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NOVEMBER 2024

The Truth Behind Purcellville's Finances: exposing misinformation and fiscal ignorance

BY KWASI FRASER, FORMER PURCELLVILLE MAYOR

It was my intention to step away from politics after serving you for four terms as Mayor, but I still live in this town, and what I see happening compels me to speak up. Misinformation is being spread by individuals who clearly lack even a basic understanding of finance. I can't, in good conscience, remain silent while this occurs.

OPINION

Today, I came across an article from

Town Council candidate John-Mark Gardner in the October 17, 2024, edition of Loudoun Now. On page 26, Mr. Gardner rails against the so-called "toxicity" of Purcellville politics and promotes the idea that conspiracy theories and confusion are being sowed. Ironically, immediately after this, he does precisely that—by misrepresenting our town's financial standing.

Mr. Gardner claims that Purcellville currently owes \$59.6 million, citing this

debt as primarily stemming from bonds issued for water and sewer treatment. This statement is simply false. The actual figure is less than \$50 million. What Mr. Gardner has done is lump in interest payments—interest that may or may not be paid over the next 16 years—as if this were debt we owe today.

This is a fundamental misunderstanding of debt finance, one that borders on negligence, especially coming from a candidate who advocates for increasing our water rates by double digits, even though our water fund is now generating annual revenue that is over five times the annual debt payment.

Is Mr. Gardner deliberately sowing confusion? Or is this an example of ignorance about basic financial principles, like the wisdom of refinancing and the time value of money? Either way, this misinformation seeks to discredit the work we did together during my time in office. From July 1, 2014, to July 1, 2022, we reduced our town's debt from \$61.6 million to



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\$52.55 million—hard facts backed by a solid record of fiscal responsibility.

Further, Mr. Gardner, Mayor Milan and their team seem blind to the value of our strategic debt restructuring and refinancing efforts. These decisions were about putting hard-earned money back into the pockets of our taxpayers, relieving

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »

For starters: Mickie Gordon Memorial Park gets its baseball field back for spring 2025

BY VALERIE CURY

At the Oct. 16 Board of Supervisors Business Meeting the Board voted 7-2 to move the special exception process forward endorsing Concept A for the renovations to Mickie Gordon Memorial Park, with Supervisors Kristen Umstatted (D-Leesburg) and Matt Letourneau (R-Dulles) voting against.

Initiating the special exception process will allow the community to give feedback on what details they want and don't want in the park, said Supervisor Laura Tekrony (D-Little River) who represents the Middleburg

community.

The community has unanimously weighed in and said they want a dawn to dusk park, and they want to keep the park roads and parking lots unpaved. The special exception process allows for community feedback, with conditions of approval, before it would go on the Capital Improvement Plan budget.

Vice-Chair Juli Briskman (D-Algonkian) asked to split the motion in two. The second motion was to convert the cricket field back to baseball in time for baseball games in March 2025. This would be funded by using

Parks Recreation and Community Services renovation program funds.

Added to the second motion was a friendly amendment by Supervisor Koran Saines (D-Sterling) that staff work with Loudoun County Public Schools to identify an alternative location for a cricket field by March 2025. The motion passed 5-4 with Supervisors Umstatted, Letourneau, Saines, and Briskman, voting against.

Baseball had been played at Mickie Gordon Park for 50 years. But prior to that, the African American community used this area and

called it Hall's Park which they used for baseball and recreational activities. It was named after William Nathaniel Hall, and was home to the Middleburg Braves who played in the African American League.

Steve Torpe, Parks Recreation and Community Services Director, said he was seeking guidance from the Board on the proposed improvements to Mickie Gordon Memorial Park. The plan was to initially add additional cricket amenities. However, the players would rather have cricket pitches closer to where they live and avoid such a long commute, he said.

PRCS held four community meetings and made a commitment, said Torpe, to listen to the Middleburg community.

The Middleburg community has asked

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 »

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



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This experience and my reputation for prioritizing my clients has led me to be asked on multiple occasions to consult during the contract-negotiation phase, ensuring the best deal for them. I’m very proud to have a proven career/record in the Top 1% for my Percentage-to-List Prices as well as days on market.

While assisting my clients through each step of their home sale or purchase, I ensure that negotiations are sound and straightforward. I am committed to a seamless transaction - honesty, integrity and professionalism are of the utmost importance to me and have been throughout my career. I am a long-term professional who embodies a background in real estate that is as strong as it is unique.

“Professionalism is not a label you give yourself, it’s a description you hope others will apply to you.”

Truly, what my clients tell me . . . and what means the most to them (and me) has been my passion for what I do. I can’t

help myself - Real Estate has been my life/career starting out so very young, and I know I am doing what I do for the right reasons. I have to make a living, and I am very good at what I do, but seeing my clients or hearing how they feel about the transaction or telling me no one could have handled their big life’s purchase or sale better, brings me an amount of satisfaction, it’s hard to describe.

I know I am also very ethical (thanks Mom and Dad!) and walking that straight line allows me to rest my head on my pillow at night, regardless of the outcome of a transaction. Lastly, I’d not be answering fully if I didn’t add that my “relationships” with not only my clients but with other Realtors has meant a lot to me and sets me a part.

I treat people, clients, friends, family and someone I meet on the street in a way I’ve been told makes them feel like they are the only person in the room. Life is too short to treat someone any other way, and people notice and should expect that from you. Why else would they choose you to share their time with you - or represent them with all the many Realtors in this world?

Today, thank you everyone who has brought me great satisfaction over the years, whether I represented you or not. As I continue to run my own business for 21 years now, I reflect on how it has been filled with memorable moments throughout every type of market. Here’s to all of real estate’s lovely nuances and even better clients — that I wouldn’t trade for the world.



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GRIND—a pop up art show returns Nov. 9

After the resounding success of last year's event, local entrepreneur and artist Kevin Bednarz is back with the second annual *GRIND*, a one-night-only pop-up art show. This year's event will take place on Saturday, Nov. 9 at 506B Fort Evans Rd in Leesburg.

- VIP Reception: 4 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- General Admission: 5 p.m. – 9 p.m.
- Admission: Free (Family-friendly)

A portion of the event's proceeds will benefit the Loudoun First Responders Foundation.

Bednarz will showcase a dynamic collection of new works, including original black-and-white pieces on actual sheet music, presented in a mixed-media format. He's joined by local artists Andrew Katz, Tiphany Forst, and Eric Thompson, each contributing original pieces, making *GRIND* a celebration of diverse artistic expression.



"I'm beyond excited to bring *GRIND* back for a second year," said Bednarz. "Art has always been a passion of mine, and

seeing the support from the community last year was incredibly humbling. This year, I'm pushing my creative boundaries by working with black and white on sheet music. It's a medium that allows me to blend my love for music and art, and I can't wait to share it with everyone."

The event will feature live music by DJ Ragz, appetizers provided by Purcellville Pub, and complimentary cocktails from Honor Brewing Company and Murlarkey Spirits.

Last year's *GRIND* attracted over 300 attendees, and this year's show is expected to be even bigger. Don't miss the chance to experience a unique blend of art, music, and community while supporting a great cause.

Kevin Bednarz is an entrepreneur, artist, and local restaurateur known for his creative ventures and community involvement. As the owner of The Ashburn Pub, The Purcellville Pub, and Purcellville Eats, Bednarz has established himself as a staple in the Loudoun County restaurant scene.

His passion for art is equally influential, with his unique style blending various mediums and themes, often reflecting his love for music and street art. Bednarz's dedication to his craft and the community is showcased through events like *GRIND*, where he combines art, hospitality, and philanthropy to bring people together for a meaningful cause.

LVHS presents *Peter and the Starcatcher* Nov. 15-17

BY BEN DEMASE

Peter and the Starcatcher, Rick Elice's 2009 Broadway adaptation of David Barry and Ridley Pearson's book by the same name, follows the adventures of Peter Pan (before he got his Pan).

Peter and the Starcatcher is the ram-bunctious tale of how Peter and his two closest (only) friends became the Lost Boys of Neverland. Plagued by irreparable childhood angst and the infamous pirate captain, Black Stache, Peter is thrust into adventure. One that is teeming with whimsy, danger, and British people. In his escapades, Peter meets the young Starcatcher, Molly Aster, who guides them to Mollusk Island, where he realizes his true purpose. Join Loudoun Valley High School and embark upon the high seas in this show of piratical awesomeness.

Peter and the Starcatcher will be representing Loudoun Valley High School at the National Capital Area Cappies Gala in the spring. Cappies honors students who

have shown exemplary work in all facets of high school theatre. All of the design aspects of *Peter and the Starcatcher* are student-led including lights, sound, props, and costumes.

Peter and the Starcatcher is directed by Diego De La Espriella, Loudoun Valley's Theatre teacher. On his choice of shows for the fall season, Mr. De La Espriella explains "We selected this show this year to provide a theatrical experience for every member of our community's families and teach our students about the joys of contemporary comedy."

Charlotte Abbe, who plays Smee in the production, said, "*Peter and the Starcatcher* has been a joy to work on. The show isn't just about Peter Pan, it's about discovering who you are, having fun with friends, and learning that even the most unlikely people can be heroes."

Abigail Landes, who plays The Boy, describes, "This is a show full of humor and excitement, which are my two favorite things."

Tickets can be purchased at <https://loudounvhs.booktix.com/>. Tickets are \$15.00 and all LCPS students are free. Showtimes are Nov. 15 at 7 p.m., Nov. 16 at 1 p.m., and 7 p.m. and Nov. 17 at 1 p.m.

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The ADU Hoax, continued

BY CHARLES HOUSTON

My last Op-Ed mentioned ADUs, but here's more detail and skepticism. I had a difficult time coming up with a title to this jeremiad about Loudoun's Affordable Housing programs, which is now called "Attainable Housing." I thought of possible titles for this piece:

OPINION Developers Outsmart Government; ADUs – Developers' Scam; The False Promise of ADUs, and so on. Chicanery needed to be woven into the title.

Start with the acronym "ADU" itself. I believe the name was purposefully changed by the County from "Affordable" to "Attainable" for undisclosed reasons. My presumption is that the County thinks "attainable" is easier to sell to the public, though the rationale could have been benign. I suggest cynicism, though.

