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Happy Easter

# LOUDOUN Today

APRIL 2023

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## Jordan Miller finishes out college career as a champion

BY LIZ TENNEY JARVIS

What a great way to start the month of April. Saturday, April 1, 2023 was officially proclaimed as Jordan Miller Day in Purcellville. At the March 29 Town Council meeting, Mayor Stan Milan read a lengthy list of Miller's incredible accomplishments, impressive stats, and historic records.

Miller was the all-time leading scorer at Loudoun Valley High School with over 1,700 points during his time there. He helped lead Loudoun Valley to the 4A State Championship in 2017 and the Final Four in 2018.

Among many other achievements, he was the VHSL 4A Player of the Year honors as a junior in 2017 and was twice chosen for the VHSL All-State First Team selection.

After graduating in 2018 Miller played for George Mason



Photo courtesy of Tessa Mortensen

University for three seasons where he earned Third Team All-Atlantic 10 honors in 2020-21. He transferred to the University of Miami and is now a fifth year senior.

With a record of perfect score games, Miller made it to this year's NCAA men's basketball tournament as a guard for the University of Miami Hurricanes. This will be the first time the school has made it to The Final Four. Congratulations to Jordan Miller.

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## Town Council rescinds Fields Farm vote as County pulls last-minute switch

BY VALERIE CURY

At the March 14 Purcellville Town Council meeting, the Council voted 5-2 to rescind their Feb. 28 vote to approve the County's proposal for a park and ride lot with 250 plus spaces on the 230-acre Fields Farm property, which

houses Mountain View Elementary School and Woodgrove High School. The vote was 5-2 with Mayor Stan Milan, Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut, and Council Members Boo Bennett, Carol Luke and Ron Rise Jr. voting in favor of rescinding the vote, and Council

Members Mary Jane Williams and Erin Rayner voting against.

At the Feb. 7 Board of Supervisors Business Meeting, the supervisors voted to execute a purchase agreement to acquire 142.71 acres for a Western Loudoun Recreational Center which is

less than a mile away from the proposed Fields Farm project. The agreement is for \$6,859,902, and is contingent on a feasibility analysis for the intended use of the property.

The very next day on Feb. 8, the Town of Purcellville received a letter from County Administrator Tim Hemstreet withdrawing the Fields Farm Park application that the Town and the County had been working on for eight

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# “ IT'S LIFE CHANGING

Finally! A local Doctor is helping cancer survivors live lives free from the constant pain and suffering associated with **Peripheral Neuropathy!**

Irreversible is not a word you want to hear from your Doctor but it's a common one if you've been diagnosed with Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy or CIPN.

John T. of Leesburg survived testicular cancer only to be living life in constant pain. He felt as though he were walking on pins and needles, becoming weaker and weaker every day. "I was beginning to be worried that one day I would be wheelchair-bound."

**Nearly half of the patients who undergo chemotherapy will develop Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy or CIPN.**

Chemotherapy meds travel throughout the body and attack cancer cells; sadly they can also cause severe damage to healthy nerves. CIPN can begin within weeks of starting treatment and can worsen as treatment continues. A high number of really unfortunate people will be forced to endure the symptoms associated with CIPN for months, or even years after they've completed chemo.

When asked how CIPN was affecting his quality of life, he responded, "It was difficult to even walk up and down stairs and do other things we usually take for granted."

**The most common symptoms include:**

- **pain, tingling, burning, weakness, or numbness in arms, hands, legs, or feet**
- **sudden, sharp, stabbing, or shocking pain sensations**
- **loss of touch sensation**
- **clumsiness and trouble using hands to pick up objects or fasten clothing**
- **loss of balance and falling**

For some, their nerves will recover over time. For most, the nerve damage is 'irreversible.' John had been told just that by a series of Doctors and specialists. Essentially they could cure his cancer but couldn't fix the damage done by the drugs used to cure his cancer.

Then John made a call to Rachal Lohr of FIREFLY | Acupuncture & Wellness right here in Ashburn. Rachal and her team are using the time tested science of Acupuncture and technology originally developed by NASA that assists in increasing blood flow and expediting recovery and healing to treat this debilitating disease.

After a series of treatments John was taking stairs with stride!

"We have a beach house and it's up stairs. This morning I walked right down the stairs and got in the car," John shared.

**"I remember thinking 'that's become mighty easy for me', I didn't have to hold on to the handrail or anything! It's life-changing to have this mobility back!"**

Again and again, we meet with patients who were once diagnosed as "untreatable" or "incurable" but after receiving Rachal Lohr's treatments are now living lives free from pain and suffering. For almost 16 years she has been reversing the effects of CIPN and other varieties of Peripheral Neuropathy, including that is caused by diabetes without invasive surgeries and medications that come with uncomfortable side effects.

If you've recently beat cancer only to find that you're living a life in constant pain and discomfort or you're struggling with the same symptoms as a result of either Idiopathic Neuropathy or Diabetic Peripheral Neuropathy, Rachal and the incredible team at FIREFLY can help!

Rachal Lohr is now accepting new patients but only for a limited time. In an effort to protect her patients, both current and future, she has made the difficult decision to limit the number of patients seen in her clinic.

**Only 10 new neuropathy patients will be accepted monthly so call (703) 263-2142 now to schedule a consultation.**

**Visit [FIREFLYAcuAndWellness.com](http://FIREFLYAcuAndWellness.com) to learn more and to take advantage of their New Patient Offer!**

# Ashburn student has The Voice

BY LIZ TENNEY JARVIS

When Ashburn's Mary Kate Connor stepped onto the stage of the TV show "The Voice" in Los Angeles, she realized that she was standing in the same spot as so many inspirational singers she had watched over the years.

"It was so surreal. I was incredibly nervous but I thought about all of those before me," says Connor. The show's blind audition, where four celebrity judges have their backs to the singer, was the culmination of a long road fraught with illness and setbacks. It was a journey that started with a childhood dream and was guided by incredibly supportive family members, friends, voice coaches



Photo courtesy of NBC.

and musical theatre teachers.

Mary Kate Connor is originally from Loudoun. She lived in Nashville and in Mississippi before returning to Ashburn. She sang in the church choir, eventually becoming one of the worship leaders. At the age of nine, Connor was encouraged to audition for the role of young Cosette in "Les Miserables." Performing in that role, Connor knew musical theatre was an opportunity to build her

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# BRMS holds winning streak for the Scholastic Achievement Awards

The Scholastic Writing Awards is a prestigious program that recognizes the outstanding work of students in grades 7 through 12. Running since 1923, this program has been the initial proving ground for famous American writers such as Sylvia Plath, Truman Capote, and Joyce Carol Oates.

To prepare for this competition, Blue Ridge Middle School eighth-grade students drafted, edited, and finalized submissions for the contest. Between genre study, peer feedback, teacher conferences, and careful revisions, students crafted their best work in the following genres: critical essay, short story, science fiction, fantasy, humor, flash fiction, poetry, memoir, and personal essay. Students submitted their finalized projects to compete against over 1800 other students in the Washington, D.C. metro area.

Eighth-grade English teacher, Eric Kursman said, "It's one thing for us to provide students with opportunities and feedback to grow their craft, but BRMS's

success is fueled by our students' tremendous efforts. We couldn't be more proud of their dedication and determination to produce exceptional work."



BRMS 8th grade Scholastic winners. Back row l to r: Maggie Tirona, Tina Pyhtila, Brinn McClintic, Samuel Hertzberg, Samuel Seipt, Druan Donohue. Front row l to r: Mia Templeton, Virginia Johnson, Ashley Galletta, Lillian Tester, Lauren Routh, Sarah Jeffers, Solenna Hye.

Within each category, there are three awards given at the Washington, D.C. regional level competition: The Gold Key is awarded to the top 5-7 percent, The Silver Key is awarded to the top 7-10 percent, and the Honorable Mention is awarded to the top 10-15 percent.

Fourteen Blue Ridge Middle School

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## Taylorstown Church



BY TIM JON

Having photographic images from a certain place constitutes proof of its existence, right? Well, I've got multiple shots of the site in mind on my computer at home, so I must have really been at the address in question, rather than having merely dreamt the whole experience, yes?

I could probably be persuaded in either direction, having a bit of a faulty memory. But that makes the recent past

all the more precious and enjoyable, at least to me. And, I'm the one writing the story, after all ... and so ... this way ...

As you wind your way up to – or down from – Furnace Mountain in the northern part of our County, you may notice – depending on your line of travel – a friendly-looking little church, nestled along the shoulder of the hills. You just may be lucky enough to come upon this historic gathering place in the midst of mist; I had noticed this neighborhood house of worship on my way home from the heights of the aforementioned summit, and made a bold mental note to return as discretionary time, brain waves and energy allowed.

So, I found myself walking the acreage around the Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church one somber afternoon, as the entire surrounding area enjoyed a cool blanket of fog and just enough actual moisture in the air to wet your glasses and give you a bit of a

shiver.

Now, it didn't take long to develop a feeling that this house of spirit could have been here forever, or maybe – one long ago time – had just grown out of the rocky ground of these hills – or perhaps took its form out of some magic (or divine) ancient cloud, such as I was experiencing on this visit.

I just let my daydreams have their way as I made a circuit around the property, noting an eight-sided stained-glass window at the rear of the structure (evidently a backdrop to the inner sanctuary), and – from the more secular side



of the church acreage – a well-used basketball hoop (and even a ball resting on the ground, ready for action).

But all was stillness on this particular visit. As I recall, not a single vehicle disturbed the temporary spell of peace and quiet at the little church, situated just yards off the passing roadway – Route 663, Taylorstown Road. I imagined I could almost hear the mist fall and the fog moving in off the hills, it was so serene. The atmosphere seemed to be reaching out to communicate to anyone blessed with a set of sensory equipment.

