

Saving the TPA

Citizens & the West v. the Planning Commission

BY ANDREA GAINES

We are the “definition of successful land use for Loudoun’s rural areas.” The current direction of the County Comp Plan, including changes to the TPA, “jeopardizes that.”

That summarizes the message Hillsboro Mayor Roger Vance and others sent to the Planning Commission at a late September

work session.

As the Envision Loudoun process has moved relentlessly forward – a process that will culminate in a Comprehensive Plan to control what Loudoun County will look like, not five years into the future, nor 10, nor 20, but all the way to the year 2040 – two visions of the County’s Transition Policy Area have vied for the public’s support.

Do you use the TPA as the place to put the thousands of homes, data centers, commercial stripcenters, and more knocking at the door of Loudoun’s undeveloped land, including that in the TPA? Or, do you contain Loudoun’s growth in the face of these forces, reining in, not just development itself, but the increasingly dominant Department of Economic Development and the Loudoun County Planning Commission?

In many respects, recent activities of the Planning Commission, including multiple work sessions and public hearings in August and September, amount to a dramatic, fast-paced search for space – any space – for more housing.

The Action Summary from the Planning Commission’s Aug. 11 Work Session –

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8th annual Purcellville HALLOWEEN block party Saturday Oct. 27

Get your costumes ready. Over 5,000 people attended the Purcellville Halloween Block Party last year, coming from all over Loudoun, Clarke, Fairfax County and beyond. This family friendly event, presented by Discover Purcellville, promises to be even bigger and better this year with more planned activities. The Block Party will be held Saturday Oct. 27 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. – on 21st Street in Old Town Purcellville. The street will be closed to vehicular traffic and transformed into Loudoun County’s largest Halloween Party.

Starting at 5:30 local Loudoun county musician Nancy Prestipino will be performing a Halloween themed show for the little ones. Nancy has been a

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Developers want second critical delay for Warner Brook

BY VALERIE CURY

For a second time this year, the 160-residential unit/220,000-plus sq. ft. commercial/industrial Warner Brook Annexation Application has been put on hold at the request of the family’s representative, Jim Herbert. The first time the applicant requested a delay was in January 2018.

On Sept. 19, Herbert wrote that the Warner family wanted to have a delay of three months, so the Town can complete a water study. As of press time, there is no schedule for the study. In the Sept. 19 email, Herbert wrote, “It appears that the Town is preparing to undertake a water resources study that will include strategy recommendations

for capacity regarding water demands and water supply. Having a water and sewer situational awareness that is made clearer by this Town study, would be important insight for the Town and for the Warner Family before having further application discussion...”

Regardless of any delays, the Town Council can vote up or down on the Warner Brook application at any time, since it has completed the review process. The application is ready for a vote in October, and is due to go before the Town Council.

In a Warner Brook Annexation Report dated Nov. 29, 2017, staff has already noted, “Public Works commented on

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It meant making sure that the space was used efficiently and had the best storage options. They made modifications to the cabinet layout to make sure they were taking advantage of all storage possibilities. They even cut the soffits to allow installation of

taller cabinets and widened a doorway to make the space feel more open and inviting. Every inch of storage space was put to use, including adding in corner cabinets and using pull-out shelves in the built-in pantry.

To achieve the new modern look they selected a warm gray finish for the outside of the cabinets along with stainless steel appliances. For an updated touch, a simple glass subway tile backsplash was added as a focal point which gave the kitchen a beautiful finished look. Then, to make the space feel even more open and bright, they added recessed lighting. From the lighting to the colors and the choice of tile, the expert designers at Abbey Design Center knew exactly how to open up this small space and

make it seem bigger and better than before. The added storage would keep the space from seeming small and cluttered. The end result was a kitchen that the owner's fell in love with. They are happy to entertain or put together a family meal and they do not feel crowded in the space. It is modern, gorgeous and has the space they need.

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The jewels are the boys

The crown belongs to Joan and Marc

BY ANDREA GAINES

"We have a 'jewel' in our own backyard here in Western Loudoun that many people don't know about. The jewel? The families that make up the Loudoun Valley Cross Country and Track teams."

That's Coach Marc Hunter describing the Loudoun Vikings' winning cross-country team family. And, that means everyone, from the boys, to the girls, to the parents, to the siblings of the runners, to the people who support them.

The boys team, celebrated nation-wide as coming from the "small town of Purcellville, Virginia" holds the 2017 National Boys Cross-Country Championship. Marc and Joan Hunter coach the boys' and girls' Loudoun Valley High School cross country teams. The boys program entered the current season ranked at the top of the high school world, having won the national title. The Hunters are also the proud parents of Andrew Hunter.

As everyone with even the smallest connection to high school track and field knows, their son Drew Hunter attended Valley, and was one of only eight (at the time) high school milers to break four minutes. Drew went pro right out of high school – in 2016 – and signed with Adidas.

So, where did this all start, and where is this all going – the crowning cross-country achievements of, not just the young athletes, but Marc and Joan themselves?

Marc Hunter started out coaching post-collegiate female runners back in the mid-1980's. His first high

school coaching job was in 1988, at South Lakes High School in Reston. "I started as the Head Cross-Country coach," said Marc, "and eventually picked up the Head Outdoor Track position, and then the Indoor Head Track position."

Joan has a similar, early-career story. "I started coaching in 1988 at my high school alma mater, James Madison, in Vienna, Virginia," said Joan. "I was an assistant in charge of the middle distance kids. I coached at Madison for six years before marrying Marc, and moving over to South Lakes."

They coached together at South Lakes from 1994 to 1998, and then retired from high school coaching, "the first time," noted Marc.

As for first impressions of each other, Marc said, "I was impressed by how passionate she was about her sport ... And her kids ran very fast and improved immensely under her coaching. More important, she was also a very nice person, had the same Christian values as me, and was pretty!"

As for Joan, "I was happy to meet another young, new high school coach who clearly loved what he was doing, and did it well. We became friends, and Marc patiently helped me tweak my training plans when I was freaking out during those last few weeks of the track season ... as the very important state meet approached!" Sweetly, she then said, "I also thought he was pretty funny, and he made me laugh a lot."

Marc and Joan's winning ways were surely cemented



Joan, son Drew (center), and Marc Hunter.

quite early in their career. And, coaching their son Drew has clearly got to be right up there, in terms of how exciting really excelling at track and field can be. But, they also had a year with a then-budding track star who went on to shake the track and field world to its very foundations. That person's name is now retired track and field phenomena Alan Webb, one of the most celebrated American track and field athletes of all time, with Olympic medals and more to his credit.

"We only coached Alan for one year," said Marc. "We contemplated just coaching him on the side, after we retired, but ... [say these truly team-focused individuals] we enjoyed the other kids on the team as much as Alan, so we fully retired from coaching to raise our own kids."

"I think we introduced Alan to the basics of the sport

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Get your woolly on

BY ANDREA GAINES

As the cold weather descends on our region, Loudoun County's wool producers, and wool artisans go into high gear ... shearing up a storm and knitting their little fingers to the bone.

Fall, you see, is the scarf, sweater, and felt-and-fiber-lover's high season. The time when wool artisans of all kinds present their beautiful creations, and early, sheep-savvy shoppers stock up for the holidays.

One of Loudoun's most well-known operators in this warm and colorful niche market is a cooperative of sorts called Solitude Wool. Solitude buys fleece from

local small farms, and has it spun based on highly sophisticated standards – breed of animal, design of fiber, etc. – at small mills in the United States. It then makes it available to wool buyers from their warehouse in Purcellville.

Merino Farm Field Day at Black Sheep Farm, in Leesburg, November 3. Details at www.solitudewool.com

Solitude is particularly active this time of year, promoting and participating in the Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival, held last week at the Clarke County Ruritan Fair Grounds in Berryville, and the Frederick Fiber Fest

– "all kinds of fibery goodness [and] more than 50 vendors that serve the knitting and crocheting crowd."

They also travel as far as the Empire State, for the New York Sheep & Wool Festival 2018, October 20 and 21.

And, they are focusing close-to-home with a great event on November 3 – the Merino Farm Field Day at Black Sheep Farm, in Leesburg, featuring farm tours and a breed talk by Martha Polkey, a sheep shearing, goat cheese tastings from Georges Mill handcrafted cheeses, a lamb cooking demo by chef and cookbook author Olwen



Photo credit: Gretchen Frederick

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Harvest Time

Pumpkins – carve, core, create, consume

BY ANDREA GAINES

Pumpkins make me happy.

I see them – one glorious color after another – orange, red, pale green, white, pink ... and I want to take every one of them home.

One way to justify my desire for everything pumpkin is to come up with more and more uses for them.

So, here are three uses of the pumpkin, and its cousins – squash, and/or gourds – with tips for each idea.

The Classic Jack-o-lantern

To me, the more-simple the Jack-o-lantern face, the better. Most well-designed faces – unless you want to get really complicated, or, are an artist – have four parts. Two eyes, a mouth, and a nose of sorts. Decide on the shapes of these parts beforehand, and get creative. A mouth can be jagged, as



shown here ... or round. Eyes can have an actual eye ball tucked in.

Drama can be added by sticking something in the pumpkin's "teeth," a walnut, a bit of grass, or even a tiny baby pumpkin.

And, get creative. In the photo here, the pumpkins are stacked, transforming the thing into a sweet little sculpture of sorts. Wonderful.

The pumpkin as a flower container

Pumpkins, with their gorgeous colors, understated, or not, are a beautiful backdrop for flowers.

Choose any color flower – white, purple, orange, yellow, green. Use sticks, and delicate branches, dried flowers, even evergreens. Just make sure the arrangement is secure inside the pumpkin.

An easy way to do that is to make



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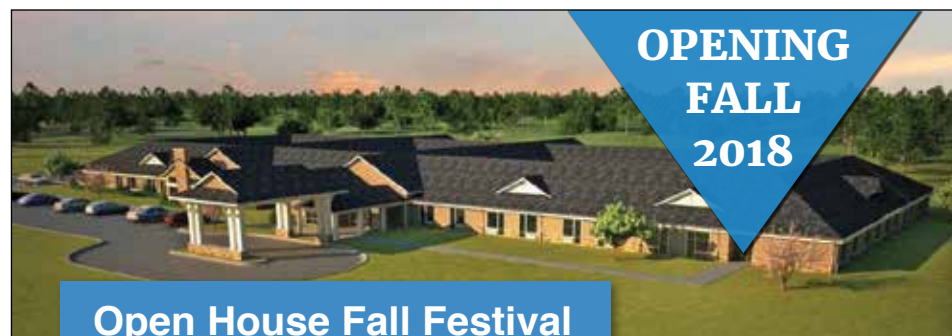
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Just like nothing (else) on earth: Ashburn Park

BY TIM JON

I live in hopes that someday I'll have a helpful electronic device that can give me real answers to actual questions, that can remind me to do all the tasks – large and small – I



JON

need to get done, and that can show me where all the real geographic locations are – instead of leading me down blind wormholes in which I spend far too much time; having placed this fervent wish on paper, however, I am grateful that my mobile phone's mapping system threw me off track on a recent photo safari – because I may have never stumbled upon this refreshingly unexpected destination – at least not without scouring the local map of attractions. Now, after having been so unceremoniously led off track that morning, I was pretty much ready to pack it in and head home to simply live to fight another day, when I noticed a sign for a place called Ashburn Park – which I couldn't recall in my mental list of potentially interesting sites here in Loudoun.

Pulling a bit closer to the parking area, I was preparing myself to be totally underwhelmed (the immediate neighborhood had a 'modern domestic pedestrian' look), when I saw the scenery open up and reveal untouched greenery extending quite a few degrees on the compass of my horizon. What I initially calculated to comprise the entire park was actually just a veritable 'vestibule' to the entire acreage; the children's play area (done in a fun-spirited dinosaur motif) and picnic grounds simply served as a welcoming delta for those who feel a need to head all the way into less charted territory.

Before I dove into the woods, though, I had to enjoy a laugh at the small army of squirrels, industriously raiding the scattered trash receptacles in this more open, 'civilized' area; these arboreal thieves weren't satisfied with simply picking up the stray tidbit – the critters boldly entered the covered containers, selected their prize, then somehow leveraged the lid back open and scampered to their favorite feeding spot. I think if I'd stuck around long enough, they'd've picked me clean of anything edible or otherwise alluring.

Leaving the troop of squirrels to their plunder, I spent a few moments with a much slower companion – a solitary box turtle – out for some early-morning sun,

and maybe even a little breakfast. He – or she – declined my request for a quick interview, literally shutting the door of its shell in my face – so at that point I opted for the deeper woods.

I found a well-defined, paved and planked corridor leading through trees, meadows, and across little rivulets where birds of many varieties were out seeking their own morning meals. I was still early enough to spot a large owl, perched above the trail – maybe on the lookout for some smaller critter to wander within striking distance. I evidently interrupted his stakeout, and he took off for heavy timber further off the trail. So, having tabulated no intelligible remarks from the owl, or the turtle, or the squirrel herd, I forged onward, down the winding, fairly level, circular trail system that worked its way far enough out to approach some of the surrounding neighborhoods, before doubling back to return; I repassed the deep woods, meadows, waterways full of bird activity, the 'owl tree,' and eventually up the gradual incline to the picnic and play area



– still occupied by the garrison of squirrels – evidently intent on rummaging those trash cans for all they had.

And so, because my phone had led me astray that morning from my original destination, I enjoyed a healthy walk, lungs full of fresh air, mind and spirit entranced by a myriad of images from my dawn encounters. I chalked up a vivid mental note, in bold lettering, to return to Ashburn Park whenever the opportunity might present itself – whether in six months or six years.

