

Blue Ridge LEADER & LOUDOUN Today

AUGUST 2021

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Will the interminable Vineyard Square project continue – who’s in charge here?

BY VALERIE CURY

On July 15, following the recommendation of Purcellville Town Attorney Sally Hankins, Town Manager David Mekarski, hired an outside lawyer to make a vested rights determination regarding the Vineyard Square development. This was done without first speaking and meeting with the Town Council.

It had been previously understood that Hankins would meet with Council first to see what position the Council wanted her to take on the matter of whether the Vineyard Square project had expired on Feb. 16, 2021 – or whether due to the COVID-19 legislation passed by the General Assembly allowing for site plans that

were active as of June 2020 (regardless of whether they expired after that) – to continue.

A finding that the developer had a vested right to commence the Vineyard Square project would mean that the project could continue despite the expiration. The legislation was passed to help projects that were in the process of being built, but due to COVID were put on hold.

At a Planning Commission meeting on Feb. 18, 2021, Hankins first informed the Planning Commission of the legislation, even though it took effect in September 2020. Hankins said, “There is a legal argument that allows the Town to take a different position that the reme-

dial legislation does not have the effect of extending this particular site plan, and so I need to consult with Town Council, to understand what position they would like the Town to take.

“It won’t matter unless some kind of action is requested pursuant to the site plan by the property owner...” The owners/developers of Vineyard Square have asked the Town for its position, since they want to now proceed with a demolition permit.

Miami Beach-style in historic downtown

Vineyard Square is a Miami Beach-style project on 21st Street that calls for a six-story building with commercial,



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along with 40 apartments, right in historic downtown. It was approved over eight years ago under a different administration.

The project has sat dormant for over eight years, with minimal work initially done – specifically the tearing down of

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Back to the future: Students and staff must mask up

BY LAURA LONGLEY

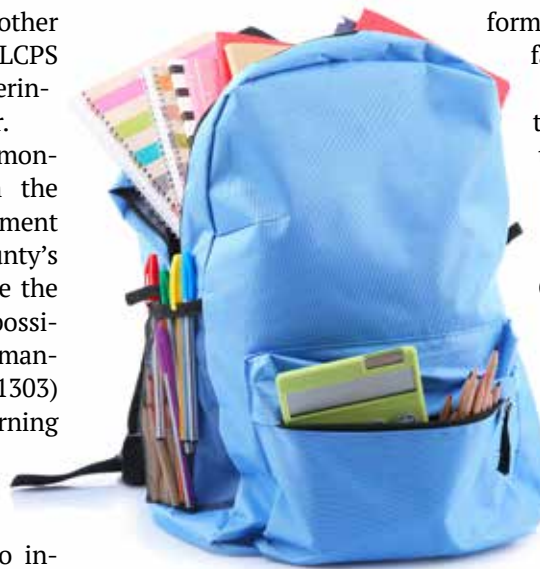
Yes, students, teachers, and school staff will be required to wear masks indoors in school this year.

Loudoun County Public Schools had been looking ahead to a year that would bring a measure of normalcy to parents’ and students’ lives. However, just three weeks ahead of the first day of the 2021-2022 school year on Thursday, Aug. 26, LCPS announced masking requirements.

“We know students and families have been waiting for news

on mask-wearing and other mitigation measures in LCPS schools this fall,” said Superintendent Dr. Scott A. Ziegler.

“We have been closely monitoring information from the CDC, the Virginia Department of Health, and our own county’s transmission rates to make the most informed decision possible. With the (Virginia) mandate of 456 (formerly SB1303) to maximize in-person learning and to follow CDC guidance, it was important to have the most updated information possible to in-



form our return to school this fall.”

This action conforms with the Code of Virginia’s Chapter 456, which requires schools to open for in-person instruction this fall while adhering to federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance related to COVID-19. With its Aug. 2 masking decision, LCPS prioritized the opportunity for students to continue to learn in a safe, consistent, in-person

learning environment.

On July 27, the CDC recommended that everyone in K through 12 schools wear a mask indoors, including teachers, staff, students and visitors, regardless of their vaccination status.

“We realize that our desire for in-person learning is currently being challenged by rising community risk in Loudoun County and the potential impact of the Delta variant on students and our community, and we will continue to monitor

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PACT

Parents Against Critical Theory

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If Critical Race Theory is a “conspiracy” then why does the NAACP say “Let them die’ to those opposed to it?

There have been no statements of condemnation of these hateful comments by: LCPS, LCBS, Loudoun NAACP or the Equity Committee, why not? Where’s the press conference? DEI right?

- We don't need hateful, divisive rhetoric, and forced acceptance through intimidation
- We don't need community organizers and special interest groups of ANY race or political ideology dictating what our kids’ education should be
- We DO need to disrupt and dismantle ALL forms of supremacy, bigotry, and hate
- We DO need community organizations that are of, by and for the people of ALL races, religions, and sexual orientation

Paid for and Authorized by: Parents Against Critical Theory (PACT) parentsagainstcrt.com

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Arresting, even in black and white

Local photographer Roger Lancaster's hands book is stunning

BY ANDREA GAINES

The title of the book, *Hands at Work*, is as simple and as profound as the images themselves.

Roger Lancaster's photography is arresting, in color or in black and white.

But, as Lancaster told us in discussing the book, there is something about black and white photography that "lets you see the grit under some one's fingernails, and that can make the image."

Lancaster's book was first published in 2008. And, now he is working on getting it reprinted.

Lancaster, who now lives in Waterford, is a native of Western Canada.

His grandfather was a photo journalist, and when Lancaster was six years old, he was allowed to use "grandpa's old fold-up camera."

Lancaster's original profession was as an association executive. He did not pick up photography until about 10 years ago.

For him, photography is a way "to bring the outdoors in for all to enjoy and an opportunity to bring out my



creative side." Interestingly, to him, the "artistic side of processing images is as much fun, as capturing the photo ..." Processing, is like painting, he said. Landscape images are a big thing for Lancaster. But, in recent years he has evolved to doing "more eclectic" and "macro photography," with "monochromatic processing."

He won the Best of Loudoun for two years running at the Waterford Fair. He is celebrated in many of the most well-

known photography journals and publications. His work is sought after by private collectors. He is an active member of the Northern Virginia Photographic Society, and has served as President of the Nature Visions Photo Expo.

"Over the past couple of years, I have been gravitating to appreciating monochrome photos over color photos, especially in black and white," said Lancaster.

I find that there is much more emotion emitted in black and white through the different shades of light and dark, gray and black, white and light gray. In my hand's photos, for example, I find the black and white really gives a lot more detail into the hands – you can see every line, the hair, the pores, even dirt in the finger nails. You would pass right by these features if it was just in color.

"My idea for the hands book came about after attending many years of the

great Waterford Fair. One day, I took a photo of just the hands working on their craft and absolutely fell in love with the result, especially when I processed it in black and white.

"What would we do without hands? ..." he added. Crafters, to Lancaster, "... are truly *Hands at Work*, which is the name of his book.

Much of this photographer's love of the craft of photography, again, harkens back to his grandfather. "My grandfather," he said, "was a photo journalist for a small community newspaper in British Columbia, Canada. He was always taking photos, and since I was the first grandchild, he took hundreds of me."

Lancaster then related, again, the old fold-up camera story.

"When I was around six, he let me take some photos with his old fold-up Kodak

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Hiroya Tsukamoto and the ethereal beauty of Japanese guitar music

BY ANDREA GAINES

Hiroya Tsukamoto, an innovative composer of Japanese guitar music performed at the Franklin Park Arts Center on Sunday, June 11. His style of music fuses folk, jazz, and other influences to produce a sound all its own, both simple and complex, melodic, and emotional.

A Franklin Park Facebook post discussed the sweetness of both Tsukamoto's performance and his visit here. The music, said the post, was "beautiful, peaceful, and cultural. He brought his family on this trip, and arranged to stay at a B&B near Purcellville. Turns out the B&B owner speaks Japanese and lived in Japan."

Born and raised in Japan, in 2000 Tsu-



Tsukamoto at a recent concert in Charlottesville.

kamoto received a scholarship to the Berklee College of Music in Boston.

According to the Franklin Park website, "Tsukamoto's instrumental

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Discover Purcellville presents "Words on a Fence"

This year's community art project coordinated by Discover Purcellville is out on the streets for all to enjoy. Thirty talented local Artist donated their talent to paint a word on a fence, for Discover Purcellville's Words on a Fence project.

Discover Purcellville provided the cut-out words and let the artist create whatever they visioned. Michael Oaks of Discover Purcellville came up with the idea of painted words because he felt the community needed an art project that was uplifting, positive, and would bring a smile to every face when everyone viewed them.

"We'll be leaving the "Words on a

Fence" out till the end of October, then they will be auctioned off on November 13 at 7 p.m. at the Purcellville Skating Rink," said Oaks.

Discover Purcellville is a 501 (c) (4) community nonprofit. Two other upcoming Discover Purcellville events include The End of Summer Block Party Sept. 12 on 21st street featuring a free concert by The Bridge "the world's best Led Zepplin tribute band," according to Oaks.

Discover Purcellville will hold their 10th annual Purcellville Halloween Block Party, Saturday October 30. For additional info please email dpurcellville@gmail.com.



Just Like Nothing (else) on Earth: 'The School'

BY TIM JON

The Department of Historic Resources in 2017 set up a marker at this site – calling the facility we examine today, the 'Ashburn Colored School.' I'm asking your permission – today – to just call it 'the school.' I'm colored. You're colored. Others are colored. It's quite a palette we've got here.