Ever wondered why developers eagerly support ADUs? Ever wonder why so many proposed subdivisions include more ADUs in their applications than is required by Zoning?

The zoning ordinance gives developers an automatic 10% increase in density (the number of units divided by the number of acres) and has an option to build more ADUs and get a 30% density increase. That translates into big profits for developers and a diminished lifestyle for us—more traffic, crowded schools, less peace and quiet.

Scottsdale

This affluent town near Phoenix promoted ADUs: A friend who lives there told me that some 15,000 ADUs were built in a four-year span. This would satisfy the aspirational goals of our Board of Supervisors.

But what really happened in Scottsdale?

These were "cookie cutter" units, many of them being apartments. While they detracted from the town's aesthetic ambiance, there were worse problems. "Traffic became brutal," said my friend.

He'll probably face something worse in a few years: Higher taxes as these new residents' children enter the public schools.

Scottsdale ought to be a warning for us, not a dream.

Windfall Developer Profits

A rule of thumb is that homebuilders' profits are 25% to 30% of the total cost of a house. I'll split the difference and use 27.5%.

If the average market price for regular houses is \$1,300,000 and \$500,000 for the ADU units, what's the effect on the developer's profits? A 27.5% profit margin means he makes \$357,000 on each market house and \$137,000 on each ADUs. Up to a point he makes more money on the market units, but if he can obtain Special Exceptions to increase his density (Say tripling the zoning density) then by building extra ADUs Mr. Developer can make much more than building a smaller number of market houses.

A Sales Job

My old marketing professor had a simple definition of marketing: "Find out what the customer wants and sell it to him." So true. In this case, the "market" is the Board of Supervisors, to whom the developer tries to sell the idea of greater density. The simple acronym "ADU" is his marketing tool.

To market successfully, you must give the potential customer (here, the Board) what it wants and stress your generosity. Recently I wrote that offering up pollinator gardens almost assures that the developer gets the extra density he wants. Promises of "Attainable" housing units make many Supervisors happily swoon as they vote for the developer.

Combine ADUs and pollinators and usually the developer gets what he has asked. We get the shaft.

Loudoun Already has a Better Program

Instead of coercing developers to build ADUs, or bribing them with more density, there's a much better way. Deal with beneficiaries of this generosity rather than with real estate promoters. Loudoun already has a "Housing Choice Voucher" program. The government gives lower-income citizens money (or vouchers) and lets the recipients choose where they want to live.

Loudoun and its towns have extensive housing stock where an older house, say a rambler by the old hospital or a townhouse near the Safeway, should be available at a much lower cost than new ADU construction. That prompts

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 »

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Please include your name, address and phone number. We reserve the right to edit submissions as necessary. Deadline for print edition is the third week of each month, or, online any time.

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Exposing the Deception: A call for accountability on water and sewer rate hikes

BY KWASI FRASER, FORMER PURCELLVILLE MAYOR

Let me be perfectly clear: the Town's recent bill insert attempting to justify the current and future double-digit water and sewer rate hikes by blaming prior Town Councils is not just disingenuous—it's downright deceptive. This politically motivated propaganda insults the intelligence of every resident who has faithfully paid their share under previous administrations, which took a measured and responsible approach to our community's needs.

The majority of Town Council along with the Town Manager claim previous councils didn't raise rates? The record says otherwise. They did increase rates, as advised, in modest and manageable increments—ensuring that the town's financial obligations were met while respecting the people's ability to afford essential services.

Advisors made it clear on the record, as far back as 2020, that we should expect modest 3% to 5% increases until the debt was paid

off. This was even before we received \$10.5 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds, most of which wisely went towards capital improvements. The numbers don't lie.

At those reasonable increases, water revenue would have been four times the annual debt payments, and sewer revenue nearly two-and-a-half times the payments. Yet here they are, refusing to mention these inconvenient facts. Why? Because it doesn't fit the carefully crafted narrative of out-of-control operational costs. It doesn't align with their need to deflect blame for the spiraling expenses under Mayor Milan's administration.

The truth is, this isn't a revenue problem—it's an expense problem. While they are busy pointing fingers at past leadership, it's this current administration that's driving up operational costs. They conveniently omit the over \$1 million in cost recovery and chargebacks being siphoned from the water and sewer fund into the general fund. And now, they expect the people—senior citizens on fixed incomes, families already struggling—to bear

the burden of your fiscal mismanagement.

Let's talk about those senior citizens. Many are already paying \$150 a month for water and sewer, \$300 for propane, and \$500 for groceries. And now, thanks to your reckless appetite for revenue to cover skyrocketing operational expenses, you're asking them to dig even deeper, to shoulder the weight of an expense crisis you created. The current majority on Town Council's alarmist claims of impending bankruptcy if these double-digit hikes don't pass, is nothing but fear-mongering.

What enterprise on the brink of a supposed collapse raises prices instead of cutting costs? Water usage is dropping every year in response to rate hikes—that's the people telling you that these increases are unsustainable.

Instead of keeping rates where they should be, the majority Town Council blame the past with false information, hoping people won't notice the obvious: this majority council wants to go back to growing the town.

So, let's set the record straight about the actions of past administrations:

- **2015-2016: 5% Sewer, 0% Water** (No opposition from Management in Budget Book as claimed by team Metropolis)
- **2016-2017: 5% Sewer, 3% Water** (Retired \$2.4 M in water debt early, saving on future interest. No opposition from Management in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 »

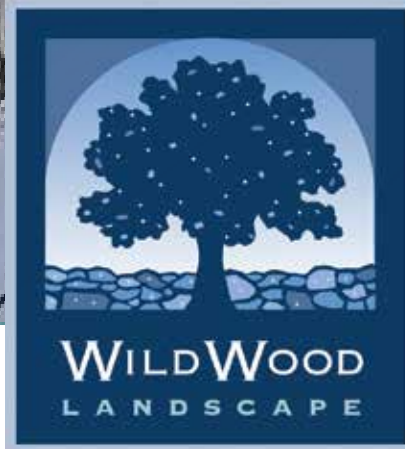
Editor's Note: We feel compelled to make a statement regarding one of the many false claims from one of the spouses of the Stan Milan team. At no time did the Blue Ridge Leader receive a request from the Milan team to advertise. The statement that we refused to accept their advertising request is made up and a complete fabrication.



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Warming of our atmosphere is the gravest issue

Dear Editor:

Like most people, I am giving serious thought about who to vote for in the 2024 Election. Managing the irrefutable warming of our atmosphere is the gravest issue the world faces.

I am voting for the candidates who understand that this dramatic change in climate is a huge threat to life as we know it. I am voting for Harris/Walz.

*Julia Kasdorf
Waterford*

Bye bye sweet Purcellville Town

Dear Editor:

Bye bye sweet Purcellville town
We used to love to hang around
You once were our resting place
But now you are just more rat-race.

Bye bye quiet Purcellville night skies
We used to see the fireflies

And gaze upon the stars
But now it's lights from cars
and tall ball field towers.

Bye bye Purcellville small town charm
And all the nearby farms
You were truly lovely once;
Once upon a time.

We'd see the old tractors
driving down the road
Or pickups with bales of
hay as their cargo load.
But now it's heavy hitters
That tear up our prime ag soil.

The politicians have sold us out
To developers with hearts of gout
That ole money in the pocket
Is what it's all about.

Let's get Purcellville up to date
Too long has she tarried at Nichols and
local Southern States.
It's time for skull and crossbones
At the downtown 21st Street gate.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

I'm Voting for Team Mayberry!

Dear Editor:

Over the past several months, I have had the privilege of getting to know each of the "Mayberry" slate of candidates—Ben Nett, Chris Bertaut, Brian Green, Susan Khalil, and Jon Arnburg. This group of my fellow citizens seeks nothing more than to serve our interests with dignity, careful management, consistency, and integrity.

The only gain they seek is a chance to

serve their neighbors, and to preserve our town for future generations. As an Army Veteran and Eagle Scout, those qualities in candidates are important to me. Just this year, Ben was elected by his fellow officers to be Police Officer of the Year. The highest honor possible given the high quality of devotion and service given by all of Purcellville's thin blue line.

A debt of gratitude is owed to all of Purcellville's police, firefighters, and

paramedics, professional and volunteer, and their families who say goodbye to them every morning. In my heart, I know that Ben Nett, Chris Bertaut, Brian Green, Susan Khalil, and Jon Arnburg will be a terrific town government that will look after our community with the careful attention that we have been missing for so long. They have my confidence and support.

*Michael Parish
Purcellville*

Purcellville election: two distinct groups of candidates—major differences

Dear Editor:

I have been visited by both candidates for mayor as well as several candidates for town council. What I see is two distinct "groups" of candidates who have major differences in what they want to do for the citizens of Purcellville.

I can say that I did fully support Stan Milan for mayor in the last election cycle and now during this past two years I see what I consider a "drastic" change of policy which will have major economic consequences for the residents and businesses of Purcellville.

I am speaking about the water bill that I just received. I'm not sure if the increase for our water bills has begun, but that is about a \$50.00 increase from my last bill and I do not like it!

This is no way to run a small town, but I forget that there are those who do favor Purcellville development to be on a much larger scale than envisioned our 2030 Comprehensive Plan, and those candidates, Milan and his running

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

Never Surrender to Bullies

Dear Editor:

"Never wrestle with a pig because you'll both get dirty and the pig likes it." I've ignored months of personal attacks online by Team Metropolis, their spouses, and a handful of their supporters. I've watched as they've launched smear after smear, garnering only a handful of "likes" and few supportive comments from the same predictable individuals—mostly, people who have been vocal over the years for growing our town with inappropriate development and the debt that comes with it.

I've watched as they've banned individuals from their online forum for disagreeing with them, to include my own Team Mayberry running mate, Jon Arnburg. Ironically, his ban from the comically named "Purcellville Matters Uncensored"—uncensored, they claim—comes after a recent letter to the editor from another citizen who was similarly banned. Why? Because the developer owner of that Facebook group, Sam



CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

Stop Stan Milan's Soaring Water Bills

Dear Editor:

As election season approaches, it's hard to ignore the irony in Stan Milan's candidacy for mayor. A man who claims to have the interests of the community at heart is standing behind policies that have left families and business owners drowning under double-digit water rate hikes.

