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Today

Loudoun's Black History Matters

Learning about the past helps us understand the present

BY LAURA LONGLEY

"It's always a question of education." L. Douglas Wilder, the nation's first elected black governor and former mayor of Richmond, recently told the Virginia Mercury. "The problem we have is that American history has never been taught to Americans. I am not talking about adding a black history course. I am talking about telling the damn truth in all our history about what has happened for the 400 years black people have been here!"

A Sense of Place from Loudoun's Past

No one experiences a place in the same way. We perceive a place through our own history and relationship to that place, including our racial and cultural experiences and those of our ancestors. That is why, when it comes to learning African American history and bridging divides, we have a lot of gaps to fill in.

And that is why the Blue Ridge Leader is dedicating this and our next two issues to Loudoun County's black history with the aim of shedding light on our community today. We hope you will use the information, links, and stories here as jumping off points for conversations in your classrooms, churches, and civic groups. This information comes primarily from the works and website of the Friends of Thomas Balch Library's Black History Committee, which provide countless links to primary sources – letters, laws, books, articles, advertisements, maps, tours, prints, and photographs related to life in Loudoun over the past 300 years. (See balchfriends.org/black-history-education-resources.)

"Twenty years ago," says Donna Bohanon, chairperson of the Black History Committee, "our group was formed by local historians, writers, and members 'to preserve, collect, promote, and

share the history of African Americans who contributed to the emergence and development of Loudoun County, Virginia.'

"Clearly, now is the time for the community to help us promote, share, and ensure that everyone in Loudoun County – from teachers to preachers, book club leaders to youth groups like the Boy Scouts – has access to the deep and broad knowledge readily available to them.

"We hope to take a lead in helping everyone understand how our history is a shared one."

A Glimpse into Loudoun's Black History

Available in the Committee's Black History Education Resources section of the website is "A Glimpse into Loudoun's Black History," an eye-opening look into Loudoun's black history. Included is the July 1820 issue

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VOTED BEST OF LOUDOUN

Affordable Housing

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

A multi-year process has given us a new "General Plan," often called the Comprehensive Plan or the Comp Plan. It's a state requirement and it addresses affordable housing *inter alia*. A "stakeholders' group" took the first crack at the plan, then sent it to the official Planning Commission. Developers and businesses had all but a few stakeholder seats, and a firm 6 to 3 majority on the Planning Commission. Groups pro and con said their pieces, and in the end the new developer-centric General Plan was approved by the Board of Supervisors.

However, General Plans are mere guides or ideas. They have no force of law and offer broad goals with little specificity. Force-of-Law status and implementation details will come from the new zoning ordinance that's now being written by County planning staff. The Board of Supervisors has been tackling various elements of the plan and giving staff

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Board okays study of public water and sewer into western Loudoun

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

On June 16 the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to approve a resolution brought forward by the Planning Department, to start the process of allowing Loudoun Water to push central water and sewer lines into the Rural Policy Area. The motion contained certain

limitations: Central water and sewer would only serve County-owned public facilities (fire stations and parks were mentioned, as well as schools) and then only if they are on parcels that adjoin the Transition Policy Area to the east. The vote also commits County Staff to identify future school sites. There was little

Board discussion of this second task.

The General Plan passed last year specifically "reaffirms a growth boundary beyond which central water and wastewater systems are not allowed." That growth boundary is the line where the Rural Policy Area and the Transition Policy Area meet. In other words, our new General Plan says that Loudoun Water will not be allowed to lay its lines into western Loudoun. Since Staff's effort contravenes the General Plan it wrote,

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Clemens swears in Purcellville Mayor and newly elected Town Councilmembers



Mayor Fraser gets a congratulations from Gary Clemens.



Clerk of the Circuit Court, Gary Clemens, swearing in newly elected Purcellville Town Councilmembers – Mary Jane Williams, Chris Bertaut, and Stan Milan.

On June 23 Gary Clemens, Clerk of the Circuit Court, swore in Purcellville Mayor Kwasi A. Fraser for his fourth term – along with newly elected Town Councilmembers Mary Jane Williams, Chris Bertaut, and Stan Milan.

Accompanied by his deputy clerk, Kim Walker, Clemens opened by saying that he loved coming to Purcellville, and pointed out that he grew up in Hamilton. “Even the small Town of Purcellville has significant issues to resolve and address for their constituents, so I thank you for the call to public service.”

Mayor Fraser said, “I was once asked, ‘Why

do you want this job?’ I think the question should be, ‘Why does this job want you?’ ” Fraser noted, “We are doing this for the people. We ran on a platform of slow growth, infrastructure improvements, and innovative solutions. We need to be accountable for whatever actions we make on this dais.”

Addressing the newly elected Councilmembers, Fraser said, “I am convinced you will make a mark, and four years from now you will look back and there will be a great legacy.”

The Town of Purcellville election bought out the highest voter turnout in the history of the town with a total of 2,723 voters.



Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser, pictured with his family, being sworn in.



Mayor and Councilmembers signing their oaths of office.

Volunteers fill the pantries

Friday at noon on June 19, in the parking lot of Fireman’s Field, Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser and Pastor Alphonso Irving of Agape Methodist Church arranged for the delivery of 2,000 boxes of dairy products from

De Lune Corporation to replenish the local food pantries. A big thanks to all the volunteers from the various food pantries and churches who came and lent a helping hand, and to Town

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A.V. Symington Aquatic Center to reopen on July 6

All interactive features will remain closed during Phase 3

The A.V. Symington Aquatic Center will reopen to the public on Monday, July 6.

In order to stay in compliance with Phase 3 of Governor Northam's Forward Virginia plan, all interactive features will remain closed. This includes the water slides, floating snake, and lily pad

crossing.

The lazy river will be open but no tubes will be permitted. Deck chairs will also be unavailable. Residents are encouraged to bring a blanket or their own chairs.

The pool will open to all town residents beginning at 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. for non-residents, seven days a week.

For more information, including rates, visit www.AVSAC.org or call the front desk at Ida Lee Recreation Center at 703-777-1368.

Shreve Mill Road construction complete; road open to traffic

Loudoun County officials report that construction on a portion of Shreve Mill Road from the Greenway to Evergreen Mills Road is now complete and open to all traffic. With the completion of the Shreve Mill Road realignment work, construction will now begin on a turn lane on Evergreen Mills Road to allow traffic to turn onto Shreve Mill

Road.

Motorists can expect intermittent, single-lane closures during construction of the turn lane. Drivers should use extra caution when traveling through the area and follow all directions from the posted signs and road crews. Construction of the turn lane is expected to be completed in late July.

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— Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider Psy.D.

Five tips to managing parental anger during COVID-19

While new cases for COVID-19 in Northern Virginia are reportedly lowering, the stress of the pandemic on parents still weighs heavy. The school year has ended, but our children and teens have started the summer off without camps, swimming pools, movie theaters, bowling alleys, play dates, etc. This has in turn put a lot of pressure on parents to keep everyone on schedule. Add to the mix, the demand to be there more physically and emotionally for our children, to be living together so closely, to be worrying more about our children's safety as they begin to leave the house, and to continue to try to accept the many uncertainties of the virus, it can altogether feel like too much to manage.



DR. MIKE

As a child psychologist in private practice, I've spent the last few months supporting children and teens through the pandemic, and I've also been helping parents who are feeling stressed, overwhelmed and burned out. Many of the parents I see have told me that they are losing their temper and yelling at their children in ways that they hadn't before. Overreacting to our children with anger is never a good thing, but we are human and this has been an especially difficult time.

Why anger? Anger is sometimes referred to as a secondary emotion because we rely on it to protect ourselves from rawer and more primary emotions that at times are difficult to experience or express with vulnerability, fear, humiliation, frustration, rejection, disrespect, pressure, etc. I offer the following five tips to help parents to manage their anger as we head into summer.

Take care of yourself. With all of the stressors coming at us as parents these days, self-care needs to be a priority more than ever. Exercising, sleeping well, drinking in moderation, carving out alone and supportive adult social time, and sticking to other healthy habits that matter to you, is important to do on a daily basis.

Have a routine for your children and practice it with consistency. Getting control over what you can get control over should also serve to keep emotional upset down. Even though we are in Phase 3 in Northern Virginia, our children are still going to be at home a

lot this summer. Everyone does better with structure, so putting together a daily plan that supports balanced activities for our children is a good idea. I'm a big fan of separating the day out into three parts where your children have a morning, daytime and evening routine. Parents can also put chores and responsibilities on the sheets.

Strive to have reasonable expectations. Frustration can quickly lead to anger when we feel that our children are not on top of what they should be. Yes, being productive and organized is good for our children, but with the world upside down, being tolerant and flexible is important too. So when it comes to a messy bedroom, stacks of dirty dishes in the sink, way too much screen or technology time, etc., instead of reacting with upset or anger, try to find the compromised win-win.

Celebrate your children's successes. Children and teens can become more emotional during times of uncertainty, and it's also not uncommon for them to emotionally regress or act-out when they're feeling unsafe, which can be stressful and upsetting for parents. It's important for parents to focus on the good with their children and to high five or give big hugs when your children do well. Creating a daily list of the good things that your children do is a loving way to acknowledge their victories, and it will put you in a positive frame of mind.

Breathe. This isn't going to be the summer your children imagined for themselves and that can be upsetting to you as parents. While you can't make COVID-19 go away quicker, you can do the best that you can in being patient, compassionate and loving – and you can also do the same for yourself. When it all becomes too much for you emotionally, there's no shame in admitting that, and returning when calm. We've all needed to take a lot of deep breathes since the start of this, and we will likely need to continue to do that this summer. Here's to having a great summer.