JON

Referring back to the official sign erected at 20581 Ashburn Road – perhaps an even more jarring note reminds us that Loudoun County Public Schools continued to segregate its students until the Year 1968; this, despite the US Supreme Court ruling in 1954 on the unconstitutionality of this very practice (and, wasn't there an earlier American document declaring all men equal?).

This is our history. Mine, yours, and others – at least concerning education in Loudoun County, Virginia. A difficult thing, at times, examining the role of one intersection within the universal time-space dimensions.

And while I feel the unfairness in reading on that placard that schools for African American children received less

funding and offered fewer educational opportunities than did their counterparts for 'white' students, I get a sense (and I'll stand behind my intuition here) that this facility represented more than just a place to be for a certain period of time – each day – for those who attended



classes within its walls.

I found myself fortunate enough to step inside and share space with as much of that history as I could imagine, at least trying to soak up some of the previous energies which filled this one-room facility. I found dreams, ambitions,



friendships, discoveries and the pleasant growth pains of youthful, exuberant brain activity; admittedly, I also gained a sense of frustrations, limited resources, impoverishment, and other less defined uncertainties and difficulties.

But, referring back to that sign erected by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources – reminding us that this particular school remained open until 1958 (when the Public School System transferred these students to another segregated facility in Leesburg), I derive a sense of comfort that this space

offered at least some type of educational (and, no doubt, social) opportunity for those young people since its construction in 1892: my senses (and sensibilities, perhaps) told me that in that

half-century and more of teaching and learning, that a great deal indeed was accomplished here. I believe I'm correct in describing a sense of the sacred within these walls. At least that's what I found.

I recall a quote from a favorite theatre director: "Every audience gets the show they deserve." On the day of my recent visit to 'the school,' I was an audience of one. I witnessed a show, of sorts – maybe not the kind I could capture on camera or microphone, but one recorded in the back of the mind, somewhere in the soul.

Yes, this site represents just a portion of the difficult struggle for human rights in the United States, and over our world; that process includes pain, ignorance, disappointment, prejudice, inequality, outrage, separation and tragedy. But – and I'd like to believe more importantly – that timeline (obviously still playing out) also witnesses courage, resilience, understanding, unity, triumph and love.

On the day I explored the space, the skies over Ashburn let down a healthy stream of rain; after I'd had the honor of enjoying this small, yet expansive, educational environment, I had a definite sense of regret in opening the door and stepping out into the downpour.

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— Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

Managing your child's back to school anxiety

BY MICHAEL OBERSCHNEIDER, PSY.D.

With the start of the school year just weeks away, so many children are beginning to look forward to returning to class. However, the numerous uncertainties, unanswered questions and unknowns about what school will be like this year, alongside the significant life changes and adjustments of the past 16 months, has created a lot of anxiety for re-



DR. MIKE

turning students.

While back to school anxiety is not uncommon, recent surveys have shown that the number of elementary, and middle school, high school, and college students experiencing anxiety is at an all-time high; one survey revealed that 66 percent of children have notable anxiety about returning to school.

In addition to anxiety, surveys have also revealed disturbing patterns that weren't there before with higher rates

of depression, anger, behavior problems, substance use problems, and sleep problems for children and teens during COVID-19.

In my work as a child psychologist, I too have noticed the increase in anxiety for children and teens this past year and a half; and more recently, there has been an absolute tsunami of anxiety – separation anxiety, social anxiety, generalized anxiety, and panic – for children, teens, and parents regarding this upcoming

school year.

Back to school anxiety can be difficult for children and teens to overcome and manage, especially this year. I offer the following tips in support of easing your child's or teen's struggles.

Take your own temperature as a parent: In many ways, our children are extensions of ourselves; and so, it's easy for us as parents to sometimes over identify with and/or even over feel our

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Charitable giving considerations for 2021

If the COVID-19 pandemic's far-reaching impacts have you looking to enhance your charitable giving, be sure to remember these tax-related considerations for 2021:



RICHARD RICCI

Cash gifts: A special rule for this year allows taxpayers who do not itemize deductions to claim up to \$300 (\$600 for joint filers) for gifts to qualifying charities.

If you do itemize, cash contributions to qualified charities in 2021 might be used to offset up to 100 percent of your adjusted gross income (AGI) (60 percent of AGI for cash gifts to a donor advised fund or 30% for cash gifts to a private foundation).

This means that if you're in a position to make generous gifts, you may potentially offset all of your taxable income. In addition, cash gifts could be used to offset Roth IRA conversion income or capital gains realized upon the sale of real estate or a large position in a single investment.

If you're unable to itemize but would like to, evaluate the possible impact of

bunching several years' worth of charitable contributions into one year. This may increase your itemized deductions above the standard deduction threshold so you can potentially receive a tax benefit for those gifts. Review your income and deductions for the current year and the next few years with your tax advisor to determine what is the best timing for those bunched contributions.

Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD): For taxpayers age 70½ or older, a QCD allows you to gift up to \$100,000 per year directly from your IRA to qualifying charities.

QCDs are tax-free distributions and count toward satisfying your required minimum distribution (RMD). Remember that, while RMDs were waived for 2020, they must be taken for 2021.

No deduction is allowed for a QCD since the distribution is not taxable. This strategy is beneficial if you will not itemize deductions this year. It could also help you control your AGI, which is used to determine many tax-related limitations.

Note that the amount of the QCD you

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ZOC Parks Some Cars

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

I'm on the Zoning Ordinance Committee, which is helping craft a new zoning ordinance for the county. The old ordinance is 23 years old and 1,004 pages.

OPINION

Frankly, I think it's fine, but that's my retrograde opinion, and now I'm fully immersed in the rewrite process for the new ordinance. At our last meeting the committee chairman said I talked a lot; I told him that was because I think a lot.

Perspectives

There are two distinct perspectives on ZOC. First, there is an outside consulting firm and county Staff.

James David, Deputy Director of that department, is the lead County manager on the project. Zoning Administrator Mark Stultz is another key person from the County. A bevy of planners work

generally behind the scenes, some occasionally attend ZOC's twice-monthly meetings.

Every County person has been pleasant and I like them. I don't always agree with them, though. Perhaps it's the nature of planners: They seem to be idealists, and value public controls. That does not mean they are always right.

The second perspective comes from the ZOC members, 19 of them. While I wish they were all fellow conservationists, the membership includes developers, engineers, development consultants, data center owners and so on.

We often have different opinions on details and there are some thorny issues ahead, but the committee is now operating collegially and most importantly, the membership has extensive hands-on experience with almost everything a zoning ordinance could touch.

I built thousands of parking spaces to

support office buildings I developed, for example, and my comments on parking were based on real-world experience. ZOC members seem to be pragmatists and value free-market solutions.

Idealism vs. Experience

Here's an instance of clashing perspectives.

Traditionally, zoning calls for a minimum number of parking spaces for each use, for example most of the spaces I developed were required on the basis of five spaces per 1,000 square feet of office space in the suburbs, and in urban areas generally "2/1,000 sf" (when expressed as a ratio).

These days planning idealism is in full bloom and Staff likes the idea of having maximum parking limits in some areas, hoping that will relieve congestion, help the environment, encourage alternate means of transportation –

bicycles, car-share, etc.

Many ZOC members, including myself, think actual experience counts more than theory and dreams. Commercial developers remain as owners of their buildings, and must get parking ratios exactly right – provide too few spaces, and projects will not lease up; provide too few and money's been wasted.

On the other hand, homebuilders quit a subdivision once it's sold out, so they have the incentive to scrimp on parking to put more money in their pockets. There, minimum parking ratios are absolutely necessary.

Staff has included contemporary feel-good ideas and wants to mandate things like special parking for electric vehicles, car-shares, bicycles and motorcycles. ZOC members think we need more time before we know which of these things are truly required.

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— It seems to me —

You are in a Seinfeld Episode

BY JOE LAFIANDRA

You may not realize it but, you are in a real-life episode of a Seinfeld sitcom – *The Shower Head*. The show characters were upset because of the limited water flow from recently installed shower heads in their building.

OPINION

Yes, in real life, the Federal Government has also recently reinstated the water flow requirements for all shower heads sold in this county back to 2.5 gallons/minute (g/m).

In real life and the sitcom, the water flow from the new shower head being used is inadequate, the characters in the sitcom can't get enough water from their shower heads to wash, and rinse their hair.

In the show, Newman has found a solution, buy shower heads made in the former country of Yugoslavia on the black market. Kramer picks a super powerful shower head that was designed for washing elephants, with the result of him being blown out of the shower when he turns it on.

This is of course a fictional outcome but, in real life there are concerns about the lack of water flow from the newly required shower heads that have people trying to find a solution. To understand the significance of changing the water flow of the government mandated shower head flow, we have to do some basic calculations of water use in the U.S.

Let's examine the 2.5 g/m requirement. The dirty little secret is that that number is specified at 80 pounds

per square inch (psi) which is a higher number than what most water systems work at. Most water system pressures range from 40 to 60 psi. This means the water flow will be less than 2.5 g/m or closer to 1.6 g/m typically.

So the government is misleading you about how much water you will be getting out of that new shower head. Incidentally, California is also implementing additional restrictions that reduce the water flow to 1.8 g/m and less from the original 2.5 g/m.

You don't have to get a Yugoslavian shower head to increase the water flow of your shower head. If you want to increase water flow in your shower head, all you have to do is remove the restrictor or replace the restrictor

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Public Schools should treat everyone equitably

Dear Editor:

Loudoun County public schools begin each day with The Pledge of Allegiance.

It is a sacred reminder that our country was created to be "invisible, with liberty and justice for all."

Recently, the Loudoun County School Board has been challenged for its com-

mitment to provide an equitable education to all. We, the members of The Center for Spiritual Living Leesburg support the efforts of the Loudoun County School Board to create a safe and nurturing environment for ALL students. We commend the school board's courageous work on racial equity and the rights of transgender students.

