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NOVEMBER 2019

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Trot, gobble, walk, watch

15th Annual Purcellville Turkey Trot Nov. 10



BY ANDREA GAINES

This is a real milestone ... Purcellville's 15th Annual Turkey Trot & Fun Run, which provides tuition financial assistance to families in need, and also supports programming at the Loudoun Valley Community Center will take place on Sunday, Nov. 10.

The race is open to all – as is the walking, watching, gobbling, and cheering on. There is a 5K race beginning at 8 a.m. Immediately following the race, children under 10 years old and their families are invited to join in a Fun Run. There is a modest fee for the 5K, and the Fun Run is free.

There are great perks for those taking on the 5K, including a long-sleeve race shirt. Awards will be given to the top three overall male and female finishers, and the top male and female finishers in the 10 & under, 11 to 14, 15 to 19, 20 to

CALL JOHN.



GET MORE.

29, 30 to 39, 40 to 49, 50 to 59, 60 to 69, and 70 & over age groups. Kids participating in the Fun Run will receive a participation ribbon.

Details for signing up for the 5K can be found on the Turkey Trot Facebook page – www.facebook.com/LVCCTurkeyTrot/. The Loudoun Valley community Center is located at 320 West School Street in Purcellville.

Bring your best fashions and your sense of fun

Who: You!
What: 15th Annual Purcellville Turkey Trot 5K & Fun Run. Proceeds benefit the Loudoun Valley Community Center's programs and provides financial assistance to families in need.
When: Sunday, Nov. 10, starting at 8 a.m.
Where: 320 West School Street in Purcellville
Sign up: www.facebook.com/LVCCTurkeyTrot/

BOS Chair debate lays open the County's divisions; Voters to make their decisions Tuesday, Nov. 5

BY ANDREA GAINES

The recent debate among Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis Randall (D-At-Large), and challengers John Whitbeck (R), and Robert Ohneiser (I) was as provocative as it was informative.

The debate was sponsored by the Coalition of Loudoun Towns, Loudoun Now, and Loudoun Times-Mirror. Randall defended her record as Board Chair. Whitbeck directly attacked Randall's record, including her vote in sup-

port of transferring land from the Rural Policy Area to the Transition Policy Area. And, Ohneiser jumped on both opponents for ignoring the big elephant in the room: the connection between growth and rising taxes.

Opening Statements

Whitbeck displayed a professional and community-oriented style, describing himself as a mental health and family law professional, president of his local HOA, a substitute judge, and a member of the Loudoun County Criminal Justice Board. "I always looked at Loudoun County as a special place ... very good to me and my

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PROPANE COSTS TOO MUCH!

This Winter is the Ideal Time to Make the Switch.

"So very happy we switched to Hunt Country. My only regret is that we didn't do it sooner. How much money we would have saved...However, we finally made the right choice about our propane. For years I have been receiving offers from other companies offering low rates, only to find out you have to enter a contract with them. It never made sense to me that you could drive around town and shop for fuel for your car, but not for your home. It's nice to see that a business owner understands this and caters to the customer. We received our first delivery this past Saturday and the owner himself brought it out. The service was excellent. Of course, I'm not surprised, as the initial account set-up was easy and the lady in the office was so pleasant!" —Caroline T.

"I have been buying propane from Hunt Country for about a year now. My previous propane provider was much higher priced. The staff was rude and didn't seem to care if you gave them business or not. When I was shopping around for a new company, thankfully I found Hunt Country. The staff is friendly, professional, knowledgeable and genuinely cared that you gave them your business. Hunt Country prices are consistently lower than their competitors. I highly recommend that you call Hunt Country Propane, if you don't, you're making a BIG(\$) mistake. Thanks Hunt Country!" —Ed, Leesburg



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Vroom Vroom

1000 Miglia Warm-Up USA
roars through Purcellville

BY ANDREA GAINES

What a sight.

On Oct. 26 approximately 25 very ... well ... colorful and sexy vintage racing cars passed through Purcellville on their way to Maryland and Washington, D.C.

The stunning display was an outgrowth of a world famous car race known as The 1000 Miglia – an all-out, fast-as-you-can-go journey from Rome to Russia and back that started in 1927.

The modern-day version – the 1000 Miglia Warm-up – is not about speed anymore. Rather, the “race” is all about adhering to a specified route and a timetable ... all the while maintaining the exact speeds need to make it all hap-

pen. And, showing off your fabulous vintage race car, of course. As the cars passed through Purcellville, Mayor Kwasi Fraser ceremoniously stamped the passports of each driver. “It is an honor for Purcellville to be part of the U.S. version of one of the most famous



car races in the world,” he said in a Town press release.

The 1000 Miglia Warm Up USA took place from Oct. 23 to Oct. 26, and was sponsored by some very big names, including the Italian Embassy in Washington, Alfa Romeo, Chopard, Alitalia, Competizione

& Sports Cars, Creighton Farms, Fairmont Washington DC Georgetown and the Town of Middleburg. Stops included Purcellville, Middleburg, Point-of-Rocks, the Congressional Country Club, the US Capitol and others.

The overall winner will be awarded the inaugural Coppa USA – The USA Cup.



Mary Ellen Stover Antiques Closing – Nov. 2

Mary Ellen Stover Antiques at 120 N. 21st Street, Purcellville, VA is closing, after 35 plus years in business, on Nov. 2. Stover and her exquisite antiques and collectibles have been a true treasure in the Town of Purcellville over the years. Her love for her business and the Town is apparent to all that have had the opportunity to interact with her.

From Normandy, France to Loudoun County, Virginia

BY ANDREA GAINES

“The inspiration was to travel some back roads that appeared timeless, as though we were traveling the roads of the 1940’s and 50’s.”

This is how local veteran Lee Phillips described an unusual “backroads tour” in Loudoun County which took place in October.

The tour featured a small convoy of veterans – in authentic vintage military vehicles – exploring the area’s back roads. The purpose of the tour was two-fold; to get the veterans together, and to

COMMUNITY

work as a group to promote awareness of veterans and their shared history. Veteran’s Day is Monday, Nov. 11, something top of mind for all this time of year.

Said Phillips, “The tour started in Leesburg and headed towards Waterford along Old Waterford Road, then headed north to Taylorstown, and then west to Lovettsville for a lunch break. After lunch the tour headed south to Morri-



sonville and then back over to Waterford and back to Leesburg.”

Phillips is a real missionary for the group and the mission.

“The back roads convoy started about three years ago,” he said.

“I became acquainted with a lot of the local veterans and vintage military vehicle owners [helping] with some of the special events in Leesburg, such as the Memorial Day event at the courthouse, the 4th of July parade, and Veterans Day at Dodona Manor.

“One of my co-workers at the Town of Leesburg, Brian Boucher, owns a WWII military vehicle and we started talking about a back roads tour.”

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Water rates – will Purcellville think outside the box

BY VALERIE CURY

The Town of Purcellville has 18 Water Fund Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) it needs to address in the next 10 years. One of the most pressing is the \$2 million project to replace the old water line that connects the Town's water main to the water treatment plant.

Many of these projects could be funded with the help of traditional state or federal grants. More innovative solutions include exploring the option of having a company take over the management of the Town's waste water treatment facility, or selling it to an outside party.

In an Oct. 26 email from Council Member Ryan Cool to Town Manager David Mekarski and the Town Council, Cool said, "Based on my review and discussion about the ballooning Town debt payment of \$1.3 million starting in 2023, and the inflated CIP projected costs, I would like a thorough assessment of ... two solution options prior to the Town Council making any decision on rates."

Cool has suggested two Requests for Proposals for companies to take over the management or purchase "our water and sewer enterprise with specific controls that will increase quality, not increase rates without Town Council approval." He also asked that affordable healthcare and retirement plans for existing employees be included in any proposal. He added at the end that the "responders need to show how they intend to not become like the Dulles Greenway debacle."

Cool also asked Mekarski to look into refinancing the Town's utility enterprise debt through U.S. Department of Agriculture or other sources, with the sole purpose of lowering the 2023 payments.

Mayor Kwasi Fraser has suggested over the past two years that the Town look into companies such as Aqua

Virginia or Imboden to either purchase the waste water facility or take over the management of it. However, that has been met with tepid enthusiasm from Town staff, who are fearful of losing their jobs.

Imboden has achieved significant cost reduction and operational efficiencies for the Town of Middleburg. The Town of Hamilton has just contracted with Imboden.

One of the issues to be addressed by Stantec, the Town's utility consultant, will be the cost of service for both the waste water rates and the water utility. They will be focusing on rate equity in the Town's 17-tier rate

"What we face is a Town nearing build-out with no appetite for massive residential growth..."

—Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser

system – with the goal of reducing the rates to four categories.

Today, there are four customer categories: single family residential – with a higher cost than revenue, multi-family residential, commercial, and institutional. Mekarski said that the residential is "not even keeping up with the net cost of service ... we want to get reasonable rates with a rational nexus to cost and service delivery ..."

The Town is in the process of accessing the utility needs and costs, and conducting a utility rate study.

In email correspondence, Fraser noted that the Town was working with outside professionals to assess factors such as what are the Town's short- and long-term utility costs and needs, how do they relate to rates, and what are the "revenue generating and cost reduction options."

"What we face is a Town nearing build-out with no appetite for massive residential growth, a balloon debt payment in the order of \$1.3 million starting in FY23, and needed repair and replacement of aging utility infrastructure." Fraser went on to say it "Is no surprise [that] the over \$30 million debt for our leading-edge wastewater treatment plant [taken on] in 2010" has put the Town in this situation.

"With the Town nearing build out, coupled with the adverse consequences associated with high density residential growth, the need for transportation infrastructure, water resources, and more produce a model that is unsustainable.

"The Town has taken major steps to reduce this taxpayer burden – restructuring the sewer debt to avoid over \$8 million in debt payments, and cutting utility operational expenses (charge backs) by \$297,392."

Other cost and taxpayer savings being looked at include generating additional revenues from the Town's \$129 million worth of Town owned real estate assets, the federal, state, and private grant funding opportunities discussed earlier, debt refinancing, cuts in operational expenses, adding a major user (for example a western Loudoun County aquatic center) unrelated to high-density residential growth to the mix, and allocating portions of the meals tax to utility-related expenses.

Just Another Wedding?

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

There is something about going to a wedding that sometimes feels repetitive.

The wedding party, the vows, the flowers, the first dance. The emotion, the reception, and sometimes, even the same dance songs. After attending a few weddings, it can feel a bit formulaic. As Kathy Sheldon (Debby Reynolds) tells Don Lockwood (Gene Kelly) in *Singin' in the Rain*, "If you've seen one, you've seen them all."

I hope that my words don't offend the

friends and family whose weddings I have attended. I've been to wonderful weddings and have experienced great joy in witnessing dear friends come together in marriage. Yet I wonder if weddings have become more about fitting a prescribed, cultural narrative, rather than a unique celebration of two individual people becoming one. I've seen the pressure that engaged couples feel in planning a wedding – to please all invited guests, including a wide array of relatives that often have competing opinions and desires. Not to mention choosing the right floral arrangement or caterer; and, of course, the perfect ven-

ue. It is not uncommon to reach a tab of several thousand dollars for a day that can become commercialized by the companies eager to make a profit.

I fear that in the months of planning a wedding, what can be lost is the reason the couple has chosen to get married in the first place. I wonder if the societal, cultural, and familial pressures placed on a couple sometimes drown out the true reason for the day.

I recently attended a wedding that was unencumbered by any of the aforementioned challenges. It was a family friend who created a wedding that celebrated and

accentuated the personalities of her and her fiancé. It was a beautiful tribute to the couple and the love they share together. They held their ceremony on a beautiful hill outside. They eschewed the conventional wedding party. They told guests to come dressed in whatever they felt comfortable wearing.

They wrote beautiful vows to each other, too. The bride talked about the first time she met her groom, and the joy she felt after their first date. "We made plans for the very next night," she said. They both, in different ways, shared how the other person enhanced their life, all while extolling the love they share. "I love you, and I like you; and, I always will," the groom said.

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— Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider Psy.D.

Dr. Mike,

We recently had a meeting with our son's preschool teacher who told my husband and I that she thinks our son is autistic. She said that our son has social problems and anxiety, and that he becomes "out of control" when excited. She said that he has idiosyncrasies like walking on his toes and going over his favorite movie lines with other kids



DR. MIKE

in class, and that these behaviors are typical behaviors of autistic children. She recommended that our son participate in a neuropsychological evaluation. While my husband and I see some of the things our son's teacher is seeing, we do not see him as being autistic. He's just shy and immature for his age, and we're offended by what was said. We're thinking about filing a formal complaint with LCPS against the teacher, or getting our son transferred. Teachers are not qualified to diagnose children with medical or mental health conditions, and we're worried that she is treating him differently. We appreciated your guidance.

— *Upset in Loudoun*

Dear Upset,

You're correct that school teachers are not trained or credentialed to diagnose autism; and I agree with you that your son's teacher shouldn't have told you that your son may be autistic. It's appropriate for your son's teacher to share her concerns with you, and to recommend a private evaluation to better understand what is happening – and how to support him. She's correct that a neuropsychological evaluation – standardized and objective developmental testing – can be very helpful. To your point, your son may simply be shy and immature, and things may balance out for him naturally in time. To her point, his problems may be more significant, and early interventions could be warranted. A neuropsychological evaluation will serve to identify problems and accurate diagnoses.

I advise that you "Don't shoot the messenger," per the saying. Preschool teacher observations and opinions are very important. Your son's teacher is spending a good part of every weekday engaging him in unstructured and structured social and learning activities. If your son is not learning or behaving in a typical manner compared to his same aged peers, her input is invaluable.

If you decide to have your son evaluated by a neuropsychologist, that professional will rely on standardized and objective testing measures for diagnoses,

will also involve your son's teacher and you as parents to thoroughly assess your son's needs.

Dr. Mike,

Our son left for college this fall, and while he's doing great academically, my husband and I are concerned about some of the things we've seen on his social media. There are lots of references to pot and alcohol. We've raised our children to know better, and we are very upset to see the choices he is making at school. As Christians, we are also concerned about a couple of his pro atheism postings, and his involvement with the Secular Student Alliance on campus. We've tried to talk to him about our concerns, but he has gotten angry, and has told us that we are being controlling and crazy and to "back off." I know he's 18, but we're paying for college, and we're still his parents; so sorry but we're not going to just back off. Help.

— *Concerned in Loudoun*

Dear Concerned,

At 18, he may be experimenting with marijuana and alcohol as a means to establish a more independent self. It's also possible that his recent interest in atheism at college is a deliberate shift away from what he grew up with to his creating his own way of being in the world. It's also possible that your son is struggling; he may be developing an alcohol or drug problem, or emotional problems, so addressing your concerns with him is important.

I think you should speak to him about your concerns, but it seems as though things are pretty tense right now. Teenagers can be proud and defensive when being confronted, so I think it's best to focus on your concerns rather than his misbehavior or wrongdoing. I would let your son know what your expectations are of him at college.

I would make your expectations as reasonable as possible, so that he is more willing to comply with things that are good for him. I would also listen closely to what your son says, and to what he wants. If there's room for compromise, then I would encourage you to find that more neutral place of agreement with him. If he wants to explore atheism, you can remind him of the importance of your Christian values, morals, beliefs as a family and your concerns regarding atheism, but I wouldn't forbid his interests in this area. By being reasonable and by compromising, it is my hope that your son will come to see you more as an ally, and less so as the contrarian parent that

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Aldebaran

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

"Aldebaran will show up soon," Robert Rood said over his glass of wine. Byne furrowed her brow quizzically and he explained. "Fall's coming and soon Orion will be over the horizon. Follow the three stars in his belt, to the right. You'll see a large reddish star. Aldebaran."

"Why are you telling me, this, husband dear?"

OPINION

"It's a long story," he replied. "But since

you asked ...