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

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Annus Horribilis

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

The Queen of England seems pretty boring, as does her extended family. (One of her sons was a pal of pedophile Jeffery Epstein and possibly thought that his life was exciting, but since being outed and ousted, “boring” fits him, too.)

One year - 1992, I think - brought the staid Queen more excitement than she wanted. Three royal marriages failed, Windsor Castle suffered a huge fire and Fergie had her toes sucked. Ever the erudite, she called that year an “annus horribilis.”

That Latin translates easily: “Horrible Year.” So far, 2020 has been such a year.

Disease X

It didn't start that way. January and February were milder and drier than usual. We Americans were vaguely aware of COVID 19. Then it hit us, slowly at first, then it

was afire.

Disease X is a fairly recent term for a hypothetical novel pathogen of high transmissibility and lethality. Sparked by newish nightmare viruses such as Ebola, Lassa Fever, Marburg and other hemorrhagic fevers, the medical-government alliance created the concept of a Disease X to form and test responses to potential new pandemics. Aside from the planning and preparations it wanted to prompt, the Disease X concept tempted epidemiologists and other scientists to speculate on what the disease itself might be. A new strain of Ebola? Nipah Virus outbreaks beyond its Malaysian home? An undiscovered filovirus or arenavirus?

Then the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the technical name of the virus, not the disease caused by that pathogen) got loose in Wuhan, China and sickened people with the COVID 19 disease. (China has been very

opaque about how this happened. That's worrisome.) There was speculation that COVID 19 was Disease X. Probably not, but it has stressed the world's medical resources beyond that imagined by epidemiological modelling. A ban on flights from China, then on flights from other countries. The first American death was February 6 in Seattle but by that time a coronavirus task force had been established, Americans were being evacuated from the Wuhan area, and the world began expecting something awful.

Awful had arrived.

Depression

March brought depression. Quarantined. Locked-down. Familiar activities and businesses no longer available to us. Cautions about meeting with others. Face masks. Social distancing. Tension began to build, and has only abated somewhat despite current re-openings. No one knew how long these restrictions - or the virus - would last. For some 115,000 Americans, the restrictions were permanent.

At least spring was around the corner.

Except it never arrived. Instead of sunshine and flowers, March and April were miserable, too cool, too windy, constant sporadic rain. Prozac might have helped. Thank Heaven for Gas Station Thai's take-out in Leesburg.

March and April also brought the worst economic news possible. Countrywide lockdowns sacrificed a quarter or more of the economy. Unemployment leaped from record lows to highs reminiscent of the 1970's worst days. Many businesses had to shut down, a lot of them forever. Were it not for our pre-COVID economic strength, the disaster would have been worse. At least some two million American lives were saved. The media should have led us in celebrating that.

There are signs of recovery as life begins to reopen but politics could bedevil things. Partisanship has no place when all of us face such unpleasantness and risk. That sounds proper, but in Washington petty politics prevails as America tears itself apart, night after night.

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



— It Seems to Me —

Don't touch that door handle



Copper covered push bar and pull bar on a restaurant door

BY JOE LAFIANDRA

If you touch a door handle you have a good chance of contacting the Covid-19 virus placed there by the last person who had the virus. The number of persons daily touching a door handle or push bar can be in the hundreds if for example, the door is an entrance to a school, retail store or a bathroom.

So, what do you do? You still have to pull or push the door open to get in or out of where ever you wanted to go. I will answer that question after you understand the threat to your health that opening the door by touching the handle of the door presents. The good news is that recent advances in door hardware technology has come to the rescue by killing the virus on frequently touched surfaces.

Before I discuss this technology, you have to understand how Covid-19 is transmitted from person to person.

I am sure most of you know that the main way the virus is transmitted is by airborne droplets from one person to others by coughing, sneezing, singing or even speaking in an enclosed or poorly ventilated area. When enough of the virus that is floating in the air enters your lungs or deposits itself on your nose, mouth, or eyes, you will become infected. Another way the virus can infect you is by physical contact. If you touch a surface that the virus has settled on, and then touch your face, there is a good chance you will become infected.

The Covid-19 coronavirus is similar to other corona viruses such as the common cold, SARS, and MERS. Numerous studies have shown that the coronavirus can persist on non-porous surfaces for great lengths of time.

A study published in 2015 entitled “Human Coronavirus 229E Remains Infectious on Common Touch Surface Materials” in the online research journal, *mBio*, describes how long this corona virus remains active on glass, plastic, ceramic, rubber, stainless steel, nickel plated steel, copper, and copper alloys (brass, etc.). On all of the previous listed materials

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Purcellville, thank you!

Dear Editor:

Thank you to all the voters in Purcellville for electing us to represent you as Mayor and members of the Town Council. We are grateful that you have placed your trust in us, and we pledge to work hard on your behalf.

We four ran campaigns we can be proud of, focusing on the issues vital in Purcellville: addressing growth, reducing taxes, spurring innovation, and retaining our small town charm. Many of you have reached out in thanks that we ran a campaign based on facts, transparency, and respect. Together we can shape a community that reflects and stands up for those values.

Thank you, too, to everyone who made phone calls and talked to friends on our behalf. We appreciate the effort you all put into our campaigns, and adjusting to campaigning during a pandemic.

Thank you, especially to our families. We couldn't have succeeded without you.

To all the candidates, we thank you for participating in the democratic process. Our town is better for it.

We pledge to work hard to keep Purcellville safe, focus on slow growth while preserving the past, and unify our community with strategic planning and fiscal responsibility.

Thank you.
Mayor Kwasi Fraser, Town Councilmembers
Chris Bertaut, Stan Milan, and Mary Jane Williams.

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Fox Ridge Park (South)

BY TIM JON

They changed it; for the past couple of years I've watched the activities and progress of a public works project at one of our local open spaces, not really sure what all the fuss



JON

was about: digging, fencing, creation of paths, erection of signs, and then a return to everyday recreation use.

Now, I'd already visited the 'other side' of Fox Ridge Park (containing the ballfield and sheltered seating area) a couple of years back — ending up with a vision of a long-ago barbecue halfway across the country; I always planned to someday walk the ground on the southerly portion of this space, and found myself here one morning after my interest had peaked — regarding those new improvements I'd watched coming in over recent months.

Whereas, before all the aforementioned activity here, this section of the Park seemed to pretty much consist of an open field with a bit of a 'dip' in the middle, surrounded by the tree-lined W and OD Trail, nearby



(and nearly ubiquitous, in Loudoun) housing, the familiar Catocin Circle — and the other — North, side of the Park.

The recent public improvements actually seemed to create more of a formal 'pond,' or stormwater reservoir, with a bit of a 'swing' or meander to it — shouldered by erosion-preventative banking and rocky rip-rap — and even some formal culverts for more controlled drainage. One of the new signs at the site explains that this design should help purify run-off water on its eventual way to the Potomac River — which is, after all, a main source of that liquid stuff that comes out of our taps at home.

Another sign (stick with me, now) designates specific 'no-mowing' areas for more natural habitat — allowing wildflowers and grasses to mature, go to seed and replenish the surroundings with more of the same. Signs tell visitors about the purple martin houses — set up to encourage these colony-nesting birds to start calling this part of Fox Ridge Park their home — oh, and by the way — help themselves to an all-you-can-eat mosquito buffet!

Other signs explain that the natural greenery popping up around the new and improved pond should attract monarch butterflies to start using the Park to lay eggs, grow caterpillars and house their chrysalides (yes, that's the plural!) for the emergence of baby monarchs. More signs just across the way along the W and OD Trail tell part of the story of the railroad that formerly ran up and down this corridor (still boggles the mind that the train system was scrapped at a time when at least some far-seeing individuals should have envisioned an eventual need for the thing!) — all the way from Washington out to little, old Bluemont.

And then, there are the signs that tell about the 'bat boxes.' Holy Houdini: Bat Boxes? Yes, Robin, it seems the Town of Leesburg — at least in this portion of Fox Ridge Park — is in what we could formally call the Bat Business. Formal signage at the site confirms that these

devices — not created by the beloved Alfred, but genuine, certified experts in building homes for these flying critters. For the squeamish among us who may wonder why on earth anyone would want to actually attract

bats, of all things ('Ooh, they'll get in my hair!') I ask: "Ever wonder what a bat eats?" The famous 'Bat Box Sign' at Fox Ridge Park calls these little darlings "Nature's Pest Controllers," and claims that each of these flying mammals can catch and consume up to 600 mosquitoes in an hour.

Wow. If I ever get into a bug-eating contest, I want some of these guys on my team. Anyway, these boxes can reportedly offer daytime (and possibly winter hibernation) shelter for a squadron of chiroptera — in addition to providing fodder for endless 'Batman-related' humor. Wonder where Robin sleeps.

But, I hope the Town's plan for the pond, and the vegetation, and the bird houses and the rest works the way they envision; it may encourage a few extra creatures to utilize the space, and offer visitors a little natural companionship as they traverse the little paved bridges and walkways and take in the air throughout the years.

But Bat Boxes: who would've thought?

What I learned from Bob Iger

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

Bob Iger's career almost ended before it had hardly begun.

"You're no longer promotable," a supervisor told him early in his career.

Years later, as he vied for the top job at The Walt Disney Company, he was told a variation of the same thing. "You need to leave," Jeffrey Katzenberg told him. "You're not going to get this job."

Yet Iger defied the odds, serving as CEO of The Walt Disney Company for 15 years before stepping down in February 2020. Perhaps, one doesn't need to be des-

tined for greatness to achieve it.

