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Beef: In Loudoun, it's what's for dinner



Justin and Casey Wisch

BY LAURA LONGLEY

Americans' latest beef in our ongoing culture wars is about, well, beef.

In case you missed it, the word has come from Epicurious.com, the ultimate online resource for home cooks, that it will no longer publish new recipes for beef, citing methane gas emissions from cattle and their controversial effect on climate change. "We think of this decision as not anti-beef but rather pro-planet," the editors declared.

It's no surprise that the media has had a field day over this one.

Whatever your position on the Epicurious decision regarding cat-

tle and climate impact, try thinking about the livestock business in Loudoun County in terms of alternatives for land use. In other words, what does the least harm and the most good: more houses, more cars, more schools, more shopping centers, or more local farms raising cattle by local farmers who bring fresh local beef to your table?

Loudoun's changing climate for beef production

In the past, Loudoun's farms were primarily dairy—not beef—operations. In fact, until the wave

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of development swept eastern Loudoun in the 1980s and '90s, the County's dairy farms numbered more than 400. Today, only the Potts farm near Lincoln remains in operation.

Today's beef market is also far

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School Board meeting addressing transgender rights turns contentious

BY VALERIE CURY

The Loudoun County School Board held a public meeting on June 22 to discuss the issue of transgender student rights and new policies being proposed.

The meeting was packed. The Board cut off public comment after a third interruption. More than 250 speakers had signed up to speak, but by the time the meeting was cut off only 51 had spoken. All speakers were given one minute to speak.

The public input focused on transgender and gender-expansive policy proposals, which

affect a transgender student's rights, including restroom privileges and the student's preferred names and pronouns. The policy proposal is identified as 8040.

A vote on 8040 is not expected until August or later.

Insightful comments

"It is possible to find compassionate ways, and protect every child fairly, without trampling all these core Constitutional rights," said Candi Cushman, vice president of Family Foundation of Virginia. "We are ask-

ing you to put the protection of kids' minds, bodies, and hearts first and foremost ahead of political advocacy ..."



Another speaker, who is transgender, encouraged the Board to support 8040 because "it im-

proves the physical and mental health of all transgender students." As a transgender woman herself, she had a message for all transgender students: "Please know there are many people who love and support you."



The next speaker was a transgender woman from Herndon. She said that she was in attendance to "ask for compassion for those who experience things you may never completely

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4. **Don't** pay more than you are "comfortable" paying knowing you will be in a home possibly long-term
5. **Don't** buy unless you know where you are going (renting, family accommodations) - rent backs are possible but never a sure thing
6. **Don't** wait to ask to schedule a showing on a property after it goes Active - be scheduled to see it the day it goes live
7. **Don't** hesitate to make an offer if you love a property and inventory remains low - looking back on historical rates will be talked about years to come in the future
8. **Don't** buy a property sight-unseen when it will be your "home" unless you are a Military Buyer and in a unique situation - Buyer's remorse is not fun

DO - be prepared by working with a local, experienced Realtor and sign a Buyer's Agreement with them so you can receive Coming Soon and Active listings the day they go into the MLS as Agents do. This allows you to be ready and prepared (and for your Agent to do their homework and you). Going onto public/Broker or other sites waiting for only their Coming Soon or one to go Active keeps you limited and behind the 8-ball. You want to have someone working just "for you" and not someone waiting for an email as a paying Realtor for leads from a site to show a property spontaneously and without any prior knowledge about the listing. **Protect your best interests as Sellers do, not everyone else's, when buying your dream home.**

I have been a Listing and Buyer's Agent since 2003 in Loudoun County, and I will continue to be one after I retire. With a team of Contractors, I personally Stage, and I follow my Code of Ethics saturating the market so "all Buyers" have a chance to purchase my listings. All of this is done in the best interests of both my Seller and Buyer clients.



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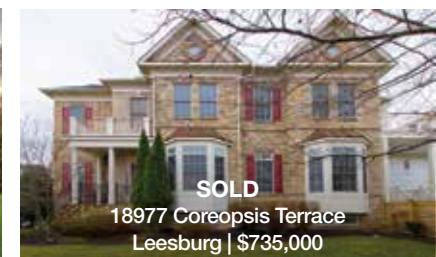
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Cannons baseball – the crack of the bat is back

BY ANDREA GAINES

Oh, is there no greater thrill than in that sound? The crack of the bat.

Purcellville Cannons CEO and Head Coach Brett Fuller said, “I’m bursting with joy about getting back after missing the 2020 season.” He continued, “This is a ‘we’ effort – everyone is reveling in our community’s return to life ... and the upcoming summer. What could be better than celebrating it all by going out to the ball game.”

The wait is over ... the rubber has again met the road

The Cannon’s team plays through much of June and July. Playoffs take up much of August.

The first pitch of the 2021 Purcellville Cannons season arrived more than 600 days after the Valley Baseball League team last took the field, several years ago, now.

For baseball fans, following your team through thick-and-thin is everything.

The Cannons organization is what is known as “a college wood bat team.” It is part of the VBL, a National College Athletic-sanctioned organization, and also supported by Major League Baseball.

Organizations like VBL develop players for the majors – and many past, present, and future Cannons have their eye on that prize. For, this is where the rubber meets the road; getting into the major leagues.

For this reason, the Cannons, and the VBL, “see the highest level of amateur baseball, played by teams competing within a league with one of the richest

histories in baseball,” notes the Cannons’ website.

The VBL has launched over 1,100 professional baseball players.

How the season’s going

The Cannons got the 2021 season going on June 5, playing the Winchester Royals at Fireman’s Field in Purcellville.

The Cannons compete in the 11-team group known as the “collegiate wood bat summer league.”

Now several weeks into a packed 42-game schedule, the season runs through July 23. Based on standings, eight of the 11 teams will advance to the playoffs in August.

The Cannons did not qualify for the 2019 playoffs; and, of course, no baseball was played in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This season, the Cannons lost their season opener on June 5.

They then came back to win against Covington June 6, and then lost two games on June 8 and 9.

They then had a 0-0 tie game on June 12, had a win and a loss on June 13 (Staunton), a loss on June 14 (Front Royal), a win on June 15 (Woodstock), then losses on June 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20.

They pulled out two 0 to 0 efforts on June 23, and 24.

As the team finished off the month of June, they faced Front Royal on the June 25, Woodstock on the 26, and Harrisonburg on the 27.

As of press time, the team was preparing to face New Market on June 29, and Woodstock on June 30.



Photo courtesy of the VBL

July 2021 schedule

- Strasburg, *July 1 & 2
- *Charlottesville, July 3
- New Market, July 5
- Front Royal, July 6
- *Front Royal, July 7
- *Winchester, July 8
- *New Market, July 9
- *Woodstock, July 12
- *Winchester, July 13
- Strasburg, July 15
- Winchester, July 16
- *Woodstock, July 17
- *New Market, July 20
- *Winchester, July 21
- Strasburg, July 22
- Strasburg, *July 23

*Home game

The photo is by talented intern Madison Hricik, a sophomore at James Madison University studying Media Arts and Design with a concentration in journalism and a minor in sports communications.

What makes it all happen – pride, partnership, a “we” attitude, and perseverance

Head Cannon’s Coach Fuller said something that reminded us there is a lot that goes on inside the game of baseball when it is played at this level.

Teams such as the Cannons are, after all, where the major leagues get their players. This is the source. These minor league teams are packed with very, very rare nuggets of athletic gold.

The Cannons, for example, have 15 players on their pitching roster, 10

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BRMS students compete in Virginia technology camp

Blue Ridge Middle School seventh graders will compete in an innovation camp where students will have the opportunity to create a product or service designed to solve real-world problems.

Congratulations to Blue Ridge Middle School Students Sophie Hudziak, Julia Miller, and Liudmila Boyarskaya.

These students from Blue Ridge Middle have been hand-selected by their coding teacher, Mrs. Angela Fraser, to participate in an elite camp offered through Virginia Commonwealth University School of Education, CodeVA, and CodeRVA Regional High School.

The Blue Ridge Team will compete against other teams to propose an innovative product or service to a panel of judges. A select number of teams from the camp will then



From the upper left going clockwise: Mrs. Angela Fraser, Sophie Hudziak, Julia Miller and Miia Boyarskaya.

have the opportunity to compete in the Conrad Challenge.

The Conrad Challenge is a transformative educational experience that brings science and technology studies to life through a student-driven, project-based approach. Guided by teachers and industry experts, these students will have the chance to become entrepreneurs and apply innovation, science, and technology to solve problems with global impact.

Over the past 15 years, the Conrad Challenge has engaged students from over 1,000 schools worldwide, serving all 50 U.S. states and 72 Countries.

Mrs. Fraser stated, “I am thoroughly impressed by their dedication, work ethic, and commitment to excellence. I have no doubt that they will do well in this competition.”

Just Like Nothing (else) on Earth: 218 Wirt Street

BY TIM JON

No- when I was a kid (some of my friends would say I still am, bless them), we never had a shopping mall across the street (or even within 50 miles of my home) to 'hang out' in; I guess my alternative to the wonders to be found in such a facility was a landscape feature with much less obvious, popular allure: my beloved vacant lots.

'Well, if there's nothing there, what did you do?' Ah, I never said that; it was merely undeveloped land: my hometown possessed enough rural character that I can vividly remember some of these landowners mowing, turning and baling their own wild hay on many of these properties; it was fertile ground, in many ways.

Mostly for my developing imagination. My brothers and I would fly kites, organize a neighborhood baseball game, play with our dogs, chase butterflies and grasshoppers, collect prize specimens of sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks (without certainty of their identity, of course), swap school stories, watch the stars at night, set up jumps for our

bikes, explore the areas with new (and old) friends, observe any interesting weather patterns, and allow our young minds to use all the time and space they cared for, and sometimes completely fill the void which an adult passerby might describe as 'just a vacant lot.'

Now, I didn't recall all these memories as I stalked the grounds of 218 Wirt



Street in Downtown Leesburg on one of my photo sessions. I hadn't even planned on visiting the property; I believe I was homeward bound from another local site of interest and, lo and behold, even at my relatively ripe age, one of my vacant lots just sort of reached out and grabbed me.

I neared, appraised and circled the

sole structure on the acreage: a blue, one-story building with the apt title of "Office" printed just to the side of the entrance, with a couple of window-style air conditioning units flanking on left and right. Wooden steps led up to the front door – with the approach also balanced to the right and left – painted in the aforementioned slate blue hue. A tin stovepipe lent its talents in completing the visual attractions of the entrance to the structure. More air conditioners in the back, and peeling paint viewed through the wild mulberry trees taking advantage of a place to grow. A 'For Sale' sign graced the front right corner of the one-time office; or, more appropriately the ground in front of the building; there it lay, for those few to see who would take the trouble to peer through the lengthening grass and weeds which enjoyed the run of the entire lot.