"Aldebaran is one of the brightest stars, and one of the biggest. It's been known since antiquity and some primitive societies worshipped it, like the Palauans in Melanesia. (Byne exaggerated a yawn.) It's important now, though. In the mid-seventies the big radio telescopes in Hawaii began picking up signals of some sort. No one could explain

them. Even today nobody can figure them out, even with much better new technology like the phased array sensors in that desert in Chile."

"How do you know all this stuff? You're in investments, not in astrophysics."

"The Royal Journal of Astronomy and Physics, which someone had left on the plane yesterday. That was just the article's introduction. Then it got strange."

"How?"

"Ever heard of Waleska, Georgia?"

Byne shook her head.

"It's a remote village in southern Georgia near the Okefenokee Swamp. Only one narrow road leads in, and it dead-ends. Supposedly the place is pretty – neat, well-kept houses, quiet – but odd. The article said you'd see a few cars parked on the street but there are no stores and it's rare to see anybody out and about. Apparently, the people

are well-mannered, cleanly dressed and groomed, polite if encountered, but strange."

"Zombies? Stepford Wives? The Walking Dead?" Byne's interest had been piqued but she liked poking at Robert.

"The magazine said that the village had been unknown for years. Then an anthropologist from the University of Georgia showed up in 1978 or so. He couldn't explain some things, like the fact that the most recent burial in the cemetery had been in 1949. Like any good anthropologist, he investigated their food habits. Turns out that a few times a month several pickups show up at a grocery in Folkston, a town nearby, and buy massive amounts of food. Then it really gets weird."

"I'm listening," said a now-curious Byne.

"A deep-space NASA probe named

Shawondasee 3 started picking up signals that were 180-degrees out of phase with the Aldebaran signals. The probe was headed towards the red star so the signals had to be coming from behind, from earth towards Aldebaran. Another probe, Alpha Rho, triangulated the signal pulses from earth. They were coming from Waleska."

"That's weird, Robert. Are those people supposed to be aliens or something?"

"Speculation might take you there. This was about twenty years ago. After some surveillance overflights of Waleska, a small delegation from Washington appeared. It was headed by an Assistant Deputy Director of Defense, a guy named Brooke, and a four-star Air Force general named Dodson. I think four or five junior people – scientists of some sort – were on the team. They were met by village

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Please include your name, address and phone number.

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



An open letter from the Town of Hillsboro

Dear Neighbors,

We, the Town Council of Hillsboro, want to recognize our mayor, Mayor Roger Vance, for his public service to our Town and to our region. Our mayor is not paid. He works tirelessly as a volunteer. He is one of the strongest advocates for the rural economy and for the public health and safety needs of his citizens.

We are proud that our mayor is a leading voice supporting the rural economy at every turn. It was our mayor that first stood tall against Rockwool

and invited citizens to brief our council – and our Town was the first to pass a resolution against Rockwool as the air quality plumes and water quality issues could negatively impact our neighbors and the wineries of our region.

Mayor Vance was the first mayor to sound the alarm and go to Short Hill and conduct a site visit when AT&T was preparing to build a huge facility on our mountain top. It was Mayor Vance, the first Mayor who spoke against this.

It was Mayor Vance, along with the western Loudoun mayors that spoke against the Planning Commission's

Comprehensive Draft Plan. It was Mayor Vance that spoke specifically about no net loss of farmland and the value of open space.

It was Mayor Vance who directed our Town to offer community events free of charge, such as Independence Day the Hillsboro Way, the Summer Concert Series and many others, so that everyone is welcomed. And it was Mayor Vance who decided that our events should only feature locally produced food and beverages, loyally supporting our rural agriculture and businesses.

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Tainted money

Dear Editor:

In America, our capitalist system gives investors the freedom to invest wherever they want. Mavis Taintor, candidate for 33rd District Delegate, puts forward her experience as a mutual fund manager to support what she considers to be her qualifications for a leadership role in government.

A recent Winchester Star Open Forum article revealed Taintor's stock holdings in excess of \$500,000 in certain oil and pipeline companies with records of massive fines and penalties levied for polluting the environment. This contradicts her published claims to be a champion of the environmental movement.

Mavis Taintor is the antithesis of a socially responsible investor. Socially responsible investing causes some to make investment choices that have a positive impact on the world while avoiding investments in bad companies. A socially responsible investor, for example, would avoid tobacco, an industry whose products sicken or kill millions of people

a year and disgust almost everyone else. Mavis Taintor recently declared owning \$136,000 worth of stock in Altria, the parent company of Phillip Morris, one of the world's largest producers and marketers of tobacco, cigarettes and related products.

The opioid crisis has brought human losses and cost to the community that are unimaginable; family members deceased and families destroyed, addicted newborn babies and drug-related crime. 70,237 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States in 2017 according to Center for Disease Control. The Oct. 10, 2019, Winchester Star article, "Opioid crisis: Winchester may seek damages from pharmaceutical firms," draws attention to the fact that the opioid crisis which plagues our community is fueled by profit-seeking drug companies and their stockholders.

Teva Pharmaceutical and Allergan Pharmaceuticals are two companies that profit from, as the Winchester Star article puts it, "...facilitating the over-prescription of pain medications, leading people to become addicted..." According to the Wall Street Journal, Teva Pharmaceuticals, "... just days before the drug maker was set to face trial for its

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Phyllis Randall is the right choice for western Loudoun

Dear Editor:

Recently, I had the pleasure of attending a meet and greet hosted by one of Loudoun's premier conservationists, Al Van Huyck, on behalf

LETTER

of Loudoun County Chair Phyllis Randall. This event served as an opportunity for Chair Randall to share her vision for the future of the West, and speak on her record of protecting and preserving rural Loudoun over her last four years in office.

As a nearly 20 year resident of Western Loudoun County I can unequiv-

ocally say that as our Chair, Phyllis Randall has fought to protect our precious open space and worked tirelessly to support our rural economy that includes industries such as agriculture, tourism, and animal husbandry. She has been a strong supporter of the Emerald Ribbons Countywide Parks and Trails system, the purchase of 100 acres in Round Hill to link trails from Sleeter Lake to Franklin Park and has supported rural schools. She's led the effort to increase the salaries of our educators and first responders so that our teachers and firefighters are paid

what they deserve.

However, I'm not just supporting her because of what she's done, but also what she's going to do. She's fighting for rural broadband extension, growing our small business community in the west, and has committed to ensuring that two rural Board of Supervisors seats remain in the upcoming redistricting. She works hand in hand with Visit Loudoun, The Rural Economic Development Council, Soil and Water Board, the Coalition of Loudoun Towns (COLT), and the Farm Bureau to make sure rural

Loudoun is protected and given the opportunity to thrive.

There's only one candidate for Loudoun County Chair with a real plan and record to protect and preserve Western Loudoun. We have the strongest ally in Chair Phyllis Randall. When you go to the polls, know that she doesn't just talk the talk, she walks the walk. On Nov. 5, I'm proudly voting to re-elect Phyllis Randall, and I encourage you to do so as well.

*Dave Rubin
Hillsboro*

Tony Buffington: Thank you for your commitment to our community

Dear Editor:

One of the most important issues for the Middleburg community is what is the vision and future of rural Loudoun. Not a week goes by when I am not asked, "How are we going to preserve this special place?" There are

LETTER

many aspects to solving these and many other issues, but one of the most important parts is having leaders in our County government who share our values, and are willing work hard to accomplish the same goals. Tony Buffington has served admirably in this capacity for us all.

Since joining the Board of Supervisor in 2015, Tony has been a such a leader for both Middleburg and the broader western Loudoun. He developed and spearheaded the Conservation Easement Assistance Program in Loudoun, the first of its kind. This program offers County grants to low income landowner who wish to perma-

nently preserve, through conservation easements, their open space but cannot afford the required legal costs and fees. Tony built the needed support with the Board, regardless of Party, and it passed 9-0.

In addition to this program, Tony partnered with Geary Higgins, and together they convinced the Board to initiate a feasibility study for Loudoun to develop and adopt a Transfer of Development Rights program. Known as TDRs, this program would allow landowners in the west to sell their development land rights to builders in the east who seek high housing density. This allows the development rights to be "transferred" from the rural west to the east where housing is desired. These types of innovative programs and solutions are what is needed to ensure we protect Loudoun's rural assets, and we support Tony's continued efforts to see the program

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Vote for Wylie, Flannery, and Schumacher – Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors

Dear Editor:

Loudoun County voters, your help is needed to protect our natural resources. Please support the incumbent candidates in the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors' race in the upcoming election. Jim Wylie, John Flannery and Marina Schumacher have a combined 24 years of experience in managing and leading the implementation of conservation programs in Loudoun County.

LETTER

The LSWCD is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia and a democratic means for local conservation leadership, and is a nonpartisan voluntary organization.

There are 47 conservation districts in the Commonwealth each with its' own unique challenges and requirements. Loudoun County is in the Chesapeake Bay watershed

and is tasked with meeting stringent pollution reduction goals to improve the health of the bay. Requirements for reducing pollutants in the Chesapeake Bay have increased as has funding and programs to accomplish these goals. The next several years are critical for Loudoun to meet these challenges.

Huge strides toward those goals have been made, huge tasks remain. The LSWCD is tasked with protecting the natural resources of Loudoun County and assisting the County's efforts in reaching the mandated goals.

The experience and expertise of Jim Wylie, John Flannery and Marina Schumacher is needed to effectively manage and implement these programs. Please do your part; reelect the incumbent director candidates so this important work can continue without interruption.

*James B. Christian
Chairman LSWCD Board of Directors*

Sam Kroiz: Farmer – Leader – We Can Trust

Dear Editor:

I am writing to endorse Sam Kroiz for Catocin Supervisor. My family moved to Lovettsville near Sam's farm, Georges Mill Farm, five years ago. When we decided to call western Loudoun our home, it was

the best decision we ever made. We came to know Sam and his family while hiking up Short Hill Mountain, spending hours snuggling baby goats, and frequenting the monthly community barn dances at his farm. We lived in eastern Loudoun be-

fore moving to Lovettsville, and were immersed in the constant change Loudoun is undergoing. Once we settled in here, it seemed like nothing would ever change at our new home.

Then two years ago, Sam told us that he had been to a community meeting and learned of AT&T's planned to build a data

center on top of the mountain behind our house. Even worse, the plans had already sped through much of the County review process and the clock was ticking on final approval. Sam wasn't an expert on data centers nor the details of the County Zoning Ordinance, but he knew

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36 »

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Closing Rt. 9 closes businesses

Dear Editor:

In a rare act of unity, elected officials, VDOT and a host of others are all in agreement...let's drive as many Rt. 9 businesses out of business and make way for massive development and hundreds of McMansions between Leesburg and Charlestown.

LETTER

Of course, that is not the actual narrative. Those words are not in the mailers, or the Town Halls, or the informational websites. Yet, it is the net result of closing Rt. 9, not for a few hours, days, weeks, or months, but for the better part of a full year, eliminating the two-way traffic flow between Leesburg and Charlestown.

The \$10 plus million-dollar project price tag neglects to account for the negative financial impact upon every Rt. 9 rural businesses and their substantial loss of revenue during the nearly one-year, two-way closure. For the gas stations, farmers markets, wineries, wayside stands and other small business, whose livelihood depends upon the two-way commuter traffic during the weekday and the two-way tourist traffic during the weekend, closing Rt. 9 is a death sentence. McMansions, here we come!

As a double bonus, the enforcement deferment of the overly restrictive advertising signage ordinances on rural businesses ends on Halloween. The sign ordinance restrictions, which severely inhibits rural business' ability to attract commuters and weekend travelers, are back in full force on Nov. 1. Rt. 9 businesses not only lose customers through the Rt. 9 closure, but they lose the ability to attract customers through adequate business advertising signage.

This is a classic example of unintended consequences of government action. Wanting to preserve Western Loudoun's rural character and businesses, politicians adopt policies with drive those businesses out of business, and make way for more development, thus destroying the rural character of Western Loudoun.

Businesses surviving the Hillsboro closure, will have another opportunity to close when VDOT installs the round-about at the intersection of Rt. 9 and Rt. 287.

Closing Rt. 9 closes businesses, and paves the way for Western Loudoun development, pure and simple.

*Warner Workman
Lovettsville*

Vote Flannery for Soil and Water Conservation Board

Dear Editor,

I have singled out one race this political season that I wish to make an endorsement, and that's supporting my good friend, the Honorable John P. Flannery for re-election as a Director to the Loudoun County Soil and Water Conservation Board, for another four-year term.

LETTER

I've known John since 1983 when we were both thinking of running for Congress. I found then how serious John was about public service, and that he cared for what was best for Loudoun County.

I took some time to tell John what I'd learned and I've seen, most recently, how he's made a difference for the better as a Director and the Treasurer of the Soil and Water Board.

In the State Senate, I served as a senior member of the Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources Committee which addressed some of the issues John is dealing with on the Soil and Water Board.

John cares that we use the resources we have to preserve and protect the quality of our water and the richness of our soil.

I encourage everyone, without regard to party affiliation, to support John for this non-partisan post, and to vote for John Flannery's re-election on Nov. 5.

*Charles "Charlie" Waddell
Leesburg*

Keep Dave LaRock working for us so that you get:



more of this



less of this

On November 5, Reelect Delegate Dave LaRock!

As you read this, [the Northam Administration](#) is plotting and planning to **divert 25%** of our NVRTA regional transportation money to a project [outside of Virginia](#)...

I plan to block that move.

Currently, **our taxes and tolls** go to transit projects close to Washington, DC...

I'm fighting to fix that.

VDOT and Loudoun County need to install [digital signs](#) on both ends of the Dulles Greenway to display [travel times on alternate routes](#), so travelers can **avoid Greenway Tolls**...

I am pressing for that to happen.

The [Dulles Greenway](#) and [Dulles Toll Road](#) are both **out of control**...

I am guiding a VDOT study and crafting legislation to rein in tolls from Leesburg to Dulles to I-66.

Everyone wins when more people work from [home](#) and **avoid traffic altogether**...

I am pressing for low-cost solutions to close the rural broadband gap.



Authorized and Paid for by Dave LaRock for Delegate.

Learn more at votelarock.us/issues/transportation

Hillsboro awaits revised bids for Rethink9 Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety Project

‘It’s complicated,’ but it’s getting done

BY ANDREA GAINES

The Town of Hillsboro has set a deadline of Nov. 7 for contractors to submit revised bids for their ambitious “Rethink9” Route 9 project – an effort that will bring traffic calming, a new road, and an updated drinking water and sanitary sewer main to the Town in one fell swoop.

COMMUNITY

In an interview with the Blue Ridge Leader, Mayor Roger Vance and Vice Mayor Amy Marasco reinforced the point that companies seeking the contract for the multi-million project must deliver proposals that “get the job done in about a year,” produce a product that results in “quality and long-term durability,” and, over that one year, “has the least impact on all parties involved.”

At the heart of the Town’s Invitations for Bids is a determination to find a contractor that is “nimble and committed to quality and working with the Town to reinstate two lanes of traffic as soon as possible.”

With respect to VDOT and the other state and local road authorities involved, everything is in place and approved.

“Change is hard,” said Marasco and Vance. But, with respect to Hillsboro’s enormous traffic, safety, drinking water, and storm water management challenges, “knitting these things together as one” is the way to go, and will “save millions of taxpayer dollars” had the road, water and sewer, and other issues been dealt with individually as separate projects, burdening the Rt. 9 corridor for years. Although subject to some modifications when the road construction firm is hired, the traffic plan approved by VDOT, the six key elements/parameters Hillsboro is requiring contractors to adhere to include the following:

1. Single-lane roundabouts at the east and western sides of Town, to be built under normal flagging operations with eastbound/westbound lanes open, expected to take the

first 3 to 4 months.