There is a new American story that is emerging. It is a commitment to compassion, inclusivity, justice, equity, healing, and the rediscovery of the Golden Rule. Students have a human right not to be bullied, intimidated, or threatened due to their race, religion, socioeconomic status, or preferred gender. Our

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Reflections on Married Life

BY SAMUEL MOORE-SOBEL

I cannot believe it has been a year.

My wife and I were married on Aug. 1, 2020. It seems just like yesterday. Mask restrictions were in effect, and we were all trying to get through life in a global pandemic. So much felt uncertain, except for the love we shared for each other.



MOORE-SOBEL

Our life since has been nothing short of a wonderful adventure. Waking up and ending each day with the woman I love has been a dream come true. I cannot imagine the past year with anyone else. I am more in love with my wife now than I was when I married her a year ago. She is a precious gift to me.

I've learned so many lessons over the last year. For me, marriage has proven to be the sweetest of adventures. I've found that being married has shifted my perspective, challenged my thinking, and identified areas for continued growth. The joy of marriage is that we get to change and grow together, while defining what we want our marriage to be.

As I reflect on our one-year anniversary of marriage, I thought I'd share some of what I've learned. While everyone's journey is different, I hope that at least part of what I share resonates with you.

For starters, our emotions and how we communicate them, often affect our partner. If I am having a bad day, that affects the person I share life with. If I'm grumpy, sad, angry, happy or joyful, that affects my spouse, too.

I've also learned the importance of communication. Everyone talks about this before getting married – but I understand it's importance more now. Open and honest conversations with my spouse help illuminate our path forward. It's not just what we communicate, though. It's also how we communicate it. When in conflict, addressing each other respectfully while clearly communicating our points of view goes a long way toward building understanding and trust.

Megan and I share almost everything together. She is my greatest advisor and confidant on all matters, both personal and professional. When I need a listening ear for a challenge I'm facing at work, she's there to help. I do the same for her. She edits much of my writing, including my columns.

We talk about every topic we can

think of – current events, psychology, politics, faith, leadership and management styles. We are each other's greatest cheerleaders – supporting each other through successes and failures. We share everything together because we enjoy spending time together – but also because it keeps our marriage strong. There is nothing more special to me than looking across the dinner table and sharing my day with the woman of my dreams.

The most important lesson I've learned is the importance of boundaries. Marriage is a great opportunity to reassess various aspects of life: what's working well? What's not working as well? What do I want or need to change, for my well-being or my partner's?

As a side note, evaluating one's life choices is a great idea to do regularly and doesn't require marriage as an impetus for doing so.

For instance, before meeting Megan, I tended to work long hours. I still work plenty of hours, but I've realized that my marriage is more important than logging another hour sending work emails or promoting my book.

My marriage comes first. Sometimes, that might mean changing how I've operated in the past. But I've learned firsthand how vital it is to fight for my marriage, make changes, and set boundaries when need be.

I believe life is precious. We all know that life is short. I only get to live this exact moment once. Being married to Megan has given me a newfound sense of purpose and reinforced the notion that time is fleeting.

I want to spend every moment I can with Megan, and I want to make every moment count. This means approaching our life together with the intent of prioritizing each other's needs, learning to love each other better each day, and finding ways to strengthen our relationship. Each day is a gift.

One year later and many things in life remain uncertain. Will this pandemic ever lift? Will life go back to "normal?" What will the next year bring? No matter what happens, I can tell you that there is no one I'd rather spend it with than Megan. Marrying her is the best decision I've ever made.

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.

— Remembering —
Daniel L. McGinnis

Daniel L. McGinnis, 82, of Round Hill, Virginia passed away of congestive heart failure on July 5, 2021 surrounded by his family. He was a devoted parishioner of St. Bridget of Ireland Catholic Church in Berryville, Virginia.

He is survived by Arlene, his wife of nearly 60 years, and their three daughters; Colleen McGinnis, Kelly-Ann Royston and Erin Meitzler, their spouses, five grandchildren, one great grandchild, his sister, Maureen Kane and brother, Edward McGinnis.

Born and raised in Honesdale, Pennsylvania, Dan graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Notre Dame, and a year later, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Aeronautical Engineering, also from the University of Notre Dame. While working to support his family, he earned a Master's degree in Business Administration from Lehigh University.

He started his career as an engineer at Hercules Corporation, working in both Cumberland, Maryland and Kenil, New Jersey on the Polaris Missile project.

He then held numerous positions at Air Products and Chemicals, based in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Furthering his career, McGinnis moved on to Division Controller for the international consumer products division of Bausch & Lomb based in Rochester, New York. After three years in that role, he joined C & J Clark America, Inc. as Vice President and Controller in West Chester, PA.

In the midst of the worldwide communication technology revolution of the early to mid-1990s, he took on the role of president and later CEO of Coherent Communications Systems Corporation based in Hauppauge, NY.

He successfully moved the business operations to Ashburn, VA. Following an initial retirement from

Coherent, he was drawn to a leadership position as President and CEO of SOTAS, Inc., in Gaithersburg, MD.

In addition to his primary employment, McGinnis served on numerous boards, including Loudoun County Economic Development, Loudoun Hospital and Independence Air.

He also started a family foundation supporting education, health-care, aid and relief, and Catholic organizations.

Serious by nature, his brilliant wit was unexpected, as was his ability to slay a room. Although a man of few words, his interest in everything mixed with his zeal for reading, awarded him a breadth of knowledge that made conversing with him fascinating.

McGinnis obtained both a pilot's and a captain's license, and was an avid mariner. He loved nothing more than having his family near and sharing his interests in boating and traveling. He and Arlene planned multiple unforgettable global trips with their children and grandchildren.

Those closest to him knew him to be determined, demanding, and decisive.

Throughout his life, he was a role model for many; leading by his faith, his integrity, and his generosity. There is no measure of the number of lives he positively impacted during his lifetime. His memory will be eternally cherished.

Visitation was held July 17, at Hall Funeral Home in Purcellville, VA.

A second visitation was held July 18, at Teeters' Funeral Chapel, in Hawley, PA. A funeral mass was held on July 19, at Blessed Virgin Mary Queen of Peace & St. Veronica in Hawley, PA.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to Capital Caring Health, 3180 Fairview Park Drive, Falls Church, VA 22042, 703-485-8949, in the name of Daniel L. McGinnis.



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Saving Aldie: It takes a village – and Guy Gerachis

BY LAURA LONGLEY

You could say it took a village to save this village. The residents of historic Aldie in southeastern Loudoun twice stayed construction of a massive new fire station. Then came “Aldie Park,” a 35,000-square-foot commercial plaza that developers were raring to build on 6.3 County-owned acres—the remains of the second fire station battle.

The villagers joined forces with preservation and conservation organizations and the mayors of Loudoun County’s towns, and pushed back by speaking at Board of Supervisors meetings. But in the end, they credit one man for winning the war.

Guy Gerachis is not a name you run across often in the local papers, even though he’s a lifelong resident of Loudoun County. He’s been an Aldie property owner for decades, the founder of a successful construction company—Gerachis Construction Group, LLC—and the winner of awards for historic building renovations. And, as former president and now vice president of the Aldie Heritage Association, he was as concerned about ACDC’s plans for Aldie Park as his neighbors were.

Why don’t you buy it, Guy?

ACDC, or Aldie Community Development Company, LLC, which is owned by John “Jack” Andrews and Leonard “Hobie” Mitchel, had big plans for the three parcels known as the “Aldie Assemblage” on the eastern end of the village.

The Aldie Park deal emerged from another between the County and Andrews’s Mojax company. In that one, the County agreed to pay Mojax \$1.5 million to place a permanent easement on 16.4 acres in the village of St. Louis where the developers intended to build 27 houses.

But no sooner had the Board of Supervisors reviewed that offer than the developers came back asking the County to compensate them with the property’s appraised value, which they tallied as \$3.4 million. Their solution to “make them whole” was to have the County not only make the St. Louis payment but also transfer the Aldie Assemblage to them.

Andrews and Mitchel proposed turning Aldie Assemblage into Aldie Park, a commercial complex that would include a brewery, retail and guest room space, art galleries, and a high-end inn

and restaurant comparable to Michelin’s three-star Inn at Little Washington.

The complex also would provide space for 164 vehicles plus a roadway from Route 50 to Andrews’s 60 landlocked acres on Aldie Mountain behind the proposed plaza.

Presented to the Board of Supervisors in a public hearing, the project captured the attention of several supervisors, one of them declaring it “big and bold.”

With a deal already under consideration, what was Aldie to do to prevent this huge development?

The Aldie residents held two meetings. At the second gathering, a neighbor posed a question: “Why don’t you buy it, Guy?”

“I looked at the numbers,” he says, “and thought, ‘Why not? As long as I don’t lose money.’”

Keeping it simple

Gerachis put forward a plain and simple offer to:

- pay \$600,000 for the 6.3 acres and four dilapidated buildings as well as assorted sheds and garages
- renovate the primary buildings

and renovate or remove assorted outbuildings

- clean up the overgrown property and properly landscape the entrance to the village

He expects to renovate and sell two of the properties—the “Tavern,” the farthest east of the group, and Satterfield’s, a small “live work” building next door.

Moving west, there’s Mattingly’s—a store that currently sells Adirondack chairs. Remembering a farm stand run by a fellow known as Apple Jack, Gerachis plans to convert that structure into a farm store with a stand.

Directly behind Mattingly’s is a Victorian farmhouse, also slated for renovation, and usable as an art gallery, antique shop, or live work building.

