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Comp Plan decision time – TPA residents prepared for a fight

BY ANDREA GAINES

It is hard to understate the enormity of the gap between the thousands of individual Loudoun County residents who have expressed their concerns about Loudoun's runaway growth, and the Comprehensive Plan that will be publicly debated this month.

With the Silverline Metro on the way, an Urban Policy Area added to the mix, and dozens of data centers on the way, Loudouners knew they were in for a change.

But, the draft Loudoun 2040 plan pre-

sented to the Board of Supervisors by the Loudoun County Planning Commission on March 21 is recommending a plan that seeks, not just to direct the growth to come, but to give it a place within which to explode.

The development community is jubilant – while the people and neighborhoods that lie in the path of that growth are incredulous, and promising to be out in full force for public hearings scheduled for April 24 and April 27.

The BOS now has 90 days, through a

series of public hearings and work sessions, to review the draft and either accept or deny the specific recommendations of the Commission. A final vote is expected in early July.

'Land available for development' vs. 'quality of life'

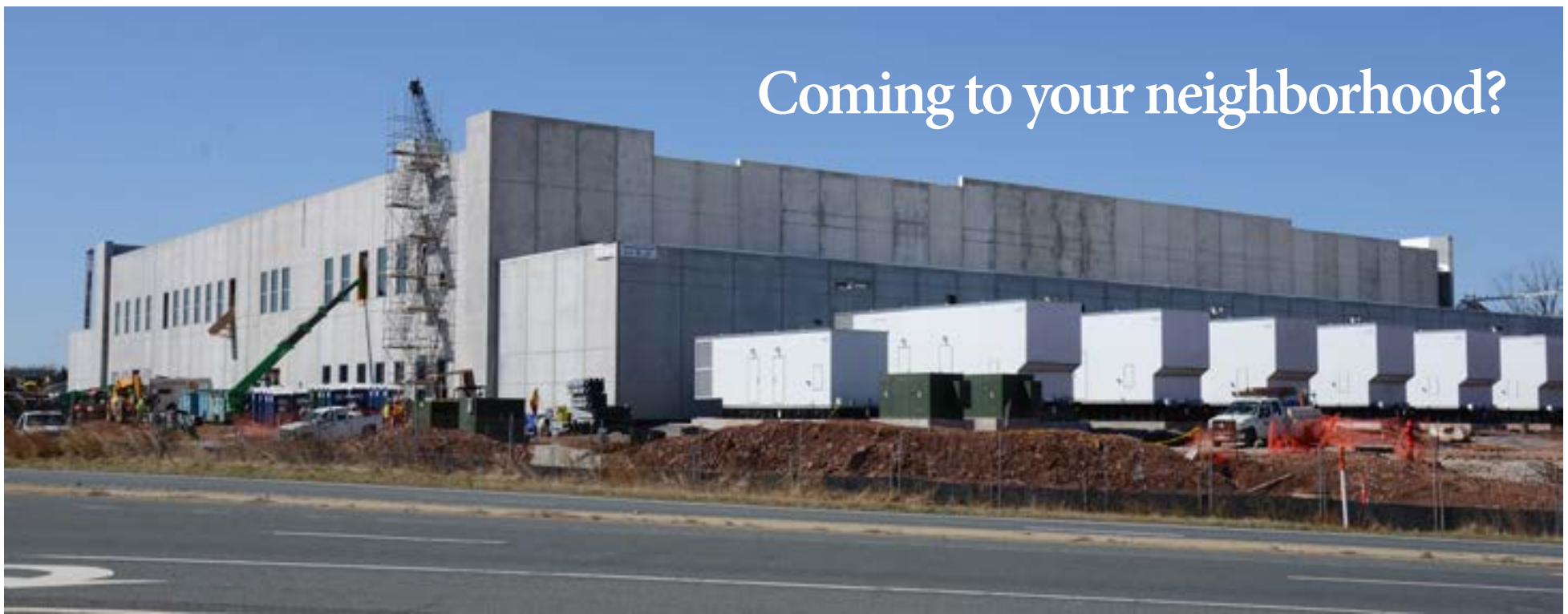
One of the first indications that the PC would seek to fundamentally change Loudoun's approach to growth was the Envision Loudoun May 2018 draft

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INSIDE: One big, messy, tax haven? Go to page 15



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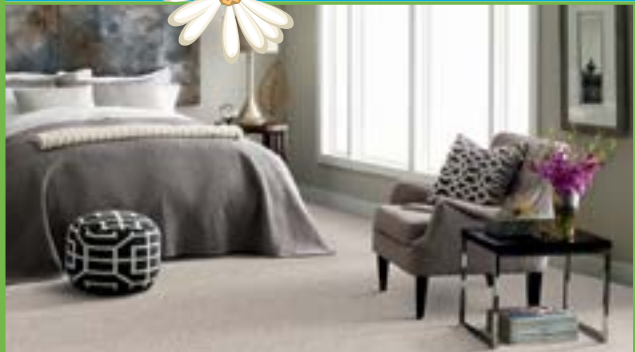
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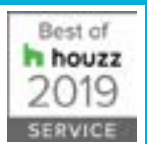
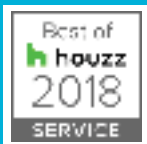
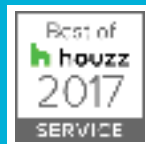
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Lincoln Elementary School Educational excellence was born here ... and has never left

BY ANDREA GAINES

One of the most enchanting learning opportunities Lincoln Elementary School has ever presented to its students is what has been known as an “1818 School Day.”

As they arrive at school, youngsters don period dress and walk down Lincoln’s main street

to the historic 1815 Oakdale School, a one-room brick schoolhouse on the National Register of Historic Places since 1974.

Each student gets the biography of a boy or girl from the year 1818 – the children of early Lincoln families such as Brown, Janney, Hirst, Purcell, Nichols or Taylor.

With a sense of wonder, the students assume this child’s identity and get to work – sitting on old wooden benches, flipping through original Oakdale School text books, and writing out lessons with hand-made quill pens.

This exercise has had special



Local author and illustrator Henry Cole thrills the kids.



Dave Michener talks with a student about his science fair project.

relevance to today’s Lincoln Elementary School parents. Not just because they or their children might have experienced it first-



At Lincoln Elementary, all paths lead to academic excellence and a stronger community.



Students enter Oakdale School for 1818 School Day.

hand. But, because the sense of educational purpose and togetherness that ran through this place in 1818 ... never left.

‘The Lincoln mothers rug-braiding network’

When long-time Lincoln resident Jean Brown and her late husband Bill’s daughter Sara attended the school, Jean formed the “Lincoln mothers rug-braiding network.”

As the ladies braided away, they shared information about how their kids were doing in school, where they’d be that day,

and maybe what trouble they’d gotten into recently ...

“I didn’t just have my mom to answer to ... all the parents were ‘watching out for me,’ said Sara.”

Today, as the parents of a daughter who graduated from Lincoln and now attends Blue Ridge Middle School, and a son who now attends Lincoln Elementary, Sara and her husband Scott Maison say “We still all look out for each other’s kids.”

Said Jennifer Reed, a fourth grade teacher, “Lincoln reminds me of why I became a teacher. I can see the growth in every

Lincoln student from kindergarten through fifth grade ...

It makes me smile when I pass a first grader in the hall and I say, ‘Good morning, Jack,’ and he says, ‘You know my name?’

“And, Jenna Alexander, Hunt District PTO President and also a candidate for Catoctin District School Board Representative, said, “The minute you pull into the parking lot at Lincoln Elementary, you know you are someplace special ... Every school in Loudoun has a strong sense of community, but what

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A “Weiner Roast” to cure Cystic Fibrosis

BY JOE LAFIANDRA

The movie “Five Feet Apart,” which opened in theaters on March 22, tells the story of two cystic fibrosis (CF) patients who meet and fall in love during a hospitalization, but are restricted from being within 5 feet of each other by strict infection control rules for many CF patients. CF is a degenerative genetic disease that affects the lungs, pancreas and other bodily organs and shortens lifespan.

This is a movie but, one Northern Virginia family with two children that have CF have been living with the real-life challenges of parenting siblings with the life-threatening disease for the past 20 years. “It has definitely not been easy keeping siblings 5 feet apart,” said Janet Weiner. “When Matt and Melissa were diagnosed, my husband and I cried and then looked at each other and said ‘we



are going to fight to give them a chance at a normal life.” From that day on, the Weiner Family has been fundraising for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. Donations to the foundation have resulted in the development of new drugs that have alleviated many of the symptoms and destructive effects of the disease and have helped CF patients to lead a more normal life.

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Makersmiths’ KidWind teams bring home three awards

Two four-student teams sponsored by Loudoun County’s Makersmiths, Inc. competed March 15 at the Northern Virginia KidWind Challenge held at Shenandoah

University. They came home with three awards. Teams in KidWind competitions are challenged to design and build functional wind turbines, and demonstrate their understanding of wind energy technology and renewable energy issues.

Makersmiths’ four-member middle school team, known as Wind Overload, received the Blades Award from Dominion Energy for best blade development, and the Knowledge Award. Makersmiths’ four-member high school team, known as Too HAWT to Handle, won first place for its overall performance in the Advanced Challenge Division.

The high school team now qualifies for the 2019 national KidWind Challenge that will be held May 21-23 at the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA) annual tradeshow and WIND-



Coach Diane Painter, and team members: Soren Ogelman, Katie Choi, Neil Murtha and Dane Taylor.



L to R: Coach Mike O’Brien, and team members Aidan O’Brien, Colin O’Brien, Andrew Bennett, and Joda Wade.

POWER Conference and Exhibition in Houston, Texas. At that competition, the Makersmiths’ Advanced Challenge high school team will need to show how the team members worked together to

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Photo by Angela Wade

CANDIDATES FOR BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT

The Loudoun County Republican Committee will hold a convention on **Saturday, May 4 at 10 a.m.** with **registration from 8:30 to 10 a.m.** Two candidates will vie for the nomination for the Blue Ridge District seat for the Board of Supervisors. To sign up as a delegate go to www.LoudounGOP.com and click on Delegate Filing Form. They are due no later than **Sunday April 14, 5 p.m.** The convention is at Stone Bridge High **GOVERNMENT** School, 843100 Hay Road, Ashburn.

Purcellville resident Tony Buffington was elected in 2015 to the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors for the Blue Ridge District. He was raised in Clarke County and attended high school in Berryville. In 1998, Buffington joined the United States Marine Corps, and he currently works in Washington, D.C. as a federal law enforcement officer, serving in a supervisory capacity.

Blue Ridge Leader: What are the most pressing issues facing the district?

Tony Buffington: When I'm talking to residents, they want us to reduce traffic congestion and lower tolls; to preserve western Loudoun's rural, historic, and scenic character; to update our countywide Comprehensive Plan in a manner that reflects their wishes; to attract more local jobs so they can work closer to home and spend more time with family; to ensure policies that promote the proper balance of a strong economy and a high quality of life for families; to expand rural broadband coverage; to ensure more parks, trails, and recreational options; to maintain safe neighborhoods, safe schools, and high-quality education; to support our veterans and first responders; and to continue lowering taxes and reducing the cost of living for families. I've worked extremely hard to listen, lead, and deliver results on all of these issues. And I'm running for re-election to ensure that we continue making progress on each of them!