My eyes instinctively searched for collectible rocks among my feet, and I carefully watched for any possible boards with upturned nails (no, this wasn't my

first vacant-lot rodeo), and kept a lookout for any birds, insects or other animal life. If my mission had been the capture of some wild beast to bring home – such as a monarch caterpillar, or some lady bugs, or maybe even a feisty grasshopper – I failed miserably: this particular lot – nestled just off of Georgetown Park along Southwest South Street, which runs parallel to the Town Branch creek – held nary a critter to capture my concentration.

And, as I explored further to the outskirts of the lot itself, I saw it: another sign – this time in vertical stance – declaring, "Coming Soon. Offices for Sale. The Offices of Georgetown Park." I thought, but of course. It's a wonder that this land lay fallow for what must have been well over a decade – perhaps much more.

And sufficient time has elapsed since my first, and only exploratory session, that my next pass-by the location may offer this writer a glimpse of those brand-spanking new Offices of Georgetown Park. And I'm sure they'll look great, and offer their future inhabitants all they could ask in such facilities – conveniently located in the Downtown area

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— Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

Three tips to getting back to normal after COVID-19

BY MICHAEL OBERSCHNEIDER, PSY.D.

As a global pandemic, COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the world. To date, there have been close to 180 million total cases, and the virus has tragically taken the lives of over 3.8 million people.



DR. MIKE

Regardless of one's personal experience with COVID-19, for the past 15 months, the world as we have always known it has not been the same place in

very upsetting ways – working from home, virtual learning for our children, social distancing, financial hardships, stress and anxiety in response to changes and the unknowns, less quality time to relate, illness or the deaths of loved ones, etc.

While these forced compromises and losses have been difficult to endure, the vaccines are proving to be successful and COVID-19 cases are steeply declining. The long awaited hope and expectation that life will return to normal seems to be

approaching fast, but how do we do that with such an extended break and so much continued uncertainty?

Unfortunately, there is not a return to life as normal post COVID-19 playbook, but I hope that these three tips are helpful.

Trust your pace to return: The world appears to be returning to life as normal quickly. Sure, restrictions are being lifted, but we are all experiencing this unfolding process differently. Just like there are some who feel fine shopping in a store

without a mask, eating at a restaurant, or attending a large social gathering maskless or traveling abroad now, there are others who do not.

As a psychologist discussing anxiety with my patients, I often say, "If you're afraid of bridges, what are you supposed to go over?" Bridges.

However, for those who are struggling to make sense of the return to life in a post-pandemic world, I recommend

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Retiring Single: 5 strategies to consider

Being single can bring a different set of challenges to planning for retirement. These five strategies can help.

If you're planning on retiring single, you aren't alone. Nearly 22 million Americans age 65 and older were unmarried in 2019, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This group makes up 41.5 percent of all people in the U.S. in that age category.



RICHARD RICCI

Planning for retirement is challenging, from building an income stream for a longer lifespan to budgeting for increasing living expenses and health care costs. These and other retirement planning issues can be especially pressing for singles, who need to prepare financially without the decision-making and income support of a spouse or partner.

Here are five tips to consider, when it comes to setting a source for those solo retirement years.

1. Create a financial fallback plan

Retirees may discover that there's a gap between what they thought they would need for retirement, and what they discover they actually need. As a single retiree,

you may not have a second income stream to rely on in case your finances are unexpectedly disrupted (for example, by dealing with a major health issue or illness).

To plan for the unexpected, it's important to periodically review your investment portfolio, and build effective financial backup plans. Such contingency planning could involve a higher cash emergency savings total than couples might need and could require considering more robust disability and long-term care insurance protection than couples might select. You could also choose to take a part-time job for extra income.

2. Build a network of professional advisors

You might appreciate the independence and freedom of your lifestyle. But with autonomy could come a reluctance to seek advice and ask questions regarding important financial matters.

However, it's especially important for singles to consider forming a team of trusted professionals—including a financial advisor, an accountant, an attorney and health care providers—to rely on for professional advice and guidance.

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“A Brilliant Idea”

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

Byne Rood was catching up on emails late in the day when her husband Robert returned from work with his usual “Hey, babe.”

“Hey yourself,” she returned his greeting and then added. “What’s that smirk on your face?”

Robert grinned, “I had a brilliant idea!”

“You always have good ideas, so what’s brilliant about this one?”

“You remember last week when that guy pulled out in front of you on Route 7?” Robert asked.

“How could I forget! He was coming from Blue Ridge Mountain Road – that’s right at the top of the mountain. He never looked, and just pulled out right in front of me. I slammed on my brakes, and bet I came within two feet of wrecking. I think he had been drinking at that brewery. A lot.”

Robert nodded and said, “I think breweries are becoming a problem. I worry that western Loudoun will become commercialized, maybe become a drink-and-drive destination.”

Byne said, “A lot of people think they add to life

here, but maybe they’re too much of a good thing. Just their regular traffic is a problem, and alcohol makes safety a real concern. Dabney lives close to one on Route 9, and she complains that the racket goes on until the wee hours.”

Robert continued, “I thought about how to prevent more breweries. They are popular, though, and I doubt that the zoning ordinance could be changed to put a halt to them now. For one thing, changing anything related to zoning is a long process, and worse, I don’t think the supervisors would go for it at this time. Then I grasped the answer – the key word is ‘now.’”

Byne looked quizzical.

“Here: Have a new provision in the zoning ordinance so that certain uses – like breweries – are permitted but only for a specified period of time, say one year or two years after the zoning is enacted. At that point a sunset clause kicks in and new ones would not be allowed anymore unless the Board of Supervisors renews their permissive status. If breweries are not seen as a problem then, the Board would logically let the brewery use continue. However, if there are

too many breweries and they’re causing problems, the Board could let the sunset provision remain and no new breweries could be started.”

“Brilliant.” Byne cheered. “What are you gonna do with the idea?”

“Well, I wanted to bounce it off someone closer to things than I am, especially about the politics that could be in play. I called the paper and explained to the publisher what I wanted and she gave me the number. Then I called Charles Houston.”

“Why do I recognize that name? Byne asked.

“Because he writes a column we read. By the way, he goes by ‘Charlie’ and he pronounces his last name ‘House-ton.’ Anyway, he thought the idea was great and could be a winner. Enacting Sunset Zoning could be done as part of the zoning rewrite that’s going on now. That means there would be no need to start a new zoning process. Supervisors, Houston guessed, would rather have anything controversial come up for Board review in the future rather than dealing with such things right now.”

“Kicking the can down the road,” Byne interjected.

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OPINION

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Publisher & Editor
Valerie Cury

Creative Department
Pam Owens, Layout/Design

Advertising

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

Here’s How to Reach Us

Advertising:
Email advertise@BlueRidgeLeader.com
or call 540-338-6200

Editor:

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

Special Editorial:

Andrea Gaines – andrea@andreagaines.com

Hot News Tips:

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

Webmaster: webmaster@BlueRidgeLeader.com

Mailing Address:

PO Box 325, Purcellville, VA 20134-0325

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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 —

Speckles is one lucky rooster

BY JOE LAFIANDRA

I read everything, which include obscure legal notices in local and national papers. Most people aren’t interested in these notices of abandoned bicycles, foster care plans or Virginia ABC license approvals. I have actually found money for other people in those lists of unclaimed funds. I just can’t help it but, I read these notices for pleasure and sometimes for the stories that they may generate for this column.

Such was the case for a legal notice that caught my eye recently, it was a notice for a hearing concerning the seizure of one chicken. Yes, you read it correctly, “Notice of hearing, sei-

zure of one chicken (rooster)”. This notice was duly printed in a local newspaper on June 10, 2021.

The details are as follows: “In accordance with the authority set forth in 3.3-6569 of the Code of Virginia,



Monday, June 7, 2021, the Loudoun County Department of Animal Services seized one approximately 8 month old male, white, with brown speckles, chicken that was found abandoned at 35644 Appalachian Trail Lane, Round Hill, VA 20141. A hearing to determine whether the chicken has been abandoned, cruelly treated or has not been provided with adequate care, will be held on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 at 10:00 AM in the General District Court of Loudoun County, located at 18 E. Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia 20176.

The chicken did have a name, as I learned later but, his name was withheld apparently because he was a

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If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it

Dear Editor:

It is a major disappointment to me that by the recent actions of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, County taxpayers are funding a \$500,000 study for an effort totally unnecessary and pointless. It

LETTER

calls to mind an old, wise adage which summarizes the situation perfectly: “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!” – applicable to whether the Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office should evolve into a County police department.

I oppose even the thought of this monumental and expensive change un-

der consideration for the political gain of six, while in turn, thwarting the tens of thousands of Loudoun County residents who for decades have been able to have a say in electing their own Sheriff, who remains so responsive to their individual needs with overwhelming success.

In my opinion, the LCSO far exceeds any such entity I’ve previously

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Loudoun County teacher enters the woke zone

Dear Editor:

The Loudoun County School Board's decision to place elementary school teacher Tanner Cross on administrative leave for refusing to use preferred pronouns for any transgender children in his classes has sparked a cultural firestorm, leaving many bewildered, including myself.

So, I reached out to my long-time friend, mentor, and spiritual advisor, Elmer Grapsuckle, for guidance. Elmer, gracious as ever, invited me to visit him for tea and croissants to discuss the matter.

Elmer received me with his usual geniality. After the preliminary niceties, I hastened to broach the raging debate over handling transgender children in our schools. "Elmer, you have to help me figure this all out — I'm completely at a loss over this issue."

Elmer paused and gently touched my shoulder. "First, let me introduce you to my close friend, Ralph," as he put his arm around nothing but air. "Uh,

ummm, I'm a bit confused, Elmer," I responded. "I ... don't see ... anyone. There's not a soul here but you and me."

"Ralph is standing right next to me -- but no worries. Very few are able to perceive Ralph visually. See, Ralph is my closest friend. We're always together. So, when you address me, please always include Ralph. Our preferred pronouns are they, them, and y'all, since we both hail from the South."

"But, Elmer," I protested, "you can't be serious? This is a joke, right?" Elmer frowned, and firmly chastened me, "How will Ralph feel if you don't include him in our conversation, as if he weren't even standing right here? Such rudeness is not becoming of you, and Ralph and I will not tolerate such inconsiderate behavior," Elmer added, as he motioned toward Ralph.

"Well, if you — I mean, if y'all insist — I guess I can do that. But with all due respect, Elmer, Ralph isn't ... uh ... um ... real. It's great you have a fictional

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Youngkin listens and cares

Dear Editor:

A few days ago, I met Glenn Youngkin who is running for Governor of Virginia. He looked me straight in the eye and said, "Paige, tell me what's on your heart?" An unusual question for a politician, but not for a neighbor or friend — which makes sense since Glenn is not a career politician.

