

cannabreeze
VIRGINIA HEMP



cannabreeze
VIRGINIA HEMP



cannabreeze
VIRGINIA HEMP



cannabreeze
VIRGINIA HEMP



cannabreeze
VIRGINIA HEMP



cannabreeze
VIRGINIA HEMP

cannabreeze
VIRGINIA HEMP

YOUR VIBE. YOUR MOMENT. CHOOSE CANNABREEZE.

Low dose THC for social vibes.

Full spectrum CBD & CBG for balance.

SOCIAL LINE

LOW DOSE THC BEVERAGES
2mg THC • 5mg CBD • 10mg CBG

8.4 OZ SLEEK CANS



ZEN LINE

FULL SPECTRUM CBD + CBG
0.5mg THC

12 OZ SLEEK CANS



0 CALORIES

0 ADDED SWEETENERS

0 ALCOHOL

GOOD FOR YOU. GOOD FOR YOUR DAY.



STRAWBERRY KIWI

Sweet. Juicy. Bright.
The perfect seltzer
for social sips.

35 CALORIES



LEMON LIME

Zesty. Crisp.
Refreshing with
a classic citrus kick.

0 CALORIES



RASPBERRY HIBISCUS

Bold. Floral. Vibrant.
Made for good
times.

35 CALORIES



CUCUMBER MINT

Crisp. Cool. Clean.
Refresh your mind
and reset your day.

0 CALORIES



PINEAPPLE DREAM

Tropical. Smooth.
Uplifting and
perfectly balanced.

0 CALORIES



HEMP DERIVED
Naturally sourced.
Responsibly made.



LAB TESTED
Third party tested
for quality and safety.



FULL SPECTRUM
The whole plant.
The full benefits.



VIRGINIA MADE
Proudly grown.
Locally crafted.



SCAN TO EXPLORE
THE FULL
CANNABREEZE
LINEUP
Find your flavor.
Find your vibe.

MADE FOR
YOUR MOMENT.

@cannabreezehemp
cannabreezehemp.com
talktous@cannabreezehemp.com

LOW DOSE. FULL FLAVOR. GOOD VIBES. CUSTOMER LOVED.

Kevin Malone's Dream Takes Shape on King Street

A familiar name in Loudoun County's restaurant industry is preparing to add a new chapter to downtown Leesburg's dining scene.

The Malone family has purchased two properties at 5 and 7 N. King St. and plans to transform the site into a traditional Irish pub, bringing a new concept to one of the town's most recognizable locations.

Evan and Meaghan Malone purchased the properties alongside Evan's mother, Kathleen Malone.

The project also reflects a longstanding vision within the Malone family, inspired by the late Kevin Malone, whose leadership and vision were central to building the family's restaurant group across Loudoun and beyond.

According to the family, the Irish pub fulfills a dream shared by Kevin Malone and his son, Evan, who long envisioned creating an authentic Irish pub in the heart of Leesburg.

Inspired by a shared love of Ireland, community and hospitality, the project will serve as a tribute to Kevin's legacy while continuing the Malone family's tradition of creating welcoming spaces for residents and visitors.

The properties are currently home to Downtown Saloon, which is expected to remain open through the Independence Day holiday before closing to allow renovations to begin. The new establishment is



expected to feature Irish-inspired food and beverages, with additional details anticipated as the project moves forward.

The acquisition marks another investment by a family that has helped shape the region's restaurant landscape for decades and represents the continuation of a vision rooted in Kevin Malone's passion for hospitality and bringing people together.

The Malone family has played a significant role in the restaurant industry in Leesburg, Purcellville and Northern Virginia for decades, building a portfolio of beloved establishments that range from casual neighborhood favorites to destination dining experiences.

Generations of residents have celebrated milestones, gathered with friends and shared family meals at their restaurants, making the family's latest investment in downtown Leesburg especially noteworthy.

The family is associated with several

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 »

Oak Hill State Park Wins Funding

The Virginia General Assembly approved funding for the proposed Oak Hill State Park, clearing the way for the preservation of one of the Commonwealth's most historically significant properties and securing millions of dollars in federal, private and state funding tied to the project.

The budget action allows the Commonwealth to move forward with acquiring Oak Hill, the former home of President James Monroe, while preserving funding commitments that could have been lost had the project been delayed.

The project includes a \$6 million federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grant awarded to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation in 2024 for acquisition of the property.