2. After roundabouts are functional, rush hour traffic lane eastbound from 4 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. – allowing teachers, parents, commuters to move through the town with as little inconvenience as possible.
3. 9:30 a.m. Rt. 9 road closures within the Town boundary every weekday so the contractor can deploy multiple crews to speed up the process, dedicating the entire Town as a work zone and dramatically reducing the total duration of the project.
4. One open lane going west starting every Friday 2 p.m. – and open all weekend long – in order to support local agritourism businesses such as wineries, breweries and the Town’s small businesses.
5. One open lane eastbound starting at 5 p.m. on Sunday to facilitate visitors leaving area businesses.
6. An “accelerated maintenance schedule and business wayfinding signs” on the local roads that will serve as a local detour route when Rt. 9 is closed – these include Stony Point Road, to Woodgrove Road, to Alder School Road, to Hillsboro Road.

In devising Rethink9, Hillsboro is looking for the work to be completed in about one year. It is mandating that the contractor have no more than 45 to 60 days of total road closure within Town boundaries during that period, and not less than five consecutive calendar days of closure and not more than 30 consecutive days at any one time – all with at least two weeks notice. And, the Town will incentivize the contractor not to use that full 60 days. “Say you want it done quickly or pay someone to do it quickly” – that is Vance’s mantra.

The traffic plan, according to Vance and Marasco is “Driven by data and driven by

engineers, as well as the many competing needs of all stakeholders—local and regional, including West Virginia and Maryland.”

VDOT’s recent traffic calming project in Middleburg was instructive to the Town’s leadership. In Middleburg’s case, a lack of road closure lead to a situation where pavement and structures had not “properly cured” and needed to be repaired twice, increasing maintenance costs.

Public information meetings, including one attended by at least 100 people in early October have helped inform the Town’s efforts. The Town has established a key stakeholder group of businesses, organizations and residents to continually provide inputs and to provide vehicles to disseminate information. The organization known as the Greater Hillsboro Business Alliance is involved, and although there are differences of opinion,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »

Smiles and gratitude abound at Purcellville Art Gallery ribbon-cutting

The joy and enthusiasm could not be contained at the recent ribbon-cutting of the Purcellville Art Gallery, one of the latest and most eagerly awaited endeavors of the Discover Purcellville organization. The event also marked the gallery’s first-ever Artist Market.

The gallery features local artworks and gifts crafted by local artisans. It will also offer classroom space, weekend art fairs and other opportunities for all to enjoy, participate in, and be inspired by art and creativity.

Coming up at the gallery ... Christmas Card Watercolor Class, Nov. 7, Music and the 60s – Photography by Richard Busch, Nov. 9, and Sip & Shop – Small Business Saturday, Nov. 30.

Purcellville Art Gallery Gift Cards are available, too, just in time for the holiday season.

For more information about the gallery, upcoming events, gift cards, and opportunities for artists to display and sell their work, go to www.PurcellvilleArtGallery.com.

Lots of business sponsorship, and volunteer opportunities, too.



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Remembering William Sherman Turgeon Jr.

William Sherman Turgeon Jr. passed away Saturday, Oct. 12, after a year-long battle with cancer. He was surrounded by his family.

There are not adequate words to express the light and love “Bill” shared with the world. Be it his humorous teaching tactics with his sixth grade U.S. history class at River Bend Middle School; the way he would make his children and wife Jill laugh, dressed as an Elf (tights and all) at Christmas time; or the listening ear and peaceful presence he would offer to a friend in need; Bill always left those around him with a smile on their face and joy in their heart.

He was born in Vallejo, Ca and raised in Vacaville, Ca. He was a wonderful son to his parents William Turgeon Sr and Kathy Turgeon; and brother to his two sisters Dynette Ferraiullo and Suzette Oxley. He was well known throughout his hometown as a star athlete on the football field and on the wrestling mat. But he was best known for his compassionate heart and sense of humor.

Turgeon spent his lifetime serving others. In addition to being an educator for over two decades, he served his community coaching youth sports, participating in callings at church, and volunteering through-



out the community. When he was 19, he served a two-year church mission in London, England.

He leaves behind his wife, Jill; whom he adored with his heart and soul. The two shared 28 years together, filled with adventures all around the world. They almost always had a suitcase packed and ready to go explore and enjoy the world around them.

Together, their greatest adventure was raising their 3 children:

Katie, Megan, and Zach. It is difficult to put into words just how wonderful of a father and husband Bill was to his family, and Granddad he was to his three grandchildren: Van, Finnley, and Olive. He instilled in his children a love of learning and appreciation for the outdoors, travel, and history. He taught them to not just enjoy life, but to love it; to find joy in simplicity; and the key to living a happy life is gratitude in all things.

His funeral service was held on Oct. 19 at the LDS Church in Hamilton, with the viewing at Hall Funeral home the previous day. Memorial contributions may be made to the Bill Turgeon Memorial fund at <https://everloved.com/life-of/william-turgeon-jr/>. The funds collected will be used to honor educators who embrace the love of learning Turgeon so wonderfully demonstrated.

Fourth Annual Turkey Pardoning – Nov. 2 noon Town Hall Purcellville

Come celebrate the Fourth Annual Turkey Pardoning at the Purcellville Town Hall, 221 S. Nursery Avenue, Purcellville – at noon, Saturday, Nov. 2. Join Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser and the Town Council in pardoning a very lucky turkey named Morgana Doo Doo Doo Doo Doo.

Morgana grew up in Houston, but realized she wanted to live in the Washington D.C. metro area, and escaped at a young age. She’s a big fan of the Nats, and watches every game she can. She resides at her home, Springdale Inn in Purcellville, where she is a favorite among her peers –



and is looking forward to her pardoning.

After the pardoning ceremony, come join the Mayor and Council for cookies and refreshments at Town Hall. Let’s celebrate the Thanksgiving season.

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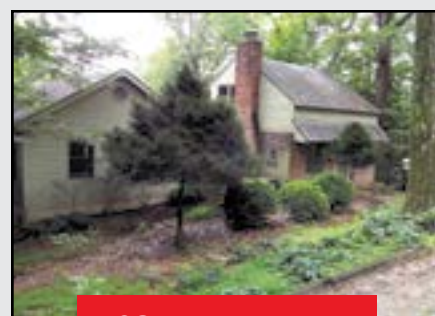
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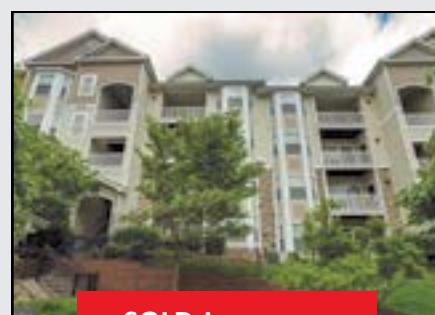
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SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES – BLUE RIDGE DISTRICT

Ian J. Serotkin

Blue Ridge Leader: What do you think the parents of Loudoun’s school children look for in individual members of the School Board, and why are you the best person to meet those needs?



Ian Serotkin: Simply put, I think Loudoun parents look for someone they can trust, and who can get things done. I’m the best person to meet these needs because I have a track record of effective public service, of listening to community concerns, and of finding common ground to make positive changes.

When I worked with state lawmakers to get a new Virginia law on recess passed, we did it in a bipartisan way. The result was a bill with broad support, with every single Loudoun lawmaker voting in favor – from Jennifer Wexton to Dave LaRock. My advocacy group, More Recess for Loudoun County, did the same thing at the local level. We held town hall meetings with the community and met with School Board

members to build consensus around what a good recess policy would look like. The result was the new Loudoun recess policy passing unanimously, doubling the amount of recess time our kids get in elementary school. I expanded on that success this year, working with the School Board

to implement a policy – unanimously again – for modest breaks into the schedule for our secondary school students.

I’ve also been fully committed to protecting our small schools in western Loudoun from the constant threat of closure. I first became involved in organizing my community to fight to keep western Loudoun schools open back in 2014, when the School Board was considering closing four community schools – Aldie, Hillsboro, Hamilton, and Lincoln - due to the \$38 million underfunding of our schools that year. We were successful in convincing the board

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36 »

Ram Venkatachalam

Blue Ridge Leader: What do you think the parents of Loudoun’s school children look for in individual members of the School Board, and why are you the best person to meet those needs?



Ram Venkatachalam: I am running for the School Board to make Loudoun County Public Schools the best and safest in America, by keeping the focus on serving our children and ensuring better communication with parents. All of this requires more cohesive leadership from the board itself than we see today – along with a commitment to listening better and working harder.

That’s what I believe most parents, educators, and taxpayers are looking for in a member of the board, and these are the qualities I bring as a candidate.

It also means serving without a political agenda, and not allowing the administration of our school system to be a vehicle for social engineering. I oppose that, and it distinguishes me

from my opponent. The next board needs to stay focused on its primary mission of educating our children and giving them an enriching life experience that prepares them for being adults. I will work hard to make sure that happens.

I also bring experience in local organizations, where I have worked as a volunteer leader for the betterment of Loudoun’s communities and families. In doing so, I have always reached out to all interested parties to listen and learn – not just to those who share my views.

The next school board will have a lot on its plate right away, including a new budget.

My priorities start with improving school safety. I support the additional hardening of schools and training of security staff, as well as putting a School Resource Office (SRO) in every public school in cooperation with the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39 »



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SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES – CATOCTIN DISTRICT

Jenna M. Alexander

Blue Ridge Leader: What do you think the parents of Loudoun’s school children look for in individual members of the School Board, and why are you the best person to meet those needs?



Jenna Alexander: As a parent, when my children get on the bus in the morning, I want to know that they will be safe and that they are emotionally and academically supported. As a taxpayer, I want my tax dollars to be used wisely and efficiently.

As a 12- year Hamilton resident with children attending Hamilton Elementary and Blue Ridge Middle School, I expect my elected representatives to have a history of engagement in our schools and be prepared on day one to be a fierce advocate for Catocotin and rural Loudoun.

As Loudoun residents, we trust our School Board members to understand the complexities of running the third largest school division in the state and managing a \$1.3B budget. To be effective, School Board members must have experience in legislative policy and financial management and be able to work in a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27 »

John P. Beatty

Blue Ridge Leader: What do you think the parents of Loudoun’s school children look for in individual members of the School Board, and why are you the best person to meet those needs?



John Beatty: Parents are looking for a School Board member who understands education and its costs, will listen to their concerns, and recognizes the unique challenges of the community they represent.

As a computer science teacher and a school administrator, I have an insider perspective on the problems facing schools today from multiple angles. I know firsthand how difficult it can be to run a classroom in the afternoon, when the students get a little rowdy and are ready to go home. I also know how rewarding it is to see our students grow and flourish in their knowledge. If elected, I would like to be a voice for teachers on the School Board to make sure they have the tools and materials they need to best engage and educate their students. Furthermore, as the Director of Technology,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34 »

Zerell Johnson-Welch

Blue Ridge Leader: What do you think the parents of Loudoun’s school children look for in individual members of the School Board, and why are you the best person to meet those needs?



Zerell Johnson-Welch: First, I think Loudoun County parents look for a School Board member who is honest, trustworthy, and committed to doing what’s best for every student. They expect a member with a strong work ethic, excellent communication skills and an individual who understands the value and importance of collaboration and team work.

Secondly, I believe parents want a School Board member who is smart, relatable and can demonstrate the necessary skill sets to perform the Board’s policy, administrative, and judicial responsibilities. The School Board member should be familiar with principles of advocacy in order to fully represent the concerns and educational needs of our children. Finally, I think parents look for someone who enjoys children, is approachable,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 »



John Beatty

CATOCTIN SCHOOL BOARD
Parent, Teacher, and School Administrator

- PUT PARENTS FIRST**
- SUPPORT TEACHERS**
- MANAGE BUDGET GROWTH**
- REFINE TECHNOLOGY AND ARTS**
- SUPPORT SMALL SCHOOLS**
- PRIORITIZE SCHOOL SAFETY**

I will work to provide the best learning environment for *all* of our children, by supporting parents in their role as primary educators, giving teachers the freedom to teach, funding small schools, promoting the arts, rethinking technology, and fighting indecent materials entering our children’s classrooms.

jb4va.com

Paid for and authorized by Friends of John Beatty



THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR **CATOCTIN**



“I’M GOING TO PUT MY EXPERIENCE TO WORK FOR CATOCTIN” — **FOREST HAYES**

I have 20 years of experience in federal, state, and local government — experience that will help Catoctin: modernize our schools, support our rural economy and improve rural broadband — without raising taxes!

I’ve worked on the US House Committee on Transportation and understand the big picture solutions to traffic safety and congestion — like finding real answers to Route 15.

I’ve produced over 6,000 units of workforce housing and serve on the Virginia Housing Commission. We can make homes affordable for working families, around the Silver Line Metro stations, while preserving open spaces in western Loudoun.”



ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, NOV. 5TH VOTE FOREST HAYES FOR SUPERVISOR

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SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES – AT LARGE

Kenya A. Savage

Blue Ridge Leader: How do you see your role in making sure the needs of all students – east and west – are met? Why are you running?



Kenya Savage: I am running for the At-Large Representative seat because the opportunities for every student are not being equitably addressed. Motions are being made with regards to political party affiliation rather than what is best for our students, our teachers, and our District. The School Board race is supposed to be non-partisan, where the best ideas are carried forward to and implemented on behalf of the voter, and not political party agenda. Our schools need to be led by individuals responsible to the voters, not to the political establishment, which is why I decided to run as a non-endorsed candidate.

Moreover, I think it lacks credibility that voters hear from School Board Representatives when it's near the end of a term and the election cycle is brewing. Loudoun County is continuing to grow. Which is why I always advocate to grow our children for a greater Loudoun County. Enabling,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33 »

Julia L. “Julie” Sisson

Blue Ridge Leader: How do you see your role in making sure the needs of all students – east and west – are met? Why are you running?



Julie Sisson: Our schools need common sense leadership from someone who is service oriented and financially qualified, and who understands that the School Board should be both a policy maker and a watch dog – not a rubber stamp. Six of our nine School Board members are not running again, so this election will have a big impact.

I've spent my 30-year career as a CPA, providing services to clients across the D.C. area and running a multi-million-dollar business. The Loudoun County Public School budget is now more than \$1.2 billion. I am the only financial professional running for the School Board, and I bring unique skill set and a critical eye to the job. And unlike my opponents, I have a proven track record of fiscal responsibility.

I want our students to have the best opportunities possible, and as a School Board member, I will support a wide variety of programs. Whether MATA career pathways, NJROTC, TJHSST, etc., I want to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35 »

Denise R. Corbo

Blue Ridge Leader: How do you see your role in making sure the needs of all students – east and west – are met? Why are you running?



Denise Corbo: I am running for School Board because I believe educating our youth directly impacts their future and the future of Loudoun County. Loudoun County School Board members must have a vision, create structures to support that vision, and be accountable to the public. Seeking input and providing a method for our teachers, employees, parents, and the community to have a voice with the board is key in addressing our needs.

Many candidates can speak to the issues; however, none have the education, experience, or first-hand knowledge of LCPS that I offer. Since 1992, I have worked in 11 County schools, designed a SEARCH (elementary gifted program) lesson template used to close disparities in minority identification, introduced the school division's first elementary electronic report card, and helped create

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34 »



CALEB KERSHNER
CATOCTIN SUPERVISOR



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AS YOUR SUPERVISOR, I WILL FIGHT TO

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- ✓ keep taxes low
- ✓ build safer & more efficient roads
- ✓ bring broadband to rural Loudoun
- ✓ create world-class schools

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Roger Zurn, Treasurer
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Bob Wertz, Commissioner of Revenue
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COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY

M. Nicole Wittmann

Blue Ridge Leader: Both you and your opponent present a very compelling case with respect to your contributions to law enforcement. What do you see as your most significant recent accomplishment, and, should you be elected, what would be your highest priority in your first 12 months in office?