“That property is next to the current fire station,” explains Gerachis, “so it’s possible that when the firefighting operations move to the new location on Rt. 15, it could become a public space where we could do community events, meetings, movie nights,” he adds. “Once the work is done, there won’t be an empty space in the village.”

After that? “Retirement.”

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Purcellville moves to strengthen historic protections

BY VALERIE CURY

The Purcellville Planning Commission held a public hearing on July 15, on a request to expand the Purcellville Historic Corridor Overlay District. The proposal would include all eligible properties within the Town that are not currently within the district.

GOVERNMENT

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.

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 feel.

Currently, the HCOD does not include most of Purcellville's historically-contributing homes.

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 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 demolition of properties is the main focus of the proposed ordinance, and does not place any restrictions on homeowners renovating or painting their properties. Homeowners would still have to abide by the current rules that are already in place.

A large crowd attended the public hearing. Many said the public notification letter they received from the Town was confusing. Staff sent out the letter without first showing it to the Planning Commission for review.

The participants had concerns about secondary structures on their property, and didn't want restrictions on them. Would they be obligated to fix up sheds, or accessory structures that they couldn't afford to fix – or did not want to fix? That needed to be clear, they stressed.

Many citizens thought additions, renovations, paint colors, in essence any upkeep to their homes would be regulated. They urged the commissioners to check to see if there would be any additional fees for any renovations they wanted to make.

The proposal states, "There are no proposed changes associated with permitted or unpermitted uses that may be located within any historic building or property included in the Historic Corridor Overlay District."

The feedback wasn't all negative. Carol Luke, one of the last speakers, said, "If I do something in Town that changes my building ... don't think that doesn't affect my neighbors, because it does. I think there are things here that need to be preserved. If not, why don't we just go live in Ashburn?" She concluded by saying, "We moved here because we like this little funky town."

Another citizen voiced concern because she did not want "someone to buy a house and ... be able to demolish it and build town houses on something that is not fitting" for her street.

She said a parcel behind her was sold and they fit three homes on it. "It does not fit in with the neighborhood. The

homes are close together. The noise from the families is terrible, and we are just scared this is just going to keep on happening – and will push out the residents that wanted the small-town character ... I don't want my neighbor's house demolished, and put three houses on it."

Planning Commissioner Boo Bennett said it was "a travesty that there was so much misunderstanding" due to the letter the Town sent out. She agreed it was difficult to read.

"There are no restrictions for homeowners, except if you want to implode your home, and then you would be asked to come and have a public hearing like this – so your neighbor, because we don't live in isolation – we live in a community – this way your neighbors can weigh in, she said.

Commissioner Nan Forbes said she lives in a house that is in the historic corridor and this expansion "would not make any difference, unless I wanted to tear my house down." She said the theme she was hearing is that "people are here because they really like Purcellville. They like the way it looks. They like

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 »

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New online system for in-person services – for County’s Community Development Dept.

Loudoun County has launched a new online system that allows people who are seeking in-person services from the County’s community development departments to make an appointment or to get in a virtual line from anywhere. The new system is designed

GOVERNMENT

to improve the experience for the County’s customers at the Government Center in Leesburg through the added convenience of the new system, which allows people to reduce or eliminate physically waiting in line for services.

The County has launched the “Qless” system for customers who plan to visit the Departments of Building and Development, Planning and Zoning, and Health (for Environmental Health Services and Vital Records), and the Office of Mapping and Geographic Information.

These departments—commonly referred to as the community development departments—provide a broad range of online and in-person services,

such as permitting, review of land development plans and applications, inspections, enforcement of regulations, and data and mapping services.

Customers who are seeking in-person services from the community development departments may make an appointment online or get in the virtual line for the customer service counter located on the second floor of the Government Center, 1 Harrison St. SE, Leesburg, in one of the following ways:

- Visit loudoun.gov/getinline.
- Download and use the Qless app (iOS | Android).
- Use the self-serve kiosk located in the Government Center lobby.

“This system allows our customers to make an appointment from home or see how long the wait may be before they drive to the Government Center for service,” said Public Affairs Manager Emily Watkins. “The system saves our customers time by helping them

to plan their visit for the fastest, most efficient service possible.”

The system is easy to use and works in three simple steps:

1. The customer makes an appointment or gets in line through the Loudoun County website or mobile app from anywhere, or through the self-serve kiosk in the Government Center lobby.
2. When it is the customer’s turn for service, they receive a text message summoning them to the customer service counter.
3. Once summoned, the customer picks up a pass from the information desk in the Government Center lobby that provides elevator access to the second floor.

In addition to in-person services, the community development departments offer many online services through the Loudoun County website that do not require a visit to the Government Cen-

ter, as well as self-serve drop-off and pick-up services in the Government Center lobby that do not require a visit to the second-floor customer service counter.

Use of the Qless system is not necessary for visitors to the Offices of the Treasurer and Commissioner of the Revenue because their customer service counters are accessible by the public on the first floor of the Government Center.

Visitors to the offices of the Board of Supervisors, County Administrator, and County Attorney, and to the Departments of Human Resources and Finance and Budget, which are located on the upper floors of the Government Center, should make an appointment prior to arrival. Expansion of the Qless system to include use by other Government Center departments is planned in the future.

For more information about planning your visit to the Loudoun County Government Center, visit loudoun.gov/planyourvisit.

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Citizens speak out on how to spend millions in funds

BY VALERIE CURY

As part of the Purcellville's July 13 Town Council meeting, a public hearing was held on the allocation of the first distribution of Federal Fiscal Recovery Funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

GOVERNMENT

The first distribution to the Town is big, over \$5 million, \$5,279,922 to be exact. The total allotted funding is \$10,559,844, with the second half expected to come to the Town in approximately 12 months.

Since the funds exceed one percent of the Town's Operating Budget, a public hearing was required, as well as a proposal to amend the FY 2022 Adopted Budget through the appropriation of ARPA funding.

The Town Council will discuss at later meetings the details of how to allocate the funds.

Purcellville resident, Chris Stevenson was the lone in-person speaker, who asked the Council to consider donating some of the funds to a Purcellville-based nonprofit that would help with water bills, sewer bills, and a restaurant voucher program.

The Town received citizen input via an electronic POLCO citizen survey.

In that survey, 92 percent of the participants favored investing in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure – with 93 percent favoring replacing the Town's 60- to 90-year-old cast iron water mains from the reservoir and water treatment plant.

Eighty seven percent of the POLCO participants said that replacing undersized water mains that do not meet fire code would be a consideration. Improving the sanitary sewer system was on the list, with 78 percent of the respondents

favoring that.

Also high on list for POLCO participants, with 81 percent, was constructing a new treated water storage tank, with a minimum of three days of emergency storage.

Seventy three percent wanted the Town to invest in broadband to ensure consistency in speeds, reliability, and affordability for both residents and businesses. Although 84 percent of the participants in the survey said their broadband service was reliable, approximately only half said it was affordable – with another half saying they were getting the service they were paying for.

Improving the Town's storm-water management and drainage system for flood control garnered 70 percent. Fifty eight percent said they would like some of the funds to go to provide water and sewer utility bill assistance for families in

need.

Grants to Purcellville businesses impacted by the pandemic came in at 48 percent; and 35 percent of participants wanted to spend funds on recovering tourism, travel, and hospitality sectors impacted by COVID. Providing grants to non-profits came in at 29 percent.

Said Mayor Kwasi Fraser after the meeting, "In the last election, the candidates who prevailed ran on a platform of slow growth, low taxes, innovative solutions, and infrastructure development.

"The survey overwhelmingly supported using the ARPA funds for infrastructure development.

"I am committed to ensuring this is done with full transparency and accountability. I see this as hard-earned tax dollars returning to our community, and we need to be responsible in how these dollars are invested."

New hours for COVID-19 vaccination clinic at Dulles Town Center

As demand for COVID-19 vaccine from Loudoun County continues to decrease and as more providers in the community continue to offer COVID-19 vaccine, Loudoun County has new hours of operation at its Dulles Town Center clinic until Aug. 24.

The clinic will close permanently on the evening of Tuesday, Aug. 24.

GOVERNMENT

Hours of Operation for Appointments and Walk-in Service

Until Aug. 24, the hours of operation at the County's Dulles Town Center clinic have changed. The clinic will continue to be open three days per week for walk-in vaccinations; and the clinic is opened one hour later on Tuesdays, and closed three hours earlier on Fridays.

Hours until Aug. 24:

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 4:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday: Closed

Thursday: Closed

Friday: 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Saturday: 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. (closed Aug. 14)

Sunday: Closed

The clinic will be closed to the general public Saturday, Aug. 14, for a closed vaccination event.

To review the current and future hours of operation at the Dulles Town Center vaccination clinic, and to make an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccination, visit the County's website at loudoun.gov/covid19vaccine.

Clinic to Close Permanently Aug. 24

Loudoun County's COVID-19 vaccination clinic at the Dulles Town Center will close permanently effective at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 24.

The County will continue to provide first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccine through the regularly scheduled hours on Tuesday, Aug. 24; however, individuals who receive their first dose within 21 days (Pfizer) or 28 days (Moderna) of the clinic's closure must receive their second dose from another COVID-19 vaccine provider.

Second Doses of Vaccine:

Pfizer:

People who receive their first dose of Pfizer vaccine on or before Aug. 3, may receive their second dose by the time the clinic closes on Aug. 24.

People who receive their first dose of Pfizer vaccine between Aug. 6 and Aug. 24 must receive their second dose at a location other than the Dulles Town Center clinic. Loudoun County will provide information to these individuals on where to receive their second dose.

Moderna:

People who received their first dose of the Moderna vaccine on or before July 27 may receive their second dose by the time the clinic closes on Aug. 24.

