

Garden Week bursts open April 21-28

BY ANDREA GAINES

Garden Week is under tremendous pressure to amaze this year. Last month's spring storm brought more snow than many northern Virginia areas had seen in more than two years. And, overall, the winter of 2017/2018 was also pretty chilly,

leaving just about everyone yearning for more daylight and warmer temps.

Thankfully, the weather outlook for April is good. And, as they have for 85 years, the folks behind Garden Week in Virginia are ready to go – rain, or shine, or heaven forbid, snow.



Photo courtesy of Tori Brock

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 » Pink tree peonies.

BY THE NUMBERS

Garden Week

- 85 Years New
- 25,000 visitors annually
- 25 tours statewide
- 2,300 flower arrangements
- 47 Garden Club of Virginia groups represented

For more information go to www.vagardenweek.com

A Fanciful Swing Through Upperville and Paris

Virginia will be the site of 25 Garden Week tours this year, including one featuring four spectacular properties in two of our area's most historic villages – Upperville and Paris.

Hosted by the Fauquier and Loudoun Garden Club and the

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VOTED BEST OF LOUDOUN

New town manager for Purcellville

BY VALERIE CURY

On March 13, the Purcellville Town Council voted to appoint David A. Mekarski as its new Town Manager. Mekarski is the eighth individual to serve in the position since 1975, and replaces Interim Town Manager John Anzivino, appointed by the Council in December for a period of a little more than three months.

Mekarski, a member of the International City/County Management Association and an individual certified by the American Planning Association, was one of 29 candidates applying for the position, and one of three finalists meeting all selection criteria. Mekarski was awarded the position following

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Electioneering dominates March 13 Purcellville Town Council meeting

BY VALERIE CURY

Politics of the most personal and unusual kind dominated the March 13 Purcellville Town Council meeting.

The first 55 minutes of the meeting sounded like any other. As the time for public comments came, however, Dana Thompson, whose

husband, Chris Thompson, is challenging Mayor Kwasi Fraser in the mayoral race, took to the podium—and a marked shift in the mood occurred.

Dana Thompson's statement – in the form of a poem – began in a light-hearted way, but quickly devolved into a political attack on Fraser, de-

scribing him as full of "predetermined pronouncements" and dismissive of long-term protocols. Under Fraser, she said, Town assets had been left to "crumble," while his Administration pushed payments off on "our kids," and disrespected Town staff.

Referring to her husband's

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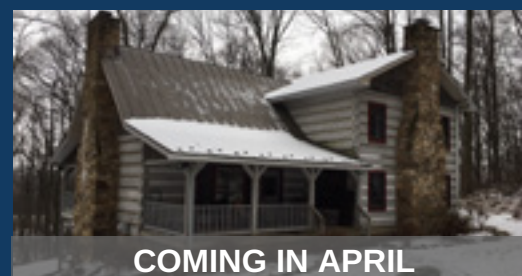
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Delivering Results Via Partnerships

- ★ Partnered with Delegate LaRock to re-open DMV Select service in Western Loudoun County.
- ★ Partnering with Senator Black to evaluate viability of a Veterans Administration Clinic in Purcellville.
- ★ Partnered with the county to secure \$875,000 in funding for the A Street Trail extension from Blue Ridge Middle School to South Maple Avenue.
- ★ Partnered with the county for seamless transition of Fireman's Field management to Purcellville.
- ★ Partnered with the Department of Environmental Quality to receive approval to add 100,000 gallons per day of non-potable water for economic value in Purcellville.
- ★ Partnered with Loudoun County Economic Development, drone operators, and the FAA to enable the advancement of innovative applications in the multibillion dollar UAS industry.
- ★ Partnered with Washington Gas for comprehensive study of the viability of a natural gas pipeline for Purcellville.

Fraser's Proven Record Putting Purcellville's Citizens First

- ★ Slow growth – continue to champion our small town feel and character; avoiding dense up-zoning through haphazard annexation.
- ★ Increased transparency and accountability so our citizens know how their tax dollars are being spent and managed.
- ★ Lowered our debt without relying on increased taxes, fees, unchecked growth and annexations, while maintaining strong credit ratings.
- ★ Saved \$12 Million in debt payments and managed avoidance of 2021 unsustainable balloon outlay.
- ★ Reduced projected water and sewer rate increases by 50 percent for 2018 and beyond.
- ★ Executed new agreement to preserve and protect Fireman's Field and quadrupled its revenue.
- ★ Partnered with state agencies to obtain sustained economic value from reclaimed water and forestry management program.
- ★ Advanced operational audit, a proven investment for **organizational** transformation, improvement and savings.
- ★ Enacted building height limits for Purcellville's Historic Downtown.

Fraser's Goals

- ★ Continue to champion our small town feel and character by opposing unchecked annexation that ignores traffic, water, and school infrastructure impacts.
- ★ Reduce our debt and reduce our taxes through innovative public private partnerships and monetization of Town owned assets.
- ★ Complete a comprehensive transportation and water study with actionable insights for improvement of these critical infrastructure components.
- ★ Strive to keep our general fund revenues exceeding our budget projections and to keep our expenditures below budget.
- ★ Complete our operational audit to improve employee satisfaction and efficiencies and to reduce waste across all town departments for better service delivery to our citizens.
- ★ Partner with the county, state, and federal government to accelerate the Route 690/Route 7 interchange and our other six transportation projects to reduce traffic congestion.
- ★ Advance our broadband initiatives to make fiber and wireless based internet access available to more users, at a rate of 25 megabits per second or greater.
- ★ Implement a connected trail system in Purcellville and a new bike/skate park.

Follow me on Facebook and Twitter
www.fraserformayor.com

Paid for and authorized by Fraser for Mayor.

Purcellville partners with Keep Loudoun Beautiful for community clean-up

The Town of Purcellville once again partnered with Keep Loudoun Beautiful – mid March – to facilitate its annual town-wide clean-up. There were approximately 200 volunteers who collected 186 bags – over ¾ tons – of trash and recycling materials.

Volunteers included Area Coordinator Adam Broshkevitch from Loudoun Valley High School, Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser, Council Member Ted Greeny and Planning Commissioner Tip Stinnette, local boy and girl scout troops, high school students, teachers, business owners, Makersmiths, Loudoun Democrats, Church members, and other neighbors and friends from in and around Town.

A special thank-you goes to Pack Rat Hauling for their participation in the clean-up. Pack Rat Hauling donated a truck and 2 employees to pick up all of the collected trash and recycling bags around Town and to haul them to the recycling center and landfill.



'I had to step up to the plate' for the Kids

National Pitch, Hit & Run April 15

BY ANDREA GAINES

You're only 10 years old, but you have big baseball dreams ...

So, you enter the local Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit & Run, and with lots of hard work, you achieve the highest overall score in pitching, hitting, and running.

That qualifies you for the next step in the competition – the Sectionals.

There, you eke out a spot in the top three for your age division, moving on to the Major League Baseball Team Championships held in all 30 of the country's Major League ballparks in June. And, you're on your way ...

Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit & Run is coming to Loudoun County, thanks to Re-Love It business owners Michael Oaks and Kim Patterson, and the non-profit business organization, Discover Purcellville.

The free national competition – which will be held at Fireman's Field in

Purcellville on April 15 – rockets onto the scene every spring as boys and girls in four age divisions – 7-8-year-olds, 9-10-year-olds, 11-12-year-olds, and 13-14-year-olds – demonstrate their baseball and softball skills.

Event organizer Michael Oaks, who with his wife founded Discover Purcellville, has lasting family memories of taking his nephew to compete in Pitch, Hit & Run years ago, in Miami.

"When I read that the finals would be held during the 2018 All-Star game at Nationals Park, and there was no Pitch, Hit & Run planned for Loudoun County this year, I knew I had to step up to the plate and organize it for the kids here in Purcellville and throughout the County." Nationals Park is the home of the D.C.-based Washington Nationals MLB team.

The competition scores kids on pitching accuracy – throwing strikes

BRMS students win scholastic writing awards

Chloe Anderson, Sarah McFarland, and 19 other students at Blue Ridge Middle School have been awarded Scholastic Writing Awards.

Anderson and McFarland were announced on March 13 as national medal winners for their writing.

Anderson won a national Gold Medal for her short story "Dealing with the Dust," while McFarland won a national Silver Medal for her science fiction/ fantasy story "Dandelion Kisses." These students had their writing selected from among all regional winners from around the United States.

As a national Gold Medal winner, Anderson is invited to the awards ceremony to be held at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Principal Brion Bell said, "Writing matters - we write across all curriculums, highlighting excellence in many areas. We look




Front Left Chloe Anderson, Front Right Sarah McFarland, Back row from left to right, 8th grade English staff, Mrs. Walker, Mr. Kursman, Mrs. White.


forward each year to the Scholastic Writing Contest as a benchmark for our kids. We are so proud of the work of the both our teachers and our student writers."

The Scholastic Writing Awards are

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Finding a home

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

"A friend of mine saw an article about the DSB in the paper..." Cindy Quick says, detailing her first encounter with the Loudoun County Disability Services Board. "You might want to look into this," her friend urged, placing Quick on a path that has led to more than five years of service.

By day, Quick is a realtor, buying and selling homes on behalf of her clients. A Certified Aging-In-Place Specialist (CAPS) and Seniors Real Estate Specialist (SRES), her business includes clientele searching for accessible housing. "[It's a] core part of all of us... finding a home and being comfortable in that home," she says. Her current living situation informs the way she views her work. "As a realtor, there are so few houses I sell every day that provide the universal design features we need to function and age in place," she says.

Quick met her husband, Sonny, during a difficult period in Quick's life. "He was the kindest, he was a gentleman..." she says. Their connection from the beginning proved undeniable. "It was kind of like we had always been together..." she says.

Fifteen years into their marriage, Sonny unexpectedly suffered a stroke. They would not be reunited under the same roof for nearly two and a half years, Sonny spending nearly every waking hour dedicated to physical therapy. "He literally had to learn how to do everything all over again," she says.

Today, they live together once again, although under far from perfect circumstances. "We have lovely landlords...but our house is not ideal," she says. "While it does offer one level living, a ramp is still needed to access the entrance, and the bathrooms and hallways are not wheelchair friendly."

For those looking to buy a home, "there are no quick solutions," she says, before going on to outline the difficulties faced. Door widths are a problem, especially for those confined to a wheelchair. "Town houses don't work for people with mobility problems — they can't walk the stairs," she says. In addition, most homes require months of alterations. Lastly, persons with disabilities are often restrained by limited income, greatly restricting their ability to buy or rent a home.