An additional approximately \$5 million in private donor pledges is being held by The Conservation Fund. Those donations were contingent upon Oak Hill becoming a Virginia state park and were not intended to support a local or regional park designation.

The project is also expected to utilize between \$5 million and \$10 million from Virginia's State Parks Acquisition and Development Fund. Under state law, those funds are reserved for acquiring and developing new state parks and cannot be redirected to unrelated purposes.

Together, the federal, private and state commitments represent tens of millions of dollars dedicated to preserving Oak Hill for public use.

"Today's action by the General

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21 »

Are you paying too much for Propane? Call Hunt Country Propane today!



WE'RE LOCAL. WE'RE LESS. WE'RE HONEST.

- We believe all customers should be paying the same low price for propane.
No games. No hidden charges.
- Receive a **FREE** Propane Tank Safety Check.
- A 5-minute call could save you **\$1,000 or more!**
- **We Sell and Install** New 500 & 1,000 Gallon Tanks!



Contact us today at **(540) 687-3608**
or visit us online at huntcountrypropane.com



PO Box 309 Middleburg, VA 20118-0188

LC# MD HVACR 01-2278



INTRODUCING



The Benefits of Equipment Leasing:

- ✓ Offering 100% Financing.
- ✓ Reduces the risk of equipment obsolescence.
- ✓ Allows for upgrades or additional equipment and conservation of capital.
- ✓ Complements your bank lines of credit.
- ✓ What can be leased?
 - Vehicles, Equipment (Construction Manufacturing, Printing & Agricultural), Technology/ IT Equipment, Office Equipment, OR Medical Equipment

CONTACT US AT:
 (888)334-0878
www.bankofclarke.bank



Clarke Leasing is offered through the Elex Group in association with Bank of Clarke.



FINANCIAL FOCUS® AI in personal finance: The promise and the limits

SUBMITTED BY JOSHUA WOLINSKI,
 EDWARD JONES FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Your smartphone buzzes with an alert: Your budgeting app has spotted an unusual spending pattern and suggests transferring \$50 from your savings account to your checking account. Later that day, a robo-advisor automatically rebalances your investment portfolio. Welcome to the age of artificial intelligence (AI) in personal finance, where technology is reshaping how we manage money.



JOSHUA WOLINSKI

What AI can do for your wallet. From tracking every latte to forecasting next month's bills, AI-powered tools are making financial management more accessible than ever. Some apps categorize transactions automatically, while other platforms offer conversational financial advice through text messages. These tools can monitor your credit score, suggest budget adjustments and even negotiate lower bills on services like cable and

internet.
 The investing landscape has transformed as well. Robo-advisors use algorithms to build diversified portfolios, automatically rebalance holdings and apply strategies to minimize tax bills. Educational tools powered by AI can explain complex concepts through interactive games and simple question-and-answer formats, making financial literacy more accessible.
Where AI falls short. Here's what the algorithms can't do: understand what truly matters to you.
 AI doesn't know whether you value sustainable investing over maximum returns. It can't weigh the emotional complexity of saving for a child's education versus retiring early. When sudden illness strikes or a job change upends your plans, AI lacks the context and empathy to guide you through those human moments.
 Technology can crunch numbers brilliantly, but it can't offer wisdom. It can't replace human judgment, experience or

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »

Just Like Nothing (else) on Earth: Ketocin Church and Cemetery

BY TIM JON

Brooding, that's it: given the hypothetical challenge of coming up with a single word description of today's subject matter, I could do far worse than this—but as you know, there'll be much more.

The somber visual presentation of an historic brick building, virtually surrounded by ancient headstones, mature (mostly leafless) trees, and a damp lawn carpeting a still and silent landscape, coupled with a grey overcast sky that melded into a low ground fog—all this left me feeling that time, and even space meant little here, that I'd stepped out of our 21st Century vortex of overcrowded hurry, and into a portion of the universe that held scant need for chronology or physical apportionment.



