

# Blue Ridge LEADER & LOUDOUN Today

FEBRUARY 2023

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## “What is the point of order?” CM Williams retorts as Mayor Milan puts an end to her filibuster

BY VALERIE CURY

Purcellville’s Town Council Special Meeting on Jan. 10, showcased hurdles the majority of the Town’s elected representatives faced in carrying out promises citizens elected it to achieve. These hurdles included disorderly outbursts and attempts to filibuster from within the Town Council’s ranks; misinformation from Loudoun County officials to pressure the Town to override its policy processes; and resistance from senior Town staff against explicit direction from the Town’s mayor and majority councilmembers. Despite one council member’s vulgar language and attempted distractions from the issues at hand, the meeting ended on time.

Working through these impediments, members of the Town Council, including

newly confirmed member Ron Rise, Jr., initiated an effort to earmark nutrient credit monies of \$926,000 to help draw down the Town’s sewer and water debt.

The meeting’s first and biggest hurdles involved what appeared to have been an attempt at a filibuster during citizen and business comments, by Town Council Member Mary Jane Williams.

Williams demanded to personally read some 40 emails into the record, after proposing a motion at a previous meeting to end Town Council meetings by 9:30 p.m.

As Town Council candidates who advocate for transparency and citizen feedback continue to win a majority of the seats in Purcellville, members are also seeking to work efficiently to accomplish all tasks before them.

Williams’ insistence to read all of the

emails, regarding the County’s Rt. 7/690 Interchange proposal, seemed to contradict her earlier effort to achieve shortened meetings.

The common protocol for reading citizen emails at Town Council meetings is to provide them to the clerk, who adds them to the minutes of the meeting. In this way the messages become part of the public record, available to anyone to read and review.

After Williams read the eleventh email, Mayor Stan Milan said, “In the interest of time, we can add those ...”, but was then interrupted by Williams who interjected, “Well technically each citizen has three minutes to speak ...”

Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut noted that many of the emails read by Williams were from County residents, and not

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Purcellville town residents. Bertaut added that the Town Council also received many emails urging them to do their due diligence in representing Purcellville citizens’ interests regarding the Rt.7/690 Interchange. To this Williams snapped, “Well, maybe you can find those, and you could read those into the record then.”

Mayor Milan ventured to find out

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♥♥♥♥♥ Twenty-three valentines we should all write in 2023... see page 18 ♥♥♥

## Plans to move Red Hill out of the Rural Policy Area advance

BY TABITHA REEVES

At the Board of Supervisor Public Hearing on Jan. 11, the topic of moving the Red Hill Community from the Rural Policy Area to the Transition Policy Area was revisited and discussed, as local mayors and residents came to speak on the issue. Changing Red Hill from the RPA to the TPA would have an impact on utility accessibility and residential density.

“Things that were put in the Rural Policy Area 18 years ago are no longer rural, and to just continue to say they are rural

because it’s on a map is not fair to the residents,” County Chair Phyllis J. Randall (D-At Large) said.

Once redesignating the region, the planned increase in homes is “one dwelling unit per three acres”, which would give Red Hill residents the option to access centralized utilities, as opposed to their current wells and septic systems. Those opposing the change, such as the local mayors representing the Coalition of Loudoun Towns and some homeowners in Red Hill, argue that this would open

the door for unwanted urbanization.

Some residents came to speak in partial-favor of the change of the area to the TPA. Under the impression that more homes will mean affordable housing and accessibility to centralized utilities, they asked for a greater residential density than the proposed one home per three acres.

“The lack of housing is literally uprooting longtime Loudoun County residents, which is a shame,” community-member Suzanne Steedly said. “The Red Hill

neighborhood is a perfect location to provide additional homes.”

Randall’s motion to change the area to TPA, but to prohibit any additional density and zoning adjustments for the time being, other than the increased one house per three acres, passed 7-2. The opposed board members were Supervisor Tony R. Buffington (R-Blue Ridge), whose district contains Red Hill, and Supervisor Caleb E. Kershner (R-Catoctin). Further vote on approval of the issue will occur at

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# PROPANE COSTS TOO MUCH!

**This Winter is the Ideal Time to Make the Switch.**

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

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

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# "SHE SAVED MY LIFE"

Loudoun county resident Dawn R. had been experiencing the painful side effects of Peripheral Neuropathy, "my feet and legs were extremely painful and my doctor told me there was nothing they could do. That I would have to take Gabapentin for the rest of my life."

Then she met Ashburn's very own Rachal Lohr, L.Ac.

Peripheral Neuropathy is the pain, discomfort, and numbness caused by nerve damage to the peripheral nervous system. Dawn explained that daily tasks like opening doors and using the bathroom were overwhelmingly painful.

"How can you live for the next 30 years when you don't even want to get out of bed to do simple things?"

She was experiencing the burning, numbness, tingling and sharp pains that those suffering from neuropathy often describe. "The way that I would describe it, it's equivalent to walking on glass." Dawn hadn't worn socks in five years and was wearing shoes two sizes too big so that nothing would 'touch' her feet.

**Unfortunately, Dawn's story is all too familiar for the over 3 million people in the U.S. suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy.**

If you're unfortunate enough to be facing the same disheartening prognosis you're not sleeping at night because of the burning in your feet. You have difficulty walking, shopping or doing any activity for more than 30 minutes because of the pain. You're struggling with balance and living in fear that you might fall. Your doctor told you to 'just live with the pain' and you're taking medications that aren't working or have uncomfortable side effects.

Fortunately, two months ago Dawn read an article about Rachal and the work she was doing to treat those suffering from Peripheral Neuropathy, without invasive surgeries or medications.

Rachal Lohr, L.Ac., founder of Firefly Acupuncture and Wellness, in Ashburn, is using the time tested science of Acupuncture and a technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat this debilitating disease.

**"Now when I go to bed at night I don't have those shooting pains. I don't have that burning sensation. I don't have pain coming up my legs," Dawn enthusiastically describes life after receiving Rachal Lohr's treatments. "I can wear socks and shoes!"**

Dawn and her sister now operate a successful dog walking business, sometimes covering up to 5 miles a day.

**"It's life altering. As far as I'm concerned Rachal saved my life!"**

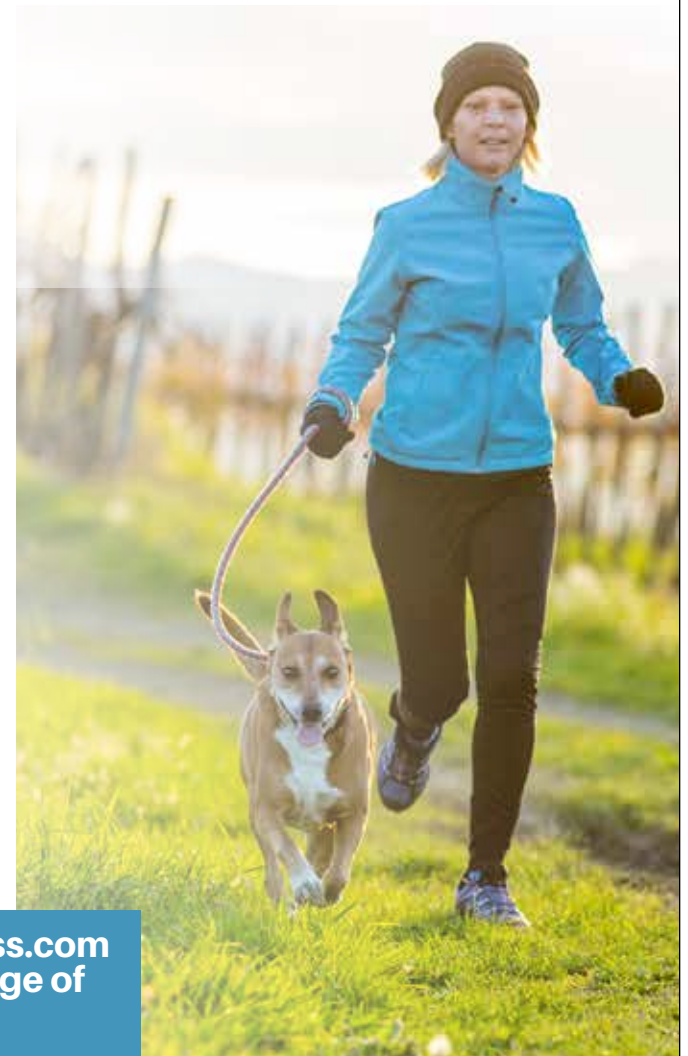
Rachal has been helping the senior community for over 15 years using the most cutting edge and innovative integrative medicine. Specializing in chronic pain cases, specifically those that have been deemed 'hopeless' or 'untreatable', she consistently generates unparalleled results.

What was once a missing link in senior healthcare is now easily accessible to the residents of Northern Virginia.

If you've missed too many tee times because of pain or you've passed on walking through the town centers with friends because you're afraid of falling, it's time to call Rachal and the staff at Firefly.

**It's time you let your golden years BE GOLDEN!**

Rachal Lohr, L.Ac. is once again accepting new patients. And for a limited time will be offering \$40 Consultations so call (703)263-2142 before March 1st to schedule a consultation.



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## Troop 711 honors five new Eagle Scouts

On Jan. 7 Scout Troop 711 honored five scouts with the Eagle Scout award, in Purcellville. Only five percent of scouts achieve this honor. Over the last 20 years, 103 scouts from Troop 711 have received the Eagle Scout award, including these latest five — Colton Hall, Ben Garvis, Edwin Kyle, Spicer Wadman, and Christopher Reynolds.

Retired Navy Captain Hung Cao spoke at the Court of Honor event.

Colton Hall is the youngest Eagle scout in the troop at 13 years old, and the 7th Eagle in the Hall family. A highlight of scouting for him was a 24-hour capture-the-flag camping trip with 3 of his older brothers.

His Eagle project was constructing a Gaga pit cart for Blue Ridge Bible Church. Reflecting on his time as a scout, Colton said: "Scouting is worth it. Scouting teaches you to prepare and plan. It's hard

but it pays off in the end."

Ben Garvis is a troop leader who plans to become a psychologist. He achieved over 60 merit badges and went on many outings such as skiing, caving, rock climbing, and wilderness survival. For his Eagle project, he built bird houses for the neighborhood.

Edwin Kyle led the troop as the Senior Patrol Leader while he excelled in high school. He is well rounded with many outdoor skills and accomplishments, including wilderness survival, first aid, and hiking the 85 miles at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. His Eagle project was preparing the concrete flooring for a new storage shed at Purcellville Baptist Church.

Spicer Wadman led Troop 711 for two years. He is energetic and many scouts loved his fun-filled adventures. His Eagle

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## Hillsboro Art of War auction for Ukraine Feb. 10-11

The Town of Hillsboro, in conjunction with the non-profit Hillsboro Preservation Foundation will host UkraineAid23— Art of War, on Feb. 10 and 11 to raise funds in support of the people of Ukraine.

