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DECEMBER 2019

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Today

Cluster zoning; preservationists' blessing or developers' dream

BY ANDREA GAINES

As Loudoun County moves from its approval of a new Comprehensive Plan to the zoning ordinances that will pull it all together, the issue of what kinds of "cluster housing" should be allowed in western Loudoun is taking center stage.

DEVELOPMENT

Cluster zoning is designed to preserve the character of a place as it develops.

It allows a developer to put more homes on a particular piece of property if the developer can come up with a plan that saves open space, keeps land in agricultural or farm use, protects sensitive environmental areas, and/or saves historic resources such as old barns, homesteads, and archeological sites.

To get more homes on the property a developer will, for example, "cluster" those homes in the center of the proper-

ty, leaving open space around them. Or, the developer will keep some areas of the soon-to-be-developed farm in agricultural use.

Loudoun's cluster zoning rules are loose

Cluster zoning, at its most basic level, gives developers increased housing densities in exchange for something of value to the community.

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Can you help us interview with Santa?

Calling all kids 12 and under

Hello my friends, we are Chestnut Flutterley and Zip Winterton, white tail deer from Loudoun County. It's been our lifelong dream to help Santa pull his sleigh on Christmas Eve. Now we know that Santa - traditionally - has only reindeer pulling his sleigh; but we really think that we - as authentically wild Virginia whitetails - would be a great addition to his crew. Can you help us make this dream a reality?

We need your help in writing a letter to get Santa's attention. Please send



From left to right: Chestnut and Zip.

Photo: Brock Miele

a letter postmarked no later than Dec. 14, or email no later than 5 p.m., Dec. 14 - explaining why we would be a good choice for the sleigh team. You can email editor@BlueRidgeLeader.com, or mail your submissions to Blue Ridge Leader, P.O. Box 325, Purcellville, VA 20134. No submissions will be considered after the above date and time.

The first place receives \$100 cash, second receives \$50, and third receives \$25. Thank you.

Please make sure to put your name, phone number, email and address in your submission. This is limited to writers aged 12 and under. Winners will be contacted on Dec. 19.



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"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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Blue Ridge Middle School holds 'Congressional Hearing'

If you're going to have a simulated Congressional Hearing, who better to conduct it than a current member of Congress?

That was the case Nov. 12 when Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-10th) visited Blue Ridge Middle School to question students as part of the We The People Simulated Congressional Hearings. The "hearings" were held over two days. Wexton's fellow judges were Loudoun County Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Eric Williams and Director of Teaching and Learning Neil Slevin. Aya Benkirane, an eighth grader, said, "This aspect made the experience so significant, because I had never done something like this before, and as much as it was nerve-racking in the beginning, I felt proud of myself when I was explaining my opinions and ideas to the judges."

Eighth-graders spent four weeks before the "hearing" learning about citizenship. Students studied case law, and researched issues (freedom of religion, freedom of speech, due process, citizenship, voting, and the responsibilities of citizens) in groups. Principal Brion Bell presented lessons in each eighth-grade civics class on students' rights in school and discussed several Supreme Court cases that influence LCPS policies.

Students argued pro and con positions on issues related to the rights of citizens and citizens' responsibilities, and



responded to follow-up questions from the judges. Student answered questions like; Do you believe there are times when freedom of expression should be limited? Should people be tested on their ability to read and write before being allowed to vote? Should people under the age of 18 have the same due process rights as adults.

Wexton, a former prosecutor, and Williams, a former history teacher, plumbed the depths of the students' knowledge, with the students providing Supreme Court decisions in defense of their arguments.

"This type of learning was different because instead of just applying our test-taking abilities, it tested our abil-

ities to think and actually apply what we've learned in class," said eighth grader Lauryn Briddell.

Several panels of judges took part in the hearings over two days including Hamilton Mayor David Simpson; LCPS Social Sciences Supervisor Patricia Coggins; Blue Ridge Dean Megan Baird; Blue Ridge Assistant Principal Matt Bolen; Virginia Civics Co-Executive Director Jen Howell; Virginia Middle School Association Teacher of the Year Erin Merrill; LCPS Professional Learning Supervisor Bill Brazier; Blue Ridge Subject Area Lead Teacher for Social Sciences Danylle Kavanagh; Principal Brion Bell; and civics teacher Thomas Martz.

Make-A-Wish Mid-Atlantic granted Will's wish

Battling cancer was a challenge for Will, but he was ready to take control and battle something else: climbing Mont Blanc, one of the tallest mountains in the world. Will knew he wanted to do something adventurous and exciting when he found out Make-A-Wish® Mid-Atlantic would be granting his wish. He loves to hike with his father and go camping with the family. He wished to go to Europe and hike Mont Blanc.

Will and his family traveled from their home in Leesburg to Switzerland and drove to their accommodations in Chamonix, on the French side of the Alps. Will didn't want a city experience, so this was the perfect place to start his wish trip. He visited the mountaineering museum at Aiguille du Midi and hiked back, making a stop in an ice cave and explored a glacier from the inside. Will

also went on a two-day hut-to-hut adventure hike, where he and his family hiked the Mont Blanc range and traveled with only the necessities. It was a true challenge, but Will was rewarded with amazing views and experiences.

Will and his family agreed the trip to hike Mont Blanc was "above and beyond their expectations." He even sent back a postcard from Mont Blanc to his friends at Make-A-Wish Mid-Atlantic to express how excited he was to have this dream become a reality, saying "I will cherish this trip for the rest of my life."

Local wishes require local donors and local support. For every wish like Will's that is granted, at least one other eligible child is still waiting. You can help make wishes come true for local children battling critical illnesses. Donate online at midatlantic.wish.org.



Why not fire up the grill this December?

Outdoor cooking puts a flavorful twist on holiday meals



Many people are firing up their grills and other outdoor cooking equipment in chilly weather to prepare holiday menus.

The National Turkey Federation recently reported one in eight grill owners cooked out during Thanksgiving, according to a survey conducted by the Hearth, Patio & Barbeque Association. Why not the December holidays as well, we ask.

The HPBA survey revealed cooks' main reason for grilling out is to boost flavor, followed by tradition and convenience. Popular holiday meats include turkey and ham, and using a smoker was survey respondents' preferred method. Other practices include using deep fryers, charcoal grills, gas grills and wood pellets. Some seasoned grillers believe freeing up the oven for pies and side dishes is an added benefit.

In addition to meats, many vegetables grown in Virginia are suitable for grilling. Winter squash, mushrooms, sweet potatoes, carrots and broccoli are all available during colder months.

Reprinted with permission from the Virginia Farm Bureau.

Just Like Nothing (else) on Earth:

Old Sterling

BY TIM JON

What's new? Well, just about everything – relatively speaking – the further east I venture in this strangely fascinating, wonderful County of ours. I'd read –



JON

over the past several years – of some veritable historic treasures still standing in the deep heart of Sterling; my interest peaked on learning of a handful of structures dating back to the late 1800's – including an old schoolhouse and a few other 'ruins' of outdated commercial industry.

On my drive to this little nexus from bygone times I passed all the usual modern amenities expected in 21st Century Northern Virginia: impressively massive highway loop-de-loops, pricey sports car dealerships, sparkling information technology centers, and of course, the shockingly raw birth pains of incoming housing development. I saw little or no evidence of what I'd call historic until I'd made it a couple hundred yards east of Rt. 28 – along West Church Road. The stark contrast was almost alarming: buildings – small in comparison to our current standards – actually constructed from wood (now, have you ever heard such a thing?) sprinkled along the north side of the road.

The turn onto Ruritan Circle revealed the aforementioned 1879 schoolhouse – ensconced amidst a constructor's lot – so out of place, yet defiantly standing its ground against all this would-be progress. I passed an interesting ethnic



restaurant a little further down Ruritan Circle – the proprietors making good use of another survivor of the past – a well-preserved two-story structure – balanced by a couple of private residences across the street – seemingly historic peers. Things got really interesting as I neared the W&OD trail – reminding me that the former railroad served as a one-time catalyst for empire-building – with a handful of what I considered prime candidates for pieces

from relatively distant history. Junkyards, storage, primitive industrial services and out-of-the-way offices etched themselves on my memory.

I could almost envision an old railroad town clustered about me. Intriguing (to me) how the locomotive brought about much of this 19th-Century development – certainly causing great change in its own time – much like, but on a far



smaller scale than the overwhelming sweep of growth brought about with the installation of Dulles Airport a hundred years or so later, just down the road.

And some of the steps in those sweeping changes grew so large they bounded right over poor little Guilford Station – the one-time rail stop for what was already a ghost train. Rt. 28 whizzes right by without ruffling any tail feathers of these relics from the 1800's – though its construction doubtlessly altered the landscape for all time – at least as far as our generations are concerned.

So – has fortune been kind in allowing this partially-neglected corner of history to remain? Or, would things be just as well had it all been erased in the great development rush of the past several decades? And: should we – as a County – invest time, effort, money and expertise to place these items in a capsule for future appreciation – and our own sense of satisfaction in 'doing the right thing?' Can we 'possess' history?

I'm reminded of one of my favorite themes in the writing of Ernest Hemingway: discovering the rewards in fighting for a cause – whether

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What's your name?

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

"I have a very important question for you," a colleague said to me one day at work. "Do you go by Samuel? Sam? Mr. Moore-Sobel?"



MOORE-SOBEL

I was touched by the question. I had assumed it would be a query about work, not about what name I preferred. I responded by saying that I prefer Samuel.

It had been a long, hard week at work, and I felt discouraged. Yet, just

when I needed it most, this colleague reached out, and asked me the most human of questions. What is your name? What do you want others to call you? Who are you?

This interaction was all the more powerful in light of a recent article I read about the life and work of Fred Rogers, better known as "Mister Rogers." Rogers has received much attention lately, since the release of the documentary "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" and the new film, "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood." Watching

the documentary was a moving experience. Undoubtedly, the man lived what he preached, treating everyone with gentleness and respect. And, of course, love, which guided his life and career.

We often measure the success of a person by the amount of influence the person has on the world, even after he's left it. In his article, "My Friend Mr. Rogers," Tom Junod suggests that Rogers remains "... triumphant as a symbol of human possibility, although just about everything he stood for has been lost."

In a sense, the author's words ring true. What motivated Fred Rogers to create his "neighborhood" in the first place was his conviction that the television programming of the day (which happened to be in the 1950s) was unsuitable for children. (I can only imagine what he would think of children's television shows today.) Rogers must have known he was fighting a losing war from the very beginning – that no matter how hard he tried to make television a positive, wholesome place,

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— Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider Psy.D.

Dear Dr. Mike,

My 8-year-old son was recently diagnosed with ADHD. After an extensive questionnaire and the urging of his teacher, the doctor has recommended we medicate him. However, I am struggling with what to do. I am told by other parents the medication is effective — but I can't help thinking this is a fad diagnosis, as our society tends to medicate everything. How do I know if he truly has ADHD or he is just a "spirited" boy?

— Concerned Parent



DR. MIKE

Dear Concerned Parent,

These are excellent questions that are often asked of pediatricians, family physicians, child psychiatrists and child psychologists by parents. Professionals typically rely on the DSM-5 or the ICD-10 for diagnosing, and children with ADHD generally experience difficulty in three areas: lack of focus/inattention, impulsivity, and hyperactivity. For a child to meet criteria for ADHD, per the DSM-5 or ICD-10, significant attentional problems must be identifiable across the important areas of the child's life — e.g., his or her school life and home life. Typically, ADHD is diagnosed in children by age 8 years, and the average age for ADHD diagnosis is 7 years.