I'd like to think that those intrepid squirrels keep enjoying their daily breakfast of stolen goods, the lone box turtle will maintain its silent meandering, the flocks of birds will keep scouring the streambeds for tidbits of interest, and the barred owl will stay on patrol in his tree above the trail. Maybe next time I'll meet some more of the local residents at this pleasant oasis from what we call 'civilization.'

Life full circle

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

"There is something different here," Robin Weisman tells me, recalling the moment in which she began to suspect her young son may possess abilities outside the mainstream. She tells of how, as a young child, he would use blocks emblazoned with letters of the alphabet to spell out words. "...We didn't



MOORE-SOBEL

realize he was reading," she says. In 1990, Asperger's was not yet a known diagnosis. "I was noticing things ..." she says. But everyone they contacted "kept telling us there was nothing wrong with him."

Her son, Cory, continued making impressive intellectual strides. "He was very advanced, teaching himself to write when he was three," she says. By the time he entered preschool, his reading skills were also quite impressive. "He picked up this big book and started reading the title pages," she tells me, referencing a novel by James Michener. Yet his lack of social skills contributed to a disgruntled effect among the parents of his classmates. "They asked that he be removed, because he wasn't playing with the other children," she says.

This experience is not out of the ordinary for parents of children with disabilities. The reality is that having a child with disabilities can be a very lonely experience. "The parents had a really hard time with this ... When I would go drop him off, nobody would talk to me," she says. She tells how seemingly all of her son's classmates had playdates, while her son failed to gain such attention from his peers. "I don't think I have ever been around people who were so cruel," she says, "but I know that parents today experience the same thing."

Eventually, they received a diagnosis, during an evaluation at Johns Hopkins. "He has Pervasive Development Disorder," the evaluator tells the Weismans. Their first question is, "What does that mean?" The woman delivers a stunning response. "Some of these kids might go on to high school," the woman says. "Here's a sheet of information about it," she says, before moments later excusing herself to attend another meeting.

Such news would devastate most parents, sending them careening towards an emotional low. Not the Weismans. "We looked at each other... and we resumed life," Weisman says. Only years later, would they learn Corey's true diagnosis - Asperger's Syndrome. She talks of moving to Loudoun in 1996, and being told by many, "We have never

heard of Asperger's before." As a result, it often felt as if they were entirely alone. "Because we were so isolated from our community...it was our little world ..."

Robin made the most of their time together, taking their son on adventures. "We took a lot of trips around the country ..." she says. Although they soon discovered they didn't have to venture far from home. Corey grew to love visiting malls, reading the words displayed atop each storefront. "We always had to get a mall pamphlet," she says, a collection they still have to this day. For him, it was always "about the words...he would read anything ..."

Corey proved the naysayers wrong. "High school was a very good experience for him," Robin says. His intelligence and work ethic ensured that he "graduated on time," while being an "honor roll student." Most importantly, her son reached a place that many of us struggle to find ourselves. "He was happy," she says. After high school, he pursued higher education, graduating with a degree in history from George Mason University.

"I feel fortunate," Weisman says. "Lots of great stuff happened because of Corey." To parents of children with disabilities, she has a few words of advice. "You have to deal with the now," she says. Additionally, it is important to avoid letting others determine your child's fate. "Don't let anybody define your child," she says, before adding a note of clarification. "I'm not saying excuse them - I'm saying accept them, and then work with them."

Her own personal experiences led Robin to pursue a path of raising awareness within the community and beyond. Whether forming a summer camp for kids with disabilities, or various parent support groups, she managed to navigate her way through a life she never imagined. She currently works as an Administrative Coordinator for Special Education for the Prince William County School System. She insists she never intended to be an advocate. "I just did what he needed," she says.

Today, Corey's life resembles one similar to those found within his age group. "He is in a relationship with his girlfriend of almost five years," Weisman says. He lives in an apartment, working two part-time jobs to pay the rent. He has become an advocate, often sharing with others that he is more than his diagnosis. "My Asperger's doesn't define me, I define my Asperger's," he says.

As for Robin, her voice has grown louder over the years, the past seemingly acting as preparation for her current role

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Reminders

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

Byne and Robert Rood lounged in their sunroom. It was Saturday, heading towards evening with pastels coloring the high clouds. Their farm was on the western slope of Catoctin Mountain, and the room looked over their pastures and barn below, then across Loudoun Valley and up to the Blue Ridge. They never tired of the view.

"I love living here," Byne said softly.

OPINION

She was startled when her husband asked, "Why?" To her it was self-evident.

"It was rhetorical," Robert explained. "We complain about developers and some politicians. We always talk about how great western Loudoun is. How scenic, how historic, what an asset it is to the county.

We talk about helping our farmers and so on. Right?"

Byne: "Sure. Where're you going with this?"

"Maybe let's take a break from conflict. Images are easy to convey. Imagine a thick coffee table book with pretty pictures on page after page. It would convey a lot about how western Loudoun looks, but it wouldn't describe how it sounds or smells or feels. See what I mean?"

"I do, I do," Byne said. "Hey, if we found a way to convey those sensations, our conservation messages would be stronger. Let me get some paper." Robert Rood looked to the paling light over the mountains and, closer to the house, the pasture where their horses Finnegan and Sebastian were grazing slowly. He loved living here, too.

Byne returned. "Let's take one sense at a time and jot down the things that make the west special. Don't talk about Virginia

or the county as a whole. Just the west." Robert nodded. "Okay and maybe even some things that aren't great. Like skunks." After Robert's de rigueur groan, Byne grinned, "Let's start with the sounds here." "You keep track of them – my handwriting's worse than your puns, Byne."

Sound

The nickers and whinnies of their horses, of course. Lots of animal sounds, from moos to meows, from chirps to caws to cackles. Thousands of peepers on humid summer nights. Some noises were eerie, especially owls' hoots and the various screeches of foxes. Ripples of creeks and streams. Robert mentioned some man-made noises – the diesel grunt of tractors, and the reassuring throatiness of generators when the power failed. County fairs and the whirring of rides and the bangs and clashes of a tractor pull. He mentioned a sound

they despised: The infernal beep-beep-beep of construction machinery assaulting the countryside for a new subdivision.

Other things came to Byne – the crunch of gravel when a car drove slowly by, the rarity of sirens and the blanketing silence of new snow on the fields. She giggled, "I even like the soft plop of horse poop!"

"Byne, sometimes you're weird! Now let's do tastes."

Taste

"I'll start," Byne began. "Apricots from the old tree outside the kitchen. The apple butter they churn at the Waterford Fair. Local wines. Farm-to-market restaurants. There's more room for vegetable gardens if you grow your own and lots of farmers' markets if you don't. Fresh eggs from Patricia down the road."

Robert Rood added a few. "How about funnel cakes at the fairs? I think I'm

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Warner Brook? Hold your horses!

BY STOSH KOWALSKI AND OWEN BROWN

One of the most significant strategic decisions ever made by Purcellville is potentially weeks away: a vote by the Mayor and Town Council to decide whether or not to annex the 131-acre Warner property on Rt. 611. This property, currently zoned for one house per three acres (43 homes) would have to be brought into the Town of Purcellville to provide the utilities

OPINION

necessary for the increased density of an envisioned "Warner Brook" development. A mixed-use plan, Warner Brook would incorporate 160 homes, massive commercial and industrial components, and a sportsplex. This proposed plan, if approved, would add significant traffic to already burdened local roads, and forever change the character of the town in a way that is diametrically opposed to what voters have expressed at the polls and in the planning process. In our opinion, voting to approve Warner Brook would be unwise, short-sighted.

Purcellville-area citizens know a major issue here is traffic. Commuter backups along eastbound Rt. 7 before the Rt. 9 interchange have become increasingly unbearable. Rush hour traffic at Hirst Road/Rt. 7/Rt. 287 is equally notorious. The Town of Purcellville has estimated 10,000 additional daily vehicle trips at nearby intersections already nearing capacity. Warner Brook cites traffic mitigation by the eventual Rt. 7/Rt. 690 interchange, accessed by an "eventual

running through of Mayfair Crown Drive." Plans show a road in Warner Brook nearly joining Warfield Court in Wright Farm, incentivizing buildout of the Northern Collector Road.

Warner Brook brings more commercial development – but at the expense of downtown businesses. Warner Brook claims the new commercial area would "alleviat[e] traffic on Main Street," but reducing traffic also draws business away from Main Street. During a recent HOA meeting with the Warner family, their representative made the point that Warner Brook would offer families an alternative to Coaches Corner – a downtown restaurant in a shopping area that has already seen its share of eating establishments close their doors.

Regarding the proposed sportsplex, the developer cites a 2016 study finding "tournament visitors and participants booked 19,250 hotel room nights," to tout its economic benefits. Where will these additional rooms come from – Leesburg? If that is where the lodging is, perhaps the sportsplex should be built there ... or is the next stage of the plan a series of Motel 6s and Holiday Inns along Rt. 7, also to be annexed by the Town? Representatives also say the sportsplex would accommodate "other events such as entertainment acts, speakers, concerts, festivals." Again, has western Loudoun seen requests for concert and festival venues out here beyond what Purcellville and Leesburg can provide, or do we really want our own "Jiffy Lube Live Center?"

More traffic, business siphoned from downtown, expanding borders, and another population spike – this disruptive plan would mark only the first domino to fall in a long string of events that end in Purcellville and its western Loudoun surroundings looking more like Fairfax and less like Napa Valley. Two election cycles have passed, and the message from residents has been clear: hold your horses!

A plan to annex 131 acres is a significant strategic decision for the Town of Purcellville. At the town level, it is comparable to a national campaign preparing to march an army off to battle – a battle in our opinion that most Town residents do not want to undertake. Amazingly, this campaign is being considered, knowing that the plan to feed, clothe, and otherwise supply that metaphorical army has not been prepared. Simply put, this plan is unsustainable. Over the recent years that this and other such annexation proposals have been active, many citizens have already spoken up against this project – and have elected a Mayor and Town Council who are on record saying they will oppose any more growth. We encourage the residents and businesses of the Town of Purcellville to consider the implications of this nascent decision by elected officials.

Stosh Kowalski is a resident of the Town of Purcellville, and Owen Brown is a resident of Wright Farm.

Comstock – Wexton Debate at Loudoun Chamber Event

BY VALERIE CURY

In a debate that touched on taxes, the Metro, Federal pay, tariffs, and housing options, among other issues, the Democratic and Republican candidates to be the next Representative of the 10th Congressional District faced off in a Sept. 21 debate sponsored by the Loudoun Chamber. While differing on most issues, State Senator Jennifer Wexton (D) and two-term U.S. Representative Barbara Comstock (R) seemed to agree on others.

In opening statements Comstock said, “This election is about results versus the resistance,” while

GOVERNMENT Wexton focused on tying Comstock to President Donald J. Trump. “I stepped up to run for Congress because I truly fear how much damage can be done to this country in the next two years by this president and the Congress that enables him,” said Wexton.

The first question concerned the tax reform bill. Wexton said, “We need a tax system that is fair and benefits the middle class ... and encourages businesses and wage growth.” She said that the current tax plan does the opposite, and only benefits the top one percent, while raising



Barbara Comstock



Barbara Comstock



Debate moderators

homelessness, Social Security, Medicare – easier – when we have more money coming in.” She said that Virginia has a \$550 million surplus due to the tax cuts.

On the tariffs, Comstock said that she is a “free trader,” and that she opposes tariffs. “The ultimate goal here is to get better deals.” She said that we are seeing some better trade deals with Mexico, and she will work with her colleagues to have free trade. Wexton said that tariffs are hurting businesses, consumers, and farmers.

On Metro, Wexton said that it has been mismanaged and underfunded for decades, and that Congress needs to make sure Metro is safe and reliable in the future. She said the Federal government needs to pay its fair share. Comstock pointed out that there was \$150 million for Metro in the Federal budget. She said she has attended Metro board meetings and put together a compromise bill along with Democrats to provide more money for Metro. She has introduced a new bill, the Grants for Reliable Efficient and Accountable Transit Act which calls for still providing \$150 million in Federal Funds, to be matched by Maryland, Virginia and D.C.

On health care, Comstock said, “We have to have bipartisan solutions.” She

the deficit.

Comstock noted, “Two years ago on this stage my opponent, LuAnn Bennett, who is a business woman, said we needed to have corporate tax cuts and business tax cuts, and I agreed, and we did. Now we need to make sure we expand on those tax cuts ... When we have an economy that is booming like it is today, it makes every issue ... poverty,

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GOVERNMENT – CANDIDATES FOR SENATE

Tim Kaine

Tim Kaine, a Democrat, was first elected to office in 1994 as a city council member and four years later he was elected Mayor of Richmond. In 2002 he was elected Lieutenant Governor of Virginia. Kaine became Virginia's 70th Governor in 2006, and was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2012. He serves on the following Senate Committees: Armed Services; Budget; Foreign Relations; and Health, to name a few. He and his wife Anne Holton have three adult children.



Blue Ridge Leader: What do you believe are the Commonwealth of Virginia's greatest strengths?

Tim Kaine: The Commonwealth's greatest strength is the people who live here. Virginians bring so much to the table – from the shipbuilders in Newport News who are helping make our country safer, to the farmers who grow everything from soybeans to pork, to the Federal employees in Northern Virginia. Whether or not their families have been here for generations or if they are new immigrants, Virginians have worked together to enable us to succeed in a global economy. When I was born, one in 100 Virginians was born in a different country, and we were in the bottom half of per capita income – and now, one in nine Virginians was born in a different country, and we are in the top quarter. It shows that building an inclusive Commonwealth is key to creating the strong businesses and good jobs that families in Virginia need.

BRL: What about your experience makes you the best person to represent Virginia in the U.S. Senate?