Participating in the event will be the international organization Blacksmiths Without Borders, whose exhibitions and events held in Europe featuring Ukrainian artists, blacksmiths, and children



CONTINUED ON PAGE 17 » Chip Beck

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Just Like Nothing (else) on Earth:

# The OTHER Leesburg High School

BY TIM JON

You may not remember the name Chuck Thornton - despite the historic line of time for those in the family in this region - but I was fortunate enough to serve under his management during my early tenure as news director at Wage Radio in Leesburg - beginning more than a quarter century ago at the time of this writing.



I'd been a transplant from Minnesota, and Chuck felt it important to demonstrate the many vast differences I'd find here, south of the Mason-Dixon. On our first drive around the locality, he eventually (remember this is Loudoun County) - stopped in the historic section of our

Town at a two-story, wooden building with the windows boarded up and the entire structure painted white.



"This was our Black High School," Chuck told me. My reaction was something like, "Your WHAT?" My intellect

and emotions were caught completely off guard. Again, having grown up in a small midwestern town in the 1960's, I hadn't been exposed to much racial interaction, much less actual segregation.

I'm sure I forced myself to take several hard looks at this one-time public facility; our conversation that morning - this is 1997 - enlightened me that the school had been closed sometime in the late 1950's; the nearby Douglass School then served for a time as Loudoun County's African American educational facility.

And I'm not sure if it was that same morning, but Chuck also informed me

- while on the trail of sensitive topics - that there used to be a public swimming pool at the local firehouse; now no more than an oversized cement slab, it had been filled with concrete to stifle the uproar from the folks who didn't want their family members recreating with anyone from another racial background. The firemen were evidently so sickened by the flames of racism that they filled their own swimming pool with cement. Apparently, that kept the 'chosen' ones from rubbing elbows with the 'wrong' people.

But, back to where we started - at that school building: it was still standing last time I checked in at the site - just a stone's throw from North King Street near Ida Lee Park; it sits in a peaceful

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## — Ask Dr. Mike —

By Michael Oberschneider, Psy.D.

# What is the best parenting time schedule for special needs children?

BY MICHAEL OBERSCHNEIDER, PSY.D.

Divorce is difficult for children, and there is no question that it is especially hard on children with special needs; children who require additional assistance, supports and accommodations for disabilities.

At school, special needs children usually have an Individualized Educational Plan - a plan and/or program that is designed and implemented to support a disabled child's specific elementary and secondary learning needs.



When it comes to divorce, there isn't a universally agreed upon parenting time plan or program that attorneys or the court rely on for divorcing parents with a special needs child. Instead, parents do their best to figure out a specific visitation plan; but when parents can't reach

agreement, the schedule is determined by the court.

In my experience as a child psychologist and custody evaluator, additional care and consideration needs to be given when developing a parenting time schedule for a special needs child. This is because children with impairments, limitations and/or deficits have additional vulnerabilities and challenges, and they require a visitation plan that support their needs.

Divorcing parents most often want more time with their child; however, when a special needs child is involved, I always assert that the quality of visitation time is more important than the quantity of time.

I offer the following tips:

**Bury the hatchet - and bury it fast:** Divorce is an emotionally painful process, and even when it's clear that the

marriage is over, there is understandably still hurt and upset to process. Anyone going through a divorce needs to come to terms with things emotionally before moving on.

As a parent, remaining hurt or angry isn't good for anyone. Special needs children are especially vulnerable to parental problems and discord, so striving to be flexible, thoughtful, and collaborative with one another regarding is advised.

A good parenting plan should be flexible enough for parents to work together when problems arise, but also enforceable enough if a parent's behavior becomes problematic. For example, if a child is having significant emotional difficulty separating from the custodial parent for visitation with the non-custodial parent, being loving and supportive with that child toward a solution is what's most important.

If a child might benefit from extending visitation or spending an additional night with a parent due to their struggles, collaborating to determine what's in that child's best interests would be correct.

Sure, you can get angry in these moments, and assert your rights with your ex and/or with the child, but that approach would likely do more harm than good.

Developing a parenting visitation plan that considers the special needs child's capacity and wellbeing - a plan that incorporates parental collaboration and flexibility - is the right thing to do.

Lastly, when parents can't find agreement in the visitation schedule, or other important parenting areas, engaging a co-parenting therapist to resolve conflicts may be helpful. For longstanding

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## Board of Supervisors' resolution on social and racial equity passes

BY TABITHA REEVES

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word "equity" as "justice according to natural law or right." Loudoun County's recently established equity resolution defines the term as "commitment to promote fairness and justice in the formation of priorities, policies, and programs," along with specifying goals to promote individual well-being throughout the resolution document.

### GOVERNMENT

At the Board of Supervisors Business Meeting on Jan. 17, the differences between those two definitions raised concerns amongst some county residents before passing the "Resolution of the Board of Supervisors Regarding Social and Racial Equity as Fundamental Values." This new resolution promises to develop a plan where matters from each County department will be analyzed through an equitable lens before making decisions, implementing equity as one of Loudoun County's fundamental values.

After public comments, the resolution passed 6-1-1, with Supervisor Caleb E. Kershner (R-Catoctin) opposed, Supervisor Tony R. Buffington (R-Blue Ridge) abstaining and Supervisor Matthew F. Letourneau (R-Dulles) absent.

"Clearly, it's controversial," Buffington said, referencing the board's Rules of Order that warn against passing controversial resolutions. "It's not something that we're all going to vote unanimously on when we're

representing our constituency."

Buffington also argued that defining equity alone is not enough, and that justice should be defined too, specifically detailing how the concepts will be applied in county policymaking.

"There's an unknown there, and I would rather know what I'm voting on than that unknown," he said.

Explaining his opposition, Kershner expressed dissatisfaction with the government using "the lens of race" to determine hiring decisions, policy development and purchases. He reminded meeting attendees of racial injustices that have previously occurred at the hands of governments throughout the U.S.

"We're actually, as a government, beginning to inject this stuff back in, which is what I thought we had fought forever to get rid of," Kershner said.

The resolution mentions eliminating barriers due to not only race, but also eliminating barriers due to ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, language, age, disability and socioeconomic status.

In public comments, county residents from various identity-based organizations spoke on their support to the equity resolution.

"Freedom is not a pie," one Loudoun Interfaith Coalition member said. "By giving someone freedom, no one ever had to take away from their own. The same goes with equity. It's not a finite resource. By lifting each other up, you do not have to put yourself down."

Greg Fenner, a Loudoun resident of 25 years,

reinforced the same notion in his speech.

"More rights for one group does not mean less rights for another group," Fenner said.

Despite support, there were also those that opposed particular aspects of the resolution, such as its wording, and what the document's phrases and definitions could mean for the future of Loudoun County.

One local, Mike Taylor, expressed concern about the use of the term "equity" in general, as he said that various interpretations and overall vagueness easily opens the door for future community harm.

"Equality? I'm right there with you shoulder to shoulder," Taylor said. "I've never met anyone that I didn't consider my equal regardless of station in life, regardless of where I was. But when you start talking equity, often it is used to put in what's sometimes called the 'soft racism of low expectations.'"

Chris Rohland, a local from the Catoctin District, shared his opposition to the definition of equity used in the resolution, saying that it will hurt people in its implementation and that the Merriam-Webster definition is sufficient.

In response, Supervisor Michael R. Turner (D-Ashburn) mentioned that he found it clear that the widespread definition of equity used throughout the county does not work, "and hasn't worked for 300 years," based on historical precedent and racial inequality statistics.

"We kind of need to say, 'If you're in Loudoun County,

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## "It's not a good idea," Mayor Milan says as senior management advocates raising utility rates to reduce debt

At the Purcellville Town Council Work Session on Jan. 25, the Council voted unanimously to use the \$926,000 plus interest in monies obtained from the sale of nutrient credits on the Aberdeen property to offset wastewater increases.

### GOVERNMENT

The payments to the Wastewater Fund would be over three years, with a \$500,000 payment in FY25, \$300,000 in FY26, and approximately \$200,000 in FY27.

The choice before the Council was deciding whether to apply the money to either Capital Improvement Projects or the Wastewater Fund.

In his Council comments, Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut said he favored applying the nutrient credit money to the Wastewater Fund. "The thing about the CIP proposals is every CIP project needs to be individually evaluated. We can't just evaluate them as a grab bag that happens to equal approximately the amount we

put together from the nutrient credits ... I continue to favor applying the nutrient credits [\$926,000] to pay down debt as it becomes due."

Town Manager David Mekarski said even with the nutrient credit monies, it will still be wise to increase the utility rates to avoid "a huge spike."

Just last year, Stantec, the Town's utility consultant, recommended increases of 3 percent for water and 5 percent for sewer over the next five years.

For FY24, they are recommending an increase from 3 percent to 6.5 percent for water and from 5 percent to 9 percent for sewer to "meet essentially our debt responsibility," said Mekarski.

Then Mekarski said, "So for FY24 we can probably hold water at 3 percent and take wastewater to 7 percent and that's with the \$926,000 from the nutrient credit revenue." He said if the Town doesn't make the rate increases, the cost

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# Memoranda

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

Let's roast some sacred cows, or if you prefer, tell the emperor that he has no clothes:

## Memo to: the Board of Supervisors

The recent draft of our new zoning ordinance does nothing to protect the historic and rural character of western Loudoun. It will lead to overcrowding, and to excessive commercialization that makes our land nothing but a drink-and-drive destination.

### OPINION

The only apparent change from the old zoning is the use of some zippy-looking tables for such ephemera as parking ratios. This is not your fault and hopefully the Planning Commission and TLUC have set out some good ideas for the Board to consider.

**Memo to the Department of Planning & Zoning** – Your people are good folks, but the department emasculated the Zoning Ordinance Committee and completely controlled the zoning rewrite in a takeover by your bureaucracy.

of what constitutes a “farm.”

For breweries, any piece of land that's at least ten acres is considered a “farm.” That special favor is totally contrary to the concept of a farm brewery that produces its raw materials on its own land, and the special language just needs to be stricken.

Memo to TLUC – The Board's Transportation and Land Use Committee will probably be a milestone in the zoning process. If it does only one thing, it should be to require Special Exceptions, and thus individual Board approval, for a range of intense uses such as event centers, country inns and breweries.

**There are a number of players in the zoning game.**

**Memo to the Chamber of Commerce** – Chambers of Commerce are good in places where new businesses are needed, such as southwest Virginia. In wealthy and booming counties like Loudoun, they do little except personify greed. Oddly, this group wants more businesses, yet they can't find themselves enough employees. Citizens, not confederacies of businesses, should set Loudoun's future.

**Visit Loudoun** – This state-mandated body is not a friend of western Loudoun. It has a governance problem that ends with it always advocating more, more, more tourism. It proclaims to be a “destination management” body, which implies working with others toward some shared goal. That's a specious claim and in reality, because Visit Loudoun is nothing but a supercharged marketing entity that cannot see the harm from over-commercialization.