People who received their first dose of the Moderna vaccine between July 30 and Aug. 24 must receive their second dose at a location other than the Dulles Town Center clinic. Loudoun County will provide information to these individuals on where to receive their second

dose.

Get a COVID-19 Vaccine

Anyone age 12 and older who has not

yet received a COVID-19 vaccine is encouraged to receive one as soon as possible. People may walk into the county's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

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TASTE Leesburg will return to downtown Leesburg on Saturday, Aug. 14.

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COMMUNITY

Experience the flavor of Leesburg with over 50 booths showcasing a taste of all that the Town has to offer. Local restaurants, food trucks, and vendors will offer a variety of menu options for purchase or stop into one of the downtown restaurants for a bite to eat.

A total of nineteen local breweries and wineries will also be on-site offering samples of beer, wine, cider, and mead. Tickets are available online and cost \$50. All ticket purchases include a souvenir sampling glass and unlimited drink tastings.

Check-in tents will be located on Town Green on West Market Street where you will need to show your ID and have your ticket scanned. A limited number of beverage tickets may be available the day of the event through online purchase only.

Live music will begin at 5 p.m. on the Center Stage,

located on the corner of Market and King streets. The North Stage, at the corner of North King and Cornwall, will feature music, comedy, and karaoke.

Parking will be available downtown at the Town Hall Parking Garage, the Pennington Parking Garage, the Church Street Parking Lot, and the Loudoun County Parking Garage. Street closures will begin at 11 a.m. and are expected to re-open at approximately 1 a.m. on Sunday, Aug. 15.

Visit www.tasteleesburg.com, or call Ida Lee Park Recreation Center at 703-777-1368.

LANCASTER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

camera. I suppose that is where my interest in photography had its genesis.

"My wife gave me a 35mm camera shortly after we were married, and I enjoyed taking photos of our kids. But, with the advent of digital photography, and the realization that I didn't have to pay to have photos developed, I went into it whole hog. I got my first digital camera for use in my job. Back then, the photos were stored on the old 3.5-inch floppy discs. But, when I retired, I decided to pursue it more aggressively, and purchased a Nikon SLR digital camera ..."

Now Loudoun County is blessed with Lancaster's love of photography.

"I moved to Loudoun County in 2014," he said.

"I guess the thing that has always struck me about Northern Virginia in general, and Loudoun County in particular, is its sheer beauty. From the banks of the Potomac to the hunt country around Middleburg, I am always amazed with every trip I take around the County of how picturesque it is ... the deciduous forests, the horse pastures covered

with hay bales, the serpentine nature of Catocin Creek, which borders my property in Waterford ..."

Interestingly, this artist is also motivated by history, saying: "... The one thing that has me in awe is the history of the county ... growing up in Western Canada, I was always amazed at how old some things were there ... My village of Waterford was first settled in 1733 ... And much of that history here I love to focus on in my photography."

In addition to the hands book, and the inspiration Lancaster gets from that idea, he is fascinated with Loudoun's barns.

"One of my current projects," he said is a photographic inventory of old barns in Loudoun County. To date I have a catalog of over 70 of them."

His barns project, he said: "... will culminate in a photographic essay in an upcoming issue of a local magazine ..." And, maybe a new book, or calendar, or poster?

Keep in touch with this great artist's work via www.flickr.com/photos/rogeral, and www.rogerlan-caster.photos.



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Loudoun Transit commuter bus service adjustments have begun

Loudoun County Transit have modified Commuter Bus Services. Due to changes in passenger demands, new Commuter Bus routes have been added to increase service at Dulles South (Stone Ridge II) and East Gate Park and Ride lots, and to add new service at Purcellville and Harmony Park and Ride lots.

Schedules and stops for existing routes have been modified. Details on the service adjustments are available online at loudoun.gov/buschanges and below:

New Routes

New Commuter Bus routes stopping at the Dulles South (Stone Ridge II) and East Gate Park and Ride lots:

- Route 284: two trips in the morning from Loudoun to the Pentagon.
- Route 684: two trips in the af-

ternoon from the Pentagon to Loudoun.

New Commuter Bus route stopping at Purcellville and Harmony Park and Ride Lots:

- Route 483: one trip in the morning from Loudoun to Washington, D.C.
- Route 883: one trip in the afternoon from Washington, D.C. to Loudoun

Route Changes

The Commuter Bus stop at 14th & F Streets NW has been eliminated, and a new stop at F & 11 Streets NW (Penn Quarter area) has been added for the following existing routes:

- Route 281: two trips in the morning from Loudoun to Washington, D.C. at newly scheduled times.
- Route 481: five trips in the morning from Loudoun to

Washington, D.C. at newly scheduled times.

- Route 681: two trips in the afternoon from Washington, D.C. to Loudoun at newly scheduled times.
- Route 881: five trips in the afternoon from Washington, D.C. to Loudoun at newly scheduled times.

Schedule Changes

Commuter Bus schedules for most existing morning and afternoon routes will change up to seven minutes. Riders are encouraged to review the Commuter Bus Schedule posted at loudoun.gov/buschanges to prepare for new arrival and departure times.

Loudoun County Transit has made operational changes following the guidance of local, state and national health authorities to reduce the risk of COVID-19 exposure on the system's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 »

Loudoun to hold public comment period on Prentice Drive

Loudoun County will hold an open comment period to gain input from the public on the county's project to extend Prentice Drive from Lockridge Road to Loudoun County Parkway.

The public comment period will be open through Friday, August 13.

Login information and meeting materials are available for review at loudoun.gov/prenticephasetwo. Materials include an overview, a recorded presentation and comment form.

This project provides for the design, right of way acquisition and construction of a new segment of Prentice Drive (Route 1071) in Ashburn from Lockridge Road (Route 789) to Loudoun County Parkway (Route 607). The roadway will be a four-lane, major collector roadway with turn lanes, in-road bike lanes and sidewalks. The completion of this project

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St. Francis de Sales

From 99 families to 100 years of service

BY ANDREA GAINES

St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church in Purcellville will celebrate its 100th Anniversary with a family picnic on Saturday, Sept. 18, from noon to 4 p.m.

As the Church website notes, “The entire parish and Purcellville community are invited. Said the church’s pastor Father James Gould, “Join us for a traditional picnic with great food, additional treats, games, memorabilia, activities and entertainment for all to enjoy.”

The church is also calling all bakers – looking for homemade pies and special cakes for a Bake-Off Silent Auction.

“This day marks the 100th Anniversary of the dedication of St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church,” said Fr. Gould.

“As we have been held down with the COVID restrictions in the last 17 months, there was no immediate plan on celebrating the anniversary where all could attend.

“Now with the recent openings proclaimed by the powers that be in the Commonwealth and Diocese, we have decided to celebrate the anniversary

with a parish picnic on Saturday, September 18.”

“Lily of the Mohawks” and other bits of Virginia and church history Fr. Gould is as enthusiastic about the festivities planned as he is about celebrating the history of the church in Virginia and beyond.

We spoke with Fr. Gould recently, and he absolutely gushed when asked about the fun to come and the long journey of St. Francis de Sales, which served as a mission for just 99 Loudoun County Catholics before it became an official parish.

Fr. Gould knows a lot about Virginia’s and North America’s history – history going way back – and how it relates to his beloved church.

He told us, for example, about a Native American known as the Lily of the Mohawks.

Noted Fr. Gould, “She traversed through our current parish boundaries when the Mohawks were wintering in North Carolina.”

This original flower child, or environ-

mentalist is Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, the first Indigenous American to be canonized as a saint.

Known as the “Lily of the Mohawks,” she is the patroness of ecology and the environment. Tekakwitha was a figure from 17th century Virginia, New England, and Canada.

As Fr. Gould related in a church newsletter announcing the September celebration, “The turn of the 19th century found Loudoun County, Virginia, with few Catholics, and even fewer Catholic churches. Only one existed, that being the Immaculate Conception, founded in 1878, in Leesburg.

“In 1918,” he continued, “Henry and Philomena Schneider, of Round Hill, made an arrangement with Father Van Ingelgem, which brought the first Catholic services to the County west of Leesburg.”

Original services in private homes

“Services at a private home, the Schneider home, continued until 1919, and since attendance at these services

had been continually increasing, Father Van Ingelgem began searching for another location.”

Fr. Gould continued, “Services were held for a long time in this private home in Purcellville. Then, outgrowing that space, a new church was built on the Ball Property at 16th and Main Streets. Groundbreaking ceremonies were held in 1920, and on May 29, 1921, the church was dedicated.”

On Sept. 1, 1967, an agreement was signed between the Capuchin Franciscan Friars, New Jersey Province, and the Diocese of Richmond. The Capuchins’ offer to serve at St. Francis and upgraded the status of the church from mission to parish. The “new” parish of St. Francis de Sales began with 99 families. In 1974, the Diocese of Arlington was established, and St. Francis de Sales became a parish in this new diocese.

This is the sequence of events and history being brought back to life on Sept. 18.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

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VINEYARD SQUARE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

three small sheds. It was extended one time on April 6, 2015 by the former Planning Director who said the project had "commenced" and was "diligently pursued." He wrote, "as long as diligent pursuit occurs," the project would continue to be extended.



The owner/developers the Chapmans also want the Town, at taxpayers' expense, to extend and widen O Street (which currently dead ends) from 21st Street to Hatcher Street. This would be a way for the project to dump the excessive traffic caused by the density of Vineyard Square onto Hatcher Street.

Even though Town management hired an outside attorney to make a vested rights determination on July 15, it wasn't until July 23 that the Town Council was notified of this.