LETTER



CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

Bridge at Beaverdam Creek needs repair

Dear Editor:

I would like to address the need for the county to encourage VDOT to repair and reopen the Beaverdam Creek bridge on Beaverdam Bridge Road. The closure of the bridge has encouraged a land owner to seek VDOT's abandonment of the road easement VDOT has with the land owner. If vacated, loss of the easement would

LETTER

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20 »



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Just Like Nothing (else) on Earth: Trappe Road

BY TIM JON

There's more sky out there, distance takes on a new meaning, and even time seems to last longer. You may think this is a reference to a trailer for an upcoming science fiction thriller, but no—it's just another fascinating feature I've come to enjoy about Loudoun County, Virginia—a locality of physical, intellectual and spiritual contradictions.



TIM JON

Even a day of overcast and fog can bring feelings of exhilaration and inspiration (at least for me) along the eastern shoulder of the Blue Ridge Mountains on County Road 619, Trappe Road, down in the valley: on those days, you're literally driving in the clouds, which can be an eerie, sensory-depriving experience—always putting my other receptors on high alert for any bearings.

The morning of my last visit, the conditions were of sparkling clarity, as if someone had lifted the lid on the heavens and let in a limitless view of blue sky; I had to stop and just look several times. Or maybe it was all the same time, because a property of those huge spaces seems to throw the relativity scale out of proportion, and I find my usual chronological meters all tilted to the slow end.

I believe those slide-rule boys came up with a proof that the speed of time decreases the faster one moves; I sometimes wonder if the same phenomenon holds true as one becomes more alive. I've noticed a sense of spiritual, physical and intellectual stirrings and tuning and



sharpening under conditions such as I've experienced in places like the vicinity of the heights along that north-south corridor known as Trappe Road. Or, maybe it's just a strong imagination, or I'm too sensitive—both of which I've been accused of being in possession of. To me, it's the same thing.

Now, for the under-initiated, this rural lane features some truly impressive horse and cattle country: some estates include vast eight-or-nine-bedroom manor houses in the two-hundred-year-plus age range, with multiple polo fields, on over a thousand acres. And there are a number of these.

Yeah, it's a different world out there. Maybe this is a trailer for an upcoming science fiction thriller: "Loudoun County—Equine Universe!"

Well, back on planet earth, one really doesn't see much from a mere passing-by: the driveways on some of these properties approach a mile in length. And, we were speaking earlier of relativity: my townhome in Leesburg (a very cozy, comfortable home I love) has no driveway. I haven't noticed any polo fields in my backyard, but I maintain a vast garden plot of some four by 16 feet. Talk about impressive.

But maybe I'm onto something here. You adapt to your environment, and then

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »

The story of two goats and your vote: how to manage yourself after the election

BY MICHAEL OBERSCHNEIDER, PSY.D.

Once upon a time, in a certain forest, there lived a Black Goat and a White Goat. One day, as fate would have it, they both needed to cross a narrow bridge. Unfortunately, the bridge was so narrow that it only had enough space for one goat to cross at a time.



DR. MIKE

The Black Goat arrived on one side of the bridge, while the White Goat approached from the other. Both goats were determined to cross first, and thus an argument ensued. Each goat was unwilling to yield to the other.

Despite their efforts, the dispute remained unresolved, and they ended

up butting heads with each other. As a result, both goats tumbled off the bridge and into the stream below.

The moral of this Aesop's fable is to teach us the importance of cooperation and compromise in resolving conflicts; to yield by setting aside stubborn pride and anger during disagreement or difficult times. Had the goats in the story worked together they could have found a resolution and crossed the river safely. Instead, their refusal to cooperate and compromise led to their mutual downfall.

In my opinion, this very old and simple story perfectly captures our country's current troubling ethos where being right is more important than getting along. As a therapist in private practice, I've seen important relationships strained and

even end due to political position and disagreement this election cycle. Unfortunately, for many, when it comes to today's main topics—the economy, abortion, immigration and the border, foreign policy, taxes, gun policy, healthcare, climate change—it seems that we've never been more divided as a Nation.

On Tuesday, November 5, 2024, either Former President Donald Trump or Vice President Kamala Harris will win the election. The race is predicted to be close, but even if the votes are still being counted after, there will be a presumptive winner.

Regardless of who wins the election, I invite you to reflect on how you want to manage yourself afterward. Here are a few tips to consider:

Celebrate With Respect: If your candidate wins, it's perfectly fine to enjoy the moment and victory. You're likely going to feel great that the country is aligned enough to vote in someone who shares your beliefs, values and vision for the U.S. At the same time, I encourage you to refrain from gloating or being dismissive to others who are upset by the outcome.

Work Toward Acceptance: If your candidate loses, you are likely going to contend with some strong, negative feelings. Accepting the outcome will be easier when you focus on self-care and when you turn to your friends and family for support. Keep things in perspective, and don't act like the country is ending and don't speak negatively or catastrophically

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18 »

As we enter the annual season of giving, you might be thinking of charities you wish to support. But you also might be wondering how to gain some tax benefits from your gifts.

It used to be pretty straightforward: You wrote a check to a charity and then deducted the amount of the gift, within limits, from your taxes. But a few years ago, as part of tax law changes, the standard deduction was raised significantly, so fewer people were able to itemize deductions. Consequently, there was less financial incentive to make charitable gifts.



JOSHUA WOLINSKI

Of course, this didn't entirely stop people from making them. And it's still possible to gain some tax advantages, too.

Here are a few tax-smart charitable giving strategies:

- *Bunch your charitable gifts into one*

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year. If you combine a few years' worth of charitable gifts in a single year, you could surpass the standard deduction amount and then itemize deductions for that year. In the years following, you could revert to taking the standard deduction.

- *Make qualified charitable distributions.* Once you turn 73 (or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later), you must start taking withdrawals from your traditional or inherited IRA. These withdrawals—technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs—are taxable at your personal income tax rate, so, if the amounts are large enough, they could push

you into a higher tax bracket or cause you to pay larger Medicare premiums.

- But if you donate these RMDs directly to a qualified charity, you can avoid the taxes. And because these donations, known as qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), will reduce the balance on your IRA, you may have lower RMDs in the future.
- Of course, if you need some or all your RMDs to help sustain yourself in retirement, the use of QCDs may not be of interest to you. Keep in mind, though, that you can start making QCDs at 70½, even before you must start taking RMDs. QCDs

up to \$105,000 can be taken in 2024.

- *Consider a donor-advised fund.* If you're interested in a long-term charitable giving arrangement, you might want to consider establishing a donor-advised fund. You can put many types of assets into this fund, and then direct it to make grants periodically to the charities you've chosen. You get an immediate tax deduction for your contribution, and, if you donate appreciated assets, such as stocks, you'll avoid the capital gains taxes you would have incurred if you simply sold the stocks and then gave the money to the charities. One note of caution, though—your contributions to a donor-advised fund are irrevocable, and once the assets are in the fund, you can't use them for anything except charitable giving.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »

Citizens advocate for Old Wheatland Road paving

BY KATIE NORTHCOTT

Fourteen concerned citizens commented on the state of Loudoun County's rural roads at the Board of Supervisors Public Hearing on Oct. 9. Most of the meeting's discussion centered around Old Wheatland Road (OWR).

GOVERNMENT

Pam Ostrich, who lives two doors down from OWR, read a statement on behalf of her 92-year-old neighbor, Betty Hutchinson, an Old Wheatland resident.

Hutchinson couldn't attend the meeting due to an injury she sustained about six years ago in an accident on OWR. According to Ostrich, Hutchinson was in her car at her daughter's driveway when a car came over the crest on the wrong side of the road, slamming into Hutchinson's car door. Hutchinson's car was totaled, and the incident left Hutchinson in a leg brace.

"I asked Betty, 'When will you get out of the leg brace?'" Ostrich said. "She said, 'When I'm in the casket.'"

Ostrich told the board that she thought paving the road would encourage drivers to stay on the right side of the road.

At the meeting, Susan Glass presented the staff report which laid out a plan to pave OWR as part of a larger six-year budget for funds from VDOT's Rural Rustic Road program. The Board would allocate \$917,032 of FY 2025 funding to hard surface the eastern portion of OWR. This would be added to \$682,986 already set aside for the road. This amount comes from the \$612,000 allocated by

the developer of Old Wheatland Estates to paving OWR. The sum has accrued interest since its contribution in 2010.

Old Wheatland Road currently has two sections of paved road, at opposite ends of the road. Multiple current residents report being told that the road would be paved in the near future before they decided to buy property on OWR.

"The BOS has wasted money year after year on this maintenance folly and sat on the escrow funds. Your inaction meets

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17 >



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Town of Hamilton seeks funding from the Board for Capital Improvement Projects

Earl Dubin, project coordinator for the Town of Hamilton, spoke at the Oct. 16 Board of Supervisors Business meeting seeking funding from the Board for three Capital Improvement

GOVERNMENT

Projects.

The first is for help with sewer relining of older clay lines in the Town. Dubin said the Town completed Phase 1 of the relining process last year. The Town used American Rescue Plan Act funds, along with town resources for this phase.

Dubin said during a storm event joints have opened up over time and “that allows for infiltration and inflow of some of the storm water runoff—which creates inefficiency in our water treatment plant.”

In the next phase the Town is asking for approximately \$800,000

in different phases. The project will be to reline 10,000 linear feet of the Town’s older clay lines.

The Town is also asking for pedestrian and traffic safety improvements on East Colonial Highway. The plan seeks to make sidewalks in the town continuous, and add well marked pedestrian crossings. The Town is seeking safer pedestrian access to the elementary schools and town park as well. Plantings and street lights are part of the traffic calming measures which are incorporated in the project. The Town has concept plans, and the cost estimate for the project is \$6.7 million.

The Town will develop a new well for drinking water and the project will include a new water storage facility. The approximate cost is \$10 million.

The schedule for the projects will be set when funding is secured.

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Oct. 7 forum deals with issues for Purcellville residents

BY VALERIE CURY

On Oct. 7, the Blue Ridge Leader held their second candidate forum at the Franklin Park Art Center for eight Town of Purcellville Town Council candidates. The Sept. 16 forum was changed from a mayor and town council forum, to just mayor, based on the request from the Milan team.