Kaine: I grew up in a middle class family -- my dad ran an iron-working shop in Kansas City -- and I learned from my parents the values of hard work, being kind, and most importantly, serving others. I began my career as a civil rights lawyer; and in my time as Mayor of Richmond, Lieutenant Governor, Governor, and now Senator, I've been focused on bringing people together to solve the hard problems we face. From building the first new public schools in Richmond in a generation, to steering our Commonwealth through the recession and earning national recognition for our business climate, to the work I am focused on now in the Senate, I've learned what it takes to serve Virginians in our government. I've passed legislation to reduce veterans' unemployment, grow the

Navy to keep us safer, fund childhood cancer research, protect open space, provide better tools to deal with campus sexual assault, expand career and technical education, and finally obtain Federal recognition for Virginia Indian tribes. I know how important it is to get things done – that's why I always reach across the aisle to find common ground, despite never hesitating to stand up to efforts that would harm Virginians.

BRL: How can you successfully represent the less affluent areas of Virginia while also protecting Northern Virginia?

Kaine: We need to work together to uplift Virginians in every corner of the Commonwealth. My message is about those last two words in the Pledge of Allegiance – “for all.” I believe in working to ensure good jobs, health care, education, safety, and opportunity for all Virginians. That's why I've spent so much of my time listening to people in every part of Virginia. Whether that's the advocacy of Gabriella Miller, a young Loudoun girl who died of brain cancer in 2013, and passing a bill to increase funding for pediatric cancer research, or speaking to farmers in rural areas about the painful impacts this administration's tariffs are having on their business, addressing Virginians' problems starts with listening to them. I represent all Virginians – not just those in one region or another.

BRL: Everybody likes “growth and prosperity.” But infrastructure costs are killing us – what's the end game?

Kaine: I have always supported making critical investments in infrastructure that will have a long-term impact – not just to ease traffic and improve the daily lives of Virginians, but to create jobs here in the Commonwealth. That means investing in both public transportation like Metro and

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Corey Stewart

Corey Stewart is the At-Large Chairman of Prince William County and has served in that position for 12 years. Stewart is an international trade attorney in private practice. He earned his Juris Doctorate from William Mitchell College of Law, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude. He received his bachelor's degree from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. Stewart resides in Woodbridge with his wife, Maria, and two sons. He is the Republican candidate for U.S. Senate.



Blue Ridge Leader: What do you believe are the Commonwealth of Virginia's greatest strengths?

Corey Stewart: I believe that Virginia's greatest strengths lie in Virginians themselves. I trust Virginians to decide what's best for themselves and their families. That's why I advocate lower taxes – so Virginians can spend more of their hard-earned money as they see fit. And that's why I support market-oriented, consumer-driven health care reform – so individuals and families can select insurance plans that are right for them. For very similar reasons, I strongly favor school choice – a top-down, one-size-fits-all educational system makes no sense. Parents understand the unique needs of their own children – certainly more than any politician might.

BRL: What about your experience makes you the best person to represent Virginia in the U.S. Senate?

Stewart: I have a 12-year record of getting things done – as a conservative Republican, in a highly-diverse, Democrat-leaning county. We successfully cut taxes, improved services, and cracked down on violent crime.

During my tenure as chairman, we enacted the largest tax cut in the county's history. Taxes in Prince William County are 30 percent lower than anywhere else in Northern Virginia today. We now lead Virginia in job growth, and we are ranked third in job growth nationwide.

Even as we held taxes down, we continued making necessary improvements to our system of county roads, and we continued hiring new teachers, police officers, and firefighters. Through zero-based budgeting, we saved taxpayers more than \$200 million, and we received a triple-AAA bond rating – one of only 36 jurisdictions nationwide to do so.

In partnership with ICE, Prince William County removed more than 8,000 criminal aliens from our streets. Overall crime fell to a 24-year low, with violent crime down 48.7 percent.

I am confident that we can – and convinced that we must – replicate the successes of Prince William County statewide and nationwide.

BRL: How can you successfully represent the less affluent areas of Virginia while also protecting Northern Virginia?

Stewart: Last year's tax cuts have already done much to promote economic security for all Americans – with black, Hispanic, Asian, and youth unemployment now at all-time lows. I would vote to make these tax cuts permanent. I additionally support efforts to renegotiate unfair trade agreements that have caused so many factories in places like Danville to close down.

BRL: Everybody likes “growth and prosperity.” But infrastructure costs are killing us – what's the end game?

Stewart: As governor, Tim Kaine gave away the Dulles Toll Road, to an unelected, unaccountable governing body. In the U.S. Senate, he failed to get the federal highway aid that Northern Virginia urgently needs. As a result, Loudoun commuters are today facing both rising tolls and rising Metro costs. As your new Senator, I will focus on securing federal funding to relieve traffic congestion and to ease access to our region's vital economic hubs.

BRL: What is something that voters might be surprised to know about you?

Stewart: My father was a longshoreman, and I was the first in my extended family to attend college. I taught English in Japan, where I met my Swedish wife, Maria.

GOVERNMENT – CANDIDATES FOR CONGRESS

Barbara Comstock

Barbara Comstock was elected to her second term in 2016, as a Republican, to represent Virginia's 10th Congressional District. Currently, Comstock serves on the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, the Science, Space and Technology Committee, the House Administration Committee, and the Joint Economic Committee. Comstock earned her B.A. in political science from Middlebury College, and her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center. She lives in McLean with her husband Chip. They have three children.



Blue Ridge Leader: What is the most essential responsibility of the 10th District representative?

Barbara Comstock: I think the most essential responsibility is to be thoroughly immersed in the entirety of this diverse district, including people from all walks of life and from all over the world. I have lived, worked, started a business, and raised my family in this district and have strong relationships throughout the 10th District in our business, technology, defense, medical, education, agriculture, tourism, first responder, and philanthropic communities, and more. I have focused on the priorities of our region and delivered results for the past decade.

BRL: What is the biggest challenge facing Virginia's 10th District, and how do you plan to address it?

Comstock: The biggest challenge is to keep our economy expanding and provide more opportunities for everyone throughout the district.

My plan to address this challenge is, first, to continue to keep our taxes low and economy growing. I have delivered on tax relief for our families and businesses: Lowering personal tax rates; doubling the child tax credit to \$2,000 and giving 90 percent of Americans increased take home pay; providing new tax incentives for family leave; lowering utility costs; cutting business taxes by 40 percent, and tax cuts for small businesses all helping bring back jobs to the U.S. and grow our economy by over four percent. Today, the economy is in the fast lane – family income is at a record high, with record low levels of unemployment, near record high for small business optimism and manufacturing optimism, and more jobs and opportunity for all. I have worked with businesses and economic development leaders to promote the

local economy. According to a review done by the nonpartisan Ferguson Group that works with Loudoun County, a Loudoun family of four earning \$150,000 and residing in a house worth \$535,000 would save \$1,798. Joint Filers with zero children, earning \$150,000 in the same \$535,000 home would save \$516. A single filer with one child in a condo worth \$343,500 would save \$823.

Second, on transportation solutions, I work with our federal, state, and local officials to secure more federal funding to help provide congestion relief and safety improvements. I am the only Virginia Member of Congress on the Transportation Committee. I have worked with Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao to ensure that Loudoun received a \$25 million TIGER grant to complete Northstar Boulevard, a vital route for local drivers, and a project that will significantly improve traffic flow so that families can spend more time at home and not in the car. In 2015, Congress passed the FAST Act, a \$305 billion five-year transportation bill aimed at bringing certainty to local and state governments by improving roads, bridges and infrastructure. I was on the conference committee for this important transportation and infrastructure investment legislation that has let counties like Loudoun plan for their future.

Loudoun County has \$1.3 billion in planned infrastructure projects, not including Metro, over the next six years. Twenty-seven of those projects are planned to receive a combination of Commonwealth or federal funds. These projects include improvements to Route 7 and alternative routes for the Greenway like the extension of Shellhorn Road to Route 28 saving Loudoun families potentially \$3,000 a year in tolls. I led on Metro safety

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Jennifer Wexton

Jennifer Wexton is a lawyer who has represented the 33rd District in the state Senate since 2014. She is running as a Democrat to represent Virginia's 10th Congressional District. Wexton graduated from the University of Maryland in College Park, and earned her law degree in 1995 from the College of William and Mary. Wexton and her husband Andrew live in Leesburg with their two sons.



Blue Ridge Leader: What is the most essential responsibility of the 10th District representative?

Jennifer Wexton: The most essential responsibility of the 10th District representative is to truly advocate for issues important to the people of the district. Northern Virginia is faced with many challenges that need attention; and our current Congresswoman has failed us on many of them. We are plagued by terrible traffic congestion. We need continued investment so our children can receive a world-class education. People need access to quality, affordable healthcare. We also need to protect our communities from gun violence. Our Congresswoman has failed us on these issues, but I have fought and delivered for these priorities while in the state Senate. When I'm in Congress, I will always stand up for the values important to the 10th District.

BRL: What is the biggest challenge facing Virginia's 10th District, and how do you plan to address it?

Wexton: The biggest challenge facing the 10th Congressional district is that we have a Congresswoman and a Republican Congress who are unwilling to stand up to President Trump and his reckless administration. Trump and Congressional Republicans have slashed deductions for residents' state and property taxes, failed to deliver much needed infrastructure investments, relentlessly attacked immigrants and federal workers, and started a trade war that is harming our local businesses. Congresswoman Comstock has voted with Trump 98 percent of the time, and has done nothing to combat policies that are directly damaging to her constituents. In Congress, I will be a real voice for Northern Virginia, and always stand up for our businesses and families here.

BRL: In what way(s) does the 10th District differ from other districts? And why are you the best person to represent this

district?

Wexton: The 10th Congressional District is a suburban to rural district that runs from just outside of D.C. through the tech corridor surrounding Dulles Airport, and all the way to the apple orchards of western Frederick County. The district is among the fastest growing in the nation and has an educated and increasingly diverse population. I am the best person to represent the district because I have spent the last two decades serving the community here. I live in Leesburg with my husband and two sons, who attend Loudoun County Public Schools. I share the same concerns as my neighbors: top-quality public schools, less traffic, and safe communities. As a Loudoun County prosecutor, I locked up violent criminals. As an attorney, I was an advocate for abused and neglected kids. And as a State Senator, I have passed over 40 pieces of bipartisan legislation, including laws that keep our kids safer, combat the heroin and opioid crisis, reform school suspension guidelines, and provide more resources to victims of domestic violence.


BRL: Northern Virginia faces intense pressure to grow. How do you balance that with the need to protect the historic and agricultural assets critical to local economies?

Wexton: One of the biggest assets for this district is our vast rural area. In my home county, Loudoun, we have done an excellent job of preserving much of its rural character especially through our booming agrotourism, farm winery and brewery operations, despite the enormous pressure to grow and develop. I believe smart, new development is important for the continued economic growth of our region, especially as Metro expands into Loudoun. New growth should be clustered in existing urban/suburban areas and along major transportation corridors. We must always take a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »


George Bowerman

A piano recital of classical works including Beethoven's monumental Waldstein Sonata and Franz Liszt's Dante Sonata, inspired by the Divine Comedy.



Presented by the *Music with a Cause* Concert Series
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 Concert proceeds benefit **HEART MARKS.**

 Venue: St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
 711 West Main Street, Purcellville, VA
www.standrew-pres.org

Absentee voting for November election is underway in Loudoun

Absentee voting for the Nov. 6, general election is underway in Loudoun County.

Anyone who would like to vote an absentee ballot in person may do so at the Loudoun County Office of Elections and Voter Registration, 750 Miller Drive, S.E., Suite C in Leesburg, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. through Oct. 26.

Voters who wish to return a ballot by mail may apply online to have an absentee ballot mailed to them through the Virginia Department of Elections.

Expanded absentee voting hours and locations will be offered beginning in late October. The deadline for voters to apply to have an absentee ballot mailed to them is 5 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 30. The last day to vote an absentee ballot in person is Saturday, Nov. 3.

There are a number of reasons that voters may choose to vote absentee, including school, work, vacation, or illness. Information on eligibility to vote absentee is online at www.loudoun.gov/absentee.

Voter Registration Deadlines

- Online Voter Registration: Monday, Oct. 15, at 11:59 p.m.

- In-Person Voter Registration: Monday, Oct. 15, at 5 p.m. at the Office of Elections and Voter Registration, 750 Miller Drive, S.E., Suite C in Leesburg.
- By-Mail Voter Registration: The application must be postmarked no later than October 15.

Stay Informed

Loudoun election officials encourage voters to stay informed by:

- Texting LCVOTES to 888777 to receive text alerts from the Loudoun County Office of Elections and Voter Registration.
- Signing up for the Election Update category in Alert Loudoun, the County's email and text notification system.
- Following the Office of Elections and Voter Registration on Facebook and Twitter. Loudoun County Government also posts general information on Facebook and Twitter.

For more information go to www.loudoun.gov/vote.

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STARTING ON OCTOBER 1st,

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Purcellville Metro Connection service is funded through revenue from the I-66 tolls collected during peak period Inside the Beltway in partnership with NVTC.

Walbridge announces run for Blue Ridge Supervisor

Tia Walbridge, a western Loudoun sheep farmer and small business owner, has announced her candidacy for Blue Ridge Supervisor in 2019. Walbridge is a founding board member of Save Rural Loudoun, an associate director of the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District, and has been appointed by the Governor to serve on the Virginia Agricultural Council.



school system by the rapid population growth of the last five years. “We are developing faster than our schools and infrastructure can accommodate. I would like to see a stronger working relationship between the School Board, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors. Collectively, I believe we can better prepare and support the communities in our region,” she said.

In her announcement statement, Walbridge said, “For me, there are few budget items more important than our children and their education. I am excited to run, and hopeful that, if elected, we may be able to fully fund our schools instead of continually requiring they raise standards with fewer resources.”

GOVERNMENT

She said that the Blue Ridge District exemplifies the strain put on our

Walbridge said she believes there are no simple fixes to preserving rural Loudoun. “The County should work with our farmers and landowners to provide a variety of tools to support a sustainable agricultural economy and the critical mass of farmland necessary for rural Loudoun to continue to exist,” she said.