Glenn, a father of four, reminds me of one of my son's football coaches. You know, the one that cared about every kid on the team. The coach that sees your kid's potential

and they are better for it. That's how you feel when you talk to Glenn.

What happened next is rare in politics: he listened.

Two years of struggles tumbled out of me. I told him about the lack of control over my children's education, and the vulnerable children I love like my own. Boys who sit at my kitchen table worried about their education, or lack thereof.

My son has friends from every socio-economic background. I know how much these boys have really struggled,

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Take the test already

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

I spent the spring preparing to take two exams.

I had been thinking for a while about becoming a Project Management Professional. To do this requires passing a difficult certification exam. But after stepping into a management role last fall, I began to see the PMP certification as an important vehicle to strengthen my program management knowledge and skills, which would in turn enable me to provide better guidance and advice to my team.



MOORE-SOBEL

As the pandemic wound down, I decided to take the exam. I started by taking a course on IT project management. This course had previously been considered a preparation course for the PMP (before the test changed versions on January 1 of this year), but still contained relevant information related to the exam. The class was composed of lectures that spanned six booklets packed with hundreds of pages. I set out to learn the information, studying nearly every day for six weeks before scheduling the associated exam: my Global Information Assurance Certification (GIAC) Certified Project Manager (GCPM) exam.

I have never been confident in my test-taking abilities. I struggled with taking exams in high school, due to bouts of test anxiety. In college, my test-taking abilities improved—but my anxiety about tests remained. I didn't know if I would be able to pass the

GCPM exam. It is four hours long with 150 questions. The minimum passing score is 70 percent.

I channeled my doubts and negative self-talk into preparation for the exam. I was studying for two exams at once, both the GCPM and PMP, and doing my best to retain the information. I used every tool at my disposal. I made flashcards, read textbooks, studied the GCPM material, wrote out definitions, and took sample tests. I did whatever I could to be ready for both exams.

The day of the GCPM, I was nervous. I knew the material but was concerned that the questions would be complex. Thankfully, I passed with a score of 89 percent. The GCPM also served as excellent preparation for the PMP.

I spent a few more weeks studying for the PMP. Eventually, at the urging of my wife and members of my team, I scheduled the exam for the Friday before Memorial Day. My hope was to get the exam out of the way so that I could enjoy the holiday weekend.

When I talk about my book with audiences, I often speak about the concept of scars. Scars can be physical (like mine), but they can also be emotional. We all carry scars from our experiences. Oftentimes, we carry our scars with us even into professional settings. My lack of test-taking confidence affected my outlook on my exams. My scars (accumulated from previous test-taking experiences and reinforced during my academic years by the comments of oth-

ers) made me doubt whether I could tackle this challenge. Taking a hard exam is challenging enough. Adding my scars into the equation made it even more daunting.

I was presented with a choice. Either I could shy away from the challenge, and allow the negative self-talk to win out; or I could face this challenge head-on, and channel my nerves into preparation. I chose the latter. Thankfully, that choice paid off. As I took the PMP exam, my confidence grew. I could hardly contain myself after finishing the exam and seeing the "Congratulations" screen. A few hours later, I received my score report. I passed the exam with "Above Target" in all three areas.

To any of you who may be struggling with a test (or another challenge), I hope my story encourages you. I graduated with a degree in Government and International Politics and knew little about project management at the beginning of my career. Yet I used that fact as motivation to keep going, to learn all I could so that I could achieve my professional goals. If I can do it, so can you, no matter how you feel about your abilities or past experiences. Don't let your scars prevent you from becoming all that you can be.

Samuel Moore-Sobel is the author of Can You See My Scars? His book is available on Amazon. To read more of his work, visit www.samuelmoore-sobel.com

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Keeping it low in historic downtown Purcellville

BY VALERIE CURY

The Purcellville Town Council has voted 4-2 to reduce building heights in the Town's C-4 District (historic downtown). Mayor Kwasi Fraser, and Council Members Stan Milan, Chris Bertaut, and Tip Stinnette voted in favor of the new limits with Vice Mayor Mary Jane Williams and Council Member Joel Grewe voting against.

GOVERNMENT

The vote was to amend the allowed height from 45 feet or 3 stories, to 35 feet or 2 ½ stories – with the one-half story allowed for attic space. Anyone who wants to build something bigger would have to go through a Special Exception process.

Applications for exceptions to the new height limits go through the Planning Commission, the Board of Architectural Review, and finally to the Town Council for a vote. Developers had objected to this idea, since it is often a harder sell and gives the community more opportunities to weigh in.

According to a staff report, all cur-

rent buildings measuring over the new limit – between 35 and 45 feet – will be “deemed to have obtained approval from Town Council for their existing height. By adding this provision, those structures will avoid becoming non-conforming” now that the ordinance has passed.

In objecting, Council Member Joel

“I do not think by us passing this ordinance, we are in any way restricting innovation and creativity, and so I will support this ordinance.”

— Purcellville Mayor Kwasi Fraser

Grewe said the ordinance “takes creativity out of the builder’s hands.” He also said he likes “preserving opportunity for entrepreneurs,” but “agrees with preserving small town Purcell-

ville.

Vice-Mayor Mary Jane Williams, although she just a year ago campaigned on preserving Historic Downtown, said she agreed with Grewe. In a previous meeting she lamented that the fee the developer would have to pay to go through the process, and then is denied, would not be reimbursed for required fees. This of course, is standard procedure in all zoning applications, and other localities, unless the application is pulled before the process is completed; then the fee is prorated.

Council Member Stan Milan said the ordinance was being “implemented because of the current Comprehensive Plan.” Extremely popular with the voters, the plan prioritized preventing mega mixed-use commercial and residential projects and attendant parking, lighting, roadwork, and infrastructure costs from overwhelming historic downtown. Lowering the height limit to 35 feet and 2½ stories is something Milan has strongly supported over the six-plus months of Town Council and Planning Com-

mission work on this amendment.

Council Member Chris Bertaut pointed out that it is rare for someone to request a Special Exception, making new limits like this a very effective way to enforce voter sentiments.

Mayor Fraser said, “I do not subscribe to the claim that height equals economic development, or height allowance equals creativity and innovation. We have the last building of over 35 feet and it was built over 30 years ago. So we have had places in downtown over the past eight years that could have been creative. We are still waiting for concrete to be poured on them.

“I do not think by us passing this ordinance, we are in any way restricting innovation and creativity, and so I will support this ordinance.”

Fraser explained that this ordinance “enables us to have a discussion and engagement as a community to build something that will be worthy of restoration ten, twenty, thirty years from now ... We are executing on the Comprehensive Plan.”

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Expanding Purcellville's Historic District – public hearing July 15

BY VALERIE CURY

The Town of Purcellville's Historic Corridor Overlay District, which was created in 2005, is made up of parts of Main Street, North 21st Street, North 23rd Street and

South 32nd Street.

GOVERNMENT

This District is meant to protect the Town's architectural and historical character, protect and preserve buildings, and ensure that new development is in keeping with Purcellville's small-town character.

Currently, the HCOD does not include most of Purcellville's historically contributing structures. Over the past year, the Planning Commission has been updating the Town's Zoning Ordinance so it is in alignment with the Town's newly adopted Comprehensive Plan. One of the goals of the Plan is to protect historic properties which individually and collectively contribute to the Town's small-town character. The question is how do you protect historic properties from demolition.

No additional burdens

The current goals of the Planning Commission are to bring all of the Town's relevant historic properties into the Historic District, and to discourage demolition of historic properties.

The purpose of the Overlay District is not to prevent nor limit the freedom of a property owner to renovate properties in Town. Those rewriting the zoning ordinance to bring it in line with the new Comp Plan do not want to change this. So, existing property owners do not have to go through anything different than they would normally go through currently. If they want to change windows, do an addition, change a roof or paint the house, for example, nothing will change. Renovations are at the discretion of a property owner.

A property has to be at least 50 years old. As proposed, anyone with a qualifying property could obtain an Historic District plaque at no charge. Also as proposed, the Board of Architectural Review could offer a no fee review of a property

addition at no charge, but it would be voluntary.

At issue, the power to demolish, no more, no less

There is currently no protection against unfettered demolition, but in the HCOD, no one would be able to destroy a structure for a year, and either the Town or anyone else would have the opportunity to buy the property at market value. If nobody buys the property, then it could be torn down.

The Planning Commission has repeatedly asked staff to bring it a draft ordinance unchanged from the current one. Use the same criteria as what exists today, has been the Planning Commission's consistent message. Staff has repeatedly presented a draft that was much more cumbersome.

At the June 3 Planning Commission meeting, Chair Nedim Ogelman opened the discussion by reiterating that the only thing the Commission needed to focus on was the demolition issue. With respect to the draft ordinance, since

it was supposed to reflect the current one, Ogelman said the draft ordinance should reflect what is in the current ordinance regarding the Historic Corridor Overlay District – “no more, no less.” However, the Commission had to spend a few hours eliminating additional restrictions that staff had proposed.

This is about preservation, not paint colors

Ogelman said that when the Town tried to have a more robust form of preservation “people did not want it.” “Our citizens are not used to experiencing those set of rules” he said of residents who live in the Historic Corridor Overlay District and they are not used to homeowners association rules.

“... What distinguishes them from other parts of Town is that they are not in homeowners associations ... so by putting any kind of transaction costs and other costs onto those houses” – you are going against what citizens want, he said.

Planning Commissioner Nan Frobes

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 »

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Virtual public meeting July 12 on Rt. 7 corridor study

Loudoun County is hosting an online meeting to gain input from the public on the Rt. 7 corridor study on Monday, July 12, from 6 – 7 p.m. The limits of the draft study, completed in February 2021, were from Rt. 28 to the Fairfax County line.

The public meeting will examine current safety and traffic operations as well as travel forecasting and traffic operations for proposed future alternatives to the existing conditions on the Rt. 7 corridor.

Members of the public are invited to join the virtual meeting to learn about the proposed alternatives and areas along the corridor that need attention, and to ask questions about the corridor.

Login information and meeting materials are available for review at loudoun.gov/route7corridorstudy and loudoun.gov/remoteparticipation. Meeting materials will include detailed corridor alternatives and speaker sign-up and comment forms. Members of the public

must sign up in advance by 12 p.m., Friday, July 9, to ask questions during the meeting. Online participants may also send questions to the project team as chat messages, which will be answered during the meeting as time allows.

The draft study, titled “Route 7 Concept Study: Traffic Operations and Safety Report,” examined existing and projected future conditions along Rt. 7 in Loudoun County, between Dranesville Road (Rt. 228) at the Fairfax County line to the Rt. 28 interchange, approximately 4.25 miles.

The study included an evaluation of the history of reported crashes occurring during recent years, an analysis of traffic operations along the corridor under existing conditions, travel demand forecasts, and an analysis of traffic operations.