For your son's doctor to recommend medication, he/she must have determined that your son met enough of the symptoms within the guidelines for ADHD and that those symptoms were significant. Based on what you've written though, it appears that your son's doctor diagnosed ADHD and prescribed medication to treat it relying primarily on a parent or teacher questionnaire and teacher feedback. It does not appear that any standardized or objective testing was conducted to identify your son's problems or to rule out other potential issues or conditions. Pediatrician and family physicians are well trained to accurately diagnosis ADHD; however, ADHD testing is the gold standard when it comes to accurate diagnosis since children with ADHD have higher rates of mood, behavior and learning problems. So, knowing what is causing what and to what degree with testing may be essential to helping your son, especially since you seem reluctant to accept the ADHD diagnosis or the medication recommendation he received from his doctor.

In my opinion, you have a few of options at this point. First, you could start your son on the prescribed medication and see if things improve. Second, if you are too unsure of the diagnosis and the prescribed medications for your son, you could instead have him evaluated by a child psychologist. That evaluation would, again, accurately identify the areas in which your son is struggling, to what degree he is struggling and whether or not he meets criteria for ADHD. Again, ADHD is not always a simple diagnosis, and there are several other conditions that can mimic ADHD or co-exist with ADHD— Autism, Tourette's Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Anxiety, Depression, low blood sugar, Sensory Processing Disorder, Sleep Disorders, Learning Disorders, Auditory Processing and Hearing Disorders, etc. In addition to accurately identifying your son's problems, the testing would also serve as a roadmap of sorts with specific recommendations based off of your son's results.

A third option would be for you to begin a course of cognitive-behavior therapy and parent training/guidance with a child psychologist to address your son's attentional struggles. Therapy and parenting work would teach your son (and you as a parent) coping skills and strategies, and, if successful, you may be able to bypass medication altogether.

To your point that ADHD is "a fad diagnosis" and that we over-medicate as a society, yes, it's true that the United States consumes approximately five times more Ritalin than any place else in the world; however, better diagnosis and more accessibility to services are believed to be the reasons for this. Moreover, 20 percent of children diagnosed with ADHD are not receiving medicine or therapy for the condition. Whether you agree with medications for your son or not, there is a large body of research to support the efficacy of certain medications for the treatment of ADD and ADHD. So, if your son does meet criteria for ADHD and his functioning truly warrants a medication regimen, he would most likely benefit.

Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D. is a clinical psychologist in private practice and 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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Ideas, Attila the Hun and Dreadnoughts

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

Ideas

Ideas can be as profound as the inventions of the wheel, democracy, religions. They can be good, like those, or bad, such as when Attila the Hun woke one morning and thought, "I think I'll go conquer the world."

Ideas are predicates for action; ideas without action are mere onanism – self-gratification. Action without resources is equally useless. The Comprehensive Plan battle was bad, but the upcoming war over a new zoning ordinance will be much worse. Conservationists need to engage in that war now. Our goal is to preserve western Loudoun's graces and we can look to Attila for guidance.

OPINION

Attila the Hun

Attila was of Hunnish nobility but while that gave him status and a bully pulpit, it was his intelligence and intensity that let him gather tens and tens of thousands of men to fight for world conquest. These were mounted archers from the grassy steppes and were fearless, deadly and eager.

His Strategy

Attila thus had an idea and resources, and he formed his strategy. First, sack the Eastern Roman Empire and its capital, Constantinople. Then turn on Rome itself and after Attila had thus conquered Europe, he'd head for China. For that strategy to prevail he also needed superior martial tactics.

His Tactics

His were simple. His hordes of mounted archers would – and did – overwhelm weaker Roman forces. (This was around 450 A.D. with the Roman Empire nearing its dissolute end.) When he came upon a fortified city, he surprised the Romans with sophisticated siege machines like onagers, huge battering rams and movable siege towers as tall

as fortress walls. Attila had one more tactic, beloved by his barbarians: Terror. Whether sacking a town or ravaging countryside, every person would be slain, often after torture of such savagery that I won't describe it. Imagine Vlad the Impaler or Hannibal Lecter, times a hundred. Terror's psychological impact was unimaginable.

He was Flexible

Attila failed to capture Constantinople, which was valiantly defended by a few Roman legionnaires and ordinary citizens led by the Roman general Flavius Aetius. Too weak to turn towards Rome, the Huns headed for Gaul (France) and ravaged it from Paris to the Rhine.

Why is this Important?

Conservationists need big ideas to save our countryside, not little pecks around the edges of bad plans. Developers would sack rural Loudoun just as effectively as the Huns sacked France. We need to assemble resources – volunteers, donors, leaders, perhaps lawyers. We need powerful strategies and tactics. Currently the two most promi-

nent conservation groups are an ossified Piedmont Environmental Council and the Preservation and Conservation Coalition which gets deep into details but dislikes confrontation. A much smaller group, Save Rural Loudoun, thinks big and can be aggressive. Though it needs more resources, it's gained a strong claim as the ideological leader of our struggle.

Information gathering and dissemination are important, as is skillful negotiation. They're just not as important as aggressive political action ... or novel and compelling ideas.

A Big Idea

Western Loudoun is divided into two zoning districts, AR-1 in the north and AR-2 around Middleburg. Permitted zoning density is more protective in the AR-2 district, meaning fewer houses and clusters can be built there. AR-1, on the other hand, gets less protective zoning, more houses and more cluster development. Unsurprisingly, most of the 67 square miles of farmland that Loudoun lost in recent years have been in the AR-1 district, which also got much more new housing than did the southern part

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Editor's Note: A well know scientist once said, "Science is what we do to keep from lying to ourselves." We will present an opposing view on the subject of climate change in our January issue.

We Need More CO₂ in the Atmosphere

BY JOE LAFIANDRA

We are currently in the midst of the one of the greatest hoaxes in human history. The hoax is; increasing atmospheric CO₂ (carbon dioxide) is the main cause of global warming and we must reduce it or we are all doomed. The real story is we need more CO₂ in the atmosphere, not less.

What I am presenting to you are scientific facts based on the history of Earth as revealed in ancient rock and ice core records and historical temperatures gathered from these records. The future of Earth's climate can be more accurately predicted from these records than from computer models that don't work.

To understand why CO₂ is important we must first understand the role it plays in sustaining life on earth. Every living thing on the planet contains and depends on the element carbon. That includes every animal, plant, sea creature and microorganism, we are all carbon based life forms. This carbon ultimately comes from CO₂ in the air or water in the case of sea life. If we were able to eliminate CO₂ completely, life on earth would

cease to exist. In fact, the Eco system of the planet requires at least 150 parts per million (ppm) of CO₂ in the atmosphere to grow food. The current amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere is approximately 400 ppm. In the past, CO₂ levels have reached a low of 180 ppm, very close to the extinction of all life.

So how can you visualize the amount of CO₂ in the air? Assume that the atmosphere is a barrel filled with 10,000 jelly beans (representing the number of molecules in a unit volume of air) of these, 4 jelly beans is the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere, that's 0.04 percent. For reference, the atmosphere contains about 78 percent nitrogen, 21 percent oxygen and 1 percent other gases including argon, water vapor and CO₂. This small amount of CO₂ and water in the air and soil (with some nitrogen and minerals) is used by plants on land and in the oceans to make plant structures and food for all living creatures. Sunlight provides the energy for this process.

Most people don't realize that a 50 ft. high tree with a diameter of 2 ft. has grown to that size because plants have figured out how to take gases out of the

air, water from the soil, build cells that support the tree, make food and produce oxygen as a byproduct. That tree and all plants have literally been built out of thin air! It is also well known that plants grow best with 1000 ppm to 1500 ppm CO₂ levels or approximately 2-3 times the current level in the atmosphere, in fact, CO₂ is pumped into greenhouses to improve plant growth. Recent NASA satellite observations have also revealed that the increased CO₂ from fossil fuels has contributed to the greening of the planet.

So what about CO₂ and global warming? Does CO₂ contribute to global warming? It should since it's a greenhouse gas. The problem is that scientists have not come up with a model that accurately predicts the climate based on the hypothesis that increasing CO₂ is the major cause of global warming. Water vapor, natural gas and other factors such as the variations in the Sun's output, sunspot activity, Earth's position in its orbit and the variation in the tilt of Earth are much more important. In fact, the historical record shows *no* cor-

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— View From the Ridge —

Holding the media accountable on Purcellville reporting

It seems that some of Loudoun's local media have it in for Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser and select members of the Purcellville Town Council. Sometimes it shows itself as a simmering resentment, and sometimes it reaches a boil.

For years, news articles have been full of insinuations about Fraser and Council members Nedim Ogelman and Ryan Cool. One newspaper's recent editorial even resurrected two of the media's favorite what's-wrong-with-Purcellville targets – Karen Jimmerson and Kelli Grim, neither of whom have

The powers that be in the development community – big monied interests that have had their way for decades – don't like the shift in the balance of power that Fraser represents. And, they have been breathing down his neck at every possible opportunity, ever since he was elected.

been on Town Council for well over a year.

The animus toward select Council Members surfaced again in recent media articles reporting on the data breach, cynically implying it was the fault of the Council, which voted no confidence in the Purcellville Police Chief in 2017. One paper tried to promote doubt of the Council by asking, "Where do we start?"

We want to put forth the same question, framing it differently: "When does the vitriol end? Where does the local media's obsession with Purcellville Mayor Fraser and select members of the Purcellville Town Council ... end?"

Fraser and other Council members

ushered in a change to the Town starting in 2014. The old guard was defeated at the ballot box, and Fraser was elected with over 60 percent of the vote. He repeated this electoral victory in 2016 and again in 2018. The entrenched cabal has continually tried to overturn the reform movement driven by the voters of Purcellville who rejected the "grow-your-way-out-of-debt strategy" of previous administrations. But, all of this could be a question of timing.

In less than 30 days, Purcellville will enter the all-important 2020 election cycle.

For the past five years, the cronyism

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »

Record support for clean streams

BY JOHN P. FLANNERY

Only a few months back, the Loudoun County Soil and Conservation District, by a unanimous vote by the Board of Directors authorized \$580 thousand dollars to underwrite the cost of best management practices (BMPs) for Loudoun County farmers and landowners, to keep our water free of waste and to resist the erosion of our top soils.

At its last meeting, only days ago, the Board approved eight cost share grants totaling an additional \$146 thousand dollars. The voting Directors were James Christian (Chair), James Wylie (Vice Chair), John Flannery (Treasurer), Marina Schumacher, and Jim Hilleary.

This year the Board has authorized about \$726 thousand dollars of the Million Dollar grant authorized for Loudoun County from down state. This is the largest dedication of funds to clean water and rich soil this district has achieved, and we have more authorized funds yet to approve. We focus on the "nutrients," the waste that flows into our rivers and streams, and then the Potomac and Chesapeake Bay.

On the other hand, we struggle to avoid and stem erosion, as it takes a thousand years to make rich top soil, so it's nothing to waste. The funds the District has approved will pay for thousands of feet of fencing (to keep livestock out of streams), troughs so the livestock can get water in the fields and pastures they inhabit, acres of grass, wells, thousands of feet of pipes for water and electricity, vaults, and stream bank protection, a pumping plant, and buffers to protect the soil against erosion.