**Memo to the Piedmont Environmental Council** – The PEC can be too staid. Its influence would make it a helpful advocate on land use matters, but its arrows tend to stay in its quiver. By the way, how about doing more conservation easements?

**Memo to the Land Trust of Virginia and the Old Dominion Land Conservancy** – Sally Price at LTV and Henry Stribling at ODL do almost all the conservation easements in the county and deserve many kudos. They are also nice people.

**Memo to the Friends of the Blue Ridge** – This group is a diligent advocate for what is probably our most important natural asset – the mountains that are the scenic backdrops to the rest of the county. It's imperative that they be protected, but the draft zoning ordinance adds nothing helpful. (That's an inexplicable decision by planners, who glibly say that “performance standards” suffice. They don't.)

**Big changes generally are prompted by ideas, and here are some.**

**Memo to big conservation easement donors** – Take a broader look at the concept of conservation, which is more than just easements. You can profit from donating easements, and that's fine. However, you protest anything that might reduce your proceeds by even small amounts (i.e., you don't like the initiative to save prime agricultural soils, and you go ballistic at anything that could reduce housing density.)

Carrington Homes is now developing cluster subdivisions in the Middleburg area, which also has far more land in conservation easement than does any other part of the county. That area has much lower zoning density than areas north of Snickersville Turnpike, yet clusters and easements still work around Middleburg. That fact seems to discredit your assertions that the currently permissive density should not be changed,

**Memo to conservation forces** – The word “density” is verboten in county government, but it's a concept that relates to the overcrowding that imperils us. (Density means how much land is required for each house. In northern areas, it's five acres per house. While

that is gracious in a suburban setting, it's fatal to the bucolic, uncrowded rural areas we love.)

Our zoning gives a density bonus when a developer will “cluster” his houses on smaller lots, theoretically leaving open space to wrap around an island of dwellings. That has not happened in practice, as clusters usually look like banal subdivision streets. You conservationists have pushed for lower density, but there is a simpler solution: Abolish the cluster concept altogether.

**Questions will come down to politics.**

**Memo to voters** – Our Supervisors will be up for (re)election this November. Many groups (e.g., realtors, developers) and individuals contribute money in hopes of having some influence on the elected candidates' future voting. The current crop of candidates has not raised much money – yet. Conservation-minded citizens should pony up if they want a seat at the political table.

**Memo to candidates** – A new and well-funded Political Action Committee, a PAC, has been formed. It's called Loudoun's Future and it plans to contribute to candidates who support the goal of protecting our unique heritage and character. This PAC's founders are a serious and accomplished group, and they will welcome any donations. Loudoun's Future is bipartisan.

**Memo to citizens** – It's YOUR county. Zoning affects your day-to-day life. Tired of traffic? Bothered by the noise of data centers? Sad to see an old farm sprout tract housing? For these and many reasons, you should care.

*In developing six million square feet of corporate office buildings around the south, Charles Houston dealt with a multitude of planners and politicians and their zoning codes. He lives in Paeonian Springs.*

## Electoral Board determines staggered terms for school board

At its Jan. 12 meeting, the Loudoun County Electoral Board determined which Loudoun County School Board members will be elected to four-year terms and to two-year terms in the November 2023 general election.

The School Board members who will serve four-year terms are members who will be elected from the:

- Ashburn District
- At-Large (Countywide) District


- Catocin District
- Little River District

In 2021, the Code of Virginia was amended by the General Assembly to allow the Loudoun County School Board to adopt staggered terms starting with the November 2023 general election, with the terms beginning Jan. 1, 2024.

The code, which was further amended in 2022, also called for the Loudoun County Electoral Board to conduct a random drawing at the

board's first meeting of 2023 but no later than Jan. 31, to determine which of the four members of the School Board elected in 2023 will serve four-year terms. The remaining five seats will serve two-year terms.

The November 2023 election in Loudoun will be conducted using the 2022 election districts map. Loudoun County election districts were updated in 2022 through the local redistricting process based on the 2020 U.S. census.



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# The Town of Purcellville Projects continue amidst concerns

TABITHA REEVES

On Jan. 10, Mark Hoffman of the Transportation and Capital Infrastructure Department updated the Loudoun County Finance, Government Operations and Economic Development Committee on the Town of Purcellville Projects. Despite making some requested changes to the proposed infrastructure, such as including pickleball courts at Fields Farm and moving the Park and Ride lot location further from the adjacent neighborhood, there remain to be a variety of concerns which prevent major progress on the projects.

## GOVERNMENT

The concerns are based on the notion that the planned construction does not fit the rural feel of Purcellville. Specifically, citizens of Purcellville have expressed dissatisfaction with the potential lighting hours at the Fields Farm athletic fields and the large size of the future Park and Ride lot. Lighting and urbanization are amongst other worries, such as blocking residential views of the Blue Ridge Mountains, according to staff.

“As much as I’m scratching my head of what they don’t want, [...] you can’t force

progress on people who don’t believe that that progress is needed,” County Chair Phyllis J. Randall (D-At Large) said.

Randall brought up the November elections for Purcellville, in which many candidates who ran on the platform of maintaining small-town charm ended up being elected, further demonstrating that a number of citizens are not in favor of urbanizing.

Because citizens feel that the lighting hours will be long and disturbing, some have suggested to shorten the time of having lights on at night, or even to not have lights at the athletic complex entirely, encouraging only daytime usage.

Steve Torpy, Director of Loudoun County’s Parks, Recreation and Community Services, explained that the new Parks and Recreation standard is to only invest in fields with longer lighting hours at night. This policy is the result of local athletic fields such as those at Franklin Park, where evening sports games sometimes have to be ended early because the overhead lights turn off.

When asked about the potential of moving forward on the project with no overhead lighting, Torpy responded with

the same sentiment expressed by many members of the staff in the Transportation and Capital Infrastructure Department, which lacks mention of unlit fields as an option.

“We are working through the process with the town and we are hopeful that we are going to be able to work through it,” Torpy said.

During the meeting, Hoffman cited the cost of the Fields Farm Park alone as being in the \$25 million to \$30 million range, and entirely county-funded. In response, Supervisor Juli E. Briskman (D-Algonkian) expressed her lack of interest in a park at that cost which does not have lighted fields.

The county’s projected income for tournament user fees for soccer, baseball and lacrosse fields collected for FY23 are estimated at \$574,343.

“At some point, the funding just is going to have to be reallocated because it’s not fair on a couple of different levels,” Supervisor Matthew F. Letourneau (R-Dulles) said. “If we’re going to make an investment in a project, we have to be able to fully utilize it.”

Aside from the lighting at Field Farms Park, another point of contention during recent discussion of the Purcellville

Projects has been the Park and Ride parking lot, due to its urban look and the presence of two other local lots.

The preexisting Park and Ride lots, one in Purcellville and the other in Hamilton, have a combined 480 spaces. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the advent of virtual work, less than 100 vehicles are recorded to use the two lots throughout the day.

“Although the expectation is for park and ride lot use to increase over time, the timeframe to reach higher utilization rates is difficult to project,” according to the Finance, Government Operations and Economic Development Committee report, page 5.

While it remains unclear where the projects will go from here, Erin McLellan, Assistant County Administrator, reported that the staff recommendation is to continue headway on the Town of Purcellville Projects as much as possible.

“The staff is still trying to work through those last issues and will be attending Town Council and Planning Commission meetings in the hopes that our projects can gain approval,” McLellan said.



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# Rise Jr. fills vacated Purcellville Town Council seat while Rayner interrupts

BY VALERIE CURY

At the Jan. 3 Purcellville Town Council Special Meeting, Ron Rise Jr. was appointed to fill the Town Council seat vacated by Mayor Stan Milan on Jan. 1 when he became mayor. The vote was

4-2 with Mayor Stan Milan, Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut, and

## GOVERNMENT

Council Members Carol Luke and Boo Bennett voting yes, while Council Members Erin Rayner and Mary Jane Williams voted no.

Mayor Stan Milan said there had been a lot of discussion and questions about making an appointment to fill his vacated Town Council seat. He said one recurring question was: Why isn't the Town holding a special election and having citizens turn in applications for the position?

"We have had six candidates run for this position for the last three months. The election was Nov. 8. The citizens voted, therefore in my opinion they have done their interviews. They voted and as the votes tallied there was a hierarchy of winners and losers.

"The first winner was Mary Boo Bennett, second was Erin Rayner, third was Carol Luke, fourth was Ron Rise Jr., fifth was Caleb Stought, and sixth was Tip Stinnette.

"So that was the logic behind making an appointment." Milan continued, "The citizens have voted, and they voiced their opinion in the tally of the votes."

Rayner said she sent Milan an email on Dec. 21 asking for interviews to fill the vacancy. "I just don't think it's fair and transparent government that that wasn't put forth initially." She also said Milan didn't answer her email. "Mary Jane and I were the only ones probably left out of that discussion."

**Milan replied, "This is an open discussion." Interrupting him, Rayner said, "It is now on the day we are supposed to take a vote."**

Milan tried to speak but Rayner continued, "I just don't think it's a good process." Milan responded, "That's your opinion," but was again interrupted by Rayner mid-sentence, "It is my opinion."

Milan said he appreciated and accepted Rayner's opinion. He explained again that "the citizens have voted. If we were to do interviews, it would be a slap in the face to the citizens who voted for the six candidates who ran for Town Council.

"Someone out of the blue comes in to do an interview for a position that the citizens do not know. They have not

presented themselves in any formal format. They have not talked to the citizens; they have not debated with the candidates on the issues that are relevant to the Town."

Milan reiterated that Rise Jr. received the fourth highest votes and if another candidate had come in fourth, the council would have chosen the other candidate.

Rayner again interrupted Milan saying that the night's process was a surprise to her.

However, this item had been on the draft agenda for almost a week, and this was the standard process for appointments for filling a vacant seat so close to a recent election.

**Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut was reappointed** as Vice Mayor in a 4-2 vote with Council Members Mary Jane Williams and Erin Rayner voting no.

Appointed to the Planning Commission were Brian Green, Jason Dengler, Ron Rise Sr. and Planning Commissioner Ed Neham was reappointed to the position.

Each Council Member asked two or three questions to the applicants applying for the four vacant seats. Council Member Mary Jane Williams asked Ron Rise Sr. how the Town can increase cooperation with the County to complete some of the County's proposed projects – specifically the Fields Farm project and the 7/690 Interchange.

Rise Sr. said, "I appreciate that question – it assumes that we haven't been cooperative or there is no cooperation back and forth. I am not sure that's true."

**When it was Council Member Erin Rayner's turn, she accused Rise Sr. of being "someone who has advocated against the Rt. 7/690 Interchange."** Rise Sr. asked, "Can I interrupt you?" Without skipping a beat Rayner continued, "Is that your role to stop the interchange?"