Milan objects to process ... eight years of delay

At the July 27 Purcellville Town Council workshop, Council Member Stan Milan objected to Council going into a closed meeting to discuss the Vineyard Square project. "We have been talking about Vineyard Square for over a year. We have been misinformed, misled ... denied ... many times on getting a decision, which is obvious to the most casual observer,"



L to R: Council Member Stan Milan and Vice-Mayor Chris Bertaut.

he said.

Said Milan, "We were presented with an email stating that they [staff] had contacted a lawyer to determine the outcome of the Vineyard Square project. On July 15, the contract was signed. On July 23, Council was notified of that determination contract.

"Eight days passed before the Council was notified. So my comment about delayed, slow response is valid."

Milan said that a discussion on hiring outside counsel must have started before July 15. "If you send documents to someone on one day, you had to have discussed the process with them prior to engaging them in a contract."

Town Council kept in the dark

He pointed out that the Town Attorney said she would get with the Town Council to determine the direction the Town should go, and that was not done. "If the Council had been notified prior ... we wouldn't have to go into a closed session."

Milan took issue with the Town Attorney hiring "an outside attorney" who works for another town, "to determine issues for this town."

Milan said he has asked for the documentation that was sent to the outside attorney, and to date has not received an answer. Milan concluded, "We are totally responsible for what happens to this



L to R: Town Manager David Mekarski and Sally Hankins.

town. That's what I campaigned on, and that's what I am doing."

Council Member Chris Bertaut said he disagreed with "some of what's going on with respect to the upcoming closed session."

"Despite the stated reason for going into closed session, the entire process seems to lack fairness and transparency all around.

Referring to one of the reasons the Town gave for hiring an outside attorney being the possibility of litigation, Bertaut said, "Every issue before this Town Council could be potential subject of litigation."

"There's also been ample time to make a determination, and ample legal resources since our Town Attorney has ten years of experience in private practice on zoning and other related issues."

Bertaut noted that just a "simple request for basic information about what was going on was met with silence, and that disturbs me greatly. All Council Member Milan was asking for was the name of the attorney consulted, and what sort of information was provided to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

Purcellville Tag Sale – Saturday Oct. 9 Rain or Shine

Save the date – it’s that time of year again for the Purcellville Tag Sale. On Saturday, Oct. 9 join the community for a day of fun, shopping, and deals. Oh, and treasures, too. Sign-up began on Monday, Aug. 2.

COMMUNITY

The Purcellville Tag Sale is perfect for the hunter, collector, picker, and hoarder in us all. The event starts bright and early at 8 a.m. and goes to 6 p.m. – rain or shine.

All vendors wanted. Go to PurcellvilleVaTagSale.com to sign up. The Purcellville Tag Sale is organized by Silas Redd, owner of Nostalgia Boutique located at 142 E. Main Street in Purcellville. Said



Redd, “I am happy to carry on Purcellville’s tradition of the Town wide tag sale. It’s always exciting to find fabulous treasures from vendors and local businesses.”

Sign up today at PurcellvilleVaTagSale.com. The cut off day to sign up is Sunday, Oct. 3. Hurry. The first 40 to sign up will be listed on the printed map. But no worries – everyone who signs up will be listed on the website.

Redd said, “After the huge turnout from last year, I knew we had to keep the tradition going. I also want to sincerely thank our sponsors, Abernethy and Spencer Greenhouses, and Bank of Clarke County – two amazing pillars in our community.” Text Silas at 540 751-8252 with questions or email him at ShopAtNostalgia@gmail.com. It’s time to get your “stuff” ready to sell at Purcellville Tag Sale, Saturday, Oct. 9 – rain or shine.

LCPL earns Honorable Mention for Library of the Year

Loudoun County Public Library is one of two honorable mentions for the 2021 Library of the Year Award presented by Library Journal and Gale.

COMMUNITY

Established in 1992, the Library of the Year Award celebrates the library that most profoundly demonstrates service to the community, creativity and innovation. This year, judges also looked at how the library kept staff and patrons safe and engaged through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Every library system in the U.S. and Canada is eligible to win.

LCPL was lauded for its response to the pandemic and its commitment to serving Loudoun’s most in-need

populations. Among LCPL’s notable accomplishments:

- Making thousands of face shields and other personal protective equipment for first responders
- Being one of the earliest libraries to reopen to the public
- Continuing Outreach Services to Senior Communities
- Expanding WiFi access outside of branches
- Providing a robust offering of virtual programming, which included tackling tough topics such as mental health, disabilities and race and ethnicity

- Hosting ballot boxes for early voting during the 2020 election

“I’m deeply grateful to every member of our staff for their efforts over the past year,” said LCPL Director Chang Liu. “They put aside their fears, came to work and never stopped searching for innovative ways to serve to the community.”

Founded in 1876, Library Journal is one of the oldest and most respected publications covering the library field.

Gale, a Cengage company, provides libraries with original and curated content, as well as the modern research tools and technology that are crucial in connecting libraries to learning, and learners to libraries.

“The key to *Successful Aging* is to pay as little attention to it as possible.”
- Judith Regan

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BACK TO THE FUTURE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

developing conditions and data," Ziegler stated. "Mask wearing will minimize the need for quarantining, helping us keep students in the classroom."

What does this decision mean for LCPS students and staff?

Masks: All students and staff will be required to wear face coverings at the start of the 2021-2022 school year, regardless of their vaccination status. This decision aligns with the recommendations of the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Loudoun County Health Department.

Masks will be provided to LCPS students and staff who do not have them.

Students will not be required to wear masks during recess, PE, or other outdoor recreational/extracurricular activities.

For indoor team practices and games, participants will wear masks while on the sidelines but may remove them during play.

Buses: Students will be required to wear masks on school buses. This regulation follows LCPS' practice for students participating in summer school and the CDC's requirements for public transportation.

Masking regulations could change if directives from local, state, and national health agencies make it advisable.

Vaccinations: According to the Loudoun County Health Department, 239,955 Loudoun residents (58 percent) are vaccinated. During the past month, the number of new cases of COVID-19 have increased significantly in the County and throughout the United States, fueled by the coronavirus Delta variant. The Loudoun County Health Department strongly recommends that everyone aged 12 years and older get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. Vaccines are free for everyone and widely available. You can schedule a vaccination at <https://www.loudoun.gov/covid-19vaccine>.

Quarantine: If a student with COVID-19 is within 3 to 6 feet of other students, the other students will not be considered "close contacts" if all the students are wearing masks. This measure will help reduce the need for quarantine and keep students in school.

Mental health: On Aug. 26, schools will be open at 100 percent capacity for five-day-a-week learning for all students on August 26. For those children anxious about returning to school, LCPS encourages parents to speak with the student's school counselor or another member of the school's mental health team.

Blue Ridge Leader columnist and psychologist Michael Oberschneider reports that recent surveys have shown that the number of elementary, middle, and high school students, as well as college students, who are experiencing anxiety is

at an all-time high. One survey revealed that 66 percent of children have notable anxiety about returning to school.

"In addition to anxiety," he writes, "surveys have also revealed disturbing patterns that weren't there before, with higher rates of depression, anger, behavior problems, substance use problems, and sleep problems for children and teens during COVID-19."

The students' participation in each class has been planned for a full day in real time. If you have questions or concerns, however, reach out to your school counselor or principal to discuss your options.

Distance learning: Distance-learning slots have been prioritized for students with health needs.

The small number of students who enroll in full-time distance learning are to have dedicated teachers for their classes and five-days-a-week instruction.

LCPS has been quite clear about the exceptions and appropriateness of distance learning for some students. The district advises that targeted, school-based interventions are often more effective in supporting students, particularly when they are continually avoiding school.

Before applying for distance learning, LCPS advises students and parents to first discuss alternative options with their counselors and/or the Unified Mental Health Team member at their base school.

It is important to understand that distance learning is different from homebound learning. LCPS provides Homebound Instruction Services to students who are unable to attend school on a regular basis as determined by a physician's certification of need.

Homebound instruction is a temporary learning arrangement with the goal of returning students to in-person instruction at school as soon as physically and/or emotionally possible.

Distance learners, it should be noted, are concurrently enrolled at their base school and able to participate in clubs, sports, and activities.

Meals: This year, LCPS is set to provide meals to all students at their schools and at no charge to families. Students who are distance learning will be able to pick up their meals through a walk-up service. A la carte items will not be offered at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. Once the school year is underway, a review and decision will be made about adding this service.

After-school programs: The after-school programs that so many families have come to depend on are scheduled for this year. The same masking requirements in place for schools will apply to CASA, YAS, CASA Academy, and after-school programs provided at community/recreation centers.

After the Fair, forging new leaders through 4-H

BY LAURA LONGLEY

That's a wrap. Back in full after 2020's limited event, the Loudoun County Fair once again entertained large crowds with rodeos, carnival rides, egg tosses, camel-petting, kiss-a-pig, and watermelon-eating contests.

COMMUNITY

By now, however, the Fair has broken down the rides, pulled up stakes, and folded the last of the tents.

For all the fun and games at the Fair, however, there was a lot of teaching and learning going on, too. All those heifer and sheep shows, milking demonstrations, and poultry showmanship programs were the culmination of a year's worth of work for Loudoun's 4-H club members.

In 4-H—the H's stand for head, heart, hands, and health—young people ages 5 to 19 engage in hands-on learning to help build better communities. 4-H programs use experiential learning opportunities to teach the latest research-based subject matter knowledge

and to foster skill development in effective citizenship, leadership, and other life skills.

The programs are organized in several areas, includ-



ing animal sciences; citizenship; leadership and personal development. They are managed by Loudoun-based Virginia Extension staff with a direct connection to research at Virginia's land-grant universities, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. The Fair is where animal sciences and Loudoun's 4-H members take the spotlight.