The date of Oct. 7 was agreed to by both sides, with both sides communicating with each other on the format. Due to the eight candidates participating in the event, the venue was changed to the Franklin Park Arts Center—which has

GOVERNMENT

both professional lighting and an acoustics system. The conversations regarding format were left up to the two sides to work out.

Just 72 hours before the October Town Council forum, the Milan slate sent out an invite through social media, to their own forum—same day, same time.

Since the Milan team had their own impromptu forum, we covered the planned Franklin Park event, and the first question from the audience dealt with each candidate's vision for the town.

Ben Nett said what motivated him to run were primarily two issues. He said he got a rude awakening when he came home from a work trip and saw the water bills. "I went to town hall to seek an explanation and they laughed at me and said 'Welcome to Purcellville. We call that the Purcellville Premium.'

He said his opponents plan to increase water and sewer rates double digits for the next four years by a total of 102% ... "that is untenable for families."

Nett added that the "idea of annexing other properties for industrial development and everything that comes with it: more traffic, more crime, is a double-edged sword. We believe we can eradicate the need for these rate increases and in the near term, bring them down to a more reasonable nature."

Brian Green said that Purcellville is a small town with a sense of community and small town character. "Our Comprehensive Plan shows our vision. It's our vision, not developers. It's our town. Let's make it what we want."

Susan Khalil said her vision is in line with Chris Bertaut who is running for Mayor, and she decided she wanted to help him. "It takes a slate to move things forward."

Khalil said the water bills are too high—"we don't need those double-digit increases." Having a background in finance and after studying the budget, "we are not going to go into bankruptcy, that is fear mongering." She wants to



keep the town small and vibrant and see the town developed properly.

"Let's look at the infrastructure now and see how we can enhance it and the quality of life for the residents that are here. You are the economic engine. We need to work for you, not the developers," she said.

Jon Arnburg said he wants to "see the town prosper. We need to manage our growth in our town. Our utilities cannot support what the other slate is promoting. We need to work with our businesses in town. We need to focus on our citizens, our children, and the people who have called this place home for their entire life. Those are the people I want to focus on—and my slate wants to focus on."

The next question was how to bring 21st Street to life. Arnburg said one of the things that attracted his family to Purcellville was the downtown area. After he saw what was proposed for the Vineyard Square property, he was angry.

Arnburg said he wants businesses and developers who are "coming into this town, they need to understand what our residents want. It's not what developers want and it's not what is going to make the most profit for them. It's what the residents want. It's what fits into our community."

He said he has no problem having conversations explaining what the wants and needs of our citizens are to these developers.

Khalil said, "How in the heck are we going to support what is proposed for 21st Street? Where are we going to put the people? Where are we going to put the cars?"

"The bottom line, there is a permit right now that can be acted upon—but the developer has chosen not to activate it right now. That has caused us some tax loss. You look at Bia Kitchen and Catoctin Creek Distillery and you see what can be done in a very smart manner—as opposed to something that just doesn't fit with 21st Street.

"So you have to ask what's the motivation? The motivation is money." She

said if the permit expires, she is "all for looking at something else. Bringing on the sensible development to 21st Street has such potential ..."

Brian Green said learning about the Vineyard Square project on 21st Street made no sense and made him want to become active. "I see 21st Street as the heart of Purcellville and what happens if you don't take care of your heart? The body dies.

"So I believe in very responsible growth that reflects our character. We need "to adhere to the zoning that is here today, and it doesn't include what Vineyard Square represents today," said Green.

Nett said, "The issue here is that we are not against growth. We support business development. What we all want is to make sure the development that occurs is in keeping with the aesthetics of the town as outlined in our Comprehensive Plan.

"We are in favor of economic revitalization. It's about sticking with that Comprehensive Plan—that vision that the citizens have laid out," said Nett.

Arnburg, addressing the utility rate increases question said, "The Town Council majority has not done their due diligence and gone through every single place within our budget that we can cut."

He said, "We focus on 21st Street. We focus on Purcellville being this hub for western Loudoun, well what's going to happen when my water bill is \$1,200?" He asked, "Do you think I'm going to be going out to restaurants, taking my kids out to restaurants? Spending any money on businesses in town?"

"It's absolutely insane and irresponsible for our town council to expect that our residents are going to pick up the tab, especially when they are focusing on annexation."

Khalil said the general operations are not being run as frugally as they

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »



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Mayfair Community Association Board of Directors rejects its homeowners' petition

BY LLOYD HARTING

At the Mayfair Community Association Board of Directors meeting on Oct. 21, the Mayfair Community Association Board of Directors voted against a signed petition submitted by Mayfair homeowners. The petition asked the Board of Directors to send a letter to the Purcellville Town Council requesting that the Town legally terminate its existing right-of-way street/road easement on the remaining parcel of land at the western end of Mayfair Crown Drive—which is approximately 7,000 square feet—and belongs to the Mayfair Community Association. This would enable the Mayfair Community Association to build a visitor parking lot on the land.

The Board of Directors supported its decision citing several reasons why it believed that the petition was not realistic or feasible. They said the Town Council would not give up the easement—but no one can predict how the Town Council will vote.

GOVERNMENT

They said the Town Council would not permit Mayfair to build anything on the land—but did not provide any evidence to support that opinion. They stated that a structure on the land would interfere with other existing easements—but the only existing easements are a Loudoun County underground water drainage easement and a Town of Purcellville school bus three-point turnaround easement at the end of Mayfair Crown Drive that would not be affected by any future structure built on the surface.

Also, the Board said that no evidence had been provided to them that the Mayfair Community Association owned the parcel of land. However, the Board of Directors was notified by email on Sept. 30 that that a recent property search conducted by the Potomac Title Group reported that the parcel of land is recorded in the name of the Mayfair Community Association in Deed of Dedication, Subdivision, Easement and Conveyance Instrument number 20151202-0079613 at the Loudoun County Land Records Recording Division. Additionally, they stated that the parcel of land belongs to the adjoining Mayfair Industrial Park—which the title search proves to be false.

Termination of the remaining easement would enable the Mayfair Community Association to legally take

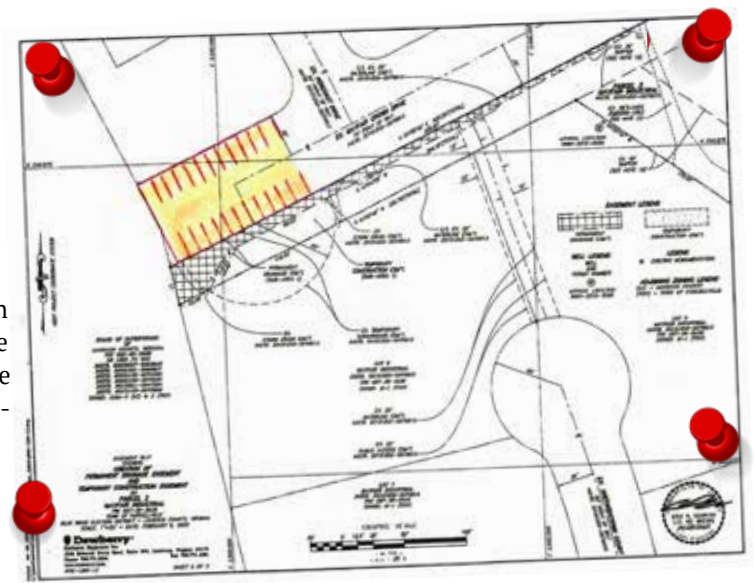
unencumbered control of its land which could then be used to construct a visitor parking lot for the benefit of the Mayfair townhouse residents where on-street parking is prohibited and parking violations are enforced. The visitor parking lot concept drawing shows 24 additional parking spaces.

Furthermore, removing the encumbrance of the easement and building a parking lot on that parcel of land would make it more difficult to build the proposed Northern Collector Road which is planned to stretch from Hillsboro Road to Berlin Turnpike through Mayfair Crown Drive. If the Northern Collector Road passes through the Mayfair community, it would turn Mayfair Crown Drive into a thoroughfare for school, commuter and commercial truck traffic.

During the months of September and October 2024, a total of 82 Mayfair households were contacted to sign a petition asking the Board of Directors to send a letter to the Purcellville Town Council requesting that they terminate the easement. Of those 82 households, which is 31% of all Mayfair households, 64 homeowners signed the petition. This is 78% of the Mayfair households that were contacted. Eight homeowners did not sign the petition, which is 10% of the Mayfair households that were contacted. And ten households were occupied by renters who were not authorized to sign the petition, which is 12% of the Mayfair households that were contacted.

At the Purcellville Town Council candidates' impromptu forum held at the Bush Tabernacle on Monday, Oct. 7, the candidates on Mayor Milan's slate were asked the following question: "The Town of Purcellville has an unexercised easement on undeveloped land at the western end of Mayfair Crown Drive for the purpose of constructing an extension of Mayfair Crown Drive in the future. If the Purcellville Town Council is asked to terminate the easement, would you vote to terminate the easement, would you vote to not terminate the easement, or would you abstain from voting?"

The only candidate who responded to the question was Purcellville Town Council Member and current candidate for reelection Caleb Stought, who is also a Mayfair homeowner. He answered the question saying that Mayfair



Crown Drive is not going through therefore "the easement is null and void."

However, the permanent legal easement is not null and void and remains viable in perpetuity unless it is legally terminated by the Purcellville Town Council, and that termination is properly documented in the respective land property records at the Loudoun County Land Records Recording Division.

The Purcellville Town Council can terminate the remaining easement with a council vote. Similarly, the Purcellville Town Council can remove reference to the Northern Collector Road from the Town of Purcellville Transportation Plan the same way.

To date, Purcellville Town Council Member Caleb Stought has voted twice against motions presented by Purcellville Town Council Member Christopher Bertaut, who is running for Purcellville Mayor, to remove the Northern Collector Road from the Town's Transportation Plan. Mayor Stan Milan is running for reelection, and Council Member Kevin Wright is also running for reelection. Both Milan and Wright voted against removing the Northern Collector Road from the Town Transportation Plan.

So for now, the idea of building a visitor parking lot for the residents of the Mayfair community will not move forward. However, termination of the easement could be considered by the Purcellville Town Council in the future based on Mayfair community residents' direct input to the Town Council.