She is quick to acknowledge, however, that much has been accomplished over



Cindy Quick, Realtor and DSB Chair, with her husband Sonny.

the last several years. "I am thankful to our Board of Supervisors for listening to what we have said..." Recently re-elected to a second term as DSB chair, she remains eager to speak on behalf of those who cannot be heard. "For those people who don't necessarily have a voice, we have to continue to be their advocate," she says.

The Loudoun County Disability Services Board is an advisory body serving at the pleasure of the Board of Supervisors. "Its members work with County staff, community partners, and businesses to strive to make Loudoun an accessible and inclusive community for all people," according to the DSB website. The board is currently accepting applications to fill two vacant positions. For more information, one can visit the following link: <https://www.loudoun.gov/dsb>

Disability services is an issue extending far beyond the disability community. Statistically, no one is immune from becoming disabled. According to recent studies, nearly one in four of today's 20-year-olds will become disabled before reaching retirement age. "I think there is a big denial that this can happen to me," she says. A fact likely contributing to an inability to fathom such a turn of events — until it happens to you. "I had never given thought to any of this...until it affected someone I really cared about," she says.

While their circumstances may have been altered, their love for each other has only grown. "We are so blessed to have him..." she says. They lead full lives, attending events and enjoying time with friends and family. They have five grandchildren who bring much joy to their lives. "I know those five children are more accepting of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

42 Ashburn Elite athletes medaled in AAU Championship

58 Ashburn Elite athletes participated in the AAU Indoor National Track & Field Championship March 9–12. The meet included about 150 top teams from the United States and Canada, ranging from age 5 to 18.

Ashburn Elite athletes won 62 medals. The 13-14 year-old Boys 4x400 Relay (Giovanni, Zevonn, T.J., and Stephen) and the 15-16-year-old Boys 4x200 Relay (Aubreigh, Joey, Christian M., and Jaden B.) both finished first, and are the 2018 National Champions. Earning gold medals and the 2018 National Champions are Madelyn in the 1500m, T.J. in the Hurdles, and Lola in the 3000rw. The following medaled: Heaven,



Ellory, Layla, Danielle, Madelyn, Bailey, Deja, Bryce, Peyton, Asia, Emily S., Finley, Jillian, Kaitlyn, Joy, Jucenia, Olivia, Callie, Sadie, Makenzie, T.J., Giovanni, Stephen, Zevonn, Yukorah, Trinity, Jordan G., Gabrielle, Emma, Sarah, Lola, Aubreigh, Joey, Jaden B., Christian M., Tyler, Belton, Jeremiah, Riley, Roman, Uriya, and Ken.

Supercuts – a super opportunity for the community

BY ANDREA GAINES

John and Judith Lovegrove have done something really special — and really ordinary — for Purcellville. Now both retired from the military, they've opened a Supercuts franchise — the new-style hair salon known for great prices, great service and really talented stylists.

Quite a leap of faith, going from the military to the business of haircuts. But, for the Lovegroves, it is actually the perfect fit, and a good one for the community, too.

The Supercuts franchise — extremely popular with small business entrepreneurs, professional hair stylists, and its customer base — has been around since 1975.

Entrepreneurs Magazine has ranked it "#1 In Haircare" for eight years in a row. It is known for great, super-quick, super professional haircuts at a fantastic price. As franchises have said, Supercuts has "streamlined salon operations down to a science," and works hand-in-hand with its franchisees "to refine the practices that keep us on top."

That formula seems to fit the Lovegroves, whose own military careers instilled in them the importance of precision and a sense of belonging.

"I'm new to this business," said John. "But, I figured, my money could sit in the stock market, or I could invest it another way. Supercuts was a way to do that, and I also saw it as a way to invest in the Town; a local, reliable, honest place to get your hair cut." And, John added, in reference to his wife, Judith, "This is something we can do together."

All of the shop's stylists are professionally trained at a styling academy. They keep records of their clients' style and color

preferences, just like any high-end salon. Their hairstyling products include Paul Mitchell, Biolage, Redken and other premium brands.

Customers are invited to come in for a simple haircut or shampoo, or get a conditioning treatment, blow dry or full styling. They can get their beard trimmed, too, get their greys blended or go for some Supercolor. Supercuts also offers facial waxing and the popular "Tee Tree Experience."

Walk in customers are the shop's mainstay. But, you can sign up for a cut online and get a message on your phone when it's your turn. Get your name on their list, go about your errands, and hop on over when they are ready for you.

The Lovegroves have close ties to the community. They've lived in the area for 15 years and own a small horse farm. "We love it out here," said John.

For that reason, this Supercuts is super community oriented. John remembers growing up playing baseball and knowing that a local business was behind his team with a sponsorship. So Supercuts Purcellville is continuing that tradition by sponsoring local baseball and football teams. "I'm an interesting character," John Lovegrove said at the end of our interview. That's true. But, he is obviously also just a super nice guy who delights in pursuing he and his wife's dreams while doing something good for the community.

Supercuts is located in the new shopping center across from Harris Teeter in Purcellville at 1201 Wolf Rock Drive. They are open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (703) 348-3191, email: PurcellvilleSC@gmail.com.

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New houses clobber the county for \$547,000,000

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

Business schools use the “case study” method of education: Students are given a scenario and asked to formulate a coherent response. The case study method is a good approach to examining all sorts of things, and I used it to examine the effect of housing growth on the County’s budget. This is important not just to the County Treasurer, but to you and me as taxpayers.

OPINION

I’ve analyzed what growth in western Loudoun will cost the County. Envision Loudoun estimates that there will be 7,500 more houses in the west by 2040, its planning horizon. Here are some basic assumptions:

A typical new house will often cost more than \$600,000, but that’s just the number I used. It would pay about \$6,500 in yearly taxes. The

mainstream assumption is that a new house will require \$1.62 in County costs for every \$1.00 it pays in taxes. (Developers paid for their own study showing a lower number, but the \$1.62 figure is the number commonly used.) Consequently, that \$600,000 house will cost the County 1.62 times the \$6,500 paid in taxes, or \$10,530 each year. The County must absorb the \$4,030 annual difference between that amount and the taxes it takes in. New housing costs the County a ton of taxpayer’s money.

Why is housing such an economic loser? And, is the \$1.62 really the right number? I put on my MBA mortarboard to find out.

The County’s total annual cost is mostly for education at \$14,253 per student per year, as requested by the school system. The County assumes there are 3.78 people in each household in western Loudoun. Recent census data shows that there are 0.81 school age youngsters in that average 3.78-person household. That doesn’t mean all 0.81 children will be

in our public schools: Some are home-schooled, some go to private schools, and some of the older ones might have bailed out to the west coast to chill for awhile.

If we assume that 10 percent of school-age kids do not attend public schools, then the 0.73 who do so (90 percent of the 0.81) will cost \$14,253 each. That \$600,000 house costs the County \$10,400 per year ... just for schooling (0.73 times \$14,253). The house pays \$6,500 in taxes but every year it ends up costing Loudoun \$3,900 more than that for education, as I computed it. To check the validity of the \$1.62 figure that’s normally cited, I divided the \$10,400 cost by the \$6,500 in taxes, and I derived a higher amount – new houses cost \$1.73 more than each dollar collected in taxes.

A thorough econometric study would add other annual County expenses – more deputies, more firemen, a bit more of everything. Offsetting that would be some minor taxes the 3.78 people would pay –

local sales tax, meals tax, business licenses, ad nauseum. My opinion is that the \$1.62 figure is too low (sorry, realtors) but I used the familiar \$1.62; it’s close enough.

My calculations attest to the reasonableness of the \$1.62 figure. Using it and not my own higher number, the County suffers an annual loss of \$4,030 per house – forever.

That’s not all. Loudoun County has what it calls a “Capital Intensity Factor” for five planning areas, one being the west. The CIF is the County’s own estimate for all the front-end costs of accommodating a new house: School buildings, fire stations and so on. In the west, the official CIF is \$24,616.

All this can be said succinctly: Each new house costs the County over \$24,600 initially and \$4,030 each year thereafter. But, we are not talking about just one new house in the west – at least 7,500 are “Envisioned” through 2040. Each of those 7,500 houses will cost \$24,616 as they are built, costing the County over \$184 million. Worse, each house costs \$4,030 each year thereafter.

I assumed that these new houses will be built at an even rate of 326 per year until all 7,500 have been constructed, though they would probably be built more rapidly. (I’m

Narratives to explain numbers can be confusing, so trust me on this: Loudoun’s projected growth will cost all county taxpayers far more than we can imagine.

— Charles Houston

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Please include your name,
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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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Civility, cruelty and kindness

Dear Editor:

My family and I live on S. 9th Street. Our otherwise neighborly road was turned into a cut-thru death trap on Sunday, March 11 at 5:10 p.m. when a careless (or worse) driver hit and killed our cat, and then drove on as if nothing had happened. They didn’t stop to give aid to our cat. Nor did they have the decency to try and find out who might have owned this cherished pet.

I have lived at this address for 16 years and the cut through traffic and excessive speeds have been a habitual problem. There have been spot times of reasonable enforcement but lately it’s the wild wild west. The fact this person drove off and left the cat dying right in

front of my house infuriates me!

I’m tempering my words now, because I don’t want to pin this horrible behavior on all drivers. I know we can’t block the cut through traffic in total, but I hope we will get really tough with people who turn neighborhoods into an accident waiting to happen. It is not a cliché to say that while it was a cherished pet this time, it could be a cherished child, next time.

Civility matters – I’m practicing that here. Calling out cruelty matters, too. As does kindness. Drive with kindness, neighbors. Please. And thank you to the Good Samaritan who stopped to help.

Patrick Walsh
Purcellville



Orca

trying to be conservative.) Here’s what that means:

The first 326 houses will cost \$1.3 million that year. In the second year, those first 326 homes again cost the County that \$1.3 million, but there are another 326 houses added, so the second year’s cost is \$2.6 million. This happens in the third and every following year – the County loses money on all the houses previously built, plus another \$1.3 million on houses built in that future year. The forecast shows that by the end of Envision’s study period, these accumulated annual costs will hit the County for almost \$363 million.

Add the initial capital costs - \$184 million – to the \$363 million in annual deficits and the County gets clobbered for \$547,000,000. Heaven help us taxpayers! That’s just for the west. For the entire county, these costs would be stratospheric.

At least the developers will be happy. At \$600,000 per new house, builders would have had sales of \$4.5 billion. Using an average profit margin of 18.9 percent, these folks would have put \$850,000,000 in their pockets.

Those costs are just for western Loudoun, but they (plus the costs of growth elsewhere in the county) are

shared equally by all Loudoun citizens, wherever they live. With the Board of Supervisors election coming up next year, candidates should heed these three words: Stop the growth!