BRL: Pick one of those issues and explain how you would address it?

TB: Since the Blue Ridge Leader serves mostly rural Loudoun, I'll cover my previous and ongoing efforts to preserve western Loudoun's small towns and



TONY BUFFINGTON

villages, along with the area's rural, historic, and scenic character. Having been raised in neighboring and rural Clarke County, and having graduated high school in the small town of Berryville as a member of the Future Farmers of America, I've always been a staunch advocate for the preservation of rural areas.

Since taking office in January of 2016, myself and the current Board have not approved a single new home in western Loudoun, to include both the Rural and Transition Policy Areas! I've supported our strong rural economy in order to ensure large landowners (wineries, equestrian facilities, traditional agriculture, bed and breakfasts, etc.) are able to earn a living on their properties, who otherwise might sell to a developer for clearing and construction of dense residential. I've led the Board on conservation efforts and recently passed a conservation easement assistance program to help middle class families permanently preserve their families' rural lands. We also recently passed Supervisor Higgins and my effort to further explore options for establishing a Transfer of Development Rights program for Loudoun. In 2018, I was honored to receive the "Friend of the Blue Ridge Mountain" award for my conservation accomplishments.

Having learned of a loophole in Rural Commercial zoning which allowed for nearly unlimited by-right residential construction, I worked with the Board to establish a cap, and I am continuing efforts to further restrict that cap in western Loudoun.

As many are aware, the County is currently engaged in the process of updating our Comprehensive Plan (Envision

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Florian Hauswiesner is challenging incumbent Tony Buffington for the BOS Blue Ridge District Republican nomination. Hauswiesner lives in Aldie with his wife and family. He attended American University Law School in Washington, D.C. and practices business law in Tysons Corner. He is the past president of the Aldie Heritage Association.

Blue Ridge Leader: What are the most pressing issues facing the district?

Florian Hauswiesner: Our district is not only the largest but is also the most diverse district in Loudoun, with suburban, transition, and rural policy areas. This means our residents have a different set of priorities and perspectives. The number one priority for most residents is the fact that our roads and schools are overwhelmed by the population increase we have seen in the last 20 years. Unfortunately, my opponent was not successful in accelerating funding for pressing road projects on Rt. 50 or in the Purcellville area. As the next Blue Ridge Supervisor, I will make fixing the traffic gridlock and the school overcrowding the top priority, while finding the right balance between promoting economic growth and preserving the rural and historic character of the West.

BRL: Pick one of those issues and explain how you would address it?

FH: Because of the population explosion in the greater Aldie area, the County decided to build a new fire station, but spent millions of our taxpayers' monies on buying two different sites that are not suitable for that purpose. I spent a lot of time to lead the fight against this



FLORIAN HAUSWIESNER

plan. Nevertheless, the County keeps on spending our tax dollars, tweaking the design of the station, instead of closing the purchase for an alternative site. Had I been on the Board of Supervisors, I would have prevented the purchase of the village site. Had I come to the Board later on, like my opponent, I would have not wasted months to decide whether a new site needs to be found or not. I don't think it's credible if you constantly talk about preserving the rural West but are indifferent about a County plan to bulldoze a large part of the historic village of Aldie. My opponent only changed his mind on this issue when NBC 4 came out to interview our residents.

We also need to address the inconsistencies in our zoning laws. For example, there are three different zoning areas for the small village of Aldie, and a historic district that only encompasses parts of the village. Data centers should not be permitted next to established residential areas, on mountain ridges, or at locations for which you need to build high-voltage power lines to reach them. Although I am a supporter of our vineyards and breweries, we also need to take into consideration whether our rural roads and established residential areas can handle the additional traffic caused by new businesses.

BRL: What makes you the most qualified person for the seat?

FH: My professional experience as a business attorney has definitely sharpened my ability to understand and manage complex issues and to recognize problems before they materialize.

Ever since I moved to Aldie in 2011, I

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A Rigged Game?

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

The game is rigged.

At least that is the conclusion one can easily reach in the wake of revelations that William Rick Singer, founder and owner of a business intended to assist students in their quest to attend the most elite colleges in America, was assisting students in obtaining college acceptance letters through illegal means. Allegedly bribing college officials, hiring corrupt proctors to enable cheating on SATs, among a myriad of other tactics. A bizarre and utterly confounding scenario, forcing many to reconsider the validity of college acceptances.



MOORE-SOBEL

Most are grappling with the idea of wealth and money parlaying into acceptance to a prestigious university. It was widely accepted that this occurred already, albeit through legal means. The idea of legacy helps students gain access if their parent attended; and, it's hard to believe that colleges are entirely blind when it comes to applicants who happen to be children of politicians, entertainers, and successful entrepreneurs. Name means much, especially if that name will help secure large donations. Which makes the idea of wealthy Americans resorting to illegal means to send their children to the top schools a bit ludicrous. Don't they already have enough advantage built into the system?

Perhaps this speaks to something a bit larger than just being accepted into college. When considering the perspective of those at the top of their professions, the stakes are likely quite high. If Lori Loughlin or Felicity Huffman told their influential friends that their children had been rejected from the schools of their choice, would this affect their social standing?

I wonder if this is reflective of the emptiness of material success. Once obtained, a person still desires more. Apparently, it is not enough to have several million dollars in the bank. Is it less about the money, and more about the doors money opens? The social connections, the prestige, the elevated societal standing, and the respect received from one's peers. Once achieving such a "level," as it were, is one destined to keep pace, as if running on a perpetual treadmill just to retain the vaunted place one has secured?

The desire may not be totally malicious, mind you. Most parents

want the best for their children, and would do almost anything to help their children get a leg up in the college admissions process. What is startling are the lengths those parents will allegedly go to pave the way for their children. It all seems not only morally repugnant, but nearly inconsequential. Whether or not privileged children go to Harvard, will they not be afforded opportunities simply by being the offspring of a famed and successful person?

Despite the troubling aspects of this story, there is something getting lost in the process. After all, does attending an elite school guarantee a student will embark upon a successful career? If true, the millions of others who attend institutions outside of those embroiled by these allegations would be doomed. America remains "the land of opportunity," where people still prove every day that where you start does not necessarily preclude you from reaching soaring heights. Some of the greatest businesses were built by people lacking money and connections, even college degrees. Obtaining an Ivy League education does not guarantee future success; for, that is entirely dependent upon the person.

The implications for the college admissions process are likely far-reaching. It remains unclear how many other students obtained college acceptances through wrongful means. Does this turn of events cast a shadow over every university involved, serving to erode the prestige of certain institutions? Lawsuits are already being filed with this in mind, leaving alumni grappling with the effects this all may have on the marketability of their degrees.

In a final bit of poetic irony, the internet is all atwitter over a long-forgotten *Full House* episode. "Aunt Becky" (Lori Loughlin) and her husband Jesse Katsopolis (John Stamos) craft a plan to get their twin boys into preschool. They make exaggerated claims on the application. To assuage his guilt, Jesse tries to rationalize his bad behavior.

"The most important thing in the world right now is their education," Jesse said. "I'm their father – if I don't lie for them, who will?"

Cue real-life Lori Loughlin.

Isn't it a wonder when television comes to life?

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

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The Divine Comedy: Inferno

BY DANTE ALIGHIERI HOUSTON

(Editor's note: This opinion piece follows the story of Dante's The Divine Comedy, completed in the year 1320. All of the facts and proceedings referenced here are accurate as reflected in County documents.)

I started this work seven hundred years ago and judging by centuries of acclaim, it's pretty good. I conceived three parts, Inferno, Purgatory and Paradise, following the tenets of the Holy Church. Most readers turn to Inferno.

Inferno might be as applicable to life

OPINION

Errata: In our March issue we featured a business (The British Pantry) in the Small Business Grapevine. This business had closed over a year ago. We regret this error and apologize.

Blue Ridge LEADER & LOUDOUN Today

Publisher & Editor
Valerie Cury

Creative Department
Pam Owens, Layout/Design

Advertising

Sabine Bibb Tonya Harding
SabineBibb@gmail.com THarding455@gmail.com
571-437-9953 703-314-5200

Here's How to Reach Us

Email advertise@BRLeader.com or call 540-338-6200

Editor:

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

Special Editorial:

Andrea Gaines – andrea@andreagaines.com

Hot News Tips:

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

Webmaster:

webmaster@BRLeader.com

Mailing Address:

PO Box 325, Purcellville, VA 20134-0325

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today as it was in 1320. It could even describe Loudoun County, where I moved three centuries ago to escape the congestion of my native Florence.

Our quietude is threatened by "Envision Loudoun," the Planning Commission's basis for a Comprehensive Plan that would destroy the county's character.

I was searching for the commissioners along Evergreen Mill Road, an area under their assault, when I espied a large hole. Three morose men stood at its edge. I came closer and saw a red glow at the bottom. This was my Inferno, somehow moved from Italy to Virginia!

I knew two of the men. I introduced myself to the third, "Hi. I'm Dante."

These were three commissioners who usually voted to slow Loudoun's growth. One of them pointed into the hole as another muttered to me, "They're down there."

"The six other commissioners?" I asked.

"Yes, all of them. What happened?"

"This is Hell, or Inferno in Italian. There are nine levels of sinners and at the bottom is Satan himself. He easily could have summoned all of you here and determined who needed punishment."

My three companions shivered. One asked, "So that's how we got here. Do we have to go down there?"

"No, but the others did. Let me enter the pit, find them and learn their sins."

I jumped into the hole. At the fourth circle ("Greed") I saw a familiar face. It was a friend. "Why are you here?" I asked.

"Satan has not yet told me."

I said he was on the level of Greed; he blanched. "Perhaps you have conflicted interests if you vote for more growth at the same time you could profit from it."

"But, but," he sputtered, "You know I'm honest and vote what I believe is best."

"I do, but apparently Satan disagrees. He

did not pull you down here to be merciful. I will tell him to release you."

"You can do that?" my friend desperately asked.

"Certainly. He is a creature of my pen, after all." And, down further I went.

I did not see another commissioner until the eighth level, where I saw two. This eighth circle was "Fraud." Did they know why Satan had put them here?

"Jeff Salmon told us that the county needs more houses in order to have more economic growth. When I said that to Satan, he slapped me."

"Have you considered that Loudoun is already the wealthiest county in America, and that our economy needs no help?" I asked. "Or that the citizens want to stop this growth?"

Both looked confused and one explained, "But that's not what Salmon, Fred Jennings and Cliff Keirce told us."

"Don't be naïve," I snapped, "Tell me more of your fraud."

"We talked about affordable housing, which sounded nice. Developers were pushing it hard. But now the question is whether the plan favors citizens or people who want to come here. We chose wrongly."

One commissioner revealed more. "Look at the fiscal impact. Under the middle-growth scenario, we'd be \$3 million positive, but that's over 21 years so the benefit's less than \$150,000 a year. So slow that it's meaningless." He kept confessing, "The numbers aren't real anyway. We told the consultants to make whatever assumptions they needed to make the plan seem fiscally positive."

"You did that?"

Both nodded; I shook my head, "Then you deserve to be in Fraud. Satan is merciless so you need to repent to his satisfaction. Good luck to you if you have accepted

the truth."