In *The Ride of a Lifetime*, Bob Iger writes on business and leadership. In the Prologue, he outlines his ten principles of "true leadership." While they are all impactful, two especially resonated with me. "Optimism," in his words, is "a pragmatic enthusiasm for what can be achieved." The reason for the importance of optimism is because a leader's actions impact others. Later in the book, he outlines the importance of adopting an optimistic attitude. "The tone you set as a leader has an enormous effect on the people around you," he writes. "No one wants to follow a pessimist."

Iger expounds on this principle by detailing his time working for the brilliant yet irascible Boone Arledge at ABC Sports. He describes Boone as a "relentless perfectionist," who believed that "perfection was the result of getting all the little things right." It is clear Iger deeply respected Boone, but recognized the pitfalls of his management style. "Most of us who worked for Boone wanted to live up to his standards, but we also knew that he had no patience for excuses and that he could easily turn on anyone..." Such a work environment can be toxic, and zap employee motivation to perform. Iger, for his part, chose a different path: "When I was given the chance to lead, I was instinctively aware of both the need to strive for perfection and the pitfalls of

caring only about the product and never for the people."

Iger's attitude is striking, especially for someone of his stature. It's rare to find a CEO who cares so deeply about their employees. In the end, his care and compassion actually aided his business interests. Throughout every Disney acquisition (which allowed Iger to negotiate with the likes of Steve Jobs and George Lucas, among other impressive figures) one guiding philosophy was at the heart of all he and his team accomplished. He writes: "If you approach and engage people with respect and empathy, the seemingly impossible can become real."

Iger has had a remarkable career, especially in light of the obstacles he faced. Even after being promoted to COO of The Walt Disney Company, he was held at arm's length by then-CEO Michael Eisner. While he handles such chapters with grace, it would be impossible to ignore the frustration he likely felt at being underestimated at every turn.

Yet even during the lowest parts of his career, he was doing his best to learn all he could. To develop himself as a leader, even when he wasn't getting a chance to lead. To keep quietly proving those who doubted him wrong, by showing up every day and working as hard as he could to become the leader that he wanted to be. He had mentors and coaches along the way, and shares the ways in which he sought wise counsel throughout the long arc of his career. Yet, in the end, Bob Iger's success was up to him. And I get the impression that he worked at it with all his might.

As I read *The Ride*, a line from the movie *Quiz Show* came to mind. In explaining the meaning of Don Quixote, Professor Van Doren tells one of his students, "If you want to be a knight, then act like a knight." It might sound simple, but for those of us who have aspirations for more, such a concept can help us use the time in waiting as wisely as possible. To learn all we

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Social Security and Retirement: Claim Benefits Sooner or Later?

When it comes to Social Security and retirement, you may have conflicting viewpoints: On the one side, you hope to start collecting your benefits as soon as you're eligible—after all, it's your hard-earned money. On the other side, you know that, if you wait, your monthly benefit amount will increase.

While it does make sense to wait as long as you can, Rob Arthur, First Vice President/Manager of the Federal Benefits Consulting



RICH RICCI

Group, Wells Fargo Advisors, recommends you re-evaluate your situation every year in retirement before deciding whether to continue delaying getting benefits. One item you need for that annual retirement review: a current copy of

your Social Security benefit estimate from ssa.gov. This provides personalized estimates of future benefits based on your real earnings and lets you see your latest statement and your earnings history.

Here, Arthur outlines a comparison of claiming now vs. later, and offers key considerations as you review your strategy each year.

Comparison: Claiming sooner vs. later. Let's start with a hypothetical example: John Doe was born in 1960 and was earning \$200,000 a year when he retired. He decided to start receiving Social Security benefits as soon as he became eligible at 62, or five years before he would receive full retirement benefits. His monthly benefit in today's dollars is \$2,106. If he had delayed receiving benefits until he was 70, he'd receive \$1,700 more a month, or \$3,806. And he would make up for the eight-year delay in not taking any benefits in about 10 years. And because one out of every four 65-year-olds today will live past age 90, according to the Social Security Administration¹, the long-term benefit could be substantial.

Make wellness a deciding factor. Your health can play a big role in helping determine when you should start taking benefits. Do your loved ones live long lives, or has everyone succumbed to illness before age 65? "It's not the most accurate indicator of what's going to transpire in the future, but it can have some bearing," Arthur says. "If you're in reasonably good health, that counsels in favor of waiting," he continues. "If you're in poor or guarded health, that counsels toward drawing benefits sooner rather than later."

Do you have enough income? Another key factor is having other sources of income to live comfortably in retirement without needing Social Security benefits. He says you should consider the guaranteed rate of

return Social Security offers: 6.25% (plus a cost-of-living increase). That's better than the guaranteed rate of return available in today's market.

Considerations for married couples. Arthur advises married clients to look at multiple factors when determining the timing for each spouse to claim Social Security benefits. For example, if your spouse is working full time and you're working part time or seasonally, his or her Social Security benefits may be dramatically higher than yours. It's still wise for both of you to wait, if possible.

"Not only does it increase the size of the benefit that the higher-earning individual personally receives, but it also increases the size of what's known as the survivor's benefit that the lower-earning spouse could draw if the individual passes away," Arthur says. Keep in mind that the current average life expectancy of a 65-year-old man is 84 years, while a woman that age can expect to live until age 86, according to the Social Security Administration¹.

What about taxes? When it comes to when to claim Social Security benefits, Arthur advises his clients not to focus primarily on the tax ramifications. "The vast majority of people that I counsel, their marginal tax rate in retirement will be fairly constant," Arthur says. "If retirees were to take their Social Security benefit at 62, what I typically see is their marginal tax rate is exactly the same or approximately the same as it would be if they claimed the benefit at age 70. I want them to focus instead on maximizing the net cash flow over the remainder of their lifetime."

Wells Fargo Advisors does not provide tax advice. You should discuss specific Social Security claiming strategies with your own financial professional prior to making any final investment or planning decisions.

This article was written by Wells Fargo Advisors and provided courtesy of Richard Ricci – Financial Advisor in Washington, D.C. at (202) 364-1605.

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¹ <https://www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html>

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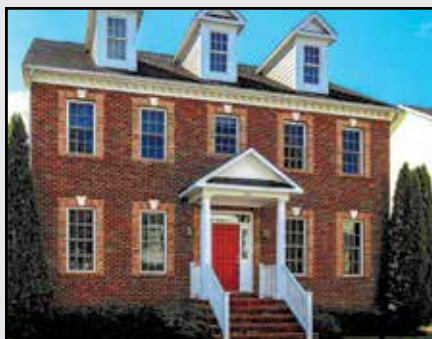
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Now here's a country house to crow about

BY LAURA LONGLEY

Rarely do we recommend a property beyond the borders of Loudoun County, but this beauty on Chicken Mountain Road in Orange County is worth a 90-minute trip. Hey, you can even make it a historic journey by detouring to James Madison's recently reopened Montpelier, just 7 minutes down the valley.

REAL ESTATE

Flawlessly constructed in 2000 of rough-hewn, reclaimed wood, the house, which is part log cabin, is surrounded by 100 breathtaking acres with a pond and lush green fields. Add to that the thousand-plus acres in conservation easement next door and there's no need to worry about noisy neighbors unless you decide to raise a flock of Rhode Island Reds or Plymouth Rocks.

The house features four bedrooms, four baths, and a large back porch and terrace for family entertainment. The two-car garage includes guest quarters while the five-stall, state-of-the-art horse barn has a tack room, feed room, wash stall, and two-bedroom apartment. A shed next to the barn stores equipment for tending the four fenced fields. The price is \$3.2 million.



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Aberdeen application – “Let’s get to it and get it done” – Councilmember Ryan Cool

BY VALERIE CURY

Nutrient and carbon credits were a major topic of discussion in Purcellville’s recent election cycle. The essence of these nutrient and carbon credits: monetizing nature’s environmental services. Proponents of these programs say they are good for the Town’s coffers and greenspace.

The 189-acre Aberdeen property, located near the water treatment facility northwest of the Town on Short Hill Road, was purchased by a previous administration in 2009 for \$2.17 million, and has since been sitting vacant, generating no revenue. Town Council thus saw this property as a great candidate for the nutrient credit program – with the added benefit of potential carbon credits down the road.

At the December 2019 Town Council meeting, the Council unanimously supported moving forward with ACRE, a company specializing in the sale of both nutrient and carbon credits, to work with Town staff to complete an application to lock in a high rate for the future sale of these credits at the Aberdeen property.

Instead of partnering with a third party to complete the application – Town staff and management overlooked Council’s directive and decided to pursue the application process themselves. While they ultimately locked in a favorable rate, this came at a cost – approximately \$25,000. If they had partnered with a third party, already familiar with the nutrient trading market to fill out the application, some experts say this cost would have been noticeably diminished.

On June 23, the Town of Purcellville’s application was approved for the planting of trees on up to 93.38-acres of the Aberdeen property.

June 9 Town Council meeting

At the June 9 Town Council meeting, Mayor Kwasi Fraser and other members of Council, citing the already eight-month long process, called for timely action on the credit program.

Said Councilmember Nedim Ogelman, “I am serious about looking for ways to reduce our debt through projects like this ... I want to go out there and I want to get the information and move forward as prudently and as quickly as possible.”

Fraser suggested partnering with a third party to get the project moving

forward.

Purcellville Town Attorney, Sally Hankins, told Council that the application had been submitted. She also said that due to recently passed legislation, the Town cannot manage the program – it has to be managed through a third party. However, Council’s prior directive already instructed staff to work with a third party.

Hankins added, the Town could get \$1.3 million in revenue from the program, if 93 acres were planted and the nutrient credits were sold.