The local Soil and Conservation District still has funds for more best practices projects – and the District is reaching out for landowners and farmers who could use some help to make it happen. This program is the Loudoun Soil and Water District's "cost share program." Landowners and farmers should consider whether they are suitable candidates for these cost share programs.

In the recent election, a valued and long serving member of the Board and the district's Vice-Chair, Jim Wylie was not re-elected despite the Chair's public call that his service was vital



Free flowing streams of clean water.

to the Board. Accordingly, by unanimous vote, on motion of the Chair, Jim became an Associate Director, so he could continue to serve the District.

The District had the applications for funding that it did, not only because of its hard working staff, but also because local outlets in the media let the public

know that these cost-share programs were available.

If a landowner or farmer wants more information, or may have a situation that could benefit from BMPs, they should visit LSWCD.org or call Loudoun's Soil and Water Conservation District at 571-918-4530.

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High strung bracelets.

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A practical and fun gift for any literary enthusiast. This winter weight scarf with Maya Angelou's Still I Rise poetry is pure literary style, gift giving perfection.



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CLUSTER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Loudoun.gov website states that, with cluster zoning, “The open space accounts for the overall lower density of the site and may serve to preserve environmentally sensitive areas while catering to active or passive recreational uses and fostering the rural character by promoting agricultural, forestal, or other rural economy uses.”

“May serve to preserve” – as opposed to “Will serve to preserve” – is the operative language here.

With the higher densities and profit margins the developer gets, the community must absorb greater demands on the water supply, increased school populations, more traffic, and required road improvements. Higher densities also trigger the need for increased public safety resources – more law enforcement officers, more fire and rescue personnel, and more public safety facilities, each of which affect the public purse.

In a concept, cluster zoning is intended to preserve Loudoun’s rural character and agricultural productivity in exchange for this added burden. But, Loudoun’s cluster zoning rules are loose. Sometimes, land set aside to meet a project’s open space requirement is an area that could not have been developed anyway – a wetland, for example. Sometimes, instead of preserving the parts of a particular parcel that represent prime agricultural soils, a developer will put homes there, setting aside other areas less suitable for farming to meet cluster zoning requirements.

Communities overwhelmed

As two proposals for large new housing developments in the Middleburg area demonstrate, Loudoun’s cluster zoning provisions are inadequate, if your real intention is to preserve the rural character and agricultural productivity of western Loudoun.

Banbury Cross Reserve is a proposal by Middleburg Land 1 LLC to build 38-homes on property that would allow for far fewer without a cluster option. The 570-acre project is located at Sam Fred Road, and Rt.50.

In early September, the Middleburg Planning Commission denied developer Andrew Hertneky’s preliminary application for that proposed subdivision.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »

Cluster Zoning, defined

Cluster zoning rules give developers higher densities in exchange for concentrating development on a smaller footprint within a larger piece of property, ostensibly, protecting open space, environmentally sensitive areas, and land suitable for farming.

Another way to get increased densities – co-housing

BY ANDREA GAINES

David Gregory of the Zeeland, NV development firm wants to build 239 co-housing units, a destination winery, a brewery, an event space, and more – on the former Graydon Manor land, a 131-acre real estate investment he purchased in 2016 for \$5.5 million. The land is located just west of Leesburg.

County planners are resisting, and lawsuits are popping up all over in response to Gregory’s plans, the costs of which the developer seems happy to absorb, given the amount of money and potential profits at stake.

The 239 housing units would be distributed according to the following layout: 73 buildings – each measuring 2,780 sq.ft.; 40 buildings – each one measuring 4,320 sq. ft., with a total of 160 units; and six units in two 3,240 sq. ft. buildings.

This is a very, very dense residential development with an equally large commercial component.

Gregory’s argument is that his development conforms with County zoning regulations designed to keep western Loudoun rural. Part of Gregory’s plans include preserving certain agricultural uses, including fields for farm animals.

The County’s argument is that while co-housing is an allowed use in the agricultural zoning that applies to the Graydon property (AR-1), a subdivision application is required. The County further argues that Gregory’s view of how agricultural uses

relate to housing in Loudoun’s rural west strains the integrity of the system.

Gregory claims the co-housing units follow a condominium model, where the residents own part of a building, but not the land.

The Loudoun County Zoning Administration looks at the homes – apartment-like or not – as separate units on their own separate lots; i.e. part of a subdivision.

If Gregory had gone the subdivision route, he could build just one residential unit per five acres, or some 26 homes – instead of the 239 co-housing units he is proposing.

There is also the issue of how the residential uses on the property relate to the agricultural uses.

In AR-1 zoning, lot coverage – or rooftop – can take up not more than 10 percent of the property. The residential uses must also be, in effect, part and parcel of the agriculture, or farming that occurs there, with the agriculture always being the main use of the land.

While the owners of the co-housing units would have access to the agricultural lands, and the footprint of the units would fall within the 10 percent limit, the County sees Gregory’s plan as a rather contorted view of established AR-1 zoning.

There is also the issue of water.

In 1998, Leesburg voted not to extend water and sewer beyond its Town borders. Graydon Manor – which served needy populations such as children with epilepsy – had been the exception to that rule, and had been served by Town water and sewer since

1963.

Gregory wants to piggyback on that exception, and keep Town water and sewer despite the enormous change in use – and required water volume – his project represents. He argues this is an expansion of water and sewer, not a new extension.

Gregory’s co-housing and winery/brewery plans have a distinctly suburban, if not urban, feel. One rendering of the brewery features a modern building with lots of glass, a steep pitched roof, water features, and multiple sidewalks.

The co-housing units would feature their own individual living spaces, but also have use of a community building with entertainment areas, gym facilities, and workshops.

This is in strict contrast to the 20th Century Graydon Manor and the nearby Rust Sanctuary Mansion.

Renderings of a reinvented Graydon Manor, which would house the winery and brewery, have an equally modern look.

Gregory’s project has been moving its way through the Board of Zoning Appeals, which has resulted in his lawsuit against Loudoun County. He has also been involved in other lawsuits against the County in connection with projects in Ashburn.

Gregory is heavily invested in the Graydon Manor project, and has assumed a very defiant tone with County, suggesting – seriously, or not – that if the County or the Town of Leesburg reject his plans, he will apply for another by-right use of the property, including a shooting/firing range.

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Gable Farm landfill – still polluting, still alarming neighbors, still unresolved



BY ANDREA GAINES

As we reported eleven months ago, the Gable Farm “personal recreational field” turned dump located just outside of the Town of Hamilton should never have been approved, stands in violation of Loudoun County land use law, and – potentially – threatens the groundwater and safety of surrounding properties.

GOVERNMENT

Despite the seriousness of the property owner’s apparent violations of zoning law, neither the County nor the owner has taken responsibility for what had been going on at the site for years. The property owner has stopped the dumping. But a formal plan to rectify the situation, promised now for months, is nowhere to be seen. The only information the County seems willing to share is that the matter is with the County Attorney’s office. But there is currently no agreed to plan to fix the problem.

Cattail, LC, a limited partnership of family members with over 800 acres of farmland under Nature Conservancy easement outside of Hamilton, shares a

boundary with the Gable Farm dump.

Cattail wrote the County in January, expressing their concern. Their letter was accompanied by a stunningly raw video showing what can only be described as massive landfill activity, “masquerading,” says the partnership, as what is known as a “Personal Recreational Field.” That field is, in fact, an 18-acre tract of land – 30 feet high in some places – and strewn with piles of dirt, massive chunks of concrete and asphalt, construction debris, plastic waste, and, in some places, liquid waste, noted the Cattail.

Despite the seriousness of the property owner’s apparent violations of zoning law, neither the County nor the owner has taken responsibility for what is going on at the site. The property owner has stopped the dumping. But, formal plan to rectify the situation, promised now for months, is nowhere to be seen.

Parts of the site now carry waste material piled 14 feet higher than that agreed to by Gable Farm when it got approval for the personal recreational field.

“The landfill rises more than 30 feet and dominates a quarter-mile-long boundary with our land,” said Cattail. We estimate, conservatively, that the volume of the ‘approved’ landfill is at least 220,000 cubic yards. Recent surveys suggest that it may actually contain over 420,000 cubic yards of waste: a total of about 28,000 truckloads that originated off the site. The revenue from dumping this much waste is potentially in the millions of dollars.”

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ATOKA PROPERTIES

Local artist Dave Levinson's photography on display at Magnolia's At The Mill

Magnolia's At The Mill restaurant in Purcellville wanted to adorn their rustic wooden walls with local photography – in a big way.

Shawn Malone, the restaurant's proprietor, asked designer and photographer Dave Levinson of Wicked Design, to engineer a way to showcase large versions of

Levinson's landscape photographs of Loudoun County on the wooden studded walls. The challenge was to design a permanent exhibit that was visually pleasing without changing the building structure in any way.

Levinson accomplished this task by printing individual canvas panels that each fit perfectly between each wall stud. Doing so left the structural components of the building intact.

One of the photos measures six feet in width, the other measures eight feet. The six-foot photo was taken by Levinson at Hillsboro Vineyard and comprises three individual photo panels. Levinson's larger Barn and Rainbow photo is made up of five individual canvas panels, and was taken



at a farm south of Purcellville.

Two other large photos are stand-alone and hang on the north wall of the banquet room. One depicts a red fall tree, and the other a goose landing in a local pond.

Magnolia's at the Mill is located at 196 N. 21st Street in Purcellville. To contact Levinson call 703-470-6029 or go to WickeDesign.com.

3rd Annual Round Hill Appalachian Trail Art Show

Online registration is open for the 3rd Annual Round Hill Appalachian Trail Art Show, sponsored by Round Hill Outdoors and the Round Hill Arts Center.

The show is open to all ages and works to celebrate the Appalachian Trail and the wild nature of the Blue Ridge. The show will be hung at the Round Hill Arts Center from Feb. 9 to March 8, 2020. Works in the following mediums will be accepted: drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, sculpture, pottery, textile and mixed media.

Themes for the entries include compass, maps & navigation, vast natural beauty, priceless cultural heritage, connect human spirit with nature, protect night skies, leave no trace, and endurance challenge.

Judges will award prizes in three categories, students K thru 5, students 6 thru 12, and adult. Winners will be recognized a reception from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 16, with a backup date of Feb. 23 if the weather does not cooperate.

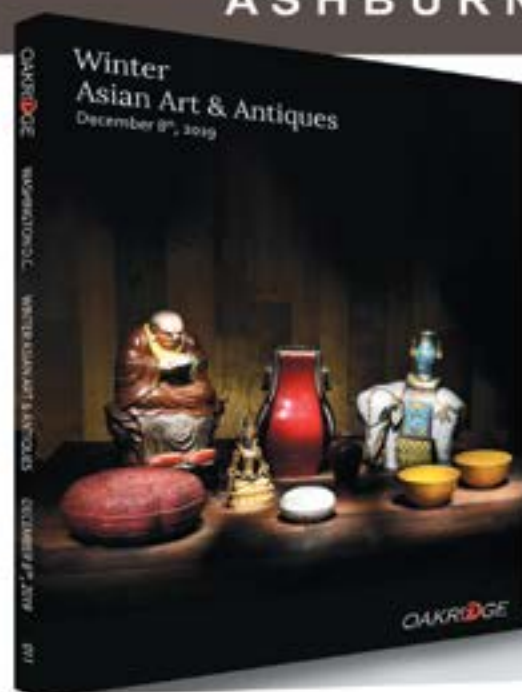
Artists can register online at www.roundhill.at/art.