TIM JON

"C'mon, Tim Jon—what's in your coffee this morning?" Okay, I'll admit, all this is perhaps a stretch for the reader's imagination, coming from one who's lived in Loudoun County going on three decades,

and as familiar with our current hustle and bustle lifestyle as most other local residents.
 Still, I was there—at that intersection of dimensions out in the relatively uncrowded, western expanse reaching as far as the Blue Ridge, and that heady description is certainly the encapsulation of my experience.
 Let's start with how the discoveries unfolded: I was initially surprised at just how expansive the grounds around the old Ketocin Church appeared. I was prepared for an historic, rural house of worship as the centerpiece, of course, and the corresponding cemetery of much more modest means about the place—but this—the graveyard seemed to reach almost out to the horizon, an effect aided by darkened skies and mist that gave me the sense of enveloping the grounds in a blanket of heavenly material.
 Now, my cursory knowledge of the site, I'm sure, also added to my imagination's free-ranging rendering of the morning's events: the congregation of Ketocin

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 »

The Ugliness Around Us

BY CHARLIE HOUSTON

A friend bemoaned the general ugliness of new County buildings. What set him off was a rendering of the zillion-dollar Western Loudoun Recreation Center. (Leesburg’s government buildings visually reference colonial architecture, though they are modern. Therefore, they look and fit better than Loudoun’s.)

His comment made me think comprehensively about local architecture. Not just public (i.e., government) architecture but private projects both commercial and residential.

Beauty First

Great architecture endures: the Parthenon, the Taj Mahal, Mount Vernon, Monticello, along with Dulles Airport.

Here’s a wild one: the Harbin Opera House. Inside and out, it’s astounding and outstanding. You’ve gotta Google it. Its world-renowned architect was Beijing’s Frank Ma.

Skyscrapers

I love skyscrapers. The best are works of art. Think of New York’s Chrysler Building or its elegant Seagram Building. These towers were built many decades ago and still look great. Further afield, Google the Petronas Towers in Malaysia. Those were once the world’s tallest and the steeped roofs echo the stupas of Buddhist temples. Stupendous! They were designed by famed architect Caesar Pelli who also did the renovated Reagan National Airport.

These will be timeless.

Not all skyscrapers can make that claim. There’s a massive, missed opportunity in New York - One World Trade Center. It’s site, budget and historical reference to 9/11 should have produced something exemplary. Instead, we see a flat-topped structure topped by a very slender spike. It looks like a giant hypodermic needle. Ouch!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »

Water Rates Should Never Be Political—But Neither Should History

BY MAYOR CHRIS BERTAUT

My opponent wrote that “water rates should never be political.” On that, we agree.

Reliable water and sewer service is essential. Infrastructure must be maintained, reserves protected, and long-term plans honored. We agree on those duties. We disagree that the only responsible path is to load increasing costs onto our citizens and businesses while overlooking other financial tools the Town can use.

My opponent offers a simple story: consultants recommended higher rates, prior councils didn’t fully implement them, and today’s problems inevitably followed. The reality is more complex.

Purcellville’s utility challenges did not begin recently, but the historical record matters. When Mayor Kwasi Fraser took office, the Town carried \$61 million in debt, that stemmed from decisions made before

his administration, including roughly \$35 million for a wastewater treatment plant expansion approved for “future growth” when the facility was operating at about 40% of capacity.

When Mayor Bob Lazaro took office, Town debt was \$10 million.

Over the next eight years, the Fraser administration reduced overall Town debt by about \$10 million while maintaining critical services and infrastructure. That is addressing reality, not avoiding it.

Utility rates were increased during the Fraser years when consultants recommended adjustments. Those recommendations occurred amid relatively low inflation and significantly lower operating costs.

PostCOVID conditions brought sharp increases in construction, materials, equipment, energy, labor, and regulatory compliance. Comparing preCOVID recommendations to today’s costs without

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

The Hands That Hold the Mission Together

BY KEN FALKE

At the entrance of every military base, there are signs, statues, and symbols honoring sacrifice. We rightly celebrate those who raised their right hand and volunteered to serve our nation in uniform.

But there is another group of volunteers in this country that rarely receives recognition.

They don’t wear medals. They don’t stand in formation. Most people never know their names.

Yet without them, missions fail.

Since opening the Boulder Crest Foundation, our volunteers have logged more than 65,000 hours of service in support of our nation’s combat veterans, first responders, and their families. They wash dishes after long retreat days. They clean rooms between programs. They muck fields,

maintain trails, move furniture, prepare meals, drive vehicles, fold shirts, answer phones, and do a thousand other tasks that keep our mission moving forward.

None of it is glamorous and all of it matters.

In a society increasingly obsessed with recognition, followers, and personal gain, volunteering remains one of the purest acts of citizenship. It is work done not for applause, but because someone else needs help. It is service without expectation of reward.