Lloyd Harting is a retired U.S. military officer, retired U.S. government civilian employee, and former U.S. government contractor employee. He is a resident of Mayfair.

Supervisors approve plan for zoning ordinance project

BY KATIE NORTHCOTT

In their meeting on Sept. 17, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors approved a plan to review rural zoning ordinances in Western Loudoun.

GOVERNMENT

The Board of Supervisors wishes to facilitate communication between themselves, the Transportation and Land Use Committee (TLUC), and stakeholders in the community. The Board of Supervisors is seeking to amend the Loudoun County 2019 General Plan and the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance.

"Our goal from the very beginning both from TLUC and from staff was to try and replicate as closely as possible the very successful discussions we had at the end of the zoning ordinance rewrite process at the end of last year," said Supervisor Michael R. Turner (D-Ashburn). "I think the model staff has presented does exactly that."

Among other things, these amendments will affect farm wineries, limited breweries, and limited distilleries; definitions including farms and other rural uses; Mountainside Overlay District use restrictions; liveries, stables, and

outdoor recreation; rural signage; performance standards and other rural-related Zoning Ordinances.

Concerns at the Sept. 17 meeting centered around the plan's timeline. The plan originally proposed a year-and-a-half long review. After revisions, the projected timeline is now 30-36 months.

"We have an old saying in the military: 'Any task will consume all the time available,'" Turner said. "As we finish the TLUC meetings, if it becomes obvious that some of the items on this list have been resolved, can we shorten the

timeframe?"

"We've baked in a lot of time for this to expand or contract if needed," planner Brian Wilson said. "If we move this along, there's opportunity to cut several months out of this."

The plan includes seven meetings between TLUC, two Planning Commission members, and representative stakeholders. Each meeting will cover different topics affected by the amendments with the exception the final meeting which is designated to address outstanding issues. If there are no outstanding issues, this meeting can be cut

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 »



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Town of Purcellville campaign contributions: follow the money

BY VALERIE CURY

In the race for Purcellville Mayor and Town Council, there are two distinct clear sides from which the two opposing teams are receiving donations.

Stan Milan, who is running for reelection for Purcellville Mayor as of the Oct. 15 filing date, received two donations. A donation of \$2,000 came in on Aug. 5, 2024 from a land owner whose 12.5-acre property will be annexed into the Town of Purcellville if the majority on Town Council decides to enter into negotiations with the County and the owners of the Valley Commercial Center annexation proposal. The proposal

GOVERNMENT

is for the annexation of 117.07 acres which is currently zoned Joint Land Management Area-3 for 39 homes—and if annexed into the Town the plan is for 1.2 million square feet of industrial on Purcellville Road across from the Mayfair Community.

The same donor is also asking for three uses to be added to a property they own at the traffic circle at the junction of Main Street and Rt. 287 on West Colonial Hwy. The designation for the property is Agriculture Tourism Commercial due to its proximity to the traffic circle. The property owner is asking for the uses of a school for 100 students, a hotel, and a senior center facility, with a special exception process, to be added to the low density Agriculture

Tourism Commercial designation.

Milan's second campaign contribution of \$10,000 was made on Sept. 12, 2024 from an employee with the development company called Mountaineer Pipe which is located in the Town of Purcellville. The owners of the company are developer Casey Chapman's uncles. The donation was made by a project manager with the company, David Hornbaker. The company handles land development, and commercial and residential development.

On Sept. 2, 2022, Natalie Hornbaker, also an employee with Mountaineer Pipe, made a \$10,000 contribution to Erin Rayner who at the time was running for Town Council. Natalie Hornbaker is currently listed with

the company as a manager.

The other candidates who are running with Milan have not declared any contributions as of press time, as the contributions are going through the Milan for Mayor account.

Chris Bertaut who has been on Town Council for four years and is running for Mayor has as of press time received \$5,000 from a Town of Purcellville farmer who has a 90-acre in town property which is in a permanent conservation easement.

Bertaut has donated to date \$5,590 to his campaign, and he has received three contributions from Purcellville residents.

Ben Nett, who is running for Town Council, has received a total of \$10,129 in small donations from Purcellville residents. Other members running with Bertaut are financed through the Chris Bertaut for Mayor, and the Ben Nett for Town Council campaigns.

The next filing is the end October, and can be viewed at VPAP.org.



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Loudoun County Firefighters participate in Toys for Tots

The Loudoun County Combined Fire and Rescue System and the Loudoun Career Fire Fighters Association are pleased to announce their participation in the 77th Annual Toys for Tots Campaign.

“We are thrilled to once again participate in this wonderful program and have opened all of our fire and rescue stations across the County as collection points,” said System Chief Keith H. Johnson. “The generosity of Loudoun’s residents will help provide toys for those children that may not necessarily receive any and will certainly help put smiles on the faces of many children this holiday season.”

Donations can be dropped off at any of the LC-CFRS stations, from Sunday, Oct. 20, through Sunday, Dec. 1, as well as fire and rescue headquarters at 801 Sycolin Road in Leesburg. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation, you can donate online at <https://bit.ly/Toys4TotsLoudoun-Quantico>.

For additional information, please contact the LC-CFRS Toys for Tots Coordinator, Technician Rob Boyer at 571-258-3723 or via email at Rob.Boyer@loudoun.gov.

Public Meetings to inform Community Arts Center Planning Study

The Loudoun County Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure is hosting a series of public meetings to gather the community’s preferences for a potential community arts facility in the eastern part of the county. This input from county residents will be used to guide future programmatic requirements for a potential community arts center as part of the Eastern Loudoun Community Arts Center Planning Study.

DTCI has scheduled several opportunities for the public to provide input on proposed facility types and amenities to inform the study. Four meetings will be held in eastern Loudoun County. The information presented at each meeting will be the same.

- **Wednesday, Nov. 6, 6:30 p.m., Steuart W. Weller Elementary School, 20700 Marblehead Drive, Ashburn, Cafeteria**

- **Thursday, Nov. 14, 6 p.m., Sterling Middle School, 201 W. Holly Ave., Sterling, Cafeteria**

The Eastern Loudoun Community Arts Center Planning Study is being conducted in coordination with the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services’ current initiative to develop a Comprehensive Arts Plan. This separate initiative will create a vision for the arts in Loudoun County and develop a clear set of goals and strategies regarding the development of public support of the arts that recognize and highlight the county’s unique attributes.

To learn more about the DTCI study, how to participate in the upcoming public meetings, how to submit a comment online and to read general information about the initiative, visit loudoun.gov/easternartscenter.



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JL Simpson Middle School First VA School to Earn Heart Safe Status

JL Simpson Middle School has made history by becoming the first school in Northern Virginia to receive the prestigious Heart Safe School recognition from the Children's Hospital of Richmond Project ADAM initiative. This honor is a reflection of the unwavering dedication of school nurse Rene Pettit who played a pivotal role in establishing the school's Medical Emergency Response Team.

Nurse Pettit's leadership has placed safety and wellness at the forefront of JL Simpson's mission, ensuring the school is fully prepared to respond to potential medical emergencies. The MERT team, created under her guidance, has undergone thorough training and drills, equipping them to act swiftly and effectively in the event of a cardiac emergency.

"Our students' well-being is our top priority and we are proud to lead the way in creating a safe environment for everyone at JL Simpson," said principal Dr. Tripp Di Nicola. "Thanks to Nurse Pettit and the MERT team, we are

well-prepared to handle emergencies and prevent tragedies. We hope this recognition inspires more schools to establish MERT teams and prioritize student and staff safety in the same way."

Project ADAM, a nationwide initiative, assists schools and communities in developing emergency response plans to address sudden cardiac arrest. Through Nurse Pettit's efforts, JL Simpson Middle has become a model for preparedness, reinforcing its commitment to the safety of both students and staff.

Project ADAM provides schools with tools and resources including planning templates and personalized consultations to develop and enhance their emergency response strategies. These resources empower schools like JL Simpson Middle to prevent sudden cardiac deaths and bring peace of mind to families and staff.

This Heart Safe School recognition is a proud moment for JL Simpson Middle School, underscoring its commitment to fostering a safe and healthy environment for all members of its community.

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LCPS hosts Mobile STEM Lab

The Loudoun Education Foundation arranged for a transformative STEM learning experience at Loudoun County Public Schools, made possible by grants contributed by, and in partnership with, the Equinix Foundation. Learning Undefeated, an experiential learning non-profit, set up their innovative mobile STEM labs outside of River Bend Middle School for the week, offering immersive, hands-on STEM “field trips” that engage students and spark their curiosity about the world of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

COMMUNITY

“We are incredibly grateful to the Loudoun Education Foundation and Equinix for providing us the opportunity to bring the Mobile STEM Lab to River Bend Middle School,” said Principal David Shaffer. “This was an incredible experience for our students, allowing them to engage in real-world learning with topics such as Artificial Intelligence, coding, data analysis, and other STEM-related areas. Opportunities like this help inspire our students to explore future careers in technology and innovation.”

Students explored topics including artificial intelligence, the secret of electricity with Ohm’s Law, and the Mystery of the Crooked Cell – a look at the science behind diseases. This incredible experience also gave students the opportunity to learn alongside volunteers and tech professionals, who shared their passion for the industry in hopes of inspiring the next generation of STEM leaders.

“Today, we are helping launch the next generation of innovators by giving them a peek into the types of real-world challenges that technologists and data scientists are solving every day,” said Brian Gaines, Learning Undefeated CEO. “Hands-on learning empowers students to internalize the confidence needed to succeed in the high-tech jobs of tomorrow. Learning Undefeated is grateful for this collaboration that has allowed us to bring the country’s largest mobile STEM lab for education to Loudoun County students,” he continued.

This initiative is part of the Equinix Foundation’s mission to bridge digital divides and ensure every student has access to STEM education and learning opportunities. By bringing mobile STEM labs directly to schools, Equinix is hoping to inspire young minds with the ability to explore interests and new career paths in unique and empowering ways. With the support of Equinix and Learning Undefeated, students will experience firsthand how technology is shaping the future, and how they can be a part of it.