Rise Sr. said he has been before the council many times and rhetorically asked, "What have I said? I am not against it."

"I know," said Rayner, "but you are for holding it up, correct?" "No," answered Rise Sr. "I don't think that's a fair statement."

**Rayner interrupted him, and Mayor Stan Milan said, "Hold on.** We are here to get questions about the person's ability to be on the Planning Commission. We are not here to debate whether he is for or against any projects.

"These people in this audience that have been against projects at Mayfair



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CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 >

# LCPS educators advocate for collective bargaining

BY TABITHA REEVES

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 10.6 million public school teachers in January 2020. Today, numbers reflect a 600,000 person decrease, at 10 million employed teachers. The pandemic is one cause of this decline, but staff shortages existed even before the pandemic began.

On Jan. 24, at the Loudoun County Public School Board Meeting and FY 2024 Operating Budget Work Session and Public Hearing, various Loudoun County residents spoke in support of collective bargaining. Under the impression that educators in the county are not paid enough, have poor working conditions and have little to no say in either, they argued that collective bargaining offers a solution to the decreasing number of educators.

"As an employee, I want to be able to be part of the discussion when negotiating for a new contract," Special education bus driver Hugo Brunet said.

Merriam-Webster defines collective bargaining as, "negotiation between an employer and a labor union usually on wages, hours and working conditions."

Without this form of decision-making, employment factors and technical salary decisions are left up to the district, which is also responsible for ensuring that each year's proposed budget is relatively balanced.

"I've seen [excellent teachers] worn down by one bad policy decision after another," LCPS teacher Brendan Carr said. "That could have easily been avoided if an educator had been in the room to help find a better solution at the time."

Members of the Loudoun Education Association, an advocate of collective bargaining, rallied outside of the board meeting just before it began. They wore red LEA hats and some held signs reading, "Collective bargaining NOW!" or "This is my teacher voice!" Additionally, they collected signatures of those in support of the policy.

The LEA's website has posts supporting collective bargaining dating back to 2021. One news report by the organization in June 2021 is titled, "Collective Bargaining is on the horizon."

Karen Tyrrell, LEA co-chair, cited numbers from MIT's Living Wage Calculator to depict why she believes this form

of decision-making is needed.

According to MIT's Living Wage Calculator, the living wage for a single adult with no children in Loudoun County is \$22.98 per hour. In defining a living wage, the calculator does not include the cost of eating out at restaurants or forms of entertainment, nor unpaid days off or savings for retirement.

The Universal Salary Scale for the FY 2023 budget shows that employees in levels one through four and steps one through eight make less than a living wage. Employees who fall into those level and step categories are nutrition workers, teaching assistants, bus attendants and custodians, amongst other related positions.

"How disgraceful in the fastest-growing, richest county in our nation," Tyrrell said. "This must change. Our classified employees deserve to live and thrive in the county they work in."

According to that salary scale, those with a Bachelor's degree or technical professional license earn a minimum of \$55,000 annually, and those with further education can earn up to \$111,000 per year, depending on the degree.

Local Brian Davidson spoke against the

efforts of the LEA, referring to the organization as a "Marxist teacher union," and denying the claims that LCPS staff are not paid enough. He reported that starting teachers in Loudoun earn \$72,000 annually, meaning that households with two streams of income make \$144,000 annually.

"They say they can't live here, but yet a household earns more than the median household income [in Loudoun County]," Davidson said. "Think about that. And they say they have second and third jobs, but yet you can't get enough teachers to teach summer school."

Mario Vargas, a LCPS educator, pointed out that Florida, Richmond City and Maryland use collective bargaining in determining employee contracts. He emphasized that their contracts include negotiation of not just salary and health benefits, but also class sizes.

"Parents, listen up," Vargas said. "We can collectively bargain class sizes. Our working conditions are your students' learning conditions."

The FY 2024 budget will not be fully adopted until late April, after a meeting between the School Board and Board of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »



## Valentine's Day DINNER

Join us at Magnolias at the Mill to celebrate the cherub's favorite day with a three course meal created from the finest local and imported ingredients. Chef Ian has designed menu infused with love that will delight the all the senses and stir the heart. Price is based on entrée (\$75-\$125).

Please note that our three course menu is all that is available after 5:00 PM. Visit [magnolias.mill/reservations](http://magnolias.mill/reservations) to book.

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# Amazon Web Services plans to expand Data Center Campuses

Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced that Amazon Web Services, an Amazon.com, Inc. company (NASDAQ: AMZN), plans to invest \$35 billion by 2040 to establish multiple data center campuses across Virginia.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership worked with the General Assembly's Major Employment and Investment Project Approval Commission to secure the project to expand data center investment to new locations across Virginia. Pending approval by the Virginia General Assembly, the Commonwealth is developing a new Mega Data Center Incentive Program, which the company will be eligible to receive.

The new program includes up to a 15-year extension of Data Center Sales and Use tax exemptions on qualifying equipment and enabling software. In addition, and also subject to approval by the General Assembly, AWS will be eligible to receive an MEI custom performance grant of up to \$140 million for site and infrastructure improvements, workforce development, and other project-related costs.

Numerous localities in the Commonwealth are under consideration and will be decided at a later date. These new campuses will combine expandable capacity to position AWS for long-term growth in the Commonwealth.

Amazon is among the largest private-sector employers in the Commonwealth of Virginia, establishing

its first AWS data centers and operations facilities in 2006 and later announcing its second headquarters in Arlington in 2018. This announcement of planned investment will create at least 1,000 total new jobs across Virginia.

"AWS has a significant presence in Virginia, and we are excited that AWS has chosen to continue their growth and expand their footprint across the Commonwealth," said Youngkin.

"Virginia will continue to encourage the development of this new generation of data center campuses across multiple regions of the Commonwealth. These areas offer robust utility infrastructure, lower costs, great livability, and highly educated workforces and will benefit from the associated economic development and increased tax base, assisting the schools and providing services to the community."

"With the highest concentration of tech talent in the U.S., Virginia boasts one of the largest data center workforces in the nation—an advantage that sets us apart and directly benefits an industry leader like AWS," said Secretary of Commerce and Trade Caren Merrick. "We thank AWS for its commitment to the Commonwealth of Virginia and look forward to a continued partnership in the years to come."

"Virginia is a world leader in innovation and cloud computing, thanks to its investment in a robust, highly-skilled workforce and emphasis on long-term public

and private partnerships," said Roger Wehner, Director of Economic Development, AWS.

"Since 2006, AWS has invested more than \$35 billion in Virginia, boosting the Commonwealth's total Gross Domestic Product by nearly \$7 billion and supporting thousands of jobs annually. Building on these successful beginnings, we plan to invest an additional \$35 billion in the Commonwealth of Virginia by 2040 and create 1,000 jobs."

"I am pleased the MEI Commission could collaborate with our state and private-sector partners to ensure AWS selected the Commonwealth for this important project," said Major Employment and Investment Project Approval Commission Chair Delegate Barry Knight. "The addition of multiple data center campuses will underscore Virginia's position as the world's largest data center market segment, and we thank AWS for its long-term commitment to the Commonwealth."

"As the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud, AWS is a tremendous economic driver in Virginia that will expand its roots across multiple regions of the Commonwealth, creating new jobs and an impactful ripple effect in communities," said Senator Janet Howell, Co-Chair of Senate Finance and Appropriations. "We are proud the company recognizes Virginia as the optimal location for a project of this caliber and that the MEI Commission was able to play a role."

"Securing Amazon Web Services' data center campuses expansion is a significant win for Virginia and our booming technology sector," said Senator George Barker, Co-Chair of Senate Finance and Appropriations. "I congratulate the partners that will continue to work together on this historic project and look forward to AWS expanding operations in the Commonwealth."

## Leesburg approves further development of Main Street Program

On Tuesday, Jan. 10, the Leesburg Town Council voted unanimously to authorize the Department of Economic Development to further develop the Virginia Main Street Program for the Historic District in downtown Leesburg.

In November 2021, the Town became a Main Street Community at the Tier 1 level, which provides access to training and grant opportunities. During the past four months, staff has employed numerous means of outreach to the local business and residential community.

Response from this outreach showed

a strong support for a Main Street program by the local community. Main Street programs are designed to leverage private and public investment towards the preservation and continued success of historic downtowns and communities.

In December 2022, a Steering Committee, consisting of local business owners and residents from the Leesburg community, was established by staff to provide guidance and communication. Currently, this committee meets twice per month and serves as the initial representation of the local Main Street organization.

To date, the development and initial implementation of the program has been accomplished with minimal investment. In October 2022, the Town was approved for a Community Vitality Grant from the state in the amount of \$7,000.

The next step involves pursuing Tier 2 and Tier 3 Main Street Community status by using the grant to prepare for the development of a 501C3 Main Street management organization.

This effort would include continuing to work with the established Steering Committee that has been formed to informally provide guidance and communication with the community.

The Department of Economic Development will provide the \$2,000 required matching amount from the approved Fiscal Year 2023 budget.

Staff will continue development of the program and subsequently apply for Tier 2 status. The earliest that an application can be submitted for Tier 2 is November 2024.

The process of moving through the program tiers to become a fully accredited Tier 3 Main Street program is expected to take several years. The Council will evaluate further Town financial commitments to the program as its development continues.

## Loudoun Landfill new waste requirements

Beginning Feb. 1, Loudoun County will require written documentation that commercial construction and demolition waste being delivered to the Loudoun County Solid Waste Management Facility comes from sources within Loudoun. In addition, all haulers of commercial construction and

demolition waste must be pre-authorized to use the landfill.

The new requirements reinforce existing county policy that only waste generated in Loudoun County is accepted at the landfill and come in response to a recent increase in the

amount of commercial construction and demolition waste being delivered to the facility.

Pre-authorization forms and information about the new requirement for written documentation have been mailed to more than 200 commercial haulers, contractors, businesses and

institutions that have landfill accounts and that routinely deliver commercial construction and demolition waste.

Documentation accepted at the time of delivery includes affidavits from the property owner or customer, construction permits, notice of award, work orders or signed quotes. Other forms of written documentation may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »

# Loudoun first responders graduate fire and rescue training

The Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System announced the graduation of 67 first responders who successfully completed various levels of fire and rescue training.

## COMMUNITY

On Thursday, Jan. 5, the graduates were joined by friends and family, along with members of LC-CFRS leadership, Loudoun County Administration and the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors at a ceremony recognizing these individuals who have committed to honorably serve their communities.

Clerk of the Circuit Court Gary

Clemens was on hand to officially swear in the most recent graduates to the Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System. Deputy Chief of Training Randall L. Shank emceed the event and introduced speakers to include Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis Randall and System Chief Keith Johnson.

Forty-seven of the students completed the Emergency Medical Technician-Basic course, 10 students completed the Firefighter I-II course, and 10 graduated the Emergency Medical Technician – Paramedic program. In addition to

their full-time jobs, schooling, and family obligations, the graduates dedicated countless hours over the last six months to their training and have achieved Loudoun County, Commonwealth of Virginia, and National Certifications.