Nicole Wittmann: I have 26 years of law enforcement experience. I have spent each day of those 26 years as a prosecutor fighting for victims, abused women and children, and putting dangerous career criminal behind bars. As the Chief Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney, I have sent some of Loudoun County's most dangerous and high profile criminals – murderers, gang members, drug dealers, and child molesters – to prison. I have specialized in the prosecution of child sexual assault, physical abuse, and homicide cases. I am committed to focusing on crimes that do the most harm, and understand that incarceration is not always the answer.

In addition to working with Sheriff Mike Chapman to keep the citizens of Loudoun County safe from criminals by lowering crime by 19 percent since 2012, I have also been on the forefront of bringing rehabilitative and diversionary efforts to Loudoun County's criminal justice

system.

I have championed treatment for those suffering from mental health and addiction issues, rather than criminalizing mental-health problems and addiction. I have been instrumental in reinstating the Drug Court, creating the Mental Health Court, and continuing an office policy of agreeing to deferred dispositions and not incarceration for first time drug possessions, as well as not requesting cash bonds in an effort to ensure fairness for indigent and low income defendants. I have supported initiatives that divert non-violent criminal cases from

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »

Buta Biberaj

Blue Ridge Leader: Both you and your opponent present a very compelling case with respect to your contributions to law enforcement. What do you see as your most significant recent accomplishment, and, should you be elected, what would be your highest priority in your first 12 months in office?



Buta Biberaj: My most significant recent accomplishment, related to this race, is my decision to run. I am running to bring solutions to our community – we need to prevent crimes, protect our community from harm, and to prosecute wisely. I realized that the culture in the office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, which was stale and fixated on convictions and incarceration, was not going to change until we change the leadership.

After 25 years as a trial attorney, 23 years as a Guardian Ad Litem, over 11 years as a substitute judge, and over 23 years as a resident of Loudoun

County, I was comfortable in how I was serving my community. I was successful in working with my clients and their families as they dealt with legal issues.

However, I was very concerned as to how the criminal justice system was not best serving our commu-

nity. We still have victims of crimes who are too afraid to make criminal complaints. Especially, in the area of sex assault cases – they were worried about being shunned, not believed, or having their cases not prosecuted. We had residents who were concerned that the prosecutors and judges were treating them disparately as compared to the majority of the citizens. We had parents worried about their emerging adults who were charged with non-violent, low-offense charges, who were being convicted and labeled as criminals for life. We had families worried about how their family members were

CONTINUED ON PAGE 37 »

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BY ANDREA GAINES

From a distance the quaint custom home located at 17149 Simpson Circle in Paeonian Springs has fairy tale curb appeal blending brick and stone accents, bay windows and towering trees.

REAL ESTATE

But, get a little closer and your expectations for what it would be like to live here will open up like a veritable kaleidoscope.

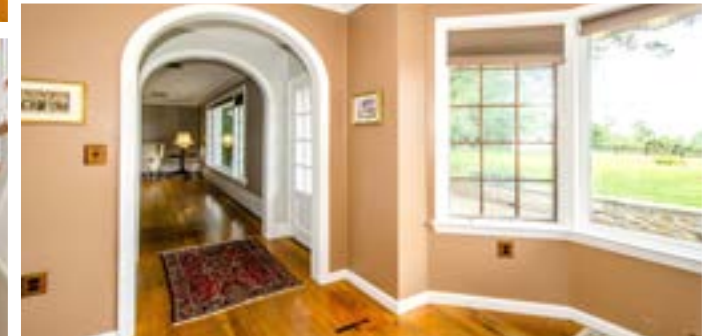
This surprisingly spacious 3,445 sq. ft., three-level home has a sought-after main level, an expansive lower level, and a supremely comfortable and fun upper level.

And once your car reaches the top of the driveway a panorama of the Blue Ridge Mountains will take your breath away.

It was built to be a part of the land – inside and out. And, while it is being offered as a whole, it is actually two separate lots.

The word “custom” takes on special meaning here. There are the expected touches, including wood floors, classic moldings, and wood-burning fireplaces. But, added to that are exquisite arched doorways, ceiling fans, copper gutters, and built-in bookcases – several of which frame a truly beautiful library room.

The main floor features the library room, and a lovely



living room – with built-in shelves and one of the several fireplaces.

A large main-floor kitchen and spacious dining room provide views to the front of the property, and an enormous fenced pasture.

The first floor also includes a master bedroom with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27 »

“My great uncle Allen Clarke, who built the home, was an inventor by trade. So, you can only imagine how much fun it was to visit him his home on Simpson Circle in Paeonian Springs. He had a backyard observatory, a darkroom for photography (way before digital), a weather station and a large workshop. He loved teaching kids about science. We have many fond memories at this home, and just being kids hanging out in the fields overlooking the awesome views!”

– **Stuart Sager**, Ashburn VA



Authorized by Friends of Roger Zurn

I have tried to serve with honor, dignity and integrity. On November 5th, I would appreciate your vote.

–*Re-elect Roger Zurn, Treasurer*

SOIL AND WATER DIRECTOR – VOTE FOR THREE

Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors
There are six candidates running and vote for three.

The Blue Ridge Leader asked each candidate to answer this question:

Many voters are unfamiliar with the role of their local Soil & Water Conservation Director. How would you describe that role and what do you bring to the table that other candidates might not?

Candidate responses below. As of press time George Melik-Agamirian did not respond.

John P. Flannery II

Serving as Director of the Soil and Water Board is a public service. It doesn't pay anything. It's not a political stepping stone. It is all about an issue that many of us think is critical and care deeply about

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »



Marina R. Schumacher

When it comes election time, the Soil and Water Conservation District is always the token volunteer elected position that is on the bottom of the list that no one really knows what they do. But

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »



Jasvinder "Jimmy" Singh

As a Virginia native, I grew up in Loudoun County and I care deeply about the environment. My background is in finance and I currently manage a small business in the Manassas City area

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33 »



James K. Wylie

Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District is one of 47 Soil and Water Districts in Virginia, some of which cover multiple counties, and some, like Loudoun, that are responsible for just one.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »



Michelle C. Thomas

Soil & Water Board Background Information: There are 47 active conservation districts established by the Virginia General Assembly with oversight, financial support, best practice man-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »





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SMALL BUSINESS GRAPEVINE

Gentle Harvest

For this month's Small Business Grapevine, we like the idea of focusing on fresh apples and handmade cheeses – both of which are in plentiful supply from local businesses this month. Here are some tips on how to use these great local products and how/where to find them.



The apple of my pie

Some call apple pie the greatest desert of all time. According to one seasoned chef, the key to success is a handmade crust, a combination of firm-tart (e.g., Granny Smith) and firm-sweet apples (e.g. Golden Delicious), and a carefully-prepared filling.

A quick tip on the crust – cut the butter into the flour and other ingredients with your hands ... a “shaggy” dough makes for the best crust. And, for the filling: toss the apples with the rest of the ingredients – flour, sugar, butter and spices – and let the mixture sit overnight in the refrigerator.

A quick tip on where to get your apples: LoudounFarms.org has all of the information you need ... Crooked Run Orchard, Great Country Farms, and Hollin Farms (Delaplane) is a good start, but the list goes on and on. So, have some fun.

Mozzarella and more

LoudounFarms.org lists no fewer than fourteen local dairy sources. The craft of cheesemaking is not for whimps. It's a fine and laborious process demanding of both technical knowledge and love.

For example, Paul Stephan of the Blue Ridge Dairy Company started his business because, according to the company's website, “he realized that his favorite cheese, fresh

mozzarella, was not being made in the U.S. to anywhere near the quality as it was in Italy.” But, now we have that, as crafters all over Loudoun serve up creamy, delicious, sweet and savory cheese and cheese-related products.

In honor of cheese, we recommend serving it in as simple a form as possible – with tomatoes and basil in a caprese salad, or with a hefty crust of homemade bread.



Again, see LoudounFarms.org for a full list of local sources.

Cheese and apples – a marriage made in heaven

Some recipes, including those of the more gourmet persuasion, call for an apple pie crust made with cheese – usually a sharp variety such as cheddar.

That, along with a simple, fresh-sliced apple and cheese platter is a beautiful way to celebrate fall and move into the holiday season.

To have your small business featured in our Small Business Grapevine, contact Andrea Gaines via email at andrea@andregaines.com. The theme for December, Hearth & Home, for January 2020, Be Bold, and for February, Finding Love.

Ram4BlueRidge.com

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VOTE NOV. 5

RAM
Venkatachalam
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SCHOOL BOARD

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- ✓ Attract and retain the best teachers in the region
- ✓ Direct more funding to classrooms, less to central administration
- ✓ Expand mental health and youth resiliency programs
- ✓ Put a School Resource Officer (SRO) in every school
- ✓ Make sure libraries do not promote social agendas
- ✓ Improve communications with families
- ✓ Protect small, rural schools



Every problem has a solution.
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Sheriff Mike Chapman

Clerk of the Circuit Court Gary Clemens

School Board member Jill Turgeon as her successor

Paid for and authorized by Ram Venkatachalam for School Board



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More pizza pizzazz in Purcellville

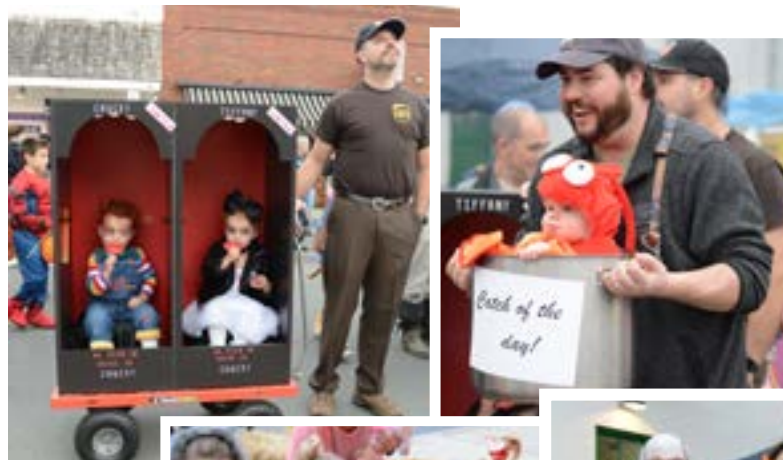
Another great pizza place – and more – has opened its doors in the Town of Purcellville.

Manhattan Pizza, under the ownership of local businessman Jack Azar is just the latest in a string of popular eating spots in the region, and one of the latest of restaurant enterprises for the family. Azar operates 15 locations for the franchise, and his wife, Jumana's parents have operated many restaurants in the area, including Del Rio in Leesburg.

In addition to fantastic pizza, the restaurant will be serving a wide variety of healthy salads, fresh gelato and more.

Manhattan Pizza Purcellville is located at 1211 Wolf Rock Road, near the corner of Rt. 287 and Business Rt. 7. Their hours are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Discover Purcellville's 9th Annual Halloween Block Party a great success



A massive crowd of lobsters, horror movies, baseball crazies, pirates, and more.



Leesburg invites residents to weigh in on new Town Plan

First deadline Nov. 5

BY ANDREA GAINES

The Town of Leesburg is taking a rather innovative approach to upcoming planning exercises, asking residents to host gatherings in their own homes, and report back to the Town about what they heard from family, friends, and neighbors.

The effort, called "On the Table" works this way.

Leesburg is about to adopt a new Town Plan.

Officials will be holding a series of traditional public hearings – and the like – on the new Town Plan. "On the Table" seeks feedback as an adjunct to that process.

Throughout the month of October Leesburg citizens gathered together, and recorded what different people said about what they see as the future of their town – where development should go, how big the Town should get, what they see as threats to their way of life – and what kinds of things can enhance their way of life. Residents will first request an On the Table info kit, and then submit a report from their gathering. Reports are due to the Town Nov. 5.

Per the officials organizing the event, "... On the Table is an opportunity to gather over mealtime conversations to build personal connections and explore how residents can work together to make our community stronger. Residents can invite their families, neighbors, colleagues, and friends – old and new – to pull up a chair, share a meal or coffee, and discuss the ways in which they can, and do, work to improve quality of life in Leesburg.

"No staff, no elected officials, no PowerPoint presentations," say the Town organizers. "Just conversation.

"After the event," say officials, "Hosts will send a summary of the conversation

back to the Town."

According to Leesburg Public Information Officer Betsy Arnett, beginning on Nov. 7, Leesburg will begin holding a Town-wide Charrette to explore where the municipality and its citizens want to go in the future. On the Table will inform and provide additional citizen information for the Charrette.

Scott Parker, Leesburg Senior Planning Project Manager from the Department of Planning & Zoning said the Town's outreach efforts are going well.

In late October, he said, "Response to the On the Table public input for the Town Plan has been very good, and very positive. We have had about five or six On the Table groups respond so far, with about five or six more scheduled within the next week. Town staff is planning to guide a discussion with Loudoun County High School Civics students at Loudoun County High School, and with the general public ... at King Street Coffee in downtown Leesburg. The Town Plan Project Focus Group will [also] be having an On the Table discussions.

"Boards and Commissions at the Town have been invited to participate as well," he said, "And so far the Diversity Commission will hold one at their next meeting, as [will] as the Standing Residential Traffic Committee ... It is anticipated that other Boards and Commissions will participate as well, including the Planning Commission."

Residents interested in hosting an On the Table event can go to legacy.leesburgva.gov for an On the Table info kit.

The deadline for submitting a report to the Town is Nov. 5.

For more information about the Town Plan Update, contact project managers Scott Parker, at sparker@leesburgva.gov or 703-771-2771, or Richard Klusek, at rklusek@leesburgva.gov or 703-771-2758.

HILLSBORO, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

particularly on the Rt. 9 temporary closure issue, the parties continue to work together.

Vance and Marasco say they are committed to ensuring that Rethink9 will "Not unnecessarily be detouring anyone to Round Hill or Purcellville," and have met with the respective mayors there.

Hillsboro is also holding regular public information meetings, one-on-one meetings with the businesses that may be affected, and making sure the Town leadership is aware of the special events sched-

ules of vineyards and breweries, and local schools. There is also a direct outreach effort to truck drivers using Rt. 9, as well as the Visit Loudoun organization.

"We want everyone to know that throughout the process," said Vance, "we are committed to getting people where they need to go as safely and as quickly as possible."

He encourages everyone to visit the project website, ReThink9.com, and sign up to the ReThink9 Dispatch, to receive official and timely alerts and updates on the project.



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Blessings at Belmont

BY ANDREA GAINES

On a quiet day in October a group of people dedicated to preserving history, healing wounds, and passing on one of the most important messages human beings are capable of conveying – ‘we will not forget you’ – gathered at a little-known spot in Ashburn.

COMMUNITY

The place is known as the African American Burial Ground for the Enslaved at Belmont – the largest burial ground of its kind in Loudoun County.

The estate, now a huge and very popular golf course and gated community development was once a classic southern plantation. The property and original manor house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Once owned by the Toll Brothers development company, the burial grounds property is now under the protection of the Loudoun Freedom Center, a non-profit dedicated to the preservation of local African American history.

Agricultural goods were produced at Belmont, incredible wealth was accumulated there, and both slave and master lived and died there.

The gathering – “Blessings and Liba-

tions to the Historical Significance of the African America burial ground for the enslaved at Belmont” – was meant to honor the slaves buried there, unacknowledged, for many, many, many years.

The event included a walking tour of Coton and Belmont Plantations. Because management of the two properties was, in some way blended, it is hard to know who is buried and where. But, according to the Loudoun Freedom Center, all slaves buried there have been accounted for by name.

Interestingly, the blessings ceremony was conducted by what many might see as a very unusual messenger; His Majesty King Toffa IX of Porto Novo Benin. And, the personal, historic, economic, and genetic dynamics involved in these cases cannot be understated.