She gave estimates of the Town’s share of the revenue ranging from \$200,000 to \$600,000. However, this conflicts with ACRE’s original revenue sharing proposal of a 70/30 split, with the Town getting approximately \$700,000.

Hankins said the credits can be sold “generally speaking two to five years after planting occurs. Those revenues are not tomorrow. They do take a while to establish.”

The customary process is as follows: the credits are released after plant verification, and the credits are sold – either all at once or over time. The process takes less than a year. Carbon credits start in three to five years and can continue for 40 years.

“So, what I’m recommending is that we continue to have conversations to understand what the legislation means, that could include getting an interpretation from the attorney general,” said Hankins – again referring to whether third party management is required.

“We can lobby the general assembly to re-look at this law that they passed.”

Fraser asked, “Why would we want to go the route of doing our own [management of the project] when we could use ACRE, potentially getting \$700,000 to \$1 million in net revenue?”

He requested that Hankins put out a Request for Proposal to find a company to manage the nutrient credit program. Replied Hankins, “An RFP is a lot of work ... I was going to propose we just make some phone calls.”

Council Member Ryan Cool pointed out that federal and state governments commonly use RFPs. He added, “some of them never come to fruition ... but I think that much like there being no market for another cell tower proved to be nonsense, there is a market for this ... I think the third-party route is the way to go. Let’s get to it and get it done.”

Parting Town Councilmembers Cool and Ogelman offer advice to new council

BY VALERIE CURY

“Don’t pander or sugar coat your positions. People want leadership. Maintain your independent thoughts, most importantly your core values ... Your core values should be the same today as at the end of your term.” Those were among the words of advice to the newly elected Purcellville Town Councilmembers, Chris Bertaut, Mary Jane Williams and Stan Milan, by outgoing

GOVERNMENT

Town Councilmember Ryan Cool on June 23, as the old council wrapped up its last meeting. He and fellow outgoing Town Councilmember Nedim Ogelman presented a united front, urging the new council to continue innovative slow growth policies. Neither Cool nor Ogelman ran for re-election.

Cool pointed out that the job of serving on the Town Council is “not about your ego and relevance; you are here to serve for the greatest good for all the cit-

izens, not your personal benefit.”

Cool said, “It’s imperative that you take all the data and facts along with what you promised, and deliver a stance.” Referring to the tremendous pressure from the development community and other special interest groups, Cool said, “You cannot sit on the fence during your time on council. You have to take a position and defend it. Sometimes that may result in making some people angry; but remember, if you want to be

everything to everyone, you are in the wrong business.”

Cool finished by saying, “I look forward to supporting your efforts.”

Parting Councilmember Nedim Ogelman said, “Representative government depends on giving citizens a clear choice – a clear voice by telling them what you will do, and then doing your best, if elected, to do exactly what they asked of you,” he said.

“I tried, and hopefully I fulfilled this role. I said I would listen to the will of our citizens in 2016. Those citizens asked us to keep our Town from growing too fast,” he said. Ogelman added that the citizens also wanted to keep taxes from getting too high.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »

Aperiomics conducts Covid-19 tests in Purcellville

On Friday, June 19, Purcellville conducted its first drive-through testing for coronavirus, becoming the second program Purcellville has developed to ensure the health of the community. The Town has also launched a water treatment program to test for coronavirus in the local water supply.



In a partnership initiated by Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser, the Sterling-based biotechnology company Aperiomics administered both RT-PCR tests for active Covid-19 infection along with IgM/Ig

GOVERNMENT

antibody tests for Covid-19 to 156 people. The reason the two tests are done at the same time – the first with a throat swab, the second with a prick of the finger – is to achieve a more complete picture of a population. According to Dr. Crystal Icenhour, Aperiomics CEO and co-founder, “When you test for antibodies at the same time that you test for the virus, you can see how the virus has spread as well as who may have been exposed previously and is potentially immune to the virus.”

Among the 156 people tested outside the former Rite Aid store in Purcellville, 11 tested positive for antibodies, 4 tested positive for coronavirus, and 2 tested positive for both the virus and antibodies.

The Blue Ridge Leader asked Icenhour how someone could test positive for both the virus and antibodies.

“What you’re seeing is a progression,” Icenhour explained. “As the patient’s health improves, the number of antibodies increases to the point where they

are detectable in a test.” In the case of the two people tested in Purcellville, she said, they most likely were on the spectrum between early stage and later stage antibody development.

Aperiomics and Purcellville have yet to schedule another round of tests, which cost \$150 per person, but individuals can arrange for testing through their clinician. Medicare covers the tests as do many insurance companies. If you plan to take the tests, check with your insurer about reimbursement.

Icenhour added, “We believe that testing to learn the health status of a work environment helps employers, schools, universities, and other institutions establish confidence among employees and students that essential precautions are being taken for their well-being.”

Aperiomics can provide onsite Covid-19 and antibody testing for medical professionals, schools, municipalities, and businesses. For those that do not have an in-house health care office, Aperiomics can arrange for a mobile unit to visit their site.

To learn more or make testing arrangements, contact Amber King, Aperiomics clinical sales director, at aking@aperiomics.com.

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How to build a successful business? Start by mowing a median strip

Here in Northern Virginia a manicured lawn is a must if you are planning to sell your home or just keep up with the Joneses. And to be sure

BUSINESS

you make the right statement, it's best to consider not only the kind of mulch you use but also, yes, the color.

Of course, you can try the big box stores in hopes of finding the right product for the right look. Or you can check out a firm that its owners have built from the ground up.

Caroline Armstrong is a 21-year-old senior at Virginia Tech who has majored in marketing. But, she says, "I've learned more here working part time than I have in any class." "Here" is the Northern and Central Virginia company that her father, John Armstrong launched as Remington Mulch 32 years ago with his business partner, Ross Jones. The two met when they were mowing the same median strip.

"Dad was just out of William & Mary," Caroline explains. "He dabbled in real estate and then got into landscaping. What he discovered was a time-wasting process where you had to dump tree and brush waste in one location, pick up loose or bagged mulch in another, find firewood for customers in still another. And to buy or repair mowers and blowers meant a visit to a dealer or garage. He figured there had to be a better way to get a landscaping job done."

Since then Armstrong and Jones have built Remington Mulch, named for the tiny Fauquier County town of Armstrong's ancestors, into a company of four divisions operating at six locations. Today, they serve the region's landscapers, realtors, tree and brush removal firms, buyers of power equipment and firewood and homeowners.

The firewood is processed through custom-made equip-



ment the company commissioned from a firm in Italy that sent over its experts to assemble it. The firewood they sell isn't your ordinary firewood. The wood is truly seasoned and makes building a fire a dream. They have numerous selections for their kiln dried wood as well.

Meanwhile, many a local Boy Scout troop and other nonprofit groups have benefited from Remington's help. Besides providing them with mulch, the company offers tips on ways to market, sell, spread the mulch, and collect the money. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has forced numerous groups to cancel fundraising projects this year.

"Our businesses, however, have been able to remain open according to CDC guidelines and government regulations," Caroline Armstrong explained. "That's because most of our employees work separately, driving trucks, grinding mulch, and so on. They have little interaction, but those who are together in our retail sites wear gloves and masks and work behind a plastic shield."

In a country where few young people follow in their parents' entrepreneurial footsteps, Caroline plans to join her brother, Brent, her father, and his partner in the firm. She is already handling the company's marketing, including social media, advertising, and website development. Brent is managing the Springfield store.

For further information on Remington, the easiest way to access it is to visit any one of their websites - remingtonmulch.com, remingtonfirewood.com, vopec.com for Virginia Outdoors Power Equipment Company, and quailridgeproducts.com for Quail Ridge Products, a company selling wholesale bagged and bulked products - which is located in Fredericksburg. Remington Mulch is a one stop location for all your outdoor needs - including full house generators!

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Hillsboro extends full road closure to August 15



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The Virginia Department of Transportation has approved the Town of Hillsboro's request to extend the existing full closure of Rt. 9 in the Town through August 15, ensuring that no additional full closures will occur during the ReThink9 traffic-calming and pedestrian safety project in 2020.

GOVERNMENT

Hillsboro Mayor and Project Manager Roger Vance applauded VDOT's partnership in continued traffic analysis and evaluation of innovative work requests during the COVID-induced shut-down, which has significantly reduced area highway traffic. "In keeping with requests for extended lane closures, VDOT responded to allow us to maximize work during COVID-19 traffic reductions, Archer Western deployed multiple work crews to accelerate underground utility excavation and installation of encased duct banks and manhole vaults, communications conduit, stormwater structures, drains and crossings, sanitary sewer main and laterals."

"It's simply common sense and good governance to maximize productivity during this extraordinary time when traffic remains light, schools are closed, the weather is favorable, and we have extended daylight. And, as important as anything else, full road closure provides the highest level of safety for our workers, residents and motorists," Vance said.

"The construction schedule was originally built with two periods of full closure later in the year. The revised plan eliminates the need for these," Vance said. "Extending the full closure now

will lessen the project's impact on our area agribusinesses during their busiest fall season. Weather permitting, this action now may even afford us the opportunity to open the road to two-way traffic by late November, months ahead of schedule."

On May 4, an emergency full closure was implemented to address the public health emergency after the Town's old water main collapsed in April, requiring temporary above-ground piping. According to Vance, the water main installation and service connections are on track for completion by June 26.

"After realizing tremendous progress of all elements of the project under full closure," said Vance, "and with our contractor, Archer Western, adding work crews, extending work days to 10 and 12 hours during six- and seven-day work weeks to deliver exceptionally high productivity, we sought to extend the full closure—while traffic counts are at historic lows, with the condition that there be no additional full closures in 2020 and requiring certain critical-path elements are completed."