(I hate footnotes but I can’t just say, “Trust me,” so I’ll tell you about my sources. Local papers have often stated the prices of new houses and through Zillow and the County website I could estimate the taxes they pay. Education costs came from the school system and might be slightly high. Persons per household is a County figure. I derived the percentage of those who are in school by using updated Census data for Loudoun County. The Capital Intensity Factor of \$24,616 is a County number. Developers’ profit margins came from an industry website. I have not used inflation or the financial concept of present value because I assume they will offset each other and because I did not include future capital costs as schools and fire stations need rehabilitation. The \$1.62 figure originated from the County and while some claim it’s over-stated, I believe that the County’s true costs are even higher.)

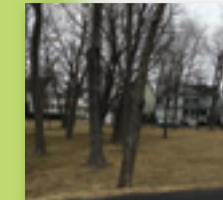
Charles Houston developed office buildings in Atlanta, and has lived in Paeonian Springs for 20 years.



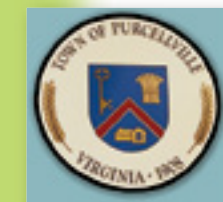
I’d like to Help



Traffic Congestion
As a top priority, I’d work toward finding solutions to relieve the traffic congestion on Main Street, Hirst Road, Maple Ave and many other streets that have problems. I will work hard with VDOT and Loudoun County transportation systems to the benefit of Purcellville.



Growth
Not pro-growth. Not anti-growth. I will listen to proposals and work with local entities that lead to smart, careful and well-managed improvements only. This allows me to be open-minded to all sides in providing solutions. I understand the pressure Purcellville is under, but making blanket promises without knowing all the facts and possibilities in each instance, isn’t being honest. One certain truth is my deep affection for Purcellville, its history and its small-town feel.



Town Council
Reinforce existing town policies and procedures. Section 2-37 of the Town Code is clear that the Town Manager shall give orders to all subordinates and not by members of the Town Council or Mayor. We should have a better use for our tax dollars, rather than on administrative leaves and legal cases.



Our Assets
Fireman’s Field, the Train Station, the Tabernacle are our unique gems that set Purcellville apart. Then there are other assets with potential. The town needs to address these sites and decide how best to use them before they’re too dilapidated to save. Fortunately, Purcellville’s greatest assets are its citizens and businesses – involved, caring, talented, energetic and full of great ideas.



Purcellville’s Reputation
Stop the embarrassment that we’ve endured in the local and national media. We need to repair the damage to our Town’s credibility and move forward by dealing with the issues in a forthright, open and transparent manner. Honesty, again, is so important.

Finally, as your Mayor, it is my pledge to foster a good working relationship between the town and its businesses and to embrace support of this important component of a thriving community.

Let’s Get Purcellville Back on Track.



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Media noisemakers and journalistic intemperance

BY KAREN JIMMERSON

Some local media outlets continue to publish inaccurate and non-factual information – attempting to create drama where there is none, with provocative headlines designed to casually slander Mayor Kwasi Fraser and the Purcellville Town Council.

OPINION

With regards to the operations of the Town, the staff is the administrative body and the Council is the legislative body, i.e., we do not conduct administrative actions.

After the conclusion of the administrative inquiry/investigation, questions arose regarding the validity of the Interim Town Manager's investigation, at which time this Council took swift action; launching an independent investigation by a highly regarded legal and police team. That review continues, and although some members of the public and press wish to place full

blame at the feet of this Council – or allude that things are “out of control” – this is a mischaracterization, and a loaded one at that.

Some choose to believe that the retirement of Purcellville's former, long-serving Town Manager was the catalyst for this, that the Town Council was somehow to blame. That, simply, is not true. No member of this Council or staff – nor any member of the public – could have predicted the series of events that have occurred. And, it is clear that a longstanding lack of managerial oversight on the Town's administrative side was a contributing factor.

I am proud that this council has unanimously taken steps with a new Interim Town Manager to implement processes and policies that will reduce if not prevent an event like this from ever happening again.

Over a year ago, this Council adopted the use of *Ethical Advocate* – an ethics hotline, compliance and training service that allows our

staff the ability to report abuses and concerns within our Town government. We have since learned that while *Ethical Advocate* was never fully implemented, it is now fully operational.

We have also moved forward on a complete and total operational audit that will further a more open and operationally-sound government. The new Town Manager we have brought on board will be the change agent adding to the past four years of progress.

At a recent Town Council meeting, speakers repeatedly stated that Council “hadn't lived here” as long as they had, in a calculated attempt to diminish our voices.

No, I don't think so.

The moment a resident moves to Purcellville ... they have a voice. The moment I was elected to Council, I have a voice on behalf of all – from lifelong townsfolk to newcomers to the 18-year-old casting a ballot in their hometown

election for the first time.

A very determined and insular segment of Purcellville's old guard – including both government officials and entrenched special interests – promoted development that brought in “newcomers.” But, clearly, they didn't want us to have shared power ... a voice ... the essence of how America works ... the essence of Democracy.

We have taken away the ability of some to use this Town for their own personal gain, and they will do and say anything to get that back.

The journalistically intemperate personal attacks on Mayor Kwasi Fraser are part of this, and, frankly, beyond the pale.

I hope voters will see through the media noise makers, and anyone else testing the resolve of the truth.

Karen Jimmerson serves on the Purcellville Town Council and was elected in 2014.

Country charm and modern convenience in perfect balance

BY ANDREA GAINES

Nestled on 6 magnificent acres at the end of a quiet country lane in northern Loudoun County, the property at 43118 Evans Pond Road can only be described in this way: “country life perfectly balanced with modern convenience.”

North of Leesburg just a few miles off of James Monroe Highway/Rt. 15, the stately Potomac River lies just north of you. The property is private yet open, and the home, built in 1987 with great care, is just remarkable – with traditional family spaces including a living room, dining room, family room and foyer, a den/study/library, and a laundry room, a beautiful main floor master bedroom, and second, third and fourth bedrooms and a recreation room.

Style-wise, the home offers soaring cathedral ceilings, crown molding, a gourmet kitchen, large windows, wood floors and a wood stove. All appliances, including the dishwasher, range, front-loading dryer and more are top notch. Recent updates include Marazzi tile, Brookwood cabinets, a KitchenAid stove and refrigerator, a Bosch dishwasher and more. Insulated doors and windows make for cool and cozy all-season interiors. A new brick side patio overlooks the property.

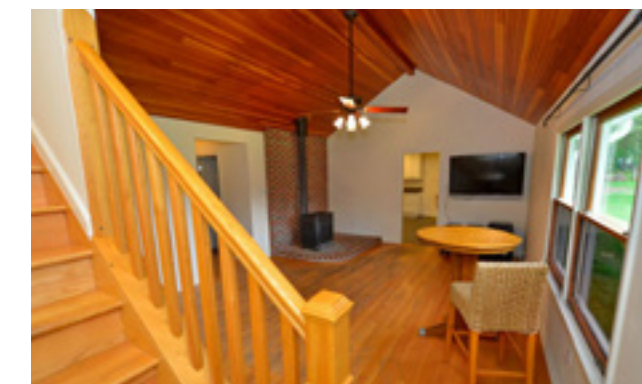
The home, while fairly new, is surrounded by one of the most traditional farm communities in Loudoun



Address: 43118 Evans Pond Rd, Leesburg, VA 20176 (LO10035028)
Beds/Baths: 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths
Total Acreage: 6 acres
List Price: \$589,900
Agent: Sam Rees, 703-408-4261
 OnthemarketwithSamRees@gmail.com
 Ray Rees, 703-470-0608
 OnthemarketwithRayRees@gmail.com
 Associate Brokers, Keller Williams Realty
 Onthemarketloudoun.com

Website:

County. Wineries and historic homes dot the landscape nearby, and the historic spots along Rt. 15 make for a lovely drive in the areas around Lost Corner Road and Farwell Dance Drive.



As the owner, you'll enjoy the living in close proximity to other homes ... but ... surprise, there's no HOA.

From the main floor master bedroom, you can look out on a quiet meadow with a pasture and mature trees. An impressive detached garage can be maintained that way ... or be converted for horses.

There are many newer homes here in Loudoun with some of these features, but not many with all of them, particularly in this picture-perfect location.

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Candidate Forum

Wed., April 11, 6:30-9pm
at the Carver Center
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6:30-7pm appetizers
7-8 pm Mayoral candidates
8-9 pm Town Council candidates

Bring your neighbors, friends and questions!

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Kwasi Fraser

Kwasi A. Fraser is a businessman and entrepreneur who learned the value of hard work at an early age by helping his mother with the daily tasks of her poultry business. For 12 years, he has lived in Purcellville with his wife Angela and their three children. They settled in Purcellville because of its balance of old and new, and its small town warmth. Fraser's professional career includes significant contributions at AT&T, Sprint Nextel, Marriott International, and Verizon, his current employer. He earned an MBA in finance from Rutgers University, a Bachelor of Engineering from Stony Brook University, and has an executive education certificate from Harvard Business School. Also, Fraser is a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and a certified Project Management Professional.

MAYORAL CANDIDATE

Blue Ridge Leader: Some people say that growing Purcellville by annexation is good, because you can control how the land is developed. Do you agree or disagree?
Kwasi Fraser: I disagree. With the exception of a school, all annexations in Purcellville have resulted in development. You annex with the intention for higher

density development than would not have been achievable if the property had stayed in the County with County zoning. The best way to control how land is developed is through zoning. Purcellville's citizens are also citizens of Loudoun County, and we control what is at our borders and beyond by holding our County Board of Supervisors accountable for adhering to responsible zoning.

BRL: What do you think about the idea of "monetizing" Town assets such as Town-owned properties?

KF: The idea of monetizing underperforming assets is common sense. With a town that has a debt burden of over \$55 million and with over \$120 million worth of Town-owned assets, it would be unwise not to explore ways to monetize some of these assets through lease, sale or some public/private partnership arrangement to generate revenue to decrease its debt. Our taxpayers should not have to service this debt with their hard earned money when we can monetize existing underperforming assets to service it. Under my leadership and actions this year, we have generated over \$1 million of non-tax revenue by



monetizing our real and cash assets as follows:

- \$344,718 in non-tax revenue through our forestry management selective cut program
- \$300,000 revenue to the Wastewater Fund from sale of an underperforming asset
- \$150,000 in revenue from leasing of our water tower to cellular carriers
- \$120,000 revenue from the Fireman's Field Public Private Partnership
- \$107,000 in revenue from investing our cash reserves in the Virginia Investment Pool

Simply put, monetizing assets allows us to extract value from Town-owned assets to avoid tax increases.

BRL: How would you reduce Purcellville's debt?