In 2017, Walbridge ran for General Assembly Delegate from the 33rd District. Her campaign website is www.tia4va.com.

Taintor announces candidacy for 33rd District Delegate

Mavis Taintor of Waterford has announced that she is running as a Democrat for 33rd District General Assembly delegate in the 2019 elections.



In her announcement statement, Taintor said, “I have the Democratic values, leadership skills, and financial expertise to help build an economy that works for all Virginians while providing quality education and access to affordable health care for all.

“I’ve been a Head Start teacher, a business executive, a small business owner, and now, I have a horse farm in Waterford. I have not followed the path of a politician, but rather my path has now led me here, to serve in this urgent time.”

Taintor said her priorities are to ensure access to good quality health care for all Virginians, and to combat the addiction epidemic. She also said that she is committed to quality education, and wants to invest in infrastructure, namely roads, broadband access, and reliable electricity.

Taintor’s campaign website is MavisTaintor.com.

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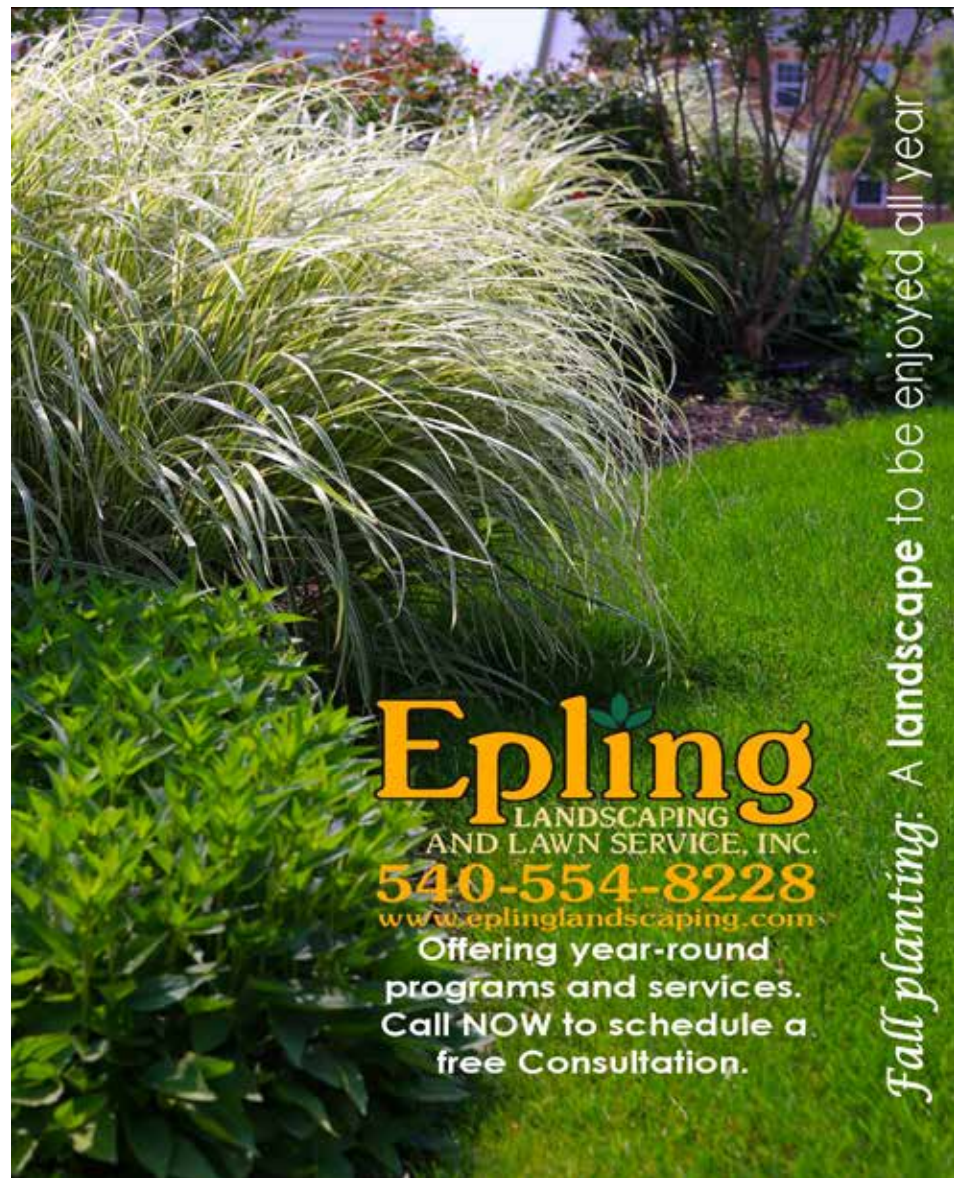
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Purcellville hires new director of public works

The Town of Purcellville has hired Amos “Buster” Nicholson as the Town’s new Director of Public Works. Nicholson worked in Round Hill where, as Town Administrator, he handled multi-million-dollar projects and gained a vast amount of management and budget experience. Purcellville Town Manager David A. Mekarski noted, “Buster brings to our largest Town department

proven experience in budgetary revenue enhancement that will expand every public dollar spent with “out of the box” entrepreneurial thinking, complementing our already excellent team with the leadership to be even greater!”

Nicholson was selected based on interviews and panel evaluations. The panel consisted of representatives from each of the Town’s Public Works Divisions. There was also an opportunity for all department staff to meet and attend a Q&A session with Nicholson.

Mayor Kwasi Fraser stated, “Our Public Works Department is the largest and one of the most mission-critical departments in our Town with 28 employees. It accounts for over 61 percent of the Town’s total budget. With Mr. Nicholson’s stellar accomplishments as an innovative and

fiscally responsible former Town Manager and Director of Public Works, I am confident that under his leadership, the management and service quality of our public infrastructure including streets, and water and sewer systems will be in good hands. On behalf of the Town Council, I welcome Mr. Nicholson as our new Director of Public Works, and look forward to supporting his initiatives to deliver service excellence to our community.”

Mekarski said, “Buster Nicholson was an exceptional hire for our community, and I am confident in my decision that we selected the best candidate to ensure proper management of our critical public infrastructure, sustainability of our water resources, and judicial fiscal management of our bottom line.”

Said Nicholson, “I am grateful to the Town of Purcellville for affording me the opportunity to serve as the Director of Public Works. Having met the staff during my interview, I was impressed by their professionalism and genuine care for serving the residents of Purcellville. I am very excited about joining the team, and I am looking forward to working with them in continuing to make Purcellville a great place to live.” His first day will be Oct. 22.

Music with a Cause concert series

On Sunday, Oct. 21 at 4 p.m., the *Music with a Cause* concert series will present pianist George Bowerman at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church with a recital to benefit Heart Marks.

The program will feature Ludwig van Beethoven’s monumental Waldstein Sonata and Franz Liszt’s Divine Comedy inspired Dante Sonata. George Bowerman’s recent honors include Second Prize in the Bradshaw and Buono

International Piano Competitions and a semi-finalist award in the Seattle International Piano Competition. St. Andrew is located at 711 W. Main Street in Purcellville. Heart Mark provides free structured art based projects, classes and events to those struggling with grief and loss, mental illness and more. Tickets are \$20 at the door and can be purchased in advance at Eventbrite (search for *Music with a Cause*).

Painted love seats auction Nov. 17

You’ve seen them around town all summer and probably even have a favorite one that you would love to own. Well, you can. The auction for “The Painted Adirondack Love Seats” will be held Nov. 17, 7 p.m. at the Purcellville Skating Rink 250 S. Nursery Ave. All 44 Love Seats painted by local artists will be up for auction. Tickets are only \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door (if available) and include Beer, Wine and light food – now that’s a deal. Tickets are selling fast so get yours



now at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3496354. This event is presented by Discover Purcellville a community nonprofit. For more info text Michael at 540 383-0009.



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— Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider Psy.D.

Dr. Mike:

My husband was recently diagnosed with High Functioning Autism. I suppose I should be happy to finally know the reason why he's treated me so badly for our whole marriage, but the harm he's caused me and our children has left permanent scars. What harm? How about forgetting my birthday pretty much every year and pretty much all of our anniversaries and telling me it's not a big deal when I get upset? How about seeing everything with hard cold logic and no emotion.



DR. MIKE

Like when my father died and he would see me crying, and he would say nothing and avoid me.

How about the time our daughter broke her leg and was at the hospital, he went home ordered Chinese food and worked at his computer without even calling us? How about the times he embarrassed our children and me because of the things he says and does? I should have realized how bad things were going to be when he didn't want a wedding because "that's money we could've put down on our first house or in retirement accounts." I'm tired of feeling isolated and alone, and

I'm tired of protecting our children and making excuses for him with everyone. After 24 years of marriage, I've always stayed because my husband is actually a very good man in all the other ways a wife would want him to be. He's a smart and successful man and will do whatever I ask. I also don't want to upset our children with a divorce. Will he ever change? Can he be cured? What should do? I want to divorce him but can't get up the courage to do it.

—*Unhappily Married*

Dear Unhappily Married,

I appreciate your longstanding hurt and upset with your husband, but I think you need to carefully think through your important moment here as you consider your options. While remaining unhappily married without any hope for change wouldn't be good, leaving your marriage in defeat right now probably isn't either.

If your husband does indeed have high functioning autism, I highly recommend that you and your husband meet with an experienced therapist who treats adults on the autistic spectrum. That professional will not only work to help your husband address his struggles, but he or she can also include you in the therapeutic process in support of

you and your marriage. Given what you've written, your children may also benefit from education on autism and support in relation to their father in family therapy.

While the divorce rate where one spouse is on the autistic spectrum and the other isn't is much higher than it is for couples where both spouses are neurotypical, I would make sure you've exhausted every possibility to improve things before deciding to end your marriage. That's because after 25 years of marriage, and out of respect to your children's needs and wellbeing, the stakes are high. The idea of moving on may seem attractive to you after being hurt and upset for so long, but divorce as a solution likely won't serve as a panacea, and it can possibly lead to all other sorts of problems for your husband, your children and you.

I sincerely hope that you and your husband get the help and support that you need in determining what is best for you individually, as a couple and as a family.

Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D. is a clinical psychologist in private practice. He has been featured on CNN, Good Morning America and several other outlets. He can be reached at 703 723-2999, and is located at 44095 Pipeline Plaza, Suite 240, Ashburn.



New LCSO in Ashburn

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office dedicated their latest new station, in Ashburn, on Sept. 22. The Ashburn Station is the last of four new planned stations. The first was opened in the Dulles South area in 2007, followed by the Eastern Loudoun Station in 2010 and the Round Hill Station in 2016. The new station is located at 20272 Savin Hill Drive in Ashburn.



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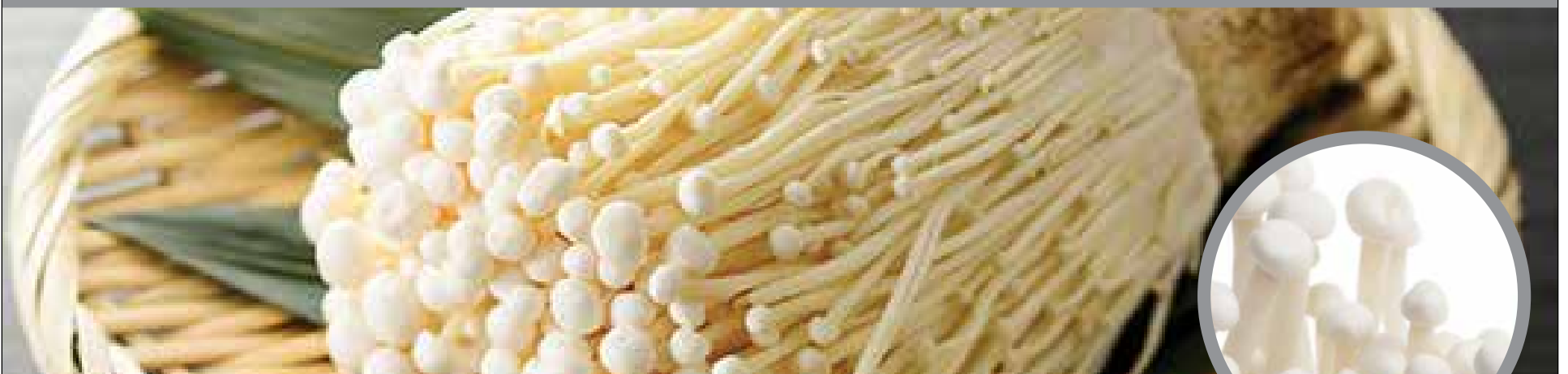
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A life worthy of the calling

BY ANDREA GAINES

On the Facebook page of Lyles Funeral Home, you'll see many enchanting photos of the people and the communities Director Eric Lyles and his family have served over the years.



Eric Lyles

One photo is of a man named Calvin Word, who died at the age of 85. And, in the same collection of memories, there is this message from Word's wife: "This has been a long time coming. My grief was immense and the experience bewildering. Eric ... You encouraged us to think what was right for my beloved husband and what we wanted rather than following set traditions. The tributes were so special, poignant and appropriate for the 'God-Fearing' man he was and represented."

This is part of the rarified life of Eric Lyles, which mirrors the lives of many members of his family, including his parents, Julian and Beatrice (Bea) Lyles.



Eric's mother, Beatrice (Bea) Lyles

As that stunning collection of memories on the Lyles Facebook page shows, the story goes far deeper and is far more poetic than the simple establishment – and continuation – of a family business.