For more information about the Rt. 7 Corridor study, including a link to sign up for updates about the project and upcoming public meeting, visit loudoun.gov/route7corridorstudy.

Purcellville seeks citizen input on how to spend American Rescue Plan Act money

The Purcellville Mayor and Town Council are seeking community input via a survey on how to spend the \$10.5 million awarded to the

Town through the American Rescue Plan Act.

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was signed into law by the President on March 11. The bill provides \$1.9 trillion to address the continued impacts of COVID-19 on the economy, public health, individuals, businesses, and state and local governments.

The Town expects to receive the first installment of \$5.2 million from the state within the next few weeks, and the second installment in the same amount following no earlier than May 2022.

In order to best allocate the Town’s ARPA funds, the Town Council has created a survey to receive community feedback. Said Council Member Stan Milan, “When I found out that

the Town of Purcellville was going to receive funds through the American Rescue Plan Act, I thought it was very important to have community involvement in how the funds are spent. I thank the Mayor and Town Council, the Town Manager and the staff for supporting the survey.”

The survey will remain open through Thursday, July 8, and can be found on the Town’s website www.purcellvilleva.gov. Go to the Coronavirus Information link located at the top of the webpage in the Alert Center. You can also go to polco.us/n/res/profile/purcellville-va, or you can pick up a paper copy of the survey at Town Hall.

Town Council and staff will work with the residents, businesses, non-profits, and other community stakeholders to ensure a transparent process.

The results of the survey will be shared with the public at the July 13 Town Council meeting.

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Big accolades for Senator John Warner

“Well old friend, today
you are at home ...”

BY ANDREA GAINES

One of Virginia’s most beloved political figures, United States Senator John Warner, died in his home in Alexandria just before Memorial Day.

GOVERNMENT

Warner served in the United States Senate for 30 years – five terms. He was also a former Naval Secretary who was known for his advocacy for the United State military as Chairman of the Senate’s Armed Services Committee.

Warner was 94 at the time of his death. He was a veteran of WWII and the Korean War, first enlisted at the young age of 17.

The man had a longstanding reputation as a true Virginia gentleman, and as a legislator dedicated to bipartisanship. Both of these traits shone brightly with the many accolades that poured out from friends and colleges at his recent funeral at the National Cathedral.

United State Senator Tim Kaine spoke at the funeral service. In a press release following the event he said: “As I entered public life, what impressed me most about John was his obvious belief that country and character count above all else ... As Mayor of Richmond and then Governor of Virginia, I often asked for his help and—if convinced it was right—he delivered. He was a Republican, and I am a Democrat. But that never mattered ... Well old friend, today you

are at home ...”

President Joe Biden also spoke at the Warner event, having developed a very close relationship with Warner over the years. Emphasizing Warner’s dedication to bipartisan, Biden said: “A few days after John’s passing I visited Arlington National Cemetery ... each marker [in Arlington] represented a precious life ... in a Democracy, this is the very soul of the nation ...”

Continued Biden, Warner “embodied,” the qualities and sacrifices memorialized at Arlington. “While we represented different political parties, I can say without hesitation, John was a man of conscience, character and honor ... a towering and respected voice on foreign policy and national defense ... a member of the greatest generation ...”

Democracy, said Biden, “is more than a form of government ... it begins and grows in an open heart and [efforts to] work across the aisle ...” Warner, said Biden, knew we were “opponents ... not enemies, fellow Americans ...” When Warner acted, he said, “he was always guided by his values ...”

Current United States Senator from Virginia Mark Warner also spoke at John Warner’s funeral service.

And, long term aides remarked that John Warner never gave up fighting, saying that one of the late Senator’s favorite calls was something like “Put me to work! ... Put me to work!”

Snyder named Commander at American Legion Post 293

Robert J. Snyder is the new commander of the American Legion Post 293, Shelbourne Parish, in Purcellville.

Snyder succeeds Commander Blaine Anderson, who has overseen the transformation of Loudoun County’s most popular and active post since 2016.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 »

Virginia's unemployment rate fell to 4.5 percent in May

Virginia's unemployment rate dropped 0.2-percentage point to 4.5 percent in May, which is 4.0 percentage points below the rate from one year ago, Gov. Ralph Northam's office announced June 23. Virginia's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continues to be below the national rate of 5.8 percent.

"More people are working in Virginia and our recovery is outpacing the rest of the country," said Northam. "This week, we reached the 70 percent vaccination benchmark, and we did it two weeks ahead of the nationwide July 4 target. In the weeks and months ahead, we will remain focused on helping the communities that COVID-19 hit hardest and making sure all Virginians have the resources they need to thrive."

Virginia had the third lowest seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, along with Kentucky, among the Southeast states. The only states with lower unemployment were Alabama and Georgia.

"Virginia's unemployment rate continues to drop, and more people are returning to the workforce—two important indications about the strength of our economy," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball. "It's vitally important that every Virginian does their civic duty and gets vaccinated so we can maintain this positive momentum."

Total nonfarm payroll employment decreased by 3,500 jobs in May. The labor force increased by 4,042 to 4,229,852, as the number of unemployed residents decreased by 8,061. The number of employed residents rose by 12,103 to 4,040,585. In May 2021, Virginia saw over-the-year job gains of 7.0 percent.

"With over 4.2 million Virginians fully vaccinated, we are reaching what looks like the final stages of this pandemic," said Chief Workforce Development Advisor Megan Healy. "Our Administration is committed to helping Virginians return to work and make sure that they have the skills and support they need to thrive in the post-pandemic job market."

The private sector recorded an over-the-year gain of 256,900 jobs, while employment in the public sector lost 1,600 jobs in May. Compared to a year ago, on a seasonally adjusted basis, nine of the 11 major industry divisions experienced employment gains. The largest over-the-year job increase occurred in leisure and hospitality, up 104,600 jobs, or 45.7 percent. The next largest over-the-year job increase occurred in trade, transportation, and utilities, up 59,800 jobs, or 10.0 percent. Education and health services experienced the third largest over-the-year job increase of 31,500 jobs, or 6.3 percent.

For a greater statistical breakdown, visit the Virginia Employment Commission's website at vec.virginia.gov.

BOS Chair Phyllis Randall seeks citizen input on critical Short Hill Mountain cell tower issue

In a message to citizens on Facebook on June 25, Loudoun County Board of Supervisor's Chair Phyllis Randall (D-At Large) asked citizens to weigh in the cell tower being discussed for Short Hill Mountain.

Randall's message read as follows: "Western Loudoun, (especially Catoctin, [and] Short Hill Mountain residents) last time when the cell tower on Short Hill item came to the BOS for consideration, there was enormous community input.

"As this item has returned, the BOS has received almost no public input. In fact, I only have about 10 emails on this matter.

"I'd like to hear from as many residents as possible re ... this item.

"Please email the full Board at BOS@LOUDOUN.GOV to offer your opinions or thoughts, for or against ..."

Loudoun's Comprehensive Plan has strong language intended to protect the County's mountain ridgelines, including places such as Short Hill Mountain which carries with it great cultural and historic significance.

AT&T projects in this particular location have faced strong citizen opposition for many years.

There is the issue of whether putting a cell tower in this particular spot will actually address this part of the County's desire to improve broadband access for citizens.

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Bills introduced in Congress to Support Minor League Baseball

Bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate to support Minor League Baseball, which was shut down last season because of the pandemic.

U.S. Sens. Mark R. Warner and Tim Kaine (both D-VA), along with Sens. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) introduced the Minor League Baseball Relief Act to help the nine Minor League Baseball teams in Virginia who are hurting economically.

The Minor League Baseball Relief Act would provide up to \$550 million in federal relief funding for MiLB teams, which provide training for future Major Leaguers and serve as important economic engines in communities. Companion legislation has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA) and David McKinley (R-WV).

“For many working families, catching a weekend Minor League Baseball game at stadiums across the Commonwealth is an affordable and fun family outing,” said Warner. “Baseball isn’t just America’s pastime; it also represents an economic lifeline for many communities. However, like many small businesses throughout the COVID-19 crisis, our Minor League Baseball teams in Virginia and across the country have struggled mightily to keep the lights

on. Since there was no Minor League Baseball season in 2020 due to the pandemic, many of these teams have sustained heavy financial losses that have not been substantially mitigated by existing small business economic relief programs. I’m pleased to work with my colleagues on this bill that would allow these local treasures access to economic relief.”

“Baseball is not only America’s favorite pastime, bringing friends and families together; it’s also a critical economic engine for the Commonwealth,” said Kaine. “Teams in communities across Virginia support our local economy and create jobs. The pandemic has taken a toll on this beloved sport, and I’m proud to introduce this bipartisan legislation to help MiLB teams through this economic crisis.”

Nine MiLB teams in the Commonwealth are eligible for financial relief under the Minor League Baseball Relief Act, which include the Fredericksburg Nationals (formerly Potomac), Norfolk Tides, Richmond Flying Squirrels, Lynchburg Hillcats, Danville Otterbots (formerly Braves), Pulaski River Turtles (formerly Yankees), Salem Red Sox, Bluefield Ridge Runners (formerly Blue Jays), and Bristol State Liners (formerly Pirates).

The Minor League Baseball Relief Act would be modeled after the success-

ful Shuttered Venue Operator Grants program, which has provided needed assistance to venues such as theatres, museums, or concert halls that were forced to shut due to necessary COVID-19 safety measures.

Specifically, the Minor League Baseball Relief Act would repurpose up to \$550 million in COVID-19 relief funding for an emergency grant program to be administered by the Small Business Administration that would otherwise be returned to the U.S. Treasury.

And it would provide eligible clubs grants up to a maximum of \$10 million. Allowable expenses include payroll costs, regular business expenses (e.g., rent, utilities), worker protection expenditures, and payments made to independent contractors.

It would also provide an opportunity for a second grant at 50 percent of the first if a club’s revenue does not recover and does not significantly exceed its 2019 total.

Also, it would require strict oversight from SBA through documentation, review of use, and an audit on grant funding. It would apply to any minor league baseball team previously part of the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues, but not to any club that is majority-owned by Major League Baseball.

CORRIDOR STUDY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness.

It is the nation’s largest wartime veterans service organization aimed at advocating patriotism across the US through diverse programs.

“I consider it an honor and privilege to lead Post 293 as a resource for veterans and their families and survivors,” said Snyder, whom most know as Bob.

Snyder has lived in Northern Virginia for 11 years. He is a native of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is retired from the Navy, and comes from a Navy family that has been dedicated to Naval service for generations.

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Before the Meeting



The Audience



SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

understand.”