The Town, VDOT's Northern Virginia and Staunton Districts and Archer Western agreed to an updated aggressive schedule during full closure intended to ensure completion of key elements in August, months ahead of the original schedule, including utility duct banks and vaults, sanitary sewer main and laterals and the stormwater drainage system under Rt. 9. Both east and west roundabouts will be functional in early August, five weeks ahead of schedule.

While all of the agribusinesses along

400 Loudoun businesses receive \$5,000 Relief Grants

On June 23, Loudoun County Economic Development completed the random selections for 400 COVID-19 Business Interruption Fund grants, totaling \$2 million.

The fund was created by the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors and the Loudoun Economic Development Authority in April, and dispersed \$1.4 million to 201 businesses in its first round. After the county received CARES Act funding in May, the fund was replenished with \$5.7 million, approximately \$3.7 million of which went to fully funding eligible applicants from the first round.

For this round, the Board of Supervisors focused on businesses that have between zero and two employees. This is the largest segment of businesses in Loudoun County, and includes solo entrepreneurs, family businesses, and larger operations that rely more on independent contractors than employees.

Eligible applicants were able to show that they had less than \$2.5 million in gross annual receipts, had at least a 25 percent loss in revenue due to COVID-19, and were an appropriately licensed, for-profit business that was operational

in Loudoun County.

The grant recipients were randomly selected in a drawing at the Government Center, and the \$5,000 grants will be dispersed to businesses starting the week of June 29. Funding will reach all corners of Loudoun County and help support business operations across a wide swath of Loudoun's industries.

"Nearly 1,100 Loudoun businesses have a better chance of survival thanks to the proactive response of the Board of Supervisors and Economic Development Authority. The combined \$6.85 million in grants will go a long way toward protecting Loudoun jobs and rebuilding our economic future," Loudoun Economic Development Executive Director Buddy Rizer said. "As we look ahead to Phase Three of reopening, we will continue to identify funding opportunities and creative ways to support #LoudounPossible innovation. Our team is dedicated to working with all businesses moving forward."

"We at StageCoach Theatre appreciate how Loudoun County Economic Development has the interests of our small business community at heart," Jerri Wiseman expressed. Wiseman is the co-owner and executive producer of StageCoach

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »

Loudoun County Public Library branches reopen

After months of closure because of the coronavirus pandemic, Loudoun County Public Library branches reopened June 24, with limited services. All branches, with the exception of the Law Library, are open Monday-Thursday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., and Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. The Law Library is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Every location will operate at reduced capacity to help minimize the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19.

What library patrons should know: Face masks are required for all people 10 and older.

Patrons should follow directions on signs and floor markers to help ensure physical distancing of at least six feet. Computer stations are available by appointment. Patrons should call their local branch for more information. Computers will be sanitized between uses.

Printing and copying are available. Patrons are encouraged to check out materials at the self-checkout stations.

"We are delighted to welcome our customers back into the library," said LCPL Director Chang Liu. "My staff has worked diligently to create a safe environment for everyone."

For the safety of all, bins are available around the LCPL libraries where patrons should place items that they have handled but decided not to check out. Those items will be quarantined before being placed back on shelves.

In addition, Curbside Pickup service will continue during regular library hours at all branches except the Law Library.

Meeting rooms, study rooms, teen centers, and makerspaces will remain closed during Phase 2. Passport and notary services are also suspended during this time.

"We look forward to the day that we can resume offering our full array of events and services," added Liu. "Until then, please continue enjoying the wide variety of programs we're offering online."

For complete information, visit library.loudoun.gov/reopening.

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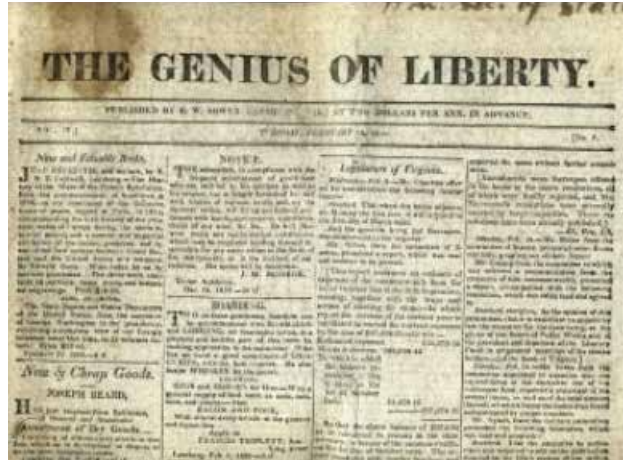
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LOUDOUN'S BLACK HISTORY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of The Genius of Liberty (below), a four-page newspaper that was published in Leesburg. This issue carries the usual news, but it also carries local farmers' classified ads for the return of their "property" with bounties to be paid to their capturers, often vigilantes. Chances are you'll recognize some of the farmers' names and their locales in these "Run Away Slave" advertisements. Many more are linked in the "Glimpse" section.



The Genius of Liberty published in Leesburg.

\$20 Reward.
LEFT home on the 11th inst. a Negro Man, named **DENNIS,**
 About 40 years of age, supposed to be about 5 feet 10 inches high, stout and strong, and not very black. Prominent upper lip, with rather a down look; when sober has but little to say. Has a plain scar over his left eye, and a very black mark across his nose. Scars on his back, having been publicly whipped. Had on a brown coat with a velvet collar, white linen shirt, pantaloons, and waistcoat.
 If said negro is secured 50 miles from home, so that the subscriber gets him again, the above reward will be given; if 30 miles Ten Dollars; and if 15 miles Five Dollars, with all reasonable charges.
Wm. Gilmore.
 Leesburg, June 26, 1821.—24 if.

William Gilmore's ad for runaway slave.

There is much more to learn from the work of other groups and individuals in Loudoun. You will find links to them on the Blue Ridge Leader website (blueridgeleader.com). We encourage all teachers, parents, businesses, municipalities, and the community at large to become acquainted with them.

It isn't necessary to dig into troves of records, however, because Loudoun's black history is all around if you just look. The Settle-Dean cabin, located in South Riding, and the Arcola Slave Quarters on farmer Charles Lewis's land, have been restored and are open to the public.

An "Inventory" of Lewis's estate, below, lists 25 adults plus children, valued at \$7,200 – less \$300 for those considered an "encumbrance." His holdings were far less than those of Oatlands Plantation owner Elizabeth Carter who at one time enslaved 128 people – the largest number held by anyone in the County. Should farmers need more help on the farm, they could at-

tend the auctions held on the grounds of the Loudoun County Courthouse. (See the Loudoun County Heritage Commission report on the Courthouse, link at blueridgeleader.com)

Slave auctions were held throughout the South, of course; one of the largest at the headquarters of Franklin & Armfield on Duke Street in what is today's Old Town Alexandria. In the November 2015 issue of Smithsonian Magazine, author Edward Ball describes the lucrative business Isaac Franklin and John Armfield launched in the 1820s, with Franklin based in Natchez, Mississippi, and Armfield in Alexandria.



Franklin & Armfield's slave pen in Alexandria.

With a signal from Natchez, writes Ball, "Armfield began vacuuming up people from the Virginia countryside." (The Commonwealth was the largest source – an estimated 450,000 – of these unfortunate souls.)

"It took four months to assemble the big 'coffle,' to use a once-common word that, like so much of the vocabulary of slavery, has been effaced from the language," writes Ball. "The company's agents sent people down to Franklin & Armfield's slavepens (another word that has disappeared) in Alexandria."



A coffle enroute to Natchez.

Ball goes on to describe an 1834 procession with Armfield at the front riding his horse, armed with a gun and a whip. "Other white men, similarly armed, were arrayed behind him. They were guarding 200 men and boys lined up in twos, their wrists handcuffed together, a chain running the length of 100 pairs of hands.

"Behind the men were the women and girls, another hundred. They were not handcuffed, although they may have been tied with rope. Some carried small children. After the women came the big wagons – six or seven in all. These carried food, plus children too small to walk ten hours a day. Later the same wagons hauled those who had collapsed and could not be roused with a whip. Then the coffle, like a giant serpent, uncoiled onto Duke Street and marched west, out of town and into a momentous event, a blanked-out saga, an unre-membered epic. I think of it as the Slave Trail of Tears."

Take a drive west on Rt. 50 through the charming villages and the green and rolling farmland, and imagine, for a moment that the time is July of 1820. Along the road you see those chained men, women, and children as they are marched and whipped past Mt. Zion Church, trudging through Adie, Middleburg, and Upperville, and climbing to Ashby's Gap where they descend over the Blue Ridge into the Shenandoah Valley. From there they would be forced to trek west and south 1,100 miles

to be auctioned and, most likely, separated from their families forever.

Until recently, writes Edward Ball, the Slave Trail was buried in memory. This is the time to bring it into the light – not just to look, but to learn the truth.

Yardley Taylor's Map

Same place, a world apart

Sometimes there is no better way to understand a place than to spend time with a map. For Loudoun County, the map to study is the now famous 1853 work of Yardley Taylor. It is so detailed – including not only the natural features of the landscape but also the names of villages, farmers, and roads – that it was used by both Union and Confederate forces during the Civil War.



Yardley Taylor Map

Let's focus for now on the short distance between Rt. 50 at Middleburg, and 13 miles north. Your eye should land on the village of Lincoln, then known as Goose Creek.