Eric's father, C. Julian Lyles

As the story goes, "The Lyles Funeral Service was founded in 1950 by the late C. Julian Lyles, Jr. of Alexandria, Virginia and his lovely wife, the former Beatrice Maclin of Lawrenceville, Virginia. They settled in Loudoun County making it their home and that of their children. Recognizing the need for community service, the Lyles struggled, with very limited resources, to establish the Lyles Funeral Service. This became the first expression of black entrepreneurship in Loudoun County, Virginia."

Eric took over the business in 1982. As he tells it, the most rewarding part of it – today and every day since he took the business over from his mom and dad – has to do with family tradition, and the joy in serving others.

Said Eric, "The reward is the same as what's expressed in Ephesians Chapter 4, which tells us '... to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.'"

"I am living out that family legacy," Eric went on to say – "No burden here,

just opportunity." And, a life worthy of the calling.

When asked if the role of a Director of Funeral Services can be difficult at times, Eric didn't simply say that he has up days, and down days – the typical response. He simply went back to that idea expressed in Ephesians, saying, "I don't experience it as difficulty, no, not really. We all just focus on quality services for the community, and we keep the prices down, so people can have the traditional burials and other things they want, and get them at an affordable price."

The Lyles story is part of the very fabric of Loudoun County, and Eric relishes his connections to it.

The funeral home building was erected in 1919 with funds from the Willing Workers Club, and served as the original Old Colored School, the first school for African American children in Purcellville.

By 1936 the school had become overcrowded, and Superintendent Oscar Emerick, for whom Emerick Elementary is named, helped push for the effort to build the eight-room George Washington Carver School in Purcellville, now the community's much-cherished Carver Center.

Eric was born here in Loudoun County, and attended both Emerick Elementary and Carver, later, graduating from Loudoun Valley High School.

His father Julian was killed in an auto accident in 1962. His mother Beatrice then took over the business, and was very gratified that son Eric had decided to pursue a degree in Mortuary Science.

But, Bea died unexpectedly, too, in June of 1974. The funeral home closed shortly thereafter, but Eric worked on and studied on, reopening Lyles Funeral Home in 1982.

Over time, he also made other

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »

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The modern farm home Where old-time elegance and country classic meet

BY ANDREA GAINES

Can a home be both old-time elegant, country classic, and new-time modern? Can it have views of the Blue Ridge and Short Hill Mountains, and quick access to convenient travel and commuting? Can it have high-end construction, a beautifully built barn, fencing, and equestrian features – all this – and also, be ... yours? The answers to all of these questions is, yes.

“Magazine caliber” describes the home and 16 acres at 14545 Shadowbrook Lane near Purcellville.

The quaint towns of Hillsboro and Purcellville are just minutes away. The MARC Train is nearby, too, as is the Dulles Greenway, and Dulles Airport.

The 5,000 sq. ft. home – with two finished levels, large rooms, nine-foot ceilings, and hardwood floors throughout – gets its views from its position on the land – a high knoll in an area nestled between the Blue Ridge and Short Hill Mountains.

A hand-built board and batten pole barn with metal roof, four stalls, full water and electric, enclosed tractor storage, and more – surrounded by seven fenced acres – adds to the lovely vistas and agricultural sense of place.

The home features a main floor master suite, four additional bedrooms, four full baths and one half-bath, and a den and loft on the upper level.

The home’s “hardware” is first-rate; an energy efficient, two-zone dual fuel propane/electric heat



14545 Shadowbrook Lane, Purcellville
MLS: LO10303299

Beds/Baths: 5 bedrooms (master suite + prince/princess suite + 3 bedrooms)
4 full baths, 1 half-bath

Total Acreage: 16 acres

List Price: \$924,900

Agents: Sam Rees, onthemarketwithsamrees@gmail.com, 703 408-4261
Ray Rees, onthemarketwithrayrees@gmail.com, 703 470-0680

Website/email: OnthemarketLoudoun.com

Comfort, lifestyle, and decorative features include a flagstone patio, a hardwood center hall foyer and dramatic front door, a hardwood staircase with decorative moldings and a walk-in coat closet, a music room/parlor with crown molding, recessed lighting, hardwood flooring and French doors opening to the living room, and a beautifully traditional dining room with more crown molding, and a beautiful chandelier.

pump HVAC with April Aire humidifier, gas cooking and hot water, new A/C condenser and hot water heater, central vacuum on all levels, wired-for-stereo speakers on the main level and porches, and a wired-for-security system with window and door contacts in place ... complimented by All Points Broadband internet.

The living room has a hand-crafted fieldstone fireplace with a Jotul wood stove and French doors. The gourmet kitchen features custom Cabico wood cabinets,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 »

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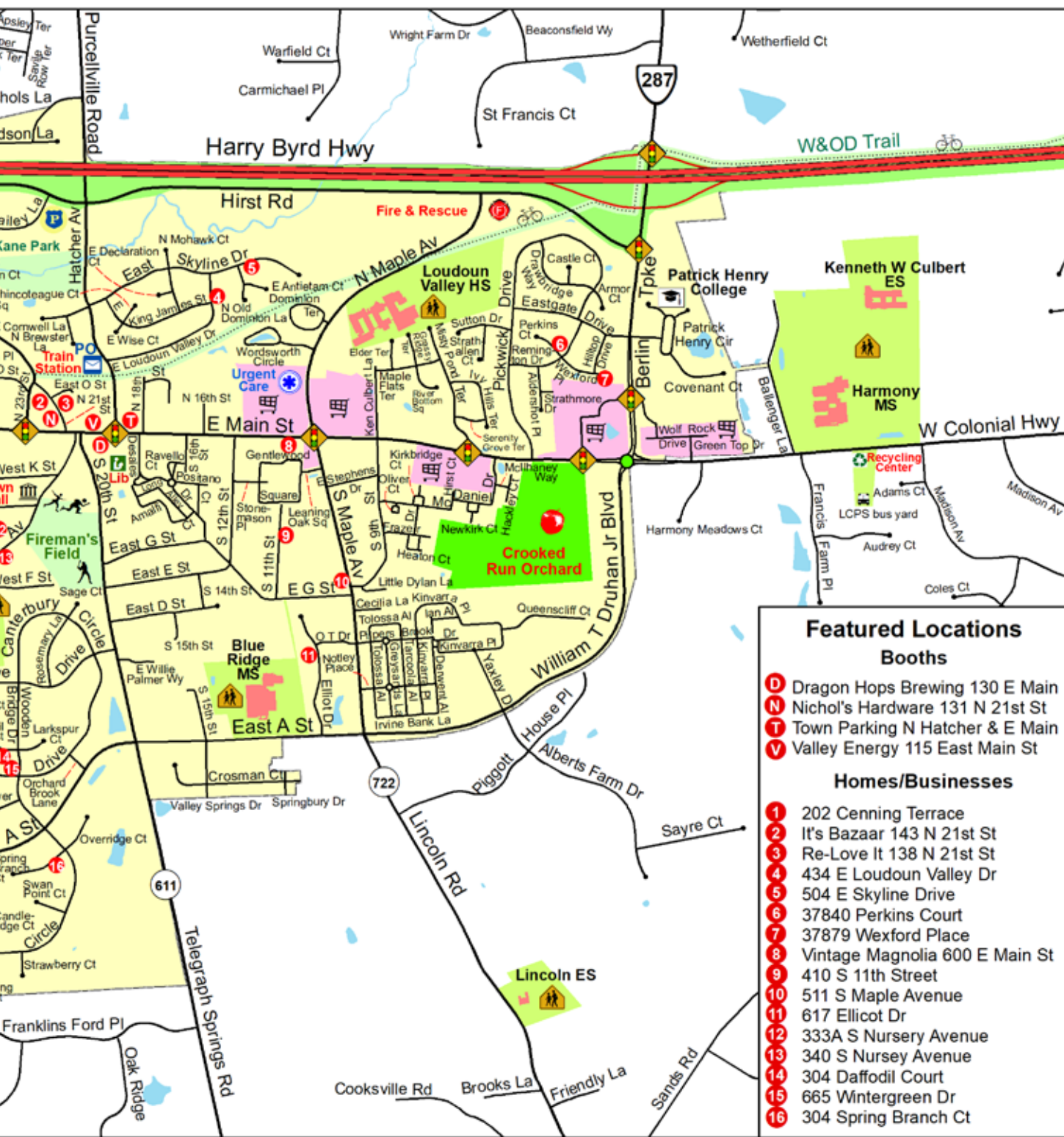
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SMALL BUSINESS GRAPEVINE

Harvest Moon

— BY ANDREA GAINES

A Harvest Moon is the full moon closest to the fall equinox, when the heavens give us 12 hours of light and 12 hours of darkness. Farmers relish the extra light this moon shines on their crops, and the help it provides to their harvest. For this month's Small Business Grapevine, we celebrate three fine dining establishments. Tucked away in the more rural parts of Loudoun and Fauquier Counties, these places come alive in a special way this time of year, as sunlight fades and the Harvest Moon rises in the sky.

You'd swear you were in Scotland. No restaurant in the area has more authentic charm than Hunter's Head Tavern in Upperville.

The building, which dates back to 1750, is a combination of wood and stone and stucco, with rustic fireplaces, grand beams, and perfectly polished wide plank floors. The structure started out as a log cabin, built by Scotsman Steven McPherson. You'd swear that McPherson himself was the one working away in the kitchen, even today. Tavern fireplaces sizzle and crackle right alongside the pub-style food that scents

the air – from Welsh Rarebit, to deliciously unusual dishes such as Kale & Roasted Beets Salad with Pecans, to deliciously dangerous deserts like Sticky Toffee Pudding.

Hunter's Head is said to be haunted by a middle-aged colonial man. As the moon rises above your table, look for his shadow. The pub is located at 9048 John S. Mosby Highway in Upperville, 540 592-9020, www.huntersheadtavern.com.

Food as beautiful as an open pasture

There are two things that have made Savoir Faire Limited restaurant in Round Hill an absolute killer with the critics – year, after year: creativity and consistency.

You'd think that these two things would clash. But, Savoir Faire's food is just what you'd expect of a fine dining establishment, while always showing you different ways to enjoy a bread's soft and crunchy texture, an herb's subtle flavors, or a meat's ability to absorb both sweet and salty gravies. It's there in Wolford's brown sugar laced bacon, in sides such as a Succotash of fresh corn, green beans and tomato, and entrees such as Sauteed Chicken Breast Fricassee.

Wolford's food also matches the

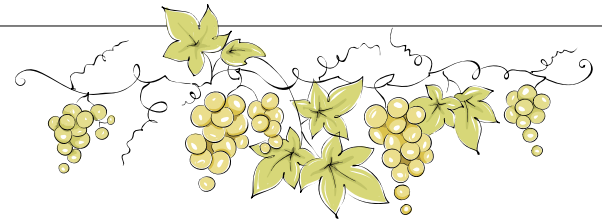
stunning beauty you see all around you in Loudoun County, with sparkling desserts that combine purple figs and dark green rosemary, glazed to shine like the Harvest Moon with a pale apricot sauce. Savoir Faire is located at 1 W. Loudoun Street in Round Hill, 540 338-8300, www.savoirfairelimited.com.

Simply beautiful modern food

The food at the Ashby Inn and Restaurant in Paris is, not just a meal, but an adventure.

You'd never expect to find such modern, innovative fare in a small village consisting of just 70 people, but, that is just how the Ashby likes it. The food is, by design, plated in a way you might not have seen food plated before.

But, the flavors, textures, and colors go way beyond art – glowing like the sky on a moonlit night. A sample: Cantelop Gazpacho with chili, buttermilk and pumpkin seeds ... Butter Poached Shrimp with grits, peperonata, orange, and bacon ... and Olive Oil Cake, with grapes, lavender, yogurt, and pistachio. The Ashby Inn and Restaurant is located at 692 Federal Street in Paris, 540 592-3900, www.ashbyinn.com.



Hunters Head Tavern

UPPERVILLE

Savoir Faire

ROUND HILL

Ashby Inn

PARIS

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Microsoft snaps up 332 acres in Loudoun

BY ANDREA GAINES

Microsoft Corporation has purchased 332 acres west of the Leesburg Executive Airport. The land was purchased by the technology company from the Peterson Companies for \$73 million.

BUSINESS

The 332 acres are part of the to-be-built 550-acre Compass Creek complex. That site is approved for a combined 3.35 million square feet of office space, retail, industrial, and a hotel – to include a Super Walmart, and an ION International Training Center already under construction.

Peterson is one of the region's largest privately owned real estate companies, having developed enormous, self-contained mixed-use developments such as Downtown Silver Spring and National Harbor in Maryland, Fair Lakes

Center in Fairfax, Commonwealth Center in Ashburn, and dozens of others, including multiple other sites in Loudoun County.

Peterson has said the company does not know what Microsoft has planned for the site. However, the news organization On MSFT, which reports on developments at Microsoft, speculates that the land will be used for a new data center.

“The area is quickly becoming a war zone amongst the biggest cloud companies, with Amazon and Google also recently buying land in areas nearby,” On MSFT has reported. “The company hasn’t announced its plans for its newly-acquired land, but the area is home to many data centers, making it a good opportunity for Microsoft to invest in a new data center in this area, helping bolster its

Microsoft purchase – the latest news

On Tuesday, Sept. 26, the Leesburg Town Council unanimously approved an annexation of more than 500 acres. The annexation would include the land recently purchased by Microsoft. According to the Town’s Joint Land Management Area agreements with the County, the Board of Supervisors must approve the annexation, which would then be finalized by Circuit Court order.

Azure services, while competing with Amazon and Google in the area.”

Microsoft has purchased hundreds and hundreds of acres for planned expansions in the past 12 months. It also has its sights set on something called “smart cities.”