You could have almost convinced me that – off in the high places somewhere nearby, a group of men – maybe in antiquated clothing – played a game of nine-pins as they sipped on a keg of intoxicating liquor. I made a promise to myself to abstain from their invitation for refreshments, should they appear, as I completed my tour of the quaint little churchyard. “Was that a bit of distant

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## Navigating the path to independence in young adults

BY MICHAEL OBERSCHNEIDER, PSY.D.

The phenomenon of young adults struggling to transition into the next stage of life has become increasingly common in recent years, and this “failure to launch” or “failure to thrive” can have profound consequences.

As a psychologist, I frequently work with parents who are concerned about their adult children's inability to mature and become independent. These parents

environment and a game plan that promotes growth, autonomy, and empowerment is the best approach to addressing failure to launch.

Various factors contribute to a young adult's inability to successfully transition into adulthood. These include emotional and social immaturity, mental health struggles, and overly lenient or uninvolved parenting.

**Emotional and Social Immaturity:** Some young adults struggle to form meaningful relationships, manage their emotions, or adapt to new situations. This can hinder their ability to successfully navigate the challenges of adult life, such as attending college, moving out of the house, or securing employment.

**Mental Health Struggles:** Depression, ADHD, substance use, anxiety, and pervasive developmental disorders can all impact a young adult's ability to thrive. These mental health challenges can make it difficult for them to cope with the demands of independence, often leading

to a failure to launch.

**Overly Lenient, Inconsistent, or Uninvolved Parenting:** Parenting styles that do not provide adequate guidance or support can also contribute to a young adult's failure to thrive. Without goals, clear boundaries, or accountability, young adults may not develop the necessary skills or resilience to succeed into the next stage of life.

By understanding the underlying causes to the problem, parents can help their young adults develop targeted interventions to address these issues.

To help young adults overcome the obstacles they face and successfully transition into adulthood, it is essential to empower the struggling individual. This can be achieved through a combination of creating structure, developing a roadmap for increased autonomy, and seeking professional help when necessary.

**Creating Structure Toward Positive Growth:** Establishing a structured environment can provide the stability and routine that young adults need to develop essential life skills. This may involve setting clear goals within the family home with chores and/or other ways to contribute, providing consistent guidance, and implementing incentives and

consequences when goals are achieved or are not achieved.

**Developing a Roadmap for Increased Autonomy and Agency:** To foster a sense of independence, young adults need opportunities to make their own decisions and experience the consequences.

Parents can help by gradually increasing their child's responsibilities, by encouraging them to take on more challenging tasks, and by providing support as they navigate new experiences. If your son or daughter gets a job, you can help them to create a savings and spending plan with goals.

Or, if your son or daughter wants to attend a four-year college but they are behind, you could help them to create a plan; perhaps they could start out with a class or two at community college where they can eventually accumulate enough credits to transfer to a four year college. Northern Virginia Community College has a fantastic, guaranteed admissions program in which students who earn an Associate's Degree can transfer to an in-state university if requirements are met.

I have seen dozens and dozens of young adults who did poorly in high school, go

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### Ask Dr. Mike

By Michael  
Oberschneider, Psy.D.

frequently ask, “What did we do wrong?” or “How did we get here?” There can be multiple factors that contribute to young adults being delayed or off track developmentally. First identifying the contributing factors and then fostering an

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# Planning Commission unanimously recommends denial of Rt. 7/690 Interchange

BY VALERIE CURY

At the Purcellville Planning Commission Special Meeting on March 23, commissioners voted unanimously to recommend that the Town Council “deny the proposed Rt. 7/690 Interchange Project or condition its approval in a manner that fully addresses the issues raised in the Planning Commission’s Resolution to the Town Council’s satisfaction.”

The resolution deals with numerous items such as landscaping, buffering and open space regulations. It also addresses streams, creek buffers, and zoning ordinances, as well as steep slope requirements and floodplain issues should a large-scale water event occur. A legal review concerning a three-party easement between Loudoun County, the Town of Purcellville, and Catoctin Meadows HOA is also required by the Town.

According to their March 23 resolution, the Planning Commission discovered that “the FEMA Hazard floodplain map for the South Fork of the Catoctin Creek for Purcellville, and specifically the creek floodplain located west of North Hatcher Avenue, is out of date according to the April 2018 County Floodplain Alteration analysis for the Rt. 7/690 Interchange South Fork Catoctin Creek analysis,” a major floodplain according to County documents.

The County has not begun “the FEMA-required Letter of Map Revision to update the Catoctin Creek floodplain,” known to be out of date since 2013. This County Floodplain Alteration for the Rt. 7/690 identified 24 different property owners affected by what was described by the Town Engineer as a dramatic change in the existing FEMA Floodplain.

Commissioners noted that “a doubling of the floodplain flow rates from 3,617 cubic feet per second to 7,447 cubic feet per second, according to both the County and Town’s hydrology consultants, is due in part to changes in land

use and roadway configurations in the creek’s upstream watershed in Loudoun County.”

In its Feb. 16 report to the Planning Commission, town staff noted: “Since the Town has received the (updated) floodplain modeling from Loudoun County, we need to take this information into consideration when considering the floodplain for the South Fork of Catoctin Creek.

“Neglecting to take reasonable action to ensure the safety of lives and property may subject the community to potential liability when flooding occurs. Regardless of whether the 7/690 Project is constructed or not, Town Staff recommends that the Town update the floodplain mapping, using the best available data.”

Furthermore, “the Purcellville Planning Commission strongly advises the Town Council to not agree to vacate the floodplain easement agreement with Catoctin Meadows HOA and reject any support for the construction of the Rt.7/690 interchange ... until the floodplain issue is addressed by Loudoun County officials,” and a FEMA Letter of Map Revision is in place.

Chair Nan Forbes said that the level of service throughout the Town hardly improves with the 7/690 Interchange and used some key intersections to illustrate her point. Main Street and 32nd Street goes from an E to a D in the morning, and is an A, F, and C in the evening.

Main and 23rd goes from a B to a C in the morning and from a C to a D in the evening. At 21st and 23rd Street with no signal, the LOS is no change with A, C, and D in the morning and A, D, and C in the evening. Main Street and Hatcher Avenue is a C in the morning and a D in the evening.

Main Street and Maple Avenue goes from an E to a D in the morning and remains a D in the evening. “These aren’t great grades, by the way,” said Forbes. “We are not seeing A’s and B’s here.”

“I would submit that this is hardly a

significant improvement for Purcellville traffic ... three intersections improve slightly, and four get worse,” she said. “This interchange is not designed or intended to benefit the Town of Purcellville.”

At the March 16 Planning Commission Meeting, a letter was read into the record from Commissioner Nedim Ogelman who was not able to attend the meeting. He pointed out that the FEMA floodplain mapping of the South Fork of the Catoctin Creek through Purcellville was a matter of great concern.

“According to Purcellville’s hydrology consultants, this doubling of the floodplain flow from 3,617 ... to 7,447 cubic feet per second is due in part to changes in land use and roadway configuration in the creek’s upstream water shed in Loudoun County.”

Despite the commission’s inquiries, Ogelman wrote, they have not received any assurances from County officials “that the construction of the Rt. 7/690 Interchange will contribute to further intensification of land use upstream from Purcellville, potentially exasperating the floodplain flow and putting our community at risk of disastrous consequences.”

Ogelman said that the floodplain flow issue must be addressed. “It’s not only our duty, but our responsibility to ensure the construction of the interchange will have no negative higher order of impact on the floodplain issue in Purcellville.

“Pursuing this project without addressing these concerns would be nothing short of irresponsible,” he said.

Commissioner Ron Rise Sr. reiterated that with the floodplain flow, the “magnitudes of 3,776 cubic feet per second changing to over 7,000 – in tonnage those are big numbers – it’s 200 tons to 250 tons of water per second. Is there a Conditional Letter of Map Review to get moving on this?” he asked.

Dale Lehnig, Director of Engineering and Planning and Development, said she asked the County if they would do a

CLOMR and they are not requiring one. “But at the end they would do the Letter of Map Revision,” she said.

“But how does that deal with the insurance for residents that are not aware of this?” Rise Sr. asked. Lehnig said the process would be like a CLOMR, and the residents would be notified. Rise Sr. said that FEMA has to be involved in order for residents’ insurance to be updated.

“What we didn’t do is look at the rest of the Town. We didn’t trigger a CLOMR west of North Hatcher for these significantly higher flow rates for nearly a half a decade? ... So, the mapping isn’t updated, which means the insurance... is not updated. None of that has been done, and I think that is my concern from a Town perspective.

“When I look at these maps that they [the County] gave us... the new limits show the water definitely jumping across N. 21st Street and getting across the road... It’s been five years we’ve known this.”

Vice Mayor and Commissioner Chris Bertaut said that the flow rate changes are of great concern, and they were caused by “massive development further up in the watershed in the South Fork of Catoctin Creek.”

“So, the question is: What does this interchange do in terms of development patterns? It has little detectable improvement, at least from the modeling in terms of traffic flows within town ... I deliberately ignore those small improvements that go from an F to a D. I don’t think people are going to notice that on a day-to-day basis,” Bertaut said.

“It appears from all evidence that the purpose of this interchange is not going to do anything for traffic flows within the Town of Purcellville. It’s to improve and bring in additional traffic up the 690 Corridor.

“The question is – Is it there just to encourage high density development up the 690 corridor?” Bertaut concluded.



# Running more power lines in the skies of Loudoun County is no solution

BY KWASI FRASER

Western Loudoun County, with its stunning bucolic setting, rolling hills, vineyards, open skies, and farmlands, has been a key contributor to the overall economy of Loudoun.

## OPINION

However, the region is currently facing a significant challenge with its electrical infrastructure. The root of the problem is inadequate transmission capacity, which is leading to potential brownouts and blackouts.

Running more power lines across our skies would compromise the beauty and charm of our community, and the electric utility is not ready to invest in underground power lines. While running peaking power plants also known as “peakers” during peak demand is one solution, it is both costly and environmentally harmful. The most impactful solution is to take heavy users off the

grid by using localized on-site energy sources.