Key dates include: Submissions due, Jan. 31, 2020, reception, Feb. 16, 2020, results of show with pictures, late Feb.

See www.RoundHillArtsCenter.org for details.

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Hillsboro Project Ready to Roll

At a ceremony in Hillsboro's historic Old Stone School on Nov. 25, the Town of Hillsboro and Archer Western Construction signed an agreement to build the Town's long-awaited Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Safety Project, also known as *ReThink9*. Hillsboro Mayor Roger L. Vance and Archer Western Vice President E. J. O'Neill signed the agreement to award the \$14.3 million construction contract in front Town residents, business owners, Blue Ridge Supervisor Tony Buffington, and invited guests.

Vance thanked residents for their support during the past 15 years "Tonight we mark another milestone in our saga to reclaim our 'Main Street' and bring modern infrastructure to the Town of Hillsboro," Vance said. "It's been a long road, with plenty of twists and turns, but we are getting ever closer to our destination. Thank you all, for never backing down in spite of long, tough odds. Thank you for your perseverance, toughness, and grit.

Thank you for your patience and your faith. Thank you for coming together and sticking together."

Supervisor Buffington praised the Town and its leaders for their dedication and tenacity to bring the project to fruition. "This project is not just critical for the Town, it's important to all of northwest Loudoun, its residents, and its rural economy. And, with its congestion relief, it will bring a great benefit to the entire region and the thousands who use Route 9 every day."

Loudoun County and the Northern Virginia Transportation Board are the primary funders of the *ReThink9* road project, which, in addition to safety improvements and congestion mitigation, will also bring safe drinking water and wastewater infrastructure to the historic Town. The first phase of the nearly \$4-million safe drinking water project, partially funded by the Virginia Department of Health, Loudoun County, and the Town, is currently under

construction.

When completed in an estimated 12 to 14 months, two one-lane roundabouts will ease congestion and – along with raised crosswalks, on-street parking, sidewalks and streetscaping – reduce speeds, calm traffic, and provide pedestrian access throughout the Town.

Archer Western Construction, a division of the Chicago-based Walsh Group,



Left to right: Archer Western Vice President E. J. O'Neill, Tony Buffington, Jr. (R-Blue Ridge), Hillsboro Mayor Roger Vance, Hillsboro Vice Mayor Amy Marasco.

was the low bidder in the Town's second round of bids submitted in October. After the first bids on the project came in too high in August, the Town and VDOT revised the project's maintenance of traffic plans to reduce the estimated duration of construction by at least 16 months and bring the low bid down by \$6 million. Hillsboro Vice Mayor Amy Marasco, who also serves as the deputy project manager, said the Town, "has worked with our neighbors north, south, east, and west to address their concerns as best we can to mitigate the inevitable inconvenience that comes with a major construction project."

Although a firm schedule of construction is yet to be finalized, Marasco said work is likely to begin in January. She added that repairs and complete repaving of area roads that will serve as local detours have been completed, and additional safety improvements are planned.



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Small Business Grapevine



Hearth & Home & Country Stores

The Philomont General Store | The Waterford Market

The Bluemont General Store

For this month's Small Business Grapevine, we focus on the wealth of good cheer, quality gifts, and hospitality that typifies the local country store,

BUSINESS

and the people ready and waiting to help make your December holidays beautiful, special, and delicious.

There are many, but three stand out; the Philomont General Store, Waterford Market, and the Bluemont General Store.

Each of these wonderful western Loudoun stops offers the things that make our area so special – whether they are old-fashioned American-made toys, Amish bells, or glorious, hand-made woolen products.

Each has a special draw. And, any one of them can satisfy your craving for a snack, an interesting conversation about the history of the place, or a holiday gift for someone special.

Take a few hours this December to visit these special places. Make a morning or afternoon of it.

The Philomont General Store

Located in the quaint Village of Philomont, this shop is a great lunch, and sandwich place – and more. It's a real find for holiday giving, with books, crafts, domestic and international wines, gourmet foods, and what owners Drew and Brandi Bishop describe as American-made old-fashioned toys. This year's White House Christmas ornament can be found here. And, the bonus – there's U.S. Post Office in the store. So, you can select, purchase, box, and ship all in one place. Philomont General Store, 36550 Jeb Stuart Road, Philomont. 540 338-5792, www.philomontgeneralstore.com.

The Waterford Market

Located in the equally quaint Village of Waterford, the Waterford Market has locally-grown sustainable lamb – no hormones or anti-biotics. They also pride themselves in their hand-made woolen products – including hats, scarves, and yarn. You can find local crafts and foodstuffs here, too, includ-

ing local honeys, as well as basic groceries. And ... yes ... penny candy! Owner Linda Landreth really knows how to do a country store.

Waterford Market is located at 15487 Second Street in Waterford. 540 882-3631, www.waterfordconnection.com.

The Bluemont General Store

This sweet place also has fresh meat for sale, including locally-raised Angus beef. They also sell local eggs. The special thing about this place is its simple, down home feel. It is not "gourmet." But, rather, offers real basic stuff, including "fresh coffee to start your day," sandwiches, hot soup, dry goods, and some groceries. There are Amish products here, too, including sleigh bells – for your horse, carriage, or door. Hand-dipped ice cream is "a lip-smacking treasure served all year long." And, this is a great holiday shopping stop, with country crafts, ornaments, and candies.

Bluemont General Store, 33715 Snickersville Turnpike, Bluemont. 540 554-2054, www.BluemontStore.com.

Celebrate Christmas in Purcellville!

November 6 to December 9—Toys for Tots

Drop off new, unwrapped toys at Town Hall, M-F 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Purcellville Police Department, M-F 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Bush Tabernacle, weekends 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

November 29—Christmas Tree Sales

Purcellville Volunteer Fire Company

December 6 —Town Tree Lighting

Town Hall, 6:30 p.m.

December 7—Winter Roller Skate Party

Bush Tabernacle, 7 to 11 p.m.

December 14—Parade, Market, and Festivities

Train Station from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Bush Tabernacle from 1 to 8 p.m.; and Main Street from noon to 1:30 p.m.

December 14 & 15—Holiday Lights Tours

Bush Tabernacle from 6 to 8 p.m.

December 20 & 21—Santa Rides Through Town

Purcellville Volunteer Fire Company, 6 p.m.

Get more information at www.PurcellvilleVa.gov and like Christmas in Purcellville on Facebook!



Thank you to the sponsors of Christmas in Purcellville!

Loudoun Workforce Resource Center to host job fair Dec. 6

The Loudoun Workforce Resource Center will host its second Loudoun Job Fair this fall on Friday, Dec. 6, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Shenandoah Office Building, 102 Heritage Way NE, second floor, in Leesburg.

The Loudoun Job Fair will feature local employers with full-time, part-time and seasonal job openings in Loudoun County. In addition to the Loudoun County government and Loudoun County Public Schools' School Nutrition Program, employers attending include: Abbtch Professional Resources, Inc.; Burke Concrete Construction; Compu Dynamics; Home-watch Caregivers; Meridian Technology Systems; Sheetz; Sight & Sound Systems; Stryker Corporation; Riddleberger Brothers, Inc.; and the U.S. Census Bureau. Immediate opportunities are available in the fields of accounting/finance, construction, customer support, government, healthcare, information technology, management, recreation, retail, service operations, sales and technical.

Job seekers are advised to be pre-

pared to meet with employers by dressing professionally and bringing multiple copies of their resumes to the job fair. Resume critiques are offered every Tuesday and Thursday from 9 to 11:30 a.m. at the Workforce Resource Center.

Additionally, those planning to attend the job fair are encouraged to pre-register at loudounjobfairleesburg.eventbrite.com to receive reminders and updates. All attendees will receive a complimentary copy of Harry Dahlstrom's "Turn a Job Fair Into a Job Offer" upon arrival or by visiting the Workforce Resource Center in advance, anytime during regular business hours.



Anyone who requires a reasonable accommodation for any type of disability in order to participate in the event may call (703) 771-5718. Three days' advance notice is requested.

The Loudoun Workforce Resource Center, a Virginia Career Works affiliate, helps businesses identify well-qualified applicants and helps those looking for work find the right fit.

For more information, contact the center at (703) 777-0150 or visit loudoun.gov/wrc.

Work started on Jackson's Run

Work has started on the Jackson's Run residential development, which is located west of the A Street/Silcott Springs roundabout. The 84.0467-acre property is zoned JLMA-3 (Joint Land Management Area – one house per three acres), and is outside of the Town of Purcellville's corporate limits. The development was approved by Loudoun County Sept. 27, 2019, and is approved for 28 homes. Jackson's Run development is a cluster development. It is leaving portions of the land open space, since it is a flood plain area.

The cluster development option allows homes to be closer together

on less than three acres – and the plat shows 42.3755 acres of the property will be delineated open space (since most of it is flood plain).

The contractor will be installing a construction entrance, adjoining the A Street/Silcott Springs roundabout. This entrance will become the fourth leg of the roundabout. All costs associated with the construction of this connection to the roundabout are being borne by the developer of the subdivision. No street closures are anticipated during this period; however, there may be intermittent impacts to traffic.

All inquiries should be directed to Loudoun County Building and Development, 703-777-0220.

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Chef Thomas crafted his menu after traveling all over the south pacific (in his mind) to create the most authentic and delicious courses for your enjoyment. This beer dinner will be the final dinner of the year and we want to welcome you all to July in Christmas!



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Terry's Body Shop

According to the Beach Boys ... A Purcellville legend

BY ANDREA GAINES

*She's so fine my 4-0-9 ...
She's so fine my 4-0-9 ...
My 4-0-9!*

This is the sunny, fly-through-the-air feel that greets you if you are ever fortunate enough to be put on hold by the courteous staff at Terry's Body Shop in Purcellville. Can you imagine being happy about being put on hold ... however briefly?

The old Beach Boy's classic – and other car songs from greats like Bruce Springsteen – set the stage for everything that happens at Terry's Body Shop.

People are not necessarily in a good place when they make contact with Terry Martin, the guy who has headed up the body shop operation for some 35 years.

They have had a car accident or are otherwise in a bad spot. Their "wheels" are incapacitated, and, they need a friend.

Said Terry's ever-able daughter-in-law



Jamie Martin, who works the shop with other members of the family, "When someone comes in and needs to have their car repaired, we are there to listen and then help them proceed in the right direction. We try to help them as much as possible and make them feel comfortable."

All of the Martins have a close connection to Purcellville. Terry Martin started in a smaller shop on Main Street, and occupied the parking lot now used by Magnolias at the Mill Restaurant for a number of years. He then moved over to the industrial park on the north end of town as he started to grow.

The Beach Boys "409"

She's real fine my 409
She's real fine my 409
My 409

Well I saved my pennies and I saved my dimes
(Giddy up giddy up 409)
For I knew there would be a time
(Giddy up giddy up 409)
When I would buy a brand new 409
(409, 409)

Giddy up giddy up giddy up 409
(Giddy up giddy up 409)
Giddy up 409
(Giddy up giddy up 409)
Giddy up 409
(Giddy up giddy up 409)
Giddy up 40 ...