In September 2017, Microsoft purchased 65 acres in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 »

Loudoun's Local Businesses

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10K Race to benefit Boulder Crest Retreat

On Nov. 11, the Loudoun Road Runners Club will host the Jim Schatz Memorial Trail 10K at Camp Highroad in Middleburg, to benefit Boulder Crest Retreat. Now in its seventh year, this race started as the Loudoun 10K Trail Run. The race was renamed in 2017 in honor of Lovettsville resident Jim Schatz after he passed away. Jim helped start the race in 2012 and was a strong supporter of Boulder Crest Retreat.

COMMUNITY

The Loudoun Road Runners are enthusiastic supporters of the mission of Boulder Crest Retreat. As military personnel returned from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, Boulder Crest Retreat was founded to provide a rural wellness center dedicated to improving the physical, emotional, and economic well-being of these returning heroes. All services are provided free of charge, and Boulder Crest Retreat relies solely on private donations for its facilities, daily operation, and support of America's recovering warriors.

Fundraising efforts from this race have contributed over \$100,000 to Boulder Crest Retreat and have supported other non-profits benefiting veterans, including Pets

for Vets. This race has been successful as a result of participation and support from Loudoun County residents and the surrounding community. Sponsors and participants are needed to make this year's race a success and to show community support for Boulder Crest.

All are encouraged to register early, as the field is limited to 200 runners. The race will take place at Camp Highroad, a 600-acre retreat located at 21164 Steptoe Hill Road in Middleburg. Registration is \$45.00 and includes a race shirt.

The race will be conducted rain or shine and begins at 9 a.m. The course is quiet, scenic and challenging, with some natural obstacles of hills and mud. To learn more or register go to: www.loudounroadrunners.org/jim-schatz-memorial-trail-10k.html.

Charitable donations can also be made by check to "Loudoun Road Runners" and mailed to P.O. Box 3342, Leesburg, VA 20177, please write "Loudoun 10K Trail Race" in the memo section of the check. All donations are contributed to the race beneficiaries supporting veterans.

For more information contact Allison Abbe at aabbe@mac.com.



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PUMPKINS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

a hole in the pumpkin – about the size of a coffee can for larger ones and a yogurt container for smaller ones. Core and empty the pumpkin of its contents, and use the coffee can or other plastic container for the water.

Arrangements like this are lovely sitting on a bed of fall leaves.

The pumpkin as art

It's always beautiful to have pumpkins, leaves, dried berries, even corn, spilling out of an empty container, or arranged in the center of a table, on a window sill, on a doorstep, on a wall or railing.

But, simple, artistic arrangements are fun, too. I love these three white pumpkins, or gourds, simply arranged with a bit of hay



scattered underneath.

And, the nice thing about it is that the pumpkin itself can serve as the main component of the decoration, with simple things you have gathered from your property – hay, leaves, twigs, flowers, pine cones.

Pumpkins, more than pie

Pumpkins can, of course, be used in pumpkin pie. But, there are many more ways to use a pumpkin and/or pumpkin parts, including the following:

Pumpkin purée is delicious as a sauce for anything crispy, including **grilled chicken or steak, or potatoes.**

Pumpkin spices and flesh can be added to so many baked goods – **muffins, breads, cakes.**

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Pumpkin can be added to **flans and custards.**

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Purchase tickets at the entrance and/or via Eventbrite.

Saturday, Oct. 6 ... Fall Festival by Joshua's Hands

In Waterford – spelling bee, live entertainment, hay rides, crafts, and more. Free event. www.joshua'shands.org.

Saturday, Oct. 6 ... Friends of Homeless Animals' Barktoberfest

At the Loudoun County Fairgrounds – fun for kids, demonstrations, dog contests! www.barktoberfest.org. Small entrance fee. Children and dogs free.

Saturday, Oct. 13 ... The Virginia Fall Races

At Glenwood Park, in Middleburg. Tickets at www.vafallraces.com.

Saturday, Oct. 13 ... The Frederick Fiberfest

At the Frederick Fairgrounds – sales, demonstrations, creativity! Frederickfiberfest.org.



com. Purchase tickets at the entrance and/or via Eventbrite.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Oct. 18 - 21 ... 6th Annual Middleburg Film Festival

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Dozens of farms and sites to choose from. See animals and fun demonstrations, enjoy great food, take some great food home. www.loudounfarms.org.

Saturday, Oct. 27 ... 8th Annual Purcellville Halloween Block Party

21st Street in Purcellville – great food, costume contests, entertainment, prizes. www.purcellvillehalloween.com.

Middleburg Film Festival Oct. 18 - 21

“Among the Top Ten”

According to AwardsCircuit.com, as the Oscar buzz starts, American and international film festivals, which began in August with the Venice Film Festival, start to shake things up in the movie world.

It's the fall festivals, though, that, according to the entertainment and awards site, can “change the game,” as each festival venue hopes to be “the ‘launching pad’ for THE film that takes the coveted Best Picture prize at the Academy Awards.”

For this reason, it's quite exciting that AwardsCircuit.com has identified the Middleburg Film festival as among the top, earning recognition right alongside The

American Film Institute Film Festival, The New York Film Festival, The Telluride Film Festival, and others.

The Washington Post called Middleburg “an itty-bitty Cannes” in its first year. And, local newspapers, including the Frederick News-Post, like it, too.

This year's Middleburg lineup will include Joel Edgerton's “Boy Erased” and Yorgos Lanthimos's “The Favourite.”

The authentically historic places where many of the festival's films are shown make it a truly unique experience. For tickets and details, go to Middleburgfilm.org.



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Happy ending to scary story

BY ANDREA GAINES

It started out as one of the scariest stories you might ever hear – two dogs, including a puppy, stolen from a truck in Middleburg, leaving behind a heartbroken owner. But, with quick community action – and maybe some good karma from above – both dogs have been located and are now back with their owners.

On Thursday, September 6, Malicia Von Falkenhausen got back to her truck (with the air conditioner on), parked in Middleburg, to find that her two dogs had been stolen.

One dog was found dumped on a highway in Fairfax. The other, a beautiful female white and brown Jack Russell puppy was nowhere to be found – in Fairfax, in Loudoun ... or anywhere in between.

The owners suspected that whomever took the puppy, in particular, might try and sell her. So, they quickly shared the story with everyone they knew and lit up the internet with pleas for the dogs' safe return, posting on Facebook, on PawBoost, and other sites.

The Middleburg Police Department got in on the action, too, and in just a couple of days came a breakthrough, with the police posting the following message on their own

Facebook page: “We are excited to report that both dogs have been returned home safe and sound. The investigation continues but for now the pups are back together again. Thank you for the support and assistance with keeping the pressure on the thief.”



The post continued: “LT. Jay Hollins, for lack of a better way of saying it, really hound dogged this case. He was and remains on the trail. I am proud of the work that he and the rest of the MPD staff contributed to the safe return.

“We believe it was the collaboration of the community, social media, and a dedicated investigator that made the difference.

“We truly have a community that looks out for one another. Thank you again.”

Due to the sensitive nature of the case, no further details are available on the circumstances surrounding the incident.

But, the owner is thrilled: “... I appreciate all the help from you,” she told the Blue Ridge Leader. “I found the puppy I'm so glad. She is exhausted but doing much better. Thank God!”

It's a beautiful thing for the many, many people who made this happen. Happy fall to all.

The butterflies win ... for now

BY ANDREA GAINES

Some weeks ago, the Blue Ridge Leader reported that “all settlement discussions have ended,” and that the lawsuit brought by the Farmington on the Green HOA against landowners Michael and Sian Pugh was indeed headed into court.

COMMUNITY

However, on the day of the deadline for the HOA to back off on its demands that the Pughs mow a wildlife meadow on their 5.6-acre property, the HOA relented and accepted the homeowners’ settlement offer.

The Pughs were being sued by their HOA for maintaining a 2-acre meadow on their property instead of a standard green lawn.

The HOA had argued that although the land had been maintained in that state for years, nothing short of mowing the meadow to lawn level – destroying the rich butterfly and wildlife habitat that had been cultivated there – would cure what it saw as a clear violation of neighborhood covenants.

The Pughs had made an offer to the HOA to avoid a costly court battle if the organization would let the meadow be, and compensate the Pughs for at least part of the legal costs they had been forced to absorb since the saga began, in January of 2014.

According to Michael Pugh, “On the day of the deadline, they accepted the offer for the full amount ... The \$20,000 that we didn’t recover is less than it would have cost to convert 2 acres of meadow to a

suburban lawn, so I try to be philosophical that it was money well spent.”

Pugh continued: “This whole episode was a tremendous waste of money and energy, initiated for no good reason. Having said all that, there have been some unexpected upsides ... We have made some fantastic new friends in the Loudoun conservation community; and they have been incredibly generous in helping us improve our maintenance regime, introduce new native plants to our meadow, and appreciate the many native plants and critters that already inhabit our property.” The HOA still has power to update and/or change neighborhood covenants. But, for now, the meadow, stays.

Joshua’s Hands Prepares for Annual Fall Festival

Joshua’s Hands will present their annual Fall Festival on Oct. 6 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The theme this year is *Autumn: A Season of Bounty!* The free event will be held on a farm right on Rt. 9 (between Waterford and Hillsboro).

The Fall Festival is open to all. Those who attend the Festival will

enjoy live entertainment by local and regional artists, mimes, puppets, the Celtic School of Rhythm & Dance, and the Blue Ridge Thunder Cloggers. Kids will enjoy Wildlife

COMMUNITY

Ambassadors, fire trucks, the petting farm and 4-H animal exhibits. There will be pony rides, kids’ crafts and

tons of games. Heritage arts will be well represented with hands-on opportunities to quilt and knit, as well as woodturning and wool spinning demonstrations.

Everything is free – including lunch. This is only possible because of generous community support of the live auction, held at 2 p.m. Local,

regional and national donations will be auctioned off to cover the expenses of the event and to support the work of Joshua’s Hands. Some of the items to be auctioned this year include quilts, restaurant gift cards, sports memorabilia, and homemade goodies.

The event is located at 38327 Charles Town Pike, in Waterford.

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Favorites from Facebook, October ... Beloved places, crime dogs and generosity

We've seen lots of great posts on Facebook recently. Here's a sampling of our favorites:



From the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, this impossibly sweet photo of LCSO K9 unit dog meeting McGruff the Crime Dog. Per the Facebook post, the two dogs met to "discuss police tactics."



A perfectly beautiful photo of the Philomont General Store. Built in 1913, it changed hands recently, but will continue as one of western Loudoun's most beloved and successful local businesses. It features the last operational Post Office located in a functioning general store in the County.



From the Loudoun Free Clinic, a photo of Chef Dennis Stanley of Chantel's Bakery in Sterling presenting a contribution to Maria Stanton of Loudoun Free Clinic at his "A Night in Paris" event.



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COMSTOCK, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

measures included in the FAST Act. I have also secured \$150 million in funding for Metro every year. This year, I introduced much needed Metro reform legislation that was endorsed by the Loudoun Chamber of Commerce, former D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams, and bipartisan leaders, and business groups.

Dulles Airport is a critical economic engine in our region; and I have been the top leader successfully fighting efforts by Members of Congress in Texas and Western states to reroute Dulles flights to Reagan. By maintaining the important perimeter rule, I have helped our region maintain the balance between Reagan and Dulles airports on which businesses in our region depend and, further helps our economy.

BRL: In what way(s) does the 10th District differ from other districts? And why are you the best person to represent this district?

Comstock: The 10th District is far more diverse in its people and businesses and opportunities than most districts. I am the best person to represent it because I have been immersed in the diverse issues in our diverse community for over three

decades – as a senior staffer to Rep. Frank Wolf, as a senior Justice Department official, as a small businesswoman, as a Member of the House of Delegates, and now in Congress. I have worked with a wide variety of people to get things done. I have extensive relationships with people, businesses, and leaders in every profession to solve the problems of our district. For example, I have been a leader battling the heroin and opioid crisis, and I serve as an active member on the bipartisan Heroin Task Force in Congress. I worked with national law enforcement leaders as well as Sheriff Chapman to initiate the Heroin Operations Team (HOT) to provide a comprehensive approach to education, prevention, and treatment in addition to law enforcement actions. I led the fight to increase HIDTA funding by \$5 million, and fought to get unprecedented funding of \$4 billion for prevention, education, and treatment to address the heroin and opioid addiction crisis. I organized roundtables, bringing together federal, state, local, and faith leaders to share best practices and policies to battle addiction. In Congress we have continued to get increased resources to our community to address this national

health emergency.

Another example: The 10th Congressional District has an estimated 50,000 veterans who live here. When I heard at our annual Veterans Job Fair that Loudoun needed a Veterans Center because veterans were spending more time in the car than getting treated, I acted. We quickly gathered the stakeholders to open a new veterans center in Leesburg in just eight months. The Leesburg Access Center provides certified counseling services for our veterans, active duty military, and their families with mental health needs. Dr. Heather West from the VA said: “This project came through in eight months ... That is fast for any project – it is lightning speed for government work. And we are incredibly proud of that.”

BRL: Northern Virginia faces intense pressure to grow. How do you balance that with the need to protect the historic and agricultural assets critical to local economies?

Comstock: In the western part of the district, I have worked closely with public and private leaders engaged in our rural economy to preserve our agricultural and tourism economy that contributes to our tax base while also preserving the

natural beauty of our open spaces as well as our historic sites. Support of our rural economy includes our agribusinesses, agritourism, the equine industry, our wineries and breweries, our strong farmers’ market community, and more.

BRL: Of what accomplishment are you most proud while serving in public office?

Comstock: I am most proud of being able to pass legislation on a bipartisan basis in a wide variety of areas: On business issues: I led on tax relief for our families and businesses, and I have been a “go to” legislator on technology issues, passing the Data Center legislation when I was in the state House that now provides \$150 million a year for Loudoun County. On public safety, I passed my Project Safe Neighborhoods legislation, which provides targeted funding for community policing to crack down on gang crime, gun crime, and drugs, as well as my bill to reauthorize Firefighter grants to support our first responders. On human rights, I have been a leader passing legislation to crack down on human trafficking from the time I was in the state House, to my work in Congress. I am proud of the ability to bring together coalitions to get important things done for my district.

