revamping of Main Street, which commuters know as Rt. 9. Some 16,000 vehicle trips make their way on Main Street each day, through the center of the hamlet. The aim of the reconstruction is to help drivers travel at reasonable speeds, while also providing parking areas, sidewalks, and raised crosswalks. Presently, construction is slated to begin in 2019, and be completed by late spring 2020. But the Town is working to accelerate the timetable.

Aside from a planned Post Office with its own zip code, the other major project is a new water and sewer system. By Fall of next year, Hillsboro residents will be able to drink the tap water without boiling it first.

Joining other residents at the Jan. 28 breakfast were members of the Town Council, as well as Catoctin Supervisor Geary Higgins, Blue Ridge Supervisor Tony Buffington, Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis Randall, and Congresswoman Barbara Comstock.

Bed And Breakfast Guests Can Learn Cooking With Chef

The Briar Patch Bed & Breakfast Inn is offering cooking classes with its chef to guests who schedule stays during the weekend of Feb. 24 and 25. Or you can just attend the cooking class without the overnight stays. Friday night of the stay includes a wine tasting with an expert from a local winery and appetizers prepared by the chef. A 3-wineries tour is an option for Saturday afternoon. And a cooking class will be offered on Saturday at which guests will learn from Chef Matt Finarelli in February as well as enjoy a four-course meal. To learn more go to www.briarpatchbandb.com.



Woodgrove Gymnastics Team Places First



From L-R - Erin Ramsey (10th), Dani Kimbrough (10th), Lauren Sutara (11th), Sarah Snare (12th), Kaycee Delitta (12th), River Stone (10th), Erin Keane (9th), Jodi Snare (9th)

Wildlife Ambassadors Continues With Educational Programs



Oliver a Greenwing Macaw turned 20 this year – he was donated to Wildlife Ambassadors 17 years ago when the Rainforest Café restaurant in Tysons Corner closed down.

Parrots and opossum and snakes, oh my! All kinds of animals can be found at Wildlife Ambassadors in Purcellville. Since 1996, the organization has been presenting educational wildlife programs for schools, libraries, birthday parties, and special events.

The collection of animals has come to Wildlife Ambassadors from other area animal rescues, county animal shelters, wildlife rehabilitators, and individuals. One of the oldest ambassadors, Oliver, a green wing macaw, was donated to Wildlife Ambassadors in October of 2000 by the Rainforest Café restaurant in Tysons Corner. He has become one of the most popular ambassadors over the years. His size is impressive, and he can crack a Brazil nut in three seconds!

Several opossum and other native wildlife have been transferred to the program from area wildlife rehabilitators. The raccoon Sophie was the most memorable animal that came from a wildlife rehabilitator. She and her family had been knocked out of a tree during a hurricane, and she was the only one to survive. Her fall at such a young age caused damage to a hind leg. She was transferred to Wildlife Ambassadors, and after care, she ended up in a nearby raccoon sanctuary where she is living with other raccoons.

Although most programs are presented in schools and libraries, Wildlife Ambassadors does a lot of special events. The animals have made appearances at the Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival, the Loudoun County Fair, and First Night celebrations in Leesburg and Warrenton. The programs cover different habitats, animal adaptations and survival skills, and wildlife conservation. Some of the most popular programs are Rainforest Rescue, Creepy Crawlies, Amazing Animals, and Wildlife in Winter.

Through Rainforest Rescue, students learn about the beauty and importance of tropical rain forests through gorgeous parrots, a huge Argentinian tegu, tarantulas, and a red footed tortoise. At the end of the assembly, the students are able to make a difference with the Adopt An Acre program – which donates a portion of the program fee to protect rain forest land. The students get to research, and vote to decide on the geographic area of rain forest they wish to protect. Their school receives a certificate from the Center for Ecosystem Survival.

For more information, go to www.wildlifeambassadors.org or call 571 252-0036.

Create Some Romantic, Road Trip Memories With Your Valentine



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– By Andrea Gaines

Growing up on eastern Long Island my family and I would often just hop in the old station wagon and go for a drive. We'd cruise through the farms, beaches and villages of the place, stopping at special spots where you could stay in the car and admire the view ... or stretch your legs and do a little exploring.