The seventh speaker who said she was the mother of a transgender student, said, “I am back here today as a proud parent of a transgender son in a Loudoun County School.” She said the community was “focusing on the hate that seems to be dripping off the followers of Jesus in this room and from their kids in the schools,” referring to what she felt the majority of parents in attendance represented. Her remarks evoked loud objections and boos from the crowd.



The School Board’s response

School Board Chair Brenda Sheridan called a five-minute recess to let things cool off.

Upon the Board’s return, Sheridan said the members had voted unanimously to end the public comment section should the crowd interrupt another time. “The board is here tonight to hear from everyone ... We ask again that you respect each other, and everyone is allowed to speak and have their time ... [or] we will end public comment and move to our next agenda item ...”

The twelfth speaker’s remarks met with muted applause, which prompted Sheridan to issue one more warning, saying, “This would be the last time.”

Various individuals spoke in support of LCPS teacher Tanner Cross, who had expressed his disagreement with the 8040 policy at a previous School Board meeting. For upsetting a few parents and students at his school, Leesburg Elementary, the school district suspended him. However, that action resulted in a Circuit Court ruling against LCPS that required Cross’s reinstatement. Since then, LCPS has appealed the Circuit Court decision to the Virginia Supreme Court.

The speakers arguing on Cross’s behalf urged the Board to withdraw its appeal, calling it a waste of taxpayer dollars.

They also urged School Board members who are facing a recall movement to “re-sign now and save the taxpayers money.”

Another parent asked the Board, “Why is indoctrination allowed under your watch ... Why is religious freedom trampled on under your watch ... and why is science and basic freedom of speech being condemned in school?”

Another attendee asked, “If I declare I’m a woman today, can I follow you into the women’s bathroom? This is a school building after all.”

Retired State Senator Dick Black on “Board bigotry”

In an impassioned speech, retired State Senator Dick Black boomed, “You retaliated against Tanner Cross by yanking him from teaching for addressing a public hearing of this Board. His comments were not [treated as] protected speech ...”

“It’s absurd for teachers to call boys girls and girls boys. You are making teachers lie to students, and even kids know that it’s wrong.

“This Board has a dark history of suppressing free speech. They caught you red-handed with an enemies list to punish

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 »

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

opponents of critical race theory.” Black said that the Board’s policies are “teaching children to hate others because of their skin color, and you are forcing them to lie about other kids’ gender.”



Black concluded by saying that he was disgusted by the Board’s bigotry.

Debate ends, “The Star-Spangled Banner” and finger-pointing begins

The crowd burst into cheers, clapping, and poster-waving— enough for Vice Chair Atoosa Reaser (D-Algonkian District) to move to end the public comment session.

The motion was seconded by Leslee King (D-Broad Run). The Board voted 9-0 to end public comment, and the members left the dais.

“Shame on you,” protestors shouted and began singing “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

The attendees did not leave and, led by Hamilton resident Jon Tigges, formed a line and took turns saying what they had planned to state in the public hearing with the Board.

Approximately 20 minutes into the continued “public comment,” a heated discussion began on the right-hand side

of the room between two acquaintances—Jackie Schworm and Scott Smith—on opposite sides of the 8040 policy issue.

It appeared that Schworm was making threats against Smith, poking him with her fingers. Smith began cursing loudly at Schworm while displaying aggressive behavior. A few people tried to get Smith to leave, but they were unsuccessful.

Deputy intervenes in “unlawful assembly”

Sensing an argument was imminent and could spark fisticuffs, a Loudoun County deputy intervened and told Smith he had to leave. Smith continued behaving aggressively, pushing back at the officer.

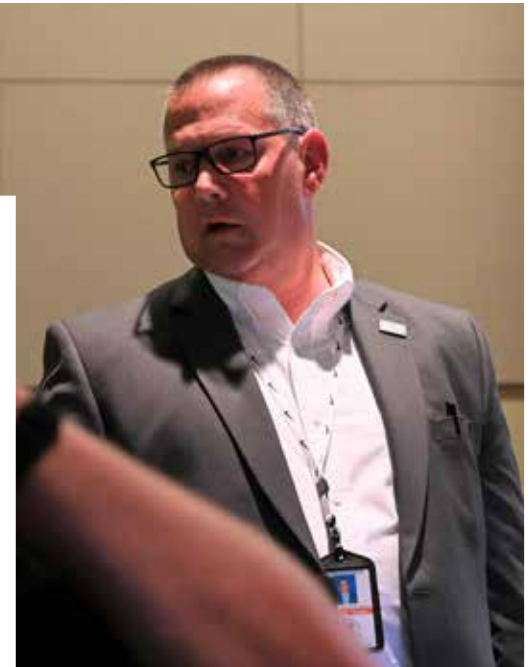
Another officer tried to help get Smith out of the room, but he continued to resist. Four officers finally subdued and handcuffed him. He was arrested and charged with obstruction of justice and resisting arrest.

At this point Scott A. Ziegler, superintendent of Loudoun County Public Schools, announced the meeting to be an unlawful assembly. Therefore, attendees who did not leave would be trespassing on school property. Ziegler directed law enforcement to clear the room.

Jon Tigges, who had organized the unofficial speakers’ group, refused to leave until everyone in the room had finished speaking. He was escorted out in handcuffs and put in a police van.

The photographs here show individuals at the June 22 Loudoun County School Board meeting. They represent speakers on opposing sides of the LCPS draft 8040 transgender and gender-expansive policies now under review. Also included are photos of the crowd, protesters, and those arrested.

The Arrest



The Speakers



Hillsboro completes \$30 million infrastructure project

On June 18, the Town of Hillsboro celebrated the completion of its ReThink9 road and infrastructure improvement project with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by hundreds.

“We are gathered here today to usher in a new era in Hillsboro’s history and to recognize and thank our partners who contributed to this transformative project and worked with us to build it once, build it now and build it right,” said Hillsboro Mayor Roger Vance.

Mayor Vance and Vice Mayor Amy Marasco hosted the event with funding

partners, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and Loudoun County, and with federal, state and local officials, res-

idents, business owners, and project contractors and workers in attendance.

“We’re so pleased to welcome our resi-

dents, local business owners and visitors back to our safer, calmer, revitalized historic ‘Main Street,’ Charles Town Pike,” said Vance, who served as the project manager. “This project was ahead of schedule and on budget thanks to the extraordinary cooperation and support from our community, partners and contractors. We are extremely proud that we delivered critical safety and infrastructure improvements to keep the region moving in a manner that did not compromise historic integrity, but rather complemented and enhanced it. Our vision, and the collaborative work of the designers, engineers and skilled craftsmen we



honor today, made this possible.”

The Town hired Volkert to design and manage the construction of the road project, which was awarded to Archer Western in November 2019. Originally estimated to take three years to construct, the project was substantially completed in 14 months and provides congestion relief for the more than 17,000 daily vehicles that travel on Rt. 9.

Vice Mayor Marasco, who served as deputy project manager, said, “While the project addressed congestion and safety concerns, we were also committed to restoring the Town with materials that are not only historically appropriate, but also durable and environmentally sensitive. A granite curb will not only last for centuries, but its carbon footprint is significantly smaller than other construc-



tion materials.”

“Through context-sensitive design and materials, the project brings infrastructure in one of Virginia’s best-preserved 18th-century rural villages into the 21st century, ensuring Hillsboro’s sustainability for generations to come,” continued

Marasco.

Above ground utilities were placed under ground in the narrow corridor alongside new drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure and Town-owned conduit to deliver fiber for broadband.

Hundreds of native trees and plants line the corridor to ultimately recreate the lush canopy that once shaded Charles Town Pike and further calm traffic.

Bluetooth-controlled dark-sky luminaires, sitting atop 40 uniquely accented lamp posts, provide safe illumination while protecting the rural night sky. Set for completion later this year, three VDOT-funded multi-modal trails will link to the Town’s new sidewalk system.

“The ReThink 9 project preserves the Town of Hillsboro’s unique historic character while upgrading the transportation,

water, and pedestrian infrastructure for the future,” said Congresswoman Jennifer Wexton. “I want to thank the Town and County leaders who made this transformative project possible. The investments of time and money in this project will improve the quality of life for the Hillsboro community and our entire region for generations to come.”

According to Town leaders, Hillsboro’s transformation into a revitalized and pedestrian-safe destination will restore its historic role as the hub to a robust agricultural region. The project’s completion comes just in time for the summer season to relieve congestion in the Rt. 9 corridor, which provides access to more than 350 agritourism destinations in Northern Virginia.

“I am honored to celebrate this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »

The Loudoun County Fair is back for its 85th year

Get ready for the fun—the funnel cakes and ferris wheel, lawn mower races and demolition derby, the pie-eating contests and pig-kissing challenge. Best of all, the 4-H'ers will be back showing their rabbits, chickens, ducks, llamas, alpacas, pigs, horses, and cattle.

Last year, with COVID-19 restrictions in place, the fair was called off with the exception of the auction, which was held online. That worked well, but everyone welcomes the return of the real thing at the Loudoun County Fairground, 17558 Dry Mill Road, Leesburg.

Mark your calendar now for Wednesday, July 28, through Sunday, August 1. Hours are noon to 10 p.m. Wednesday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Saturday; and noon to 6 p.m. Sunday. “We are all so excited to be able to be able to continue the long-standing tradition of the Loudoun County Fair. This year will mark its 85th! The Loudoun Fair & Associates Board of Directors along with the Fair Committee volunteers and all the 4H kids are eager to showcase their hard work. We look forward to seeing everyone at the fair July 28 thru August 1,” said Arlee Harris.

If you have a special talent or recipe, grow amazing flowers, take fabulous photos, sew exquisite quilts, or bake tempting cookies, cakes, and pies, be sure to enter them in the Sykes Hall contest. Find details on the fair website.

Besides blue ribbons for 4-H animal projects and specialty entries, Loudoun Fair & Associates awards four scholarships totaling \$7,000. This year's recipients—all of them Virginia 4-H All Stars—



are Roxanne Howard, Sarah Noel, Noah Esper, and Arielle Knight.

You can buy tickets for one day only or for the full fair. An admission ticket is required to enter the carnival area. Rides and games are additional.

- Adult tickets are required for all attendees ages 13 and up.
- Adults—one day \$15; all 5 days \$40. Kids (ages 6 through 12)—one day \$5; all 5 days \$15
- Children ages 5 and under are free.
- Buy online now and take advantage of early pricing through July 26,
- Adults—one day \$12; all 5 days \$35. Kids—one day \$5; all 5 days \$12
- Parking is \$5—cash only in person or pay online; the pass is good all



week.

- Wednesday is Children's Day: kids 12 and under are free until 4 p.m.