Porto Novo, or “New Port” was once used by the Portuguese as a center for the slave trade in the region. Toffa is a descendent of the African Kings who reigned at that time, many of whom participated in the slave trade. His organization, Roots to Glory was present, to honor



the slaves buried at Belmont and to make amends.

According to Ada Anagho Brown, president of Roots to Glory, “With these blessings and events we want to say, we are sorry about what happened to you, and about what you went through.”

The concept here is connected to the African Diaspora, with that continent as the ‘mother’ and all of the millions and billions of people world-wide whose ancestors originated in Africa as ‘her children.’

“We want to reconstruct our relations with the people who suffered so much,” said Brown.

Roots to Glory hosts many, many tours, and recently hosted one at the Macedonia Baptist Church in Bethesda, and this one at Belmont. They also hosted events in the French Quarter in New Orleans, and at the Stagville Plantation in Durham, NC, and others.

At one event at the Whitney Plantation in Louisiana, Toffa’s mission of remembrance and contrition took on special significance. A Wall of Honor at the historic spot carried the names of the enslaved there, many of whom, genetic tests showed, were his direct descendants.

For more information on this and other Loudoun Freedom Center projects go to www.LoudouFreedomCenter.org. Information on Roots to Glory events can be found at www.RootstoGlory.com.



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Loudoun Heights Has a New Communications Tower

After years of waiting while an application for a new tower worked its way through an expensive bureaucratic maze, American Tower has constructed a new tower alongside the existing outdated tower. Broadband service provider, All Points Broadband, rented space on the old tower and will now transition to the new tower. All Points is now upgrading their equipment, which provides broadband service to the Lovettsville and Neersville areas of NW Loudoun County.

The Loudoun Heights telecommu-

nication tower structure was at the end of its useful life, no longer meeting federal safety regulations which prevented companies who rent space on the old tower from accessing and servicing their equipment for the last several years. Numerous antennas are being placed on the new tower, allowing for improved cellular, broadband, and emergency communications service to the region.

Del. Dave LaRock said, "Getting the County to approve a tower upgrade to accommodate the equipment that will

bring improved cell phone and internet to my constituents should not be a legacy project. Working on this has been an extremely valuable lesson; drawing my attention to what needs to change. Not only was this tower old and broken, so is the system that slows down building the infrastructure in Western Loudoun that will give rural residents the service we all need."

LaRock's office, along with Supervisor Geary Higgins' have been interacting with American Tower and Loudoun



Delegate Dave LaRock (left) visiting the mountain top to view progress, on Oct. 24

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35 >

Loudoun OMS Celebrates 25 years

Loudoun Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery recently celebrated 25 years of oral surgery in Loudoun County. The three oral and maxillofacial surgeons have a combined total of over 20-years of dental, oral surgery and medical education, along with over 65-years of combined oral and maxillofacial surgery experience.

COMMUNITY

Dr. Andrew Bluhm, who joined the practice in 1994 and assumed leadership in 1998, was joined by Dr. Steve Dorsch in 1999, and Dr. Jay Vandervort in 2009. They have offices in Ashburn and Leesburg.

During the last 25 years, the practice has helped many



thousands of patients for common needs such as wisdom teeth removal or dental implants. In addition, the

three doctors provide a wide scope of services, including management of oral and facial injuries, corrective jaw surgery for congenital jaw deformities, and treatment of oral pathologic conditions.

All three doctors have full admitting privileges at Inova Loudoun Hospital for complex operations that cannot be performed in the office. The three doctors also have medical training in anesthesiology, which allows them to provide patients with a full range of office anesthetic options.

As part of its ongoing education mission, Loudoun OMS hosts the Greater Loudoun Study Club to offer educational programs to local dentists, focusing on comprehensive interdisciplinary dental care. This helps to build communication and understanding between specialists and general dental practitioners when it comes to treating complex patient needs.

We have travel options that keep your wheels rolling.
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<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>LOCAL BUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Weekday and limited Saturday service from Purcellville through Leesburg and Eastern Loudoun County + Equipped with wheelchair lifts and bike racks </div> <div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>COMMUTER BUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Comfortable, stress-free ride to work on coach-style buses + Board at park and ride lots to Rosslyn, Crystal City, the Pentagon and Washington, D.C. </div> <div> <p>METRO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Connections to the Silver & Orange Lines on LC Transit </div>	<div style="margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>CARPOOL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Shared rides with commuters who live and work near each other + Split travel costs with fellow carpoolers + Read, sleep or work as a passenger </div> <div> <p>VANPOOL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Arranged among groups of commuters traveling 15 or more miles to work + Split costs and lease of commuter vehicle </div>
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**Loudoun County
Commuter Services**

Travel Options > Information > Advice > Solutions

JENNA ALEXANDER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

non-partisan way to build a school system that supports every student and staff member. Before shifting to public education, I spent ten years working in the investments and capital markets industry running large, complex, strategic projects. I know how to take a budget apart, find process gaps and creatively redesign practices to close operating inefficiencies. I am uniquely qualified to oversee the Loudoun County Public School's budget and find operating efficiencies.

I started this journey in 2014 as a result of the small school closure hearings. While serving as Hamilton Elementary PTA Treasurer and then President, I formed a coalition of PTAs and PTOs to protect our small schools from consolidation. I am the only candidate that has ever spoken to the School Board (and state and federal legislators) about issues unique to rural Loudoun.

I've spent the past two years overseeing all of the PTAs in Loudoun County as the Director of the Hunt District PTA. My vision and communication skills transformed the Hunt District PTA into a cohesive and respected parent voice. I understand the concerns of parents and school communities across Loudoun; and I am therefore able to bridge the divides that challenge our county.

I am the only School Board candidate who works at the state level. I currently serve as the **Vice President of Advocacy for the Virginia PTA**. I set the non-partisan legislative agenda for the state and advocate on behalf of every parent, student, and teacher across Virginia. I have authored position statements and resolutions on mental

health, school renovations, small schools, world language instruction, and advancing equity and diversity, which now guide PTA advocacy work in schools across Virginia. As a direct result of this experience, I see where Loudoun excels and where we need to improve.

In Loudoun, you can see my work reflected in the fact that our small schools are still open, that we have full time principals in every elementary school, that LCPS' mental health return-to-learn policies changed, and that parent voices were raised across Virginia last year to ask for increased funding for mental health, and the largest teacher pay raise in 15 years. I've also partnered with Loudoun 4-H to develop an after-school program that is connecting elementary students with Loudoun farms.

I am passionate about the Catoclin District, and dedicated to ensuring the School Board joins the effort to protect rural Loudoun by reinvigorating agriculture education so that Loudoun's next generation of farmers and entrepreneurs have a pathway to work the land we are fighting to preserve. It's time to re-energize the way we communicate with families, re-prioritize renovating the oldest schools, bring back world languages in elementary school, expand support for the performing arts, reduce overcrowding, fix the mid-career teacher salary sag, make it easier for students with special needs to receive support, and aggressively chart a strategy to close the achievement gaps.

I'm asking for your vote on Nov. 5 because I have a proven track record of results and successful leadership, and it's time to get the work done!

PAEONIAN SPRINGS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

private bath, and a guest suite – also with a private bath. And, there is a dramatic, glassed-in porch which can be accessed from the kitchen ... a great place to read, drink your coffee, do puzzles or work on gardening projects.

A flagstone patio off of the porch has an electric awning for shade on brilliantly sunny days. Tucked away on this floor is also an additional den or office with access to a full bath in the hallway.

Upstairs in this magical home you will find two very spacious bedrooms with new carpeting that share an open den area, and a full bath. Also, on the upper level, is the enormous walk-in attic.

Stairs (and yes, an elevator!) provide access to the lower level, which features a large recreation room with another wood-burning fireplace, two large storage rooms, an additional storage room ideal for tools, and a small room outfitted with a sink that has doubled as a mini kitchen. A large utility room walks out to the two-car garage, and has additional storage if needed.

Outside ... the grounds are marvelous. The view from a flagstone veranda is out of a magazine, and the gardens and trees bloom for three seasons. There is a very

17149 Simpson Circle, Paeonian Springs
 MLS#: VAL0393110
 Year Built: 1963
 Beds/Baths: 4 bedrooms, 4 & 1/2 baths
 Total Acreage: Approximately 10-1/2 acres (5.5 acres with additional 5-acre lot)
 List Price: \$799,900
 Agent: Sam Rees, Associate Broker, Keller Williams
 onthemarketwithsamrees@gmail.com
 Ray Rees, Associate Broker, Keller Williams
 onthemarketwithrayrees@gmail.com
 Website: www.onthemarketloudoun.com
 Phone: (703) 408-4261

spacious garden shed with electricity – ideal for keeping your gardening projects and tools organized. For the animal lover there is a two-stall barn with additional storage that would be perfect for hay, and there is ample room to keep your lawn mower and/or tractor inside. The pastures on this property are lovely and rolling – very suitable for horses, goats, alpacas or outdoor hobbies such as grape growing.

As for location, this property is perfect; seven minutes to downtown Leesburg, and the Dulles Greenway. And, the popular W&OD Trail runs right through the quaint village of Paeonian Springs, and is within just a short walk of the property.

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M. NICOLE WITTMANN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

being charged and being brought to court, such as the Check Enforcement Program. This program has brought \$346,000 in restitution to local merchants. I have been a founding member of multiple initiatives aimed at keeping Loudoun safe, such as the Child Advocacy Center, the Domestic Abuse Response Team, the Sexual Abuse Response Team, the Improving Childhood Outcomes for Positive Endings Initiative, the Reducing Ethnic and Racial Disparity Initiative, and the Critical Accident Investigation Team.

My office has been a leader in the movement to keep juveniles out of the court system by diverting juveniles before they are charged. We have accomplished this without sacrificing public safety, by allowing the schools to handle in-school behaviors and by referring kids to diversion through the Restorative Justice Program. I have also been a leader in the effort to keep non-violent juvenile offenders out of detention by partnering with other County agencies in the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI). Since JDAI was brought to our county, Loudoun has managed to maintain the lowest rate of pre-trial detention in the entire state.

This effort has been recognized as the gold standard across the spectrum by those concerned with juvenile justice. My office's innovative handling of the graffiti of the Ashburn Colored School was hailed by the Washington Post, the New York Times, and the British Broadcasting Company as the future of juvenile justice. www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/stories-47936071. Even critics of law enforcement and prosecutors have acknowledged my office's success in ending the school-to-prison pipeline. George Soros funded an anti-law enforcement candidate for Commonwealth's Attorney in Arlington County, Parisa Tafti. When speaking of her model for juvenile prosecutors, Tafti recently wrote: "Nearby Loudoun County has a restorative justice program in place,

which studies show leaves victims more satisfied and decreases recidivism. We have no such program here [referring to the Arlington County Commonwealth's Attorney's Office]. I would work to implement a restorative justice model in non-violent and juvenile cases where the victims agree to it." --Falls Church New Press, April 11, 2019.

While my opponent has misled the public by posting budget numbers and projections as representative of how many juveniles are on probation or being committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice, please refer to: <http://www.djj.virginia.gov/pages/community/csu20L.htm>. These are the actual numbers from the Loudoun County Juvenile Court Services Unit, which show that less than one percent of Loudoun's 84,000 students are on probation, and zero have actually been committed. In fact, at this time, we have only 58 children on probation.

In this job, experience matters. I have tried most of Loudoun's murders, including Braulio Castillo, Henri Combs LaFleur, David Cavalieri, and convicted all of them; sending these criminals to prison for life. The job of Commonwealth's Attorney is not about politics, it's about public safety. This is why I am the only candidate who is endorsed by law enforcement, Sheriff Mike Chapman, and Democrats and Republicans alike.

The Washington Post has called me a skilled prosecutor; and being a skilled prosecutor is the number one requirement for the job of Loudoun's top prosecutor. Unlike my opponent, who has advocated for dangerous criminals, including murders, rapists, and child molesters, I will continue to serve and protect the people of Loudoun County by advocating for victims and taking violent criminals off our streets. Unlike my predecessor, I have a strong relationship with Sheriff Mike Chapman. Together, Sheriff Chapman and I have the experience and expertise to keep Loudoun County the safest area in the region.

JAMES K. WYLIE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

I am running for reelection, and am the only full time farmer currently serving on the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District board. I manage Lazy Lane farm in Upperville, where we primarily raise beef cattle but also have horse and hay production. I am currently the chair of our Technical Review Committee at the District, which reviews all the agricultural cost share practices prior to presenting them to the full board for approval. Having a farmer who is familiar with the day to day activities in agriculture, and how our programs fit into an ag business, I believe is critical to having a well rounded board in a County that still has a great deal of agriculture.

Our current board brings a lot of different backgrounds to the table both geographically, with both ends of the County represented, as well as with regards to our jobs and experience which I think lets us work well with folks from all around the County.

The Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District board focuses on supporting the staff's work with various voluntary conservation programs that are available to our farmers, homeowners, students, and businesses. These include the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Program that helps farmers to do things like fence livestock out of streams and provide clean drinking water to their animals as well as planting cover crops to protect from soil erosion and nutrient loss. We also deliver the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program to Loudouners, which is the Commonwealth's "subur-

ban" cost share program. It provides assistance to install things like permeable pavement, tree plantings, rain gardens, and other conservation landscaping that help improve our suburban environment.

The board's role in these programs is to review the applications that staff puts together from residents and approve them for funding. Likewise, we also have programs that our District does on our own that we approve such as our "Mini-Grant" program for Loudoun schools and teachers looking to do conservation projects and activities with their students. We also support our staff's fundraising rain barrel workshops that both help homeowners construct their own rain barrels, but additionally raises funds for our education programs. There is a septic rebate program that is an important part of our overall goal towards healthy water and soil that we support, too.

I think it's critical to continue having someone directly involved in farming on the LSWCD board since a good portion of the financial and technical assistance we provide to our community is directly related to agricultural conservation projects on farms. Without that, we'd really have a hole that wouldn't serve our citizens well, as we help Loudoun and Virginia meet the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay clean up through our voluntary agricultural conservation programs. That's why I'd be honored to once again be elected to serve on the Loudoun Soil and Water Conservation District board, and I ask for your vote on Nov. 5.

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MICHELLE THOMAS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

agement and program assistance provided by the Virginia State Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Role of Loudoun Soil & Water Conservation District Director: Loudoun Soil & Water Conservation District (LSWCD) Directors work directly with authorities from federal, state, local and private sector groups to promote conservation, preservation, best practices management, and sustainability programs for all natural resources in Loudoun County. LSWCD Directors also work to reduce runoff, protect our streams and rivers and reduce pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

LSWCD Directors touch almost every part of the community working to develop and implement educational, community outreach, technical expertise and grant programs for Loudoun farmers, agribusinesses, equine organizations & horse owners, landowners, teachers, students and county residents.

What I bring to the table that other candidates might

not: If elected to the Soil & Water Board, I will bring to the table:

- Technological driven innovative solutions as an electrical engineer and 25 years of government contracting experience as an IT solutions small business owner,
- 5 years of historic proven preservation success with the Loudoun Freedom Center
- 4 years of expert conservation experience as a Loudoun County Heritage Commissioner
- Greater transparency and diverse programs, community outreach, and equitable distribution of LSWCD Federal, State and Local funding assistance.

Making LSWCD more accessible and responsive to the diverse needs of one of the fastest growing counties in the nation.

My Top 5 Priorities for Loudoun's Soil & Water Board:

1. With a towns being the primary owner of the roads, parking lots, sidewalks, and open fields in

the county, in addition to providing assistance to farmers and individual citizens, I will work closely with the Towns & Municipalities to recognize and address soil and water issues (i.e managing and maintaining Town infrastructure to improve water quality).