Yardley Taylor, mapmaker and nursery owner, was a Quaker – a member of the Society of Friends and a community leader. Along with Friends in nearby Waterford and Hillsboro, he is said to have been a "conductor" on what was later called the "Underground Railroad," which spirited runaways northward to the safety of Canada. The Goose Creek Quakers built Oakdale School, a one-room schoolhouse close to their Meetinghouse, to educate both Quaker children and the children of African American freed men, making Oakdale one of the first integrated schoolhouses in Virginia.

Visit the Lincoln Friends website. Another source for getting to know the Quakers of Lincoln is historian Lee Lawrence's compelling monthly blog called "nest of abolitionists."

A short walk from the 1735 stone meetinghouse and the 1815 structure now in use are two churches built by freed men and women with the assistance of the local Quakers – Mt. Olive Baptist Church in 1884 and Grace Methodist Episcopal Church in 1885. In 1872 they also constructed Lincoln Colored School, which employed a Quaker teacher.

By the time those churches and the school were built, the coffles of black men, women, and children were gone, no longer winding their way to Natchez and New Orleans. In so many ways, however, they had a longer, harder road ahead of them. And yet, with hope, resilience, and reliance on one another, they would also have successes ahead of them.

In August, with the Black History Committee's guidance, we will discuss African Americans in Loudoun during the Civil War and under Jim Crow. We will focus on their struggles for legal, economic, environmental,

Loudoun receives face masks from sister city and local business owner

Loudoun County officials hosted Taiwanese officials and the United States Martial Arts Academy's Grandmaster Eung Gil Choi, to receive gifts of 12,000 medical face masks to aid in the COVID-19 response, on June 23.

The brief presentation ceremony was conducted in a socially distant manner at the Government Center in Leesburg, and the boxes of masks were delivered to the county's Emergency Operations Center for distribution.

"As Loudoun County takes a responsible approach to re-opening the economy, the health and protection of our first responders, frontline workers and citizens remains of the utmost importance," said Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair at Large Phyllis Randall, who hosted the reception. "These incredibly generous donations illustrate the importance of Loudoun's relationships, both within our community and around the world."

The Taipei Economic and Cultural Association gifted 10,000 masks on behalf of Loudoun's sister city, New Taipei, Taiwan. It was the first official delegation to Loudoun from Taiwan since 2017, but underscored the importance of these international agreements.

"Taiwan cherishes its friendship with Loudoun County, and the Sisterhood relations between Loudoun County and New Taipei City. We hope the surgical masks can help the frontline health care workers in Loudoun," explained Paul Paohan Wang, senior executive officer of the Taipei Economic & Cultural Office. "Taiwan is providing humanitarian assistance against COVID-19, through a program called 'Taiwan Can Help and Taiwan Is Helping.'"

Through the program, Taiwan has donated more than 50 million facemasks and personal protective equipment around the world, including more than 10 million to U.S. federal and local governments since early April.

Loudoun County also received a generous donation of 2,000 medical face masks from USTMA's Master Choi, a Taekwondo ninth-degree black belt and a Loudoun business owner for more than 30 years.

"Loudoun County is my home. I know it's a small donation, but I want to do my best for those who work hard to keep Loudoun County beautiful and safe, especially at a time like

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 »

ROAD CLOSURE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

the Rt. 9 corridor are always directly accessible via the Local Hillsboro detour, Vance said the Town is committed to lessening the road construction impact during the peak fall tourist season. Beginning August 16, the project's "partial closure" phase will begin, which allows one-lane eastbound traffic from 4 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. weekdays to accommodate commuters, and then starting on Friday afternoons, one-lane westbound traffic through Sunday evenings, to accommodate visitors to area agribusinesses.

In addition, Vance said, "COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on all of our area small businesses." He said the Town continues to support and promote area businesses during construction by investing heavily in two "open for business" programs. The Town shared the cost with Loudoun County and Visit Loudoun, and included participation of the Chamber of Commerce, Greater Hillsboro Business Association and the Loudoun Heights Agritourism Council, to produce a web-based promotional campaign aimed at consumers, along with a companion "toolkit" to be used by each business to help travelers plan their visits. The Town has also produced and posted dozens of "way-finding" signs along the local detour

route to help visitors find their way to the area's wineries, breweries, farm stands, bed and breakfasts and restaurants.

Hillsboro Vice Mayor Amy Marasco, the project's Deputy Project Manager, said, "Extending the full closure has many benefits for motorists. It moves the project forward, it's safer and it also minimizes the hassles we've already experienced with the temporary water line installation under flagger operations, as that prompted queues lasting as long as 25 minutes because of alternating single-lane travel."

The Regional and Local Detour routes will continue to be in place during the extended closure timeframe. "The regional and Local Hillsboro detours have performed exceptionally well, with only minor incidents reported," said Marasco. "Law enforcement has told us that the public has grown accustomed to the detour." She added, "The detour routes were established, and safety improvements were made, to handle the full volume of traffic originally projected by VDOT to use the detour—with schools in session. We are grateful for the tremendous support we have received from State Police and the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office and Fire and Rescue for monitoring the detours and keeping them safe."

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VOLUNTEERS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Councilmember Nedim Ogelman.

Browning Equipment provided a forklift operated by Jim Hill, to off-load the products. The organizations in attendance were: Agape Methodist Church, Tree of Life, Christian Fellowship Church, Seven Loaves, The Salvation Army, Loudoun Hunger Relief, Capital Community Church, Round Hill United Methodist Church, Windy Hill, and more. Mitch from the Town of Purcellville Public Works Department was in attendance with an extra forklift – and led the clean-up.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

directions on what the Board wants in the new zoning ordinance.

Through its Transportation and Land Use Committee, the Board is now examining the issue of Affordable Housing. If the new zoning ordinance were to parrot the General Plan, here are a few of the things developers would get:

“An expedited permit process...”

“Explore offering free or subsidized public land to developers.”

“Explore the development of a proactive ‘public land for public good’ program that offers public property to reduce the cost of housing development by reducing or eliminating the land cost.”

“Reduce capital facilities proffers...”

“Higher densities planned in the Urban Policy Area outside the Metrorail Service Districts, Suburban Policy Area, and the Transition Policy Area.”

In country-talk from my native Georgia, those dogs won't hunt. They are too overtly greedy. However, developers' influence is great because they have set the political agenda: “We must have affordable housing and we developers can provide it.” Thus, the powers-that-be have been focusing on ways to incent developers to build affordable housing.

A Better Way

Developers want incentives like those above but most of all they want higher densities. When the affordable housing debate revolves around generating desired developer behavior, there is a high chance of failure. It simply creates another group which takes money from housing transactions and thus adds costs.

The focus must be on *people* who will buy or rent affordable housing, not on those who would construct it. This can be done using existing County programs. For example, there are three for buying a house: The Down Payment/Closing Cost Assistance

(DPCC) program, the Public Employee Homeownership Grant Program (PEG) and the Sponsoring Partnerships and Revitalizing Communities (SPARC) program. There are others for renters.

Expand these programs and create a Loudoun Housing Trust Fund that's large enough to be meaningful. Have it make direct housing subsidies to eligible individuals and let them decide where they want to live, whether they want to rent or buy and so forth. Details would be easily worked out. For example, if a grantee used the money to buy a home, when it later sold the grant money would go back into the main housing fund.

There are other benefits. For example, affordable units would be scattered about the county. That's far better than concentrating them in specific subdivisions or apartment complexes. (Doing this elsewhere in the country has effectively produced “instant slums” in some eyes, with sociological implications and harm to nearby property values.) Participating in the location decision is also more empowering for beneficiaries who then have more emotional skin in the game. The diverse scattering of affordable housing better seems to meet the County's vision for the future.

There are multiple ways to put money into the housing fund. One is to issue low interest rate municipal bonds. Another would be to affiliate with a charity and encourage tax-deductible donations. Here's what I'd like to see: The County should also explore adding significant surcharges on new residential and commercial construction and put that money in the new Housing Trust Fund.

The new Board ousted all but one of the old planning commissioners. It should not feel saddled with the decisions on the Comprehensive Plan made by those controversial people. The Board has the freedom to consider and form its own philosophy and goals for affordable housing. It should be imaginative and focused on those who use housing, not those who profit from it.

LAFIANDRA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

except copper and copper alloys, the virus remains active from 3 to 5 days. Think of that when you reach for that stainless steel door handle.

The short term answer to the question posed at the beginning of this article is; don't touch the door handle directly. Use gloves, a paper towel or disinfectant wipe between you and the door handle. The gloves should be then cleaned with a disinfectant wipe or liquid. If the door can be pushed open, do it with a cloth protected part of your body. As you can see, this is an awkward process when all you want to do is open a door.

The best answer to the question is to make the contact surface out of copper or brass so that any remaining virus from the last person who opened the door dies quickly. Copper and brass surfaces start to kill the virus within minutes, and destruction of the virus was seen in minutes or a few hours according to numerous studies.

Copper has the added advantage of killing other microorganisms such as the flu virus, Norovirus, common cold virus, flesh eating bacteria, deadly e-coli 0157:H7, nursing home bacteria c. difficile, and many others.

The copper surface after a while develops a brown-tan patina like a shiny copper penny does after it is handled. The oxidized surface still kills microorganisms although normal cleaning is recommended. Another advantage to using copper is the fact that the microorganisms can't mutate and develop resistance to copper. Copper is so toxic to microorganisms because it interferes with the basic chemistry of the microbe's life processes.

So, where do you get copper door handles? Replacement brass door knobs and small standard door handles are readily available at low cost from Home Depot, Lowe's or on line. Solid copper or brass push bars or pull bars unfortunately are not available.

Recently however, a company in Michigan, Great Lakes Stainless (website: greatlakesstainless.com), has come out with a product line of copper covers for standard stainless steel door push/pull bars, door plates and crash bars. These covers are readily available, easily installed, last for years and are reasonably priced (\$30 to \$55).