Unfortunately, the data center industry in Loudoun County, which is critical to the region’s economy, currently lacks clean energy generating capacity to sufficiently serve as a primary source of electricity during peak demand periods.

As a result, the industry is left with its estimated 4,100 diesel generators, which are environmentally damaging and counterproductive to Loudoun County’s recently adopted energy strategy. Loudoun County’s energy strategy identifies buildings including data centers as major contributors to greenhouse house gas and establishes goals to reduce greenhouse gases.

To run these diesel generators during peak demand events would be a significant step backwards in the reduction of greenhouse gases and getting to net zero.

Fortunately, there are other alternatives available. With the Department of Energy’s Hydrogen Shot goal of 1 kg of hydrogen being generated for \$1 within 1 decade, the data center industry, the electric utility, and the local governments have an opportunity to collaborate with the federal government on advancing decarbonization and clean energy solutions for our communities.

By using biogenic waste from farms, watershed properties, sewer plants, and the county’s landfill to generate clean hydrogen using plasma gasification, Loudoun County could become a leader in the clean energy revolution.

This proposed solution would provide clean energy from the source, which would not only benefit the community but would also be recognized globally. The UN Climate Change Conference and Conference of the Parties (COP) goals of net zero require localized solutions that

do not rely on fuzzy math derivatives such as out of operating market power purchase and energy credit agreements. Loudoun County could lead the way by generating clean hydrogen locally and powering its data centers and transmission lines with it, injecting it into natural gas pipelines.

In conclusion, the proposed solution of running diesel generators during peak demand events is shortsighted and reckless. There are alternatives available that can benefit our community now and in the long term.

By collaborating with the federal government, the data center industry, the electric utility, and the local government, we can work together to advance decarbonization and clean energy solutions for our communities. Let’s take advantage of the opportunities available to us and make Loudoun County a leader in the clean energy revolution.

*Kwasi Fraser is the former Mayor of Purcellville and former member of the National League of Cities Energy, Environment, and Natural Resources Committee.*

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# “An Ugly Building Makes My Teeth Hurt”

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

So said architectural icon Frank Lloyd Wright. Let’s use his lens to examine design in Loudoun County. After all, our ballyhooed new General Plan has an entire chapter titled “Quality Development” which asks, “How does the development exhibit high quality design through shape, materials, finish ... ?”

## OPINION

Our new zoning ordinance is supposed to enshrine those aspirational goals as mandates. Unfortunately, so far, it makes only a single, lone stab at quality design: It requires that glass windows be installed on the ground floors of parking garages. Whoopie-do.

### Design Surrounds Us

“Design” is all around us and touches your days from dawn to dusk: Shampoo bottle and toothpaste tube, the clothes you wear, your cell phone, the carpet on the stairs, every automobile, the building in which you work and your laptop. Your house.

You get the picture: Design is everywhere, but are you aware of it on more than a subconscious level? Do you even care?

### Yes, You Should Care

We are visual creatures, so as you drive around, think about what you are seeing,

not all of which will be pleasing. Does that apartment building fit into its surroundings? Architects call that “context.” Does that new house have any redeemable character? Does the new Leesburg subdivision, White Oak Farm near the high school, actually have any oaks? Nope. Its low-quality developer bulldozed every single tree, every blade of grass, on the site. Quality design at that subdivision? Nope.

Good design should please us just like a dramatic sunset does, or like the sublime appeal of early morning mist over a meadow. Bad design, at best, can be ignored, or at worst, it can make our teeth hurt, as Wright would say.

### What’s Your Opinion?

Things become controversial when you comment on a particular design – Is it good? Is it bad? Does it look substantial or shoddy? Does it fit properly with its neighbors? Rendering these verdicts raises the issue of taste.

Everybody has taste but is one person’s taste more refined than others? Consider art. Van Gogh’s *Starry Night* has near-universal appeal. So do the Impressionists’ paintings, but I’d guess that less than half of us like Picasso. I think he’s a genius even though his art does not always appeal to me.

Now to cars. Some like the looks of big SUVs such as new Escalades; others like

the sinuous lines of iconic Jaguar XKE’s of times past. Personally, I’d say that the Jaguar-lover has the better taste.

Looking at cars and other everyday items is a good start on developing your own sense of design. Looking at art is even better.

### Some Buildings

With my background developing office buildings, I really notice the built environment – structures of various sorts. I’ve **bolded** some buildings and building types in the paragraphs below and hope you will Google each of them and see what you think:

Malaysia’s **Petronas Towers** are important not because they are among the world’s tallest, but because they are inspirational, mystical. Note the tops of these two buildings, which architect Cesar Pelli conceived as a homage to the *stupa* – the pyramidal top of Buddhist shrines.

Now look up **One World Trade Center**. What a missed opportunity. It meets the sky with a flat roof topped with one dinky spire, a boorish composition that looks like a gigantic hypodermic needle.

Good design does not need to be monumental. Google **Francis Kere** and click on “Images” to see many of his elegant works in Burkina Faso. Of course, monumental scale can help – Look up Beijing’s **MAD**

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## Western Loudouners need to protect our Rural Policy Area

Dear Editor:

I have always wondered why many of my western Loudoun County friends prefer their dirt roads over paved roads. The current discussion around the proposed Rt. 7 and 690 Interchange has helped me understand my friends' preference for dirt roads instead of paved roads.

Dirt roads do two things; they serve as a natural traffic calming feature, and they reduce traffic volume. The proposed interchange will do exactly the opposite. It will not calm traffic and objectively speaking, as well as by the County's own account, it will significantly increase the traffic volume as it seeks to draw traffic from Rt. 9.

In short, the proposed interchange is an urban area traffic mitigation being applied to our Rural Policy Area. The County has

long sought to expand development into the Rural Policy Area of western Loudoun County.

The interchange is the urban camel's nose under the Rural Policy Area tent. Be careful what we wish for; increased traffic flow begets development and development begets urban growth. And this is why many in western Loudoun County prefer their dirt roads over paved roads.

The bigger issue we are missing is the urbanization threat to the Rural Policy Area ... interchanges, tournament lighted fields, new roads, park and rides are the shiny ornaments ... the gift we don't need is the urbanization of the Rural Policy Area.

Don't blink.

*Tip Stinnette  
Purcellville*

## Leesburg Town Council funds study for Liberty Street Lot

The Leesburg Town Council has authorized a remediation study for the Liberty Street parking lot. The study will evaluate soil conditions of the property, which was previously used as a municipal dump during the mid-20th century.

The remediation study will investigate and characterize the material contained beneath the

**GOVERNMENT**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 »

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## DEQ variance for data centers diesel generators meets opposition

BY LAURA LONGLEY

In January, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality proposed a regulatory variance that would allow Northern Virginia data centers to run their emergency backup diesel generators this summer during periods of non-emergency transmission constraints and strain on the electric grid. Since then, opposition has been mounting from both predictable and surprising quarters.

On Feb. 27, at a DEQ public hearing in Woodbridge, residents and advocacy group representatives turned out in force, warning of noise impacts and emissions from generators, including nitrous oxides, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, and carbon monoxide.

“Virginia must use this permit variance

from DEQ as a wake-up call on data centers,” said National Parks Conservation Association’s Kyle Hart at the hearing. According to *The Virginia Mercury*, Southern Environmental Law Center attorney Morgan Butler faulted DEQ for not providing information about ‘specific pollutants and the total quantity of each that may be emitted’ as well as ‘the type and quantity of any fuels to be used’ under the variance, despite state public notice requirements. ‘DEQ was legally required to include that information in the public notice for the proposal, and it did not,’ Butler said.”

Writing to members of the Piedmont Environmental Council, Julie Bolthouse, PEC director of land use, pointed out that “these grid instability issues are a direct

result of the rapid growth of data centers in Northern Virginia and their enormous appetite for power.” She added, “Diesel is one of the most polluting and harmful forms of energy production, but most data centers have chosen to rely on diesel generators for backup power, instead of more sustainable solutions like on-site solar, battery storage, and more energy-efficient operations.”

On March 27, the Data Center Coalition, which represents the industry, asked the DEQ to withdraw the proposal. In a letter obtained by the *Loudoun Times-Mirror*, DCC President Josh Levi wrote, “[T]here are important and unresolved technical, federal regulatory, and operational challenges with this [proposal]. Due to these issues, no DCC member has indicated they

would use the variance.” He emphasized members willingness to work with the electrical companies and state regulators to “address the transmission constraint in Eastern Loudoun County and ensure a strong, resilient, and reliable grid.”

Timing of the transmission strain and the DEQ proposal has not been opportune for the Data Center Coalition. The DCC just launched an ambitious public relations campaign to promote the benefits of data centers investment and continued development to local communities. In several recently published articles and comments, Levi points to data center tax revenues and how they fund schools, social services, and create job growth. “Data centers are a revelation

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 »



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## Warner, Hoeven introduce legislation to reauthorize USA test sites

U.S. Sens. Mark R. Warner (D-VA) and John Hoeven (R-ND) the last week of March, introduced legislation to support the research and development of unmanned aerial systems technologies at the nation's UAS test sites, including the site at Virginia Tech.

"Unmanned Aerial Systems have the potential to transform the way we manage disasters, maintain our infrastructure, administer medicine, tackle national security threats, and conduct day-to-day business," Warner. "UAS test sites, such as the one located at Virginia Tech, are crucial to the research and development of these technologies and I am glad to continue building on the progress we have made over the last decade."

"UAS play a crucial role in our country's defense, and there is tremendous potential yet to be realized, benefiting our national security as well as our economy," said Sen. Hoeven. "The UAS test sites,

including the Northern Plains UAS Test Site in North Dakota, are at the center of our efforts to ensure these aircraft can be safely integrated into our national airspace. This legislation supports their ongoing work and dovetails with the new BVLOS waivers we recently secured for our test site, further strengthening North Dakota's position in this dynamic industry."