KF: My key strategies for reducing our debt are to continue to pursue initiatives to reduce wasteful spending, and to monetize underperforming Town-owned assets via lease, sale, or some public/private partnership arrangement. These strategies are my common sense approach to not relying on that old unsustainable strategy of high density development through annexation, wishing it will rain for every house that is built and not giving thought to any transportation impacts. This past budget cycle, expense reduction resulted in \$324,558 in utility enterprise fund cost-avoidance. Monetization of our assets over the past year resulted in over \$1 million in revenue that did not come from our taxpayers' pockets. Combined, these strategies freed up more cash to continue our four-year trend of debt reduction.

BRL: What would you do to reduce

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 >



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Lovettsville
-  43 Greenway Ave S, Boyce
-  16646 Mandileigh Lane,
Hamilton
-  19862 Mellon Cir, Ashburn
-  43118 Evans Pond Rd, Leesburg
-  Mountain Rd, Purcellville
Powers Homes
-  38600 Morrisonville Road, Lovettsville

Sam: 703-408-4261 | Ray: 703-470-0608 | onthemarketwithsamrees@gmail.com | onthemarketwithrayrees@gmail.com
Associate Brokers with Keller Williams Realty. Find us at onthemarketloudoun.com



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FRASER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

Purcellville's water rates?

KF: The reason behind Purcellville's high water and sewer rate was the former Town Council's (prior to my election) choice to upgrade the Town's wastewater treatment plant which resulted in over \$30 million of debt. Consequently, the current rate payers have the burden of paying that debt through increased fees. With our recent debt restructuring, we were able to reduce the projected double-digit water and sewer rate fee by more than 50 percent.

Ongoing, I will continue to pursue innovative and public/private partnerships to generate additional revenues to repay the debt and to reduce the fees. For example, given the recent approval from the Department of Environmental Quality to allow us to reclaim 100,000 gallons per day of treated water, I will pursue opportunities to market and sell this water for irrigation, construction, and industrial uses throughout Loudoun County and beyond. Further, I am advancing efforts to generate lease revenues from the 189-acre Aberdeen property, as well as targeting the estimated \$160 million equine industry, the estimated \$32.4 billion market for drone-powered solutions in agriculture, and the agricultural tourism industry. With the right partnerships, we will be able to generate sufficient revenue to reduce our water rates.

BRL: Do you believe the Fireman's Field tax is a fair tax?

KF: It's not a fair tax, and I remain committed to reducing it. When instituted under prior administrations, it was not packaged and sold as a property tax although it resulted in a 17 percent increase in the property taxes [that] all of our residents and businesses have to pay, even if they do not use the field, because it's based on their assessed property values. Owing to the recent management agreement with Shaun Alexander Enterprises and Play to Win, we are able to implement the first reduction in the Fireman's Field tax.

BRL: How does an Operational Audit of Purcellville benefit the Town?

KF: Four years ago, I pushed for an operational audit to establish a baseline on where we were operationally, and what needed to be improved. During the next two years, I faced opposition from the then-Town Council and management who called my recommendation a witch hunt, and claimed that it would be disruptive to ongoing operations. After the 2016 election, I gained support from the new majority Town Council, but still faced objection from the then-management, still claiming that it would be too disruptive. Finally, with an Interim Town Manager who has previously led such efforts without disruption to operations, we have been able to advance a request for proposal. This Operational Audit will benefit our community by a comprehensive review and assessment of

Purcellville's current organizational structure, our operations, and our service delivery policies, practices, processes, and levels of staffing, to result in increased efficiencies as the Town works to meet current and future service demands. This has been long overdue, and we finally have management and the Town Council all on board.

BRL: How would you increase broadband service for residents and businesses?

KF: To enable ubiquitous 25 megabit per second or greater broadband for residents and businesses, I will continue to support and to encourage the strategy led by Vice Mayor Ogelman and Council Member Karen Jimmerson to explore and to implement fiber optic and wireless connectivity solutions. Under my leadership, we were able to achieve the following, and we have momentum on our side:

1. Obtained budgetary pricing from two of the major carriers to provide broadband throughout the Town
2. Implemented a Town-operated free Wi-Fi extension model that would allow any businesses and residents in the vicinity of the signal to access the internet. This initiative can be easily replicated with the schools in Purcellville to extend Wi-Fi broadband-based coverage to adjacent neighborhoods
3. Advanced a strategy that will require our Public Works and contractors to assess the viability of laying fiber optic conduits during all major excavation projects to create a fiber optic ring that the Town could lease to service providers
4. Ordered fiber optic-based broadband service at our Water Treatment plant

BRL: What makes you qualified to run for Mayor of Purcellville?

KF: I am qualified to run again for Mayor of Purcellville because of my selfless commitment to the people of Purcellville over the past four years, learning and understanding the DNA of the Town, keeping my promise to prevent high density growth and annexation that will compromise our small town charm and character, reducing our debt, increasing non-tax revenues, lowering taxes and fees for our citizens and businesses, and cutting wasteful spending. In addition, my professional, practical, and educational experience, including the deployment of a nationwide Long Distance network, enterprise risk management leadership, Lean Six Sigma Black Belt practice, MBA in Finance, and Project Management Professional certification, uniquely qualifies me to lead and navigate our Town through the next two years of immense opportunities and challenges – and I humbly ask for your vote May 1.



★ Chris Thompson

Chris Thompson and his artist wife Dana make Purcellville their home. They have two adult children, Chris Jr. and daughter Kyle. Chris earned a BS in Business Administration from WVU. Thompson is a former small business owner and has worked for the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development Code Enforcement since 1994.

MAYORAL CANDIDATE

Blue Ridge Leader: Some people say that growing Purcellville by annexation is good, because you can control how the land is developed. Do you agree or disagree?

Chris Thompson: Growth by annexation is only one method of growth. I think it would be irresponsible to flatly say "yes" or "no" to annexation without context, but it is forever the question! I would prefer not to see our Town annex any land. Only if the citizens determine it is a benefit, would I consider annexation. The Mayor is only one voice in the process of approving annexations in conjunction with the Town Council and, now, the County. The loudest voice must

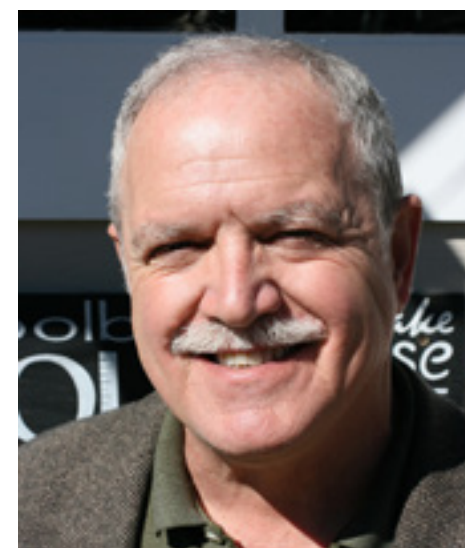
come from the citizens in determining the future of Purcellville.

BRL: What do you think about the idea of "monetizing" Town assets such as Town-owned properties?

CT: Yes, I would consider the process of monetizing our assets, if it makes economic sense to the citizens of the Town. This would be done only after a careful analysis of the benefits for both the short- and long-term. The Town should always be aware of, and take reasonable advantage of, opportunities to utilize our assets in multiple ways, including generating income.

BRL: How would you reduce Purcellville's debt?

CT: For the most part, there are limited methods of reducing debt; you can accelerate payments, sell assets and apply the proceeds to curtail the debt, or take advantage of refinancing options. I would take a long-term approach, and stress the importance of bringing spending under control. We can control spending.



With the revenue the Town is generating now (outside of property tax), we can use those proceeds to reduce the debt by not using them for projects not required by the Town. Town leaders have to be careful about refinancing debt. While refinancing may provide a short-term advantage of reducing the periodic payments, unless the money saved is applied to accelerate the payments, one is simply "kicking the can down the road."

BRL: What would you do to reduce Purcellville's water rates?

CT: As Mayor, I will assure the expenditures for operating and maintaining the facilities

are reasonable, necessary, and prudent. As these are fixed costs, providing services to the citizens, they can only be modified marginally, meaning there is no "silver bullet" in reducing rates. Since rates reflect the cost of operations, any efforts to reduce rates will require constant and vigilant monitoring of all aspects of the system.

BRL: Do you believe the Fireman's Field tax is a fair tax?

CT: Fireman's Field has many proven benefits to the citizens of the Town, including economic development. The Babe Ruth Baseball tournaments and the Purcellville Cannons baseball team are just two examples. Due to these extraordinary benefits, the Fireman's Field tax is a tax I would always prefer to pay. In addition, many, many volunteer hours were spent to improve the facility and make it what it is today, all at minimal cost to the citizens. Fireman's Field is a true gem, something you will not find replicated anywhere in Virginia. To

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14 >

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THOMPSON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

maintain the integrity of that effort, yes, I support the continuation of the tax, which funds the operations of a public asset that benefits and is loved by all. I believe the tax is fair.

BRL: How does an Operational Audit of Purcellville benefit the Town?

CT: The benefits of conducting an operational audit for the Town of Purcellville are in reviewing the overall effectiveness of how the Town operates, and assessing the operational efficiency to set program goals and identify system needs for the future. One purpose for an audit would be to improve the efficiency of the day-to-day operations of the Town. A properly prepared operational audit will identify areas that require improvement.

An operational audit would also be an effective tool for identifying strengths and weaknesses in the system. I also think the timing has to be right for conducting the audit. Purcellville now has a new Town Manager, and he should be given an adequate amount of time to introduce himself to the staff and implement his plan.

BRL: How would you increase broadband service for residents and businesses?

CT: I have to admit it is interesting how technology improvements are becoming a "must" to Americans. One can argue that providing broadband is not a government

function, but one for business. The Town of Purcellville is in the business of providing basic public services such as police protection, water and sewer utilities, and trash pick-up. However, the Town owes it to its citizens to encourage other amenities and basically not "get in the way," but to make them easier to achieve from the private sector, such as cell phone and microwave antennas affixed to the Town's water tower.

BRL: What makes you qualified to run for Mayor of Purcellville?

CT: I believe that one of my unique qualities is my life-long connection to the Town. This gives me institutional knowledge of how the Town works and why the citizens so revere this Town. It is one of the reasons I never moved away. Secondly, coupled with my degree in Business Administration, I feel I am prepared for the challenge. I also feel I have the ability to listen, which is a necessary tool when resolving problems. As Building Code Operations Manager for the County, I interact daily with the citizens of Loudoun and help them find solutions that provide safety in homes and businesses. Finally, I believe I am considerate, honest, prudent, and thoughtful — all qualities that are urgently needed at this point in leadership.