They tendered remorse, "We knew better but we just went along."

I'd seen six members of the Planning Commission by now. I had not seen Fred Jennings, Jeff Salmon or Cliff Keirce. They had to be in the lowest level of Hell.

"Wait," one of the two men called as I started downward. He spoke. "We need to confess something else. The Transition Policy Area is the target. It was to be a transition of uses and a buffer between the suburbs and the farms. Jennings changed that, saying the TPA's purpose was to act as a repository for growth. Salmon wrote that it had to be developed. Then he made a threat – if the TPA didn't get a lot more houses, they'd have to go into the Rural Policy Area. We think his idea is to get the rural people to abandon the TPA."

"Confession is good for your soul. But, now I must leave. Why have you revealed so much, when you voted otherwise?"

"Imminent torture made us re-think everything."

I got their attention with sarcasm. I did not like what this threesome was trying to do to the county. I would not be gentle.

"You said your plan has to meet market demand forecasts. Why must we do that, especially if the citizens are bitterly opposed?"

"You lied about the input you received, using vague terms like 'land use' rather than what the people really said, which was 'stop growth.'"

One of these milquetoasts started to speak but I shushed him with a raised palm, "I was at three of those sessions. I was at other community meetings. I have lived here three centuries. I know what citizens want."

"You made absurd statements, as when your plan said 'the primary housing

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A 13-year-old's answer to identity politics

Dear Editor:

The following was written by 13-year-old John Dennis Donovan from Waterford as an impromptu essay for an SSAT test administered in eighth grade. The writing prompt was wide open, of the two given, John Dennis chose "She decided it was time for a change". His father, Sean Donovan, was so taken by the what he came up with that he thought it ought to be shared with the larger community.

OPINION

Whites. It was always black water fountain, white water fountain, black bathroom white bathroom. Rosa had felt like this was the last straw. She felt insulted that a white man was commanding her to move to the back of the bus. She was no soldier and he was no general. So she sat in her seat and didn't move. She was arrested for this.

Any person be they black, white, Hispanic, Indian, oriental, Irish, Catholic, Sunnis or Shia is still a person. We are all human, we may look or act different, but we are all the same species. Why we cannot accept this I do not know but I do know that everyone thinks of

stereotypes. That is completely wrong.

I feel that everyone should take more time to learn more about other cultures. Not all blacks are the same, not whites or any ethnicity or religion. Those things are labels to separate humans further, if they were to travel and meet people, they might have a more worldly view.

I myself have been to such places. I have been to Iceland, France, Britain, Greece, Turkey, China, South and North Korea, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Hawaii, Alaska, Bon Aire, Aruba and I anticipate my travels to new places. Wherever I go I study the language, the culture and the

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Purcellville Mayor brings local perspectives to Washington

BY ANDREA GAINES

The Congressional City Conference is an annual event organized by the National League of Cities designed to give local leaders the opportunity to “advocate for local priorities at the federal level.” Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser attended the March 2019 NLC event Washington, D.C., along with thousands of local city leaders from across the country.

GOVERNMENT

Presentations and discussions for the 2019 conference included both modern-day and time-honored concepts such as “Data-Driven Government,” and “The Ethical Leader.”

The event also included a Capitol Hill Advocacy Day, during which local leaders had to opportunity to discuss their needs with federal legislators and their staffs.

Fraser used the conference to “network,” as the saying goes. But, ever the pragmatist, he also went right after the specific needs of Purcellville.

“The conference enabled me to network with mayors and other municipal leaders on solutions for the common challenges facing our communities – such as storm water management, traffic congestion, contracts management, and process automation.”



Said Fraser, “I also advocated for the passage of a transportation and infrastructure bill to fund capital improvements in the areas of bridges, roads, the ‘information superhighway,’ and water and sewer utilities in Purcellville and western Loudoun County.”

As part of the conference’s Capitol Hill Advocacy Day, Fraser met with Virginia Senator Tim Kaine and Representative Jennifer Wexton, who represents the 10th District of

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Loudoun's elder statesman, Al Van Huyck, speaks out on County's "highly risky" Comp Plan

BY ANDREA GAINES

Al Van Huyck is one of the most positive Loudouners you will ever meet. An elder statesman who can run circles around anyone even half his age.

We interviewed Mr. Van Huyck recently to get his take on the County's newly drafted Comprehensive Plan.

He served as Chair of the Loudoun County Planning Commission from 1996 to 2003, helping to oversee the development of the County's innovative, three-part growth management strategy consisting of the Suburban Policy Area, the Transition Policy area, and the Rural Policy Area.

GOVERNMENT

Board of Supervisors Loudoun 2040 Draft Plan Public Hearings, Government Center
 Wednesday, April 24 at 6 p.m.
 Saturday, April 27 at 9 a.m.

Founded by local preservationist Lori Kimball, the Coalition is made up of 50 non-partisan, not-profit member organizations representing approximately 5,000 Loudoun residents working to convince the Board of Supervisors – the Comp Plan's ultimate decision-makers – to get growth under control, protect Loudoun's varied landscape, and avoid fiscal catastrophe.



"I am optimistic that the Board will limit the excesses of the draft Plan, if the public demands it."
 – Al Van Huyck

The three-part system has served the County well.

But it is under enormous pressure today, as the County debates proposals for increased housing densities and new uses in the low-density Transition Policy Area, and considers reducing the size of the Rural Policy Area, effectively rezoning farmland for high-density residential and commercial uses, including data centers.

Van Huyck serves today as the Chair of the Loudoun County Preservation and Conservation Coalition (LCPCC).

If you love this place, fight for it

In 2018 Van Huyck received a Loudoun Laureates award for his long-standing preservation efforts. In accepting the award Van Huyck said that "the one unifying theme" about the people receiving the award that year was "how much they all loved Loudoun County and how much they felt the special place where we are privileged to live."

His comments are reflective of both his tenacity and his optimism.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27 »

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Perfectly restored circa 1850 beauty

BY ANDREA GAINES

Loudoun County's villages are known for their beautiful historic properties. The home at 353 West Colonial Highway (Old Rt. 7) in Hamilton is one of these, but, rarely does a property of this caliber come on the market.

The historic house was for many years the home of the well-known Hamilton Garden Inn. The property is located in the heart of the village. But, with mature trees and landscaping, a sweet little garden shed, stone walls, brick patios, beautiful walkways, and other features, it's no wonder the name "Garden Inn" came to mind when previous owners ran the home as an inn. This is a bird-watcher's paradise. And, from hydrangeas to towering pines to spectacular roses to mature hedges, the outside is just as inviting as the inside.

And, oh ... the inside.

Here you'll find 4 to 5 bedrooms, 3.5 baths, 2 offices, wood and stone floors, exquisite woodwork and cozy room after cozy room, accented by 5 decorative and

working fireplaces, some of which run on gas and some of which are wood-burning. The bedrooms are beyond charming, including the master bedroom, which features a dressing area and a walk-in closet. Everything around you speaks to quality and comfort.

As a true, fully-restored antique, you'll see fine craftsmanship in every corner and in every detail – including old-fashion moldings.

But, you'll also see a bright and open, completed updated kitchen, with a built-in wine rack, an airy breakfast room, a living room and family room – on the main level – and a roomy laundry area. Large

windows bring the outside in, and built-in mirrors reflect the beauty you see ... everywhere.

A Florida Room on the main level welcomes the sun from every angle, and sweeping porches and decks welcome quiet morning coffees and al fresco dining.

The yard is fenced, and there is also a detached, two-car garage, and a workshop.

For those with big dreams, the property is zoned commercial/residential, providing the next fortunate owner with lots of possibilities for how to live, and potentially, work here.

The property is a must-see.



353 West Colonial Highway, Hamilton
 MLS: LO268548
 Year built: 1850
 Beds/Baths: 5 bedrooms, 3.5 baths
 Historic Note: Home is the former Hamilton Garden Inn
 Total Acreage: 1.5 acres
 List Price: \$740,000
 Agent: Marcy Cantatore, Atoka Properties/Middleburg Real Estate
 Phone: 540 533-7453
 Website: www.MarcyC.com
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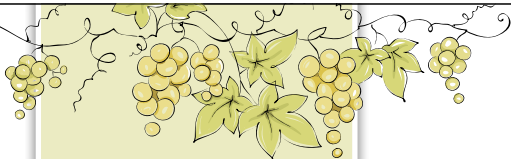
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THEME FOR MAY

“Flowers, Flowers and More Flowers”

THEME FOR JUNE

“Hello for Summer”

THEME FOR JULY

“Freedom for All”

BY ANDREA GAINES

As a writer, one of the most interesting things about Loudoun County is this: every time you think you’ve uncovered and reported on all of the small businesses readers might get excited about, a dozen more pop up. There’s always something new, something undiscovered, a breath of fresh air.

These two small businesses – a cool BBQ place and a cool little women’s clothing store caught our eye this month. Enjoy.

Devilishly-fine BBQ

Washingtonian Magazine has called Hammerdown BBQ one of three smokehouse-type restaurants worthy of going out of your way for.

That’s a pretty awesome endorsement considering the DC area’s reputation for great, great eats.

Owner Ken Soo Hoo grew up in the Chinese restaurant world. “As soon as I could answer the phone,” he said, “As soon as I could reach the wok ... I was in the business.”

A breath of fresh air

Soo Hoo first sold at farmers markets. Then he had a food truck. And, now he has his own restaurant.

His gluten-free BBQ sauces, which translate into dozens of mouthwatering meats – and vegetarian options, too – are his hallmark. And, his menu lacks ... nothing.

Hammerdown serves beer and wine – from mostly local sources. There are homemade desserts and sides, including cole slaw, baked beans, potato salad, fresh fruit, mac & cheese, seasonal greens, and more. Within this list, only the mac & cheese is not gluten-free.

And, of course, there are the meats – including smoked sausage, chopped beef, sliced brisket, chicken, pulled pork, and ribs.

The genius of Hammerdown is that you can get Soo Hoo’s great food any way you want it.

Choose single-serving or family style. Get a table at the restaurant, get your food to go, or have your food catered.

Hammerdown BBQ is located at

41153 John Mosby Highway in Aldie, 703 542-8691, www.hammerdownbbq.com.

Angelic women’s clothing

Misguided Angels is a really unique women’s clothing shop. There’s a Brambleton store, and soon the will be a Leesburg store.

Owner Kim Hutchins has a very fashion-forward point of view when it comes to the shop’s clothing line. There is a California, weekend-kind-of-feel to both the shop and the clothes.

“My clothes are more casual, ‘sexy sophisticated’ I’d say,” said Hutchins. “I started out my career in fashion merchandizing. But, I’ve wanted to have my own shop since high school. And, now I do!”

The clothing brands Hutchins features at Misguided Angels include Bailey 44, Bella Dahl, Young Fabulous & Broke, Chaser, Veronica M, and Level 99. And, her shop’s website warns – or maybe has a little fun with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »



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Alexander announces run for school board – Catoctin District

Jenna Alexander is running for School Board because she believes “that every student and every school community needs to be celebrated as an important part of our Loudoun learning community.” She has lived in Hamilton for the past 11 years, with her husband, and two children, who attend Hamilton Elementary and Blue Ridge Middle School. She is fluent in German and Romanian.