High school student Clay Grisius of Lincoln started with 4-H in 5th grade when he began raising chickens. "My family uses a lot of eggs, and I have grandparents who live in Michigan and farm, so I decided to give it a try. It was fun, and that's when I got into 4-H." His younger brother, Henry, also joined 4-H and is raising pigs. Both showed their animals at the Fair.

There's a lot more to 4-H than the Fair, said Clay, and a lot of success with the programs is due to Carly Wright, a Loudoun extension agent, and to 4-H Program Assistant Kim Monroe, who organizes the annual

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GUITARIST, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

abilities are indeed breathtaking and astounding, but his performances are so much more than that. He has the unique capability of engaging an audience through a personable, and genuine approach that transfixes, and almost transcends his capabilities as a guitarist.

“Tsukamoto plays with an effortless skill on the guitar and a repertoire that will have you traveling the world, not to mention experiencing new sounds with his own compositions.”

Said Tsukamoto, “When I was in middle school my mother, who was a school teacher, found a used guitar at a school bazaar, and brought it home. It was an acoustic guitar, so hard to play, but I didn’t know those things, so I kept playing it.

“Since my teenage years, I have been playing a wide variety of musical styles from rock, folk, pop, blues, and jazz influenced by my friends and teachers. But, about ten years ago, I decided to play music I can feel naturally, play

with honesty, and started playing solo music combining storytelling.

“I use a loop pedal (real time recorder) to create multiple layers with voice and guitar so that I can get a kind of orchestra sound by myself.

“My mother plays traditional Japanese string instruments such as Shamisen, and also Koto, which is a long instrument with 13 strings.”

The shamisen is a traditional style of guitar, recognizable by its small rounded body and elongated neck construction.

Today, the musician lives in New York City, and has been there for 16 years.

This is his second appearance at Franklin Park, and he spoke of what it is like to be released from at least some of the restriction of the pandemic, and what’s up for him for the rest of the summer. “I had my first in-person show last month, finally after 14 months because of COVID. After Franklin Park, I will perform in Wisconsin, Maine, New Hampshire, Wyoming, and Colorado.”

As for his original connection to

Franklin Park, Tsukamoto said, “The director of the theater is into Japanese culture, and she started doing Star Festival in the summer, so I was invited to play some Japanese folk songs.”

We also asked the artist how his music may have changed over time. He said, “It has been changing all the way up to now, but I feel like it is coming back to a similar style to when I started playing a guitar in middle school – solo acoustic style.”

This gentleman certainly has taken an extraordinary journey from his early schooling in Japan, to performances all over the world, to a summer of performances in all parts of the U.S. in 2021.

To connect with Hiroya Tsukamoto, go to these informative and musical sites, sounds, and videos: Website: <https://hiroyatsukamoto.com>, Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HiroyaMusic/>, YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/htmusica>, and Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/hiroya_tsukamoto/.

4-H FAIR, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

Loudoun/Fauquier Camp.

“Carly has taught us so much— how to determine quality in meat products, how to manage our livestock, how to do presentations, which is something we should know how to do whatever area we go into.”

Now that the Fair is over, clubs will be getting together, planning activities, and electing officers.

Loudoun County 4-H currently has more than 15 clubs. While most are dedicated to the raising of specific kinds of animals, such as cattle or swine, the organization also offers clubs for cooking and sewing, innovation, and shooting education.

Any young person interested in joining 4-H should visit the Loudoun 4-H website at <http://loudoun4h.weebly.com/> or contact Carly Wright at carlymg@vt.edu.

You’ll find a list of all the clubs, locations, and contact information at the site.

DR. MIKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

children’s emotional pain.

Being mindful of your statements, advice and behaviors in response to your child’s or teen’s back to school anxiety is important. Modelling positivity and strength regarding the return to school, will also help to ease anxiety for them.

Prepare and practice for the return: Anxiety likes to take control, and more than anything, it likes to distort control when it comes to how we think, feel and behave. So, if your child is afraid of returning to school, for example, he or she will likely have distorted or exaggerated thoughts of unsafety and feelings of unsafety, which could lead to difficulties for your child to get to get to school or remain in school.

One way to get more legitimate control over anxiety’s distorted control in this moment is to prepare and practice. Getting your child into a back-to-school routine (adjusting bedtime, selecting clothes, etc.), increasing your child’s social time with children he or she will be seeing at school, visiting the school if it’s open or playing

on the school’s playground, are a few ways that can help to normalize your child’s feelings as they transition back to school.

Listen, communicate openly and validate: I encourage parents to openly talk to their children and teens about the return to school. If they are having difficulty opening up, open ended questions can be helpful.

For instance, you could ask them about some of the things they may be looking forward to, and some of the things they may not be looking forward to in returning to school. Validating their concerns and worries will help them to achieve greater resilience and confidence.

Praise and reward: As a psychologist and father, I am a huge fan of praise and reward; applied separately or together they reinforce positive change and increase self-esteem and competency in our children. So, if your younger child has developed separation anxiety, offer him or her a reward (going out for ice cream with you), for attending a play date outside of your presence and the home.

A teen I work with who has anxiety about returning to college this fall is taking a fun and adventurous road trip with his parents prior to returning to school. The extra positive time with his mother and father, and the planned activities, have helped to ease his anxiety with going back.

Know your child’s or teen’s bandwidth: Certainly, the expectation is for your child or teen to return to school. However, knowing and respecting their limits is important. If their anxiety remains high, communicating with the school as soon as possible is a good idea.

From pre-school to college, involved school personnel can work closely with your children and you, to support their safe and successful return to school.

Get help if needed: Combating anxiety is difficult, and while children can work through their back-to-school struggles without professional help much of the time, there are times when professional help is warranted.

This has been, and continues to be, an especially challenging time for our children, so it will be important to keep

a closer parental watch on things in the coming weeks.

If you believe your child or teen is struggling with anxiety, or any other mental health problems, and their struggle is more than you can help them with as a parent, I recommend contacting a child psychologist or therapist.

The school year is closely upon us, and we are all wanting life – including our child’s or teen’s schooling – to return to normal. There remain numerous uncertainties, unanswered questions, and unknowns about what school will be like this year.

There are ample reasons for our children to be anxious, and there are plenty of reasons for them to be happy. The pandemic is ending, our children are thankfully returning to school, and life is slowly returning to normal.

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

are able to exclude from your income is reduced by any deductible IRA contributions you make in the year you reach age 70½ or after.

Stock gifts: Gifting stock directly to charity rather than selling it and contributing the proceeds provides a current tax benefit if you itemize deductions. In

addition, it lets you avoid capital gains taxation on the stock’s appreciation if it increased in value while you owned it. Deductions for stock gifts are limited to 30 percent of AGI when contributing to public charities.

Before employing any of these strategies, please contact your tax and financial advisors to help provide the best outcome.

Wells Fargo Advisors does not provide tax or legal advice. Please consult with your tax and/or legal advisors before taking any action that may have tax and/or legal consequences.

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

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COVID-19 CLINIC, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

COVID-19 vaccination clinic at Dulles Town Center, 21090 Dulles Town Circle, Sterling, without an appointment to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

COVID-19 vaccines also are being offered through various community events in Loudoun County this summer. The next scheduled event is Saturday, Aug. 7, from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m. at Bluemont Community Center, 33846 Snickersville Turnpike, Blue-

mont. More information is posted at loudoun.gov/vaccineevents.

Vaccines are also available from many other providers in the community, such as local pharmacies. To find a COVID-19 vaccine provider near you, visit vaccines.gov.

More Information

Anyone with questions about receiving a COVID-19 vaccine may call 703-737-8300 or send an email to health@loudoun.gov.

LAFIANDRA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

with one that permits a larger water flow.

I could not find any law preventing you from doing it or penalizing you. In fact, some plumbers do this without telling you when they replace shower heads in order to reduce call backs.

Increasing your water flow is not something to do without considering all the factors of your decision on society and your water bills. It is to be determined in your individual case, i.e. where do you get your water (well or municipal supplied) and where you live, i.e. in a desert region or rainy Pacific Northwest.

To clarify the water supply source situation, if you are on a well where the water is derived and returned to the soil (21-25 percent of households), this is the best situation for water conservation.

For example, the average shower takes seven minutes and uses 11.2 g of water. If you double the water flow from your shower then you will use 22.4 g of water per person per shower. If you assume that there are 2.5 persons per household and they all take one shower a day that comes out to 56 g/day. This amount of water used and returned to the ground can be easily handled by a standard well-septic system. Remember, this is double the amount the government says you need. If you stick with the slow shower head you will be saving 23 g/day.

This is a simplified analysis of the

water supply system, it becomes much more complex if you are on a municipal water system. Municipal systems derive water from both wells, reservoirs and rivers and discharge the water back into rivers and recharge basins (which return water back to the ground).

In most cases, municipalities don't have enough recharge basins and the water is discharged to creeks and end up in rivers. Cost and soil conditions determine how much water is recycled. If we want to save more water, municipalities must return water to the ground, not throw it away in rivers.

So, how significant on the nation's water supply would it be to take a shower with a high flow shower head? According to the government, 2/3 of the population take showers daily. If you count only those on municipal water systems which is 79 percent of the water supply, then the number of showers per day in the U.S. is 175 million. Multiply this by 11.2 g, and you would save with a low flow head 2 billion gallons. This also assumes that everybody has a high flow rate shower, which is a worst case situation.

In 2015 the government estimated that the total water usage was 322 billion/g per day. With 37 percent of that going for agriculture and 41 percent for thermoelectric power. The calculated 2 billion extra usage is 0.6 percent (in reality closer to 0.3 percent) of the total water usage in the U.S., a small price to pay for a warm relaxing shower, literally a drop in the bucket.