It is tradition for LC-CFRS instructors to designate one individual as the “top student” for each graduating class that exemplifies leadership, dedication, academic success, and the ability to motivate others. The top students recognized Thursday include Tyler Yudd for the Firefighter I-II class, Claire Davison for Summer EMT-B, Hana Al Shawi

and Ed Jackson for their respective Fall EMT-B classes, and Adam Smith for the EMT-Paramedic class.

“This is a proud moment as we continue to grow our fire and rescue system,” stated System Chief Keith Johnson. “These fine individuals will make valuable contributions to our fire and rescue family and to the Loudoun County community. Thank you for your commitment, courage, and willingness to serve.”

For more information about LC-CFRS visit [www.loudoun.gov/fire](http://www.loudoun.gov/fire) or to become a volunteer first responder in Loudoun County visit [www.OpenNewDoors.org](http://www.OpenNewDoors.org).

# Call for local art groups to apply for funding

Local non-profit arts organizations are invited to submit requests for funding to the Purcellville Arts Council to be considered for inclusion in the Town’s proposal for the Virginia Commission for the Arts

## COMMUNITY

Creative Communities Partnership Grant Program. Eligible arts organizations are encouraged to apply online by Sunday, March 5.

Through the Creative Communities Partnership Grant Program, the Virginia Commission for the Arts will match up to \$4,500 of tax monies given by independent town, city, and county governments to stand-alone arts organizations. Should the Town receive funding through the grant, a total of up to \$9,000 could be distributed to independent arts organizations that have applied for and been awarded support for arts activities

within the town.

Eligible arts organizations interested in applying are required to submit the online application, the organization’s W-9, and the organization’s 501(c)3 letter. Eligible applicants must be 501(c)3 organizations that:

1. focus primarily on the arts (i.e. production, presentation or support of dance, literary arts, media arts, music, theater or visual or related arts)
2. are incorporated in Virginia
3. have their headquarters and home seasons, or activities equivalent to a home season, in the state

Proposals must be for arts activities that will be held in Purcellville, between July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. Please note that funding cannot be provided for payment to performers for specific performances or for school arts

budgets or arts programming by local governments, committees or councils of government, nor departments such as parks and recreation.

The Purcellville Arts Council will review the funding requests and then share their recommendations of organizations to be included in their grant proposal to the Virginia Commission for the Arts Creative Communities Partnership Program with the Town Council.

The application to be considered for included in the Town’s grant proposal is available online on the Purcellville Arts

Council page of the Town of Purcellville website. Eligible art organizations may either apply online or mail the proposal with all of the required information to Purcellville Arts Council, Attn: Creative Communities Partnership Grant, 221 S Nursery Ave, Purcellville, VA 20132 by Sunday, March 5.

For more information about the Virginia Commission for the Arts’ Creative Communities Partnership Grant Program, visit <https://vca.virginia.gov/grant/creative-communities-partnership-grants/>.

# The Village of Philomont is on Track for National Register Listing

The Village of Philomont, like so many of Loudoun County’s existing Rural Historic Villages, is expected to achieve National Recognition for its role in Loudoun County’s agricultural and commercial industry through the 19th and early 20th century.

## COMMUNITY

The Virginia Department of Historic Resources has evaluated an application sponsored by the Philomont Village Foundation. Historic preservationist Jane Covington has been interviewing and compiling the historical file since early 2022, working with Philomont historian,

Laura Pearson (nee Dawson). Pearson was born in the Charles Dawson house on Jeb Stuart Road across from her current residence, on Snickersville Turnpike.

Upon final approval, this process will add the Village of Philomont to the National Register of Historic Places.

The well-known crossroads, Snickersville Turnpike (the Turnpike) and Jeb Stuart Road would eventually define the village of Philomont and the core community that emerged during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Those who came to Philomont and settled on the much-traveled turnpike, especially after Hibbs Bridge

was finished in 1829, supported the surrounding agricultural industry with their many tradesmen, such as leather tanners, blacksmiths, doctors, and carpenters.

Snickersville Turnpike, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2022, has a centuries old history that is treasured by many who live along it or take the time to enjoy the mostly unchanged route taken by so many including Indians, farmers, tradesmen and soldiers during the Civil War.

## Adult spring sports sign up now

Whether your goal is to meet new friends, socialize or reignite your competitive fire, PRCS offers a variety of sports leagues and tournaments for people 18 and older.

See some of the below offerings and go to the Department of Parks Recreation and Community Service website and register today for the spring season.

Spring softball starts April 3, on a weekly basis for 9 weeks at Potomack Lakes Sprotsplex and Philip A. Bolen Memorial Park. Both men’s and coed divisions are available.

Spring soccer starts April 2, at Hal and Berni Hanson Regional Park for men’s and coed – Wednesday and Thursday nights and Sunday morning at Potomack Lakes.

Farmwell Station Middle School will hold spring basketball starting April 17. Twelve games lasting six weeks, plus potential playoffs. Monday and Wednesday nights for both men’s and women’s divisions.

Kickball will start April 19 at Hal and Berni Hanson Regional Park for eight weeks, Monday and Friday nights.

Originally used as migratory paths by Sherando American Indians and later as a major route to transport harvests to the mills along the Turnpike, Philomont was perfectly situated midway along the 15-mile route, for travelers to stop for supplies at the General Store, get a wagon wheel fixed, a new shoe for their horse or maybe pick up a celebratory beverage from a local who had their liquor license in an easily accessible and welcoming

# General Fund revenues up halfway through FY23

Gov. Glenn Youngkin announced the General Fund revenue collections for December 2022. Through the first half of the fiscal year, adjusting for policy actions and timing issues, general fund revenues were up 6.5 percent over the prior years. On an unadjusted basis, general fund revenues were 0.8 percent higher versus the projected 8.8 percent decline assumed in the Governor's December proposed budget amendments for the full fiscal year.

"This revenue report confirms Virginia remains in a great position to make critical investments this year and lower taxes in the Commonwealth so that we can compete to win against our peer states," said Youngkin. "The consistent revenues we've seen throughout this fiscal year underscore the Commonwealth's financial health and capacity to deliver tax cuts for families and local businesses throughout Virginia, I look forward to working together with the General Assembly to make this a reality, just as we did last year."

**GOVERNMENT**

"December results were slightly ahead of expectations, with our major revenue sources

reflecting a stable job market and consumer with continued pressure on corporate profits," said Secretary of Finance Stephen Cummings. "For the first half of the fiscal year, revenue collections are consistent with updated revenue projections included in the Governor's proposed budget, and I am confident that in coming months revenues will continue to meet or exceed our conservative forecast."

Major policy and timing adjustments contributing to revenue growth include the impacts of the repeal of the Accelerated Sales Tax and the recently enacted optional Pass-Through Entity Tax, which affects the timing of payments but not total state tax liability for the year. These policies combined added \$509 million to collections fiscal year-to-date. These were offset by tax rebates and changes to the standard deduction which subtracted \$1.2 billion to revenue growth, for a net reduction of \$728 million in the first 6 months of Fiscal Year 2023.

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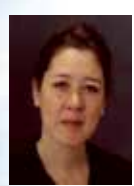


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# Here they come!

On Jan. 7, the Cochran family held their annual sheep drive, which was first held in January 2015. They started walking the sheep from their late autumn field back to Stone Eden farm.

In mid-January, the lambing season started. Allen Cochran, along with his wife Nancy and

their two daughters, Emily and Montana and their border collies have a successful drive every year.

This year drew a large crowd. Plan to go next year and information on this event is posted mid-December on their Facebook page, Stone Eden Farm.

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## HILLSBORO, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

have raised funds for emergency vehicles and protective equipment for communities in Ukraine.

Swedish artist and blacksmith Ludvig Ödman, whose political cartoons on the war have won acclaim across Europe, will be the featured speaker at an Eat, Drink & Be Literary! entitled Art of War—Friday, Feb. 10, at Hillsboro's Old Stone School. (Tickets and information: [OldStoneSchool.org](http://OldStoneSchool.org))

An exclusive "American Edition" of Ödman's celebrated Ukraine Drawings will be on display Friday evening and will be auctioned after an artist reception on Saturday, Feb. 11—along with an array of works from award-winning political cartoonists including Pulitzer Prize-winner Joel Pett, and Kevin Kallaugher, Steve Artely, Paul Fell, Stilson Greene and Hillsboro's Chip Beck.

Limited editions of iconic works by Ukrainian political poster artist Nikita Titov will also be auctioned, as will work by Ukrainian blacksmith Sergiy Polubotko, Hillsboro's Laney Oxman and several watercolor artists from across the region and the nation.

Hillsboro Mayor Roger Vance said, "As the first anniversary of the Russian invasion nears, it is critical to keep Americans' awareness of Ukraine's fight for freedom high and continue to support the people in any way that we can. This event will inform and inspire—as well as raise funds to aide Ukrainians on the ground during what will be a brutal winter."

Just five weeks after the invasion began Hillsboro's UkraineAid concert and art auction raised \$20,000 to support Ukrainian war refugees. Hillsboro Preservation Foundation President Paul Hrebenak said the coming UkraineAid23 event will again extend the reach of the non-profit organization's Neighbors in Need program. "People here want to help and as part of our Neighbors in Need program we can continue to keep the needs of the Ukrainian people in our hearts and mind—and take action," Hrebenak said. "We are pleased to partner again with the Town of Hillsboro to raise funds for the valiant Ukrainians battling for their freedom and democracy."

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 10, to the Old Stone School and The Gap Bar, with artwork on display, providing attendees the opportunity to place a bid or purchase works. The Eat, Drink & Be Literary! presentation—Art of War, begins a 7 p.m.

Advance tickets are available for \$15 at [OldStoneSchool.org](http://OldStoneSchool.org), or at the door for \$20. On Saturday, Feb. 11, the Art of War exhibit and silent auction



## T-Mobile opens shop in Purcellville

T-Mobile held their ribbon cutting on Jan. 27 along with Purcellville Mayor Stan Milan and Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut. T-Mobile moved to their location in Purcellville three weeks ago and they are located at 150 Purcellville Gateway Drive, Suite AA. Their telephone number is 540 441-1760.

## DR. MIKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

and ongoing high conflict co-parenting situations, a mature and highly skilled parenting coordinator may also be needed to address disagreements around a child's routines, treatments and parenting visitation schedule.

**Develop a plan that fits your child's needs.** The moniker, "special needs," can include a wide range of capabilities and conditions, and thus, it's important for parents to agree on the main factors influencing their child's functioning and ongoing needs.

Are you in agreement regarding your child's temperament and personality style? Are you in agreement regarding your child's diagnosis and treatment? Are you in agreement regarding which parent has more capacity and availability to care for your child? Are you in agreement regarding who your child has historically viewed and experienced as being the more involved and reliable parent regarding their care and needs?