Joel Grewe



Joel Grewe has lived and worked in Purcellville for more than a decade. Grewe is a graduate of Eastern Washington University and the Director of Generation Joshua. Grewe has also served on his HOA board as needed since 2011. He and his wife Christie spend their days staying one step ahead of their three boys.

TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATE

Blue Ridge Leader: What will your top three legislative priorities be as a member of the Purcellville Town Council?

Joel Grewe: First, I want to resolve the investigative mess that our Town has been suffering through. There are conflicting accounts of what happened. The details are confusing; in some cases, they make a soap opera look straightforward. And they include crucial topics that can only be discussed by navigating a maze of

legal and ethical requirements. We must finish navigating those — and then we must provide a full, honest account of what happened, so that we can restore the community's trust.

Second, I will pursue a long-term solution to our growing traffic problems. Our Town has grown, but our infrastructure has not kept pace. In particular, we need to accelerate the installation of the 690 interchange. This is the next logical step in managing traffic for Town residents. It provides access to Rt. 7 without funneling most of northern Purcellville's traffic onto Main Street or Hirst Road. It will also allow nonresident traffic to drive to Woodgrove High School without going through Main Street.

Third, I will hold the Council to their



responsibility to promptly address the concerns and needs that its residents bring to us. They should not have to wait two or more years to get permission for minor, non-controversial adjustments to Town plans.

BRL: What is your vision for Purcellville in the future?

JG: My vision is for Purcellville to keep being a place where people can raise their families, where my boys can grow up, and where they'll want to return to. I want us to maintain our commonsense, small-town community—but we also ought to have a well-managed, adaptable infrastructure that can support the needs of residents and businesses without bankrupting them with high utility costs. And I want us to plan five to 10 years ahead in our finances, so we can take care of that infrastructure without causing extensive fiscal pain and drama for the Town.

BRL: What is your experience developing and managing budgets?

JG: I'm the director of Generation Joshua, a nonprofit here in Purcellville that teaches students about civics, ethics, and American government. In that position I oversee between five and eight budgets on an annual basis. For each one, I develop a strategic plan, forecast our likely costs and revenue, develop one or more potential budgets, make sure they comply with overlapping legal requirements from all 50 states and multiple federal agencies, and then oversee the execution of those budgets on a day-to-day basis.

BRL: What are some cost-saving measures the Town could take to reduce the Town debt?

JG: So far, the central cost saving measure I've found is to diversify our sewer utility costs by selling sewer services outside of the town. I think it's one of the best ways to remedy our extremely high utility rates. We need to pay down our utility debt—but we need to do so without raising our Town's sewer rates.

BRL: What do you consider qualifications for Purcellville's elected officials?

JG: Officials should demonstrate prudence, common sense, dignity, and graciousness toward others. They should have a record of thoughtful decision making, paired with genuine humility. They should also have some experience in leadership and management—familiarity with budgetary oversight is a must. Preferably, they should have lived in

Purcellville for at least five years.

BRL: What is the impact of more annexations on Purcellville?

JG: There are some practical challenges we would need to address if we choose to annex additional land into the Town. For example, do we have the water and sewer utility capacity to support a border expansion? What will the annexation do to our traffic? What sort of zoning does the annexed land come with? These are the kinds of detailed, practical questions we would have to carefully consider before expanding the area of responsibility that the Town must manage.

Annexation may bring both good and bad consequences with it. No one wants to contribute to Purcellville's rush hour—my commute working and living in Town has doubled since I moved here. But annexation may allow us to distribute our utility costs across a larger consumer base, which would ease our utility costs. That's no small thing. We know that the state average for sewer rates in Virginia in 2017 was \$8.54 per 1000 gallons, while our costs are \$15.19 per 1000 gallons—more than 75 percent higher than the state average. As young families move to Purcellville, the average age of residents continues to drop, and those families are particularly vulnerable to high utility costs.

Our town is growing; no one disputes that. The question we face going forward is whether we want our growth to happen haphazardly and painfully, or if we want to look carefully at the challenges and prepare for them in a way that preserves this wonderful town we all call home.

BRL: Tell us something about you that you would most like voters to know.

JG: I just want to say that I love this town. When my wife and I moved to Loudoun, even before we started a family, we looked at houses all across Loudoun and Clarke Counties, and even up into Maryland. Out of all the places we went, only Purcellville had that amazing combination of small town mixed with the services, accessibility, and location our young family needed. I believe that our best days are ahead of us, and together we can guide Purcellville into a wonderful future. It would be my great privilege to serve the residents of Purcellville on the Town Council, and I humbly ask for your vote on May 1st.

Steve Warfield

TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATE

Steve Warfield has lived in Western Loudoun since 2001, and in Purcellville the past four and one-half years, with his 14-year-old twins who attend Loudoun Valley High School. Warfield has a Bachelor of Science degree from Cornell University, and has attended Cleveland Marshall College of Law. He has been both

a corporate executive and a principal of a small firm primarily engaged in capital expenditure deployment and allocation, in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. He is currently a Marketing Manager for Costco. He is a member of the Purcellville



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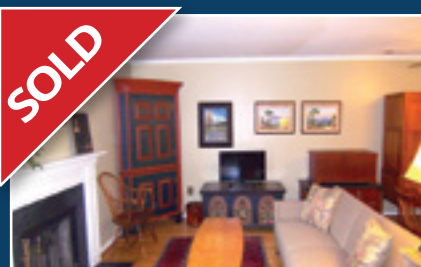
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WARFIELD, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

Business Association, the Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce, the Loudoun Golf and Country Club, and the St. Francis HOA Board of Directors.

Blue Ridge Leader: What will your top three legislative priorities be as a member of the Purcellville Town Council?

Steve Warfield:

1. Turmoil: We have to resolve our serious personnel issues and put them in the rear-view mirror. This needs to be done fairly, rationally, succinctly, and with open minds. The continuing investigation and resolution needs to be not about blaming, "witch hunting," or airing "dirty laundry," but about reaching mutually-acceptable outcomes. Those of us who will be new to Council need to be understanding of the feelings of those who were here, but also mindful of trying to keep

those feelings at bay.

2. Taxes: Impacted by the turmoil, the real estate tax rate has already been advertised at \$.24 per \$1,000, even though the proposed FY 2019 Budget calls for \$.22 per \$1,000. This is the start of a contingency plan for the ongoing operational costs and expected settlement costs caused by the turmoil. I believe the total will be at least \$500,000, and could hit seven figures. We are losing gas tax revenues (\$145,000 LY) to Metro funding. We are also losing a source for road improvements due to \$145,000,000 in Northern Virginia Transportation Authority funding being diverted to Metro. We may be feeling temporarily better about water and sewer bills, but there is a curve ball ahead. Our ongoing fees we pay collectively account for 43 percent of our annual



water and 58 percent of our sewer budgets. Virtually all of the rest comes from bringing on new users to the systems.

3. Traffic: We have to get our head out of the sand on this issue. It is getting worse, nothing has been done to help it, and worse yet, there really is no concrete planning being done. Is the Rt. 690 interchange for real? How soon? What will it look like? We need to work with our county, state, federal legislators, and the NVTVA to get and help shape the answers. As I gather more information, I will keep an open mind. But, from what I know, there are strong odds it will not happen. And if so, it is 8 to 12 years out. Permitted development within the Town - and more importantly, all of the growth by-right (houses with school-aged children) in the area served by our two high school districts - will make our existing peak-hour traffic failures of today look minor. We need to take measures to improve Main Street, Hirst, Maple, and most importantly, the existing Rt. 287 interchange. Any and all proposed new development that is not by-right should be

prepared to offer substantial peak-hour improvement (not just mitigate what they add). If they do not, they will be wasting their time and ours.

BRL: What is your vision for Purcellville in the future?

SW: If we can overcome the three challenges listed above, my vision of the future for Purcellville is that it will look a lot more like it does today in 2038, than it did in 1998. Our boom is over, we need to protect and preserve our historic areas. We need to accept the fact that we do serve all of Western Loudoun; and the natural trade area for the businesses here are the school district lines. That is why we have three supermarkets and 40 restaurants, it is not just the town residents. Infill and redevelopment should pay for the benefits of trade areas they tap, and we should continuously find ways increase our sources of revenue from non-residents. We should embrace the agritourism growth that is occurring around us for two reasons. It increases our revenue and the strength of our business community, primarily in the summer and on weekends (non-peak hour traffic). It continues to eat up acreage that would otherwise be converted to McMansions. I would like to see more

activities for our children and a town that is much more bike/pedestrian friendly.

BRL: What is your experience developing and managing budgets?

SW: I have developed, prepared, reviewed, and managed budgets throughout my corporate and entrepreneurial career. This includes short-term operating budgets, long-term budget projections, and capital budgets. My education includes a Bachelor of Science from Cornell University in Economics and Business Management.

BRL: What are some cost-saving measures the Town could take to reduce the Town debt?

SW: We need to put the Town's unused assets (in Town and north of Town) to better use. We need to move forward with a professional "organizational assessment" as soon as possible. Sixty-four percent of the total budget relates to employee costs. I want the new Town Manager to be sure we have all of the staff properly deployed, adequately taken care of, motivated, and on-board with their individual and departmental goals. We should be sure we are collecting taxes in the most cost-effective manner. I would look at the

large shift in employee charge back costs in recent years, to the benefit of our Utility Services Budget and the detriment of the Town General Budget. I will also be sure that such budget items, such as \$60,000 to replace trees in one easement, is necessary. And, when we cite increased concessionaire revenue, we net-out our \$50,000 per year maintenance obligations.

BRL: What do you consider qualifications for Purcellville's elected officials?

SW: The desire to meet the challenges ahead to keep Purcellville as one of the best small towns in America for one simple reason, you love living here! Each member should be an independent thinker, a voracious reader of materials before Council, willing to listen to all viewpoints, and willing to express themselves with forethought and understanding. They should be gracious in accepting the fact that they will not always be in the majority. Be able to support the Town Manager to help him

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 >

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WARFIELD, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

create an atmosphere at Town Hall that creates an economically efficient, professional staff that fully understands that their mission is to take care of the taxpayers. They must have the financial acumen to fully participate in the budgeting process.

BRL: What is the impact of more annexations on Purcellville?

SW: Any annexation can only have the impact we allow it to have (if we annex it, we control it). As I have already stated, a proposal that needs Council support will need to have a significant positive impact to our peak-hour traffic issues, or it will be a non-starter. I do not see annexation as a panacea.

BRL: Tell us something about you that you would most like voters to know.