2. Expand Collaborative Business & Educational Partnerships, Community based Educational Programs and Loudoun County Public Schools Conservation Programs
3. Diversity Outreach with a specific focus on underrepresented communities (help save and protect all Loudoun farms, agribusiness and preserve Loudoun's historic rural lands and sacred grounds.)
4. Provide inclusive best practices management solutions for climate change effects and the impacts of Loudoun's growing data center

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 »

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JOHN P. FLANNERY II, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

– assuring the quality of our water and soil.

This is the reason I ran for this office four years ago, and why I seek re-election to continue another four years. I believe we have been making a difference for the better. I want to continue in that vein.

This job and the Board we serve imposes no regulations on any one. Participation is voluntary. We serve farmers and landowners by underwriting the cost of keeping their streams and creeks clean for the welfare of everyone. These

waters make their way to the Potomac and Chesapeake Bay and, along the way, folks in Loudoun and Fairfax Counties drink that water.

The overall objectives of Soil and Water are straightforward. First, we seek to keep “nutrients” (waste) out of our waters. We underwrite the cost of fences to keep our livestock out of our waters, and subsidize troughs in the fields, and the necessary power and water lines. Second, we are similarly concerned to avoid soil runoff and erosion. We preserve and protect our top soil because its loss takes a thousand years to replace. That’s why we encourage buffers, cover crops, and

tree plantings.

The funds come from federal, state and local governments. I’m proud to say that our Board including this Director approved \$580,000 only a few weeks ago to make these changes possible for farmers and landowners in Loudoun County.

As a Director and the Board’s treasurer, I review those projects that we may implement with our staff, review the topography in technical review committee meetings and then we discuss them before our Board and implement, revise, grant or deny projects. I also serve as the Board’s liaison to the Potomac Council that considers how our individual districts may learn from each other and coordinate change across the region.

As for the merits of my re-election, the most obvious consideration for any voter considering whether to continue my services, is that I have been doing it for more than four years and that we have had to deal with some complex decisions about those projects that we may underwrite, attended frequent subject matter training sessions and performed special assignments as they have arisen.

The Board designated my service to

the Board as Treasurer and as the Board’s liaison to the Potomac Council. I was assigned to investigate whether Loudoun Water had compromised the water flow in the historic Goose Creek that empties into the Potomac River; Loudoun Water corrected the problem.

I’ve had this interest even as a kid in the South Bronx, watching Saturday morning television show, “The Morning Farmer.” Many years later, I had a 70-acre horse farm in Lincoln, and that focused my attention on issues involving soil and water. Presently, my wife Holly and I have a small farm outside Lovettsville, and our largest contingent of livestock is our pig rescue.

While my education is in the science and law, the most rewarding thing I do is the time we spend on what for some might be tedium to sort out how we can help farmers and landowners preserve and protect their soil and water.

I hope you’ll consider giving me a chance to continue as a Director of the Soil and Water Board. My passion for the work is undiminished. Thanks for reading this and, if you think I’m worthy, vote for my re-election on Nov. 5.

MARINA R. SCHUMACHER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

oh my, we do quite a bit.

Loudoun is one of the most diverse counties I’ve experienced. We have the Dulles area which is rich in businesses, data centers, and the airport. We have our small towns, that keep the culture and history of Loudoun sacred and enjoyable. We have suburban areas like Ashburn, Brambleton, and Sterling, where families raise their kids and enjoy their connecting within their communities. We have western Loudoun, with its many farms and local agriculture, including the rise of ecotourism with our breweries, distilleries, and award-winning wineries. We are an amazing County, where one can enjoy so many different lifestyles, and yet live harmoniously together.

One item that will constantly transcend our differences, is each one of us can institute good conservation practices. The Soil and Water Conservation District has numerous programs that anyone has available to them, from the family in suburbia that wants to install a rain garden with their kids to teach them native plants and importance of water filtration, to aiding farmers in cover crops to prepare the soil for the next season.

Good conservation programs can be tailored to keep everyone engaged in conservation, in any unique lifestyle. Here are things we do not do: We do not create conservation policy or enact conservation laws. We do not fine people, or change regulations. The state level VAS-WCD [Virginia Association of Soil and

Water Conservation Districts] engages our representatives and educates them on what we do, and how necessary our programs are. We do express our opinions on budget, regulations, and policies to state representatives, to help educate the people voting on important issues. We do constantly seek the support of our representatives to continue our practices. Our budget is a mix of farm bill funding, state funding, and County funding. We respond to DCR [Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation] as a “big brother” agent, to fulfill the mission of instituting conservation practices.

The role of director is one that requires a diverse, but strong environmental background. Directors have a large job of ingesting all the incoming information, from numerous different sources, and providing directive. Regardless of it being to guide the Board of Supervisors on their votes, or to support our conservationist in unique problems that arise, including moving into the budget approvals. A Director must be well versed in the unique environmental situations in Loudoun County. This is not an elected position that should be used as a stepping stone into the political arena. This is a position of complete servitude to this great County.

Being born and raised in Florida, right on the beaches of Indian Rocks, I had quite a childhood exploring the outdoors. From this grew a love for the environment and the practical application of science. I graduated from the University of South Florida in 2002 with a Bache-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33 »

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I want to create a culture of Safety and Justice.

Justice: Being a good prosecutor requires that justice come first. Conviction at all costs makes our communities less safe. I will change that culture by adding diversity of experience to the office.

Cyber Crime: I will create a cyber-crime team that educates our community. My focus: protect the elderly, combat computer crimes, and work with the Federal Government to reclaim your lost monies.

Prosecutorial accountability: I will create a system of data collection and analysis reporting to the community on who we are charging, what charges we are pursuing, what charges are being dismissed, and what sentences are being imposed.

Proactive Crime Reduction: I will work with community stakeholders to stop crime before it happens; engaging youth in meaningful community programs, encouraging adults to be mentors, and empowering parents to identify risky behaviors. I will also focus on mental health and drug addiction services as a way to reduce crime and recidivism.

Gun Safety & Forensic Backlogs: I will work with law enforcement to prosecute the reckless discharge of firearms. I will also reduce the forensic testing backlog (DNA & drugs) now over 6 months statewide, bringing greater and more timely justice to victims.



“I am running to bring solutions to our community – we need to prevent crimes, protect our community from harm, and to prosecute wisely. I realized that the culture in the office of the Commonwealth’s Attorney, which was stale and fixated on convictions and incarceration, was not going to change until we change the leadership.”

—*Buta Biberaj*

PREVENTION • PROTECTION • PROSECUTION



ZERELL JOHNSON-WELCH, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

and is a true public servant.

I am the best candidate to meet the unique needs of my Catoctin District and the only candidate to be endorsed by the Loudoun Education Association. I am a 12-year Catoctin resident. My husband and I chose the Catoctin District for the good schools, the small-town charm and the strong sense of community. We raised three children who graduated from Loudoun County Public Schools. My oldest daughter is a recent engineering graduate from Virginia Tech; my second daughter, a graduate from The College of William and Mary, is a second-year medical student at the University of Virginia. My son, the youngest, a computer science graduate from UVA, is currently employed as a software developer. I come from a family where education and hard work were expected and community service was practiced. Serving is an opportunity to give back to my community.

I believe that investing in our children strengthens family values and builds strong communities. This starts from a belief that every identifiable learner – All Students – deserve a classroom experience where they feel SAFE, WELCOMED, and INSPIRED to dream big! I will fight to prioritize the

physical and emotional safety of every student; support budgets that address the unique and diverse needs of our learners; support the preservation and modernization of our small schools, and competitively compensate educators and support staff, while promoting a philosophy that values parental engagement.

For over a decade, I have consistently worked with various groups and organizations, within LCPS and outside, that aim to support our students in a meaningful and relatable way. I've worked with LCPS teachers, The Office of the Superintendent, Chief of Staff and LCPS Cabinet and Directors from the following departments: The Department of Instruction, Human Resources and Talent Development, Department of Pupil Services, Department of Support Services, Office of Outreach, Gifted and Talented Education, and the Loudoun Education Association as an Educator for the Day.

I served a two-year term as committee chair to the School Board's advisory committee, focusing on discipline, academic performance, and accommodation issues. I provided feedback to the individual School Board members and staff on recruitment and retention of highly qualified educators. I organized town hall meetings that effectively brought together multiple edu-

cational and community resources – to address concerns about the safety of our children. I started my educational advocacy in 2009, and currently serve on LCPS' ad hoc Committee for Equity and the Tuscarora High School's Advisory Council for School Counseling.

I am an attorney by training, and have over 25 years of experience mentoring young girls as a USAG Gymnastics Coach. I served as executive director of two non-profit organizations, serving homeless children and U.S. Veterans. My professional training in advocacy and negotiation, on the local, state, and federal level, as well as my ability to navigate through legislation, and identify and resolve complex issues, are essential for this position. I am a quick learner, and I have good analytical skills. I have assisted several boards in developing clear visions and strategic goals for their organizations. I am an excellent communicator. I have developed budgets, monitored expenditures, and will make difficult decisions that ultimately support a more fiscally sound organization with the option for future growth. I believe in transparency and accountability. As your Catoctin School Board Representative, I will be accessible and demonstrate a willingness to communicate directly to the community.

MICHELLE THOMAS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

development on Loudoun's soil & water, natural resources and the environment.

5. Small Businesses make a big impact in our county. Develop a "Farm Business Incubator" to assist all farmers, agribusinesses & landowners in using the power of the web, farming best practices and program assistance to grow, thrive and successfully achieve their business goals.

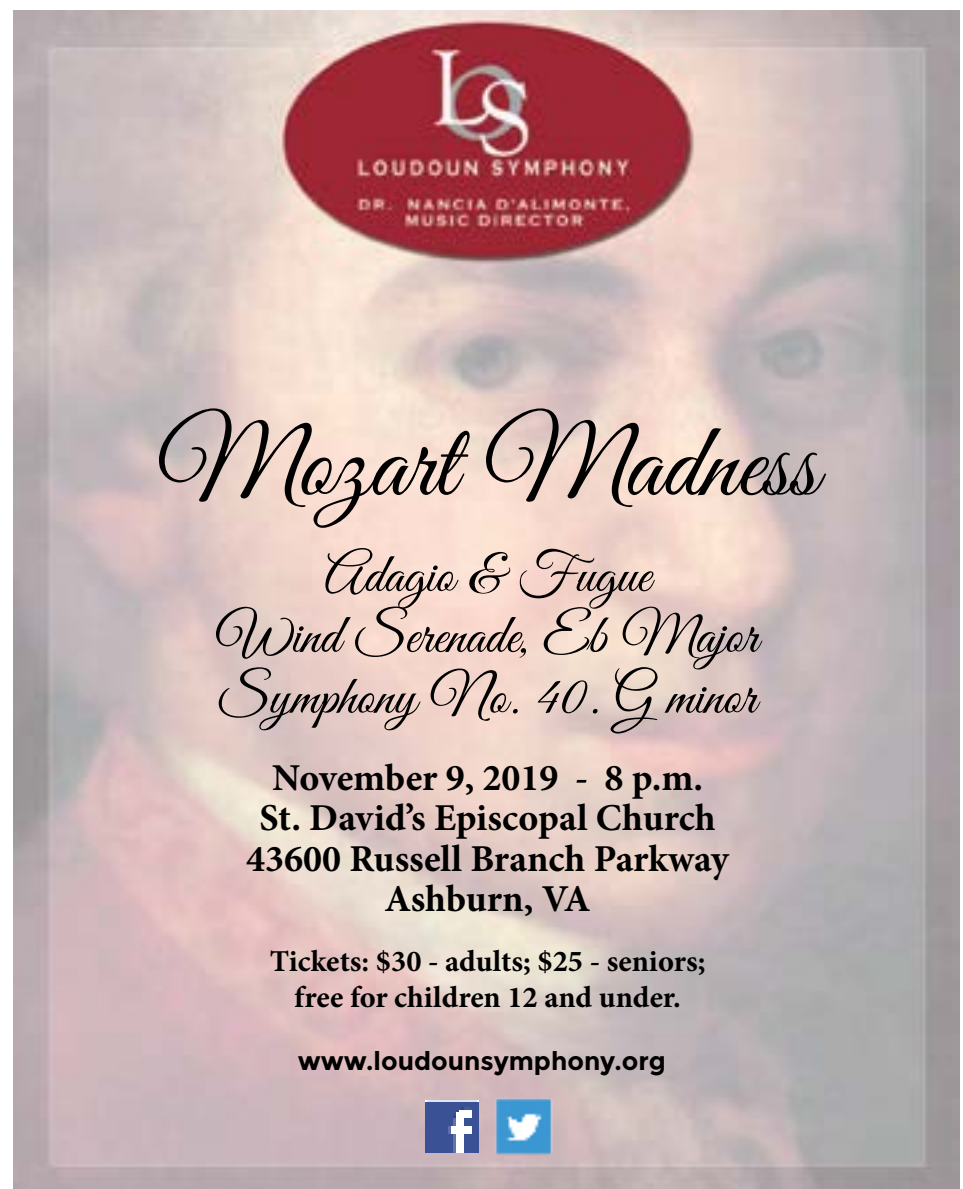
This year's race for Loudoun's Soil & Water Conservation District Director is a historic contest of epic proportions with far reaching consequences for every Loudoun citizen. The management and sustainability of Loudoun's most precious natural resources is "the ONE issue" on the ballot that voters can not live without. Equal access to natural resources is a basic human right of every citizen. If elected on Nov. 5, I will be the first African American to integrate this important board, giving every Loudoun citizen a voice at the table and providing access to rich soil & clean water to all. Be the change we need in Loudoun, vote Michelle C. Thomas for Soil & Water Conservation District Director. #SoilAndWater4All.



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KENYA A. SAVAGE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

encouraging, edifying, empowering, and equipping our students to be the best Loudoun graduates – who will excel at any college – or career endeavor they pursue. Likewise, I will ensure our teachers remain trained, appreciated, valued, and compensated fairly for being the difference makers to our future leaders.

I did not just decide to run for School Board a few months ago. I am doing the work now, I am in the trenches now, advocating for every child now, and I look forward to continuing in these efforts as the Loudoun County School Board's At-Large Representative.

During my multiple visits and conversations with families across our County, I understand and appreciate the phrase, "Keeping the Rural Rural, But Our Children Still Need Jobs!" I understand and appreciate that our curriculum and instruction must be extensible to support every student uniquely. As parents and community members, we make choices on where we want to live, work, and play; however, our schools must never limit the need to equip and prepare our children to compete at the highest levels for college or career experiences based on what part of the County students live in. Loudoun County is where the best of two worlds coexist. Half of our County is thriving as the technology corridor, and the other half continues to preserve our rich and vibrant agricultural history from local businesses and farms which contribute to the County's economic success.

As your At-Large Representative, I

will continue to ensure our District policies, opportunities, and tools that aid in student learning are available equitably across our County. The emphasis on using technology is often met with an inconstant ability to maintain internet services for our families and students in the west. That to me is a disproportionate assignment. I will endeavor to coordinate between the School Board and my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors to ensure their goals and priorities understand the impact on our schools, and work to drive more synergy amongst our two boards to support our schools.

Our District must be accountable, through policy development, instruction, and staff training, to develop students to be creators of mastery beyond the school buildings with real world examples.

Having opportunities to create learning labs in our schools (neighboring districts have already started incorporating this model) to stimulate real world project-based learning is key to connecting and relating a student's imagination beyond school building walls. This approach invites and allows children to contribute and communicate what is best for them and to become strong advocates in their learning - not as a collateral, but in how curriculum and learning is made available for him or her individually. Similarly, our School District must continue to collaborate cooperatively with local government offices to advocate for high-speed internet services, which make accessing these great LCPS resources in our most rural parts of the County achievable.

"JIMMY" SINGH, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

with over 400 clients with the majority consisting of small business owners. In my business, we have developed close relationships with farmers, repair shops, local governments and building companies.