Developing a parenting visitation schedule that fits your child's needs may mean that one parent spends more time with the child than the other parent, and for some parents, that's difficult to agree to. If reaching agreement

with your ex is difficult, meeting with a parenting professional for individual guidance and support may be helpful.

**Limit transitions.** Having a consistent routine and stability in residential placement is very important for a lot of special needs children. While some children require frequent contact with both parents, too much back and forth between the two parental homes can be difficult for special needs children to manage in general, especially during the school week. Sometimes additional shorter visits during the school week with the non-custodial parent can advantageously bridge a longer break between the child's two homes.

**Be conservative with adjustments.** Divorce, and all the changes and adjustments that come with it, can be especially difficult on special needs children. Thus, for the first year, I recommend that parents keep life as predictable and consistent as possible. Remaining in the same home or moving to some place close, respecting and supporting family relations, not introducing your child to a new romantic partner, and not making any other sudden changes, will help your child to accept and grow into his or her next chapter of family

life. So, when you consider how you want to enjoy your visitation time with your child, keep in mind that for special needs children consistency supports emotional security.

Regardless of your custody arrangement, working together as parents to create a parenting time schedule that is in the best interest of the child is very important. The tallest hurdles to jump most frequently have less to do with the child's needs and more to do with the parents' longstanding conflicts.

When developing a parenting time schedule, try to remember that while you didn't get the marriage right, you can both work through the challenges that lie ahead to get the co-parenting right.

*Dr. Michael Oberschneider is the Founder and Director of Ashburn Psychological and Psychiatric Services, a multidisciplinary evaluation and treatment practice comprised of forensic and clinical psychiatrists and psychologists, neuropsychologists, and therapists. He is a nationally certified custody evaluator and parenting coordinator.*

begins at 12 noon and ends at 5 p.m., with an artist reception starting at 3 p.m. Admission to the exhibit and the auction is free.

Joining Ödman in Hillsboro will be fellow Blacksmiths Without Borders member Sergiy Polubotko. Ödman, whose wife is Ukrainian, said his Ukraine Drawings began as an exercise to calm his nerves when the invasion began. To date, he has created more than 100 inspired pen and ink drawings, with all proceeds from their sale going to support the provision of humanitarian equipment to Ukraine.



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## Twenty-three valentines we should all send in 2023

1. **To Valentine Vernon Purcell** (1848-1925) who gave his last name to our own picturesque Purcellville. A great date idea: Take a split of champagne and a single red rose to his grave at Wheatland.
2. **To Hershey's** for bringing out Meltaway Roses Kisses just in time for Valentine's 2023
3. **To Richard Rogers and Lorenz Hart** for writing "My Funny Valentine: for their 1937 hit Babes in Arms
4. **To St. Valentine** who was martyred on February 24, 269 under orders from Roman Emperor Claudius for trying to convert Claudius to Christianity. St. Valentine is the patron saint of lovers, epileptics and beekeepers. Interesting group.
5. **To Kevin Noyes at Red Truck Bakery** in Marshall and Warrenton for sprinkling red hearts on their scrumptious chocolate cakes.
6. **To Barry White** (1944-2003) maestro of the Love Unlimited Orchestra, two-time Grammy winner, who brought the world a bunch of impossibly sumptuous love songs.
7. **To Leo McCarey**, one of Hollywood's least appreciated directors, who gave us two (2) versions of his story "An Affair to Remember," (a remake of "Love Affair"). Arguably, the most romantic film ever. Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr will intoxicate you.
8. **To Dr. Christiaan Bernard** (1922-2001) the South African surgeon who performed the first successful heart transplant in 1967. To quote a Sergio Mendes lyric, "Let's talk about second chances ..."
9. **To Sam Cooke** (1931-1964) bluesy, breakthrough singer who's more famous, maybe, for "You Send Me" or "A Change is Gonna Come," but "Cupid" is his Valentine to all of us. Murdered at the age of 33, imagine all the hits he could have left us.
10. **To Hallmark Cards** in Kansas City for, well, you know ...
11. **To Spangler Candy Company** for making those tiny, ubiquitous, pastel candies that show up this time o'year. Each comes with a terse little lovely message: "ALL MINE," "KISS ME" and "MISS YOU" among the faves. The Chase brothers launched this tradition in the mid 1800s. Necco took over, but folded. Spangler Candy Company turns out a billion each year.
12. **To Magnolia's, Purcellville**, for offering a Valentine's Day Special menu "infused with love."
13. **To Johnny Mathis** for, next to Barry White, producing such creamy, smooth love songs that have inspired countless romances, marriages and, yep, babies. Personal fave: "It's Not for Me to Say."
14. **To The Sunflower Shack** in Leesburg for all kinds of insanely Valentine-ish|stuff: chocolate roses, sour lips, "conversational" Jelly Bellies, even chocolate pizza! Yikes!
15. **To The Chocolate Palette in Purcellville**, Cheryl June, here is one Lady who can help you melt the emotions of anyone you know! Scrumptious, fabulous, handmade desserts and sipping chocolates – oh, I am on Cloud 9.
16. **To Redford and Fonda** for another cinematic Valentine, this one for those of a certain age: "Our Souls at Night" with Robert Redford and Jane Fonda, this romantic duo's fourth collaboration. Arguably their best, gotta say, is their first: "Barefoot in the Park."
17. **To Tracy and Hepburn** for their 1945 romcom "Without Love." Warning: this starts with the iconic couple falling in like, not love. But things happen and love, well, happens. Some of it takes place in Virginia's hunt country!
18. **To Ruth Negga and Joel Edgerton**, the scintillating stars of the film "Loving," It chronicles the true story of Richard and Midred Loving who sought to defy state laws (yes, our state's) that prohibited interracial marriage. This is a Valentine with rough edges. It might shock you. But it's worth it.
19. **To Dorothy Parker** (1893-1967), infamous, caustic wit, who wrote "Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker."
20. **To Eyetopia Inc.** The Eyewear Vault. Paige Buscema, who for more than 20 years keeps us looking our best and helping us see the true heart in everyone we meet.
21. **To Stephen F. Whitman**, who, in 1842 started selling food wares, including chocolates, on the docks in Philadelphia. He created the Whitman's Sampler with the famous Messenger Boy logo, which probably inspired the Forrest Gump line about "you never know what you're going to get..." Whitman sold out to Pet Inc, which sold out to Russell Stover and in 2014 was swallowed up by Lindt & Sprungli.
22. **To Emma Thompson** for adapting Jane Austen's 1811 novel "Sense and Sensibility" with her Oscar-winning screenplay for the 1995 release. There is a knotty web of romantic scenarios all twisting and turning at the same time. Interestingly, Thompson later married Greg Wise, who played the film's dashing cad Willoughby.
23. **To Rudolph Valentino** (1895-1926) whose smoldering gaze launched a million swoons during the silent film era. His starring vehicle, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse" was one of the first flicks to do a million at the box office.

### And Three More to Grow On ...

24. **To Jack Jones** who sang the theme song from the long-running TV hit "The Love Boat" (1977-1986) which included the lyric, "Set a course for adventure, your mind on a new romance." For a generation of small-screen viewers, this was a secret guilty pleasure. There were 250 hour-long episodes. Most critics dismiss Jones as a lightweight. But if you've ever heard "Love with A Proper Stranger," you can't agree.
25. **To the Unknown Romantic** who invented the popular XXXOOO hugs-and-kisses signature added to romantic texts, emails, letters, etc. Could be ancient code between early Christians. Could be 1960s pop jargon. Like love itself, its originator is mysterious. And great fun.
26. **To The Ashby Inn & Restaurant, Paris** for going all-out for Valentines. Special *prix fixe* February 10-12<sup>th</sup> and then on the 14<sup>th</sup>. The Inn offers that special meal, plus roses, champagne and chocolate-dipped strawberries in the hopelessly romantic rooms.

# The Sixth Annual Purcellville Cabin Fever Film Festival is full of talent

It's a wrap for the sixth annual Purcellville Cabin Fever Film Festival co-hosted by The Franklin Park Performing Visual Arts Center and the Town of Purcellville's Arts Council. It is the only festival in the area that focuses solely on the talent of local filmmakers and was held at the Franklin Park Arts Center on Jan. 27 and 28.

**COMMUNITY**

This year there were a record 20 films submitted.

The Audience Favorite award, sponsored by the Friends of Franklin Park Arts Center, went to Rikki Elizabeth Stinnette for "The Wallflower Pact."

The Best Student

Produced Film Award, sponsored by the Purcellville Arts Council, went to Josh Ryan for "Long Sleeves." Award winners received a glass Cabin Fever art piece by Loudoun artist G'Ann Zieger and a cash prize. Purcellville Mayor Stan Milan presented each filmmaker with an official Certificate of Participation.



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# Sheriff Chapman will seek fourth term

Mike Chapman announced that he will seek a fourth, four-year term as Sheriff of Loudoun County, overseeing the largest, full-service Sheriff's Office in Virginia, the position he has held since 2012.

## COMMUNITY

This announcement comes fresh off an International Association of Chiefs of Police study showing the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office provides "excellent" service, and a Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Council of Government report confirming that Loudoun has the lowest crime rate in the Washington, D.C.-Northern Virginia area.

"Loudoun County is one of the safest places in the United States to live and work, and I am determined to keep it that way through continuous improvement, the professionalism of our team, and effective community engagement," Chapman said.

COG statistics further demonstrate that since Chapman took office in 2012, crime has dropped by an unprecedented 47 percent – the best performance in Northern Virginia, including four times the reduction in Fairfax County and twice as much as in Prince William County.

"Our Step-Up Strategy to constantly improve Service, Technology, Efficiency and Professionalism is clearly working," said Chapman. "My promise has always been to do everything possible to keep Loudoun safe, and I will continue to do so if our citizens re-elect me."

Chapman named four areas he plans to focus on this year and in his next term:

1. Continue reduction of serious crimes – adding new deputies and expanding programs to prevent crime, and holding violent criminals and drug traffickers accountable;
2. Expand mental health initiatives – helping those in crisis with more local treatment and transition options, including LCSO's police-mental health co-responder program as well as advancing the capabilities of the Crisis Intervention Team at Assessment Center (CITAC);
3. Continue interdiction of dangerous drugs – leveraging Chapman's global expertise and professional contacts to further enhance cooperative relationships with state, regional and federal partners and keep dangerous

4. Protect children and schools – working with parents, teachers, and school administrators to further strengthen LCSO's exemplary School Resource Officer, internet safety, and related programs, and to optimize communication with schools to ensure the safety of our youth.

"Under my leadership, the LCSO has become a leader in the law enforcement community, but there is no such thing as doing enough when it comes to crime prevention and public safety," said Chapman. "We continue to move in the right direction in service to our community, and we can't take our foot off the gas now."