Specifically, this legislation:

- Extends the authorization for the Federal Aviation Administration's UAS test sites for an additional five years through 2028
- Formally authorizes research grants through the FAA for the purpose of demonstrating or validating technology related to the integration of UAS in the national airspace system
- Requires a grant recipient to have a contract with an FAA UAS test site;
- Identifies key research

priorities, including: detect and avoid capabilities; beyond visual line of sight operations; operation of multiple unmanned aircraft systems; unmanned systems traffic management; command and control; and UAS safety standards.

This legislation builds on Warner's efforts to expand the domestic production of unmanned systems, including driverless cars, drones, and unmanned maritime vehicles and make Virginia a national leader in this growing sector. Earlier this year, he introduced the *Increasing Competitiveness for American Drones Act*, legislation that will clear the way for drones to be used for commercial transport of goods across the country.

Last month, Sen. Warner introduced legislation to prohibit the federal government from purchasing drones manufactured in countries identified as national security threats, such as the People's Republic of China.



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pages 14 and 15

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# Town Manager discusses in-house counsel versus law firm on retainer

BY VALERIE CURY

The Purcellville Town Council voted to approve the tax rate of \$0.205/\$100 which is one half cent less than what Interim Town Manager John Anzivino requested.

Last year's rate was \$0.21/\$100, and the equalized rate for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$0.1916/\$100 due to real estate assessments increasing 9 percent.

**GOVERNMENT** The Town Manager's proposed FY24 Budget is \$28,195,082, which is an increase of 18.2 percent from the FY23 Adopted Budget of \$23,861,174.

At the March 29 Town Council special meeting concerning a section of the FY24 proposed budget, the council discussed legal, public works and part of the Town's fleet – trucks and equipment.

In May 2012, the Town of Purcellville decided to hire an in-house attorney on staff full-time. Before Sally Hankins resigned her employment with the Town to work for the City of Falls Church, she

had an annual salary of nearly \$200,000 – not including benefits. With other legal firms hired to work on various projects and an additional part-time attorney on staff, the total legal budget came to well over \$400,000.

The FY24 proposed budget for in-house legal is \$427,550, "which is considerable," said Anzivino.

**During Hankins' tenure as attorney for the Town,** Vineyard Square, a 6-story project with retail space plus 40 condos on 21<sup>st</sup> Street, was approved in the C-4 District – even though multi-family use is not allowed in this district. Neither a Comprehensive Plan Amendment nor a Zoning Amendment, which would have been necessary to add a use which is not allowed, was requested by the Town.

Most towns the size of Purcellville and even those much larger do not have full-time attorneys. Anzivino said the Town Council needs to decide whether to continue with a full-time attorney

or have an attorney on retainer with a wider range of vocations coming from contracted services, "at equal to or less cost."

"If you make this transition," said Anzivino, "in speaking to several attorneys that provide this type of service, there's a new level of discipline which has to be exercised internally by staff ... but they can read the code – if the code is black and white – as what you can or can not do. You don't have to consult an attorney.

"Sometimes it's been pointed out to me that when you do have in-house counsel, it's much easier to walk over to the office of the in-house counsel ... and ask, 'Can I do this?' as opposed to doing your own research and maybe doing a little work on your own."

Anzivino said that the Town of Vienna is a larger community than Purcellville – over 16,000 population. Warrenton is a little bit larger but they have a more complex operation because "they have

a more vibrant extensive operational function and they provide a lot of out of town utilities" – and both are going back to "out of house counsel."

Council Member Ron Rise Jr. explained that with out of house counsel "you get an entire firm" – so if there's a specialty that a locality needs to focus on, they have the benefit of the whole firm, which would be an advantage.

Mayor Stan Milan pointed out that there would be no overhead costs to the Town, and no employee benefits with a firm on retainer.

The Public Works part of the discussion covered the \$3,235,000 budget, which represents 24 percent of the General Fund. Part of that total – 10 percent of the General Fund, to be exact – encompasses pay and benefits of \$1,447,000. This fund also covers Town and State streets, trash collection and upkeep of various facilities, as well as part of the Town's fleet.

# Kuhns and local governments' offer to open White's Ferry rejected

White's Ferry owners, Chuck and Stacy Kuhn, worked closely with the State of Maryland, Commonwealth of Virginia, Montgomery and Loudoun Counties, including their economic development authorities and transportation departments, and previous Ferry

**GOVERNMENT** owner Herb Brown, to develop a proposal to purchase the Virginia landing site from Rockland Farm in an effort to get the ferry reopened for its nearly 1,100 daily users. Unfortunately, Rockland Farm owners rejected the bid—which was well above the land value—and has caused White's Ferry owners to pursue selling the land and operation to Montgomery County.

"We are grateful for the significant and good faith efforts of our local and state governments on both sides of the Potomac to help us re-open White's Ferry. It's unfathomable that one family is standing in the way of people's livelihoods.

"We have run out of options and will now seek to sell the ferry land and operations to Montgomery County so it can

work to invoke eminent domain and acquire the Virginia landing site," said Kuhn.

The proposal was submitted by the two counties to Rockland Farm in January. The plan had called for Rockland Farm to sell the 1.4 acres landing site for \$1.1 million—well above the appraised value for the flood plain land.

The offer included funds from White's Ferry's owners, both Montgomery and Loudoun Counties, and additional funds from Herb Brown. Under the proposal, the landing site would be limited to public use and passage along White's Ferry Road including potential modifications to facilitate vehicle travel, pedestrian and bicycle passage, or improved ferry operations.

The farm's stipulation that it could shut down the ferry at any time without notice made it too risky a business to pursue. Since purchasing it, the Kuhns have been working with Rockland Farm and the local and state municipalities to find a good faith resolution.

"We needed an agreement that we

could build a business model around. Owning landing rights would enable us to understand and manage ferry costs so that we could offer the best product at a price the users can afford," said Kuhn. "The states, counties, and towns involved all understand this. Sadly, one entity—one family—refuses to be part of the solution and is hurting real

people and our local communities."

The economic impact of resuming ferry operations (based on travel time savings, travel cost savings, safety savings, the value of emissions avoided, and the value of trips not taken) will be over \$9 million this year alone and will result in a travel time savings that equates to up to \$1.7 million a year, according to a Montgomery County study. While working through the efforts to regain landing rights, the Kuhns invested in needed upgrades and repairs, ensuring that the ferry could reopen within 30 days of an agreement with Rockland Farms.



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## Town of Middleburg to hold County-wide Land Planning Summit

The Town of Middleburg will hold a Land Planning Summit, “Loudoun Together: A Strategy for Our Future,”

### GOVERNMENT

on April 11 at Salamander Resort & Spa, located at 500 N. Pendleton St., Middleburg, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tickets for the day are \$25 with all proceeds going to Seven

Loaves Services. Breakfast and lunch are included in the event.

The town is encouraging all Loudoun County business leaders, HOA boards and members, candidates and community leaders to attend.

“The purpose of this summit is to engage local leaders on how the entire county – east and west – can work

together to balance the impact of data centers and the pressure of ongoing development with proper fiscal planning,” said Middleburg Mayor Bridge Littleton.

“We believe these conversations are critical for the upcoming decisions of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors and should be key topics in

upcoming elections.”

Tickets are limited and attendees are encouraged to register early. For more information, or to register, please visit [www.loudountogethersummit.com](http://www.loudountogethersummit.com). Registration is open until April 7 as long as tickets are available.

For more information on Middleburg, visit [www.middleburgva.gov](http://www.middleburgva.gov).

## A Cappies review of Alice in Wonderland at John Champe HS

BY MARIAH WATERS, ROCK RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

With a sly purple grin, the Cheshire Cat (Justienna Tong-On) commences the journey into the whimsical world of Wonderland in John Champe High School’s production of *Alice in Wonderland*. Adapted from the cult classic novel *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, Anne Coulter Martens’ adaptation, published 100 years later, details a young, naive girl’s path to finding her way home. Along the way, she encounters outlandish creatures and valuable lessons, ultimately serving as her way back home.

### COMMUNITY

With a tumble and a fall through the rabbit hole, Kierra Murray animated the theater with the childish and nervous physicality and voice inflection of a young girl who’s lost her way. Throughout the show, Murray consistently stayed in character and was able to pull off a well-executed trans-Atlantic accent for her Alice, which helped establish and enforce the time period in which the play takes place.

Alexis McGuffin (Queen of Hearts) didn’t need to yell “off with their head!” to establish she was in charge; her booming stage presence spoke volumes as to who she was and her status within the land. McGuffin perfectly encapsulated the cruel and tyrannical nature of

the Queen of Hearts, ruler of Wonderland, with her prim and monarchal gestures, stern voice, and authentic British accent. To top off her already grandeur character were the heart-shaped buns she wore, courtesy of Aiyana Pickins (makeup and hair designer). The attention to detail with the Queen’s hair design, in particular, elevated the show’s whimsy and exuberance.

John Champe’s production of *Alice in Wonderland* was filled with an array of unique characters with witty jokes and hilarious comedic timing, including that of Humpty Dumpty (Santiago Schoof) in his endless banter with Alice and the King of Hearts (Justin Walker) in his efforts to calm down his outrageous wife.

Most notable was Tweedledee (Will Bumpus) and Tweedledum (Chase Maxwell) in their battle of glory with flimsy dusters and iconic children’s toys; their contrasting brotherly characters seamlessly played off of one another in a scene that brought laughter and delight. Another notable comedic moment was that of White Rabbit whipping out the never-ending scroll during Alice’s trial, in which the Queen had accused her of eating all of her tarts.

Speaking of White Rabbit, Gelasia Fahren lived up to playing the classic character through their jittery stage

presence and skittish facial expressions. During time on stage, Gelasia was always seen to be engaged in character with the story being told. The believability of their character was heightened through face makeup, created and designed by Aiyana Pickins.