And that spirit is becoming dangerously rare.

For generations, Americans understood that communities are not sustained by government alone. They are held together by churches, civic organizations, neighbors, parents, coaches, and ordinary citizens willing to give their time freely for something larger than themselves.

They volunteer at Little League games. They staff food banks. They support veteran’s organizations. They coach, mentor,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16 »

Drought Warnings and Development Dreams

BY PURCELLVILLE COUNCIL MEMBER SUSAN KHALIL

Virginia’s leaders have a message for their citizens: conserve water.

Take shorter showers. Delay watering the lawn. Be mindful of every gallon. The Commonwealth is facing drought conditions, and we are all being asked to do our part.

Fair enough.

Water is precious. Conservation is prudent. Responsible stewardship of natural resources is a hallmark of good government.

But there is a problem.

The people issuing the warnings seem unwilling to apply the same principles when making decisions about development.

Nowhere is that contradiction more apparent than in western Loudoun County.

For years, residents were told that the

Comprehensive Plan mattered. They attended public meetings, participated in planning exercises, reviewed maps, debated land-use designations, and endured countless presentations from consultants and planning professionals.

The promise was simple: growth would occur, but it would occur in a manner consistent with a long-term vision that preserved the rural character of western Loudoun while directing more intensive development elsewhere.

The Comprehensive Plan was presented not merely as a document but as a covenant between government and citizens.

Then came the Valley Commerce Center proposal.

Despite concerns regarding groundwater resources, traffic impacts, rural character, and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors voted to approve a large-scale industrial project in western Loudoun.

The message was unmistakable:

The Comprehensive Plan matters—until it doesn’t.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 »

OPINION

OPINION



Copyright 2026 Blue Ridge Leader & Loudoun Today. All rights reserved.

Publisher & Editor

Valerie Cury

Creative Department

Pam Owens, Layout/Design

Cartoonist

Chip Beck

Advertising

Sabine Bibb

SabineBibb@gmail.com 571-437-9953

Tonya Harding

THarding455@gmail.com 703-314-5200

Boo Bennett

BRLBooBennett@gmail.com 571-508-9895

Here's How to Reach Us

Advertising

Email: Editor@BlueRidgeLeader.com

Phone: 703-943-8806 or 540-751-8110

Editor

(Letters to the Editor & Press Releases)

Editor@BlueRidgeLeader.com

Hot News Tips

Valerie Cury

Email: Editor@BlueRidgeLeader.com

Phone: 703-943-8806

Mailing Address

PO Box 325
Purcellville, VA 20134-0325

We Welcome Your Letters To The Editor!

Submissions can be sent to:

Email: Editor@BlueRidgeLeader.com

Postal: PO Box 325, Purcellville, VA 20134-0325

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.



Complete Kitchen Remodeling Free Design Consultation



**QUARTZ & GRANITE
COUNTERTOPS,
FABRICATION & INSTALLATION**

~~\$2500~~

LIMITED TIME ONLY!

\$1,250

INSTALLED PRICE

Minimum Job 35 sq. ft.

NO HIDDEN FEES!

**NEXT DAY
COUNTERTOP INSTALLATION**



Google
Reviews

4.9 ★★★★★ 124 Google reviews
Countertop store in Sterling, Virginia

“The professionalism of the team is outstanding. The entire process was very efficient. They handled the entire process with diligence, attentiveness, and great communication. I had a hard time choosing because all of their designs were stunning. I had an amazing experience. I will definitely be doing further house renovation projects with them. I wholeheartedly recommend Granite Center to anyone who is looking for a team that will make a kitchen renovation the most easy and rewarding process!” — Happy Customer

granitecentervva.com

SHOWROOM & WAREHOUSE: 22446 Davis Drive, Ste. 109, Sterling, VA 20164

HOURS: MONDAY - SATURDAY 8AM - 6PM



NEW CUSTOM DECKS, REPAIRS & RENEW

VIRGINIA DECK & PATIO

- Trusted name in Loudoun since 1998
- Small company, attention to details
- Quality materials and craftsmanship
- Fully licensed & insured
- Competitive pricing, one job at a time
- We do HOA and county permits
- Thousands of local references
- Owner operator, no sub crews
- Call Mike today for FREE ESTIMATE



DECKS • PORCHES • GAZEBOS
FREE ESTIMATES

703-723-7676

www.virginiadeckandpatio.com
virginiadeck@yahoo.com

KILJOY by CHIP BECK



SUMMER SAVINGS

Schedule Job Now for Special Rates



Veterans Land Rescue

LAND GROOMING - TREE REMOVAL



BEFORE

AFTER

Tree of Heaven Treatment Window
Aug - Oct
Contact Us Now

Land Clearing
Invasive Species Removal
Fence Line & Property Line Clearing
Site Prep for Homes and Pasture

Schedule Your Site Visit



540-900-1888
www.veteransllc.us

Thank you!