Eastern Long Island had lots of special places that over the years created a beautiful series of road trip memories for me. And, getting to know Loudoun, I see that this County carries the same kind of potential ... maybe some romantic activities for Valentine's Day ... with whomever or whatever takes up the task at the moment. With an eye toward beauty ... and romance (?) ... here are a few of the Blue Ridge Leader's favorites – easy local road trips where you can savor the view and make some memories.

A Mount Gilead Climb – Rt. 15, which runs north and south from Leesburg is a wonderful drive, with great views in either direction ... especially in early spring when the redbuds are in bloom. We like to head south from Leesburg and then take a hard right on Hogback Mountain Road (Rt. 651). This twisty-turny road takes you all the way up historic Mount Gilead, with lots of exquisite vistas along the way. Take a left on Mt. Gilead Road and explore this special community. A right will take you back towards Leesburg, where Mt. Gilead and Harmony Church Roads meet Rt. 15.

Blue Ridge Mountain Road – Rt. 50 runs from Ocean City, Maryland to West Sacramento, California. That would be some road trip – if you could leave your life and job for a month and drain

your bank account. But, with just a few hours out of your schedule you can take a beautiful drive heading west on Rt. 50 out of the quaint Village of Upperville, to Mountain Ridge Road (Rt. 601) on the right. The ridge road runs for several absolutely spectacular miles, and connects with Rt. 7 west of Purcellville as it ends.

Bear's Den Overlook – Just before you get to Rt. 7 on your Blue Ridge Mountain Road trip you'll see signs for Bear's Den, a hiker's spot and hostel that also provides access to the Appalachian trail. Pull in. Bear's Den overlook is a short walk/hike from the parking area. It has a large rock formation that also provides a spectacular view of the Shenandoah River, and points west towards Winchester.

Airmont Road – This beautiful byway is called New Cut Road where it leaves the Village of Round Hill heading south, turning into Airmont as it crosses under Rt. 7 west. Along the way, the road shows you some of Loudoun's most beautiful properties and farmsteads and takes you past quintessential country spots, including the Airmont Country Store. Airmont turns into Greengarden Road after it intersects with Trappe Road. And, from there towards Rt. 50 your trip takes you back in time, over narrow dirt pathways and centuries-old bridges. So special. So, Loudoun.

Harper's Ferry – If someone were to ask me to name an absolutely failsafe hike in the area, I'd say, Harpers Ferry. Your canine friends will love it. Lots of trails and places to wander. Food lovers will delight in all the great coffee shops and restaurants. And, people who love to take photos and poke around in historical nooks and crannies can't get enough of it. Easy to find. Head north on Rt. 15 out of Leesburg and let GPS do the rest.

Carter Center Events For February

- ☉ **Monthly Lunch & a Movie** — *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* Friday, Feb. 3, 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. Call 571-258-3407 to pre-register by Noon on February 2.
- ☉ **Pickleball** (Ages 18 and up) Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., on-going
- ☉ **Lyme Support Group** (Ages 18 and up) First Tuesdays from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., on-going
- ☉ **Valentine's Day Dance** (Ages 55 and up) Friday, Feb. 10, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. \$3
- ☉ **Love Songs Performance.** Alice Power and The Hamilton Trio. Tuesday, Feb. 14, 1 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Ages 55 and up)
- ☉ **Jerry's Jukebox** (Ages 14 and up) 2nd and 4th Tuesdays from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., ongoing
- ☉ **Alzheimer's Support Group** (Ages 18 and up) 4th Thursdays from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., on-going.

Hidden Stars By Myles Mellor and Sally York

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
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60						61					62		
63						64					65		

ACROSS

1. Ballyhoo
5. Cut's partner
10. Crescent point
14. Coin featuring Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man
15. Letter opener?
16. "Finnegans Wake" wife
17. ___ Rose
18. Moves a muscle
19. First fugitive?
20. Tells fortunes, in a way
23. Frank kept one
24. Comfortable
25. Nickelodeon staples
28. Sonata, e.g.
30. Primatologist's study
31. Player
33. Finish, with "up"
36. Tamarindo, for one
40. Body shop fig.
41. Greek physician
42. Part of CNN
43. ___ over
44. Horrified
46. Round trip?
49. Ancient musical instrument
51. Likely loser in court
57. Literally, "injured"
58. Boys of books
59. Traveling
60. Anon's partner
61. A rival
62. Tide type
63. Williams and Kennedy
64. Spiraling form
65. White-tailed eagle