John Champe High School did an

outstanding job at executing the marvelous adventures of Alice through Wonderland, which has enchanted children’s and adults’ hearts around the world for centuries. Whether you are a mad hatter, a sleepy dormouse, or just an avid theatergoer, John Champe’s *Alice in Wonderland* is worth a visit.

## Leesburg Flower and Garden Festival April 15 and 16

The Town of Leesburg’s annual Flower and Garden Festival will take place Saturday, April 15 and Sunday, April 16 in historic downtown Leesburg. The event

### COMMUNITY

will feature nearly 150 vendors selling gardening supplies, plants, flowers, outdoor living furniture, and more. The event will take place rain or shine.

In addition to the exhibits, festivalgoers can enjoy music on the main stage, activities and entertainment for the kids, a rooftop beer garden, and delicious festival foods.

Guests will also have the opportunity to vote for their favorite landscape display in the People’s Choice Landscape Competition. Votes can be made at the gazebo by noon on Sunday. Winners will be announced Sunday afternoon from the main stage located on the courthouse lawn.

The following streets will be closed for the event beginning on Friday, April 14 at 5:30 p.m.:

- Market Street from Wirt to Church streets
- King Street from North to Loudoun streets
- Cornwall Street from N King to Wirt streets
- Cornwall Street from Church to N King streets will be closed to thru

traffic however, local residents will have access to their property.

The entire area will re-open to traffic at approximately 10 p.m. Sunday night.

Parking will be available in the Town Hall parking garage using the Loudoun Street entrance only. Additional parking will be available throughout downtown including the Pennington and County garages. A free shuttle service, from Ida Lee Park, will run continuously during festival hours.

The Flower and Garden Festival runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, rain or shine. Please note, visitors are asked to leave pets at home.

This year’s presenting sponsor is Loudoun Medical Group. Other festival sponsors include Leaf Guard, Loudoun Credit Union, Firefly Acupuncture and Wellness, Heartland Foods, Power Home Remodeling, Kitchen Saver, Country Buick GMC, Loudoun Now, Wegmans Food Markets, Inc., Mountcastle Medical Spa and Laser Center, Yield Bookkeeping Services, State Farm – Cynthia Michitsch, Agent, and Washington Gardner Magazine.

For more information, call Ida Lee Park Recreation Center at 703-777-1368 or visit [www.flowerandgarden.org](http://www.flowerandgarden.org).

## LC-CFRS annual smoke alarm program starts

The Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System’s annual smoke alarm program has started.

“During a house fire, you have an average of three minutes to escape your home,” said Fire Chief Keith Johnson. “Smoke Alarms provide you precious time to

escape and reduce the risk of dying in a fire by half.”

Firefighters are canvassing neighborhoods one weekend a month from April to October. First responders will go door to door between 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. offering free smoke alarm assessments and information about fire safety.

They will test existing smoke alarms, assist with battery replacement, and replace the smoke alarms if necessary.

Go to [loudoun.gov/smokealarms](http://loudoun.gov/smokealarms), or call the smoke alarm program hotline at 703-737-8093.



## Remembering Jean Gore Copeland

On Wednesday, March 22, Mrs. Jean Gore Copeland, 86, passed away peacefully at her home in Purcellville, Virginia.

Jean was born in Pomfret, Maryland, to Harold Mason Gore and Lucy Emma Gore in 1936. She attended Lincoln High School, the first high school to be built in Loudoun County. On Nov. 11, 1960, she married Nathan Francis Copeland, who would be her loving husband for the next 44 years.

Some of Jean's best moments were spent in the outdoors camping with her late husband and only son Nathan Lee. She also loved softball and played on a local team. Jean was a beloved employee of Browning Equipment in Purcellville for 67 years, and in that time, she worked as the company treasurer alongside best friend Janet Biser.

Jean worked at Browning Equipment until the day she passed, showing up an hour early for work, working through

lunch, and climbing the stairs three levels to her office, which she joked kept her in such good shape. In her later years, Jean loved spending time with family, shopping (she had a weakness for flea markets) and going on cruises.

Jean delighted in her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She is survived by her son Nathan Lee Copeland; granddaughters Deborah Jean Burgess and Kimberly Ann Harrell; and five great grandchildren, Dane Lee and Josey Ryan Burgess, and Bailey, Karri, and Evelyn Harrell.

Jean is preceded in death by her husband Nathan Francis Copeland; brothers Charlie Gore, Clyde Coburn, Ishmal Coburn, and Oliver Coburn; sisters Emma Coburn and Danese Coburn – and granddaughter Heather Copeland.

A public viewing was held March 29, at Halls Funeral Home in Purcellville, Virginia, and was followed by a public funeral and burial at Hillsboro Cemetery.

## Remembering Lieutenant Colonel John Joseph "Jack" Spisak

Lieutenant Colonel John Joseph "Jack" Spisak of Round Hill, Virginia died March 23, 2023 at the age of 83. Born on July 31, 1939 in Cleveland, Ohio, son of the late Anna and Andrew Spisak.

Jack attended St. Wendelin Elementary and St. Ignatius High School in Cleveland, Ohio. He earned a Bachelors Degree at John Carrol University in Ohio and a Master Degree at UCLA in Los Angeles, California. He also attended MIT: Seminar XXI, Massachusetts Fellow and International Studies.

Lieutenant Colonel Spisak served in the U.S. Army from 1961 to 1981. His overseas assignments included a tour in Berlin, Germany (1962-1963) and Vietnam (1972-1973). He served in the Infantry, Transportation Corps, and was an Army Aviator.

His personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Air Medals, Bronze Star with V-Device, Senior Aviation Wings and the Purple Heart. Last duty assignments included Commanding Officer of the Combat Aviation Battalion, 4th infantry Division, Ft Carson, Colorado, followed by four years as a U.S. Army Chief of Legislative Affairs to the U.S. Senate in Washington DC.

From 1982-2005 he served as Director of Marketing and Business Development



for several Defense Corporations – Rockwell International, Boeing, Litton Industries and Northrop Grumman. From 2005-2014 Jack lead his own company, Managistics LLC, which provided advice and analysis in the area of Defense International Marketing.

Since his retirement in 2014, he spent more time resuming his high school interest in Junior Achievement, Inc., a non-profit volunteer organization. Jack supported the "Learn by Doing" program to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global economy. Jack's advances in the program lead the operation at the local and national level.

Jack found time to volunteer for deployment to natural disaster areas with the American Red Cross, supporting both Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and Hurricane Rita in Southern Texas.

Since 2005 he had multiple 21-day deployments driving and manning Emergency Response Vehicles that transferred "Hot" meals from the emergency kitchens to the injured community at large, the first responders, and other volunteer organizations in the affected areas.

He was a member of the Roman Catholic Church, serving in Knights of Columbus in Northern Virginia. He established

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »

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# Virginia Gold Cup races to hold hat contest

One of the nation's oldest and largest steeplechase events, the Virginia Gold Cup celebrates its 98<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year on Saturday, May 6, at Great Meadow in The Plains. One of the hallmarks of the legendary event is its hat contest that draws dozens of contenders vying to win one of the five contest categories: most glamorous or elegant; best racing theme; funniest or most outrageous hat; best child's hat and best men's hat. Celebrity judges will decide whose hats are the most impressive and competition is fierce.

Devon Zebrovious won the Virginia Gold Cup hat contest "most glamorous" hat for multiple years. This year, she's helping others organize their hats. Zebrovious has been competing in hat contests at races in the Mid-Atlantic region since 2004 with wins at more than five different race locations. In 2018, she started designing and making her own hats. Soon, friends were coming to her to borrow hats. Her hats have been to the Kentucky Derby, Breeders Cup and Saratoga races with her friends.

When asked what makes for a winning hat, Zebrovious provides the following tips:

- Decide on your dress or suit first, then select your



Photos by Richard Clay

hat. Your millinery should be part of your outfit, and it's far easier to find or make a hat to go with the outfit than vice versa. Bigger brimmed hats typically work best with more fitted clothes. If you have a dress with statement sleeves, you want the hat to work with them, not battle them for supremacy, in your overall style.

- Don't choose a hat you can't confidently wear, either in size or design. Bigger isn't always better.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 >

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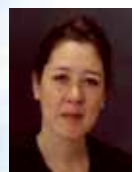
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### VIRGINIA GOLD CUP, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

Fascinators, hatinators, and crowns are all excellent options, in addition to a wide-brimmed hat.

- Choose a hat in appropriate materials for the season. Straw, sinamay and light fabrics are for spring and summer racing. Felt, leather and heavier fabrics are for fall and winter racing.
- Don't forget to consider the weather. If it is pouring rain on race day and you will need to carry an umbrella as an essential accessory, don't wear a hat that can't fit underneath it and stay dry.
- Play around with the position of the hat on your head, to find the best angle, or the best side on which to place a fascinator, that will suit your facial structure. Don't hide your eyes.
- Don't forget to think about your hair style. Unless going for a boho or casual look, an updo will usually be the best choice to finish your look, rather than having your hair down. If your hat has an elastic, having a bun around which you can wrap it will help keep it secure on your head.
- If it is breezy, remember to use a hat pin, or an attached elastic, to keep your hat on your head. Chasing your loose hat around or having to have

a death grip on the brim, is not how one wants to spend the day.

"Many may think that the Virginia Gold Cup is all about horse racing but there are a good number of attendees who are more focused on the social aspect of the event," explained Zebrovius. "The hat contest is one of the day's most anticipated events."



The Gold Cup's long-standing tradition beckons to national celebrities, local VIPs, D.C. politicians as well as visitors from around the world. Characterized by fancy hats, lavish tailgate spreads, sleek thoroughbreds and exciting hoof-pounding competition, many individuals and companies have capitalized on what the day has to offer by getting involved with sponsorships, purchasing tents to entertain, and some actually end up doing business there.

The 98<sup>th</sup> Annual Running of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 >

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## John Ellis announces candidacy for Catoctin District Supervisor

John Ellis has announced he is running as an Independent candidate for the 2023 election of County Supervisor for the Catoctin District.