“We are incredibly excited to partner with the Loudoun Education Foundation and Learning Undefeated to bring this unique educational experience to students in the Loudoun County community,” said Paige Rodgers, Director, Equinix Foundation. “At the Equinix Foundation, we believe that equitable access to STEM education is an essential building block to bridging the digital divide and empowering young people to see themselves in the tech field, as innovators, creators

and problem-solvers. By investing back into our communities through programs like this and leveraging the passion and expertise of Equinix employee volunteers, we hope to inspire more students to pursue careers in tech and become future leaders,” Rodgers added.

The Loudoun Education Foundation is committed to fostering educational excellence by supporting innovative programs and partnerships that expand learning opportunities for students across our district. Our focus is on creating and supporting programs that improve the quality of public education in Loudoun County. Together, we fund programs that boost student performance and provide teachers with the necessary tools to be impactful in their classrooms.

The Equinix Foundation aims to help ensure a more accessible, equitable and interconnected digital future for everyone, everywhere. The Foundation harnesses the passion of Equinix employees locally and globally by engaging them in every area of the organization’s mission, to bridge digital divides around the world. It also aims to deepen engagement within the communities where Equinix operates through grant funding, employee volunteering and other community outreach activities.

Learning Undefeated is a non-profit organization driving race and gender equity in STEM through experiential and deep-impact learning experiences for students from under-resourced communities. Through innovative and experiential education programs for grades K-12, they are sparking interest in STEM careers, building the workforce that will drive the innovation economy, and bridging school, community, health and business.

CITIZENS ADVOCATE. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9
the county’s own definition of waste.” OWR resident William Clark said. “The daily users, the residents have spoken time and time again. The percentage of people who want this keeps growing. The ratio is now almost three to one.”

Under the Board’s direction in 2023, 158 ballots were mailed to “the residents and owners of property adjacent to or served by OWR.” Of the 111 responses, 82 indicated that they support paving Old Wheatland Road while 29 indicated they do not support the paving.

While most of the commenters spoke in favor of paving OWR, a few expressed concerns about the future of the paving process if paving is allowed to move forward.

“Is this the way we want to make decisions about public assets in the future? What if I lived on a paved road, decided I didn’t like it, and gave you money to rip it up?” Rural Roads Committee member Emily Houston said. “Do we want to have this type of public hearing again in which ‘the road wars,’ as Supervisor Kershner called them, play out in the board room?”

The Board previously decided to work on a more data-driven system to decide which Loudoun gravel roads are the highest priority for paving. Those opposed to paving

said that arbitrarily pushing OWR to the top of the priority list undermines the system board members are trying to create. On the other hand, those in favor of paving argued that the developer’s 2010 cash contribution sets OWR apart.

According to the staff report, three of the five crashes reported on OWR between 2017 and 2023 were on the paved portion of the road. Commenters opposed to paving highlighted that more crashes have been reported on the paved part of the road. One said she believed that gravel roads reduce car speeds, making the area safer for recreation. She asked board members to install speed mitigation measures should they choose to pave the road.

Those in favor of paving OWR reported family members being sideswiped and run off the road. They raised the safety concern of dust particle inhalation for their children. One father reported taking his kids to school himself instead of letting them inhale dust waiting at the bus stop.

A couple speakers said that the board could “have its cake and eat it, too” by choosing to build better gravel roads. This approach may be more economically feasible than paving all of Loudoun’s gravel roads.

“There are better ways, better methods for building and

maintaining gravel roads,” said Scenic Loudoun Legal Defense representative Tom Donahue. “This approach involves gravel that does not turn immediately into dust, drainage that avoids road erosion, deep reclamation of defective roadbeds, and proper installation and maintenance that ensures enduring road quality. The district grant allows us an opportunity to shift from maintaining wrong to building right.”

In the end, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to forward the issue to its Nov. 7 business meeting. Speaking on his motion, Supervisor Caleb Kershner (R-Catoctin) said that he supports the measure to pave OWR because he believes the situation is unique. However, he does not plan to support any more rural road paving until a new system for determining which roads to pave is in place.

“It’s really a delicate balance, in my opinion, of what we’re trying to do in western Loudoun, that is really preserve what the west is and what it looks like and what people appreciate about it, and obviously we have ongoing growth and developments that pop up and roads that are getting a lot heavier traffic,” Kershner said. “We are getting to solutions, but it’s obvious the process is broken.”

Human Trafficking Response Team community meeting Nov. 15

The Human Trafficking Response Team is holding its inaugural community meeting, on Nov. 15, from 12 to 2 p.m.—in the Dulles Room at the Loudoun County Government Center located at 1 Harrison Street SE, first floor in Leesburg. Lunch will be provided. This event is open to the public and will feature a collaborative discussion between local government agencies and partner organizations involved in human trafficking prevention and response within Loudoun County.

Please visit <https://forms.office.com/g/gHcDet5Lbv> for more information and to RSVP for this event.

HART is a collaborative community effort organized by the Office of the Commonwealth’s Attorney for Loudoun County as required by Va. Code § 15.2-1627.6. The board members include representatives from Loudoun County Youth Services, Trauma and Hope, Loudoun County Public Schools, Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office, and Juvenile Court Service Unit.

“Raising awareness and educating the community are the first steps to combating sex and labor trafficking in Loudoun County.

We invite all who are interested in learning about how to solve this problem to attend,” said Commonwealth’s Attorney Bob Anderson.

Join the Office of the Commonwealth’s Attorney for Loudoun County and the Human Trafficking Response Team in the fight to eradicate human trafficking in Virginia.

MICKIE GORDON,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for a light touch, said Gem Bingol, Piedmont Environmental Council's Senior Land Use Representative, in citizen comments. "Less is more."

This would include restoration of the baseball field, natural surface trails with signage depicting the deep history of the African American Community's connection to the park—and maintaining the rustic beauty of the park.

A next door neighbor to the park said the plan did not reflect the input from the community. He said the residents want a low impact park—as it has a rural ag historic setting. What the county is offering, "is like asking me if I would rather get kicked in the knee, or get kicked in the shin—and I have to pick one. Please recognize the African American community that founded this Park."

John Benedict spoke on behalf of the Board of Directors of Loudoun's Future. Benedict asked for more modest improvements. "Mickie Gordon Park isn't the place to spend \$10 to \$13 million for traditional recreational facilities—it's really the wrong place for intensive use."

Benedict said the community wants some improvements and better maintenance, and "we really shouldn't be treating all parks alike." The community doesn't want lights and they don't want paved parking lots, he said. "People traveling here want a different experience."

Larry Lloyd said it was out of control to again have to choose from three options the county has offered. "We have to get some results out of this. First of all, it's the history of the park. No one mentions the history. It's sad."

"It's been neglected for years. Now we are asking you all to please make a decision and do the right thing." Lloyd said Middleburg had a baseball team ready to play this summer and there were no games at Mickie Gordon because there was no baseball field, even though the community was told they were going to play at the park.

Said Lloyd, "I know we can get it done."

Megan Gallagher asked the Board to

make less costly improvements to Mickie Gordon Park. She said that the county should redirect the \$10 million budgeted for improvements to serve residents who have been waiting years for cricket fields, and soccer fields closer to their homes. "The cricket community wants pitches close to them."

"No paving, no lights. It doesn't make sense in a park that's a rural retreat." Gallagher said the park should reflect "a rural historic rich experience in nature that won't be anywhere else in the county—for all county residents who need a break in the west."

Regina Banks, who grew up in Middleburg, said she spent a lot of time at Mickie Gordon Park growing up. "I would go to baseball games with my father. He was a pitcher for the Middleburg team. Mickie Gordon Park has been in our history, in our lives and in our family for years."

Banks said it is "very important to get the baseball back to Mickie Gordon Park."

Board of Supervisors Chair Phyllis Randall (D-At Large) said, as it stands the community will have two baseball fields—one of the fields will convert the cricket field back to baseball. There will be one cricket field that is smaller than standard.

Letourneau expressed concern that the cricket community will lose a lighted cricket field. He said there was a rush to move forward with Concept A. Umstatted said she also had a problem eliminating a cricket field.

Since cricket has concrete with artificial turf, the field when converted back to

someone, for example, listen carefully to what is being said and try to appreciate the counter viewpoint. Sharing your views on topics in a respectful manner will also help others to stretch themselves. Also, being kind and considerate can help bridge divides and foster a more positive and collaborative environment.

Get Involved: Joining a group or volunteering for an organization that shares your political views will also likely be helpful. I'm a huge fan of the group, Building Bridgers, which brings people together with diverse political views to engage in



Megan Gallagher



Larry Lloyd



Regina Banks

baseball can't be multi use, said Torpe. He said that the cricket community attended the meetings in Middleburg to advocate for cricket, but said they prefer to play elsewhere because of travel time.

Saines said it was not good to lose a cricket field and he wanted to see the field lit. Supervisor Caleb Kershner (R-Catoctin) said he favored returning baseball to the park. He

noted there are 7 or 8 cricket fields being built elsewhere in the county. He said he didn't want the driveways paved, and Concept A is too intensive—the park needs to be designed for the area.

Randall said she had attended at least three meetings. "I heard. They want the baseball fields back. In a room of 200 people, there were 10 who wanted something else."

"I don't know why we are not listening to the constituents on this one. This is not that hard. In fact, the constituents have made it easier. I have seen the light [lighted field] and I don't think those lights are that invasive at all—but if they are saying to me, they don't want lights—don't give us lights and save us some money—okay. I'm not going to force lights in the community that doesn't want them."

"I can listen to the community on this one." Randall said the original county plan was a mistake and it was corrected. The community attended four meetings—"Let's listen to them, let's listen to them."

Randall said, "The population is calling for baseball fields. Why aren't we respecting that voice?" She said it's just like "we respect other voices when they say they do want pickleball or we do want cricket. Why aren't we respecting those voices?"

"We will have two baseball fields—put the baseball fields back and have one cricket almost to regulation size—is appropriate."

Randall said it's reasonable and a nice compromise.

Tekrony said the baseball field will be restored and ready for use and ready for spring baseball in late March 2025. "This is Middleburg's community park. I attended all the meetings and there were three unanimous requests," she said.

One was to restore the historic baseball field. Another request was to add multipurpose natural surface trails with interpretive signage and the other request was to maintain the natural rustic beauty of the rural park, said Tekrony. "Concept A needs to be more modest—try and maintain what is there."