Terry grew up in the area and went to Loudoun Valley High School. He was a member of the Neersville Fire Department for 22 years and served as both an officer, and as the chief – for five years.

Community, fixing cars, putting people at ease – and great songs about cars

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32 »



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St. David's Episcopal Church
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Ashburn, VA



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www.loudounsymphony.org



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Blue Ridge Middle School turns learning math into feeding those in need

The week of Nov. 25, the sixth-grade math students at Blue Ridge Middle School applied Project Based Learning to support the Tree of Life food center by donating student-created soup jars for food insecure families.

COMMUNITY

The students applied their skills of multiplying and dividing by fractions to give back to their community. Students' calculations on paper didn't just end up in their binder but, instead, after having their work checked, the students converted their answers into soup recipes.



Students rolled up their sleeves, put their sanitary gloves on and carefully measured the ingredients from their calculations into large decorated Mason jars with directions on how to make the soup. Hundreds of jars of

ready-to-be-made soup were delivered to Tree of Life – which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to changing the lives of the poor and needy within Purcellville and the surrounding areas.

This educational outreach activity is part of the larger Loudoun County Public Schools Project Learning initiative where students tackle authentic problems and questions with

real solutions that integrate the Virginia Standards of Learning. Project Based Learning of this type takes learning to a level of philanthropy that will stay with students long after the paper is forgotten and the test is taken. Not only are the students learning fundamental math skills but also how to be a great citizen.

The teachers involved in planning this PBL were Laurie McDole, Jennifer Farrey, Lena McFarland and LCPS Teacher of the Year Nominee, Diane Taylor.

Christmas in Middleburg

The historic and welcoming Village of Middleburg makes the holiday season shine like no other with its wonderful Christmas in Middleburg series.

COMMUNITY

The event spans three glorious days and is open to all – locals, tourists, and everyone.

There is a tree lighting, a Christmas parade, a "Hot Chocolate Warm Up," shopping, caroling, and more.

The Middleburg hunt will be there with over 100 horses, beautifully-dressed riders, and dozens of hounds. There will be parade floats, musical groups, dogs, antique vehicles, and lots of quintessential Loudoun County celebrants. And, the village's many bistros, cafes, pubs, and restaurants will be joining in the Spirits of Middleburg food, wine and more extravaganza. Highlights include:

Friday, Dec. 6

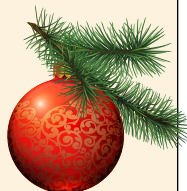
- Tree Lighting Ceremony

Saturday, Dec. 7

- Breakfast with Santa and Silent Auction, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Craft Fair, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Santa's Workshop, 9:30 a.m. to 1:45 p.m.
- Hot Chocolate Warm Up, 10 a.m.
- Middleburg Hunt & Hounds Review, 11 a.m.
- Bronze Fox Sculpture Dedication, 12 noon
- Christmas Parade, 2 p.m.
- Spirits of Middleburg, 3 to 6 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 8

- Live Animal Christmas Pageant at Foxcroft School, 2 p.m.



For a full schedule and more details, go to www.ChristmasinMiddleburg.org.

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Phillip Clyde Bernier

From high school wrestling to national TV to music innovator

BY ANDREA GAINES

Phillip Clyde Bernier just doesn't seem to know when to stop. And, why should he?

The recording artist and dancer won the ABC "Dancing with the Stars" spin off, "Dance Wars Bruno Vs. Carrie Ann," in 2008.

A Loudoun County native, Bernier is a graduate of Park View High School in Sterling, where he was the head of the wrestling team.

Now – quite a way from his high school days – in recent weeks Bernier released what might be called a dance and vocals "duet" – *Game Face*.

According to a press release from PLA Media representative Mark Logsdon, "With the release of his song *Game Face* today, independent artist Phillip Clyde Bernier debuts a world-first by premiering a cutting-edge music experience and expansive content with it. The *Game Face* Song Experience utilizes proprietary multimedia and smartphone technology to put a stadium feel into a fan's hand to amplify the song's message. Working with Nashville-based Guiding Star Global to ap-



ply their exclusive creative, marketing and technical capabilities to his release, Phillip boldly set out to redefine how music can be presented, enjoyed and valued."

Bernier lives and works in Nashville now, but cares deeply about his roots in Loudoun. His parents and other family members still reside here.

"*Game Face* is so much deeper than sports," Bernier has said. "*Game Face* is not about a single moment, but a mindset in life that prepares you to look adversity in the face and say, 'Bring it on!' I didn't want that message to be missed, so I thought why not push for something more with this release? ..."

After high school, Bernier attended James Madison University, where he realized that, despite his love of sports, he also had a "love of the stage."

He pursued that stage love with an opportunity to audition for the Bruno vs. Carrie Ann TV competition. That show featured people who could sing and dance at the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 33 »

PCB press shot, credit Casey Moore.



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Thanksgiving Day at the Main Street Commons Community



The United Bank in Purcellville along with their branch manager, Marie Thomas Brooks, hosted an entire Thanksgiving Day meal – complete with pie, ice cream, donuts, and of course turkey with all the sides – at the Main Street Commons for over 70 residents of

the community. Food was provided by Cracker Barrel, Dunkin Donuts, Harris Teeter, with Gift Cards from McDonald’s and Chick-fil-A. Pictured with community members are Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser and his family – who served the lunch on Nov. 28.

Solar Power Panels Donated to Middleburg Academy

Richard Pantel, founding principal of Princeton Engineering and an expert who has been working in solar and renewable energy for nearly 12 years, donated a collection of solar panels to

COMMUNITY

Middleburg Academy this past summer, with the primary goal of contributing to the operation of the school’s water treatment plant and reducing overall carbon dioxide output. Middleburg Academy reports that, in less than three months, the panels have generated just over 3.32 MegaWatt hours of power with a carbon offset of 2.44 tons.

“I wanted to create an energy endowment for the school,” said Pantel, whose son is currently a junior at Middleburg Academy. “This array should produce many MegaWatts of power over the 20 to 25 year lifespan of the system. To put this into perspective, this array’s power production is enough to power about three or four average homes.”

“We are truly excited and deeply appreciative of this generous gift from Mr. Pantel,” said Head of School Colley W. Bell III, who watched the installation of

the solar panels this past summer with great interest. “The significance of this gift is that our science and math students will be engaged in the science of solar power - and the power of environmental awareness. Already our teachers are crafting lessons as the solar array supplements power to our water treatment plant. It is unquestionably an impactful gift for our community as a model for helping protect our environment here and now in the name of our students.”

Pantel adds that he is “a big believer in installing solar wherever possible. Everyone who thinks about the future understands the importance of developing and using renewable energy sources.”

There will be a formal dedication ceremony for the solar panel field on Wednesday, April 15 at 10:20 am on Middleburg Academy’s campus at 35321 Notre Dame Lane, Middleburg, VA 20117. Contact Kasey Morris, Director of Admissions and Advancement, at kmorris@middleburgacademy.org or (540) 687-5581 – for more information.



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Loudoun Symphony Orchestra concert Dec. 14

Experience the glorious sounds of the holiday season at the Loudoun Symphony Orchestra's concert, **Holiday Cheer** featuring

COMMUNITY

music that will get listeners of all ages into the holiday spirit. The program includes Rimsky-Korsakov's *Polonaise from Christmas Eve Suite*, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Selections*, Anderson's *Sleigh Ride* and an audience singalong of holiday favorites. The concert is one-hour long and will be presented twice at **1:30 pm and 3:30 pm on Dec. 14 at St. David's Episcopal Church** (43600 Russell Branch Parkway, Ashburn, VA 20147).

Individual tickets are \$30 for Adults, \$25 for Seniors (65+), and tickets for Children (up to age 12 and under) are free, but must be ticketed. Go to <https://www.loudounsymphony.org/>.

Christmas in Purcellville Dec. 14

The Town of Purcellville's 16th Annual Christmas in Purcellville Hometown Parade will be held on Saturday, Dec. 14 at noon. The Christmas Market at the Bush Tabernacle will be held the same day from 1 to 8 p.m. Applications for both are on the Town of Purcellville website. Christmas in Purcellville includes festivities in the Train

COMMUNITY

Station and the Bush Tabernacle, the Christmas Parade, and the holiday lights tours, all of which make for a great holiday experience.

Join one of Purcellville's best community traditions and one of Loudoun County's largest Christmas parades. Decorate your car, truck, or float, or dress up your walking group and join in the fun. Floats will have a chance to win a prize in the Christmas Parade Float Contest. Businesses, clubs, individuals, and families are encouraged to participate. The application deadline is Dec. 6. To participate in the parade, please visit: <https://www.purcellvilleva.gov/FormCenter/Parks-and-Rec-Forms-2/2019-Christmas-Parade-Entry-Form-Guideli-71>.

In an effort to improve the safety of the parade, the Town is changing the route this year. The new parade route will start at Loudoun Valley High School on North Maple Avenue, turn right onto Main Street, then turn left onto Nursery Avenue, and conclude at Emerick Elementary School. The following roads will be closed from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.:

- Main Street and N. Maple
- Main Street at Hatcher, Nursery, 18th, 16th, 12th
- Nursery Avenue to Main Street
- 23rd street



Roads will open after the parade is over, which will be approximately 1:30 p.m.

The Christmas Market will be held on Saturday, Dec. 14 from 1 to 8 p.m. inside the Bush Tabernacle. It coincides with the first night of the Holiday Lights Tour held that evening. The vendor fee to participate in the market is \$35 and the application deadline is Dec. 5. To participate in the Christmas Market, go to <https://www.purcellvilleva.gov/FormCenter/Parks-and-Rec-Forms-2/Christmas-Market-Exhibitor-Application-a-73>.

Information about all of the Christmas in Purcellville Festivities is on the Town of Purcellville website at www.Purcellville-VA.gov.



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Virginia chestnut group rekindling holiday tradition

The American chestnut tree of the past is long gone, but thanks to a group of Virginia farmers, centuries-old chestnut traditions are being re-introduced.

Virginia Chestnuts LLC, a group of chestnut growers offering “a taste of history,” is comprised of five Nelson County, VA farms – Breidablik Farm, Bryant Farm and Nursery, Helbert Orchard, Hopkins Orchard and Seaman's Orchard, Inc.—and Jefferson Farm in Rockingham County.

Chestnuts owe a fair amount of their lore to the opening line of Nat King Cole classic *The Christmas Song*. However, when his timeless rendition was released in 1946, the American chestnut was already largely extinct. Now, if Americans have ever eaten chestnuts at all, they were likely imported.

Providing the public with fresh chest-

nuts has been Virginia Chestnuts' way of bringing a nearly forgotten legacy back into Virginia homes as well as those across the nation. The group shipped chestnuts to over 40 states in 2018.

“Ninety percent of the chestnuts eaten in the United States are imported, and when they get to the grocery store, they're not refrigerated,” said Kim Bryant of Bryant Farm and Nursery. “We keep our chestnuts refrigerated. We keep a good, fresh product, and when people get it they are just amazed with the quality of the flavor—they're nice and sweet like they should be.”

In addition to the chestnut's natural sweetness, the nut has become a mainstay holiday food due to its health benefits. Chestnuts provide a low-calorie, low-fat snack compared to other nuts, but also are high in fiber, complex carbohydrates and vitamin C.