Ellis is widely respected as a tenacious advocate for preserving the unique characteristics and charm of western Loudoun's small towns, villages, and rural countryside. He is a member of the Loudoun Farm Bureau, serves on the board of the Blue Ridge Center for Environmental Stewardship, and is a member of the County's Fiscal Impact Committee.

"I'm running for Catoctin supervisor because I love western Loudoun and want to make sure it remains as wonderful for our kids as it is for us today. We need more

than lip service to address the intense development pressures, increasing traffic congestion, rising property assessments, growing water scarcity, and ballooning County spending. Time

is short. We can and must do better."

As an Independent, Ellis promises to work with all the citizens of the Catoctin District, regardless of party, to preserve and strengthen the communities, small businesses, and surroundings that make western Loudoun so special. "I will collaborate with all my constituents to maintain our close-knit small town and rural communities and quality of life," he said.

"With the recent redistricting, Catoctin is the only district in Loudoun that remains primarily rural. To effectively defend the interests of our small towns and rural areas on the nine-member County Board of Supervisors,



we must stand united on the local issues we all care about.

"We need a strong voice on the Board, and not just empty rhetoric. I will do all I can to make sure the eastern supervisors understand and support the issues that are important to western Loudoun."

Ellis is concerned by the rapid growth of the County's budget and its increasing dependence on data center revenues to cover regular operating expenses. He says, "I will work hard to rein in County spending and debt."

Depending on the availability of Federal, state and county funds, he supports initiatives to improve the walkability of our towns and villages, create more parks and trails for safe

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 »

## Board Chairman Candidate Kroiz is firmly planted

BY LIZ TENNEY JARVIS

Despite his heritage as an eighth-generation farmer in Loudoun County, Sam Kroiz did not originally intend to work the land. Kroiz went to the University of Virginia where he studied environmental science but he found that the classes were more oriented towards the requirements for various medical degrees. So Kroiz returned to the land in Loudoun where he and his family run the George's Mill Farm.

Named after Kroiz's ancestor John George, who settled the land in Lovettsville in the mid-1700s, George's Mill is a farmstead that features handmade/homegrown products. A variety of cheeses, gelato, caramel, soaps, pork and other agri-artisanal items are sold via a self-serve store on the farm. Since 2013, Kroiz, his wife, Molly,

and their two children have run the farm, store and the historic B&B. While agri-tourism has been on the rise and this has brought increasing numbers of visitors to the county, Kroiz has also seen the impact of explosive urban development.

Much of what Sam Kroiz warned against in his 2019 campaign for Loudoun County supervisor did in fact come to pass. Kroiz mentions the One Loudoun development where a ratio of housing-to-commercial development has been incrementally changed from the original plan resulting in the bulk of the construction going into housing.

Kroiz feels that "terrible deals" are being made by the county. The Goose Creek Overlook, for example, was approved by the former candidates he ran against in

2019 (Caleb A. Kershner was elected as supervisor and Forest Hayes as now head of the Planning Commission). Goose Creek Overlook was a development that Kroiz felt would be costly both financially and environmentally. The decision to approve the project was subsequently reversed.

Kroiz continues to believe that the rising tide of residential/commercial developments, increased traffic and other issues threaten to take over that which makes Loudoun such a wonderful place to live. He is passionate about representing the fight to maintain the quality of life. As in 2019, he feels he has to "do something about it."

Kroiz says that he is a methodical thinker and approaches complex issues facing the county in a scientific way. He believes in collecting data, being analytical and looking at the unbiased facts. As most candidates

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20 »

ASHBURN STUDENT, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

onstage and singing capabilities.

Connor acknowledges Beth deButts at Heritage High School, Katie Hudson at Blue Ridge Middle, Tony Cimino-Johnson and Jordan Markwood at Rock Ridge High School as those teachers who definitely refined her vocal technique and gave her, "so much encouragement." With such highly regarded teachers/coaches and her standout performances in local musical arts, Connor was prepared when auditions for "The Voice" came her way.

In 2020, a mutual friend of Connor's father received a call from someone in the music business. He was looking for young talent in the D.C. area and had seen videos of Connor singing. "I thought he was just looking for kids who could sing and I did not realize that it would lead straight to a chance to audition for "The Voice," she says. Wherein the usual route would be to go through the show's website and appear for an Open Call, Connor was asked to come out to Los Angeles to audition.

Sometimes the journey does come with setbacks. After Connor had "filled out piles of paperwork and had been

in L.A. for a month, she was about to audition when she tested positive for Covid the night before. Sadly, she would have to wait another whole year for her chance. Though heartbroken, she viewed the delay as a chance to hone her singing talent and to learn to play the guitar.

"The Voice" reached back out to Connor earlier this year and she was ready. She had three songs for her audition including "I Don't Know How To Love Him" from the Jesus Christ Superstar production, "Stars" by Grace Potter & the Nocturnals and "Fifteen" by Taylor Swift.

It would be "Stars" that got celebrity judge Blake Shelton to turn his chair around to see her belting it out. Next would be judge Kelly Clarkson and at that point, Mary Kate Connor's parents had gone from contained excitement to emotional (teary) relief and joy. The other two judges (Niall Horan, Chance the Rapper) were equally impressed but ultimately Connor chose to be on Blake Shelton's team for the final episodes of competition.

Connor states that throughout the experience being involved with the "The Voice," there has only been positive reinforcement. She likes the show

because "it's uplifting and it has a great atmosphere – you won't see contestants getting ridiculed or made fun of."

That kind of support is in addition to that which Connor has received from family, friends and the community. Upon returning to school after taping the show, Connor was concerned that classmates may distance themselves from the rising star but it was quite the contrary. "I felt the love and support from everyone at school."

Connor speaks lovingly of her family. Her younger siblings (brother Jacob and sister Addie) are also in high school. They are singers and in musical theatre as well. Jacob and Addie have been incredibly supportive of their sister during this process and are so proud of her. Connor says that her parents have kept her going with a wonderful support system.

"My Mom has traveled with me, been by my side, provided anything I needed and created a wonderful place for me at home. And my Dad, he cries and we tease him for it but it's so sweet. There have been some funny memes with him getting emotional," she says.

Connor's parents, Bryan and Lori, are incredibly thrilled, "This journey so

far has been wild and fun. One of our favorite memories was during the Blind Auditions. She looked so small walking onto that big stage and we knew how nervous she was – we were too. But then she opened her mouth to sing and we both started to cry. She was really doing it. Seriously, no matter how anxious she is, she always shows up when the lights come on. She is so brave."

Connor's deep faith has also bolstered her along this path. Her wish is to always "have a positive impact, to inspire and to spread joy and happiness." This is why she feels she has the talent that she has been so blessed with. The "battles" between the teams on "The Voice" have already been recorded but there are "no spoilers" from Connor. There will be the Battle Rounds, the Knockout Rounds, and the Playoffs until the finale. How will it go for the 18-year-old from Ashburn, Virginia? "We'll just have to tune in and see!" she exclaims.

*Editor's Note: as of print time, Mary Kate Connor lost the Battle round to fellow contestant Kylee Dayne. However, moments later in a surprise turnaround, Connor was given the "Playoff Pass," a coveted pass to skip all the way to the Playoff rounds.*



## TOWN COUNCIL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

months. The park portion of the application was supposed to include lighted tournament fields for baseball and soccer.

**On Feb. 28, Purcellville's Interim Town Manager John Anzivino** received a letter from Tim Hemstreet saying that with the application of the park and ride lot, Fields Farm Park Road would revert to the extension of the road through Mayfair Crown Drive. "Please understand that should the Fields Farm Commuter Lot be constructed the County intends to construct Fields Farm Park Road as the road is necessary in order to access the Commuter Lot," the letter read.

**The Town and the County had previously agreed to move the road further west**, so as not to serve as an extension of Mayfair Crown Drive. After working on the new road alignment for eight months, however, the County reverted to the original alignment – but said they would be willing "to discuss a reasonable alignment and buffer from the surrounding residential communities."

"What surprises me is that they [the County] pulled everything back," said Mayor Stan Milan at the Feb. 28 Work Session.

He said the County pulled "the rug out from under us the week before the deadline" and reverted to the extension of Mayfair Crown Drive, which would have served as a collector road through the Mayfair community to the commuter park and ride.

"We had spent months and months to get to a point where everybody was pretty much in line except for the lights," Milan said. "It's like saying, 'Yes honey, I'll meet you at the altar,' and the day of the wedding – you don't show up. So what do you do?"

**"We sat down with the County for eight months;** we came to an agreement to how the park and ride would look, where the road would not be connected." Milan reiterated the County had agreed to move the road. "Yet, we go back to square one at the twilight hour."

He said they also agreed on how the berms would be created to shield the neighborhood from the tournament fields, because the community did not want lighted fields on until 11 p.m. and did not want the fields closest to the neighborhood lighted.

"Why do we have to sit down again and go over what we have done?" he asked.

Milan said the County now wanted the Town to approve "something on a wish." He said the Planning Commission had extra meetings to accommodate the County's deadline.

"They worked on weekends, on nights, and twice a week to get this done and at the last minute they switched horses on us. The citizens said they do not want the road connected ... and now we are going to make this road go through there?"

He added that the schools "have been in operation for 10 years and the County had the opportunity to put in a second access to Woodgrove and Mountain View" all that time.

**Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut said, "There has been a general lack of candor ... from the County when it came to the lights.** It became apparent rather late in this process that they really wanted the athletic fields for tournaments because they get revenue for the tournaments."

Bertaut said, "It was not the Town Council nor the Planning Commission that caused a delay in the consideration of these projects." He added that the County project "sat there in the basement of Town Hall for a year, before it was brought to the Town Council and the Planning Commission."

Milan pointed out that the park and ride lot in Hamilton is not fully utilized and the County has said that ridership is down two-thirds.