For the past five years, she has been an advocate for our western Loudoun community schools, and has represented the needs of students, teachers, and schools across Loudoun at the local, state and national level as the Director of the Hunt District PTA. As the current Vice President of Advocacy for the Virginia PTA, she has helped parents across the state understand legislation and policies that impact their students and helped them advocate for changes to support their students and school communities.

Said Alexander, “It’s time to re-write LCPS’s strategic plan. As a county, we have made great strides providing students with the technology they need to be successful in tomorrow’s workforce. However, we need a new strategy that integrates the arts and K-12 world languages into the curriculum. We need to provide opportunities for our students to connect with nature and explore ca-

reer pathways that support Loudoun’s rural economy.

“We need a new plan that starts renovating older school buildings now, rather than waiting another ten years. We need a strategy that re-evaluates bus transportation routes, so students have more direct commutes and aren’t expected to walk down gravel roads. We need new strategies that focus on hiring a diverse workforce, and supporting our teachers with mentors and professional development. We need a communication strategy that empowers principals and engages parents as partners when policies are being developed.”

Prior to serving as the Director of the Hunt District PTA, Alexander served as Treasurer, and then as President of the Hamilton Elementary PTA for two years. Alexander said she was instrumental in forming a coalition of five rural small school communities to keep schools open, and ensure all schools in Loudoun have a full time principal.

“Just as I have been supporting school communities and volunteers across Loudoun, as a member of the Loudoun County School Board, I will dig deep into the details, listen to the concerns of our communities, ensure that you are educated on the issues, and look for creative ways to ensure that our children have safe schools, mental health support, academic opportunities to meet the needs of every learner, and that policies are respectful of the beliefs of every family and our tax dollars are used in a fiscally responsible manner,” she said.

To find out more go to Alexander’s Facebook page, Jenna Alexander for School Board.



Jenna Alexander

Congressional art competition accepting submissions

The office of Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-VA) is now accepting submissions for the 38th Annual Congressional Art Competition. Students grades 9-12 are invited to participate for an opportunity to have their artwork hung in the U.S. Capitol.

All submitted artwork must:

- Be framed (Frame may not exceed 26 inches high, 26 inches wide, and 4 inches deep)
- Be two-dimensional with the Student Information and Release Form taped to the back
- Be ready to hang with attached hanging wire and specified mounting hardware
- Have a marking arrow on the back of the work indicating which direction is up

Submissions can be delivered to Enterprise Hall, George Washington University’s Virginia Science and Technology Campus, located at 44983 Knoll Square, Ashburn, Virginia 20147 on Monday, April 22 between 12 p.m. and 6 p.m.

The artwork from all participants will remain on display for public viewing at Enterprise Hall, George Washington University, from April 22 through May 12. Following the exhibit, all artwork must be picked up from Enterprise Hall on Sunday, May 12 between 12 p.m. and 4 p.m.

More information about the Competition, including the Rules and Regulations, can be found at: <https://wexton.house.gov/services/art-competition>

If you have any questions or issues with the established drop-off or collection times, please contact Tami Davis in Rep. Wexton’s Office at 703 234-3800.

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Forget the fancy shirt; I'm here to talk about protecting our County – Kroiz announces run for the Catoctin District

BY ANDREA GAINES

We came prepared with a nicely-pressed shirt just in case the candidate would want us to take, you know, a professional campaign photo while we went about interviewing him for this article.

GOVERNMENT

“Not really me,” said Lovettsville businessman Sam Kroiz, an eighth-generation farmer on a small piece of Loudoun County heaven known as George’s Mill Farm. And, the newly born kid goats, snuggling up against the candidate’s warm flannel shirt seemed to agree.

Kroiz announced in mid-March that he is running as an independent for the Catoctin District seat on the Board of Supervisors.

Kroiz made quite a name for himself in connection with the fight to keep tech giant AT&T off historic Short Hill

Mountain, or, at the very least, to prevent AT&T’s ever-changing “transmission substation” activities that have long dominated the mountaintop from morphing into an all-out data center.

So, we were eager for his thoughts on that and other things having to do with the special connection he has to Loudoun County.

We asked, you are an eighth generation farmer on your family’s land at George’s Mill. How much does your Loudoun County farm/family heritage play into your decision to run?

And Kroiz said, “When the County plans for 2040, it doesn’t feel distant to me. My wife Molly and I are building our farm, making decisions every day

with 2040 and beyond in mind. My kids will be young adults choosing their paths in life. Will Loudoun County be a place that they will want to live and farm? Our decisions today are vital, and they shape

the future.

“I’m also keenly aware of how hard it is to sustain a farm and preserve a family property day-to-day and between generations,” he continued. “Loudoun is famous for its timeless charm, but timelessness doesn’t mean invincibility, or that it can’t or won’t change. Selling the family farm is heartbreaking, but it is the easiest option for many families.

“I’m not sure many people realize how easily it could all fall apart, Kroiz said. “With a cascade of families deciding to give up and sell out, we are approaching a point of no return, and we will not know when we have passed it.”

Kroiz then said, “Many folks think we’ve passed it already, but I don’t. We can still save rural Loudoun, but we have to act together and act now. And, it’s important to point out that keeping rural Loudoun rural is crucial to all of Loudoun – not just because it’s a nice place to visit – but also because if it is all built out, the costs in new schools, roads, and other services will bankrupt the county.

“Party is largely irrelevant when it comes to local politics,” said Kroiz.

“Supervisors should be focused on serving their constituents and solving problems. But, too often, both parties are distracted from service by partisan issues and interests. During election time, you hear a lot of good talk from politicians from both parties about controlling growth, improving roads and schools, etc. But, after the election it’s back to the same old politics that give us some of the highest taxes in the state, overcrowded schools, and horrible traffic.

“I’m sick of it, and am sure many others are as well. I’m confident that I can win as an independent, and will never be beholden to anyone but the citizens of the Catoctin District.”

With respect to the whole of the County, we also asked Kroiz where the interests of the east, the west, and the middle meet.

Said Kroiz, “Every part of the county has unique issues, but for the most part we all just want a high quality of life, good schools, less traffic, safe neighborhoods, and reasonable taxes. The problems we have in all these areas are driven by the constant influx of new residents, who

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 »



Sam Kroiz

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The Gable Farm rural landfill – one big, messy, tax haven?

BY ANDREA GAINES

In recent months, the Blue Ridge Leader reported that Loudoun County had issued a Stop Work Order to Gable Farm for unpermitted stockpiling of soil on its land east of Hamilton.

Documents in possession of the County appear to show that 18 acres of the Gable Farm, approved as a personal recreational field, are, being used as a fully-functional landfill.

Beyond that, the County also has documents showing that Skinner Enterprises, the operator of the landfill, was charging fees for dumping.

Now it appears that the Gable Farm personal recreational field should never have been approved in the first place because it may have failed to comply with County regulations, because it is in the County land use program.

The four parcels that make up the personal recreational field/dump are in the County's forestal and agricultural Land Use Assessment Program. The farm applied for the program in 1986, and reapplied in 2016.

The goals of the program are to keep

land in farm-related use and preserve open space – protecting Loudoun's beautiful countryside, while helping taxpayers avoid the millions of dollars in public infrastructure costs that come with runaway development.

In exchange for putting their property in land use, property owners get huge property tax savings.

In the Gable Farm case, it appears that the owner was enjoying these land use tax savings, while at the same time securing approval to use the land, not for agricultural and forestry purposes, but as a personal recreational field. And, then, turning the whole enterprise into a giant landfill.

It also appears that Gable Farm never told the County officials processing the personal recreational field application that the parcels were in land use, and the County department that handles the Land Use program was never informed either.

County regulations state, "Changing to a non-qualifying use, rezoning to a more intensive use and the split off or subdivision of lots may trigger roll-

back taxes."

Roll-back taxes are the difference between the property taxes the owner would have paid year after year had the property not been in land use. Penalties, in the form of interest on those taxes, also apply.

Had the Land Use office known what was going on, a Stop Work Order might have been issued just as soon as the landfill began accepting the now 28,000 truckloads of fill estimated to have been dumped there. In other words, it might have been stopped before the dumping even started.

In early March, Richard Doucette, Land Protection and Revitalization Program Manager for the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, responded to our inquiry about what his department found when it visited the site in February.

Since the inspection conducted was "visual" only, and did not take any "samples of landfill materials, or water surrounding the landfill for chemical analysis," DEQ said that it was not in a position to "certify that the landfill does not contain hazardous materials."

Flannery files for re-election as Soil and Water Conservation Director

John Flannery filed petition signatures and other paperwork March 22 to be a candidate for reelection to another four-year term as Director of the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District.

In doing so, Flannery said, "We don't regulate soil and water, but we do a

GOVERNMENT

lot of good to resist erosion, chemicals, and 'nutrients' from finding

their way into our soil for crops and feed, and into our drinking water, from the groundwater, to the creeks, to the Potomac River, and even the Chesapeake.

"Our information, outreach, and funds underwrite best practices like livestock fences, water troughs, cover crops, and more. These efforts go back to the days after the long ago Dust Bowl catastrophe, when bad practices destroyed the lands and lives of many. These districts were created afterwards to assure that disaster wouldn't happen again."

Pictured here with Flannery is the Electoral Board's General Registrar, Judy Brown accepting his petitions.



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Chris Harmison announces candidacy for Loudoun County Sheriff

On March 20, Chris Harmison, 61, veteran law enforcement officer and former Chief Deputy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for Loudoun County Sheriff.

Harmison began his career in law enforcement at age 21, when he was hired full-time as a police officer for Fairfax County in 1979, and worked his way up the ranks, eventually becoming the Chief Deputy of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office (LCSO).

"We need a Sheriff who is committed to fair and unbiased policing for all

people," said Harmison. "My campaign is about transparency, direct community involvement, and improving communications at all levels," he added.



Chris Harmison

Harmison said his top priorities include seeking better relations with governmental and non-governmental partners – not only with the Board of Supervisors, where improvement in communication is critical, but



also with the County Department of Fire and Rescue, the School Board and its staff, the various local towns with their own police departments and service providers in the community.

"I am respected by the sworn and civilian personnel in the Sheriff's Office. I will establish Citizen Advisory Committees for the Office and in each of the four Substations in the County. I will make a commitment to openness and diversity in the operations and hiring for the Sheriff's office," said Harmison.

Sheriff candidate Harmison said he believes he is the person for the job because he has spent his entire career in law enforcement, on the streets, in administration, and as Chief Deputy for the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »

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— Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

Helping your children succeed without breaking the bank (or the Law)

The recent college admissions scandal has sent a shock wave throughout the country, and the topic has come up for me repeatedly with parents. The scandal has caused the parents I see to more immediately deal with the anxiety they experience regarding their children's academic futures. College has historically been the path many take toward achieving later vocational success.



DR. MIKE

How do you get your kid into college? It's not your job to get your kid in college, it's your kid's job to do that. As the old adage goes, "You can bring a horse to water, but you can't make him drink," and I think that point is applicable here. As parents, our job is to prepare our children for life as best we can; but we need to get out of the way in order for our children to become independently successful and happy adults. The better question is how can we best prepare our children for life – to get them thirsty enough to want to

drink the water when they should. I offer the following tips:

Do the right things for your child during the early years. Developmental research has shown that engaging infants serves to stimulate IQ. Singing, cuddling, reading books, counting aloud, introducing music, playing and having fun, using sign language and non-verbal communications (e.g., pointing) and experimenting with spatial relations are all things to consider. For toddlers, research has shown that socialization with same aged peers, exposure to novel situations and different opportunities, eating and sleeping well, and implementing experimental learning via old fashioned toys, are also good things to consider.