The Loudoun County Fair is hosted by Loudoun Fair & Associates, Inc., a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. All Loudoun County Fair proceeds are invested in maintaining the fairgrounds for use by Loudoun's 4-H clubs and other community groups. Sponsorships by regional businesses provide financial support, and long-time supporters such as Mike and PJ Bramhall with Bramhall Trucking make invaluable in-kind contributions such as loads of mulch and manure removal. In the past, they helped build the beef and horse barns. “The fair is a great family experience whether you are participating in it or visiting the fair. We really missed it last year, and are

excited about this year's fair,” said PJ Bramhall.

The Loudoun County Fair is a 100 percent volunteer-run organization that is always looking for folks to help put on a great event! If you're interested in volunteering in any way, just fill out the form at www.loudouncountyfair.com

Other important information to know before you go:

- Credit cards will be accepted at the front gate.
- The Loudoun County Fairground is private property.
- Firearms are not permitted. Only sworn law enforcement officers are exempt from this policy.
- No pets are allowed on the fairground. Service animals are welcome.

Local kids excel in KidWinds Virginia Challenge bubbling with curiosity, and problem-solving

BY ANDREA GAINES

Diane Painter is a member of an organization called VSTE – Virginia Society for Technology in Education, and a member of Makersmiths organization. She was recently nominated as a 2021 Outstanding Educator by Repowering Schools for her innovative approach to education.

Painter helps lead an effort called KidWind, an official “Makerspace STEM Initiative.”

Makerspaces, including Makersmiths in Leesburg and Purcellville, are places where invention “enthusiasts” and entrepreneurs, including children, can exercise their creative muscles – learning, playing, and making.

Sometimes this involves crafting a prototype of something, or nailing down the design of a new prod-



L to R: Katie Choi with Diane Painter, Connor Ellis, Ralph Pugh, Soren Ogelman, Caleb Nicholson.

uct.

Makersmiths refer to themselves as a movement, and their tools of the trade include shared spaces and workrooms with CNC mills (tools and software for wood and metal-working), 3D printers, laser cutters, storage space, and more.

In the most recent “KidWind Challenge,” concluded in May of this year, local Makersmiths including Kaleb Nicholson, Conner Ellis, Soren Ogelman, Katie Choi, and Sofi Johnson walked away with first, second, and third place wins in the KidWind-Virginia Middle School Solar Project Challenge – making renewable energy look, not just doable, but doable by mere babes-in-the-woods. A new look at wind turbines? No problem.

Said Painter, “As a retired K-12 teacher and member of a community Makerspace called Makersmiths,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 »

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BEEF, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

different from what it was 20 years ago, when Sara Brown and her late mother, Jean Brown, realized they needed a new farming model to keep their ninth generation, 200-acre Oakland Green Farm thriving.

"The local food movement was just coming into its own," Sara Brown told Loudoun journalist Shannon Sollinger. Changing their business model, the Browns began selling sides of beef at Loudoun's farmers' markets and delivering to neighborhood restaurants, as well as marketing online.

The Brown family model set the standard for today's small-farm beef producers. Justin and Casey Wisch, who own the 100-acre Long Stone Farm near Lovettsville, represent the next wave of local farmers, using sustainable and regenerative farming practices to produce pasture-raised meat and eggs.

However, they face many of the same old obstacles: onerous government regulations, taxes, and the dawn-to-dusk rigors of running a farm while, in their case, raising three children under age 4.

Meeting the growing "farm-to-fork" challenge

Raising livestock for Loudoun's flourishing farm-to-fork market is a three-year process from calving to "finishing"—essentially fattening the cattle—and processing. The Wisches take their grass-fed and -finished cattle to a processor near Gettysburg for butchering, drying, and processing as sides, quarters, and standard cuts.

"But one of the hardest things to manage in this kind of livestock farming is projecting the production side out for a whole year," Casey explains. "You'd better know when your animals are finished and get your dates with butchers now—and not miss your dates—or you won't get another date until 2022."

Given the demand for local beef, the lack of facilities for processing has become a problem serious enough to get the attention of state farm bureaus and ag-economy departments in both Virginia and Maryland.

Virginia is increasing its support for entrepreneurs interested in livestock processing. In Maryland, The Delmar-



va Farmer recently reported, efforts are growing around Montgomery and Frederick counties to do something, whether it's opening a new processing plant or a larger regional agricultural center that would include after-slaughter processing services.

But no matter which area facility processes their cattle, Loudoun livestock farmers know the market now demands certification for humane treatment of the animals in addition to the USDA seal of approval. "Younger customers tend to support the animal welfare side of our livestock operation, so they want that certification," Casey says. "The response from older customers has been strong because they want to support us as a small family farm. The union of those two groups makes our market."

Justin and Casey Wisch reach their customers through their farm store, farmers' markets, social media, and active participation in the robust Loudoun Made, Loudoun Grown marketing and events programs of the Loudoun County Department of Economic Development and the Loudoun Rural Economic Development Council.

Like most farmers, they know that despite their grueling schedules, they need to find time to participate in the organizations and serve on the boards that make farm policy. They've learned that decisions made at the federal, state, and county level will inevitably impact their operations. Right now, for example, Loudoun farmers are keeping close watch on the County's review of the Loudoun Comprehensive Plan and zon-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

Wheatland Concert Series starts at Shiloh Manor Farm – July 24

Shiloh Manor Farm, located at 14781 Berlin Turnpike north of Purcellville, is offering its initial recital set for Saturday, July 24 at 8 p.m. It features an internationally known string quartet and summer-themed classics from Mozart, Handel, Purcell, Pachelbel, and Boyce.

Catered patisseries will be served during intermission, by Chef Erik Nettin Foxx of The Polished Foxx. Tickets are \$50 each, and available at www.shiloh-manor.com. Seating is limited.

The goals of this series are to provide an intimate and culturally enriching experience of chamber music and to promote a greater understanding of how music connects all of us. For the summer-themed recital, Dan Zhang, Jie Hyue Kim, Alán Saúl Saucedo Estrada, and Marjory Serrano will be performing. Planning for fall and winter programs is underway.

Chamber music is a form of classical music that is composed for a small group of instruments—traditionally a group that could fit in a large room – or in French a “chambre.” Its history

goes back to the troubadours of medieval France; traveling musicians who would visit and perform ballads recounting the virtues of courtly love, and of chivalrous courage and heroism. By the 17th and 18th centuries, chamber

music evolved to embrace a distinctly social function; it provided an opportunity for friends to gather and enjoy one another’s company and the arts, not in a cathedral or a palace, but in the intimate surroundings of their own homes.

“I am really excited about our inaugural Wheatland Concert Series, and am looking forward to the chamber music and Chef Eric’s pastries with wine pairings,” said Nick Donnangelo owner of Shiloh Manor Farm.

The recital will take place in a newly renovated 230-year-old Quaker barn. The Wheatland Concert Series will offer four to six classical music recitals yearly.

Dan Zhang received her Master of Music degree from Yale University School of Music in 2013, and her Doctor of Music Degree at The Catholic University of America in 2019. Zhang has performed frequently with Washington National Opera Orchestra, National Symphony, Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, Richmond Symphony, and others.

Jie Hyue Kim received her doc-

toral degree from the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music of the Catholic University of America. She has performed at New York’s Merkin Hall, Alice Tully Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and many other venues. She currently serves as concertmaster for the National String Sinfonia in Frederick, Maryland, and as co-concertmaster for the Loudoun Symphony Orchestra in Leesburg.

Alán Saúl Saucedo Estrada holds cello performance degrees from the Escuela Superior de Musica y Danza de Monterrey, Scola Municipal de Musica “Victoria dels Angels” in Barcelona, and Shenandoah University. He has appeared in recitals in Paraguay, Brazil, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, and Spain, and has lectured at the Smithsonian Museum, Kennedy Center, and White House.

Marjory Serrano received her doctorate in Violin Performance at Catholic University of America in 2014. She has participated in the Las Vegas Music Festival, the summer festival of the National Repertory Orchestra, Idyllwild Arts Music Festival, the Shenandoah Performs festival, the prestigious Castleton Music Festival, and numerous other places.



Alan Estrada



Jie Kim



Marjory Serrano



Dan Zhang

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BEEF, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22
ing laws.

The Loudoun land grab

At or near the top of the list of concerns for farmers like the Wisches is Loudoun’s increasing loss of prime agricultural soils to development.

“Access to land is a huge issue,” says Casey. “The developers are taking the land out of production, and when they build a cluster, the homeowners’ association often will outlaw livestock, sometimes even gardens.”

According to Jim Hilleary, Virginia Cooperative Extension’s agent for Agricultural and Natural Resources, “Many parcels are now only three or five or 10 acres, and you really need at least 25 acres for cattle. You should figure two acres per 1,000 pounds per cow. That’s two grazing acres. You’ll need one acre for a house. So out of 25 acres, you maybe can take nine or 10 cows to market per season.”

The lack of acreage is one reason many Loudoun farmers are turning to smaller animals, such as sheep and goats, although beef remains the product in greatest demand. As for chickens, many local residents are raising them for eggs.

So you think you want to farm?


It helps if you’ve grown up in the business.


Justin Wisch grew up on his grandparents’ farm and worked on one of the local Potts family dairy farms near Hillsboro. He was active in 4H and Future Farmers of America and went on to earn a degree in agriculture sciences from Virginia Tech, one of the best programs in the country. Casey, another western Loudoun native, knew early on that she wanted to farm.

According to Jim Hilleary, if you didn’t grow up with farming, the best way to get up to speed is to visit the County’s new “AgroEcology Hub” (<https://www.agroecologyhub.info/>).

As Loudoun’s agricultural education clearinghouse, it offers information to facilitate lifelong learning relating to food systems, agriculture, and nature resources conservation. Its purpose is to help Loudoun’s residents chart learning paths through local in-person classes and online programming.

The Hub has yet to post recipes for beef, and it’s doubtful Epicurious will ever reverse its no-new-beef recipes decision. But if you’re planning your next barbecue or Sunday supper, there is a site where you’re sure to find the latest recipes for succulent steaks, burgers, and kebabs: beef-itswhatsfordinner.com.





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Purcellville swears in newest officer

The Purcellville Police Department has their newest officer, Nelson Fernandez. Officer Fernandez graduated from the 144th session of the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy on Monday, June 14.

A formal swearing-in ceremony was held later that afternoon at the Purcellville Town Hall in the Council Chambers. Fernandez was sworn in by Clerk of the Circuit Court, Gary Clemens. Purcellville Police Chief Cynthia McAlister, Deputy Chief of Police Dave Dailey along with Members of the Purcellville Police Department, Mayor Kwasi Fraser, Supervisor Tony Buffington, as well as Officer Fernandez's family, were in attendance for the ceremony.

The challenging six-month academy program for police officers and sheriff deputies from the Northern Virginia area covered numerous law enforcement principles and procedures.

The Basic Law Enforcement School is divided into four main modules including criminal investigation,

legal, patrol, and skills sections. Academy recruits must meet proficiency standards in all four areas, as well as successfully complete all performance-based training including First-aid, CPR, control tactics, firearms training, and driver training.