"We have been working very hard with the County to make this appealing to everyone involved, the citizens, the Town, the County," Milan said. "We were mindful of the deadline for the County; they were not mindful of the concerns of the citizens of Purcellville. My job is

for the health, safety, and welfare" of the citizens.

Trying to make a convincing point, GIS and Special Projects Coordinator Andrea Broshkevitch said that the Town has a water storage tank that they're currently designing on land that the County is obligated to give the Town. She said the Town is relying on the road to be constructed for access to the storage tank.

**"There is also a lot of trash on that property and Loudoun County** was going to remove that trash for the Town and then put up a fence, so that trash can no longer be placed on that property," she said.

Milan asked, "So the County will remove the trash no matter what we do, right?"

Broshkevitch said, "If the road is not built, we would have to get access to that site, either from existing easements from existing roads, and then go cross country to that parcel, or build our own road." She said if the Town has to remove trash, put up a fence, and build a road, that would "take us over budget."

**Bertaut answered, "I also wonder about a County that would refuse to move trash** before turning over the parcel that they are obligated to give to the Town under a previous agreement with the Town. That's just unfathomable to me."

In a March 14 email to Vice Mayor Chris Bertaut, Dale Lenhig, director of Engineering, Planning and Development, said, "It has not been envisioned that we would need a temporary road and we will need to reach out to Loudoun County to determine their schedule and if they plan to move forward with the road. I have also not been out to the site recently to see how much trash has actually accumulated on the site."

**At the March 14 meeting to rescind the Town Council vote,** Council Member Carol Luke said she was not happy with the transparency of the County.

Council Member Ron Rise Jr. said when he looked over the packet that the two recommendations – one from the Town

staff and the other from the Planning Commission – "could not have been further apart. One saying one thing and one saying completely the opposite."

Bertaut noted that the thick agenda packet for the Feb. 28 Council Work Session came to the Council after noon on the same day as the meeting and vote.

"I heard tonight that motions to rescind the vote or reconsideration of a vote is highly unusual, but the County's elected officials have taken that step twice within the last year," he said.

**Bertaut said there are also environmental issues since** the proposed park and ride lot is within the stream shed of the South Fork of the Catoclin Creek, which is a concern both for this project and the 7/690 Interchange.

Milan reiterated that both the Town Council and the Planning Commission made a good faith effort. "They promised they would do this, they promised they would do that, and at the last minute they pulled the switch on us."

**"We asked the County several times" to put the Western Loudoun Recreational Center** on this property and they said no. "So what do they do? They pull the plug, spend \$6.9 million on property for a sports center, when they already owned property at Fields Farm." Milan said the Rec Center would have been closer for the Woodgrove swim team.

At the March 14 Board of Supervisors Finance/Government Operations and Economic Development Committee meeting – which was taking place at the same time as the Town of Purcellville's meeting – Mark Hoffman with Transportation and Capital Infrastructure said the intent for the newly purchased 143-acre property to the west of the Town of Purcellville would include the Fields Farm Park projects, the Western Loudoun Recreational Center and a library.

County Administrator Tim Hemstreet said, "We actually signed the letter of intent, and we are in the due diligence phase. We will go to closing before June."

## BRMS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

eight-grade students received awards. One Gold Key was awarded to Ashley Galletta. Four Silver Keys were awarded to the following students: Druan Donohue, Lauren Routh, Lillian Tester, and Sarah Jeffers. Nine Honorable Mentions were awarded to the following students: Elliana Leach, Mia Templeton, Brinn Mcclintic, Virginia Johnson, Maggie Tirona, Solenna Hye, Samuel Hertzberg, Tina Pyhila, and Samuel Seipt.

Brion Bell, the Principal of Blue Ridge Middle School, reflects on this accomplishment, "These results are amazing. I appreciate how Scholastic has impacted our culture. By stepping it up each year, this competition challenges our best to be exceptional! This is all credit to our English department and the collaborative learning team's commitment

to all kids with the highest levels of rigor and expectation.

"BRMS routinely enters the Scholastic competition. We encourage all students to submit year after year. During the last two years, 28 of our students have earned either a Gold Key, Silver Key, or an Honorable Mention. This is an exceptional statistic compared to schools across the area. We believe the next Sylvia Plath, a Scholastic Gold Key winner, could be part of our eighth-grade group."

Ashley Galletta, the Gold Key winner, said, "All of the reading and writing practice I've done in the past has paid off. All that practice has brought me to where I am today." Ashley's work now moves on from the regional competition to the national competition.

For more information go to [artandwriting.org](http://artandwriting.org).

## LEESBURG TOWN COUNCIL, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

pavement in the former dump site. The study results are expected to provide an estimated remediation cost to clean up the site, should redevelopment occur in the future.

The March 28 action by the Town Council authorizes the Town Manager to sign a task order with WSP USA Environment and Infrastructure Inc. in the amount of \$130,961. The study report is expected this fall.

In a separate action Tuesday, March 28, the Council also voted to continue their review of a redevelopment proposal for the property submitted by a development partnership in response to the Town's issuance of a Request for Proposals for the site. This action does not commit the Town to approve the proposal.



HOUSTON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

**Architects** to see the **Harbin Opera House**, an incredible structure, and other of that firm's estimable projects.

While you're at it, Google "**Batman Building**," a skyscraper our firm developed. It's unique.

**Bringing It Home**

Loudoun is a bedroom community and thus lacks large signature buildings, so let's talk about some house types.

Google "**inexpensive colonial style house**" which show houses much like the subdivision houses we see here. Now Google "**historic colonial style house**" and compare. Notice the many details which mark the latter as better designs.

Sometimes "unspectacular" is good enough. Visualize One Loudoun and the Village at Leesburg. Their overall looks

are not remarkable, but kudos to their developers for making these projects appealing at the pedestrian level.

Many governmental buildings take the "neo-colonial" approach and fit the context of our historic county. Good.

On the other hand, look at some of the three- and four-story apartments that have been built recently. Their designers seem infatuated with the color brown, for which they should be taken to task.

**Back to Wright**

Frank Lloyd Wright's houses are interesting. Google "**Fallingwater**" and next, "**Frank Lloyd Wright houses.**" Look carefully. What do you see? Most showcase his signature "**Prairie Style**" design: Strong horizontal lines, flat roofs, wood and stone, swaths of windows.

They are not to my taste, but I recognize

Wright's importance – Much like my thoughts about Picasso's art.

**What Can You Do?**

Not much, really. If you're rich and want a new house, hire a good architect. If you're a young couple and need a starter house, boycott that treeless "Farm" in Leesburg and look for an older home you can renovate. If you're young and single, "affordable housing" means renting.

Any of us can develop an eye for design, and then a sense of taste. Simply look around you, but look deeply.

Don't count on a new zoning ordinance that dictates specific architecture or design. I prefer freedom, which

unfortunately includes the freedom to have poor taste. That's what led to the blandness of much of our built environment.

**That Toothache**

Salve that dental pain by looking at our countryside, our farms and forests, our mountains, our historic villages. They give Loudouners a special relief from generally bland and sometimes toothache-inducing architecture.

*Charles Houston developed more than six million square feet of office buildings throughout the south for an Atlanta-based firm. He lives in Paeonian Springs.*

JOHN ELLIS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

hiking, bicycling, and other outdoor recreation, and preserve Loudoun's rich historic legacy.

He is dedicated to helping Loudoun farmers supply high-quality foods and beverages to local and regional markets and to promoting Loudoun's vibrant, world-class wineries, breweries, and other small businesses.

Ellis received a BA from Carleton College and a Masters in Foreign Service from

Georgetown University. He and his wife Anne live near Hillsboro. They have two adult daughters and a smart, feisty granddaughter. "One of my big challenges these days is trying to keep the bears from eating Anne's chickens," says Ellis. He and his family enjoy hiking, biking, canoeing, bird-watching, stream monitoring and other outdoor activities in the Catocin District.

Details of Ellis' platform are available on his campaign website: [JohnEllis4Catocin.com](http://JohnEllis4Catocin.com).



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**BOARD CHAIRMAN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17**

align themselves with political parties and take political contributions towards their campaign, the waters become murky. Kroiz feels that without such alignments, commitments and pressure, he can see the facts more clearly.

The rejection of the proposed AT&T project at Short Hill demonstrated that organizing public opposition can be effective. Kroiz was one of the most outspoken and rallied an upswell of public support to stop the large-scale project that AT&T had quietly started. His drive to give voice to those who feel they have none is what Kroiz says he is all about. The ability to “gather help from all over” is his strong suit as he showed when bringing citizens together to advise and/or advocate against the AT&T project.

Additionally, not belonging to a political party or taking aforementioned contributions then keeps him from being “ beholden.” Kroiz feels that many voters are being duped as their candidates are often obligated to vote along party lines.

Kroiz brings the perspective of farming, being a part of the larger farming community in the rural part of Loudoun. “I don’t claim to know everything that is going on in the eastern part of the county but I do care deeply about the county as a whole,” Kroiz says. He feels he can learn as well as educate while in the role as Chairman.

As a farmer, Kroiz says he makes tough

decisions every day. The future of farming can be strong if county supervisors are willing to come together to keep rural areas protected from encroaching development.

Kroiz is fully cognizant of landowner rights and he is also aware of there being no obligation to have explosive growth simply because that is what is demanded, “people have the right to develop their property but local government needs to be reasonable in their limits. Unreasonable development would be that which changes the whole character of the area and destroys the quality of life here.”

“We’re growing faster than any county in the region and we need to reduce the density so that it is more in line with other neighboring counties,” says Kroiz. Those who used to farm the land and are no longer willing to continue are what developers find most attractive.

While Loudoun is vulnerable to the end of generational farming (the average age of U.S. farmers is getting older) he also says there is room to grow and attract a new generation. Farms can take on different models as did the land where Kroiz is now. Leasing to raise different crops or for other uses is a way to stay profitable while maintaining the rural way of life.