Letourneau argued that the park wasn't a Middleburg park because it is in the county. "My problem is Concept A takes away one of the best cricket pitch in the county and replaces it with baseball which is light demand." He said the process was rushed.

Replied Randall, "Mr. Letourneau taught me a term sometime ago which was 'Paralysis by Analysis,' when he says you take too long to do something. I don't know how you can call something rushed when it has taken two years to do."

"It seems that systems break down when we talk about a certain part of the county and I'm going to say that I'm getting real tired of it," said Randall.

Tekrony said the park is a community park for Middleburg. "We have community parks throughout Loudoun County and we listen to the community that is surrounded by the park."

She said she wants cricket players to be able to play closer to their homes. "It's time to move this forward through the Special Exception process and begin the public engagement. There is work to do on Concept A. This moves it forward."

Tekrony said when it comes time to address the conditions of approval with the special exception, the supervisors can address lights and not paving the park roads.

"The Pop Gordon field is historic. It is one of the oldest baseball fields in the region. So, I think it needs to come back." Tekrony said, "If you build it, they will come. It was a forgotten park and the maintenance wasn't there. We are going to take care of it. We are going to bring it back."

HOW TO HANDLE YOURSELF, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

about your future or the future of others. Remember, in a democracy there will always be losses and gains, and there's also always another election to come.

Listen, Understand And Cultivate Humility: Instead of questioning and challenging the beliefs of others, turn inward to reflect on your own. I encourage you to find common ground on issues when you can. Be mindful that being open minded to others' perspectives and views can serve to help you grow and learn. So, instead of arguing about the border with

structured and productive dialogue toward unity.

Get Help: If the election outcome proves to be too much to handle emotionally, entering counseling or psychotherapy for support and guidance may be a good thing to do. There are times in life for all of us when events can lead to problems such as depression, anxiety, increased alcohol or substance use, and it's not a moral flaw or weakness in those moments to seek out help.

So, for the next four years, do you want to be the goat on the bridge that fails due

to hubris and a closed mind, or do you want to be the goat that crosses successfully by focusing on finding common ground and agreement with others?

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as a cause for withdrawing from a friend."—Thomas Jefferson

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.

SUPERVISORS APPROVE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

to save time.

Other examples of extra time include the allowance for four meetings on amendment language and multiple Planning Commission work sessions.

In his closing comments about the plan, Turner personally guaranteed that the project will finish on time before the current supervisors' terms expire on Dec. 31, 2027.

In previous meetings, the board selected coordinating leads for representative stakeholders. Chris Van Vlack,

Urban/Ag Conservationist for Loudoun Soil and Water, will coordinate the Agricultural Conservation representatives. Beth Erickson, Visit Loudoun President and CEO, will coordinate the Business and Tourism representatives. The three supervisors representing western Loudoun, Chair Phyllis Randall (D-At Large), Supervisor Caleb Kershner (R-Catoctin), and Supervisor Laura TeKrony (D-Little River), will select one representative for residential stakeholders.

Below is the tentative schedule for the zoning review:

TLUC Meeting 1 – Liveries/Stables/Outdoor Recreation	November 2024
TLUC Meeting 2 – Agricultural Processing/Other Farm Related Issues	January 2025
TLUC Meeting 3 – Value Added Farming/Other Farm Issues/Cons. Easement	April 2025
TLUC Meeting 4 – Mountainside Overlay District/Signage	June 2025
TLUC Meeting 5 – Wineries/Breweries/Distilleries/Events	August 2025
TLUC Meeting 6 – Food Trucks/Food Service and Rural Restaurants	October 2025
TLUC Meeting 7 – Outstanding Issues	December 2025
Staff Develops Draft Ordinance Language	January-December 2025
Zoning Ordinance Committee (ZOC) Review and Comment on ZOAM Language – Four Meetings	January-April 2026
Agency Comments	April-May 2026
Board Information Item & Resolution of Intent to Amend Ordinance	June 2026
Planning Commission Public Hearing	July 2026
Planning Commission Work Session(s) for Recommendation	July-October 2026
Board of Supervisors Public Hearing	December 2026
Board of Supervisors Business Meeting for Action	April 2027

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Keep It Safe: RFID multi card, Italian leather wallets.

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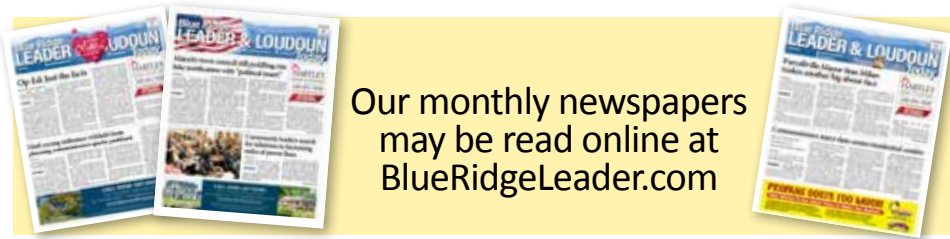
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LETTER: BRIDGE AT BEAVERDAM,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

effectively prohibit access to the creek by walkers, bicyclists, and horseback riders, all of whom that have been using the road and bridge for generations.

VDOT should repair the bridge and reopen the bridge on Beaverdam Bridge Road. The county should encourage VDOT to expend the resources necessary to repair the bridge at the creek, remove the unsightly concrete barriers, and reopen the crossing. If VDOT chooses not to do so, at a minimum, they should not vacate their easement with the land owner.

I shudder to think of what might happen if VDOT's easement is vacated: I'm driving my grandkids down the road to see beautiful Beaverdam Creek, only to be denied access by a "No Trespassing" sign! This can't be what the county envisions. The county should encourage people to visit and explore the beauty of Loudoun County.

Beaverdam Bridge Road, and the bridge at Beaverdam Creek, is a public asset that should be accessible by the



public. It has existed for generations and should be restored to its original beauty. The benefits include providing an emergency escape route during wildfire, supporting Agri-tourism, and providing opportunities for bicycling and horseback riding.

I encourage you to request VDOT to appropriate the funds necessary to repair the bridge at Beaverdam Creek.

*Les Starck
Middleburg*

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OPINION: EXPOSING THE DECEPTION,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Budget Book as claimed by team Metropolis. Cash flow savings from debt restructuring praised by Management and Advisors)

- **2017-2018: 0% Sewer, 0% Water** (Reduced chargebacks which are operational expenses to the general fund which enabled us not to raise rates that year)
- **2018-2019: 2% Sewer, 2% Water** (No opposition from Management in Budget Book)
- **2019-2020: 3% Sewer, 3% Water** (No opposition from Management in Budget Book)
- **2020-2021: 0% Sewer, 0% Water** (COVID year. No opposition from Management in Budget Book. Cash flow savings from debt restructuring praised by Management and Advisors. Town received \$10.5 Million in ARPA funds with majority being allocated to Capital Improvement Program budget)
- **2021-2022: 5% Sewer, 3% Water** (In public meeting Advisors stated that single digit increase can be expected from now until debt is paid off.

Council noted that debt is known but increasing operational costs are unknown and needs to be managed. \$900,000 nutrient credit bank revenue.)

- **2022-2023: 5% Sewer, 3% Water** (No opposition from Management in Budget Book)

These increases, supported by our consultants, were sustainable and fair. They ensured that revenue exceeded debt payments without placing an undue burden on the people. The real issue here is Milan and his majority's failure to control costs, and their blatant attempt to mislead this community is not only dishonest—it's an insult.

The people deserve better. They deserve transparency, not manipulation. They deserve leadership, not excuses. And they deserve a government that can control its own spending before demanding more from those who have little left to give.

They deserve truth, not political inserts funded by the town taxpayers to support their push for growth. As we know growth does not pay for itself, and it will change our small town completely.

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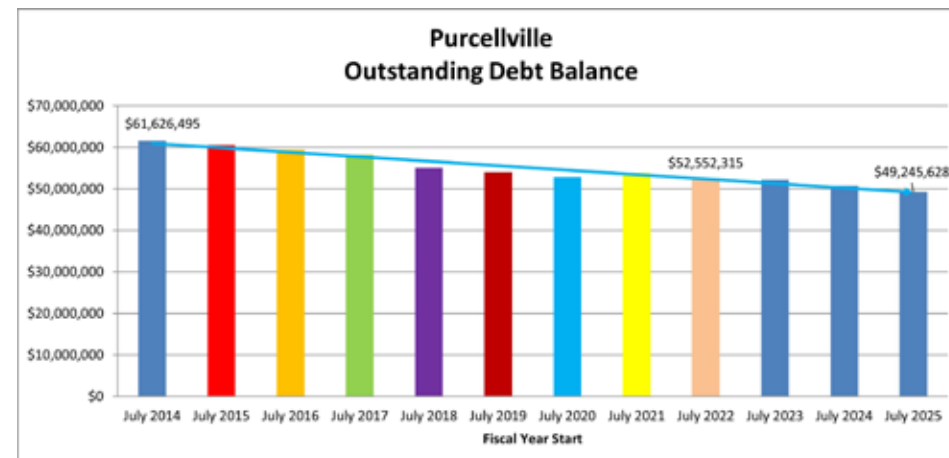
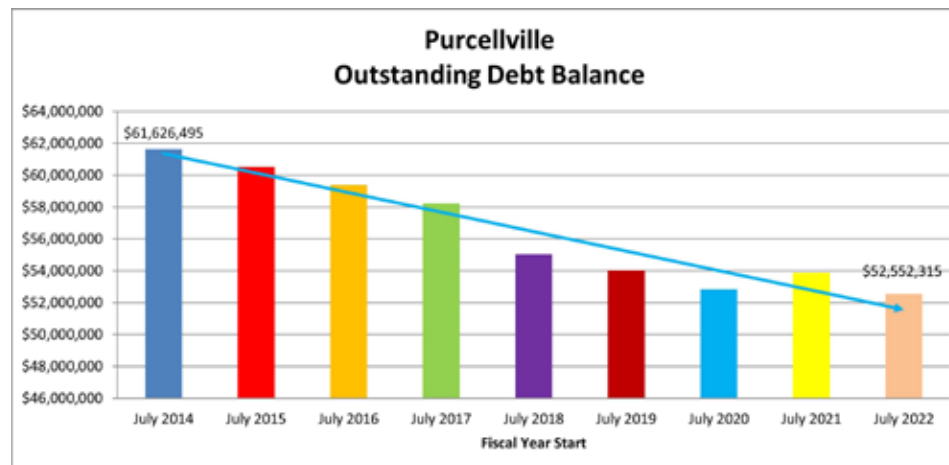
THE TRUTH BEHIND PURCELLVILLE'S FINANCES,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the heavy burdens on households while reducing the debt.