Encourage your child to learn a musical instrument. Research has shown that children who learn a musical instrument show a boost in IQ scores and that additional boost can help them to excel across various academic subjects. Children who receive music lessons demonstrate increased organizational,

planning and task persistence skills, and music enhances language and reasoning skills, and creative thinking.

Encourage and cultivate grit and emotional resiliency in your child. Research has shown that having a growth mindset – i.e. passion for something and persevering toward long-term and difficult goals – is a key ingredient for success. Teaching your child the value of a dollar, giving your child age appropriate chores, encouraging your child to go beyond their comfort zone, sending your child to an away camp, rewarding your child for hard work, praising your child's efforts more than the outcome, expecting your child to get a part-time job during high school, and encouraging your child to do good deeds are ways in which you can instill a growth mindset for your child.

Encourage your child to join a sport. Research studies have shown that highly athletic children do better academically, socially and emotionally when compared to children who do not participate in organized sports.

Research has also shown that high school athletes display greater self-confidence and self-respect, possess significantly more leadership skills, graduate at higher rates and actually end up earning more money later in life than their non-athletic peers.

Encourage self-care and balance for your child. Sure, it's important for your child to study well and apply him or herself to school, but over prioritizing academics isn't a good thing. It's important for your child to have a well-balanced life where exposure to different activities and pursuits is the norm.

Spend time together as a family. Research has shown that children who eat at least three meals a week with their parents get better grades when compared to children who don't have family meal times. One study even found that family meals are more positively impactful than reading to younger children when it comes to academic preparedness.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

COMP PLAN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Loudoun 2040 General Plan.

While speaking to the need to, "Strengthen natural and historic resources," County planners were at the same time conducting an inventory of "land available for development."

And, while speaking to the need to protect residents' "Quality of life," the Envision Loudoun discussion was now dominated not by how many new housing units, and data centers Loudouners might agree to, but where to put the huge densities being demanded by groups such as the Dulles Area Association of Realtors (DAAR), and the Northern Virginia Building Industry Association (NVBIA).

The TPA, from rural residential haven to data center corridor #2

The Vision Statement approved for the new Comprehensive Plan specifically omitted any mention of the County's long-standing Suburban, Transition, and Rural Policy areas.

Supporters of preserving Loudoun as a special place – by using the Transition Policy Area as a growth buffer between the east and the west – saw this as a warning sign. And, it appears they were right.

The TPA champions a mix of the old (rural) and the new (suburban) – requiring low residential and commercial

densities, promoting farms as a local food source for the newer communities to be built, mandating a high level of open space, and creating self-sustaining, walkable communities that combine residential and commercial.

Large new residential communities, including Red Cedar, Willowsford, Goose Bend, and others were now flourishing here.

But, the draft plan now before the BOS sells these neighborhoods out, expanding the TPA by grabbing parts of the RPA, dramatically increasing residential densities – huge concessions to the DAAR and the NVBIA – and creating a second Loudoun County data center corridor along Evergreen Mills Road.

More than 80 percent of the residents in the Red Cedar neighborhood are not in favor of converting area farms for data center development.

Planned for light industrial, this includes a farm north of the Hamlets at Red Cedar in three parcels totaling over 250 acres, another totaling over 450 acres, and a third that is comprised of seven individual parcels. Some proposed data center properties are located within 1,000 feet of Red Cedar homes.

TPA residents given a Hobson's choice

As the Aldie Citizens Association recently shared on the citizen-inspired Keep Evergreen Mills Road Green Facebook page: "The Planning Commission's

recommendation is now online ... with 19,000 additional residential units being proposed in the Transition Policy Area."

On the data center side, the County's recent decision to allow a data center in the TPA – the 750,000 square foot True North facility – appears to be paving the way for the PC's recommendation to greatly expand "light industrial" in this policy area, too, opening up huge areas of the TPA to even more data centers.

At a recent community meeting organized by the Piedmont Environmental Council and sponsored by the group Keep Evergreen Mills Road Green, attendees were in agreement that no one wants data centers or high-density housing in the TPA.

The Goose Bend community was at first opposed to the expansion of data centers in the PC's plan. But, the head of the PC explained the process to them and how far down the road the planning was. The message: the TPA is going to grow, via lots of new houses or lots of new data centers – you decide what you want to be next to.

In the end, Goose Bend agreed unanimously to recommend to the PC that their own community be proposed as light industrial in the plan, opening the door to more data centers.

Tone deaf

COLT – the Coalition of Loudoun

Towns – has been particularly vocal about over-development in the TPA.

The Coalition is made up of of the mayors representing Purcellville, Leesburg, Round Hill, Hillsboro, Hamilton, Lovettsville and Middleburg, and has proposed specific alternatives for where additional residential densities might be located, preserving the TPA's role as a protective buffer between the suburban east and rural west.

Middleburg Mayor Bridge Littleton has met with several Loudoun County Planning Commissioners, asking why the Planning Commission was so intent on developing the TPA. How is it possible that the revised Comp Plan has gone off in this direction, Littleton wanted to know, when, based on over 10,000 individual comments recorded from the public during Envision Loudoun's extensive public input sessions, 80 percent of County residents wanted no additional growth in the TPA.

According to Littleton, one of the commissioners told him point blank: "I really don't care what they [i.e., residents] want; they are all uninformed, and don't know what they are talking about."

Littleton spoke at a Piedmont Environmental Council gathering in the TPA's Willowsford neighborhood on the evening of March 12, and shared the comments with the attendees.

Purcellville Town Council debates second cell tower

BY VALERIE CURY

The Town of Purcellville has four cellular carriers on the Town water tower – AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, and T-Mobile – netting yearly revenue of \$180,000. Councilmember Nedim Ogelman has been looking into putting another cellular carrier at the Town wastewater treatment plant. It would be either a 125 or 175-foot tower.

GOVERNMENT

Since there is no facility in place to host the carrier's equipment, there are two options.

One option is to use money from the Reserve Fund to invest in building the infrastructure needed to host the carrier's equipment. A study shows the cost to be from \$198,805 to \$233,533 depending on the height. It would take slightly over two years to recoup the initial investment, (considering the Town already receives \$180,000 annually for four carriers on the Town water tower), at which time the Town would get 100 percent of the revenue.

"This option would have the potential to generate the most ongoing revenue for the Town," according to a Town staff report.

The second option would have a third-party vendor pay for the infrastructure, manage the tower, and share the revenue 60/40, with the Town getting the 40 percent. The cost of yearly maintenance is approximately \$500, with an estimated three percent annual increase.

At the Feb. 26 Town Council meeting, the cell tower

at the waste water facility was discussed at length. A second tower is needed to "provide the bandwidth that is necessary for all of our homeowners," said Town Manager David Mekarski, with Town Attorney Sally Hankins noting that the goals for a second tower would be "to improve cell coverage, particularly for residents in the southwestern quadrant of Town." Hankins pointed out that it would also ease water meter reading, ease communication for the police radio system, and enhance revenue for the Town.

Council Member Nedim Ogelman said it is a health and safety issue, since the signal strength is so weak in the southwestern quadrant. "There is significant likelihood that 911 calls might not get through," he said, pointing out that staff had done a study. The signals were weak, he said, "and this is the dominant ground for pursuing it."

Council Member Ted Greenly wanted to see documentation that calls are being dropped, and confirmation that it is a safety issue.

Vice-Mayor Ryan Cool pointed out that the coverage in Hirst Farm is bad on a daily basis.

Council Member Tip Stinnette said that the study showed that there is a weak signal, "but we haven't arrived at the assertion of 'I can't get through.'" "The assertion that 911 calls are likely to not be completed, mathematically, I'd like to see if we are going to take the risk from the public perspective. I'd like to try and quantitatively, mathematically qualify

that likelihood," he said. Stinnette asked staff to do a risk transfer versus risk assumption study.

Cool said that residents in the Hirst neighborhood "have captured zero reception." He continued, "We have hundreds that can attest to this, hundreds, and they go on Facebook and people can't get a hold of their kids."

Cool noted that many who have home-based businesses can't conduct transactions, and have to go downtown to work. "Are these people going to take screen shots? ... No, these people can't get a hold of their families."

Stinnette said, "We say the health, safety, and welfare issue falls around the ability to make 911 calls. So at the end of the day, the metric – if we are going to proceed with the ability to make 911 calls ... not the ability to reach kids, not the ability to work from home, we are going to hang our hat on the ability to make 911 calls, then statistically you would turn around and say, over a period of time these are the number of 911 calls that were made from the community, and these are the number of calls that were not able to get through. Then you do the mathematical analysis and you come up with a likelihood."

Referring to calls not getting through, Cool said, "I am telling you, 'I hear it every day,'"

The discussion and possible vote on the issue has been pushed to another meeting.



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Wittmann announces run for Loudoun Commonwealth's Attorney

Chief Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney Nicole Wittmann has announced her candidacy for Commonwealth's Attorney.

"I have been a prosecutor for 25 years and have spent the last 15 years working with Jim Plowman to keep families in Loudoun County safe," said Wittmann. "I have spent my entire career protecting women, children and all members of our community from crime and look forward to continuing to serve Loudoun County as the Commonwealth's Attorney. I am running for Commonwealth's Attorney in an effort to continue to keep Loudoun County the safe and family oriented community that it has always been and to continue my work of ensuring that victims have a voice and are heard in the criminal justice system."

Wittmann has devoted the majority of her time to prosecuting violent criminals. She has specialized in the prosecution of crimes against women and children, including sex crimes, domestic violence, child abuse, child exploitation, and cases of child pornography. She has also prosecuted some of Loudoun's most high profile cases of murder, including that of Braulio Castillo,

the Ashburn executive who murdered his wife, and then staged it to look like a suicide.

While championing victims' rights, Wittmann has espoused criminal justice reform. "I have always believed that while there are violent people who need to be kept away from society, the majority of people who offend are involved in the criminal justice system due to addiction, mental health issues, or socio-economic issues," Wittmann said. "I am proud of my office's involvement in efforts to address those issues such as the Mental Health Court, the Drug Court, the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative, and the Overdose Response Unit.

Wittmann graduated from Mount Holyoke College and received her Juris Doctorate from Michigan State University College of Law. Wittmann moved to Northern Virginia in 1998. She is married to Joseph Langone, who is also an attorney and a member of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary. Joe and Nicole have two sons, Tony 15 and Stephan 13, and two dogs, Rocko and Teddy.

The current Commonwealth Attorney Jim Plowman has been appointed to be a judge with the Circuit Court and will not be seeking reelection.

All-Star farmers on Loudoun trading cards

Loudoun Economic Development's award-winning farmer trading cards were unveiled at Loudoun County elementary schools on March 28, to coincide with the start of the Major League Baseball season.

The public was asked to nominate Loudoun farmers to be featured on the trading cards.