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TPA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

which the PC followed with a series of work sessions and public hearings in September – included the following:

1. Setting the public hearing for the Loudoun 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Nov 1.
2. Repeated references to “Residential Forecasts” calling for a total of 74,870 residential units, and, playing these numbers out to 2040, some 8,727 more, with “5,433 in the pipeline.”
3. High-density Joint Land Management Area (JLMA) Place Types, including the opportunities present in the “undeveloped land” surrounding western towns such as Purcellville.
4. Options to convert single-family homes to condos and other multi-family units.
5. Options for moving a portion of the Rural Policy Area to the TPA, and, conversely, residential expansion in the TPA to protect the RPA.
6. Discussions regarding converting parts of the TPA to the Suburban Policy Area.

At a Sept. 6 Work Session, PC Chair Cliff Keirce, expressing frustration at the effort involved in maintaining the TPA, called for the following vote – perhaps in jest, perhaps, not: “All those in favor of retaining the name Transition Policy Area in the new plan going forward, please raise your hand.”

Seven out of nine Planning Commissioners raised their hands in support of the TPA. But, the irony of moment was clear.

Citizens all over the County have expressed their clear and consistent support of the TPA.

Many members of the Board of Supervisors don't like the direction that Loudoun 2040 is going with respect to the TPA. And, seven out of nine Planning Commissioners agree.

So, what's the problem?

At a Sept. 27 PC Work Session, individuals representing an organization called the Coalition for Loudoun Towns spoke out.

Formed in the 1990s, COLT was revived by Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser and then Lovettsville Mayor Bob Zoldos, as the Envision Loudoun process picked up speed.

At the work session, PC representatives expressed their desire to “work through

COLT” in developing Comp Plan policies for the area.

Hillsboro Mayor Vance first said, communities like his are “quickly disappearing from the Commonwealth and across the nation.”

COLT's greatest hope was that the new Comp Plan would “strengthen the protections” for the west, preserving not just the beauty of the area, but the \$1.8 billion in tourist income, 18,000 in jobs and \$700 million in wages it represents.

We are the “definition of successful land use for Loudoun's rural areas, [returning] a net positive” amount in taxes to the County compared to the services the County provides, said Vance. Vance then identified five specific things in the current draft that COLT members believe would threaten Loudoun's rural heritage and rural economy:

1. The “diminishment and elimination” of most of the policies which produce and encourage broad cooperation between the County and the towns.
2. Increased density in the TPA, which virtually eliminates “the stated goal of the buffer area,” an outcome “strongly opposed by 80 percent of County residents.”
3. The potential relinquishing of the towns' control over their water and sewer facilities, obligating them to supply properties in the JLMAs.
4. A lack of specificity as to how a town's planning documents, including its own Comp Plan, plays into the bigger picture.
5. Provisions which weaken the overall protections for the TPA and the RPA. Current zoning law specifies what actions “will be taken,” and what policies “will be implemented.” New language merely “encourages” such actions and/or policies.

Whether individual commissioners have either never really supported the TPA, or, believe that, at this point, they have no choice but to fundamentally change or scrap it all together, their vision for Loudoun would deny the clear, compelling, and consistent sentiments expressed by the thousands of everyday citizens who have spoken out over the months of public hearings, public input sessions, and more with one simple message: get the growth under control and get it under control ... now.

The Makeup of the Loudoun County Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is an unelected, nine-member advisory board representing each of the nine County Districts. Each is appointed by the Board of Supervisors member serving that District – from the densely populated Broad Run District to the rural areas represented by the Blue Ridge District.

The Chair of the Commission is Cliff Keirce, Broad Run District, and the Vice Chair is Fred Jennings, Ashburn District. Kathy Blackman represents the Algonkian District; Tom Pricilla, the Blue Ridge District; Jeff Salmon, the Dulles District; Ad Barnes, the Leesburg District; and Dan Lloyd, the Sterling District. Jim Sisley serves At-Large.

Robert Sanabria Retrospective at Franklin Park Sunday, Oct. 14

This is what makes the Franklin Park Arts Center so wonderful ... so spectacular.

On Sunday, Oct. 14 the center will hold a reception opening an exhibition of sculptures by Loudoun artist and author, Robert Sanabria, featuring models of his work from parks, embassies and city centers around the world.

Local exhibits of the caliber represented by artists like Sanabria – an individual with more than 26 major career sculpture commissions – are few and far between. But, Franklin Park Arts Center has them.

Also at Franklin Park this month – ballet, puppet shows, bluegrass, musicals, comedy, cabaret, and more. For details go to www.franklinparkartscenter.org.



WOOLLY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Woodier, a wine tasting from Fabbio Cellars, a natural dyeing demonstration, and three Merino wool classes.

The language of the knitting and crocheting crowd – sustained and celebrated by wool professionals such as Solitude Wool – is so fascinating.

They talk about animals – llamas, alpacas, Merinos, paco-vicunas, and “rare fiber goat breeds.” They talk about methods of construction – felting, knitting, weaving, crocheting, and hooking. And, they amuse themselves with things like llama jumping contests. (A paco-vicuña, by the way, is “a special

alpaca that exhibits the phenotypical traits [The observable physical or biochemical characteristics of an organism] of the vicuña, its Andean ancestor.” Of course it does.)

Solitude Wool is part of the Loudoun Artisan Trail. The company has warehouse hours on Wednesdays, and by appointment. To learn more about Solitude Wool’s artsy story, go to www.solitudewool.com, or contact Gretchen Frederick, 540 554-2312.

For details on the November 3 event, and to register for the classes offered go to the Solitude Wool’s website.

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HALLOWEEN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

musician all her life and teaches music at Montessori School and is children’s choir director at a local church. Bring the kids early to enjoy Nancy’s Halloween Show.

They’ll be fun Halloween themed games for the kids, such as The Rubber Rat Toss, Pumpkin Bowling, Pin the Nose on the Witch, Pumpkin Tic Tac Toe among others. Every kid will win a prize.

Come dressed in your most creative costume and be judged in one of 7 costume contests for trophies and cash prizes.

- Infants to 5 yrs. – judging 6 p.m.
1st Place \$100. 2nd Place \$50. 3rd Place \$25 plus Trophies. For all categories – same prizes for 1st, 2nd, and third place plus trophies.
- 6 years to 12 years – judging 6:30 p.m.
- Pets – all types – judging 7 p.m.

- 13 years to 17 years – judging 7:30 p.m.
- Adults 18 plus – judging 8 p.m.
- Family/Group – judging 8:30 p.m.
- This is followed by the Best Overall Costume award of \$500 cash.

Other events include “Howl at the Moon” and “Most Horrific Scream” contests, face painting and balloon artists.

Come hungry. Delicious food by Magnolias, Oysters and Beer Garden outside Jacks Run Brewery and LaDolce Vita Gelato will be available right on 21st Street from 5 p.m.

Admission is free to the Purcellville Halloween Block Party along with free parking throughout the Town. For contest rules and more information visit www.purcellvillehalloween.com, find us on Facebook at Purcellville Halloween Block Party or text Michael Oaks at 540 383-0009 – email DPurcellville@gmail.com.

TIM KAINE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

traditional roads and bridges. Metro is vital to Northern Virginia, and as Governor, I pushed to secure funding for construction to build the Silver Line out to Wiehle Avenue – and later extend access to Dulles. In the Senate, I’ve worked to strengthen its safety and efficiency, which led to the creation of the Metro Safety Commission. I’ve secured TIGER grants for Virginia projects like the I-95 Express Lanes, in addition to funding to fully repair the Arlington Memorial Bridge. Traffic and infrastructure impact the daily lives of almost everyone in Virginia, and I will continue to fight to improve traffic, spur economic development, and work to ensure that we have livable communities throughout Virginia.

BRL: What is something that voters might be surprised to know about you?

Kaine: Most harmonicas can only play in one key, and I like to be prepared for an impromptu music session, which is why I usually have eight harmonicas with me, at the ready. I love to play. And anytime I’m in the car traveling around Virginia, I’m listening to music – from The Replacements to Charlie Parker to the Carter Family. And I love joining local bands on stage for a song or two (or three) at breweries, fish fries, and picnics across our Commonwealth. My wife Anne is also a great clogger. In fact, the first time I played harmonica on stage was only after Anne had finished clogging, and told me it was my turn to “do something embarrassing.”



WEXTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

judicious approach between approving new growth and preserving the things that make our region a great place to live.

BRL: Of what accomplishment are you most proud while serving in public office?

Wexton: I am very proud that during my time in the state Senate, I have passed over 40 pieces of legislation, every one with bipartisan support while serving in the minority party. My single proudest accomplishment is voting to expand affordable healthcare for up to 400,000 hardworking Virginians who fell in the coverage gap. It is good for Virginia's physical and fiscal health. We are able to expand coverage and bring more than \$5 million a day back to Virginia's economy to invest in areas such as our mental health and substance abuse programs.

ERIC LYLES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

significant investments and commitments to the community, as a businessman and as citizen.

He served on the Town Council for nine years. Every holiday – from the 4th of July, to Christmas, to Veteran's Day, Labor Day, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and Thanksgiving – he sends out messages of hope, faith, and love to the community. And, Eric also makes sure that he does his part in promoting authentically American values – like getting to the polls on Election Day.

The second part of Ephesians Chapter 4 must have aided Eric in his journey – from the little boy who rode with his father in the funeral

home's hearse, to the student patiently earning his degree, to Funeral Director, to a seat on the Purcellville Town Council, and beyond. That second part of Chapter 4 reads: "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."

Everything about the Eric Lyles and the Lyles Funeral Home is so community-oriented, so authentically "family."

So, the Blue Ridge Leader, at last, asked Eric, "Will another Lyles take over the business from you one day?"

"Well, the jury is still out on that," said Eric, "the jury's still out."

WARNER BROOK, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the sewer layout with specific emphasis on capacity, connection points and flows. Initial review of sanitary capacities indicates that based on anticipated flows provided by the applicant there will not be enough capacity in the VIP pump station to handle the increase proposed by Warner Brook. It is not clear what type of upgrade will be needed to convey adequate flows."

Regarding water capacity, the Town's consultant has determined that the inclusion of the Warner Brook property in the Purcellville system will cause both Average Daily Demand, and the Maximum Daily Demand to exceed the Town's capacity, as shown in a Virginia Department of Health letter dated Nov. 3, 2015 (1,103,600 gpd)."

The Warner Brook property totals 131.29 acres, and is located on Rt. 611/Purcellville Road. The property is currently in the County and is zoned JLMA-3 – one house per three acres. Its current zoning would allow for approximately 43 homes on the property. The large proposed development would generate 8,000 to 10,000 daily vehicle trips in and around intersections and roadways currently rated a D or F by

transportation studies. In an Oct. 23, 2017 memo, Town staff reviewing the proposed Warner Brook annexation stated, "Given the layout, the uses proposed could generate new future trips up to 10,000 trips per day ..."

The owners of the property are requesting an annexation into the Town of Purcellville, which would give access to Town utilities, allowing the property to be developed at a much greater density. At previous meetings, now several years ago, community residents asked Herbert, to develop the property by-right. At the time, he said that the owners wanted the higher profit associated with higher densities on the property. The proposed development is calling for the following, if annexed into the Town:

160 residential units on 65 acres, light industrial on 24 acres with an M1 proposed zoning.

Commercial on 11 acres – with 70,000 sq. ft. of MC/Mixed Use Commercial zoning proposed.

Recreational on 31 acres, with 130,000 sq. ft. of recreation also with an MC/ Mixed Use Commercial zoning.

There is also a mention of the playing fields that would be used until market demands allow for more commercial on

the property.

One year ago, water and sewer rate consultants for the Town of Purcellville told Council that with its FY18 proposed strategy of keeping utility costs down, citizens would have a two to three percent increase in water and sewer rates from FY19 to FY23.

At that time, the Town used revenue from non-tax sources – cell tower leasing and operational expense reductions – such as the \$324,558 chargeback reduction in the Utility Fund for FY18. Restructuring the debt also allowed for \$12.5 million in debt payment savings over 10 years. The Town can also use a percentage, for example, of the meals tax to add to the Utility Fund as long as it is provided for in its policy.

However, in less than five months, the consultants came back with a totally different scenario, and said that the rates would increase nine percent annually through 2024, more than 300 percent higher than their original estimate. Their reasoning included the increase in Capital Improvement Projects over the next five to 10 years.

But a closer look at the CIP budget from the year FY18 to FY19 shows an increase of only \$2 million over five to 10 years.

The \$2 million could be paid, for example, through matching grants and available funds. As of August 2018, the Water Fund has \$6.8 million in monies, and the Sewer Fund, \$5.9 million.

The Warner Brook representatives are using the new nine percent figure to suggest to citizens that unless they support the annexation, their bills will increase by nine percent.

Arguably, the nine percent projection of utility rate increases in FY20 assumes that the CIP estimates for the next five to 10 years are accurate.

But owing to present and future advances in technology, some of these costs might be significantly reduced. Considered in this respect, quotes used to estimate the CIP budget projections are two- to three-years-old. This projected increase was made without the consideration of the following: restructuring the debt to obtain \$12.5 million in debt-payment savings over 10 years, lowering Town debt from \$58.2 to \$55.7 million, reducing Utility Fund chargebacks for FY18 by \$324,558, generating \$344,718 from selective timber harvests, selling an underperforming Town asset for \$300,000, and gaining \$107,000 in interest revenue.

COACHES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

and fueled his desire to excel. At that point I don't think we ever contemplated coaching in high school again. Eventually, we had nine kids of our own, [and] we really did not have time to coach a high school team."