The enormous debt was not of our making; it was thrust upon us in 2011, when the annual sewer debt payment skyrocketed from \$744,000 to an overwhelming \$2.69 million, all under the leadership of the previous mayor and town council—who incurred tens of millions in new town debt to upgrade our sewer plant for future growth. No responsible municipality could look at such a situation and suggest that we should forgo refinancing and place an undue strain on families to

pay off an asset with a 30-year lifespan, using resources they simply don't have. We acted with foresight and responsibility for the sake of our community's future.

Let me be absolutely clear: I will be casting my vote for Team Mayberry—the only candidates who have shown a true grasp of municipal finance and debt management. They understand how to strike the right balance between the needs of taxpayers and the demands of sound fiscal policy. Purcellville deserves leaders who can cut through the haze of confusion and stay focused on the facts, not misleading narratives.



The current amount of bond debt is \$49,245,628. This graph also shows that the town staff and the Milan team has been misinforming the public by stating that our current debt is \$59,626,503, which is the actual amount of current debt plus interest payments going out as far as 2040.

JUST LIKE NOTHING (ELSE), CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

immerse yourself in a diametrically opposite situation, which brings all your senses on high alert (similar, I would guess, to jumping into a frigid body of water after emerging from a sauna—those crazy northerners).

So, while I don't possess the deed to any of the expansive (and expensive) horse farms in western Loudoun County, I can hereby lay claim to some of their benefits—without having to shell out for any of their taxes, or mow any of their lawns, feed the animals or pay the staff. And I wouldn't be any good at polo, so there's no problem there.

I can take what I enjoy: the stone fence-lined (and usually deserted) country road, with views of the tree-covered hills leading up to the summit of the Blue Ridge Mountains, open fields (some partially occupied by herds of black Angus cattle), the

tantalizingly-close-but-so-far-away Mount Weather Emergency Operations Center (talk about a sci-fi thriller—no, wait—we can't talk about that) looming up on the heights, the simple enjoyment of relative silence and complete stillness (extremely rare qualities in Northern Virginia!), and the appreciation (on my part, anyway) of at least the semblance of timelessness.

The knowledge and general assuredness that on a return trip we can plan on finding the same physical features of rocks, trees, grasses, animals and more sky than one who lives in a relatively small townhome in Leesburg, Virginia would believe.

I want to return to find a similar expansion of time, and something approaching the suspension of gravity itself. There we go traveling again ... yes, that's me—the one you don't see.

FINANCIAL FOCUS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

These strategies—QCDs and donor-advised funds in particular— can be complex and involve several issues of which you should be aware. So, you should consult your tax advisor before taking action. But if any of these techniques are appropriate for your situation, give them some thought—because helping a charitable group and getting tax benefits for doing so is a “win” for everyone.

Remember, your individual financial goals and questions deserve individual attention. If you think you might need specific financial advice, please reach out to a local financial advisor.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Contact: Joshua Wolinski | (540) 338-2291 | joshua.wolinski@edwardjones.com.

FORUM, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

need to be for a small town. “The bankruptcy comment in the water bill we just received, I think number one for town management to mention anything to have to do with bankruptcy is such poor leadership. Instead of showing how we can solve the problem, they put fear in us that our town is going to go bankrupt. That is immature and unacceptable.”

Brian Green called for the town to “tighten their belt.” Nett said, “We have a lot to do in short order. We would eliminate all the planned double-digit rate increases over the next five years. As my colleagues have said, we have a spending problem.”

All the candidates were against the Valley Commerce Center annexation. Nett said, “Annexations do not pay for themselves...We don’t have the water. Like so many other properties surrounding us,

it’s controlled in the county”—at a much lower density.

Green said since the town doesn’t have the water it could cost the town millions of dollars to expand the town’s water system. “The residents don’t want annexation, and if considered, the residents would have to agree to it.”

Khalil asked, “Why would we want to take on a financial burden when we could have 39 houses?” She added, “We should look at how we can increase the vibrancy of what we have right now and work on that.”

“The projected revenue from the project does not meet the risk the town would have to take,” said Arnburg. “Let’s focus on bringing businesses in town to fill up the vacant spaces on Main Street.”

Said Nett, “We would vote no on that [annexation] immediately.”



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LETTER: NEVER SURRENDER, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Chapman, and the Team Metropolis slate he backs, are afraid of dialogue.

That's why Team Metropolis backed out of the October 7 candidate forum they agreed to, less than 72 hours beforehand, and why they instead self-hosted their own forum on the exact same date and time. It was advertised as an open mic event—but wasn't. Minus our supporters, they garnered a very small crowd, I'm told.

During this campaign, they've been caught stealing our yard signs, passing out gift cards to voters as bribes, and attacking us personally with libelous nonsense hoping something will stick.

They can't defend their support for more than doubling our already insane bi-monthly water bills, their support for maintaining a bloated Town Hall, or their plans for annexations leading to mass urbanization and the destruction of our small-town life. So, they offer distractions and personal attacks.

*Ben Nett
Purcellville*

LETTER: BYE, BYE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

They want to move the library from the middle of the town That charming landmark where knowledge can be found. It's all about expansion, Let's move It out of town to the new mega Rec Center.

Now the town widow struggles to pay her water bill She showers but once a week and leaves her garden still.

While mildew grows upon the front door path She dare not power wash. Bye bye safe Purcellville town, once safest in the state Now lock your doors and secure the gate. We used to know our neighbor But now fear has taken over.

Bye bye sweet Purcellville town We used to love to hang around You used to be our resting place But now we go to other spots that help us recreate.

The politicians have sold us out To developers with hearts of gout That ole money in the pocket is what it's all about. That ole money in the pocket is what it's all about.

*Elizabeth Miller
Purcellville*

PURCELLVILLE ELECTION, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

mates, are the very ones who are being financed and controlled by developers.

I know the mayor does not like the Blue Ridge Leader and that is why he refused to answer interview questions by that paper whereas all the other candidates did. I call that simply extreme weakness and not willing to answer the hard questions.

The most recent copy of the Blue Ridge Leader had an article by former mayor Kwasi Fraser and it sounds to me that our current mayor is not being honest with the residents or is possibly over his head. It's obvious that there are serious differences between the two groups.

I will no longer support Stan Milan for mayor as well as his "group" known as "Metropolis." I say mayor Milan needs to answer real questions that effect the residents of Purcellville from a local newspaper that asks legitimate questions.

*Michael McCoy
Purcellville*

LETTER: STOP STAN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

This picture says it all: Stan quite literally stands next to a symbol of what he's done — turned our water taps into cash faucets for the town. We need a mayor who will work for us, not against us. Let's stop Stan and bring real relief to our wallets. Vote Christopher Bertaut for lower water bills, not higher profits for the town.

*Susan Khalil
Candidate for Purcellville
Town Council*

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OPINION: THE ADU HOAX, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

a question: Why should an ADU program focus on brand spanking new housing?

The County currently funds this housing program from its accounts. There's a better way: Assess all new construction (including data centers and houses) a special fee to fund the Housing Choice Voucher program. This would be a four-fer: Put a mild brake on more development; Have developers fund the program; Reduce some County spending; Improve some of the existing older housing stock.

A Definitional Problem with ADUs

Eligibility for an ADU is based on one's income. That poses a problem: Just what "income" is used? The IRS form 1040 has multiple types of income: Wage income, capital gains, total income, adjusted gross income (AGI) and finally, taxable income.

I couldn't find any direction in the zoning code as to which of these should be used to determine ADU eligibility. (AGI seems most logical.)

The ADU formula solves for new housing units that are affordable to eligible purchasers. This could be a real mess: What percent of one's income could go for housing costs? (30% most often.) Are taxes and insurance included as housing costs? (Lenders want to see housing expenses be less than 30% of income.) Then, what loan term applies? Thirty years? Fifteen years? What is the correct mortgage interest rate? Is a down payment required? How about private mortgage insurance?

It seems like a moving target. These questions need specific answers for an ADU program to work, and I don't think that's happened. Instead, we may have a Wild West of applications with no

guide on resolving them. The vaunted ADU program needs more work and frankly, a rethinking.

I suggest giving the ADU program an expiration date of, say, one year, and reevaluate it then to see if it's worth keeping. Who could argue with that?

Charles Houston's career was developing large office buildings throughout the south. Every building had a tight and detailed budget and every building came in under budget and on schedule.

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WE WILL ELIMINATE THE PLANNED WATER AND SEWER RATE INCREASES.

We will dedicate a portion of the meals tax to paying down the sewer debt, relieving the people from the strain of double-digit rate increases. The water debt is already manageable, and with just a million in cost reductions, we can make the sewer debt more than manageable. We do not need to raise rates to solve this problem.

Our opponents, Team Metropolis, would have you believe that the meals tax is untouchable, claiming it's essential for operations. Yet they conveniently omit a critical fact: this tax is funneled into excessive reserves and wasteful spending.

WE WILL IMMEDIATELY VOTE NO TO THE VALLEY COMMERCE ANNEXATION.

In addition to putting further strain on our water resources, annexation would add thousands of cars and heavy industrial trucks to our already congested roadways, transform our small town into Ashburn 2.0, and put an end to Purcellville's status as "Loudoun's Rural Destination."

We ask for your vote on November 5

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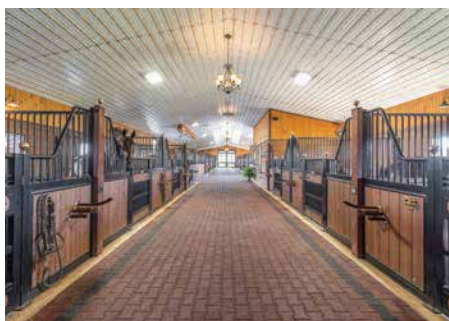
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