"The future of agriculture in Loudoun depends on the children of today becoming the farmers of tomorrow," said LED Executive Director Buddy Rizer. "This is another opportunity for our kids to interact with our farmers and see them as the stars they are!"

Interim Agriculture Development Officer Vanessa Wagner revealed that this year's featured farmers are: Bill Bundy – Red Gate Farm, Dr. Mike Gast – Brookfield Farm, Eric Hilgartner – The Ag District and Locksley Farmstead Cheese, Bonnie Kittrell – Double



Farmer Sophia at Mountain View Elementary – the students loved her gourds.

8 Alpaca Ranch, Sophia Maravell – Potomac Vegetable Farms, Beth Sastre – Loudoun Cooperative Extension Office, Erik Schlener – Root and Marrow Farm., Mike Smith – JK Community Farm, and Donnie Ulmer – Milcreek Farm.

LED partners on the trading cards with LCPS. Dr. Becky Domokos-Bays, RD, SNS, director of School Nutrition Services, said, "Local farmers bring so much value to our community. It is our pleasure to honor their work for the fourth year with the farmer trading cards. Students look forward to collecting them each year."

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TUSCARORA MILL

Gentle Harvest

Hanging out in Marshall with organic cows

BY ANDREA GAINES

The farmlands, village centers, and historic byways of our area are home to a growing number of businesses – including re-invented small farms, eateries, and small grocery stores – enticing visitors, neighbors, and savvy consumers to come in and enjoy truly local farm products.

One of the best is Gentle Harvest, a combination restaurant, grocery store – and more – that gives people a personal and informed way to related to their family’s food and food-related lifestyle – whether ordering a homemade sandwich or bringing a chicken home to cook for dinner.

In many ways, Gentle Harvest reflects the way we used to relate to farmers, butchers, bakers and others ... harkening back to a time when we knew – and trusted – what we were getting in every bite.

Its parent organization, Ayrshire

Farm is well known in the area as producing some of the cleanest and most nutritious meat in the area. Ayrshire also owns Hunter’s Head Tavern in Upperville.

Gentle Harvest provides a place where local residents and visitors can buy locally grown food that’s Certified Organic and non-GMO. This is clean local food – free of hormones and chemicals. And, given Gentle Harvest’s close proximity to local farms, it is food that is more nutritious, and truly farm-fresh. It is the epitome of farm-to-table without the weeks and sometimes months of transport that can degrade the quality and nutrient values in food. The products you buy from the typical grocery store may have sat on the shelf for weeks or longer. But, not at Gentle Harvest.

This method of food distribution is better for the consumer and better

for the earth.

The Gentle Harvest Market not only features a butcher shop and a bakery – with a local butcher and baker on premises – but also offers great wines, coffee, local items, produce, canned and boxed goods and environmentally friendly paper goods and household items.

There’s a restaurant for on-site dining and a convenient drive-thru where customers can pick up groceries or healthy food to go. There’s even a Gentle Harvest app for organizing your purchases and ordering ahead.

Sheree McDonald, who oversees all of the food operations at Ayrshire told us, “I am always happy to talk more about our farm and our company!”

“Our fast casual restaurant within the Gentle Harvest store has been given the highest rating

of sustainability by the Green Restaurant Association.

“We are committed to running a business that is sustainable and customer-focused. One of our sustainability goals in the Gentle Harvest store for 2019 is to implement post-consumer composting. We already do this at our sister property, Hunter’s Head Tavern in Upperville, and I am excited to complete this circle for our new restaurant as well.

“We are currently composting all of our pre-consumer food waste and this new goal is one more step in the right direction.”

Gentle Harvest is located at 8372 West Main Street in Marshall. It is open Monday through Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Sunday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Phone: (540) 837-4405, web: www.gentleharvest.com, Email: info@gentleharvest.com.

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Annual Loudoun County Bed & Breakfast Guild Open House April 28

BY ANDREA GAINES

Nothing looks better in full spring bloom than a classic Loudoun County bed and breakfast property.

Each year the Loudoun County Bed & Breakfast Guild works with its 29 members to identify select properties for a spring B&B Tour, scheduled this year for April 28.

Guests, visitors – and the curious – are invited to come by – or stay and sample Loudoun County's inns, special places, and undiscovered history. Locals are invited, too. All of the Guild's B&Bs would love to thank all for your support.

Meet the innkeepers, and enjoy products and libations from the Guild members' many partners – from wineries to breweries to distilleries to local artisans and gourmet food purveyors. Take in some local culture and music. Enjoy the scenery, local byways and dirt roads, and wildlife.

On Sunday, April 28, these inns will be open for a free tour and sampling of the products, culinary treats, and beverages of the area: AltaTerra Farm, Airwell Bed & Breakfast, Fieldstone Farm, Highholdborne Estate, and Silverbrook Farm Bed & Breakfast.

Learn more about the free Bed and Breakfast Open House Tour and the Loudoun B&B Guild by visiting www.loudounbandb.com, or www.facebook.com/loudounBnBs.

The Guild welcomes all to support these wonderful Loudoun County B&B properties: Ginger Hill Adventure Lodge, AltaTerra Farm, Silverbrook Farm Bed & Breakfast, The Inn at East Lynn, Restoration Bed & Breakfast, Loudoun Valley Manor Bed & Breakfast, The Cottage at Twin Notch Farm, Mortgage Hall, Briar Patch Bed & Breakfast, The Cottage at Dunthorpe Farm, WeatherLea Farm & Vineyard: The Cottages, Middle Grove Inn Bed & Breakfast, Ivy Hall Bed & Breakfast, Fieldstone Farm, Stone Manor Boutique Inn, The Inn at Waterford, The Inn at Oatlands Hamlet, Linden Farm LLC, Hillsborough Bed & Breakfast, Springdale Village Inn, Hidden View Bed & Breakfast, Creek Crossing Farm, George's Mill Farm Bed & Breakfast, Airwell Bed & Breakfast, Sylvanside Farm, Blue Hill Farm, Oakland Green Farm Bed & Breakfast, Wheatland Spring Cottage Bed & Breakfast, and Mews Bed & Breakfast.

Rosemont Springs adds wedding venue

On March 29, historic Rosemont Springs, in a new Amish-built wedding venue barn in Berryville, saw its first couple say, "I do." They shared a romantic kiss in front of the venue's picturesque waterfall, and celebrated with family and friends under the barn's post and beams.

Owner William "Biff" Genda chose to build the approximately 7,000 square foot space to provide an upscale and elegant barn wedding and events venue for the area. Quarry View Building Group out of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania began construction in 2018.

Historic Rosemont Springs features seating for up to 400 guests, a grand Virginia bluestone fireplace, a garden terrace, a 10-foot waterfall, chandeliers, open catering, indoor plumbing, and central air. A second building adjacent to the barn houses a bridal suite, groom's suite, and catering kitchen. Couples also have access to overnight accommodations on the property.

Functioning as a second wedding venue, Rosemont Springs is located on the grounds of historic Rosemont Manor, built in 1811 by the first High Sheriff of Clarke County, George Horton Norris. Sitting on a 60-acre park-like setting, the



manor also once served as a respite for U.S. Presidents and celebrities while the late Virginia Governor and U.S. Senator Harry Flood Byrd, Sr. owned the estate. Presidents Roosevelt, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon visited, as well as Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein, John Wayne, and others.

The grand opening of Rosemont's fourth annual bridal show – To Have and To Hold – is slated from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday, April 14. The show will feature 50 wedding vendors, offering services including music entertainment, transportation, florals, wedding cakes, invitations, massages, and catering. Tickets are \$10 in advance at www.eventbrite.com and \$15 at the door. For more information about the show, visit the To Have and To Hold Facebook event page, visit www.rosemont1811.com, or call Rosemont at 540 955-2834.

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LINCOLN ELEMENTARY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

makes Lincoln Elementary unique is the way their school community extends beyond the building ... it is a great family-style environment for students from across Loudoun, who are looking for a smaller learning environment.”

Academic excellence

Lincoln Elementary students enjoy a rich array of social and academic-related events, including partnerships with JK Farm and the Makersmiths organization, Wegmeyer Farm field trips, Tree of Life community service events, creative sessions with local author and illustrator Henry Cole, engaging science fairs, STEM-related activities, and 4 rounds of after-school activities throughout the year – including Wildlife Ambassadors.

Lincoln Elementary School students are also looking forward to the school's 140th anniversary celebration.

At Lincoln, all this translates into high levels of student and parent satisfaction and fantastic academic numbers.

Lincoln Elementary students consistently earn high scores on Standards of Learning exams.

During the 2015-2016 school year Lincoln students achieved an 86 to 89 proficiency in both math and in reading/language arts – surpassing the Virginia state

averages of 80 percent, and putting the school in the top 30 percent in the state.

In 2018, the school received the Virginia Board of Education Excellence Award – one of only eight elementary schools in Loudoun County to earn the award. Lincoln Elementary earned the award in four prior years, as well.

In recent years, Lincoln Elementary has been identified as a National Blue Ribbon School, which says volumes about the power of a small school like Lincoln to not only beat statewide academic averages, but close the gap for individual students who may be struggling.

A Principle agrees

Principal Dave Michener has served at Lincoln Elementary for many years. Prior to coming to Lincoln he served for 12 years at the Hillsboro Elementary School, and he takes great joy in the buzz of positive feeling he sees all around him.

“We are definitely known for our academics,” he said, “But, also for our extracurricular activities, our PTO, and our afterschool clubs. As a smaller school, we've been able to reach out to the community and find great leadership opportunities for our kids, too.”

Parents point to the role administration plays in the Lincoln experience. Three of Monica and Tom Seeley's six children attend Lincoln. As a special needs child,

their young son James is unable to do so, but, said Monica, “Principal Michener, Secretary Mary Beard, everyone knows him. They are people you can lean on for your entire family's needs. They see James as part of the Lincoln Elementary family, even though he attends school elsewhere.

For the parent for whom school size matters

Western Loudoun County is still a rural place. But, as the fastest growing county in Virginia, the student populations of most elementary, middle, and high schools are getting larger.

Both Principal Michener, and parent and local business owner Harriet Wegmeyer spoke to the value of having both large and small schools in the mix as a choice for parents.

Said Wegmeyer, who has a sixth grader at Blue Ridge Middle School, and a fifth and second grader at Lincoln, “As parents, we chose Lincoln. Even though we are just one mile from the school, we must seek special permission for our children to attend ... Sure, Lincoln doesn't have all the bells and whistles of a new school, but it is the perfect fit for our family,” she said.

Let's pitch in and get it done

In the last few years, there was a big change at Lincoln Elementary. The

school's in-house lunch service was replaced with County-supplied meals, and the school's beloved “lunch lady,” who had prepared meals for the children for decades ... was out of a job.

The possible permanent loss of its kitchen seems to have brought out the best in the Lincoln Elementary community. Parents, Principal Michener, and others came out in strong support of restoring in-house food service. School Board Member Chris Croll proposed that the cafeteria be reopened, and, yes, restoring in-house food service was just approved in the 2019-2020 budget.

Parent Christi Porter, who has a second grader at Lincoln Elementary, said that the school community is special because of its can-do approach.

“We don't take a ‘poor us’ attitude,” said Porter. “We have shown resilience and fortitude in the face of small school status issues, rezonings and budget cuts.