SW: We have a great Town, but we need to maneuver through some speed bumps. I am running because I care, I want this to remain a great, affordable place to live. For me, it is not about ego. You will not see me run for higher offices in the future. I have elected not to ask or accept campaign contributions, because each time I cast a vote it will be because I believe it is the best choice for the future of our Town.

Ted Greenly

In November of 2017, Ted Greenly was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Purcellville Town Council. He serves on the Council's Tree and Environmental Sustainability Committee and is the Town's representative on the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's Planning Coordination and Advisory Committee. Greenly's wife Joy is a small business owner in Purcellville, and his son attends Emerick Elementary School. They have lived in Purcellville for nine years. Greenly is a military veteran, and has over 30 years of combined federal service time.



Blue Ridge Leader: What will your top three legislative priorities be as a member of the Purcellville Town Council?

Ted Greenly: Traffic improvements are high on my priority list. I want to work

with the County leadership toward full completion of the Rt. 7/690 interchange. This will improve other intersections and routes in Town, and the sooner we can get this done, the better. I would like to explore securing federal, state, and county monies to fund Town projects that are beneficial, not just for Town residents, but the County residents who fill our Town daily. Maintaining water and sewer rates that keep Purcellville affordable for all residents, is also very important to me.

BRL: What is your vision for Purcellville in the future?

TG: I want to see Purcellville maintain the small town charm that attracted many of our town residents. We can't ignore the fact that we live in a fast-growing region. And, we should pursue economic development appropriate to the scale and character of our town, protect our neighborhoods, the quality of our environment, and the historic character of our downtown. I want to see the Town retain our high level of service for residents and keep taxes reasonably low. With respect to the ongoing investigations in Purcellville, for now, I am focused on seeing the investigations through and helping our Council continue doing great things for our citizens.

BRL: What is your experience developing and managing budgets?

TG: I have developed and managed budgets during my entire working life, which has ranged from delivering IT services to maintaining existing transportation and other infrastructure. I want to see Purcellville practice and participate in more robust cost projections, so we can plan for future expenditures, and align those expenditures with our budget.

BRL: What are some cost-saving measures the Town could take to reduce the Town debt?

TG: As mentioned above, seeking increased opportunities to use federal, state, and county funds would go a long way towards maximizing Town cost-saving measures. The current effort to restructure existing debt is a wise move, and I would continue to support those efforts. Other less complex measures could involve installing solar energy panels on Town property, and/or seeking partnerships with Round Hill or Hamilton with respect to the delivery of public services.

BRL: What do you consider qualifications for Purcellville's elected officials?

TG: I am struck by the similarity between the Council candidates and our Town's stated goals and desires. We want safety and security, a high level of Town services,



M. F. "Tip" Stinnette

Tip Stinnette has lived in Purcellville for eight years and is the Chair of the Purcellville Planning Commission. He is a retired United States Air Force colonel and federal executive with more than 35 years of leadership experience. Stinnette is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute and has two master's degrees – one in Strategic Planning and one in Public Administration. He and his wife Pat have a daughter, Elizabeth.



hearings. Once adopted, this plan will set the foundation for how we want our town to fit into the larger context of Loudoun County.

We need to launch a Transportation Plan that addresses vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian interests. This plan should complement the Comprehensive Plan and play an integral role in infrastructure improvements.

We need to decrease the tax burden on our community. Lowering restaurant taxes, water and sewage rates, and personal property taxes will require us to decrease our budget requirements and increase our revenue opportunities.

BRL: What is your vision for Purcellville in the future?

TS: To strengthen and preserve Purcellville, protecting its place in western Loudoun County as a sustainable small community.

Blue Ridge Leader: What will your top three legislative priorities be as a member of the Purcellville Town Council?

Tip Stinnette: We need to complete and adopt a 10-year Comprehensive Plan that represents the will of our community. A large part of this includes inviting citizens to contribute their ideas through public

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21



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a healthy economy, to improve things where needed, and to preserve the things we all cherish. I am not just running because I fell in love with this town. I am running because I chose to be part of it.

First and foremost, we must listen to Town residents. I believe a community should tackle its toughest issues by first identifying common ground, and then, by building upon that. Elected officials must be willing and able to devote time to addressing our pressing issues, and should strive for open, transparent communication. Purcellville is a friendly, caring community. And, whenever possible, elected officials should engage with local business owners and residents. In other words, we need to be the voice at the table for our residents.

BRL: What is the impact of more annexations on Purcellville?

TG: Long a source of political ire, annexation should not be done solely for financial reasons – as growth does not pay for itself. The first step in any annexation proposal should be an analysis to determine its viability. What is the consequence in terms of population growth? What are the topographic features of the land? Is it fiscally feasible? Most importantly, what is the number and kinds of services and facilities that the Town would need to

invest to support growth – and, how much will it cost the Town to supply services to the particular types of uses being proposed. Purcellville should strive to not over-extend its boundaries to the point where demands for services and facilities will drain our coffers and raise taxes. Recent surveys, and feedback from the public for the Comprehensive Plan, have consistently told us that citizens want Purcellville to remain a small town, and I am committed to listening to the citizens.

BRL: Tell us something about you that you would most like voters to know.

TG: I am dedicated to the Town of Purcellville. Serving on the Tree and Environment Committee, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Advisory Committee and the Town Council has given me the opportunity to represent the great citizens of this great Town. My family and I picked Purcellville because of its wonderful small town charm and close proximity to Washington, D.C. I remain consistent in keeping with the citizens' vision for Purcellville, and ask for your vote on May 1.

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GARDEN CLUBS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Leesburg Garden Club, three properties never before open to the public as part of this year's Garden Week.

The properties, on tour Sunday April 22, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. and Monday, April 23, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. include:

Ovoka Farm, a late 18th Century home and property surrounded by 2,000 acres of protected land. Ovoka was part of the George Carter land grant of 1731 and surveyed by the first President of the United States – George Washington – as a young man.

Kenilworth, a 19th Century fieldstone home, has a dramatic tree-lined drive, a pond and other points of interest. The property played a prominent role in the Civil War's Gettysburg Campaign.

Peace and Plenty at Bollingbrook, a stunning property with seventeen fully restored buildings, includes a circa 1800s Gothic-style church;

Foxlease Farm, an equestrian estate with outdoor gardens and features inspired by the world-famous



Flower arrangement with Lenten roses, peonies and hydrangeas.

Belgian landscape designer Jacques Wirtz, showcases "clouds" of boxwood that seem to move and flow across the property; modern-day "green architecture."

Also part of the tour is Middleburg's National Sporting Library & Museum – the guardian of centuries worth of equestrian, angling and field sports art, literature and research ... framed by beautiful outdoor boxwood gardens and traditional barnwork architecture.

Four other points of interest are in the area, too – the Historic Goose Creek Bridge on Rt. 50 in between Upperville and Middleburg, the Caleb Rector House, just off Rt. 50 at Atoka Rd., and Trinity Episcopal Church, on Rt. 50 in Upperville. There's also Sky Meadows State Park on Edmonds Rd. in Delaplane. Proceeds from Garden Week help fund Sky Meadow.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 •

STINNETTE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

BRL: What is your experience developing and managing budgets?

TS: As a colonel in the Air Force I was recognized for my leadership of a military base larger than Purcellville. I have extensive experience in developing and remaining within a multimillion-dollar budget.

BRL: What are some cost-saving measures the Town could take to reduce the Town debt?

TS: The recent restructuring of the Town's debt was a significant cost-savings measure. I also support the effort to leverage existing assets, such as leasing the water tower to telecom businesses who would like to use it as an antenna relay. We should also work closely with our local businesses to pursue mutually beneficial opportunities.

BRL: What do you consider qualifications for Purcellville's elected officials?

TS: The key qualifications of an elected official are the abilities to listen to, communicate, and perform the will of constituents. I believe another important aspect of being a Purcellville elected official is having a sense of and appreciation for the history of our town. My experience reading past and current Comprehensive Plans provides me with a unique insight on the evolution of our community interests.

BRL: What is the impact of more annexations on Purcellville?

TS: As a member of the Town's Planning Commission, we have discussed annexation extensively. Population growth in Loudoun County will continue. As commuting options increase, this growth will continue to move west. We must strengthen our collaboration with the County so we can address this population growth as it encroaches on our town. Discussion of annexation should be condition-based. In other words, we need to understand the potential impact on our infrastructure and services and ultimately determine the will of our community.

BRL: Tell us something about you that you would most like voters to know.

TS: I am a 20-year citizen of the Commonwealth and a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute. Over the course of 15 military moves I have always appreciated the contributions of my elected officials and would like to pay those contributions forward by helping make our community stronger.

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TOWN MANAGER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a series of interviews and discussions with the three finalists over a three-week period. That effort was led by a Town leadership team comprised of the Town Council, Town Department Heads and other key staff.

Said Mekarski after the meeting, "I've always loved the Blue Ridge region and western Loudoun County. As soon as I drove into Purcellville, it reminded me of the area where I grew up."

"When I began to examine the Town of Purcellville, I found a Town that had strong leadership at the Council level, and had gone through the necessary exercise to define goals, objectives, and strategy to spell success, but clearly lacked the administrative leadership to pull together what I accessed was a competent, intelligent management team. I am truly excited, and looking forward to making Purcellville my home for both myself and my family. I am anxiously waiting the opportunity to roll up my sleeves to work vigorously to protect and enhance Purcellville's quality of life," he said. Mekarski has been in management positions at the local government level for more than 20 years.

Mayor Kwasi Fraser noted that the Council had a difficult choice in narrowing the candidate pool to one finalist, due to the strong body of work of each and the variety of experiences they brought to the Town and the interview process.

As part of the final decision, Fraser noted: "With over two decades of municipal management, David Mekarski brings to our town a wealth of professional, practical,

and educational experiences to successfully guide Purcellville through the challenges and opportunities before us. He has demonstrated leadership in the areas of crisis management, revenue enhancement, business development, and comprehensive, long-range planning. During his tenure



David A. Mekarski

as the City Manager of Vero Beach ... he led his community through two unprecedented natural disasters - within a 30-day period. As the Village Administrator for Matteson, Illinois, Mr. Mekarski's re-energized the local business economy and expanded the local economic base. As our new Town Manager, Mr. Mekarski will be committed to becoming involved with the social fabric of our

community, giving what I call 'voice and volume' to the needs of our citizens, and leading our town operations to continue the delivery of best-in-class services."

Mekarski, who also served for 11 years as Village Manager for the south Chicago suburb of Olympia Fields, Illinois, started his career as a Planner in Slidell, Louisiana. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from the State University of New York, Buffalo and two Master's Degrees, one in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of New Orleans and the second in Public Administration, from Oakland University in Michigan. In addition, Mekarski has attended the Harvard School of Government Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government. He has led numerous innovative economic development and planning efforts, receiving a "best practices" award for the creation of an economic development strategy.