Horizontal and vertical copper covered push/pull bars

The photos show copper covered horizontal push/pull bars and vertical push/pull handles used in a typical entrance door environment. The company has a website, copperkillsit.com, which illustrates the current product line and the scientific studies that backup the claims. Incidentally, I have written about using copper tape to reduce virus transmission in some of my previous articles. While copper tape works, this is a cleaner and better looking solution.

In a recent local television interview, Great Lakes Stainless President Michael DeBruyn, said, "It's been known for some time that copper has antimicrobial properties. It's the only metal that is EPA registered. It starts killing any germs on contact and hours later, everything is dead on it. When I reach for a door handle now I say, oh man, I wish that was copper."

It seems to me that in this time of pandemic, we should use every means available to limit Cov-19 infections. Now that businesses, doctor's offices and schools are opening, people will be going in and out of buildings and touching door handles. Just one symptomatic or even a non-symptomatic person can infect hundreds. Now that a low cost way of reducing surface contact infection is available, there is no reason it can't be universally used.

Joe LaFiandra writes a regular column, "It seems to me" for the Blue Ridge Leader.

LOUDOUN FACE MASKS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

this," Choi explained. "I really love and appreciate Loudoun County with all my heart."

Choi has studied Taekwondo for more than 50 years and was the South Korean Special Forces Champion from 1975-1977. USTMA was the first school to teach martial arts in Loudoun, and Choi has been proactive in attracting other Korean businesses to

invest in the county.

"We are very appreciative of Master Choi's dedication to the Loudoun community, and look forward to growing our relationship with New Taipei City in the years to come," Loudoun Economic Development Executive Director Buddy Rizer said. "While the first half of 2020 will likely be remembered for its crises, gestures like these will help fuel our strong recovery into a bright, #LoudounPossible future."

Photos courtesy of Great Lakes Stainless

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PUBLIC WATER & SEWER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

a Comprehensive Plan Amendment (a "CPAM") will be necessary. Passing the CPAM will require a prescribed series of meetings and hearings and final approvals by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors.

While it was presented and discussed almost matter-of-factly by Supervisors, the water-and-sewer proposal is certain to face fiery opposition from western conservationists and anti-sprawl activists. One prominent conservationist privately explained that this was a classic example of "letting a camel get its nose inside the tent," implying that developers will "jump all over this" and find some way to get the west fully served by Loudoun Water. (His camel-tent analogy was shorthand to acknowledge that developers are patient, that they will nibble away towards tapping into public water and sewer, and will eventually wreak their havoc.)

The General Plan states affirmatively that it was the presence of central water and sewer that sparked the residential and commercial growth in eastern Loudoun.

Another leader in the land use battles has a more specific view. "You can make the case that by using Loudoun Water, the school system can choose less expensive sites that do not perc for wastewater or that lack water. This might save money."

She went on, "But I really worry about the language saying other County-owned facilities can also be served by Loudoun Water. We could end up with a web of water and sewer lines covering huge amounts of the west, and that would really increase development pressure."

Beneath the Surface

This plan may have been prompted by a 173-acre site at the intersection of Evergreen Mills, Ryan and Red Hill Roads. It was put under contract by the County in December 2019 "for future school/public use needs" according to an email from the school system. That email, dated last Saturday, further said that "LCPS has no cost comparison specific to public utilities and non-public sewer/water systems."

That admission prompts questions. Were water and sewer studies (i.e., test wells and percolation tests) done before contracting to buy the 173 acres? One would presume so, which leads to the next question: If that site had adequate water and sewer capability, why would Staff want to bring in Loudoun Water? From where did this idea arise? If it came from Staff, what prompted it to promote this plan? If it came from a Board member, who was it, and what was the motivation? Were any non-governmental people involved? (Specifically, real estate interests.) Will the school system do cost comparisons to see if Loudoun Water

Find us 24/7 at www.BlueRidgeLeader.com @blueridgeleader**LOUDOUN'S BLACK HISTORY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18**

and especially educational justice.

In September, for teachers and parents who are educating middle and high school students with in-school and remote learning, we'll share Virginia's "Essential Understandings" of black history and talk about Emancipation Day in western Loudoun. From 1910 to 1967, more than 1,000 members of Loudoun's black commu-

nity gathered on the Emancipation Grounds next to what was then Carver School in Purcellville.

Laura Longley is a content and website creator, former Washington Post editor, and tutor who uses the news to help teens write better. A resident of Loudoun for 25 years, she lives in Lincoln.

would be cheaper? If Loudoun Water is not cheaper than on-site water and sewer, will the CPAM be repealed?

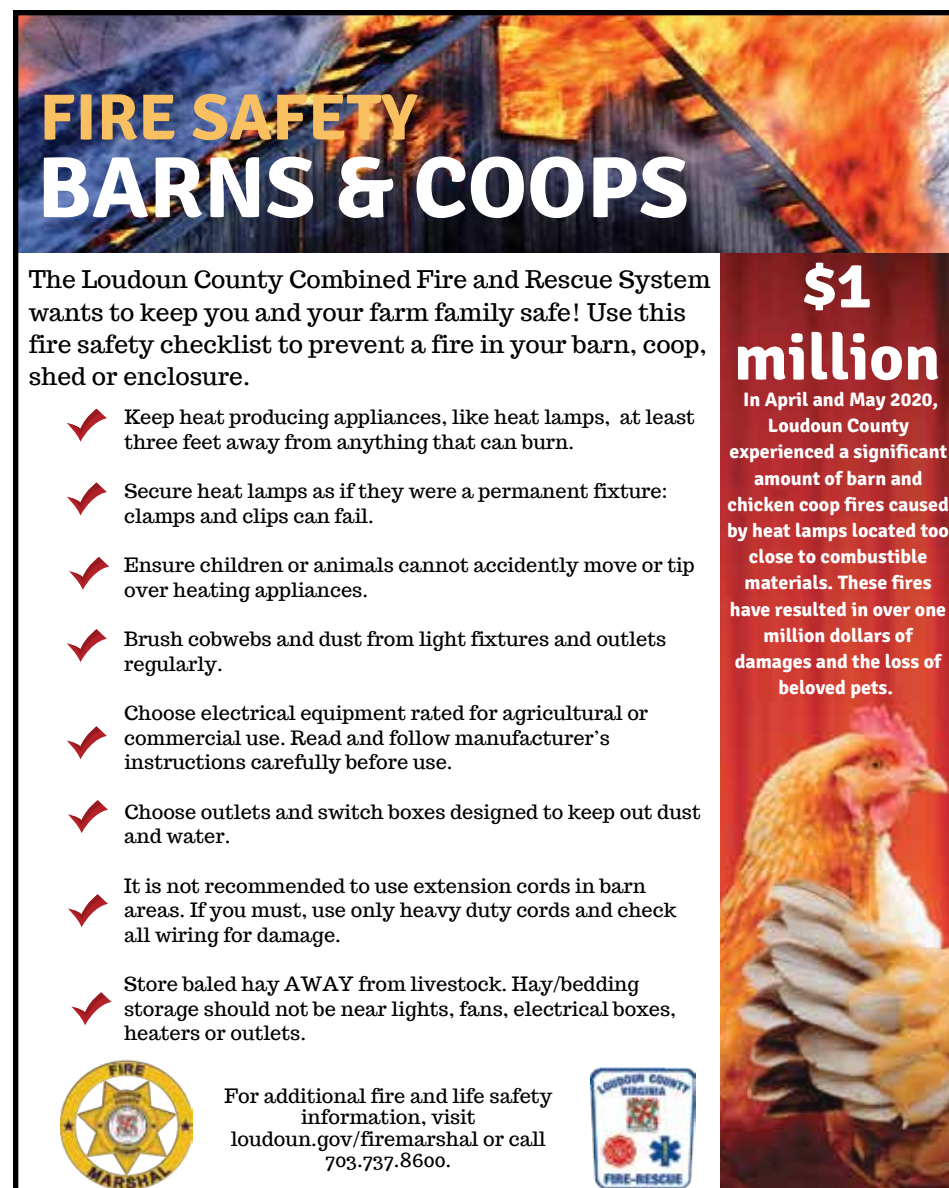
And more: Why wasn't this specific school site mentioned? What were the politics behind the motion? Clearly something caused Supervisor Tony R. Buffington (R-Blue Ridge) to add the constraining language that public utilities serve only County facilities, and only along the eastern edge of the Rural Policy Area. What was that internal debate?

This last question is monumental. Loudoun Water is a political subdivision of the state, not a department of the County, so are these constraints even binding on it?

MOORE-SOBEL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

can. To broaden our skills. To use the talents that we have in small ways, even if they aren't the ways we envision for ourselves. For, as Iger highlights when detailing his last principle for success (integrity), "Nothing is more important than the quality and integrity of an organization's people and its product...the way you do anything is the way you do everything." Even how you wait for a chance to lead.

Samuel Moore-Sobel is the author of Can You See My Scars? His book is available for purchase at Mascot Books.