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17**Steady growth**

St. Francis de Sales continually increased its ability to serve Loudoun County Catholics. Our area is one of the most prosperous and fastest-growing places in the nation, and as the area's Catholic population grew, so did de Sales, dovetailing with the needs of people just as it had done during the time of Lily of the Mohawks.

"The number of masses was increased to three each on Sunday and additional masses were said at the Blue Ridge Middle School Auditorium, and the Loudoun Valley High School Auditorium," said Fr. Gould.

"Churches in the area, including Protestant churches, collaborated to serve the faithful, with whatever space was available for dinners, marriages, education, and more. Larger churches and more church facilities were needed, and that required money. Land needed to be acquired, permits needed to be obtained, architect's drawings approved, sufficient

capital raised," he said.

Keeping with the Catholic order of things, at St. Francis de Sales, a "friary" was built instead of a rectory. In 1992, the church was completed and "with joy and exaltation was dedicated on June 28, 1992. At that time, the parish served 250 families," said Fr. Gould.

Over time, the church known as St. Francis de Sales built additional space for meetings, kitchen space, and several classrooms for religious education.

"Classes for religious education were held at Loudoun Valley High School, and then Woodgrove High School," he said. But, as "the community room and kitchen weren't adequate for the size of the parish, large events such as weddings and large-scale parish events could not be held in the limited space available, youth activities, and recreation for all members of the parish were minimal."

Early in 2001 the concept of a new parish center was introduced. Over time, St. Francis de Sales evolved in what we see today. And, the rest is history, all to be celebrated on Saturday, Sept. 18.

TIM JON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

I can't help but feel that those who came here before me often – metaphorically speaking – had a similar feeling. But, just as there was a 'colored school,' which may not have featured the brightest and loudest of the 'bells and whistles' of a state-of-the-art education – yet it offered some type of learning experience and sanctuary; the same door which allowed me to experience this holy shrine also provided me (and, again – those who had come and gone before) with sufficient nourishment for the heart and soul and mind so that I could face the

day outside – as well as the remainder of my week, and month, year, and life.

At least that's the hopeful side of me. And that's where I prefer to live. So, I'm glad I found 'the school,' and I'm glad it offered what services it could in the time it had. To my finding, it still serves its purpose.

And yes, I'm aware that an incident of vandalism occurred at the facility some five years prior to this writing; I'm also informed that the juveniles involved in the act received a series of educational exercises as their 'punishment.' I could think of nothing more appropriate.

LETTER SCHOOLS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

public schools hold a sacred trust to be inclusive and to treat everyone equitably.

We encourage the School Board of Loudoun County to continue their meritorious work, so all our children

experience a place where liberty and justice for all are a commitment – not just empty words.

*Charlene Banks
Community Director,
Center for Spiritual Living,
Leesburg*

VINEYARD SQUARE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

that attorney in order for them to make a determination."

Hankins responded with denials and read from a prepared list all the things she has been working on, some with help from outside hired law firms, for months. She said the Council did not make this a

"top priority."

In an email to the Town Manager, Mayor Kwasi Fraser echoed Bertaut's concern, questioning why an outside attorney who works for another town was hired for this determination, and why wasn't the Town Attorney able to make a determination.

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PRENTICE DRIVE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

and the adjoining new segment of Prentice Drive from Loudoun County Parkway to Shellhorn Road (Route 643) will provide connectivity to the Loudoun Gateway and Ashburn Metrorail Stations.

For more information about the Prentice Drive project and to provide feedback, visit loudoun.gov/prenticephasetwo. Information about other Loudoun County capital projects, studies and plans may be found at loudoun.gov/capitalprojects.

PURCELLVILLE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

the way it feels. They like the small town – and I have not heard anybody say they don't want that."

"How do we keep small town Purcellville a small town?" Forbes asked. She pointed out that there are some properties in Town that are currently planned to be demolished in the next few months. When that happens, she said people will be outraged and will say, "How can you do this? How can you let this happen? Why is that permitted?"

"Well, because there isn't anything to prevent it. So, the point of this is to try to figure out whether or not to create at least a hurdle. Does it mean it can't be done? Is there a way to create at least a hurdle? It doesn't mean it can't be done." She said there needs to be a procedure for a review, so "someone can't just knock down your house ... That's what this proposal essentially is."

"You can do what you want with your house inside and additions, paint color, roofs, you name it ..." The proposed ordinance also deals with demolition by neglect. "The idea is so someone can maintain the minimal bit of maintenance, so it does not become a hazard – and you can't just get your tear-down because you ignore it completely."

Commissioner Stosh Kowalski said that the intent of the proposed ordinance was "to prevent people from simply tearing down a house or a row of houses, and put

up a block building."

Purcellville Council Member and Planning Commissioner Stan Milan said the commission is "rewriting the ordinances to reflect what the Comprehensive Plan stated." He said, "For years, there has been ... a lot of development in the Town that was just haphazard ... through the ordinances we are trying to control tearing down a house, and building three houses on that same lot."

Said Milan, "There are issues with people trying to build three-story buildings on Hatcher [Trails End proposal] – 40 apartments dumping on Hatcher [Vineyard Square]. There are two cars at least per apartment. That's 80 cars

coming onto Hatcher, when at 4 [p.m.] traffic is backed up to the veterinarian hospital. It doesn't fit. It deters from the small town character that we have here. We are trying to manage that and make it livable."

He said, "We are trying to preserve the historical value of the Town."

Vice Chair Ed Neham said, "If you really like and want to keep Purcellville the way it is, then we should act to do that ... One of the things we are aiming for in this ordinance change is ... to discourage demolition of older houses that make up Purcellville's quaintness. There is nothing else in the ordinance about controlling anything."

Chair Nedim Ogelman said he lives under this ordinance, and living in the HCOD saved his house from the impact of demolition that was done across the street because the developer was not allowed to blast at the stronger levels that would have been most efficient for his development. If he had, it "would have damaged my house," said Ogelman.

"We live in a community, and so we don't just get to be entirely free. We try to balance out and have those personal freedoms that we have, and balance that out with the value we get from being neighbors and friends and living in a community."

The Planning Commission met July 28 to discuss its plan for going over the ordinance and refining it based on citizen input.



Three homes on Hatcher Street are set to be demolished and replaced with a proposed three-story building.

HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6**A Plentitude of Parking Prescriptions**

There are five planning areas for zoning purposes – an Urban area near Metro; a Suburban area in the east and a Rural area in the west; a Transition area between them; and a Joint Land Management Area around the larger towns.

There are also up to 150 land uses that can be permitted in each of these areas, from single-family detached houses to data centers to art studios to ... tons of uses.

The new ordinance envisions the minimum amount of parking any use

must provide, and in some cases a maximum amount it can build. These standards can vary from planning area to planning area.

All told, there are around 650 different parking standards that must be spelled out in the new ordinance. Staff has done a tremendous amount of work to prepare drafts of all these standards.

ZOC members then reviewed each standard. I'll quote from the minutes of the ZOC meeting: "ZOC comments generally included concern over the level of detail, lack of definitions, effects of by-right development and change of use, market-driven parking limits, question-

ing the need for special parking spaces, parking ratios, the parking modifications process, the lack of looking at what is unique to Loudoun, data center parking, zoning enforcement areas of concern, proffers, electric vehicle chargers and their location, bike requirements, recreational vehicles, affordable housing, urban areas and viable means of transportation." We know our stuff, and were not bashful in making comments.

Staff then went back to work, considered our comments and made some revisions to its draft and says it is still pondering others.

ZOC Must Act

The phrase "Staff considered our comments" illuminates the ZOC situation today. Staff presents draft zoning requirements. ZOC members comment and Staff includes whichever comments it thinks have merit.

Staff is therefore in control. It will eventually produce the full zoning document and send it to the Planning

Commission. After approval there, the new zoning ordinance would go to the Board of Supervisors.

I hope that at any step a ZOC member may issue a minority opinion, if he or she disagrees with Staff language, and send that opinion to Planning Commissioners or Supervisors. That's not a formal policy, though.

Ultimately ZOC is charged with acting in a different way. The Board of Supervisors directed that "the Zoning Ordinance Committee shall review and provide comments ..." Thus, ZOC is supposed to be a single entity, not as a collective of 19 individual opinions.

I believe that we will end up acting as one body, but the mechanics of doing so will be complicated. We will get there the sooner the better, and when we do, our comments to Staff may carry more weight.

Charles Houston developed six million square feet of office buildings for an Atlanta-based firm. He lives in Paonian Springs.

LOUDOUN TRANSIT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

buses.

Although the Transportation Security Administration extended the face mask requirement for individuals across all transportation networks in the United States through Sept. 13, Virginia lifted mandates for physical distancing on

transit buses. For more information, visit loudoun.gov/covid19transit.

Over the coming weeks, Loudoun County Transit will continue to monitor ridership and services for possible additional changes. Details on service changes as well as current schedules may be found at loudoun.gov/bus-changes.



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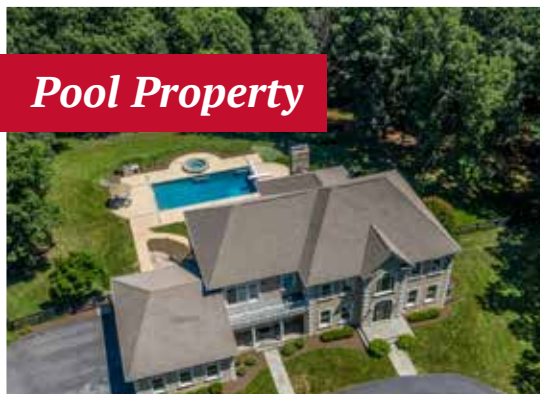
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