“We have the perfect class size for an elementary school, happy students who continue to excel, and unmatched community involvement.

“When the challenges come,” said Porter, “We pitch in and get it done.”

Kindergarten enrollment and special permission enrollment is now open at Lincoln Elementary School. For details go to www.lcps.org or call (571) 252-1021.



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BUFFINGTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Loudoun). At the beginning of that process, I was able to successfully exclude the vast majority of western Loudoun (all of the Rural Policy Area) from being considered for changes that would have weakened current protections for the area and resulted in recommendations for increased housing throughout all of western Loudoun. With only two of nine Supervisors on the Board that directly represent western Loudoun, this was a very important accomplishment which to date, has resulted in no loss of current protections throughout the process. I'm also working to add a Mountain Ridge Overlay District to prevent clear cutting of our ridgelines, and to prevent ridge-line buildings from rising higher than the tree line.

I've also worked hard to maintain western Loudoun's historic 300-mile rural road (gravel road) network. My office stays in close contact with VDOT to address specific concerns and to provide the highest level of VDOT maintenance possible. We also lobby state representatives for increased funding for VDOT's rural road maintenance budget in hopes of improving VDOT's ability to better maintain our rural roads.

I've also worked hard to improve western Loudoun's road network in order to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety for residents. I've had numerous successes including full funding for future improvements to the Rt 7/Rt 287 interchange, full funding for the Rt 7/Rt 690 interchange, full funding for the Rt 9/Rt 287 roundabout, approval to extend the Rt 7 eastbound acceleration lane from Rt 9 onto Rt 7, and many other Rt 7, Rt 9, Rt 15, Rt 50, and other road improvement projects.

BRL: What makes you the most qualified person for the seat?

TB: My experience and strong record of accomplishment over the last three years of transforming resident and community concerns into meaningful solutions that have addressed the issues and improved quality of life for residents. Whether my time in the Marine Corps, my law enforcement

career, serving as an appointed member of Loudoun's Heritage Commission, or serving my previous community as Vice President of the Brambleton HOA, service has always been a part of my life. I've lived in both the east and west portions of Loudoun, which has given me a unique and thorough understanding of issues affecting residents. And as the father of two boys in Loudoun County public schools, I'm also familiar with the needs of our education system. My staff and I have cultivated strong relationships with County staff and community organizations throughout Loudoun. And we have already experienced the long and difficult learning curve of being newly elected, so we will be as effective on day one of the next Board's term as we are today.

BRL: Does the proposed Draft Loudoun 2040 Comprehensive Plan align with your vision of what the voters want for the Blue Ridge District?

TB: No, the currently proposed draft does not reflect what I've heard from residents regarding their desire to slow the rate of new home construction; maintain our farms and open spaces; build more parks, trails, and recreational facilities; and continue catching up on much needed road infrastructure in order to reduce traffic congestion. The Board is currently reviewing the proposed recommendations, and I will work hard to ensure improvements that reflect the desires of Blue Ridge District residents.

BRL: Why should Republicans vote for you over the other candidate?

TB: My record of hard work, results, and positive leadership over the last three years speaks for itself. And I'm proud to have delivered projects that improved our quality of life while lowering taxes. Our District needs an experienced representative who's unwavering in the fight for resident priorities, and who has the necessary relationships with staff and other Board members to advance them. I've been that representative over the last three years, and that's why I remain the right choice to continue representing the interests of Blue Ridge District residents.

DR MIKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17**Encourage moderation with technology.**

Technology is a wonderful thing, but if used in excess it can become problematic. Research has shown that children who spend too much time with technology are at higher rates for experiencing a host of problems – obesity, ADHD, learning problems, emotional problems and social problems.

Practice what you preach. Modelling good behaviors as parents is very important for children; they learn from what they see. If you want your child to study hard and to be a good student then it's important to model a strong work ethic.

There is no guarantee that your child will get into college even if you do the things I've suggested, but his or her chances to be successful and happy in life will increase with a strong foundation.

Success can take on many different shapes. The expectation that our children enter college at 18 and finish in 4 years may be reasonable for some, but not others. I work with young men and ladies who return home from school freshman year because they couldn't succeed; while they were smart enough to get into college, they weren't mature enough to thrive. For some, taking a gap year and working, joining the military, attending community college are better approaches.

College isn't for everyone, and that consideration needs to be okay for parents. Learning a trade is the best route to success and happiness, for some. The world will always need electricians, mechanics, plumbers and chefs, and careers such as these can be rewarding. It's not about getting your kid into college, it's about parenting them so that they have the ability, and maturity to get themselves to where they will be most happy.

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.

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KROIZ, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

require far more dollars in services than they pay in taxes. It's not a good thing to be one of the top 10 fastest growing counties in the country every year if our roads and schools can't keep up.

"The county's goal for roads is a D rating. The goal is D. Does anyone think that is a good idea? And, we are moving forward with projects that consultants say will result in F ratings.

"Folks used to talk about smart growth, but I've started talking about sane growth. Our current growth and trajectory are insane, and we are all living with the consequences. Nobody in Loudoun likes insane growth, not in the east, west, or middle, except for developers. Which party will stand up for the folks who already live here? Both parties talk the talk, but neither walk the walk. You can be sure that I will stand up for sane growth for all of Loudoun, east, west, and middle."

And, the new Comp Plan, what, we wondered, does Sam Kroiz think about that? If you had been on the BOS as the current draft was being written, how would you have worked to prevent the sweeping growth, use changes to the Transition Policy Area?

Said Kroiz, "The Comprehensive Plan Review has been on the wrong track from the start. We are under no obligation to accommodate every new home that developers project they would be able to sell if we let them build, yet this concept is currently driving the new plan. County leaders should instead determine how many new residents we can accommodate while maintaining our high quality of life and getting our tax rate under control, and use this as the basis for development planning.

"During a review," said Kroiz, "one might expect the Stakeholder's Committee to sit down with the current plan and work together to remove the bad parts and add improvements. Instead, the Committee was presented with a whole new plan, and had very little opportunity for discussion.

"In terms of public input, there were many meetings and the County did a good job soliciting public comments, but these were simply placed in a file and ignored. There was no analysis to determine the most important issues or

what folks thought about those issues. County leaders could look through the comments if they wished, though it appears few did, because independent analysis shows that public opinion favors limiting growth, preserving the Transition Policy Area, more public parks, which are pretty much the opposite of the draft plan.

"The Comprehensive Plan has reached the Board of Supervisors, and the public should demand that their opinions be respected, and the plan should be significantly changed to align with what the citizens want. I have been working to inform folks about the Comp Plan Review process since it started, and it is a big part of my campaign. Another important part of my campaign is building a citizen movement, because the fight for Loudoun and the Catoctin District's future must happen every day, not just during election season.

And, what did the AT&T fight teach you about Loudoun County politics?

"Well, on the negative side," he said, "The AT&T Short Hill fight was a great example of the dark side of party politics.

"AT&T was represented by a firm that was led by a member of the Virginia House of Delegates. Not only were a majority of the Board of Supervisors members of the same party as the Delegate, they also had to rely on him to do all sorts of things for them and the County at the State level. I am not saying that the Delegate or Supervisors did anything improper or illegal, but even the appearance of this type of conflict of interest makes folks wonder about who their representatives are serving, and is destructive to folks' confidence in government.

"When I am Supervisor, I will never give my constituents reason to wonder if I am working for anyone but them.

"On the positive side, and much more importantly, I learned that Loudoun is full of talented, passionate folks. When we can get all these folks organized and working toward a common goal, there is no limit to what we can accomplish for Loudoun County. This is what gives me hope for the future, and inspired me to run for Supervisor."

To contact Kroiz, email samkroizforsupervisor@gmail.com or go to Facebook – Sam Kroiz for Catoctin Supervisor. His website is SamForSupervisor.com.

HAUSWIESNER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

became involved on a variety of local issues ranging from the plan to build a high-voltage power line along Rt. 50, to traffic issues over the County's plan to use eminent domain to the ongoing fire station issue.

As the former President of the Aldie Heritage Association, and in cooperation with NOVA Parks and other stakeholders, I was able successfully restore parts of the historic Old Carolina Road, create a loop trail at Mt. Zion Church, and restore the Tail Race trail in the village of Aldie. I have also been working with a local land owner in establishing a park in Aldie that will be second to none in all of Northern Virginia.

Because of my involvement with local issues, I will be ready from day one and a great asset for the next Board of Supervisors.

BRL: Does the proposed Draft Loudoun 2040 Comprehensive Plan align with your vision of what the voters want for the Blue Ridge District?

FH: I attended many of the workshops for the new comprehensive plan. Everybody wanted better roads, trails, parks, and more restaurant and retail choices. I never met anyone who advocated for more homes. The draft comprehensive plan proposes additional density in the Transition Policy Area and converting rural policy areas into the Transition Policy Area. As a resident of the Rt. 50 corridor, I know that our infrastructure won't support additional density and that most residents don't want it.

One of the things that I fought back in 2014 was the upzoning application for the Willowsford community. The developer wanted to add density, meaning much of the open space that exists today would have been replaced with additional houses.

I see a real danger that these open spaces will be replaced with homes if the Comprehensive Plan advances in its current form.

BRL: Why should Republicans vote for you over the other candidate?

FH: As a fiscal conservative and proponent of limited government, I disagree with my opponent on fundamental issues. Almost everything that he advocated for in the last three years results in bigger government which will ultimately lead to higher taxes.

We need a Supervisor who is a problem-solver and who will hold his ground if difficult issues arise. It is a fact that there are only two Super-

visors from the West. That's why we need a Supervisor who is an effective negotiator and will be able to work with the other Supervisors to achieve real results for our residents.

I don't promise everybody everything. Instead, I will set priorities that will be backed by my principles. I don't believe policy decisions should be driven by "feel good" considerations that have little value or will simply shift problems from one area of our district to another.

For example, I oppose the taxpayer-funded conservation easement program that is cited by my opponent as his greatest "achievement". Although I support the use of conservation easements, I do not believe that our taxpayers should be on the hook for the legal fees of a landowner to save taxes. Taking into consideration that over 72,000 acres are already protected by conservation easements, I don't believe that this "big government program" will make a real difference.

Another example is the Transfer of Development Rights program that my opponent is advocating. A TDR program would render zoning laws pointless, make them subject to negotiations and would create more work for our already overburdened County staff. From the perspective of a landowner in the western part of our district, such a program looks appealing. On the other hand, if you reside in the eastern part of our district (such as the Willowsford community and the Rt. 50 corridor), the only area where you can pack additional density is in their backyard. So clearly something doesn't add up when our Supervisor promises the people in the eastern part of our district that he opposes additional density in the Transition Policy Area, but is the biggest cheerleader for the TDR program that will serve as the Trojan horse to bring in additional density to that area.

Because the next Board of Supervisors will be tasked with updating our zoning laws for the next 20 years, we need a Supervisor with the necessary skill set, experience and knowledge to ensure that we don't repeat the mistakes of the past, and lay the groundwork for a successful and prosperous Loudoun County. Only a successful county will allow us to finally lower the tax burden for our residents, which has not happened because our real estate assessments have been going up.

So this run is not just about the Blue Ridge district but really about bringing conservative common sense solutions to the Board of Supervisors.