The chair of the county board of supervisors will be making decisions that will have a long-term impact. Kroiz knows that his roots run deep, that he and his

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »



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**DEQ VARIANCE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9**

in energy efficiency and are driving the clean energy transition.” notes the group’s website.

On March 30, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors also joined the fray, posing 14 questions in a letter to Virginia DEQ Director Mike Rolband. The Board asked, among other things: Is there any scenario where data centers could run the Tier II or Tier IV Diesel Fire Generators 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and/or any amount of time in excess of the normal/average time by which these generators would normally be used upon signage of this variance? Is there a scenario where all (4,000+) Tier II and/or Tier IV Diesel Fire Generators could be activated at the same time? If this variance was enacted, how would DEQ inform the local Governing Body (Loudoun County) of the emergency alert, warning, or actions? Can this variance be extended in any way?

The DEQ proposal does set a variance expiration date of July 31, 2023, but the following statement in the proposal is raising concerns: “The Department may modify, rewrite, or amend this order and local variance with the consent of the affected data centers, for good cause shown by affected data centers, or on its own motion after notice and a public comment period and hearing.”

Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis J. Randall (D-At Large),

along with Supervisors Mike Turner (D-Ashburn) and Sylvia R. Glass (D-Broad Run), have added a Board Member Initiative to the Board’s April 4 business meeting agenda.

They seek Board approval of their draft letter to DEQ and the Data Center Coalition, inviting “proactive communication with the Loudoun County Government regarding the variance and policies.” They also request that the DEQ move its next public hearing on the variance, set for April 6, from Woodbridge in Prince William County to a location in Loudoun County, “because the proposed variance most directly impacts Loudoun County.” Originally, the variance extended to data centers in Fairfax and Prince William counties, as well as Loudoun.

Meanwhile, Purcellville Mayor Stan Milan has reached out to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s municipal ombudsman, Jamie Piziali, to express his “deep concern regarding the pending approval from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality of a variance.” He emphasized risks to human health. “This decision could potentially result in a staggering amount of greenhouse gas emissions, particularly non-methane hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides, totaling up to 93 tons per hour of runtime, and almost 51 tons of carbon monoxide per hour. This is a matter of serious concern

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »

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### BOARD CHAIRMAN, CONT. FROM PAGE 20

family will be here far into the future. Yet they are already feeling the negative effects of decisions made by some previous county supervisors with regard to overcrowded schools, traffic-packed roads and higher taxes.

As a farmer he is familiar with long-term planning, funding that which may not pay off in the short term, and he is certainly an expert at weathering unexpected events. Kroiz strongly believes that preparation and planning will reap the best outcome for the citizens of Loudoun.

### VIRGINIA GOLD CUP, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

Virginia Gold Cup will take place on Saturday, May 6 at Great Meadow in The Plains. Gates open at 10 a.m. with the National Anthem and color guard pre-race at 12:30 p.m. The tailgate contest judging begins at 12:45 p.m. and the first of eight horse races will be underway at 1 p.m.

Tailgate packages, which now include tents in most areas, and Members Hill entertaining tents are available. Purchases can be made online at [www.vagoldcup.com/va/tickets](http://www.vagoldcup.com/va/tickets) or by calling 540-347-2612. General Admission ticketing has returned for 2023.

The 2023 Virginia Gold Cup Races are presented by Atlantic Union Bank, Brown Advisory, Virginia Equine Alliance, VHBPA, Charles Schwab and the Virginia Thoroughbred Association.

### REMEMBERING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

"Share Sunday", a monthly collection of food for the needy. For the past 10 years he has led a team of fellow Knights who work at transferring tons of food a month to Catholic Charities for distribution and providing other support assistance.

He is survived by his wife of 40 years Joanne Spisak; son John Joseph Spisak III and wife Linda; daughter Cesilie Ann (Spisak) Bellone and husband T.J.; five grandchildren John Christopher, Benjamin, Cassidy, Aiden, and Taegan; and many nieces and nephews.

Service to his country and community provided him the ability to fulfill

his lifelong commitment to help anyone needing his support to the "Last measure of devotion" to his wife, family, friends, and God. Jack's passion to help his fellow man knew no bounds. He was an unsurpassed friend to countless individuals. May Jack rest in peace and may Light Perpetual shine upon him.

Memorial contributions can be sent to St. Francis de Sales Roman Catholic Church, 37730 St. Francis Ct. Purcellville, VA 20132, or to T2T, 2361 Hylan Blvd. Staten Island, New York, 10306 or online at T2T.org.

Arrangements were made by Hall Funeral Home, Purcellville, VA.

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TIM JON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

thunder, or a ghostly bowling ball rolling down the lanes of some unexplored cave hereabouts?"

But, I didn't see any mischievous group of New Englanders, and I didn't take a 20-year nap after imbibing from their favorite drink, while engaged in their sport of choice.

In fact, I made my way quite safely and securely back to my car, and traveled back to Leesburg in very uneventful fashion, and learned a bit of the true history of the subject of my visit. The local congregation started worshipping at the current Mount Pleasant structure some six decades back, after initially using a neighborhood schoolhouse, which practice dated back to 1878.

So, yes – there is quite a bit of history associated with – not only the present-day house of worship on the hill, but the entire

property, which includes a cemetery across the highway. I'm sure I wouldn't be the first to recall feeling a distinct sense of strength and benevolence about the whole acreage, at least partially engendered by the nestling effect of the circling hills and surrounding stands of mature, stately trees – as well as a closer proximity to the clouds (or heavens, perhaps?) which we don't enjoy in this concentration down in the "flatland."

Even the simple (mostly) brick and mortar design of the church itself – placed in the setting of the hills, trees and mist added to the sense of otherworldliness of the whole experience. It seemed like something from another time, but I'm not sure when. Without trespassing on the grounds of blasphemy, I'd say that, if I were a deity, I'd certainly spend a great deal of my Eternity in a place like this. And, I guess that's sort of the idea, right?

DEQ VARIANCE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

for us, as many schools, sports fields, playgrounds, and homes are located near Loudoun County data centers, and the increased use of diesel generators poses a real threat to localized air pollution and regional greenhouse emissions."

Milan urged the EPA "to consider the long-term effects of this decision and take steps to prevent this threat to our environment ...We need to work together to ensure that the well-being of our

community and the environment are not compromised."

The DEQ will make a decision on the generator variance proposal after the April 21 public comment deadline.

For public comments, document requests and additional information, contact Karen G. Sabasteanski, Office of Air Data Analysis and Planning, Department of Environmental Quality at (804) 659-1973 or karen.sabasteanski@deq.virginia.gov.



**2023**  
**HOLY WEEK SERVICE SCHEDULE**

- Palm Sunday – April 2 at 9:30am
- Maundy Thursday "Christ in the Passover" – April 6 at 7:00pm, followed by All-night Prayer Vigil
- Good Friday Stations of the Cross- April 7 at 12:00pm and 7:00pm
- The Great Vigil of Easter – April 8 at 8:00 pm, Champagne & Dessert Reception to follow
- Easter Sunrise Service - April 9 at 6:15am at Montcalm Farm, 16471 Hillsboro Rd., Purcellville, VA
- Easter Holy Eucharist – April 9 at 9:30am Easter Egg Hunt to follow

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DR. MIKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

on to do well at Northern Virginia Community College and then transfer to UVA, William and Mary, Virginia Tech, and other great Virginia universities.

**Seeking Professional Help:** For some young adults, therapy, and/or medications may be necessary to address the mental health challenges that have contributed to their failure to launch. Individuals with significant anxiety, depression, social struggles, substance abuse or screen time addiction, most often require help. By working with a mental health professional, young adults can develop coping strategies and gain the insight and self-awareness they need to overcome challenges.

As a psychologist, I have also found that meaningful and lasting changes occur most from not only helping the young adult who is struggling to thrive but also from supporting parents. This involves

providing guidance to parents on how to best support their young adult child's development, as well as addressing any conflicts within the family system.

**Empowering Parents:** By educating parents about the factors contributing to their adult child's failure to launch, they can better understand their role in supporting their child's growth. This may involve adjusting their parenting style, setting appropriate expectations, or seeking additional support.

**Addressing Family Dynamics:** A young adult's failure to thrive may be linked to issues within the family unit. This could include unresolved conflicts, poor communication, or unaddressed mental health concerns for the young adult in relation to important others (e.g., upset due to parental alcoholism, overly harsh parenting, etc.). If family dynamic issues are significant, addressing them and fostering a supportive and nurturing

environment for all involved is important.

**Encouraging Open Communication:** Open and honest communication is essential for addressing the challenges associated with failure to launch. When family members are able to more openly express their concerns and needs, it can ease the way for young adults to begin to develop more effective solutions in their journey toward independence.

Failure to launch is a complex and multifaceted issue. By understanding the factors contributing to this phenomenon and by implementing strategies to empower the struggling young adult, it is possible to create a supportive environment that fosters growth, autonomy, and agency.

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

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**A little about us...** Our real estate firm is based out of a brick-and-mortar shop in historic downtown Purcellville, VA where we have strong ties to and are invested in our community. Our local market mastery and connections have made us one of the leading boutique Real Estate brokerages in the region. Whether we are representing buyers or sellers on a quaint in-town home, an impressive equestrian estate or a flourishing vineyard, you can expect the culture of our firm to be one of innovative and customized service for our clients and exemplary professionalism and ethics within our industry.



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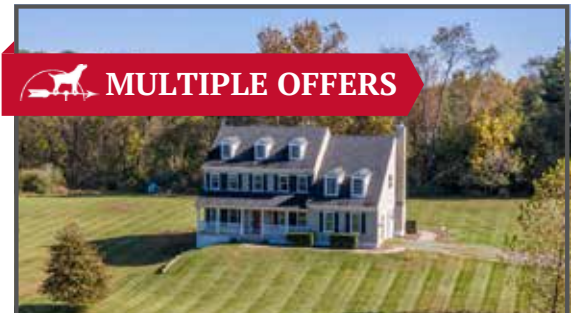
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