On the Soil and Water Conservation District, landowners and farmers are the clients and I look forward to using my experience to serve them just as I've served my clients in Manassas over the

years. As development continues pushing further into Loudoun County, it has begun to threaten western Loudoun. I want to preserve the unique qualities of western Loudoun and help landowners conserve their natural resources so they have the tools to manage the land wisely. Loudoun has to be thoughtful about our conservation practices for future generations. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve and I hope on Nov. 5, I will earn your vote as the SWCD Director.

MARINA R. SCHUMACHER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

lor's in Geography and Environmental Engineering. I have created a career dedicated to supporting our intelligence sector. Always having an interest and passion for local politics, in 2015 I ran for and won the Director of Soil and Water Conservation District of Loudoun. This

afforded me the ability to stay involved in environmental work and conservation efforts, where my passion has always been. Since the position is volunteer – in spite of being an elected official – I know that the valuable time I spend is creating a worthy impact on the people of Loudoun. I hope to win your vote again, Nov. 5.

shop  LOCAL See page 29 

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JOHN P. BEATTY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

I also make administrative decisions for my department. Knowing how to stretch a dollar further, and being able to make the hard decisions on budget cuts are skills that I would bring to the board. I will make sure that the tax dollars we all pay into Loudoun County schools are prudently spent on our children's education, not wasted on extra overhead.

As a parent of an LCPS student myself, I know that parents want School Board members who will listen to their con-

cerns, communicate with them promptly, and can explain the reasoning behind their tough decisions. I plan to proactively communicate with parents about the board's work by broadcasting upcoming agenda items with corresponding links to the relevant documents, so that there can be more public involvement. It is essential that the board try to stay transparent about their policy making. This helps prevent misunderstandings and confusion about each board vote.

School Board members also need to understand their electoral districts, and

the particular challenges each school across the County faces. The problems of the Catoctin District are different than those of the eastern side of the County; and I will work to represent those on the board. Specifically, I want to keep our small schools open, and provide them with the upgrades and repairs they need. It's more economical to upgrade a historic building than to demolish it and build a bigger school further away. I would also address the transportation concerns that we face in Western Loudoun, specifically, the long bus rides

for middle school and high school students. There are also policy decisions that are not unique to Catoctin, which would be beneficial for all LCPS students. For example, I support funding the arts and humanities, because these classes help us grow closer together and develop a greater understanding of the world around us.

If these values resonate with you, please consider voting for me this November, so that I can represent you on the Loudoun County School Board.

DENISE R. CORBO, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

the current LCPS mentor program. In 2018, I was named the Loudoun County Washington Post Teacher of the Year. Delegate David Reid presented me with a House resolution highlighting my lifelong contributions to education. I will bring a much-needed voice, the voice of a teacher, to the School Board.

In 2014, I became the President and Founder of StoryBook Treasures, a national literacy nonprofit reaching more than 6,000 students across five states. Our mission is to place books into the hearts, hands, and homes of our nation's neediest children. With StoryBook Treasures, I brought over \$100,000 in grants to Sugarland Elementary, where the literacy rate skyrocketed from 63 to 94 percent.

Voting for me means voting for an experienced educator, an innovative businesswoman, and a strong advocate for all children. Schools are the center of our communities. They have a tremendous impact on how we grow. I will meet the needs of all students by beginning with needs-assessment, and building relationships among the board, administrators, educators, interest groups, and the community. Both the east and west have very unique needs. The schools in the east and south are growing rapidly and are overcrowded. The schools in the west have an aging infrastructure that im-

pacts the safety and health of children. As the At-Large School Board member, I will meet the needs of the entire County by proactively advocating for anticipated growth, building infrastructure, and protecting our small schools and charter schools as they provide family options.

My County initiatives include the following:

A Voice for All – Implement a simplified communication system allowing for everyone's voice to become part of the School Board's decision-making process. How can our board make the best decisions for our children, without allowing for employee and community input to drive them? If elected, I will create a framework where the board actively solicits the input of all stakeholders. I have already started the conversation with board member Jeff Morse about launching this platform.

Action – Through the outreach committee, I will propose the creation of a "LCPS Quick Link" button on school webpages. This will allow all staff, parents, and students a way to directly communicate with the School Board. The database will stream-line the communication that is now delivered through individual emails or public comment at board meetings. This is a new communication tool for everyone to use and access.

Technology – Technology is part of everyday life and a vital skill to bring to

the workforce. LCPS needs to ensure that teachers and students have technology that works and meets their instructional needs. We need to provide everyone with appropriate technological tools and training.

Action – With a \$30 million line item, we need to create a Technology Ad-Hoc and/or standing committee responsible for the oversight, policy, and programming related to instructional programs, tools, and overall impact on student learning.

Equity and Diversity – Hire diverse employees, require diversity training that includes the implementation of a culturally-responsive curriculum to celebrate differences, and provide opportu-

nities where all learners have equity and access to all programs.

Action – Transition the Ad-Hoc Committee on Equity to a standing committee responsible for researching current LCPS practices and policies related to equity across the division.

Budget Evaluation – Budget analysis to ensure programs have a positive impact, and are data driven. Unnecessary spending must be cut.

Action – Evaluate all instructional programs and initiatives. Breakdown of spending should be transparent from each department. There should be a needs-based assessment and research submitted to the committees and board prior to funding approval.



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JULIA L. "JULIE" SISSON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

prioritize our classrooms, not more bureaucracy.

To do that, I plan to delve into the details of our spending to determine our true needs (zero-based budgeting) and reduce waste. When we are spending money on rapidly changing items like technology, we need to weigh short-term benefits against long-term costs and our ability to maintain those items (e.g. promethium boards).

In addition, I've spent more than 15 years volunteering in leadership positions in our schools, donating my time in support of our students and staff. I've served in nearly every capacity – from kindergarten room mom to PTA President to Fine Arts advocate. In 2018, I was honored as Volunteer of the Year.

I've been inside classrooms of every grade level, seen the positives and negatives, and my efforts have had a tangible impact on students and staff, including:

Established an annual school supply drive so that all students start the year ready to learn

Worked with administration to relocate our playground to a safer location on school property

Established an annual music scholarship for graduating seniors

Instituted an annual audit of Music Booster books to increase transparency

Alongside our large public schools, I support and will advocate for our small schools and our charter schools, as they provide a more intimate learning environment and are often the "heartbeat" of their communities. In addition, I support our home school community, and was the only At-Large candidate to provide updates on the Religious Exemption issue addressed earlier this year.

Our schools in Blue Ridge are very diverse, and the east and west face different issues. Families in the west often endure long and sometimes unsafe bus rides and unreliable (sometimes nonexistent) internet service. Families in the east face overcrowding and the constant specter of boundary changes. And then there are the challenges that the weather can create.

It's a balancing act, to be sure, but I believe it is possible. There are few one-size-fits-all solutions, and we must be creative and flexible. Communication is KEY. Since I announced my candidacy, I have met with School Board Chairman Jeff Morse, School Board Representative Jill Turgeon, Supervisor Tony Buffington, and many others to discuss the unique challenges we face. I will work with my fellow School Board members, alongside LCPS administration, and where appropriate, our Supervisors and representatives in Richmond, to make sure that our children's needs are being met.

I believe School Board members should provide local opportunities for input from the people they represent, instead of requiring citizens to come to them. I will work with my fellow School Board members to find ways to hear from residents within the districts.

In addition, we need to make it easier for our citizens to obtain information. I want to establish a single tool that curates LCPS communications and pushes that information out via all platforms. This way, whether you prefer email or social media or the app, you can find everything you need in one place (vs. the current "hunt & peck" method many of us now employ).

We also need to make sure our underlying methodologies are solid. For example, earlier this year, LCPS contracted with an outside statistical consultant to audit their enrollment projection methodology. The company made 16 recommendations for improving the accuracy of those calculations. This could have a huge effect on predicting overcrowding in eastern schools, along with assisting in our planning for future construction.

We need an At-Large Representative who will listen to all citizens. I entered this race simply out of a desire to support our children, and I look forward to serving you on the Loudoun County School Board.

TOWER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

County staff, pushing for rapid approval of this project since a constituent first asked for help in expediting progress well over three years ago on Feb. 1, 2016. LaRock said, "It was a pleasure to visit the mountaintop site today [Oct. 24] to see work progressing."

The original application to make what should have been a routine equipment upgrade was made in September of 2017; final approval for the tower came from Loudoun County Aug. 14, 2018.

"My constituents have been waiting for about 5 years for this, and they're anxious for the possibility of improved service and more competitive prices in the area served by this tower. People in rural areas have a genuine need for cell coverage and access to the internet," said Higgins. "Government needs to facilitate moving this project forward, not slowing it down."

Other entities renting space on the new tower include Loudoun County and a variety of cell phone service providers.

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SEROTKIN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

to keep the schools open, but it's an ongoing fight, and I continue to fight for our small schools.

When I served on the Board of Directors of the Aldie Heritage Association, I worked collaboratively with County staff to prevent a modern firehouse from encroaching on the historic look and feel of the Town of Aldie. I also quintupled the number of active paid members and modernized our membership system.

I have also served as an Odyssey of the Mind coach, judge, and school coordinator over the past six years, because I'm passionate about great STEAM and creative problem-solving programs. My last year as a coach, my team of fourth graders won our regional tournament and qualified for the Virginia state championship, despite competing against kids a full grade older than them.

All of those share a common theme: service and getting things done. And I have many things I want to get done on the School Board.

My biggest priority is to make sure we are doing an effective job of keeping up with the tremendous growth that Loudoun County has had, to eliminate overcrowding in our schools, and to lower class sizes. The new schools that are opening are opening full, because they're the schools we needed five years ago.

Some communities in Blue Ridge have had to switch schools four times in the past five years because of the constant redistricting every time we open a new school and shuffle kids around. I intend to make sure that we're getting ahead of the growth curve, and that no children and teachers are suffering in overcrowded classrooms while waiting for schools to be built.

Educational research done over the last 30 years tells us that reducing class sizes, particularly at the elementary levels, has a variety of long-term educational benefits, such as increased student performance, lowered rates of disciplinary issues and suspensions, higher parent engagement, and lower teacher attrition. Some of our most crowded elementary school classrooms have nearly double the recommended students for the age level. That is unacceptable.

My next priority is to make sure we're paying all LCPS employees a living wage. I've met with around 20 Blue Ridge school principals since I launched my campaign, and most of them tell a similar tale – they live here in Loudoun, but too many of the teachers and staff that work for them live in Clarke County, or Winchester, or West Virginia because they can't afford to live here in Loudoun. If we want truly great schools, then we need to attract and retain truly great teachers by making LCPS the best place to work in the region.

Vote Nov. 5th

Follow election coverage and results
at www.BlueRidgeLeader.com

SAM KROIZ, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

that somebody had to do something to stop this project. And while he was busy with his farm and family, Sam realized that he needed to be that somebody. He called multiple meetings in his family's barn and helped to form a group of passionate community members that assembled expert information, worked tirelessly with County leaders and staff, debunked the project proposal, and eventually won the fight against the project.

Sam will be the first one to tell you that our fight against that data center was a group effort, but many of my neighbors and I would have never gotten involved, nor had even known about it in the first place if it had not been for Sam and his timely leadership. Since then, from the approval of the True North Data Center and the decision to relocate the rural/transition boundary, to various other

poor decisions by the Board of Supervisors, it has become clear that the public interest is being ignored; and Sam's leadership is much needed in the Catoctin District and Loudoun as a whole. Whether it's land-use policies, budgets, transportation, schools, or all the other issues that affect us as residents of this wonderful County, the solution is bringing the community together to find common-sense solutions.

All the candidates talk the talk about not playing party politics, but Sam has walked the walk and is doing it now with his independent campaign. We need Sam on the Board of Supervisors to protect our quality of life and precious natural resources from the greed of developers and the politicians - from both parties - who too often serve special interests over ours. Please join me on Nov. 5 and vote for Sam!

Julie Paul
Lovettsville



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BUTA BIBERAJ, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

being treated for actions taken, due to their drug addictions or mental health impairments.

As an attorney, I assisted victims with convincing Child Protective Services, the Sheriff's Office, and the prosecutors to file charges and prosecute cases previously ignored or declined. I represented clients and worked diligently to ensure that they were not treated disparately by the system. I assisted young adults with presenting their best cases to prevent convictions. I worked with families to get their kids programs and services, so that they had treatment that was not otherwise provided by the courts. I represented clients and got them protective orders, so that they felt safe at home. I helped kids get back in school after they were wrongfully expelled. I constantly worked on providing long-term solutions to increase the chances that my clients did not recycle through the criminal justice system.

As a community investor, I maintained my law practice in Leesburg since 1993. I worked with the Loudoun County Public Schools in multiple programs aimed at mentoring at-risk students, e.g., The Street Law Program, Colors of Justice, and the Leadership in the Law Programs.

As a community leader, I held numer-

ous positions of responsibility and trust: I was the President of the Loudoun County Bar; Bench Bar Member of the General District, Juvenile, and Circuit Courts; member of the ad hoc committee entrusted to find solutions for the over-detention of minority children in the juvenile courts; member of the Best Practices Court for Loudoun County, entrusted to find solutions on keeping our kids safe, secure, and stable as they navigated the foster care system.

Upon assuming the position of the Commonwealth's Attorney, I would immediately establish a policy and process of accountability. I would adopt the means and methods to collect, analyze, and incorporate data that would then be used to create policy for the office. The data would be used to report to the community on how we are effectively prosecuting cases; how we are investing our resources – human and financial; how we are focusing on serious violent cases; what type of cases are being most consistently prosecuted; report to the community the equity and equality of the prosecutions; and, how we respond to community needs. Currently, there is no process by which the prosecutors report to the community. I will create a community advisory board so that we are aware of the community's concerns, and that we are responsive to their needs. We will share the data with the State

Department of Justice, the Board of Supervisors, law enforcement, the schools, and social services to determine where we, as a county, can invest in services so that we prevent crime and protect the community, by creating synergy of services for victims, so that they have access before, during, and after the trial process; and, prosecute cases appropriately – incarcerating those individuals who are unsafe remaining in our community, and redirecting non-violent and low-offense cases away from incarceration, so that they can contribute to our economy. I would ensure that we are focused on safety and justice.



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NORMANDY TO VIRGINIA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

That first tour went through the Middleburg, Unison, and Airmont areas. And, each time the vets got together on Veterans Day and Memorial Day they'd start planning the next one.

It was finally decided to hold the event twice a year.

Anyone with a vet in their family can imagine the emotions that attend events like this.

"There's a photo of the group on the first tour in front of the old church in Upperville that could appear to be a photo taken in front of a church in Normandy, France in the early 1940's," said Phillips.

And, referring to this year's tour Phillips said, "The vehicles maintained a slow pace mostly on the narrow gravel roads. Some of the veterans mentioned after that tour that they never traveled across the back roads that were taken ... and they were unaware of so many of the beautiful settings that this County is

blessed with."

Seven veterans in four vehicles participated in this year's tour, which featured two WWII military vehicles, and two Korean War military vehicles. Many of the same veterans will be at the Dodona Manor Veterans Day event with their vehicles.

Said Phillips, "The group includes a lot of veterans. None of us served in the same unit, or even at the same time period."

But, clearly, the veterans participating in the effort have ties that bind, whether it is lending an ear or sharing stories about how to maintain that old, ever-dependable set of wheels.

Phillips, who now lives in Hamilton and was stationed at Fort Carson, Colorado in the 1970s concluded by saying, "The tour is a great way to get our local vets together. The comradery is wonderful."

For more information on the effort, contact Lee Phillips at leehvfd@aol.com.



The veterans used vintage military vehicles for their tour and enjoyed a lunch stop in Lovettsville.

HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

elders, whom I guess might remind you of the Amish. They parlayed for the morning and then the team left.