LCSO has led the region in de-escalation efforts with nearly 100 percent of all deputies and dispatchers trained in Crisis Intervention and Advanced Crisis Intervention programs. "We always strive to de-escalate volatile situations to avoid the use of force," said Chapman, "and we do this successfully every day in Loudoun thanks to the professionalism of our deputies, effective training, and collaboration with community partners."

Chapman built Loudoun's School



Resource Officer program that now provides a full-time presence in every public high school and middle school in the County – and well as a shared presence in elementary schools.

Chapman currently serves as Vice President for Homeland Security for the Major County Sheriffs of America; as Homeland Committee Chair and Board Member for the National Sheriffs' Association; as Chairman of the Baltimore-Washington High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program; as a Board Member of Virginia's Department of Criminal Justice Services; and as the Virginia Sheriff's Association Region IV Director and member of its Legislative Committee.



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## Free downtown parking extended through February

Parking in downtown Leesburg will remain free through the end of February.

The extended free parking promotion will allow for a smoother transition to the new ParkMobile system for on-street parking. Free on-street parking will continue to be limited to two hours, and will be enforced by the Town's parking staff.

Free parking will also remain at the Town Hall parking garage, in recognition of limited availability due to the ongoing construction work.

The on-street ParkMobile system allows drivers to easily find and pay for

parking simply by scanning a QR code, sending a text message, or downloading the free app. More information about the transition to the ParkMobile system will be forthcoming.

Staff will begin the removal of old meters and replace them with new Park-Mobile signs the week of Feb. 22. New on-street parking rates go into effect on Wednesday, March 1.

Paid parking is expected to resume in the Town Hall parking garage beginning the week of Monday, Feb. 27.

## Purcellville's Rock the Rink Feb. 19

The Purcellville Parks and Recreation Advisory Board is pleased to introduce Rock the Rink, a live concert at the Bush Tabernacle Skating Rink featuring local and regional music for all ages.

Tickets are \$12 in advance and \$15 at the door. Beer, wine, and food will be available for purchase. Bands that will be playing include: Sheltered, Sidetracked, and The Darby Brothers. Purchase advance tickets

online at <https://2023RocktheRinkConcert.eventbrite.com>.

Rock the Rink continues the Purcellville Parks and Recreation Advisory Board's tradition of highlighting local performers. Sponsorship opportunities are available to support this event.

For more information about Rock the Rink or to become a sponsor, visit <https://www.purcellvilleva.gov/1069/Rock-the-Rink>.

### VILLAGE OF PHILOMONT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

cabin or mill.

To this day, Philomont is fortunate to still have many of the original homes, some date back to the late 1700's through mid-20th century. Most of the original log cabins are still visible as part of the proposed designated area and right outside of it.

Some, like the Charles Dawson house and the Benjamin Walker House were added onto through the years, with stone and/or wood frame additions, but the original logs can still be seen inside. At least ten log cabins can be identified within a one-mile radius. While there

have been some newer homes built in the last 25 years, most remain true to village architecture and are compatible with a simpler style.

Of course, the heart of Philomont remains the General Store, the Firehouse and the Community Center (a former school dating back to 1919). Roszell Chapel, which was moved and rebuilt in 1890 from its original location one mile down Snickersville Turnpike, provided a more accessible place of worship closer to the crossroads – and still holds Sunday services to this day.

The VDHR community meeting is scheduled for Feb. 7, at 7:30 p.m. at Roszell Chapel's event room.

### RISE JR., CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

Crown Drive and we didn't go to this type of questioning." This time interrupting Mayor Milan, Rayner said, "Let me ask my next question."

Finishing his thought, Milan said, "Let's keep it straight on the questions about the person's ability to perform the duties on the Planning Commission."

"Okay, let's go with this – what do you believe your role is on the Planning Commission?" Rayner asked.

Rise Sr. said the Planning Commission takes the "land development applications that come through whether it be for roadways, buildings etc. and bounce that against the Comprehensive Plan." He then said they would also consider the

Town's ordinances and as a body make a recommendation to the Town Council.

Rayner also asked him how he views revitalization. Rise Sr. said he thought the direction the town should take is that they should be proactive to find opportunities as opposed to waiting for them to come to the town. He said they have to make sure that the opportunities align with the Comprehensive Plan. He said the interchange at 287 and Berlin Turnpike has to be fixed as "it limits how many people come into the Town" which effects businesses.

The contract for the Bush Tabernacle rental will go out for an RFP as the Town will not renew its contract with Shaun Alexander Enterprises, Inc. SAE's contract will end June 30.

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**“WHAT IS THE POINT OF ORDER?”**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

more about the remaining emails Williams planned to present, asking, “Are all those...”, but was again interrupted by Williams who declared, “This is not a pissing contest.”

Milan responded that he never said it was, and was then again interrupted by Williams. Milan at this point used the gavel, calling a “Point of Order.” Williams responded belligerently, “What is the point of order?” Milan, now able to complete his question, stated “I am asking, are all those comments from citizens who live inside Purcellville?”

Williams responded that all the messages were from citizens or business owners in Purcellville, and proceeded to read one from a citizen residing on Snickersville Turnpike – outside of the Town of Purcellville’s boundaries – while claiming the citizen to be a town resident.

Milan confirmed that each of the emails would be included in the meeting record. Williams persisted, however, and added that she wanted to make sure that “everyone knows you will not allow me to read citizen comments into the record.”

Loudoun County’s Blue Ridge District Supervisor Tony R. Buffington (R-Blue Ridge) had sent a Dec. 22, 2022, email to his constituents which said that the Purcellville Town Council was delaying County projects. He said the delays included the Rt.7/690 Interchange.

The Town Council is unable to approve the project because the County altered the agreed-upon design without following the Town’s due process for notification and public review. Nevertheless, Buffington urged his constituents to email Purcellville’s Town Council, in opposition to the delay.

Vice Mayor Bertaut said that one of these emails erroneously claimed that the traffic on Hirst Road and Main Street without the Rt.7/690 Interchange would be crippled. “The County’s own data

shows that is not the case. The no-build scenario and the Rt.7/690 Interchange scenario show virtually the same levels of service along both corridors. So, I think there is a bit of misinformation that has been floating around.”

Milan recognized that the Rt.7/690 Interchange has become a public debate, as it has been the focus of much anticipation “because the approval for the Alternative 1 project was done in 2014. The new project that we see now, is an Alternate Barbell Design, and was not approved by the Town Council.”

He said the new engineering design was not presented to the Council or to the Planning Commission. He said the Alternate Barbell Design “encroaches on our trees and streams and into the community that is adjacent to it. The review of this new engineering design should have gone through the process where the Planning Commission should have been involved and then presented to the Town Council. That was not done.”

Another major hurdle the Town’s elected officials confronted during their Jan. 10 meeting involved disagreement with and resistance from the Town’s senior staff.

Town Manager David Mekarski announced that he wanted to hire Martha Mason Semmes to fill the position of Director of Planning and Economic Development on a temporary basis, since Don Dooley, who previously held the position, recently handed in his resignation. Semmes was the Director of Planning under former Mayor Bob Lazaro.

Mekarski said Semmes would assist the Planning Commission with its zoning rewrite and act as interim Zoning Administrator, a position that serves at the pleasure of the Town Council, according to the Town’s laws.

Mekarski said Semmes would start her position on Jan. 18. Mayor Milan pointed out that he had asked the Town Manager in the preceding week to provide a transition plan and a job description for the

position vacated by Dooley, and that to date “I have not received it.

“Now I am hearing that it has been an ongoing conversation with someone to fill this position.” Milan noted that the position to appoint the Zoning Administrator is the function of the Town Council. “Strike 1,” he told Mekarski.

He added that the “Town Council asked the Town Manager to generate a termination letter for the contract on the Tabernacle. A week later at the midnight hour, we get the letter ... hours before,” the contract, with the current lessee, would have automatically renewed. “Strike 2,” he said.

Milan went on to say the Town has many employees who are nearly eligible for retirement and that they were told over two months ago they needed a transition plan. “We need to look at a transition plan ... to cover events like the one that just happened,” referring to the resignation of the Planning Director.

Milan requested a job description for the Interim Planning Director position. “There should be something out there right now,” noting they had filled the position only a few years ago.

Senior management demurred, asking Milan what would he do with it and why he wanted to see the job description, and also saying they are working on tweaking it and making it better. They said they did not have a current job description yet.

Vice Mayor Bertaut said, “The key thing for this Town Council is we don’t have the current job description in front of us.” After 20 minutes of discussion about not having a completed job description, the Director of Human Resources said she had it, and with the Town Manager’s permission, would send it over to Council momentarily.

Despite these hurdles, the Town Council managed to initiate discussion related to campaign promises to constituents, including how to spend the nutrient credit monies of \$926,000.

Council Member Boo Bennett said, “I want it to go to the wastewater debt; and I want to make it very clear because I have had to watch over the years negative comments made about this innovation and now there’s a pile of money and everybody is interested.”

She continued, “One of my favorite stories from childhood was the *Little Red Hen*. She couldn’t get anybody to help her bake the cake, but everybody wanted to eat it.”

Bennett said she wanted to make the reduction of “your water bill in this Town the drum you can plan to hear me beat ... I will look high and low, line by line, through the Town’s budget to find the monies necessary to begin funding the \$1.2 million debt payment that begins next year ...”

Bennett said she would not support hiring a consultant to suggest raising taxes.

Bertaut said he would like the nutrient credit revenue of \$926,000 “to go to pay off the waste water debt,” rather than the possibility of it going in either the General Fund or the Parks and Recreation Fund.

Bertaut continued, “I wanted the impact to be felt by every citizen of this Town and one way to ensure that is to more narrowly restrict the uses to which this money may be used. I want to fulfill promises to the people of Purcellville.”

Milan agreed saying, “It should go towards the debt for the water and wastewater.” He had not finished speaking when he was interrupted by the Town Manager.

Then the Director of Finance Elizabeth Krens said the money could go in the Sewer Fund for a certain number of years, with the direction of Council.

Meanwhile Ron Rise Jr. thanked citizens during Council comments, “for the honor to serve them, and I look forward to serving. I look forward to acting in a way that the citizens of this Town demand.”

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5**

that definition is not working, so we’re gonna give you this definition,” Turner said. “It’s going to be very precise and very specific about the way we expect citizens of this community to treat each other.”

Phyllis J. Randall (D-At Large) supported the resolution and defended its wording. According to Randall, being in elected office means being faced with controversial and difficult decisions. She explained that Loudoun County has grown to be successful in a variety of aspects by doing “hard things.”

“I’m sorry that the word equity is the issue, but we’re not going to change that word,” Randall said. “Because if it wasn’t the word equity, it’d be another word

that would be the issue.”

Aside from the goals outlined in the social and racial equity resolution, the specific plans and policy decisions that will occur as a result of its passing have not come to fruition yet. Unsure of how the future looks, Loudoun County citizens remain in disagreement on the matter.