The NVCJTA participating agencies include the City of Alexandria Police Department, City of Alexandria Sheriff's Office, Arlington County Police Department, Arlington County Sheriff's Office, Fairfax City Police Department, Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, Manassas City Police Department, Manassas Park Police Department, Metro Transit Police Department, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department, and the Northern Virginia Community College Police Department.

Fernandez is a naturalized U.S. citizen, and moved to the United States from the Dominican Republic as a young adult. He is bilingual, fluent in both English and Spanish. Fernandez served as an Auxiliary Officer with



the Fairfax County Police Department since 2008. In addition to his law enforcement volunteerism, he also served as a volunteer firefighter with Loudoun County Fire and Rescue Department.

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Celebrate summer at Morven Park's event – Polo in the Park

Celebrate enjoyable evenings of Polo in the Park at Morven Park in Leesburg. The family-friendly arena polo matches kick-off on July 17, and will be held every Saturday night through Aug. 21.

Polo in the Park car passes, tailgate passes, and season passes are on sale at .

COMMUNITY

This fourth season of Polo in the Park will feature two matches per night, with gates opening at 6 p.m. and the first match starting at 7 p.m. In a departure from previous years, there will be no cash or credit sales of car passes at the gate. All car passes must be purchased in advance online.

While the main attraction for many spectators is the thrill of competition combined with the athleticism of magnificent horses, Polo in the Park has quickly become known as the “best party in Loudoun” on Saturday nights. “Whether you are looking for a special date night setting, a unique place to host clients or out-of-town guests, or an old-fashioned evening of family fun, you can find it at Polo in the Park,” according to Stacey Metcalfe, Morven Park's Executive Director and CEO.

The sport is thrilling to watch for long-time fans and new spectators alike, with nonstop action in the arena.



Each night of the season will showcase the skills of polo players from around the world, including internationally renowned players Juan Salinas-Bentley and Doug Barnes of Destination Polo.

Guests are encouraged to bring in their favorite food and beverages, and may also purchase a refreshing dessert from one of the on-site vendors. This season's sweet treats will be provided by Anita's Frozen Cotton Candy, 1,000 Shakes, and Flying Moo's Creamery. For more information follow Morven Park on Facebook for polo updates and announcements of weekly vendors.

Morven Park thanks AMJ Financial, Climatic Heating

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For full Polo in the Park season details, and to purchase car, tailgate, or season passes, visit PoloInThePark.org in Leesburg.

Alán Saúl Saucedo Estrada holds cello performance degrees from the Escuela Superior de Musica y Danza de Monterrey, Scola Municipal de Musica “Victoria dels Angels” in Barcelona, and Shenandoah University. He has appeared in recitals in Paraguay, Brazil, Japan, Mexico, Portugal, and Spain, and has lectured at the Smithsonian Museum, Kennedy Center, and White House.

Marjory Serrano received her doctorate in Violin Performance at Catholic University of America in 2014. She has participated in the Las Vegas Music Festival, the summer festival of the National Repertory Orchestra, Idyllwild Arts Music Festival, the Shenandoah Performs festival, the prestigious Castleton Music Festival, and numerous other places.

DR. MIKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

making those bridge moments manageable. Perhaps going for a walk outside without a mask, or dining at an outdoor restaurant with spaced seating is a good start. Incrementally adding social challenges that you can handle is likely the best way to get back to doing more in life again.

Trust your muscle memory: The mind, like the body, is a complex system that relies on learning and repetition in order to thrive. Research has shown that an atrophied muscle will return to top condition faster for those who were previously in great physical shape compared

to those who were not.

So, how do we get back into shape by being fully present again? Psychologists term what we have learned (i.e. facts) declarative memory, and what we have experienced (i.e. life events) episodic memory.

While we have not forgotten how to be fully human, we also have not practiced it for a while. The best way to get that episodic memory muscle working hard again, is to lean back into life. By engaging socially with others, by getting outside, by getting back to work, by travelling, you will be doing once again what you have always done, and it will feel right over time.

Focus on the good: Benjamin Franklin once said, “Out of adversity comes opportunity.” These past 15 months have been fraught with adversities, and in my opinion, the experience has provided us with a long-drawn-out opportunity to reflect on our lives and redefine things for positive change.

What makes me happy? How do I want to spend my time? Do I have professional life and personal life balance? What matters most to me, and how can I prioritize that better? Several people have told me that the pandemic has taught them to be calmer, more patient, more grateful, less materialistic and more self-less and generous.

Certainly, COVID-19 is not over, however, all signs indicate that it is ending – or at least it is something that we will soon have enough control over to return to life with few or no restrictions. With all that has happened though, I recommend that we be kind to ourselves and others as we return to life fully, and let's enjoy the re-entry.

Welcome back.

Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D. “Dr. Mike” is a clinical psychologist in private practice. He can be reached at 703-723-2999, and is located at 44095 Pipeline Plaza, Suite 240, Ashburn.

RICCI, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

3. Count on family and friends—to a point

It's important to have strong relationships with friends and family to help you out in good times and in times of need. However, it's equally important to make sure they don't take advantage of your independent status or create serious financial burdens for you.

For example, you should take extreme care before turning over your financial matters and decisions to anyone else, whether a loved one or a professional. Make a point to stay actively involved in those decisions and work with a team of people you trust to help make decisions that are in your best interests. Evaluate the possibility of engaging a corporate trustee to manage finances, should you become incapacitated.

4. Get estate and wealth-transfer plans in place

Many people drag their feet when it comes to estate planning. According to

a 2019 survey by Caring.com, more than half of American adults don't have estate planning documents such as a will or trust. Even if you've put some documents together, are you sure you have what you need to ensure your wishes are carried out?

Here are the key documents that form the foundation for most estate plans:

- Will
- Power of attorney for financial matters
- Durable power of attorney for health care
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act release authorization
- Living will
- Revocable living trust

Additionally, you could help prevent confusion and misdirected bequests by managing other critical planning documents: Carefully designate beneficiaries of assets in IRAs, employer-sponsored retirement plans, insurance policies and annuities. Lay out clear directions for the

distribution of remaining assets for your heirs. Also, don't forget about your digital assets and accounts. Will your executor or trustee have proper authority to access and manage those items? Talk to your attorney about keeping your digital planning secure and up-to-date.

5. Plan for change

Although you may be single now, that could change during retirement—or even before. Entering into a committed relationship or getting married, could mean making adjustments in your financial life now and down the road to and through retirement. Look at your insurance coverage, emergency fund and future income plan.

Think about having a frank discussion with your new partner about how you want your assets to be divided in the event of divorce or death. If there are ex-spouses or children in the picture on either side, consider managing your finances and estate plans separately, rather than jointly.

With the assistance of your financial

advisor and estate-planning attorney, you can get a basic estate plan put in place, and, as appropriate, discuss other strategies for preserving wealth.

One final tip: Set a time on your calendar for a regular review with your team of professionals to keep all of your documents up to date.

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

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HISTORIC DISTRICT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

said, "Residents in Purcellville would not be comfortable with these additional restrictions..." This is too restrictive."

She pointed out that the intent of the meeting should focus on the demolition of older buildings, "and

not micromanage the particulars of how a person handles their property." Going forward with the zoning ordinance, she indicated, "I would go with what already exists."

As of press time the public hearing will be held on Thursday, July 15.

LAFIANDRA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

juvenile. Just kidding.

Well, this is something you don't see every day, at least I didn't, so I decided to investigate further by reading the relevant Code of Virginia section cited, and going to the hearing.

Upon entering the court room before the hearing started, I spotted four heavily armed animal control officers in a small anti-room and proceeded to discuss the case with them. They were all very professional, and seemed to be genuinely interested in the welfare of animals. One of the officers had a petition for adoption to present to the judge, which apparently included the party that wanted to adopt the chicken. According to the officers, several abandoned or lost chickens are seized every year.

I asked why they were here to present a petition for a chicken. They essentially said that as animal control officers, they are required by law to do so. They told me the name of the chicken, a rooster, was "Speckles." We were able to obtain a photo of Speckles, and as you can see, he was aptly named because of his coloring.

I stayed to witness the hearing which was handled in a straightforward legal manner. The animal control officer presented the petition to the judge, she reviewed it and then granted custody to whoever wanted the chicken. The acoustics in the court room were poor, and I couldn't hear all the details. The case was sandwiched between two more serious cases, and took about five minutes to complete.

Trying to find out more about why the county had to spend the time, money and effort including requiring the time of animal control officers to adopt a chicken, I contacted the Community Relations Manager of the Department of Animal Services, Talia Czapski. She responded to my question in an email as follows;

"Unlike a cat or dog that we might

find running at large and take in as a stray animals, there is no stray process for livestock. Instead, if we find ... a stray livestock animal, we technically seize them rather than bring them in as stray. This means that we need to go through the seizure process (involving court) for that animal before we can adopt them out. This is true for all livestock so roosters, chickens, cows, goats, horses etc. would all follow this process. When we bring livestock into our care this way, we hold them until their court date, and try to find their owners in the meantime."

So there you have it, everybody was doing their job. They were following the law as written. That's how the county ended up putting a notice in a local paper for a seizure of a chicken, a rooster named Speckles. They had to do it. In their zeal to make sure that no animal is mistreated, our lawmakers cast a wide net because the code statute 3.2-6569 includes all animals.

The real problem with this whole process is that it diverts resources from the real cases of major animal abuse like the recent situation in Aldie where a woman was charged with 118 instances of animal abuse by hoarding 367 animals. According to published reports, there were an alleged 51 class 1 and 64 class 4 misdemeanors at her place of residence. If convicted, she could be put in jail for 51 years or pay \$127,500 just for the Class 1 misdemeanors alone.

Now, that's a case worthy of a hearing, not the finding of a home for a rooster. The bottom line is the Code of Virginia has to be changed to allow for the local disposition of a lost or abandoned animal.

My experience with the people of the Loudoun County Department of Animal Services is that they are kind and caring animal lovers, that are sometimes faced with horrendous animal abuse situations. Free them up to do the important things, so Loudoun County doesn't have to hold a hearing for a chicken.

LETTER WOKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

friend and all, but you can't expect other people to act like he really exists."

Elmer's face tightened, his anger clearly rising. "Your failure to recognize and respect Ralph, regardless of his invisibility, is solely on you and your intolerant spirit. Ralph and I have every right to be acknowledged as the inseparable friends we are, even if Ralph exists only in my head. We will accept no less, and if you'd like to remain friendly, we suggest you comply with our wishes."

Given their adamancy, I relented. "I'm so sorry. I hope you both will accept my deepest apologies." Elmer (and possibly

Ralph) smiled and embraced me, though Ralph's touch was hardly noticeable.