AL VAN HUYCK, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Van Huyck emphasized the cooperative but direct approach LCPC has taken in its work to influence the BOS's Comp Plan decision-making.

Organized as a "swat team" – 10 to 15 members of the coalition have been meeting regularly for three years with various players in the County's planning community – pouring their hearts and souls into the effort to save Loudoun County.

"If we don't get it right now, it will be gone," said Van Huyck.

Rife with risk

The draft Loudoun 2040 plan developed by the pro-growth Planning Commission, says Van Huyck, is rife with risk, for three reasons:

The County is losing control of its future growth. People don't realize, noted Van Huyck, that the three-part growth management strategy adopted by the County in 2001 limited densities and uses everywhere – not just in the rural west and the TPA, but everywhere.

"Loudoun County is a unique and wonderful place. We need to have a different paradigm ... a different model. Certain County assets should never be developed."
 – Al Van Huyck

For the last 20 years, even the eastern part of the County has been planned for under four housing units per acre. Now areas around Rt. 7 and Rt. 28 are being looked at for up to 16 units per acre, mixing residential with commercial.

It reduces the effectiveness of the Transition Policy Area as a functional buffer between higher densities in the east and the rural west. The TPA, notes Van Huyck, was designed as a lower-density area with 50 to 70 percent open space. Under new Planning Commission proposals, part of the Rural Policy Area will be lost to a much more intensively developed TPA, with less open space, and more commercial.

It leaves the rural west vulnerable. The Rural Policy Area, says Van Huyck, was designed as a permanent, agriculturally-based County asset, where farmers and working farms would coexist alongside larger residential lots and in-town development in places such as Purcellville. The changes proposed by the Planning Commission will push development west, making this model unsustainable.

Aspirational vs. Practical

"A comprehensive plan," says Van

Huyck, "is all about space."

"If you take up space," he says, "with increased residential densities and commercial areas, you squeeze out space for parks and trails and the other things that speak directly to the individual families' quality of life here."

"The Silverline Metro was adopted 2012," said Van Huyck, "But, there is still no real plan for it. We bought a Ferrari, but we're about to enter it in a demolition derby. All the taxpayers are going to be paying for Metro ... over \$1 billion over the next ten years."

According to Van Huyck, fundamental to the problem is that the relationship between the new revenues the County would realize under the final buildout proposed by the Planning Commission and the costs to the County for that development presents taxpayers with a razor-thin margin.

Loudoun would realize \$5.192 billion in new revenue, but \$5 billion in public infrastructure would need to be paid for at the same time. And, the infrastructure costs do not take into account how much taxpayers would need to spend on new roads.

On another issue, data centers, "We have a problem," said Van Huyck.

"We are hooked on growth. Data centers are buying up land all over. The planners say that 'this will be our booming industry through 2040.' But, my fear is this. They may be right. But, everyone wants data centers now.

Despite the subsidies we offer, Loudoun County has the highest taxes for data centers. What happens when in order to keep our data centers we need to reduce tax rates further? We're up a creek. So many of these things have not been thought through."

Six meetings, 90 days, four choices

Van Huyck has lived in the planning world for decades, and despite what he sees as enormous setbacks and missteps with the Envision Loudoun process and the draft of Loudoun 2040, he remains optimistic.

"The Board of Supervisors will have six meetings and 90 days to review the plan. And, they have four choices – adopt it, amend it themselves, return it to the Planning Commission for further work, or deny it.

"I am optimistic that the Board will limit the excesses of the draft Plan if the public demands it.

"My goal right now is to try and get as many people as possible to the public hearings on April 24 and 27.

"I hope that Loudoun's residents turn out for the upcoming Comp Plan public hearings. The Board of Supervisors has not yet fully joined the discussion ... the Supervisors' minds are open," he said.

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SMALL BUSINESS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

her potential customers by saying: "If you want ordinary, this is not the store for you!"

The Misguided Angels collection includes dress and skirts, tops and sweaters, jumpsuits and rompers, cardigans and jackets, and more. Clothing descriptions such as "flutter sleeve button down," "peplum top," "salty air open back tank," and "Tallulah tie back top" confirm that this shop has quite the personality.

The Misguided Angels Leesburg location is 14 South King Street in Leesburg. The Brambleton shop is located at 22855 Brambleton Plaza in Ashburn. You can also shop Misguided Angels' cool clothing, shoes, handbags and accessories at www.shopmisguidedangels.com.

HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

objective is to ensure that an adequate supply of housing is available for existing and future residents.' Do you think we have a primary obligation to anyone other than our citizens?

"Look at staff's analysis. Accommodating demand means 27,000 more houses than are called for in the current Plan. You compared one projection to another and made the changes look smaller. What really counts is how many more houses you want, compared to today. You want 56,320 new houses - increasing the population from 400,000 to over 600,000 and adding 563,000 daily vehicle trips. Letting you dictate our future is imbecilic.

"Your plan says we need strategies to increase density and reduce development costs. Are you in the bag for developers?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

people to get a better understanding of the world. I eagerly wait for the day when all humans can live without segregation. I wish Americans would realize not all Muslims are terrorists or I would have visited a terrorist uncle and his family in Turkey for a

PURCELLVILLE MAYOR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Virginia. He also met with the staff of Virginia's other Senator, Mark Warner.

NLC is one of the oldest such civic organizations in the country, serving the mayors, council members, employees, and volunteers working to make their individual communities better places to live.

Two-thousand-plus member cities of all sizes, from hometown Purcellville to Los Angeles, look to NLC as a way to share information about best practices and

KIDWIND, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

do background wind energy research, and planned, built, and tested their turbine. That work included developing the blade and generator, calculating the turbine's power output, and showing the steps taken to improve the design. The students will also be tested on their knowledge and understanding of wind energy, renewable resources, and various topics related to jobs in wind energy fields.

The Northern Virginia KidWind Challenge, organized by James Madison University in partnership with Dominion Energy, was supported in part by judges from the Shenandoah Valley Makers, Nick Grzeda, a digital integration specialist from Loudoun County Public Schools, and Shenandoah University.

The middle school team, Wind Overload, consists of Makersmiths members Diane Painter and Jennifer Chu as coaches, and fourth and fifth grade team

For realtors? You say developers need more ... flexibility."

I let that last word roll slowly off my tongue, a snarl. I felt suddenly hot. My nostrils filled with a rank odor. I felt a presence behind me and turned. I saw Satan. He communicated with deep growls, "Dante, you heard one tell the Supervisors how much he appreciated realtors' help? Not one word about public opinion."

Jennings bawled and tried to hide behind Keirce.

"I remember that, Satan," I replied. "I was sickened by his vainglorious praise of their plan."

"Why do you use such big words?" queried Satan.

"Just showing off."

Back to Salmon. "Did you write this, 'Explore offering free or subsidized public land to developers seeking to address the unmet housing need in the County.'? Do

month.

I wait for the day when religion doesn't call for murder. I understand conflict is part of man's nature it will be like this to the end. I only hope it ends with less bloodshed. She decided it was time for change, I do too.

strategies for tackling issues such as how to fund infrastructure, address housing needs, combat the opioid crisis, develop equitable tax policies, and comply with federal, state, and local regulatory requirements.

NLC is also a storehouse of information on how local governments do things - from how they share power between mayors and town councils, engage the public, manage annexation issues and fund schools, to how they work with private sector contractors.

members Neil Murtha, Katie Choi, Soren Ogelman, and Dane Tyler.

The Advance Challenge high school team, Too HAWT to Handle, consists of Makersmiths member Mike O'Brien as the coach, and grades 9-12 team members Joda Wade, Aidan O'Brien, Colin O'Brien, and Andrew Bennett.

The Advance Challenge high school team is now in full fundraising mode to send the coach and four students to the national competition in May. The team needs to raise about \$3,000 for airfare and incidentals to attend the national competition. Those interested in supporting the team, may contact Mike O'Brien at mobrien@elvantech.com.

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you truly mean give land to developers?"

Salmon could not speak. He started jabbing his index finger at Keirce.

"Assemble properties for housing that addresses the County's unmet housing needs," the Devil thundered at Keirce. "Is this yours? You want taxpayers to assemble parcels for developers? What planet are you from? Ork?"

Keirce jabbed a finger at Jennings, who began screeching, "They did it! It was them!" The three commissioners began brawling and scuffling.

"Join me for dinner, Dante Alighieri Houston?"

"Thank you," I said, "but I must go. I am sure we will see each other before the November elections."

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

HARMISON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Harmison is a native Virginian, born and raised in Fairfax County. He resides in Leesburg, with his wife Monica and their two children. For more information visit www.harmisonforsheriff.com.

WEINER ROAST, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

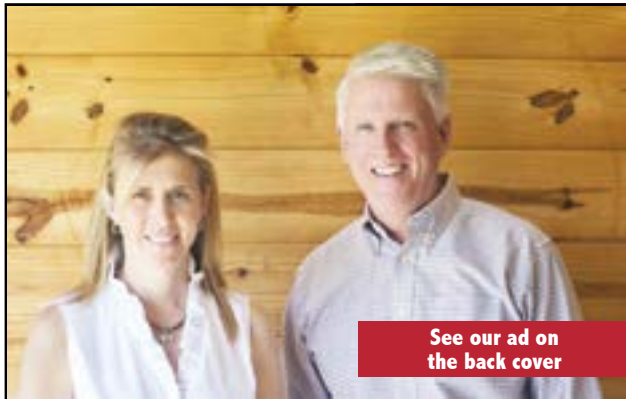
Since Matt and Melissa were diagnosed in 1997, the average age of survival for CF patients has risen from 18 years to nearly 40. Three new CF drugs (Kalydeco, Orkambi and Symdeco) were recently approved by the FDA that have the potential to be a cure for 85 percent of CF patients, but not for Matt and Melissa, who have a rare CF genotype and have to rely on older protocols.

For the last 8 years, the family has hosted "Weiner Roast" - a backyard fundraiser that brings in close to \$50,000 in donations annually. The volunteer-run event features unlimited hotdogs and fixings, soft drinks and homemade desserts as well as activities such as swimming, games, a DJ, a photo booth and one of Northern Virginia's largest silent auctions.

"We are encouraged by the rapid pace of scientific advancement toward a cure, and we hope that it comes in time for our kids," said Janet Weiner.

To learn more about Weiner Roast, being held on June 8, make an online donation, donate an item for the silent auction including promotional gift cards from local businesses, visit: <https://passion.cff.org/weinerroast>.

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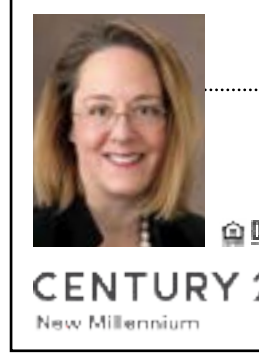
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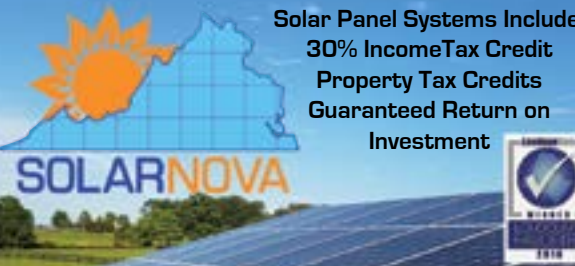
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