Mekarski will begin his duties in Purcellville in mid-April.

WRITING AWARDS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

a prestigious program recognizing the work of seventh through twelfth graders in the United States. They have been in existence since 1923 and have been an initial proving ground for famous American writers such as Sylvia Plath, Truman Capote, and Stephen King.

All 21 students, including Anderson and McFarland, won awards for the Southeast Region-at-Large, which means their writing was competing with the work of other students throughout Virginia and several other states.

The highest award in regional competition is the Gold Key. The Gold Key is awarded only to the top 5-7 percent of regional submissions, and students whose work was selected for this honor went on to compete at the national level. This year, BRMS has nine Gold Key winners:

in addition to Anderson and McFarland, Amelia Abbe won a regional Gold Key for personal essay; Patrick Stevenson, for critical essay; and Afia Paracha, Sammi Saba, Sarah St. John, Julia Stiltner and Angel Vasquez won in the category of short story.

The Silver Key is the next highest award in regional competition. Students whose work represents the top 7-10 percent of writing in their region and category are awarded the Silver Key. Blue Ridge's Silver Key winners were Francesca Fiorello, Laura Stark, Riley Heffron, and Riley Flynn.

The Honorable Mention recognizes the top 15 percent of writing in each category. Honorable Mentions went to Noah Hallett, Avery Keller, Avery Nelson, Anna Palmer, Meg Parry, Zach Stern, Jacob Supplee, and James Scott Thomas.

No stopping Nalls

BY ANDREA GAINES

As spring takes hold, Nalls Farm Market is one of the prettiest and most welcome sites to be seen as you drive west on Rt. 7 towards Berryville. Fun and colorful, signs of welcome are everywhere - with yards and yards of fresh produce, beautiful hanging flower baskets, and homemade signs announcing the produce available ... tomatoes! ... corn! ... strawberries!

A Feb. 27 message on the market's Facebook page exclaimed, "Opening date, Thursday, March 22nd. Come rain or shine." But, then, a first-day-of-spring message - taking into account the heavy and wet snow that was coming down - passed along the solemn news: "Unfortunately we will have to delay our opening until Saturday March 24th. 9 a.m. - 6 p.m." Of course, Nalls' regular customers were obviously not dissuaded one bit by that little bump in road.

Because on the 24th, Nalls was up and running, and with every warm day, more and more customers had settled into their spring shopping routine, picking up pansies, gleaming jars of local honey, potted herbs, bedding and garden plants, and mulch and other gardening supplies. They were

pouring over the "Fresh Chunky Fruit Pies" selections and breads from Raven's Revenge. And, they were studiously shopping as other products started coming in, including the spectacular Amish lawn furniture that Nalls is known for.

Nalls is owned and operated by David and Mary Ann Nalls, and has been in business for some 23 years. Their season runs from around mid-March to Christmas Eve - when they share freshly baked biscuits with their customers and hold a huge sale. Nalls is the kind of place that flows with the seasons, the availability of fresh produce, and the relationships David and Mary Ann have with the farmers who supply their produce, and their customers.

David Nalls takes great pride that the farm avoids GMO products and supports the small producers, including the Amish and other farmers he has worked with for years. Sometimes he has to pay a little more for the produce he sells or travel a little further to pick it up. But, it's worth it, he says, because, for example "Handpicked green beans are way better than machine-picked green beans. And, the strawberries from the Carolinas can't be beat."

Nalls customers clearly appreciate this point of view and the relationship they have with David and Mary Ann. As one customer said: "Love this market. I am usually up there at least every other weekend. I stock up on my produce for the next few weeks, and always have to pick up one of their amazing pies! Super nice people, excellent selection of fruits, vegetables, homemade canned items, and beautiful flowers."

And, over time, the Nalls have also added a whole new dimension to their customer relationships, passing on everything they know about the nutritional value of the food they sell, garden tips, and, most importantly, how to make sure that homemade pie arrives at its intended table in perfect condition.

When it comes to honey, for example, did you know that if a product doesn't contain pollen - which some producers filter out - that it technically can't be sold as "honey?"

Did you know that a bit of sliced onion can be used to take the sting out of a bee sting - or a sunburn, or that certain herbs can help drive mosquitoes out of your garden?



Nalls Farm Market - full of great produce, precious little tidbits of information, great products, and sweet, sweet people. As the saying goes at Nalls ... "We know no strangers."

The Nalls website and Facebook page - www.nallsfarmmarket.com, www.facebook.com/NallsFarmMarket/ - have all kinds of information about the products they sell and what's available, when.

They are open daily, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. 4869 Harry Byrd Highway, Berryville, Virginia, 540 955-0004.



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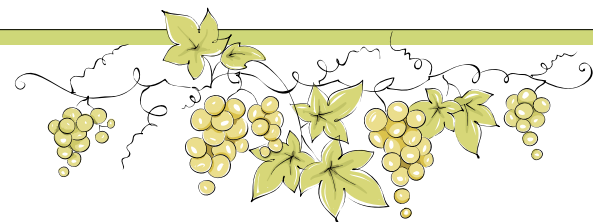
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SMALL BUSINESS GRAPEVINE

The artist in everyone

BY ANDREA GAINES

April is here, and this month we celebrate the artist in everyone – the makers of fine wool ... the roasters of fine coffee ... and the brewers of fine beer.

have been working with Solitude Wool for years as members of the LLC.

Learn more about their artsy story at www.solitudewool.com, or contact Gretchen Frederick, 540 554-2312.

still as local and as delicious as you can get. Wicked Goat Coffee Roasters, Lucketts; www.wickedgoatcoffee.com, wickedgoatcoffee@gmail.com, 703 915-8156.

Vanish ... Into More Artistry

The final stop on our Small Business Grapevine this month is Vanish Farmwoods Brewery, in Lucketts.

Owner Jonathan Staples started out as a hops farmer under the name Black Hops Farm. But, he soon found out how fun and rewarding it could be to support both agriculture and Virginia's growing craft beer business, and so he opened Vanish. He now has a cellerman ... a head brewer and two assistant brewers ... an events manager ... a head chef, and more.

With brew specialties such as Hops & Honey, Manchester Mild, Abbey Dubbel, Milk Stout, and Vanilla Latte – and endless choices of the kinds of foods that go spectacularly with craft beer – there is real artistry going on here.

Vanish in at the end of a long day. Email, info@vanishbeer.com, www.vanishbeer.com, Call 703 779-7407.

Wool Artisans

Solitude Wool describes itself as an artisan wool company. Another definition of the word “artistic” has to be “passionate.” In the case of Solitude Wool, the passion surrounds the 10,000 years old, wonderfully warm – and cool – fiber known as wool ... for clothing, yarns, art, and more.

Solitude Wool creates small batch, breed-specific yarns from fleece sourced exclusively in the Chesapeake watershed region.

It began as a partnership between Gretchen Frederick – of Solitude in Round Hill, and Sue Bundy of RedGate Farm in Leesburg. Kathy Reed, of Briesbrook Farm in Round Hill – another wool enthusiast who specializes in cashmere goats and alpaca – was welcomed into the company fold recently. And, fiber artists Debbie Deutsch and Kim Pierce

Solitude Wool

PURCELLVILLE

Wicked Goat Coffee Roasters

LUCKETTS

Vanish

LEESBURG

To have your small business featured in our Small Business Grapevine, contact Andrea Gaines via email at andrea@andregaines.com.

THEME FOR MAY
“Welcome Summer”

THEME FOR JUNE
“Just Warming Up”

THEME FOR JULY
“Free Yourself”

— Mona's Lebanese Cafe —

Antiques, food, friendship why not?

BY ANDREA GAINES

Ultimately, the happiest people in the world measure their success based on how much they love what they do.

McLean residents Jackie Anderson and Bill Ewing demonstrated their belief in that profoundly simple idea when they opened Guilford Station Antiques. And, they took that idea further when they took a spark of an opportunity – that a good friend specializing in Lebanese food needed kitchen space for her expanding catering businesses – and asked Mona Aboul-Hosn to set up shop in and amongst their antiques.

Guilford Station Antiques, which specializes in early American antiques and crafts, and Mona's Lebanese Cafe, specializing in, of course, Lebanese food, are the perfect partners for the third ingredient in this fascinating business venture; a beautiful 1860s house in what is known as Old Sterling.

Sterling Park, founded in the mid 1800s, started out life as Guilford Station. Old Sterling as it is known, in the far eastern part of Loudoun County, had a railroad station back in the day, and was the commercial center of farming life. As local historian Mark Gunderman writes, “At one point in its history, Old Sterling had a total of five saloons, a blacksmith shop, a saddle shop, a grocery store and a family combination shoe store, bar and post office.” Old Sterling is mostly gone, replaced by highways, the infrastructure that serves various parts of Dulles Airport, and various strip centers. But, in this beautiful house, Old Sterling persists. The lovely, old-fashion scent of home-made food fills

the air and mixes with well-oiled antiques, neatly displayed glassware and dishes, antique baskets, flowered wallpaper, old clocks, and decorative items. Antique rugs cover the wood floors, beautiful cabinets and hutches line the walls, and the playful sounds of people passing food and clinking glasses is in the air.

The very table and chairs your party is enjoying its meal on may be for sale, and everything around you complements the wonderful things coming out of the kitchen.

Mona's signature dishes include Kibbi – beef and burghal stuffed with onion, pine nuts and ground beef, grape leaves – vine leaves stuffed with meat, rice, parsley, olive oil, lemon and garlic, traditional hummus – chick peas with tahini, lemon juice and garlic, Kafta Kabob – ground beef, minced parsley, minced onions, and spices, Fatayer – a baked pastry stuffed with meat, spinach, or feta cheese, and Mousakka – eggplant stew with chickpeas, garlic, onions, tomatoes, and dried mint.

All meat dishes can be prepared in vegetarian form, and gluten-free diners are also welcome.

Mona's food gets top ratings from pretty much every one lucky enough to find this extraordinary place. Said one member of the Blue Ridge Leader family, whose family is of Lebanese decent: “My kids grumbled at me when I told them I was taking them to a restaurant in an old house – ‘they have antiques, too,’ I said. We've been back several times, now, at my kids' suggestion. It's the best Lebanese food we have ever



L to R: Bill Ewing, Jackie Anderson and Mona Aboul-Hosn.

eaten. Sorry, grandmother!

Mona's is open five days a week, and also offers catering – select menu items on party trays and platters, box lunches or buffet style meals – “your space or ours” as Mona says – and complimentary event planning services, including tables, chairs and wait staff.