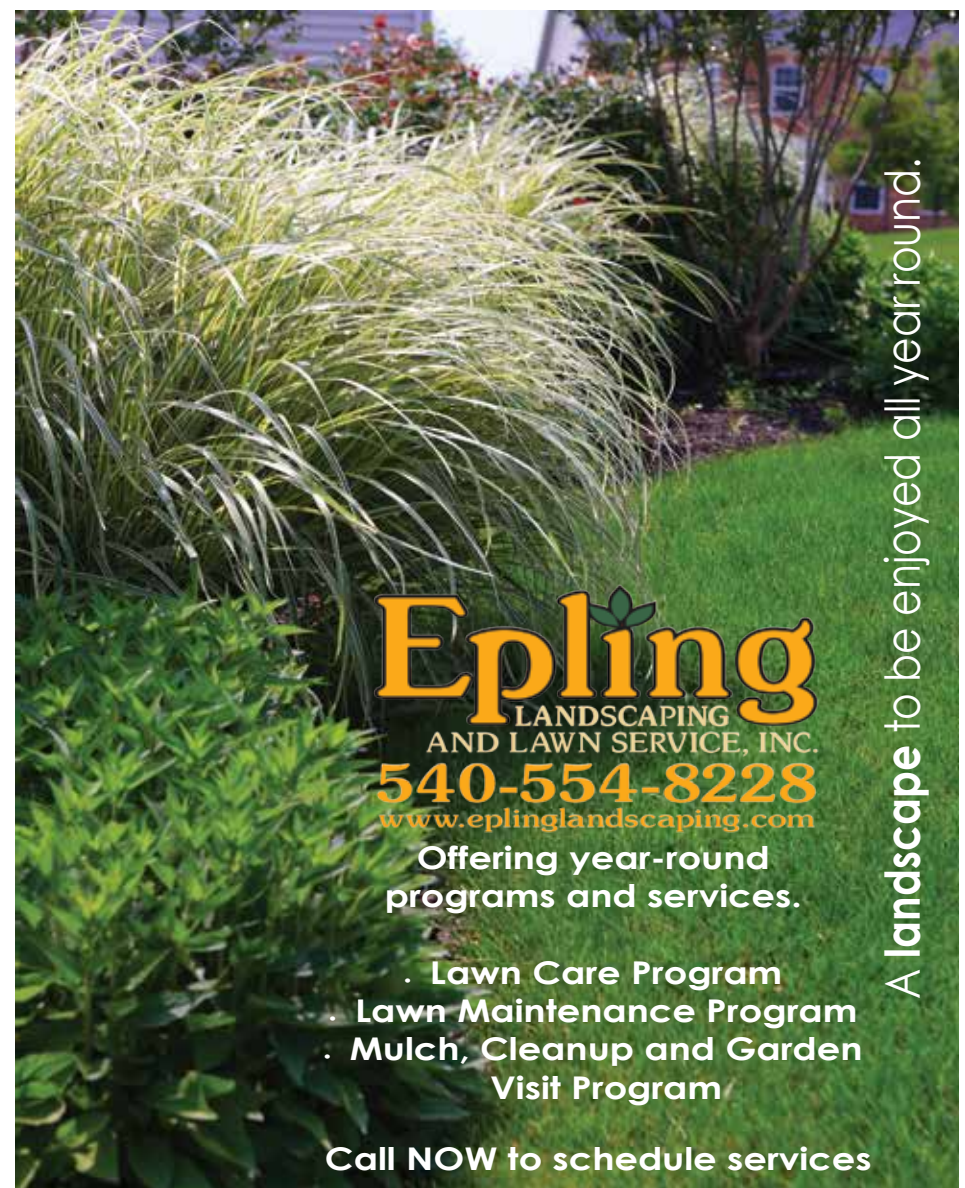
FIRE SAFETY BARNs & COOPS

The Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System wants to keep you and your farm family safe! Use this fire safety checklist to prevent a fire in your barn, coop, shed or enclosure.

- ✓ Keep heat producing appliances, like heat lamps, at least three feet away from anything that can burn.
- ✓ Secure heat lamps as if they were a permanent fixture: clamps and clips can fail.
- ✓ Ensure children or animals cannot accidentally move or tip over heating appliances.
- ✓ Brush cobwebs and dust from light fixtures and outlets regularly.
- ✓ Choose electrical equipment rated for agricultural or commercial use. Read and follow manufacturer's instructions carefully before use.
- ✓ Choose outlets and switch boxes designed to keep out dust and water.
- ✓ It is not recommended to use extension cords in barn areas. If you must, use only heavy duty cords and check all wiring for damage.
- ✓ Store baled hay AWAY from livestock. Hay/bedding storage should not be near lights, fans, electrical boxes, heaters or outlets.

\$1 million
In April and May 2020, Loudoun County experienced a significant amount of barn and chicken coop fires caused by heat lamps located too close to combustible materials. These fires have resulted in over one million dollars of damages and the loss of beloved pets.

For additional fire and life safety information, visit loudoun.gov/firemarshal or call 703.737.8600.

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HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Devil's Fortnight

From the 1970s through the 1990s, Detroit erupted every October 30 in waves of teen vandalism and arson. It was aptly called "Devil's Night." Eventually it ended, but Devil's Night remains a nasty reminder of many things violently out of control.

Twenty years later, this May 25, George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis policeman Derek Chauvin. Angry but peaceful protests understandably sprang up the 26th but by that night Devil's Fortnight began across a no-longer peaceful America.

I've protested before, I've found myself at the White House fence with people pushing up behind me, and I've felt a full dose of tear gas in the face. It was a badge of honor of sorts, and it was without burning and looting. Peaceful protestors, on their own, will not do those things either. They will simply...protest. However, if outside agents bring pre-planned agitation and violence, peaceable people can get caught up in the moment and their protest becomes a riot. Now we've had coast-to-coast violence. Devil's Night pales in comparison.

The provocateurs need to be rooted out and prosecuted, as should their yet-identified masters and money sources.

Deity

Eris, the Greek goddess of discord, is having a field day. I hear her laughing on Mount Olympus. We can stop her cackling. The United States is a good and fair country. It will recover.

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

PARTING COMMENTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

Ogelman pointed out that all his efforts on Council during the four years he served were focused on achieving "that majority will of our citizens." He said, "All of the candidates who won in 2016 said that they supported the same values, but only some pursued those values."

"I am honored to have served with Mayor Fraser and Councilmember Cool who both gave voters a clear indication of what they stand for. We have been steadfast, consistent, and true in serving our community."

Ogelman pointed out that Mayor Kwasi Fraser is entrepreneurial, creative, and driven enough to come up with solutions to hard challenges – hard challenges inherited by previous administrations.

He said, "I hope that our Town staff, through the

RELIEF GRANTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Theatre Company, LLC.

"Since we use contractors, our options for COVID relief grants and loans were extremely limited. This grant will go towards covering our rent and instructor pay. It is money well spent by the county as small businesses will continue to support others in the community."

Program Director Clarisse Bethel at Clarys Nurse Aide Training Center also emphasized the significance of the funding to meet operation expenses.

"This grant will impact my business by helping me to make office rent payments and repaying some obligations such as my payroll," Bethel said.

Eddie Mason, founder and CEO of MASE Training, sees a promising revival for the business that he and his wife Sonya run together.

"We were overjoyed from the fact that we truly needed

leadership of our Town manager, will have the courage to align behind the consistent majority, to sustain slow growth, keep taxes and rates as low as possible, enhance our infrastructure, and pursue innovative solutions to achieve this.

"I say to the group of slow growth candidates who won this month in a clean sweep on a ticket with Mayor Fraser, stay true to what you promised citizens you would do during the campaign. You were not elected to do your will and bidding or that of outside developers or some other special interest group. You were elected to represent the majority will of Purcellville citizens. Stay true to that, as I hope and believe I have." He said he was "humbled to serve the citizens," and he thanked the citizens of Purcellville for their trust.

it, after having to close our doors due to the impact of the coronavirus on our business," Mason explained. "To now have business interruption funds that will help us bring some of our staff back and pay for operational expenses has truly been a blessing!"

The first- and second-round of grants from the Business Interruption Fund were dispersed to companies with between three and 100 employees. Survey responses from those businesses indicate that the grants of between \$5,000 and \$10,000 were used primarily to fund payroll (46 percent) and pay monthly rent or mortgage expenses (36 percent). Other expenses included employee benefits, supplies and products.

Additionally, 92 percent of first- and second-round grant recipients felt more confident about the viability of their business heading into recovery after receiving the funds.

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ATTENDING A PROFESSIONAL FIREWORKS SHOW MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE THIS 4TH OF JULY, BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE CONSUMER FIREWORKS A SAFE ALTERNATIVE. FIREWORKS CAUSE THOUSANDS OF SERIOUS INJURIES EVERY YEAR. THE LOUDOUN COUNTY COMBINED FIRE AND RESCUE SYSTEM ENCOURAGES YOU TO FIND FUN AND CREATIVE WAYS TO CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY WITHOUT FIREWORKS.

IF YOU DO USE CONSUMER FIREWORKS, KNOW THE RISKS AND FOLLOW THESE TIPS!

DON'T use illegal fireworks!

- ✓ DO use only legal fireworks purchased from a stand with a Loudoun County Fire Marshal's Office permit.

NEVER use fireworks while impaired by drugs or alcohol!

DON'T light fireworks indoors!

- ✓ DO use fireworks a safe distance away from homes, and steer clear of brush, leaves and flammable substances.

NEVER allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks and maintain constant adult supervision.

- ✓ DO light one device at a time and maintain a safe distance.

DON'T light fireworks in your hand!

- ✓ DO Place fireworks on stable ground, never in a container, and ensure it won't tip when firing.

NEVER point or throw fireworks at anyone!


DON'T try to re-light "a dud" or malfunctioning firework!


- ✓ DO soak spent fireworks in water for several hours before discarding into a fire-proof container. Keep the container outside, away from the home.
- ✓ DO Keep a bucket of water or a garden hose nearby in case of fire.

Fireworks Injuries by Body Part










FOR ADDITIONAL FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY INFORMATION, VISIT LOUDOUN.GOV/FIREMARSHAL OR CALL 703.737.8600.



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