"A few months later, a big fence was put up around the village. You know, not right next to it, but like an outer perimeter. There's a main gate manned by men wearing 'Fish & Wildlife' uniforms but carrying side arms. Outsiders are not allowed in."

Byne chimed in, "That sounds a bit heavy-handed."

"Well, they still don't know what device generates the pulses back to Aldebaran, or what they mean. Now, there are government installations – mostly monitoring stations – all over the area, but it's still a big mystery. The villagers can come and go as they wish, but there's only one day a

year, or every two years, when all the village's adults come out together."

"Why do they do that?"

"To vote. It seems to be a duty."

Hordes of people from all over are eager to move here. Their arrival would irreparably change western Loudoun, so each of us must vote November 5th. If fictional alien villagers vote religiously, we can too. If you're unsure which Supervisor candidates deserve election or re-election, shoot me an email at CharlesHouston3@yahoo.com, and I'll give you some ideas.

Charles Houston developed office buildings in Atlanta, and has lived in Paeonian Springs for 20 years. Mr. Houston takes occasional flights of fancy and hopes they intrigue or amuse you.

TONY BUFFINGTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

implemented in the next Board.

Tony has been and continues to be a true champion for us in Middleburg. This was evident during the Envision Loudoun process, where Middleburg and many of the other towns we left out of the process. When this was brought to him by the Mayors, Tony took action

and, working with other Supervisors and the County staff, ensured our concerns and changes we taken and put into the plan. We are deeply indebted to Tony for his support and I want to thank him for his commitment to our community.

*Bridge Littleton
Mayor, Middleburg*

RAM VENKATACHALAM, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Sheriff's Office. We should be protecting all our schools – not just some of them – in case of an emergency, as well as to promote positive relationships between our children and trusted adults. My opponent does not support the basis of Loudoun's nationally recognized SRO program, nor proposals for strengthening it.

We can do more to keep our children safe on buses too, including cameras to apprehend drivers who don't stop when children are getting on and off. This happens far too often and without consequences.

Safety also includes the emotional health of our children while at school, and I will support the strengthening of programs that build self-esteem and resiliency through peer-to-peer and peer-to-adult networks.

Another top priority is to offer our children a world-class, well-rounded education, with the recognition that one size does not fit all. Some students flourish in large, diverse schools, and others in small, rural schools. Still others thrive at charter schools or in a home school environment. LCPS must respect all these choices, and I certainly will.

I will be a champion for the preservation of our small, rural schools in western Loudoun, as well as for better planning to minimize overcrowding and boundary changes in the east.

I will also put a high priority on attracting and retaining the best teachers and staff available. Loudoun should not be playing catch up with the rest of the region, when it comes to teacher pay and benefits at every level of their career. We should be the magnet where outstanding teachers want to work and stay.

I am also concerned about fiscal re-

sponsibility.

In 2012, the Loudoun County Government Reform Commission was directed by the Board of Supervisors – with support from the School Board – to make the consolidation of certain LCPS and general government services and programs a priority. They tried, but thanks to LCPS administration, this effort was stonewalled.

LCPS continues to grow its central administrative overhead at a far greater rate than student enrollment and teacher pay. That's a misdirected priority that must be changed.

It is time to look again at how LCPS can operate more efficiently, to deliver high quality services in a way that directs more school-related monies to students and classrooms -- not overhead. Loudoun County School Board needs to be operating efficiently from its meetings to committee meetings; these need to be looked at as well.

There should be a qualitative review, too. For example, a case can be made that County government and the school system ought to examine the process, coordination, and oversight – or lack thereof – for selecting books and collateral materials for children and youth in both our public and school libraries.

This is an open seat; and the current representative from Blue Ridge District, Jill Turgeon, has endorsed me, as have Sheriff Mike Chapman and Treasurer Roger Zurn, among others.

While I value these endorsements, this election is not about partisan politics, but about who is best prepared to represent the interests of the County's students, parents, teachers, and taxpayers.

I am that candidate in the Blue Ridge District, and I humbly ask for your vote on Nov. 5.

while ignoring the consequences of investing in companies that profit from death and destruction. As we approach Election Day, Mavis Taintor is asking us to trust her to champion good health, fight the opioid crisis, and save the environment. I hope others will agree, Mavis Taintor's informed decisions to profit from companies who specialize in harmful products, fuel the opioid crisis, and pollute the planet makes her unfit to lead.

*Greg Walker
Bluemont*

TOWN OF HILLSBORO, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

For the last 15 years and over 50 public hearings, information sessions and presentations our mayor has been presenting the road project, advocating to bring traffic calming and pedestrian safety, congestion mitigation, safe drinking water, storm water management and a municipal sewer system to our historic Town. Traffic calming, so our children could cross the street – our Main Street – without risking their lives as motorists speed in our Town; potable water to our citizens and businesses, so we can drink our water without having to boil it first; integrating a storm water management plan, so Rt. 9 does not have water on the road coming down the mountain side and eroding the road and our property foundations; and he has led the effort to install the first phase of wastewater, so our residents and businesses could see a future without pump and haul.

The Town of Hillsboro could have undertaken these four separate projects ripping up Rt. 9 within our Town boundary four separate times. But we are good neighbors, and that doesn't sit well with us. By integrating all of these infrastructure projects into one 12 to 14 month project, with a limited full road closure of not more than a total of 60 days, we can bring the project

on line safely with the highest quality of end product while we save all of us as taxpayers millions of dollars and we reduce the burden of road construction on the Rt. 9 corridor that could – if we did all of these separately – take 5 to 8 years!

We recognize that any road construction project has challenges, and we in Town will feel the direct construction burden every day for about a year. We appreciate that our regional businesses will also have to work with us to encourage the message that the Rt. 9 businesses in Town and outside of Town are "Open for Business," knowing we might, for a short time, have to use a local or regional detour. We will be done in a year – just in time for other transportation projects in the region to come on line – relying on our project to be completed first. We are excited that the Historic Town of Hillsboro will be preserved and revitalized, and we know this will be an asset to Loudoun and will complement the wonderful agritourism businesses in our region.

Thank you, Mayor Vance, for your tireless work!

*Vice Mayor Amy Marasco
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TAINTED MONEY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

alleged role in helping to fuel the epidemic..." admitted its role and paid \$85 million to compensate for the damage. Another problematic drug company is Allergan. According to the Wall Street Journal headline, "Allergan to Pay \$5 Million to Settle Ohio Opioid Suit." This year, Mavis Taintor declared owning \$116,000 worth of stock in Allergan and Teva Pharmaceuticals.

Taintor's stock choices make it abundantly clear her goal is to generate the highest possible investment returns,

BOS CHAIR DEBATE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

family," he said.

He also told the story of how he and his family started out living in an affordable dwelling unit in Sterling Park, and how that helped his family "pay off student loans, move up in the world, and start a business." With respect to policy, Whitbeck focused on fighting against increasing tolls and traffic, for cutting taxes, expanding mental health services, and, perhaps most importantly, looking to develop a housing plan for Loudoun that will provide housing from "entry level to retirement."

Randall started by thanking COLT and emphasizing how helpful they were in developing the newly passed Comprehensive Plan.

She also emphasized her role as a mental health professional, and highlighted her history of community service. "I have spent my entire life helping others," she said.

As the incumbent, Randall also took advantage of the specific accomplishments of her administration and the County's strong economic numbers – including four-day kindergarten for all, increased salaries for teachers, firefighters, and first responders, 17,000 new jobs, "one-half billion dollars" in infrastructure investments, more money for "unmet housing needs," and the creation of a drug court

DR. MIKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

he wishes would just back off. If you continue to have concerns, after talking with him, I recommend that you schedule a consultation with a psychologist that works with adolescents.

Lastly, you might also want to discuss your son's social media activity, and let him know that public postings don't always go away on the Internet. Future employers, and others, could gain access to your son's social media information even years from now, and postings involving marijuana and alcohol could negatively impact his reputation.

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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and mental health court.

As the independent outsider, Ohneiser went right after both opponents, saying that he has "the time and lack of conflicts to be Chair ..." As a retired attorney, he said he is ready to take his years of business, volunteer, and community experience – including his time on the Loudoun County School Board – and apply it as BOS Chair. "I believe in action, not words ... [the] land-mogul donors rule the day and night."

Comp Plan controversy

Each candidate was asked to say what they saw as the "best and worst" of the new Comp Plan.

Ohneiser tackled this question first and pulled no punches, saying that as BOS Chair he would "Set the agenda to put the Comprehensive Plan back up for review in January." He noted the plan adds 11,500 more housing units to the County, and will drive up the tax rate, and is a "Developer give-away ... insulting to a community with educated people ... We should be reducing the number of approvals, removing them as threats to the rural west."

Randall vigorously defended her actions on the Comp Plan, pointing to the fact that the County's population had grown from 167,000 to 420,000, since the plan had last been reviewed. Because of that, "You had uncontrolled growth and encroachment in the places you should not have encroachment ... overcrowded schools and no County-wide transportation plan."

With respect to the best parts of the plan, she identified the Urban Policy Area and the ability to pack more housing in there. "By putting them there, we won't be putting them ... in the Rural Policy Area ... So proud of the Comprehensive Plan ... which was an 8-1 vote ..."

Whitbeck took the issue of the good and bad of the Comp Plan right back to Randall, saying "Ladies and gentlemen, the issue of development in this campaign has become about trust. I've lived in Loudoun County 20 years. In that time ... We have been promised by the Chair of the Board to 'hold the line on the Rural Policy Area' ... For the first time in 20 years ... that promise was broken." Whitbeck also said, "I would have gone a lot further on a Transfer of Development Rights Program."

How would you amend the Comp Plan?

Candidates were asked whether they would offer any amendments to the Comp Plan in their first 90 days in office.

Randall said, "Zoning does not belong in a land use document." Then, addressing Whitbeck's comments that the rural west was not being protected, Randall noted that "He is incorrect ... there was never any protective language [for the rural west] ... I actually made a motion and

put protective language for the first time into the Comp Plan."

Whitbeck shot back at Randall, saying that her language had "No legal effect ... When we go to the polls and we choose our leaders, we are asked to put our trust in them. And, one of the things we are going to be asked to do in the next Board is deal with the Transition Policy Area."

Whitbeck went on to say that "Putting in a classification that was a ... hybrid between the Suburban Policy Area and the Rural Policy Area ... which candidate on this stage can your trust to keep their word, when it's already been broken?"

Ohneiser was equally blunt. "The Comprehensive Plan should not have been a method of increasing the number of homes, housing units, for the developers. It should be a chance to look at what are the problems of the County, and how do we go into solutions for those problems? You don't do things that raise your taxes when you're 33 percent higher than the rest of the state ... I would amend it in the sense of taking away previously approved housing units."

How do you see the TPA

Later in the debate, each candidate was asked about how they saw the Transition Policy Area.

Ohneiser described it as a buffer between "an extremely developed area and an area that doesn't want to be developed."

"The bottom line is ... When you have 45,000 pent up construction projects ... they can't build the west anyway, they are busy building in the east ... so, the transition area is basically an outlet."

He continued by saying that building interests "fully intend to develop all the way to West Virginia ... no matter what B.S. you're being told ... They are coming for the west."

Randall described the TPA as a "spatial zone", and reinforced her votes against the True North Data Center.

Whitbeck, consistent in his attacks on Randall for her vote to move a one-square mile of RPA into the TPA, repeated his "promises broken" argument, and also repeated his argument in favor of a Transfer of Development Rights program as a way to protect the RPA.

How many data centers

The question of how many data centers Loudoun County might absorb was a hot topic.

Randall emphasized the enormous amount of revenue the industry provides to County coffers – some \$300 million annually. She also, however, supported "diversification" of the tax base.

Whitbeck said, "data centers are here to stay," and voiced his agreement with Randall, pivoting, at the same time, to his Western Loudoun Telecommunications Initiative, and how the industry

might help bring broadband to western Loudoun County.

Ohneiser called these "bait and switch concepts ... justification to have data centers going down Rt. 7." We can't let high-tech companies "walk all over us."

The Leesburg JLMA decision

Randall's work with the Town of Leesburg came up when she was asked about her vote to first "abstain" on the BOS vote to make Loudoun Water to be the preferred provider in any new development that might go into the Leesburg Joint Land Management Area.

Here, Randall explained her vote as a procedural issue, abstaining, she said, to try to hold her Republican colleagues on the Board off, while she tried to contact Leesburg Mayor Kelly Burk.

Randall directly challenged Mayor Burk, a moderator for the debate here, indicating that Leesburg did not have "the staff" to handle the issue.

In the end, said Randall, "My Republican colleagues voted how they voted."

Whitbeck said that while he did not disagree with vote, he saw this as a failure of leadership from Randall.

Ohneiser said he saw this in a more fundamental light. "It's a follow-the-money issue," He said. "Loudoun Water is a tool of the developers, and to give them first right of refusal is an insult to the Town."

Big decisions for voters Nov. 5

With respect to style, Randall also said in the debates, "I collaborate ... I'm not a dictator." And, referring to her Leesburg JLMA vote, "I'm there to represent the people, and I did that with that vote."

Ohneiser, who has been criticized for his freestyle campaign said, "I'm not trying to get an A-plus in campaigning. I am a retired attorney that has no conflicts. I'm completely capable." Ohneiser has also said, "I don't want to ask a developer for money. My two opponents have a million dollars between them ... where did that come from? Pay to play? – not me."

Whitbeck has staked his claim on the relationship between citizens and their government.

Regarding the Purchase of Development Rights, Whitbeck said, "Government takes taxpayers dollars from all over Loudoun County and buys land ... [I would have a hard time explaining to residents of] Sterling Park or Ashburn or Algonkian, or some of the areas that have been left behind ... that your tax dollars are going to be used for open space ..." and not, he noted, for safe schools, for roads, and for making sure "your sheriff's office is going to be fully funded."

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MOORE-SOBEL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

After the conclusion of the ceremony, people could choose where to sit at the reception. (No assigned table arrangements.) Board games sat on each table, with delicious catered barbecue – the best food I’ve ever tasted at a wedding. There was dancing and laughter. It was by far the best wedding I’ve ever attended.

I wonder if the love between the bride

and groom was displayed more prominently exactly because of the traditions they chose not to incorporate. I wonder if without the presence of a DJ, formal attire, and a fancy venue, that those in attendance had the opportunity to see and experience the couple more clearly. It was as if there was less noise that the bride and groom had to break through to be seen by their guests.

I’m not saying that we should do away

with weddings; nor is my intent to criticize the choices people make when planning their special day. I just wonder if there is a way to preserve the uniqueness of each couple, rather than applying a standard template for nearly everyone to follow. Is there a happy medium between preserving past traditions, while finding new and creative ways to celebrate a union between two people? Perhaps the key is

to find what works best for you, while acknowledging that what might work for one couple may not work for another. After all, it’s hard enough to find someone to love; shouldn’t all be able to celebrate how they want, regardless of what others think?

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

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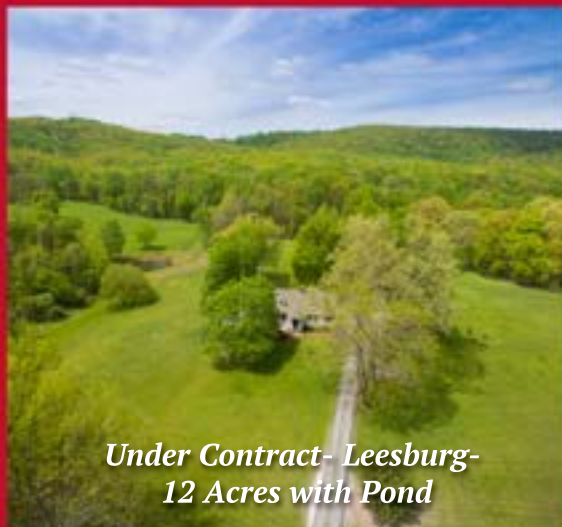
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