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter to recognize and express my thanks for the excellent work that is being done, behind the scenes at a couple of our local schools.

My family and I have seen two generations, our children and recently our grandchildren pass through Blue Ridge Middle School and Waterford Elementary School.

LETTER

Over the years we have attended many performances, plays, recognition and award ceremonies at both schools for the students, most recently our grandchildren.

Blue Ridge Middle School and Waterford Elementary School are two very fine schools with dedicated staff that quietly focus on educating, mentoring and encouraging their students. This is not to say that there are not other great educators and schools in Loudoun, but these two schools are real gems that we have had firsthand experience with.

Brion Bell, Principal, Blue Ridge Middle School and Andrew Heironimus, Principal at Waterford Elementary School, along with the rest of their wonderful staff, are excellent educators who are absolutely committed to their mission.

They are upbeat, encouraging and gentle with the kids. They know their parents. They are not just educating the children, they are encouraging them and helping them to discover their niche, the places where they can excel and build confidence, affording all of the students opportunities to find success and be recognized for it.

All too often, we take for granted the good things that happen in life and we don't realize that good things don't happen by accident. It takes good people working hard to make good things happen.

Thank you Principal Brion Bell, Principal Andrew Heironimus and your amazing staff for the great work that you do. Your students and their parents will remember you for the dedication, kindness and respect you gave them.

They will be able to look back through the years and recognize the educators and teachers who truly helped and inspired them. They will remember the ones who taught, encouraged, and guided them through the tough assignments and challenging seasons of growing up ... I still remember mine.

*Geary Higgins
Waterford, Virginia*

Nett Attorney Says Prosecutor Agreed to Verdict Form He Now Challenges

Editor's Note: Published before June 30 hearing outcome

BY VALERIE CURY

A Loudoun County Circuit Court judge will hear arguments June 30 on whether Purcellville Vice Mayor Ben Nett should be permanently removed from office, following a motion filed by Special Prosecutor Eric Olsen.

Olsen has filed a motion asking the court to vacate or set aside the verdict and remove Nett from office following a six-day jury trial held in April. In response, Nett's attorney, Jennifer L. McGovern, has filed a memorandum opposing the motion and arguing that Olsen agreed to the very verdict form he now challenges.

The dispute centers on how jurors were instructed to decide whether Nett should be removed from office under Virginia law.

McGovern states that the court reviewed Virginia Code sections 24.2-233 and 24.2-235 and concluded that even if jurors found by clear and convincing evidence that Nett committed one of the violations alleged by the Commonwealth, the jury still retained the authority to determine whether removal from office was warranted.

The court subsequently proposed a sixth verdict form addressing that question.

According to the defense filing, prosecutors not only failed to object to the proposed verdict form but agreed that it correctly reflected the law.

"The Court raised the issue and the removal verdict form. The Commonwealth not only did not object to the removal verdict form, it agreed that this was a correct interpretation of the relevant statutory provisions," McGovern wrote.

The filing further states that several days passed between the court's initial discussion of the issue and the final jury instructions. During that time, both sides continued preparing for trial, submitted proposed jury instructions and verdict forms, and participated in discussions with the court regarding the final language that would be provided to jurors.

McGovern argues that the prosecutor again agreed to the removal verdict form during those proceedings and did not raise any objection before the case was submitted to the jury.

Now, following the verdict, Olsen is asking the court to find that the removal verdict form should not have been given to the jury and that Nett should be removed from office.

McGovern contends that argument comes too late.

"By agreeing to the removal verdict form on multiple occasions over multiple days without raising any objection thereto, the Commonwealth waived its argument challenging the removal verdict form," she wrote.

The defense filing cites Virginia Supreme Court precedent holding that jury instructions and verdict forms given without objection become the "law of the case" and are binding on the parties, even if one side later believes the instruction may have been incorrect.