DOWN

3. Carbamide
4. "___ Woman," Fleetwood Mac tune
5. Agnolotti and bucatini, e.g.
6. Union station?
7. Serpentine
8. Over, for short
9. How Phileas Fogg traveled
10. Certain beans
11. Deprive of heat?
12. Insinuating
13. Wuss
21. Anger, e.g.
22. Grasshopper sound, var.
25. Newfoundland promontory
26. Body of verse
27. Medical advice, often
28. Arab League member
29. Ballpoint, e.g.
31. Embellish
32. Big club
33. Iris holder
34. Puts in stitches
35. Start with while
37. Banded stone
38. Amscrayed
39. Kind of treatment
43. Foot travelers
44. Knitting pattern, var.
45. Wildebeest
46. Young hooter
47. "The Canterbury Tales" pilgrim
48. Supported
49. Boatload
50. Court call
52. "Heartbreak House" writer
53. Hyperbolic tangent
54. The America's Cup trophy, e.g.
55. Indian bread
56. Create an email

Answers on page 25

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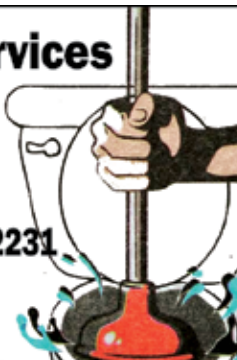
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Valentine's, continued from page 1
 that promote fair trade (in chocolates and flowers) to groups that advocate for the homeless.

But what is this thing called love ... and how do we know that "love" is what we are feeling?

The Most Complicated Of Emotions

People in love relationships are apt to evaluate the strength of their love based on what or how much they or the other person invests in that relationship – and that includes how much money they spend.

But, the way we show our love has a very idealistic side, too. As the old Beatles song says:

Say you don't need no diamond ring and I'll be satisfied, Tell me that you want the kind of things that money just can't buy.

I don't care too much for money, 'Cause money can't buy me love.

So, what is this thing called love? How does it show itself? And, what are some of the finer points about the history behind this day and our most sacred love traditions?

Surveys show that people go into love relationships with very high hopes and lofty expectations. But, those surveys also show that love is based on another person's goodness. People value the goodness they see in themselves; and, when they see those same values in another, they experience love for that person.

Love's Traditions & Origins

Emperor Claudius II did not want Roman men to marry during wartime. A bishop named Valentine refused the emperor's orders, and married people in secret. Valentine was jailed and eventually executed for his actions, an injustice that many see as one of the origins of Valentine's Day.

It was also a man who started the Valentine's card tradition. Charles, Duke of Orleans, was imprisoned in the Tower of Loudoun after being captured in the Hundred Years War. "Je suis Deja d'amour tanne ma tres douce Valentinee ... " (I am already sick of love, my very gentle Valentine), Charles wrote to his wife in the year 1415. It was later recognized as the first Valentine's Day card.

Let's Get Physical

Love is, of course, associated with the human sex drive, but romance and long-term partnerships serve us, too. Romance

helps us focus on our love object and develop connections recognized as special. And, those long-term partnerships provide us with a sense of security. But, the parts of the brain related to love and attractiveness are highly-evolved.

It's not just an instinctual or emotional reaction that draws us to love someone, but, an intricate reasoning process that tells us something about the intentions of others. "He's a man I think I can trust to do right by me," a woman might tell her mother. Clearly, love is not just something that feels good to us, but also something that enhances our quality of life ... maybe even our odds of survival.

Do Animals, Love?

It is unknown whether animals experience romantic love, say researchers.

But, studies show that animals are attached to their owners in ways that go beyond seeing them as a source of food, shelter, and protection.