“Our collective goal, yours and mine, is to move Loudoun County forward in a very positive, connected way where residents feel united, and they feel they can celebrate each other and not feel divided,” Aparna Madireddi, a member of the Loudoun Multicultural Advisory Committee, said. “As I see it right now, many residents are already divided with this equity resolution, regardless of how well-meaning it is.”

**LCPS EDUCATORS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10**

Supervisors, which is tentatively scheduled for Feb. 13. The budget currently shows no indication of making room for collective bargaining, but there are plans to meet and reconcile any needed budget changes in late April or early May.

“[Collective bargaining] is what we need to compete with the other rich counties around us, and to offer the very best advantages to our workforce,” Julia Holcomb, a Loudoun resident, said. “Which, in turn, offers the best advantages to our students.”

**LOUDOUN LANDFILL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11**

Under Chapter 1084 of the Loudoun County Codified Ordinances, commercial construction and demolition waste is solid waste which is produced or generated during the construction, remodeling, or repair of pavements, houses, commercial buildings, and other structures.

Construction waste includes, but is not limited to, lumber, wire, sheetrock, broken brick, shingles, glass, pipes, concrete, paving materials, and metal and plastic if they are part of the construction material or empty containers for such materials.

More information, including a link to the pre-authorization form, is available at [loudoun.gov/landfill](http://loudoun.gov/landfill).

TIM JON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

spot adjacent to Union Cemetery, on a carpet of healthy green grass.

Just the wooden structure is about all that's visible from the exterior; the boarded-up windows leave me guessing about how things look inside. It may be much as the school system left it all those decades ago: desks for students and teachers, blackboards with chalk and erasers, textbooks for various basic studies, some rudimentary instruments for practical science or industrial arts, and a few janitorial supplies.

Or maybe it's crammed with stored educational detritus accumulated through the years, from tightly packed school buildings elsewhere in the County. It could be an empty shell; and, yes, I know could make a few inquiries and receive the usual replies in the form of dry listings of facts, but I'm more interested in the unseen, perhaps imaginary mysteries behind any covered window or locked door. Especially here.

And – in the spirit of wonderment – what of the unnumbered moments within the sanctuary of these boards and windows? Standing outside during my latest visit, I couldn't help but listen

and even somehow feel through the various senses – for the lost voices and footfalls – perhaps still reverberating on classroom floors and hallways and stairwells. What stories could they tell? I envisioned a multiplication table of the number of students factored against individual memories, and imagined the countless human experiences of humor, pathos, friendship and isolation.

And what of the future for this unique piece of the past and present? Will the nearly forgotten structure fall to demolition? Or simply fall from neglect? I would imagine that the former students have very mixed emotions about the place and the time spent within the walls. The lessons they learned here certainly exceeded the bounds of reading, writing and arithmetic.

I can't help but wonder if the former sanctuary could be preserved as an historic artifact – considering its original use as an educational facility; the space could even serve as a living museum in the timeline of local race relations.

If you know your history you can avoid repeating it, they say. It could be a learning experience for us all.

"IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA", CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

will increase significantly in the future.

Director of Finance Elizabeth Krens said, "We would recommend that you continue to raise rates because of compounding interest rates. Any rate increase you should defer today, you are going to have a higher increase to get that same level of revenue in the future."

Mayor Stan Milan said, "I don't think personally that the citizens would stand another rate increase of that amount ... It's not a good idea. We need to look at some way to lower this debt to where we will not have to increase the rates substantially ... to the citizens."

Krens said, "The hard truth is yes ... you can avoid a rate increase in FY24, but you can't avoid a rate increase once that debt service comes fully on board ... as far as reducing debt – there's only one way to reduce debt, and that's to pay for it."

Milan said he remembered when "I first got on Council before I heard of the American Rescue Plan Act money [the Town received \$10.5 million], Council had approved \$3.5 million to take care of the reservoir issues. We then received the ARPA money ... What happened to the \$3.5 million?"

Dale Lehnig, Director of Engineering, Planning & Development, explained that the money was to be used for the dredging project and "instead of taking the \$3.5 million out of reserves, it came out of the ARPA funds. So it remains in reserves."

Milan said the Town could use the already allocated \$3.5 million for the CIP projects and the utility debt. "We didn't

use it. It was approved to be put towards the reservoir inlet valve, outlet valve, and valve to the Town. We allocated \$3.5 million for that, right? But we never used it ... Is it still in reserves?"

Krens replied, "It appears that some of these monies were budgeted with the USDA loan; it looks like we never went for that loan. There is some budget clean up we need to do." Then she added, "It looks like we never went for that loan; it's an error. We need to verify it."

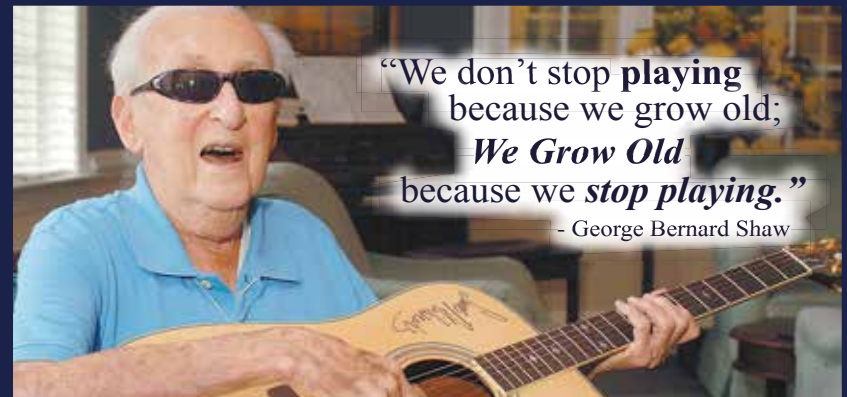
Accounting Manager Paula Hicks said, "I believe we weren't given direction to take the money out of reserves. Somewhere before we did an actual budget amendment to take the reserves, we got the ARPA money. We never actually moved forward with taking it out of reserves."

Milan asked, "So, it's still there?" Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut commented that it sounded like "we need more research on whether the money was actually there in the first place."

Krens concluded that they needed to re-look at "our reserves because that was a couple years ago," and they need to make sure "we have it."

Milan asked senior management, as he has done in the past, to apply for the \$1.3 trillion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill grant monies available to localities such as Purcellville. But again, management said they didn't have the time and the process is too competitive. The deadline, for example, for staff to have applied for a safe drinking water grant was Jan. 26, 2023. Numerous grants are still available.

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**TROOP 711, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3**

project was a stone entry walkway for Blue Ridge Bible Church. Spicer is currently studying physics at Cedarville University in Ohio.

Christopher Reynolds taught fire-building and multiple merit badges for troop 711. Skilled in speech and debate as well as basketball, Christopher also enjoys spending time with his friends in scouting. For his Eagle project, he restored a shed and paddock for Project Horse, a local non-profit that helps veterans overcome post-traumatic stress through equine therapy.

Hopefully you will meet some of these young men around town — they are great leaders and will go far in life.

**PLANS TO MOVE RED HILL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

the Feb. 7 meeting.

Explaining his decision, Kershner emphasized the importance of being strong in protecting the Rural Policy Area. Similarly, Buffington mentioned that he has heard the same from constituents of his district.

“Each time you move the line, a new group of people will be asking you to move the line,” Buffington said. “And so at some point, if you really care about the Rural Policy Area, or different policy areas and not upzoning them to higher density, then you have to hold the line.”

Buffington’s opinion was similar to those of local mayors who spoke at the meeting in opposition of the plan. Leesburg Mayor Kelly Burk described the transition as the “nibbling away of a very important policy area.” One of her main concerns was that this situation would not be a one-time decision.

“If you approve this change you are making a precedent that will be hard to discount in other areas of the county,” Burk said. “We can’t afford to lose the uniqueness of our Western area.”

The 424-acre Red Hill neighborhood is located between Arcola Farms and Greene Mill, as well as being surrounded by other developed neighborhoods. There are also plans to construct a large school complex in the area, as 40%, or 173 acres, of the Red Hill property is owned by Loudoun County Public Schools.

Middleburg Mayor Bridge Littleton pointed out that just because the current motion is to refrain from increasing urbanized density, future boards are not

prevented from changing that.

“What you’re really doing is telling all these folks that they should live on septic tanks the rest of their lives, when there’s a giant gleaming school complex immediately next door that has water and sewer,” Supervisor Matthew F. Letourneau (R-Dulles) said.

Given the size of the incoming school at Red Hill, resident William Steedly spoke to the necessity of more affordable homes surrounding the education complex so that students can live near their school and young adults can buy in Loudoun.

“With regard to the mayors’ input, and with all due respect, none live in Red Hill, or any close to Red Hill, nor have any constituents in Red Hill,” Mr. Steedly said. “They don’t live in what will be the shadow of the schools during the daytime and they don’t live within the lighting beams of what the schools represent in the nighttime.”

Randall reminded meeting attendees that the sheer amount of residential density required in an area before those homes can become affordable is better suited for the Metro area.

Mark Winn, community member and remote speaker at the hearing, cited population growth numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau. In 2000, Loudoun County had almost 170,000 residents, while in 2022 the number is over 400,000.

“The growth is coming no matter what the previous board, present board or the future board wants,” Winn said. “The question is: Will it continue to be hodgepodge or will it truly be a comprehensive plan?”

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While the question of whether or not the Board of Supervisors will vote approvingly remains on hold until Feb. 7, Planning and Zoning staff, mayors, residents and supervisors will work towards the accomplishment of their respective opinions until then.

“There’s nothing binding any future board to anything no matter what we do,” Letourneau said, “So that will be a discussion at some point, or it won’t be depending on the will of the board at the time and whether anything makes sense. But at least we should give [Red Hill] the chance to have water and sewer.”

Some families of the community have submitted a letter advocating for greater residential density, arguing that one single-family home per every three acres is not enough for affordable access to county utility systems or adequate homes for future students and young adults.

“If I lived there I might ask for this as well,” Buffington said. “But I see it as a bigger issue. It’s a policy area issue.”

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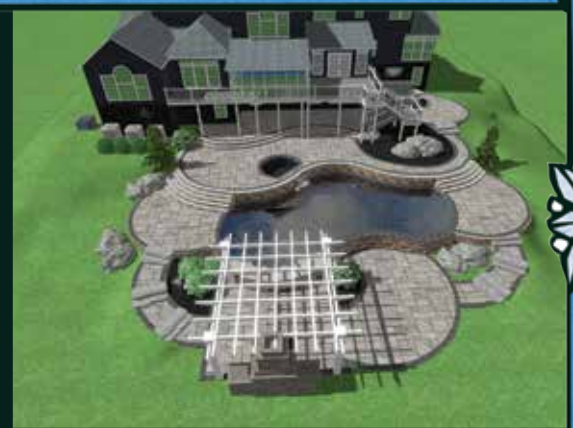
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