I was ready to leave, but still hadn't gotten Elmer's opinion on the Leesburg teacher's refusal to accept non-biological genders.

Then it hit me: Elmer actually had made his point quite lucidly: preferred pronouns have nothing to do with reality. Accept the delusion that gender is chosen, not given, or pay a big, big price. Tanner Cross, you have entered the woke zone.

*David Culver Brenner
Leesburg*

LETTER BROKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

experienced in three other states in which I've lived. Their conscientious, dedicated, professional and prompt response to a myriad of situations each day is commendable, and never more so than within the past year or more.

While too many of our County leaders conducted business behind the zoom cameras, our deputies were patrolling the streets and meeting citizens face-to-face, potentially detrimental to their own health and safety.

They continue, minute-to-minute, to meet the everchanging demands of the County and its residents – and it would have been extremely reward-

ing for each deputy if the monies, instead, had been spent to provide them a generous bonus as a "thank you" for their efforts, far above and beyond an already adverse situation for all.

I believe the Board of Supervisors would be better suited to address other critical issues pending before them, not looking for other unsuccessful and meaningless avenues to pursue.

They should refocus on our children's educational needs, and other far more important unresolved issues – not the expansion of their power base.

*Rebecca Reeder
Leesburg*

TIM JON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

of the County Seat. Yes, they will be a nice addition to the Town.

But I just know, that I'll remember the look of that forlorn, gun-metal-blue structure, with the white-painted "Of-

fice" placard stuck out front, and the obsolete air conditioners, and the home-made-looking stairs, and the stove-pipe, and the wild mulberries around the back. And so will you.

THE CANNONS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

infielders, six outfielders, and three catchers.

These super-talented young men hail from the University of Nebraska, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Hawaii; and, they come from Northwest Florida State College, James Madison University, Roanoke Collage, Virginia Tech, Mount St. Mary's University and other places.

"Some of our best guys are also the smallest guys on the team," said Fuller.

But, he added, those players can represent "The fly in the ointment" to the team we are trying to beat. In other words, even so-called "small guys" can present a problem, and, therefore, give a real competitive advantage to their team.

The Cannons' coaching staff includes Brett Fuller as head coach; Ridge Full-

er, assistant coach; Doug Walker, assistant coach; Dave Dinges, assistant coach; and Joey Burr, strength coach. For all of these guys, it's all about pride and partnership.

Fuller is as enthusiastic about his sponsors as he is about his players, and gave a generous shot out to Lowry's Crab Shack and other Cannons sponsors, too. He knows them all by heart; in the real sense of that sentiment. "We have such great sponsors. If they can't make a donation, the help feed us, or give in other ways, It's just amazing."

Fuller also made a reference to what the team's sponsors, with businesses of their own, went through this past year.

"I know how hard it was," he said. Whatever we are able to do for our sponsors, is "Never going to equal what they do for us..."



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LETTER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

and their mothers feel helpless. So many are barely making it, and don't know how to help their children.

Instead of debating policies that further divide us, we should be embracing each other's differences like my son did, when he waited to eat until sundown, to support his Muslim friend during Ramadan.

The debate of educational theories at school board meetings, and thirteen months out-of-the-classroom not only failed my children, but crippled the most vulnerable among us.

I told Glenn about these boys and many children like them falling years behind while school boards debate race theories, and analyze injustice – unwilling to address the injustice happening every single day; children and their mothers falling farther and farther behind, and no one sees or hears them. A father first, Glenn nodded with concern, took notes and listened.

Tears sprung from my eyes as I recalled the helplessness I felt with my own boy. For thirteen months of virtual learning, I watched him deteriorate. My teenage boy needed friends and football.

While we watched other states educate, Virginia continued to isolate. No one listened. Kids quickly understood that in Virginia their opinions didn't matter. My children felt powerless and it was heart-breaking to watch. I told all of this and much more to Glenn, and he listened. He understood.

When I finished, Glenn said, "Paige, I hear you. We need to work on solutions so that every voice feels heard. We have to work together."

Virginians deserve a leader who puts children first, and knows that empowering parents will make a bigger difference in a child's life.

As Virginians we are beautifully diverse, and no voices should be marginalized. Now more than ever, Virginia needs a governor who partners with parents, making every child a priority. We need Glenn Youngkin for Governor.

*Paige Marriott
Leesburg*

HILLSBORO, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

transportation milestone to enhance the quality of life in the Town of Hillsboro and for all of those who travel this corridor," said Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis J. Randall (D-At Large), who is also chair of NVTA. "Through this regional collaboration, visitors are welcomed back to Hillsboro where congestion has been relieved, and pedestrians can walk safely through the Town."

In addition to the ribbon cutting, the Town marked June 18—the date in 2018 the Authority members voted to fund the

KIDWINDS CHALLENGE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

I volunteer as an educational liaison, working with families seeking opportunities for their children to become involved in STEM activities." During the 2018-2019 school year, Painter noted, Makersmiths including herself sponsored the two KidWind teams, one built wind turbines and the other solar projects.

This is very cool stuff

Leave it to kids to simplify what sounds like a rather complex task.

These two videos will give you a flavor for their inspiring personalities and beautiful, youthful, and infectious attitude towards life: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rCoeUV-jBMOKeVc30WegnjHOCrS-f2Asf/view>, and <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1h0GQQyPG9M-J68QyyB-6CbTsFmqMmWdLZ/view>.

In the recent KidWind's challenge, their wind turbine team (Ellis and Ogilman) persevered through the COVID crisis to be awarded the Wind Geek Award during the KidWind-VA 2021 Competition.

This is serious, very cool scientific stuff, documented extremely carefully at every step.

Said Painter: "Our documentation explains that we began development of our wind turbine by learning about gears. A retired electrical engineer helped us understand how adding a gearbox to the wind turbine would improve our wind turbine's performance.

"Then we learned to use an online gear design program and the laser cutter to make gears.

"Next, we researched blade designs and drew blades that we wanted to make. Soren made his blades from cardboard, but Connor worked with his grandfather to create his blades from wood. We tested out our blades in a wind tunnel we built at Makersmiths. "Then we learned Tinkercad [an app for 3D design, electronics, and coding] to design blades that could be 3D printed or laser cut ...

"After testing our blades again with the gearbox that Soren created, we determined that Soren's blades outperformed Connor's wooden blades when the gearbox was used ..."

Outstanding and innovative learning opportunities

A June 2021 Repowering Schools post on the LinkedIn blog says it all

about the enthusiasm with which this effort is received by both parents and kids: "... [Your] continued desire to spark the creativity and imagination of our youth for deeper learning is so inspiring.

"I love the problem-based learning that is occurring and the problem-solving of real world, authentic problems while they are developing a passion for projects that can impact them for a lifetime, but can also impact the global world.

"It can all start in Makersmiths where the 'making' can make a big difference. You are inspirational. I love how you share your passion for learning."

Recognizing excellence

Supporters, families, and friends held an event for the winners on June 23 in Round Hill's Stoneleigh community.

Four of the five kids recognized by Makersmiths were in attendance. Ralph Pugh – an engineer and Makersmiths volunteer was in attendance, too, along with KidWinds folks.

To learn more about the national KidWind.org, go to www.kidwind.org.

HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

"That's one way to put it," replied Robert. "Also, people who wanted to start breweries would have to hurry up and get them permitted before the new zoning takes effect with a sunset provision. You might worry that a bunch of them would suddenly pop up, but Houston and I don't think that would happen. People in the west should really like Sunset Zoning and people in the east shouldn't care since we'd keep the breweries that we have now. Existing breweries should support the idea since it would mean less future competition."

Byne smirked.

"We then talked about the staff at the Department of Planning and Zoning. Houston says that zoning codes lock things in almost permanently and

are very difficult to modify, but Sunset Zoning would add new flexibility that Staff should like. They also should like kicking controversial cans down the road, as it were. Sunset Zoning itself shouldn't be controversial.

"He then asked me how I'd like to publicize my idea. I said that I didn't need to get credit for it. He said the same thing. Houston's on the Zoning Ordinance Committee that's helping working on a new ordinance and I thought he would present it there. He had a better approach - he'll share the idea with Staff and let it become their idea. We Googled 'sunset zoning' and similar terms and could not find any instance of its being used. Loudoun's Staff could get professional recognition for it. That's our plan."

Byne smiled but also pointed some-

thing out, "You didn't talk about lawyers. Would Sunset Zoning pass legal muster?"

"I think so. Counties can down-zone as long as there are public hearings and such, and this might not even be considered a down-zoning. With lawyers you never know, so that's a good point. Let me call Houston. Maybe he should take the idea to a supervisor who would then give it to the planning staff ... and also tell the lawyers that their job is to make it happen."

"Did Houston know who you were?" Byne asked her husband.

"Nope, but we're having lunch next week. He said he'd buy."

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

Hillsboro project—as **NVTA Day**. The Hillsboro project is one of the first transportation projects in the Authority's first Six Year Program to start and finish construction.

"It is truly an honor to celebrate this transformative, congestion-reducing transportation milestone with the Town of Hillsboro, Loudoun County and VDOT on Hillsboro's first official NVTA Day," said NVTA Executive Director Monica Backmon. "Hillsboro has proven, no matter how small a jurisdiction, by dreaming big, and through regional

collaboration and strategic planning, a project vision can be brought to reality, benefiting travelers across Northern Virginia."

"I'm honored to have played a small role in the funding and approvals of this much needed multi-faceted improvement project" said Loudoun County Supervisor Tony Buffington. "I want to recognize the dedicated and strong leadership of Mayor Vance and Vice Mayor Marasco. Had it not been for their extraordinary efforts, this project would not have been possible."

The ceremony also featured Zahria Ford, a sophomore at Rock Ridge High School who delivered her poem, "The Visionary." Ford was the Northern Virginia winner in the 2021 Strong Men & Women in Virginia writing contest.

The Town also prepared a time capsule to commemorate this history-making event. Vance said, "In 2121, when this time capsule is opened, we hope the future leaders of the Town of Hillsboro will be inspired to see how—with vision and through dedication and teamwork—we made the 'impossible' possible in 2021."

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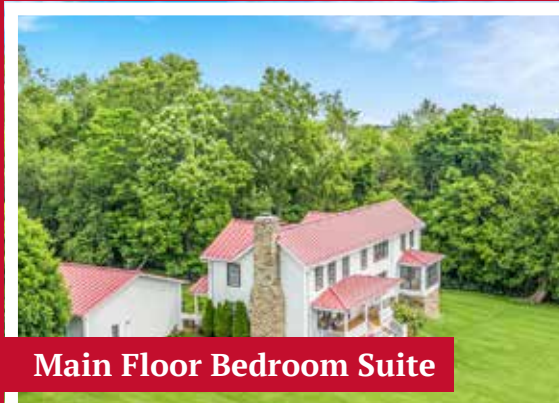
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