Researchers describe the relationship between horses and humans as something akin to an "interspecies co-being." Horses and humans have changed and evolved to be a better fit for each other physically as well as emotionally. It is equine science's belief that horses relate to people as individuals, and that people do the same. If a horse could talk, it might say "I get along with Jane, but I absolutely adore her sister Frances!" Cats are more aloof – more distant and less demonstrative in their affection and closeness. But dogs, however, are the kings and queens of the interspecies love relationship. Dog owners stick with their canine 'til the end ... because they know the dog would do the same for them. Dogs, in fact, have been shown to have a primitive understanding of human distress – assuming the role of caretaker, for example, when a person is crying. While cats are generally seen as more aloof than both dogs and horses, they still show preferences for individuals unrelated to factors such as which human provides the food. Finally, animal pairs that have spent a lot of time together often change their behavior when one of them is in need, taking over when their "love" is suffering from illness or incapacity, for example.

Ah ... love ... animal or otherwise ... ain't it grand.

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Dr. Mike, continued from page 1

are not equipped to treat, and most will not even accept, teens with significant mental health struggles and needs. You should also know that military school tuition isn't inexpensive, and if your son is dismissed after being enrolled, a lot of military schools won't refund your tuition. Unfortunately, as a psychologist, I've seen many families lose tens of thousands of dollars in these sorts of moments. In addition to losing money, the wrong sort of placement could actually make things worse for your son as well.

In my opinion, your son needs to be thoroughly evaluated and ASAP. There is a possibility that all he needs is increased structure and discipline away from home for things to improve (i.e. a military school or boarding school setting), but unless you get him evaluated, you won't really know how bad things are for him or what he really needs in order to get better.

If his emotional and/or substance use issues are significant (and it appears they are based on what you've written), and if he remains unwilling to get help locally, and if you feel that you've exhausted all other options, I think you should then take unilateral action as parents on your son's behalf. Similar to if your son had cancer and was refusing treatment that would help him to recover, you would override him at 15 to get him the help he needed. Given what you've shared, your son appears to be on a very steep

downward spiral, and he may be a candidate for a program outside of the home – a residential treatment center, therapeutic boarding school, and/or a wilderness program – and he may need to go away to get better against his will. Yes, he will likely be angry with you initially if you decide to send him to a program, but in the right environment and at the right program he will be evaluated and his needs will finally get addressed; his anger should dissipate as he make progress and improves.

Again, I appreciate the seriousness and the urgency of your moment, and at this point, I strongly recommend that you turn to a professional who specializes in placements in your son's area of need if your son remains unwilling to address his problems with you at home. The School Counseling Group in Washington, DC has been my go-to referral for these sorts of moments for over a decade now. Peter Sturtevant is the director of the group and a top-shelf professional, and he would be a good person to speak to. He can be reached at: 202 333-3530. I also invite you to call me directly at: 703 723-2999 should you have more questions for me or for additional support and guidance.

Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D., is a clinical psychologist in private practice. His new children's book, 'Ollie Outside' is released through Free Spirit Publishing. Go to AshburnPsych.com or call 703 723-2999 for more.

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Answers to puzzle from page 21

1	P	2	L	3	U	4	G	5	P	6	A	7	S	8	T	9	E	10	C	11	U	12	S	13	P		
14	E	U	R	O	15	A	L	16	P	H	A	17	A	18	N	N	A	19		20		21		22			
17	A	X	E	L	18	S	T	I	R	S	19	C	A	I	N	20		21		22		23		24			
20	R	E	A	D	21	S	T	A	R	O	T	22	C	A	R	D	S	23		24		25		26			
25	R	E	R	U	N	S	26	O	P	U	S	27		28		29		30		31		32		33			
30	A	P	E	S	31	G	A	M	E	R	32	U	S	33	I	V	E	R	34		35		36		37		
36	C	O	S	T	37	A	R	I	C	A	N	38	R	39	I	V	E	R	40		41		42		43		
40	E	S	T	41	G	A	L	E	N	42	N	E	W	S	43		44		45		46		47		48		
46	O	R	47	B	I	T	48	C	49	C	O	R	N	50	U	51		52		53		54		55		56	
51	W	E	A	K	E	52	S	T	A	R	G	U	M	E	N	53		54		55		56		57		58	
57	L	E	S	E	58	H	A	R	D	Y	59	A	W	A	Y	60		61		62		63		64		65	
60	E	V	E	R	61	A	N	G	E	L	62	N	E	A	P	63		64		65		66		67		68	
63	T	E	D	S	64	W	H	O	R	L	65	E	R	N	E	66		67		68		69		70		71	



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