In addition to boiling or roasting chestnuts, they also can be used in recipes for soup, pasta, bread and stuffing. A chestnut puree can be added to cakes or made into a frosting.

“People don't realize how versatile chestnuts are,” Bryant said.

She said Virginia Chestnuts' harvest this fall was its best yet, totaling 11,000 pounds. Demand also has been high, with two-thirds of the harvest already sold.

For more information contact Virginia Chestnuts at 434 327-1985.

Reprinted with permission from the Virginia Farm Bureau.

The American chestnut was virtually wiped out about 100 years ago.

In their natural, wild habitat, the trees grow very large – up to 150 feet – and very wide. Their height made harvesting the nuts difficult, and so immigrants from Europe introduced the much smaller Chinese chestnut.

Unfortunately, that tree also introduced a blight, a fungus, which resulted in the death of 4 billion American chestnuts in under half a century.

Efforts continue to try and restore the species in Loudoun County and elsewhere. In recent years conservationists and volunteers at Banshee Nature Preserve worked with the American Chestnut Foundation to plant and cultivate American chestnuts on the near 700-acre property.

Winter skate party at the Bush Tabernacle – Saturday, Dec. 7

The Town of Purcellville and Shaun Alexander Enterprises present a Winter Roller Skate Party at the Bush Tabernacle on Saturday, Dec. 7 from 7 to 11 p.m. The

Bush Tabernacle is located at 205 S. Nursery Ave in Purcellville.

Loudoun DJ will play a mix of holiday favorites along with songs from the 70s, 80s, 90s, and today. Loudoun DJ has been in the business for 19 years. “From vinyl to CDs and now MP3s, Loudoun DJ can mix, remix, and mash up on the fly with any set of DJ tools,” according to the Loudoun DJ website.

The Town of Purcellville has set up a Toys for Tots donation box in the Bush Tabernacle. Toys for Tots is a national

charitable organization run by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve to provide happiness and hope to disadvantaged children during each Christmas holiday season. If you would like to participate, please bring a new, unwrapped toy to the Bush Tabernacle and place it in the box when you come for the Winter Skate Party or any weekend from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. through December 9. Other drop sites include Town Hall Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and the Purcellville Police Department, Monday – Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tickets for the skate and dance party are \$12 online and \$15 at the door. Visit www.BushTabernacle.com to purchase your tickets.

Purcellville Art Gallery Holiday Happenings

It's going to be an exciting December at the Gallery. The Richard Busch "It's Only Rock & Roll" exhibit has been extended through the holidays. Richard attended the original Woodstock festival in 1969 and has his great photos on display and for purchase - a perfect gift for the Rock & Roller.

Fresh off the printing presses, the Gallery now has posters, bumper stickers and postcards of the "Welcome to Purcellville" mural for sale - proceeds support the Purcellville Art Gallery.

The newest edition to the gallery is the eight-foot-tall hand painted Angel Wings that visitors can take pictures in front of (great for holiday cards). Local artist Patricia Taylor Holz donated her time and talent to create the wings for the public to enjoy.

Saturday, Dec. 14, 6 to 8 p.m. - is the Purcellville Art Gallery Christmas par-



ty. Everyone is welcome to this joyous event featuring open mic music, food and drink, along with an artsy "Ugly Christmas sweater" contest with a \$100 top prize for the most creative one. All sweaters must have been hand decorated by contest participants.

Last but not least is our first ever Silent Art Auction of local art. Bid in person at the Gallery or online on the Purcellville Art Gallery page. There are certain to be some awesome deals for gifts. Purcellville Art Gallery is located at 760 East Main St, Purcellville, and their phone number is 540-338-0800.



From left to right: Anne Stine, Michael Oaks, Richard Bush, Kim Patterson and Dave Levinson.

James Bland Youth Music Competition - Feb. 9

The Lovettsville and Purcellville Lions Clubs announce that the annual James Bland Youth Music Competition will be held on Sunday Feb. 9, 2020, at 2 p.m.

COMMUNITY

The competition is open to Virginia students up through 12th grade, who sing or play an instrument. They will be evaluated by professional music

instructors, and the winners will advance to a regional competition. The competition will be held at Bethany Methodist Church, Purcellville, with a snow date of Feb. 16. For more information and registration forms, please contact Betty Hedges, (540) 822-4808 or chuckandbetty@verizon.net.



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Holiday giving inspiration – all in the form of beautifully-crafted clay

BY ANDREA GAINES

Clay, colorful glaze, and girlish enthusiasm.

These are the wonderful ingredients for a holiday-giving effort called the Shaping the World Charity Project.

The project is the brainchild of Yousung Largent, who owns Yousung Choi Fine Art Pottery in Round Hill. Beginning last year, Largent began working with children in her community to make holiday ornaments, the proceeds of which would go to charity. The first year was a great success and 2019 is shaping up to be even better.

We asked Yousung what inspired her to start the project going and get young people involved. Her story is just about as inspiring – awe inspiring – as it gets.

“I majored in pottery, and graduated from Daegu Catholic University in Daegu, South Korea,” Yousung

said.

“Soon after moving to Round Hill in the summer of 2014, I started my business.

“When I first moved to the United States, I lived in Stephens City, Virginia and was often very lonely and homesick. I was very blessed, though to have a kind and caring neighbor, Tina Liong.

“I had never experienced this kind of genuine care before coming to the States, and it was very inspirational to me, so I decided that I wanted to be that kind of person too.

“As the 2018 holiday season got closer, I began to ask my kids and other people what they wanted for Christmas. But, I started to also think about what the holiday season actually means.

“Christians celebrate Jesus, and He said that what we do to others, we do to Him. I wanted to give the young people in my community the opportunity to experience the joy in helping others. I

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »



My name is Adriana Miranda, and I chose to donate to Smile Train, because they help children with cleft lips and palates. When I saw these kids it broke my heart. I can just imagine how those parents must feel like when they see their kids like that. Because of Smile Train, they are able to see hundreds of kids with their lip perfect. I just wish for them to be able to live the life they wanted. If they have problems with anything, I want to be someone's hero.

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Sheriff Chapman Lauds Amended Traffic Ordinances

A nearly six-year effort by Loudoun County Sheriff Mike Chapman to remedy a serious gap in the Virginia motor code has been finally resolved at the local level with the passing of two amendments to the County's codified ordinances by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors.

The amendments allow Loudoun Sheriff's deputies investigating a minor crash the discretion to issue a summons to a driver instead of Reckless Driving - a Class 1 misdemeanor. If convicted of Reckless

GOVERNMENT Driving, the driver faces up to \$2,500 in fines, and up to one year in jail. The amended ordinances, Failure by the operator to give full time and attention to driving and Failure to keep a vehicle under control, will be pre-payable by a maximum \$250 fine and would not assign demerit points to a driver's record.

Across the Commonwealth, law enforcement has little option but to charge an at-fault driver involved

in minor accidents with Reckless Driving for accidents not witnessed by the deputy/officer. "The amendments relieve our deputies of the current state code constraints and provide drivers a much fairer legal recourse," said Sheriff Chapman. "Previously, the charge of Reckless Driving could only be reduced to Improper Driving, a less serious charge, by a judge or at the request of the Commonwealth Attorney," added Sheriff Chapman.

A review conducted in 2017 determined of 795 Reckless Driving cases in Loudoun County's General District Court, 89 percent were reduced to Improper Driving.

Since 2014, Sheriff Chapman has urged the General Assembly to amend Improper Driving statute language, and has taken extensive efforts to support statewide legislation that would remedy the current Virginia Code.

In addition, with support from Board of Supervisor Vice-Chair

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »

Celebrate Computer Science Education Week with the Makersmiths

Computer Science Education Week is scheduled to run from Dec. 9-15. During this week-long event, students are encouraged to learn more about all aspects of computer science, including coding. Computer programming, or coding, is the means by which we give the computer instructions. Coding at Middle School (CAMS) students across Loudoun County have the privilege of learning computer science fundamentals all year. However, during Computer Science Education Week, many students from all over the country have the opportunity to participate in Hour of Code events to learn more about computer programming.

Angela Fraser teaches CAMS students at Blue Ridge and J.L. Simpson Middle Schools. In an effort to expose students to practical applications of computer science outside of the gaming industry, Mrs. Fraser decided

to collaborate with the Makersmiths. The Makersmiths is comprised of members, both adults and children, who create various items, including pottery, video games, metal work, and wood work. Members include enthusiasts, retired engineers, and curious tinkerers. Many of those items are created with machinery or computers that need to be programmed to carry out specific instructions. The Makersmiths have two makerspaces in Loudoun County - Leesburg and Purcellville. Students will be able to tour each facility. Volunteers will be there to show how some of the equipment is run. The Open Houses are open to the public.

Makerspace Open House will be held on Dec. 14, from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. Their address is 785 S. 20th St, Purcellville VA, 20132.

They will also be holding an open house in Leesburg from 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. and they are located at 106 Royal St., SW, Leesburg, VA 20175.

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Cabin Fever Film Fest call for submissions until Dec. 13

Quiet on the set: Regional filmmakers are invited to submit films (short and feature-length) and home movies for the Cabin Fever Film Festival co-sponsored by the Franklin Park Visual and Performing Arts Center and the Town of Purcellville Arts Council.

COMMUNITY

The third annual Purcellville Cabin Fever Film Festival kicks off with a slate of films that highlight local tales and talent. The focus this year will be on films, student productions, and vintage home movies all shot by Purcellville area residents. Break that cabin fever in late-January and enjoy the third year of Purcellville's only film festival.

Roll sound: Entries should be no longer than 90 minutes and a minimum of 1 minute. All films should be in digital format on a flash drive or on a DVD. Any subject matter is acceptable keeping in mind that the Cabin Fever Film Fest is a family-friendly event.

Films can include live action, stop motion, animation, etc. The entry fee is \$10 for the first film entry and \$5 for each additional film entry. Films should be dropped off at the Franklin Park Arts Center (36441 Blueridge View Lane, Purcellville, VA 20132) anytime between Monday, Dec. 2 and by 5 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 13. The application and fees can be completed at the time of film drop off.

A copy of the application can be found at www.FranklinParkArtCenter.org with

a link on the home page. All films will be reviewed and filmmakers will be contacted shortly after the submission deadline as to their acceptance and scheduled showing time block.

Show times will be Friday, Jan. 24 from 7 – 9 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 25 from 10-11:30 a.m. and 12:30 – 2 p.m., depending on the number and length of entries.

Friday night will also include a reception. The full schedule will be posted online at the beginning of January 2020.

Marker: Important dates:

- Dec. 2 until Dec. 13, at 5 p.m. – Film festival submissions accepted
- Friday, Dec. 20 – Film festival slate announcements
- Monday, Jan. 6 – Film schedule posted online
- Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24 and 25 – Cabin Fever Film Festival

Action:

Filmmakers must complete registration form and submit with the film and entry fee. Cash, checks (payable to County of Loudoun), or credit card are accepted. Franklin Park Arts Center is open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday – Friday and weekends by appointment.

Questions should be directed to Elizabeth Bracey, Manager, Franklin Park Arts Center Elizabeth.Bracey@loudoun.gov or 540-338-7973 or Liz Jarvis, Chair, Purcellville Arts Council, arts@purcellvilleva.gov.