McGovern also argues that the verdict form was not designed to mislead jurors because it originated with the court rather than either party.

"The form in Nett's case was proposed by the Court rather than by either party, demonstrating its neutrality and that it was not calculated or designed to mislead the jury into a finding one way or another," the filing states.

In his motion, Olsen argues that he previously agreed to the removal verdict form when the issue was raised during trial and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 »

LAWN AND LANDSCAPE



Serving Counties of Loudoun, Fauquier and Clarke

- ISA Certified Arborist
- Tree Trimming
- Tree Removal
- Stump Grinding

530 E. G Street • Purcellville, VA 20132
arbogast6@aol.com
 540-338-5714
 Cell 540-454-0514
 Cell 540-454-2832



HALL FUNERAL HOME OF PURCELLVILLE

Serving the Community Since 1895

"Providing Memorable Tributes With Compassionate Care"

- Pre Arrangements • Monuments
- Burial & Cremation Services
- Memorial Service & Family Gathering

- Military Funeral Services, For Both Service Members And Their Dependents
- Ship Out

140 SOUTH NURSERY AVENUE • PURCELLVILLE, VIRGINIA
540-338-5561 www.HallFH.com

571.206.0176

appletoncampbell.com

FREE ESTIMATE

2nd Opinion On NEW HVAC SYSTEM

“ Appleton Campbell delivered outstanding HVAC service. Professional, knowledgeable, and efficient. Our AC unit and coil replacement was seamless, clearly explained, and left spotless. Highly recommend!





APPLETON CAMPBELL

PLUMBING • HEATING
 AIR CONDITIONING • ELECTRICAL

Built on Trust Since 1976





WINCHESTER
GASTROENTEROLOGY
PURCELLVILLE ENDOSCOPY



Now Open!

Compassionate, High-Quality GI Care

**IN YOUR
HOMETOWN**

**SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT
IN PURCELLVILLE TODAY**

540-441-4900

WinchesterGastro.com

Data Centers, Growth Concerns Dominate Subramanyam Town Hall

BY VALERIE CURY

Concerns over data centers, transmission lines, growth and the preservation of western Loudoun County's rural character dominated a town hall hosted by U.S. Rep. Suhas Subramanyam, D-Va., at Harmony Middle School on June 22.



Subramanyam was joined by Ash Jain, a senior fellow with the Atlantic Council and former State Department official. Jain participated in portions of the town hall, helping answer audience questions on international affairs and national security issues.

The event drew residents from across Loudoun County, who questioned the congressman on issues ranging from energy infrastructure and housing to the national debt, health care, artificial intelligence and immigration.

Much of the evening focused on the impact data center growth in eastern Loudoun is having on communities farther west.

Early in the meeting, a Loudoun resident noted that the county has approved hundreds of data centers and questioned the need for additional overhead transmission lines, urging elected officials to support underground infrastructure instead.

Subramanyam agreed, arguing that data center operators should bear more responsibility for the infrastructure required to support their facilities.

"If the data centers want to come here, that's great, they should be paying for their own power infrastructure, and they should be paying for the undergrounding on these lines, not us," he said.

The congressman also reiterated his opposition to continued data center expansion in Northern Virginia.

"One is just, we're building way too many in our community," Subramanyam said. "I don't think we should be building them here anymore."

Lovettsville resident Theresa Ghiorzi delivered one of the evening's most pointed appeals, warning that western Loudoun communities are increasingly being asked to absorb the infrastructure needed to support

development elsewhere in the county.

"We do not want to be a 600-foot-wide infrastructure corridor for eastern Loudoun County," Ghiorzi said.

Ghiorzi described concerns about proposed transmission lines, electric grid reliability and the concentration of infrastructure supporting the region's growing data center industry. She urged federal officials to explore new technologies and policies that would encourage underground transmission lines rather than additional overhead corridors through rural western Loudoun.

Subramanyam thanked Ghiorzi for her suggestions and said his office would review the ideas she raised.

Questions about growth pressures and the future of western Loudoun resurfaced later in the evening when Purcellville resident Dan Carvill addressed the congressman.

Carvill said residents in western Loudoun are increasingly concerned that development pressures originating in eastern Loudoun are spreading westward as available land becomes scarcer.



"We've had all these data centers blowing up in Ashburn and Sterling," Carvill said. "One of the byproducts people will remember when looking at this is now because we have all this square footage that's pushed out. A lot of development now seems to be pushing out into western Loudoun."