Mona's Lebanese Cafe and Guilford Station Antiques is located at 1006 Ruritan Circle in Sterling; (703) 915-0475. The cafe is open Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Closed Monday and Tuesday.)

Sunday is a particularly good day to get to know Guilford Station Antiques and Mona's Lebanese Cafe, as guests are often treated to live music events, along with and a buffet from Mona – all for a fixed price.

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ELECTIONEERING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

record as a County employee, “Respect is most certainly something you earn,” said Thompson. And, she continued, “With all due respect, that is something some should learn.”

The room was still as Ms. Thompson completed her poem; and her supporters in the room, including some of the Warner family and others connected with their 131-acre annexation proposal, seemed pleased. But, since she was over her allotted time and veering off into the political, she was interrupted by Town Council Member Karen Jimmerson. “We’re not supposed to do campaigning in this room. Nobody is,” said Jimmerson.

The Warner Annexation as a Campaign Issue

Beverly McDonald Chaisson, who served on the Purcellville Town Council for 12 years, followed Ms. Thompson’s lead, criticizing the news media and others for what she saw as a bias against Thompson’s candidacy. Chaisson took issue with how the Town was handling the proposed Warner annexation. She accused Fraser of letting the Warner annexation languish, saying, “If you didn’t want it, why didn’t you just say no to this project? ... There’s no doubt that what they want is best for the Town ...”

Three Purcellvilles

The mood at the March 13 meeting exposes the tension among the three Purcellvilles: The Purcellville of the days before growth took over ... The Purcellville of the days when growth was everywhere you looked ... and the Purcellville of today, when, as citizens began questioning the Town’s rate of growth, new leadership began to take concrete steps to rein it in.

Each of these three Purcellvilles has a political constituency. And, as the May 1 election inches closer, they have their candidates, too.

The Warner property is currently outside of Town boundaries and zoned J/LMA-3—one house per three acres, allowing for approximately 42 homes.

Under the Warner proposal, the land would be brought into Town, providing for 24 acres of industrial use, a nine-acre sportsplex, outdoor sports fields (with the possibility of a more intensive

use in the future), 11 acres of mixed commercial (70,000 sq. ft.), and 65 acres of residential (160 homes). The proposal would also generate approximately 8,000 to 10,000 daily vehicle trips.

At a Purcellville Planning Commission meeting on March 15, one of the Commissioners asked when the O’Toole property would be coming back to that body. A staff member responded: “They are waiting for the results of the next election.”

a new Mayor and Town Council might look upon their project more favorably.

The statements made by individual members of the Town Council and the Mayor—following statements made by Ms. Thompson, Chaisson and others—show how the three Purcellvilles dynamic plays out politically.

In response to statements about people who have spent their entire lives in Purcellville, and newer residents, many of whom seek to limit growth,

Jimmerson said: “Every time I hear somebody say ‘None of you were here ... You just moved here ... I’ve been here my whole life,’ basically you are inferring that my vote doesn’t count, that my taxes don’t pay the bills, and that I’m not allowed to say anything, because I haven’t lived here as long as you. I’d like you to tell somebody who raised their hand and swore to the Constitution and became a citizen ... ‘You haven’t been in this country long enough to make a decision.’”

Jimmerson said that the Warner application hasn’t gone through the process, and hasn’t had a public hearing. “The representatives of this application had only one meeting ... And there were only a few residents [there] because the residents of Purcellville were not invited.” She then noted that there wasn’t a public advertisement, and that everyone who attended were developers.

Piling Up On Purcellville

Council Member Ryan Cool, responding to Ms. Thompson’s many accusations, countered by acknowledging existing problems, but also detailing the recent progress that had been made. “There are things we have discovered thanks to Mr. [John] Anzivino being here, things that nobody

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27

ELECTIONEERING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

knew about.” As Interim Town Manager, Anzivino identified “crumbling infrastructure and poor planning across the board,” said Cool. But, he explained, there is a lot of misinformation from Mayoral and Town Council candidates on a myriad of issues—and not just on the issue of growth.

It came to Cool’s attention that Supervisor Tony Buffington (R-Blue Ridge) had been telling residents that the Town was short sighted to not let the County take over the Town’s tax billing. Cool pointed out that it was staff’s recommendation to keep the tax billing at the Town. Buffington had also told residents that the Town did not want financial help from the County. Not true, said Cool, pointing out the new walkway near Blue Ridge Middle School—which was paid for by the County after a very long lobbying effort by the Fraser and Cool. The County runs the schools, so it makes sense for the County to help with the walkway, noted Cool. “... We are happy to take our County tax dollars back...”

We Did Not Build This Fire

In response to the discussion, Fraser summed up his feelings regarding the many challenges and pressures facing his Administration and, in turn, the

Town – including the legal requirements that came with the independent investigations.

“My silence is not complacency or [a] lack of transparency,” he said. “We are in the phases of an investigation, and because of legal counsel, there are limitations on what we can disclose.”

He said his son had asked him why he was doing all this. Fraser said, “It’s because I care. For me to hear comments that I lack innovation and I lack leadership ... All my life I have been called a leader. I took up the mantle to run as your Mayor four years ago because I saw a need.”

He described the rundown Town Hall building he had inherited, into which a previous Administration had sunk a total of more than \$8 million. “We have a waste water treatment plant that a previous Council invested over \$30 million in ... [never looking at] other options to lower the impact on taxpayers. And, for me to hear comments that we are kicking the can down the road ... We did not build this fire ... It was already here.”

Fraser also held fast to his Administration’s accomplishments. On the issue of his success in leveraging the Town’s good bond ratings to attack the debt, he said, “Because of decisions of past Councils ... we are with the debt that we currently have, and we have to

NATIONAL PITCH, HIT & RUN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

to a designated target; hitting distance and accuracy; and running – starting from second base, touching third, then touching home plate.

Kids in-the-know know the rules, and the competition is both fierce and fun: choose your sport – baseball or softball; proper conduct and sportsmanship required; no metal spikes allowed; and, “in the event of a tie” or “threatening weather conditions,” well, things get a little

complicated, but, don’t worry, the organizers of this “perfect game” event have you covered.

Finalists in the multi-phase competition win an all-expense paid trip to the MLB All-Star Week in Washington, D.C.

To sign up for Pitch, Hit & Run, visit pitchhitrun.com and click “find a competition” and enter “Purcellville.” For more information, contact Michael Oaks at dpurcellville@gmail.com.

FIND A HOME, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

people with disabilities,” she says.

She makes it clear that her story is not the only one touched by disability. “Everyone has a different story,” she says. “We just have to keep blending the stories...” She desires for her clients possessing disabilities to have more control over where they live, granting them the dignity and respect they deserve. “To me it’s all about choices and basic human rights...we are supposed to all have the same ability to pursue happiness,” she says.

While her clients and work on the Disability Services Board remain near and dear to her heart, her ultimate

goal is to take care of her husband. “He is such a gentle soul,” she says. “I just know if I was in his situation I would not be nearly as graceful and generous as he is.” While a sense of excitement can be detected in her tone as she rolls out additional goals and hopes for the coming year, it is clear she only has eyes for the man who is undoubtedly the love of her life. “The most important thing in my life is taking care of Sonny...and the rest of it has to fall into place...”

Samuel Moore-Sobel is a freelance writer. To have words of hope delivered directly to your inbox, subscribe to his blog by visiting www.holdingontohopetoday.com.

deal with it ... We went to New York to sit with the Bond Councils and Standard & Poor’s ... the purpose, to lower the debt obligation of our citizens. In so doing, we were able to save \$12.5 million over 10 years ... I am sitting here because I care about the community.”

On The Horizon: The Election and More Development Proposals

The O’Toole property, which is within the Town limits, is located at the southeast corner of Rt. 287 and Business Rt. 7, near the traffic circle on Main Street.

The property is 12.46 acres and zoned Transition X—a category that provides for less dense development options.

The property is in the Historic Corridor Overlay District and part of the minor flood plain.

The owner of the property has asked the Town for one of the most-dense zoning designations – Mixed Use Commercial. Details of the proposal include 72,000 sq. ft. of commercial, restaurants, retail offices, an assisted living facility, and a three-story hotel.

At a Purcellville Planning Commission meeting on March 15, one of the Commissioners asked when the O’Toole property would be coming back to that body. A staff member responded: “They are waiting for the results of the next election.”



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GARDEN CLUBS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

Virginia History at The Kitchen and Garden Level

Garden Week is one of the most interesting ways to experience Virginia history on a personal, domestic, day-to-day level, as visitors travel down quiet backroads, pass through now open gates, and stroll through private gardens, living rooms, kitchens and barns.

The Upperville and Paris properties,

while obviously connected to great wealth throughout the 18th, 19th and 20th Centuries – and today – reflect Virginia's early European influences, but, also, how all classes worked to weather both the Revolutionary War and the Civil War.

It is for the gardener who wonders how a particular variety of English roses came to the United States and established itself here, for the equestrian interested in the

champion thoroughbreds the region is known for, and the Civil War buff familiar with the history behind the Battle of Upperville.

Garden Week is timed to take advantage of the commonwealth's magnificent springtime bloom peaks.

Tulips, peonies, iris, azaleas and dogwood can be seen, and, depending on natural temperature fluctuations, daffodils, camellia, wisteria, redbud, roses and hydrangea may be taking a peak at the sun, too.

In that way, Garden Week is a celebration of the history of horticulture, formal gardens, cottage gardens, and herb and water gardens.

But, everything associated with the people who built the homes, tended the gardens and looked after the sporting and farm animals can be experienced here, too, as everything – from architecture, to interior design, to art and antiques to the time-honored craft of flower arranging – is on display.

Get Up and Go

Proceeds from the tour fund the restoration of 40-plus historic gardens and properties in the state, a fellowship program and a Garden Club of Virginia project run in cooperation with Virginia State Parks.

Tickets are available at local outlets and online. Online sales close 48 hours prior to individual tour dates.



Bike and basket.

Photo courtesy of Catherine Petron

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YARD SALES

Multi-Family Yard Sale Saturday April 14, 8am-2pm Chestnut Grove Ct, Purcellville Toys, Sports, Household, Kitchen, Furniture, Electronics, Etc....

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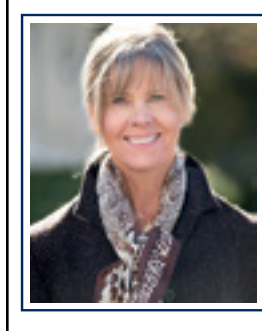
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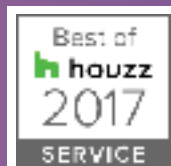
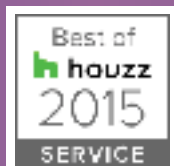
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