Even before working with Webb, Joan has said, "We had some reasonable success as coaches ... many state qualifiers, several state champs, one national champ relay team – but no state team titles."

Said Joan, "Coaching Alan was really, really fun – he was the most talented kid we had ever worked with, obviously. He also had just a tremendous work ethic and competitive drive. Quitting after his freshman year was so hard, but it was the right thing to do for our own family."

So, "What's the toughest part of cross-country for the individual athlete? Does it vary from person to person?" the Blue Ridge Leader asked.

Well, according to Marc, there's a lot more to that than meets the eye. "We have a seven-level process in what we call our 'Win-the-Day' motto. Step 1 is that you chose to participate in sports. Step 2 is that you chose to participate in an individual sport which is typically lonelier and

mentally tougher on kids because their success is not based on teammates, but on themselves alone. Step 3 is choosing cross country as your individual sport. There is not much glory in cross country compared to other sports. It is hard and monotonous, and your hard work is recognized by few people ... Cross country kids have a different bent, and are extremely successful because of that ability to be disciplined, hunker down, work hard, absorb the pressure of the individual sport, and push yourself beyond what you thought was humanly possible."

And, said Joan, "Cross country is demanding. It involves physical discomfort. We train in all kinds of weather. We train six days a week. Some of our kids train seven days a week. We expect our athletes to be there every day. It is a big commitment. I am always amazed that so many kids at our school have the guts to try it; and most who try it, stick with it. There is something very satisfying about transforming yourself from a non-runner who couldn't run ten minutes without stopping to someone who can run for over an hour, after a couple months of training."

The Hunters deal with all of these complicated physical and emotional factors with their own family track and

field star, son Drew, who shattered records to include Alan Webb's national indoor mile.

And, now that he has turned pro, how far in track and field do they see Drew going?

Again, according to Marc, "Drew has all the intangibles to be successful. He is willing to do all the little things to be great, so that should help him continue to improve. In his second full-year as a pro he is the second fastest 1500-meter runner in the United States, second only to the Olympic Champion, Matthew Centrowitz." Marc continued, "From a father-coach perspective, the only thing lacking is his racing tactics; he cost himself some better results by being tentative and not trusting his ability. Running at the world class level is so tactical; and you have to make correct tactical decisions in a split second, or you can find yourself out of position, and therefore out of a chance at a medal."

Joan also believes mightily in her son's potential. "I think Drew has the talent, patience, and work ethic to go as far as he wants to go."

Congratulations to this family track and field team. Here's to hoping – knowing! – they will go far.

Another Western Loudoun Sportsplex

A pre-application meeting with County staff was held at the end of September for a proposed sportsplex located on the Purcellville West property west of the Town of Purcellville on the north side of Business Rt.7.

Developer Joe Bane is representing Allen Phelps on the proposal, who is considering building the following on 30.45 acres of the 84-acre property: a sportsplex "like Evergreen," with grass sports fields and artificial turf; and a club house to include a restaurant and brewery – according to notes from the pre-application meeting. According to those notes, staff said that parts of the proposal "may not be compatible with farmland. Lights for fields in evening may be deleterious." They noted that traffic generated from this proposal "is not in keeping with landscape." They recommended "looking for a more

passive recreational use."

The County Zoning Department noted that indoor recreation is not a permitted use in the AR-1 district, and that a text amendment might be required for the project. The same would be required for outdoor lighting for potential sport fields. In this zoning district, a brewery is allowed, and a restaurant would be allowed by-right if agriculture is on-site. It was noted that with the residential community next door, there could be compatibility issues, too.

Since there would be no access to public utilities, there would have to be a well and drainfield. And, for this type of use, it would have to be a "Major mass drainfield..." Putting in drainfields would mean the well site is limited. According to the meeting notes, a soil study was also recommended – immediately.

DEBATE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

said that Obamacare was totally a partisan bill, and that there was no collaboration. "We continue to see problems with it." Comstock said that the new bill didn't protect pre-existing conditions, and that she didn't support it. She pointed out that Congress has expanded health savings accounts, given more choices to veterans, and repealed the medical device tax. She said she supports people being able to buy health insurance across state lines. Comstock said it needs to be changed, reformed and have bipartisan support.

Wexton said the government needs to bring premiums under control, and Medicare needs to be able to negotiate prescription drug prices. She said that quality affordable health care is a right for all, and she will work across the aisle to find real solutions.

In response to the question about workforce housing and housing diversity in Loudoun, Comstock stated that the booming economy has been providing money needed along with data centers yielding \$120 million for the County. There is also the option of working with HUD, and obtaining available grants to address these concerns. "The issue is what kind of growth are we going to have, and that is a community discussion on where the growth is going to be, and how it is going to be. I always support having our state and local officials decide that, because you need to get community support for that."

Wexton said, "Congress can help by insuring full funding for community development block grants and home investment partnership programs to allow localities, states, and the Federal government to pool their resources with

private builders to make not just affordable but workforce housing."

Comstock said she is against the Federal employee pay freeze. "You can't balance the budget on the backs our Federal employees. That has been my position." She said she was confident that "we will have those pay raises next year." She also wants paid family leave. Wexton said that Trump's freeze on Federal workers pay is just another attack on this employment sector. Wexton accused Comstock of voting for the budget which contained the Federal workers' pay freeze; Comstock responded that it was not in the budget.

Wexton concluded by saying she will truly protect and represent members of the 10th Congressional District, and not just when the spotlight shines on them, but all the time. She said she will work to find solutions for the challenges "facing our region and our country, not score political points I will truly stand up to the dangerous policies of this president and his administration," she said.

Comstock said that her record "is one of getting results on your priorities." She said she is "focused on bringing us together, and moving us forward. Results not resistance." On the many issues facing this district – the heroin issue, the tax credit issue, the human trafficking issue, sexual harassment, and hate crimes, Comstock said that these are bipartisan issues, and that she has worked across the aisle to solve them.

The debate was moderated by Loudoun Chamber President Tony Howard before about 550 people at the National Conference Center's West Belmont Place in Leesburg.

The election is Nov. 6.

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Loudoun BOS engages on Rockwool issue

BY ANDREA GAINES

As the October issue of the Blue Ridge Leader went to press, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors was due to take up the issue of the Rockwool stone wool factory. On the agenda for the Board's Oct. 2 business meeting, was an item called *Response to Board Member Initiative: Rockwool Manufacturing*.

According to a BOS staff memo, the purpose of the agenda item was "To provide the Board of Supervisors (Board) with an overview of the Rockwool manufacturing facility currently under construction in Ranson, West

Virginia."

The agenda item was an outgrowth of the Board's Sept. 4 Business Meeting, where Supervisors Tony Buffington Jr. (R-Blue Ridge District), and Geary M. Higgins (R-Catoctin) directed staff to "provide a summary of the project details, status, regulatory approvals, permitting and other relevant publicly available information along with discussion outlining existing options for further Board action. The Board directed that the item should also provide a cost estimate for potential further analysis of human, agricultural and environmental impacts on

Loudoun County resulting from the facility."

In researching the Rockwool issue, staff reported it had attended a community open house hosted by Rockwool at the Jefferson County Community Center. At that open house, staff discussed the factory with Rockwool officials. Rockwool later sent a letter providing staff with "a letter summarizing various informational resources available to Loudoun to stay current on the project."

The Loudoun County Administrator also communicated various BOS questions and concerns to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and the factory's potential environmental impact on Loudoun. Staff also communicated questions and concerns to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Rockwool broke ground on its Ranson factory in June, and plans to be operational at the site in 2020. Loudoun County staff notes that there are a number of regulatory and technical steps remaining, "before the facility comes into operation, including: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) from WVDEP, a Title V CAA Operating Permit, Extension of Charles Town sewer utilities to the site, Extension of Jefferson County water to the site, and City of Ranson building permits."

The staff memo provides cost estimates for additional studies that the Board might choose to undertake to determine the specific threats that the factory may pose to the citizens and rural businesses of Loudoun County. These studies relate to the factory's "effects on soils, vegetation," "additional air dispersion modeling to incorporate Loudoun County," and "risk assessments of toxic substances such as heavy metals."

MICROSOFT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

the San Jose/Silicon Valley area of California, signaling its intent to expand its reach in cloud and internet technologies. Microsoft has said the property might be used for the company's light industrial needs or for data center development.

In August of this year, Microsoft purchased 260 acres in Goodyear, Arizona for \$48 million, reportedly with similar aims in mind.

In November 2017, an investment firm controlled by Microsoft founder Bill Gates purchased 25,000 acres west of Phoenix, with plans to build a "smart city," defined by the firm as "a community built from the ground up with the idea of integrating technology into its residents' lives."

The Microsoft land purchase here in Loudoun highlights the difficult choices that fast-growing communities face.

Tech industry analysts note that Silicon Valley and other places that tech companies have traditionally called home are, literally, running out of land for both commercial and residential development. It is this phenomenon that is driving much of the data center boom in Loudoun County, where land, at least in terms of what a tech giant such as Microsoft can lay down, is cheap.

When contacted for comment on the Microsoft purchase, the office of Loudoun County Economic Development told the Blue Ridge Leader, "We're not permitted to go into specifics at this time." But it passed along the following statement from Economic Development Director Buddy Rizer: "I'm very excited that Microsoft has made this commitment to Loudoun County. Loudoun continues to evolve as a technology location, and I'm very confident this will be a very successful campus for the future of one of the world's great companies."

MODERN FARM HOME, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

along with touches you'd only find in a modern home of this quality – a planter's shelf, a glass front wine storage cabinet with granite counters, a large island with vegetable prep sink, a full ceramic subway tile back splash, a white fireclay English farm sink, and new stainless steel appliances – Bosch, Kitchen Aid, and others. And, imagine the other extras in a kitchen that has a warming drawer and warming lamps.

The large breakfast room, family room, study/home office, master suite, bedrooms, bathrooms, mud room, and powder room follow the same spectacular frame of mind – with more hardwood, Dutch doors, ample closets, and a sense of openness. The laundry room, which is on the main floor,

is adjacent to an enormous mud room with the multiple cubbies – they are both large rooms, which are ideal for busy life on the farm. And, a 2,500 sq.ft. unfinished walk-out basement with French doors provides loads of additional possibilities.

A YouTube video link for this property can be found at bit.ly/shadowbrookvideo – take a quick peek. Before you know it, you'll be wondering what you would do with the wonderful columned front and back porches, the beautifully appointed interiors, and the barn. Then, get a little closer, and schedule a personal visit. You'll love what you see.

P.S. The owners of this property will also enjoy great tax benefits. The land is in permanent open space easement, as verified by the tax record.

LIFE FULL CIRCLE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

as Vice Chair of the Loudoun County Disability Services Board. "The battle for awareness never stops; and, you cannot force acceptance," she says. The DSB is comprised of Loudoun County residents serving their community by tackling issues important to the disability community. For more information regarding this volunteer board, visit: www.loudoun.gov/dsb

Despite Corey's success, Weisman still finds her role is far from diminished. "I find I have to work more to get what he needs," she says, pointing out the difficulty in accessing adult services. "I think

that unlike before, I am anxious," she says. She worries about what life will be like for Corey when she is no longer here to watch out for him, a common theme found among parents of children with disabilities. Yet, she takes solace in her son's having achieved what all parents desire for their children: "You want them to be happy," she says, before quickly adding that Corey is. "I am scared, but I don't think he is," she declares, leaving her with a sense of peace. "Life full circle," she says.

Samuel Moore-Sobel is a freelance writer. To read more of his work, visit www.holdingontohopetoday.com.

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HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

addicted to them.” Byne pointed at his waist and nodded in vigorous assent, so he poked back, “I’ve seen you eat hay, Byne!” The slight woman defended herself, “It was the sweetest smelling hay Todd has ever delivered, so I thought I’d taste it. Sebastian and Finn demolished it, as I recall.”

Smell

“Maybe the best way to talk about smells is to mention the ones we don’t have – exhaust fumes, pollution, garbage,” Robert observed. They preferred the country smells: Hay, honeysuckle, freshly cut pastures, smoke from a burn pile. Horses. The rich leather of cared-for horse tack.

Byne said, “They’re some farm smells that aren’t sweet but are part of life here.” Horse manure (though it was such a part of

country life that many people came to like it) diesel fuel, but then she remembered the nicest smell of all – clean air.

Touch

“Robert, this one’s going to be a challenge. I touch all sorts of things every day but I don’t really think about them.” They managed to name some: The hair of a horse’s flank and the smooth skin around its nose. The slipperiness of mud and the pricks of floribunda rose vines along the fences. The itch of poison ivy. A pet goat’s rough coat and the ribs along its horns. Robert added a last one, “The flexing of a credit card.”

Byne chuckled. Inwardly, she was grateful for her husband’s success in the investment world.

Sight

Too easy, they agreed. People rely on sight more than other senses, and in western Loudoun there was a lot of beauty to see. Panoramic sunsets, some almost thermonuclear. Little historic villages with log cabins and quaint stone houses. The soft Blue Ridge Mountains marking the western edge of the county. Unpaved roads, often flanked by board fencing or old stone walls and sometimes weaving through a canopy of trees. Horses grazing on green pastures. Night skies full of stars (though fewer now because of sprawl). Country stores. Fox hunting and horse shows. Barn swallows and swooping bats, cormorants occasionally, eagles sometimes and geese always.

It didn’t take Byne long to realize something. “We could go on forever on why

this is so pretty. I mean, you could cover a lot of coffee tables with glossy photo books about western Loudoun.”

Next?

“You know, Byne, we could do this again, maybe about the people here, or maybe about how all of this makes you feel.”

“It might be fun to poke at city people,” Byne answered, “but for me, the emotional part can be pretty succinct.” Robert arched his eyebrows, a silent gesture for her to continue.

“It’s really just one thing, Robert. I love it here. It’s home.”

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



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