CLUSTER ZONING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

An MOJAX LLC development off of Snake Hill Road in the community of Saint Louis is a 30-home subdivision proposed in this historic African-American community. Saint Louis currently has approximately 90 homes. The development would increase the size of the community by about 30 percent. Banbury Cross lies east of the Village of Middleburg, and the proposed Snake Hill Road development, to the west. Together, the two developments would bring 68 new homes to the historic, distinctly rural area.

With respect to the Saint Louis property, developer "Hobie" Mitchel, says that wells being dug for his 30 homes will provide sufficient water for the project. Neighbors say they already have low-flow water problems,

and that the cluster option will put even more pressure on water supplies.

Archaeological surveys have also identified 50 graves in what is known as the Robinson-Howard Cemetery. Developers say a 50-foot buffer required by the County will protect these historical assets. Neighbors and preservationists are not so sure.

With respect to the Banbury Cross property, Middleburg Mayor Bridge Middleton has pointed to the Coalition of Loudoun Town's (COLT) no-net-loss-of farmland policy, indicating that Loudoun County's cluster zoning rules are not providing the farmland protections western Loudoun County needs. Loudoun has lost 10 percent, or more than 20 square miles, of farmland in the last seven years.

The entire Middleburg community is an extremely productive agricultural and tourism-based rural area. Property owners raise horses, bale and sell hay, raise vegetables and fruits, run small businesses such as antique shops, B&Bs, country stores, equestrian training facilities, and farm markets,

Increased residential densities will bring a different kind of life to the area, as it always does.

The question is, will the increased residential densities enjoyed by the developer help preserve and protect the area's best agricultural lands, history, and environmental assets as cluster zoning is intended to do.

www.Loudoun.gov contains the following language:

Cluster Development: A cluster design is defined as the grouping of building units on smaller lots within a portion or portions of the site, with the intention of retaining a significant area of the land as a contiguous tract of unbuilt open land. Clustering is both visual and spatial with the dwellings scaled and sited to maintain coherent relationships to each other and the surrounding landscape. The open space accounts for the overall lower density of the site and may serve to preserve environmentally sensitive areas while catering to active or passive recreational uses and fostering the rural character by promoting agricultural, forestal, or other rural economy uses.

SHERIFF CHAPMAN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

Ralph M. Buona (R-Ashburn), they obtained the successful adoption of the county ordinance on Nov. 13, by a 7-0-2 vote by the Board of Supervisors amending the Loudoun County Ordinances by adding two additional traffic infractions. The amendment to Loudoun County's Ordinances will mirror those of 11 other Virginia jurisdictions that established local ordi-

nances that provide law enforcement the ability to cite drivers for a lesser charge.

Sheriff Chapman will continue to work with state legislators to establish a uniform code for law enforcement regarding Improper Driving.

Residents can view amended ordinances 466.07 and 466.08 at www.loudoun.gov/ordinances.



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In 2017 Taste of the Blue Ridge launched its Root to Table Culinary Series – with just a single event. By 2019, it had expanded its menu to include ten events.

The last of these ten events took place on Monday, Nov. 30 at the spectacular, 250-year old tenth-generation West Oaks Farm in Winchester.

The event was hosted by Purcellville’s very own Chef Erik Foxx-Nettlin of Magnolias at the Mill. This was Foxx-Nettlin’s fifth event as a Root to Table host, and his 14th overall Root to Table appearance.

Per a press release from Root to Table just prior to the event, Foxx-Nettlin’s enthusiasm was evident. “At our Fire and Ice event ... we will be showing the passion, sourcing responsibility, friendship and technique that makes us a movement. We will be representing Virginia’s bounty. The bounty of our farmers and chefs as well as its hospitality ... It will be a great night ...”



Left to right, Chef Erik Foxx-Nettlin of Magnolias at the Mill in Purcellville, and Farmer Dave Lay of West Oaks Farm, where the event was held.

And, it was a great night.

Guests were treated to ice carvings being cut and crafted right in front of them, and all of the main courses were cooked outdoors – “barbacoa style” on an open fire pit.

The event featured a specialty-brewed beer from Adroit Theory Brewing, and a one-off whiskey from Catocin Creek Distillery.

Per the menu, “The Greeters” – or appetizers – included Oysters, Smoked Virginia Trout and Rillettes, Local Cured Meats and Locksley Cheeses, Huckleberry Wine Jam, Char Crackers, Pickled Things, and West Oak Mostarda.

Diners were treated to four food stations with beyond exquisite offerings. These included Hearth Charred Chicken Thigh, Soft Boiled Egg stuffed with apple and wrapped with Spring House Bacon, Sapling Roasted White Sturgeon Oscar,

Blue Crab, a Gathered Field Salad, and main courses of Lamb Porchetta, Stuffed Pork, and Pit Beef. The dessert came from four talented pastry chefs.

In addition to Foxx-Nettlin, the Top Chefs and guests behind it all included Chef Megan Agreggaard (Pastry Chef, Magnolias at the Mill), Jeff Ault (Bavarian Inn Resort & Brewing Company), Steve Ferrell (Hillbrook Inn and Spa), Sandy Gallagher (The Butcher Station/Audley Farm), Abby McAllister (Schenck Foods), Chef William

O’Neill (The George Washington Hotel), Chef Jeremy Thrasher (West End Wine Bar & Pub, Purcellville), Marcus Repp (Lansdowne Resort), Mike Ritenour (Massanutten Resort), Britt Shyrene (Delirium), Tyler Sponseller (Monk’s BBQ), Marvin Swaner (The Aikens Group), Santosh Tiptur (The Conche), and Daniela Williams (Cucinamore – Italian Cooking Parties).

For information on upcoming Taste of the Blue Ridge events, go to www.tasteofblueridge.com.

MORE CO₂, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

relation between CO₂ levels and global temperatures. Past records of Earth’s temperature when CO₂ levels were high reveal that temperatures were low.

There are also historical records that show just the opposite. In this century there has been modest global warming but, it has not kept pace with predictions. Similar rises in temperature have occurred in the past when there was no use of fossil fuels.

Recently there has been a controversy on how temperatures are measured with thermometers located in parking lots and near brick walls which register higher temperatures. The historical record also shows that in most cases, CO₂ increases follow temperature increases, not cause them. While it is true that CO₂ levels are the highest today for the last 800,000 years, global warming alarmists fail to mention that CO₂ levels had reached 7000 ppm 545 million years ago and have dangerously steadily declined from 2000 ppm to present day levels over the last 150 million years. Burning fossil fuels has reversed this decline.

Over the past 400,000 years there have been four ice ages. As recently as

20,000 to 12,000 years ago, one mile of ice was over Chicago and other northern cities. We are currently in a warming period known as an interglacial period. In fact, 80 percent of the time over the last 400,000 years, the temperature of Earth has been below present levels.

We should be worrying more about the coming ice ages than global warming. Unless we can figure out how to stop it, an ice age will reduce food production to levels that will kill billions and deposit snow and ice over a majority of the land mass in North America and Europe. If rising CO₂ can prevent global cooling, we better start burning more fossil fuels as soon as possible.

All of this information can be found on the web. Check out YouTube lectures by Dr. Patrick Moore and Dr. Patrick Michaels. Save this column for reference when your global warming alarmist’s friends say we must limit CO₂ emissions.

Joe LaFiandra lives near Purcellville. He is a graduate of Stuyvesant H.S., and has an electrical engineering degree from NYU and MBA from Adelphi University in New York.

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HOLIDAY GIVING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

shared my ideas with a few other moms, like Amy Fredericks and Kunal Shah, who each sponsored this year's project through their own local businesses (Harvest Symphony and Shahnti Aesthetic Medicine), and they gave their full support in helping me to grow this idea."

Fourteen young ladies are participating in this project this year.

They are: Bridget, Clare and Abby Doherty (Bridget and Clare are twins who've just turned 13, and Abby is 12 years old), Addi Fredericks, Ariya Shah, Alyssa Holland, Adriana Polanco, Rebecca Largent, Kerry Chmielewski, Jems Byrd, Niya Hartley, and Whitney Hess (all age 12); and Stella Frake and Lottie Jenkins (both are age 11).

This year, the girls have chosen Adler Care Center, SupportOurTroop.org, No Kid Hungry, Radstock Ministries, Birthright, Make a Wish Foundation, Abba Care Pregnancy Center, Tree of Life, Smile Train, and Boulder Crest Retreat as their designated charities.

Dad Chris Largent told us many of the girls' ornaments had already sold out – but, there are some still remaining.

"To purchase ornaments," he said, "We are asking people to reach out to the parents on Facebook, so on all of Yousung's Facebook posts for each girl, she has tagged their parent(s) also.

Find Yousung Choi Fine Art Pottery on Facebook, and you're on your way to some very meaningful holiday gifting.

VIEW FROM THE RIDGE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

of embedded politicians and hangers-on who nearly pushed Purcellville off a cliff of debt has been diminished. During his tenure, Fraser has found alternative solutions, including avoiding a \$1.8 million payment increase in 2021 on the interest-only debt accumulated by prior administrations, and achieved an \$8 million reduction in payments over 14 years. When Fraser took office, the debt was \$61,626,495 and had increased yearly for nearly a decade. He has heralded the debt reductions every year since, with a current debt reduced to \$54,013,305.

The powers that be in the development community – big monied interests that have had their way for decades – dislike the shift in the balance of power that Fraser represents. And, they have been breathing down his neck at every possible opportunity, ever since he was elected. Instead of giving a free pass to developers and saddling the taxpayers with the bill, Town Council has considered the effects on roads, schools, public services, and more.

In no one's wildest dreams, would have something as big as the proposed Warner Brook Annexation been voted down by previous Councils. Yet, Fraser got a decisive 6-1 vote in 2018, stopping a megaproject that would have added 160 single-family homes, 70,000 sq. ft. of mixed-use commercial, 150,000 sq. ft. of industrial, and more to Purcellville's already unmanageable rates of growth and corresponding tax burden.

Recent investigations have shown no wrongdoing by the Purcellville Town Council, yet only the reform members on Council, who were voted into office from 2014 to 2018, have been continually disparaged by the media.

In 2017, Interim Town Manager, Alex Vanegas who was hired to that position by a unanimous Council vote, took administrative action and launched the McAlister investigation. Town code al-

lows actions like this to be done by management and not the legislative body, the Town Council.

McAlister received a vote of no confidence by a 7-0 Council vote, and shortly after, it was discovered that the investigation was botched. Fraser and the entire Council brought in an outside firm to review the investigation results, and ultimately, McAlister was reinstated, and Vanegas was fired. Still the investigation's origins had a basis in fact; Nearly half of the police force under McAlister's command at the time had lost confidence in her ability to lead, according to a 2018 review.

Recently, the media seized on the opportunity to vilify Fraser and Council members in an attempt to link the newly discovered "data breach" to the McAlister investigation in 2017. At least one local editorial said people's data "may have been compromised during the Vanegas-Nuckolls plot."

But, as we reported recently, a more in-depth look at the origins of the potential data breach indicates that a Purcellville Police officer submitted an expense report using an electronic form from the officer's previous employer, Fairfax County.

Unknown to the officer, this document contained a seal – not visible – with a hidden link to the personal data of 1,740 Fairfax County employees. In submitting this expense report to Chief McAlister, the officer unknowingly transmitted via email hidden personal data of Fairfax County employees. Fairfax County Police confirmed the use of this form to be a violation of their policy that their employees sign, "to not take any property or confidential material upon their separation." This data was contained in emails that were part of the investigation.

Yes, we are heading into an election year. Let's hold all of these special interests and their friends in the media accountable.

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HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

of western Loudoun.

Why should the northern part of the county suffer like this? Why can't its zoning be as protective as the areas to the south? I've heard explanations as to why this situation came to be, but find them weak at best.

Here is a Big Idea that people are now discussing: Abolish AR-1 zoning and let all of western Loudoun be covered by AR-2 zoning. I've heard this described as "Fair Zoning" and it has an egalitarian sensibility. Fair Zoning would be equitable and uniform western zoning makes total sense. It would save farmland and protect countryside, while the overall reduced density would save countywide taxpayers perhaps \$100 million in up-front public costs (building schools, roads, etc.) and \$400 million (mainly education and public safety) in operating costs over a twenty-year period.

Reducing density is perfectly legal, as evidenced by the successful downzoning in 2003. Property rights can be protected in the manner set out in the State Code. (Section 15.2-2307.)

Dreadnoughts

Just before World War I, great powers built huge battleships of such armor and armament that they feared nothing, hence the term "dreadnought." Like a modern-day supertanker longer than the Empire State Building is tall, these colossi sailed with such momentum that it might take twenty miles for one to stop.

There is a new enemy in our conservation fight, a true dreadnought that grows ever larger, ignoring its elected bosses, determining its own rules and deciding what Loudoun will become. It's the county's planning bureaucracy. Its bosses are the Supervisors but it knows they will come and go, while Dreadnaught Staff sets its own powerful path.

It has been tasked with writing a new zoning code. That scares me. I've followed land use squabbles here for two decades, and have constantly heard people say "the Planning Department is pro-growth." That's logical. Surgeons want to operate. Dentists want to drill. Planners want to plan for things new and exciting, not to protect the status quo.

The Board of Supervisors needs to force an attitudinal change, lopping heads as necessary. Two September 19 planning staff documents are clear evidence of why this must happen. One was its plan to meet the Board's direction to conduct an "Unmet Housing Needs Plan." I worry about this statement: "... significant changes to zoning regulations." Staff probably intends for this plan not to be mere guidance, but

to effect some new (and probably bad) zoning changes. In addition, far more clout seems to be given to developers, though it does advocate some citizen involvement.

I am most concerned about the basic premise of "unmet housing needs." Loudoun has less than 200 homeless people, so whose housing needs are not being met? The answer is obvious – the developers and realtors have convinced the Board that Loudoun has an obligation to allow new houses for every single soul who wants to move here from somewhere else. In simple terms, that's a crock. Let's hope the next Board simply ignores this idea.

Dread

Far more troubling is how the Dreadnaught Staff wants to go about revising the zoning ordinance. Also on September 19, Dreadnaught Staff presented its zoning work plan to the Board. I used a red pen to mark bothersome things. The pages looked blood-covered. Attila would have been proud.

Here are some of its major problems:

Revise zoning to "reflect the current marketplace." Instead, this must be to "reflect the will of the people."

"Increase the scope of administrative approvals." This power grab reduces oversight by and the authority of the Board of Supervisors. Developers will see this as a great way to get projects quickly approved by unelected bureaucrats they've schmoozed.

"... improve the outcome for all stakeholders." This effectively means increased profits for developers, but perhaps that's too cynical. Or is it?

"... Board input and direction will also factor into the extent of the changes ..." In other words, it will listen to the Board's wishes, but not necessarily obey them. Dreadnaught Staff has placed itself on the throne with Supervisors at its feet.

Staff will only "consult" with the community, and then only on a finite number of options. As I said before – this is a crock. Citizens should have not just consultative rights over every word, I frankly think we should have veto power.

Dreadnaught Staff names certain Stakeholders who get influence not granted to the citizenry. These Stakeholders are almost all members of the real estate and development industry. Conservation groups are only one information-gathering group (the PEC) and one information-dissemination group (the Loudoun Preservation and Conservation Coalition.)

It's a shame that Attila is not available to lead our fight.

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

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- Judith Regan



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TIM JON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

personal or public, grand or grotesque – sometimes with the knowledge that it's already lost – or at least – can never be truly won. In the boxing match of life, I've seen nobility in merely making it to the next round – which may be the best foreseeable future for Old Sterling (I love this contradiction in terms!).

Even with the above concerns, it's gratifying that the scythes of modern construction have either paused or diverted their efforts from these frail reminders of what once was; I also gain reassurance in the valuation of time – the fact that, not all, but some – still place great importance on using the past as a practical learning tool – to compare the paths taken by others, in other times – by plane, train or the hoof – with our own.

Can we maintain this current method of travel – and – can we 'get there' from here? Until I have more answers to all this wonderment – or, maybe just more (or deeper) questions – I'll keep visiting places like Ruritan Circle in Sterling – and others, totally unlike it – trying to come to grips that we're simply here, now.

TERRY'S AUTO SHOP, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

– is what Terry Martin is all about.

He has been involved with Upper Loudoun Little League, is a strong supporter of western Loudoun schools, and has also been a big advocate for 4-H.

We asked Martin what motivates him. You seem to pride yourself in craftsmanship, and real quality work, we noted. "Have you always been in this business, and, where does that work ethic come from? Your reviews on Facebook are amazing!"

Terry responded by saying that "I started working at an early age, 12, and always worked hard and honest. I've been in the auto body business ever since I started working. My first job was as a helper in an auto body shop."

In addition to "calming people's nerves, letting people know we will take care of it, and getting people back on the road," Terry's Body Shop is one of those small-town businesses that understands the value of family.

Daughter-in-law Jamie Martin is one of the body shop's biggest assets, as is

her husband Derek Martin.

"Terry's Body Shop is really a team," said Terry Martin. Each step in the process is important, he said, and we all have to work together to get each job done and done to a standard.

"Many people in the team are family, including my wife Glenda and son Derek. I think of everyone here as family ... and I treat them as so."

Terry and his crew and family are making plans to have his son Derek take over the reins of the Terry's Body Shop business in the coming years.

Sounds great.

She's so fine my 4-0-9 ...

She's so fine my 4-0-9 ...

My 4-0-9!

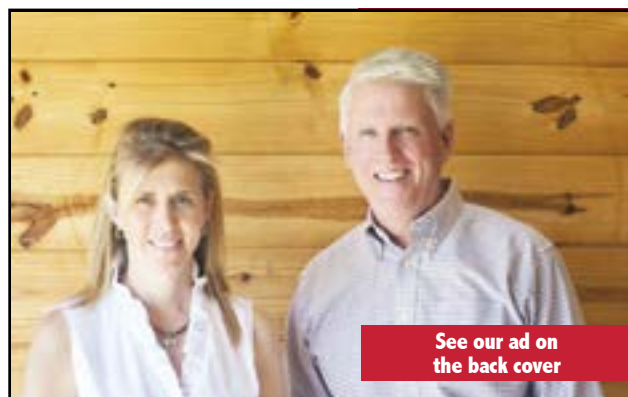
Here's to many more years of Terry's Body Shop.

Terry's Body Shop is located at 101 North Bailey Lane in Purcellville. The shop is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and closed on Sunday. Call 540 338-5500 for assistance with your very own 409 ...

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MOORE-SOBEL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

he was just one voice in a sea of others. It reminds me of what Dick Goodwin (played by Rob Morrow) says to his fellow lawyer at the end of the movie Quiz Show: "I thought we were gonna get television. The truth is, television is gonna get us."

Perhaps Fred Rogers didn't intend to transform television. Maybe he believed that changing the world didn't require more shows like "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood" to spring up. It's clear by Rogers' life that he believed he was called to live a certain way. To treat others with the dignity and value assigned to them by their Creator. It seems to me that Rogers wasn't setting out with the expectation that the world would inevitably conform to him; but neither was he willing to compromise his principles along the way.

Tom Junod asserts in his article that when it comes to Fred Rogers, "he lost." That as hard as Rogers tried to make the world a better place, the cultural discourse is still often one of discord. Indeed, much of the internet proliferates loathing and unkindness and, Mister Rogers' brand of "goodness" may

not exactly be winning the day.

Yet I am not so sure that Fred Rogers lost, as Junod claims. I wonder if the real legacy of Fred Rogers is the example of kindness and grace he gave to a world in desperate need of both. Is it possible that his life can serve as a call to action for those of us in the present?

Mister Rogers made kindness look easy, but perhaps that wasn't the case at all. Junod wrote that Fred Rogers was "a good man who worked very hard at goodness." Perhaps we can choose to do the same. To treat others like Mister Rogers did. To inject bits of love, grace, and kindness into every interaction. It won't be easy, and perhaps it will take work. But it seems to me that it will be worth the effort. After all, we never know what an act of kindness might accomplish – even if it is as simple as asking someone about his name.

Samuel Moore-Sobel used to watch "Mister Rogers Neighborhood" as a child. He treasures those memories, and wishes that Fred Rogers was still here to share his love with the world.

PHILLIP CLYDE BERNIER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

same time, a challenging task. Bernier was on "Team Bruno". And when that group won, Bernier followed up his victory with a recording contract with Hollywood Records.

Since leaving that record label, he has followed an independent music and motivational speaker career, performing nationally and internationally at festivals, theaters, churches, and schools. He also hosted the Miss Arizona Pageant.

Bernier is now a father of four and is associated with the Artist Bootcamp in Nashville, pursuing music, performance, and speaking engagements.

Bernier was in Loudoun County for Thanksgiving – he treasures his connection to the area, noted Logsdon.

"Music fans ready to get their Game Face on," continued the press release, are encouraged to "[c]heck out this first-of-its-kind song experience [at] www.GameFaceSong.com.

Game Face song experience

Music fans "ready to get their Game Face on," and listen to Loudoun County native Phillip Clyde Bernier can go to www.GameFaceSong.com.

A promotional press release says that The Game Face Song Experience includes the following exclusive content:

- The Experience and Instructions to Launch It
- Full HD and Instrumental Versions of the Game Face Song
- A Behind the Inspiration Video About Game Face
- Photos of the Artist and Lyrics to the Song
- Artist Web Links
- A Live Stream Performance of the Song*

*As a bonus to anyone who purchases the Game Face Song Experience by January 1, 2020, the purchase will include a live-streamed performance of the song and dance choreographed by Phillip. Announcements will be made in mid-January to Game Face fans, and the live performance will be streamed to them using the Guiding Star app in late January.

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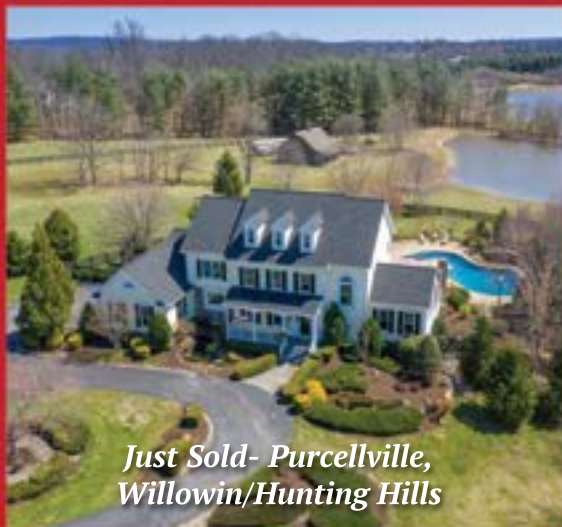
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