Carvill said the area is already facing pressure for additional housing and industrial development while also confronting concerns about water availability and the preservation of rural communities.

"We have all this infrastructure because it's being pushed out in one area, it's being pushed out here, but yet we don't necessarily have a lot of the natural resources here in this area to cover that," he said.

Noting projections that Northern Virginia could add hundreds of thousands of homes over the next decade, Carvill questioned whether the region has sufficient resources to sustain that growth.

"We don't have the wells, we don't have the water, and we're also seeing our rural

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 »

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

TOWN OF PURCELLVILLE CANDIDATE'S CORNER

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Editor's Note: The following campaign announcements were submitted to us by the candidates when they announced their campaigns. Several other candidates announced their candidacies earlier this year but did not submit campaign announcements to us for publication. As a community newspaper, we welcome campaign press releases announcing candidacies for local office.



Mayor Chris Bertaut Launches Re-Election Campaign: “Keep Purcellville, Purcellville”

On June 29, Mayor Chris Bertaut announced his campaign for re-election, pledging to continue fighting for responsible growth, fiscal stewardship, more efficient and accountable government, and the preservation of the small-town character that makes Purcellville unique. Bertaut, a Purcellville resident for more than two decades, said he is seeking another term because he believes the town stands at a crossroads, with decisions being made today that will determine Purcellville's future for generations. “Over the past several years, I have worked to keep the promises I made,” Bertaut said. “I said I would stand up for

responsible growth, protect taxpayers, preserve our small-town character, and follow the vision residents established through the Comprehensive Plan. That is exactly what I have done.” He supported the Town's updated Zoning Ordinance following years of public input, voted to remove the Northern Collector Road from the Townwide Transportation Plan, and opposed annexation proposals he believed would fundamentally alter the character of the community. “Purcellville is constantly facing pressure to grow beyond what residents envisioned,” Bertaut said. “My position has

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 »



Greg Paris Announces Candidacy, Pledges to Protect Purcellville

Greg Paris has announced that he is seeking a seat on the Purcellville Town Council, citing concerns about increasing development pressure, infrastructure demands, and the need to preserve the small-town character that makes Purcellville unique. Paris said he is running because he believes the decisions being made today will shape the future of Purcellville for generations. “Like many residents, I chose Purcellville because it is different,” Paris said. “It has a strong sense of community, a historic downtown, beautiful open spaces, and neighborhoods where families know

their neighbors. Those qualities are worth protecting.” Originally from Hershey, Pennsylvania, Paris grew up in a small town where children spent their days riding bicycles through the neighborhood, playing pick-up games with friends, and enjoying a close-knit community atmosphere. One of his earliest lessons about local government came when residents organized to oppose a large residential development planned for one of the community's largest farms. “I remember watching neighbors come together to protect the character of our

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 »



Hank Speckhardt Runs to Protect Purcellville's Future

Hank Speckhardt today announced his candidacy for Purcellville Town Council, saying he hopes to help preserve the town's small-town character, strengthen fiscal responsibility, and ensure residents guide decisions shaping the community's future. Speckhardt grew up in a small town in upstate New York and spent more than two decades in the insurance industry, ultimately owning and operating his own agency. After selling that business and another company he founded, he describes himself as a semi-retired entrepreneur seeking to apply his experience in service to the community he now calls home. He moved to Purcellville to be closer to his mother, a longtime resident, following the passing of his father, and said he

quickly developed a strong appreciation for the town's close-knit atmosphere, history, and quality of life. “I came to Purcellville because it feels like a real community,” Speckhardt said. “It has a character and quality of life that is increasingly rare, and I believe it is something worth protecting, not replacing.” Speckhardt said one of the most pressing issues facing the town is the continued pressure for annexation and large-scale development proposals that he believes could significantly alter Purcellville's character while moving the town away from the vision many residents value. “Some of the proposals being discussed would fundamentally change

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 »



Sam Brown Announces Candidacy for Town Council

For most of my life, I have watched Purcellville grow and change. Some things have changed for the better. Others have reminded us how important it is to protect the character and values that have made this community such a special place to call home. My family's roots in the Loudoun Valley go back to the 1760s, when Quaker families, including my ancestors, settled here to farm the fertile land of western Loudoun County. The land has always been an important part of my life and has shaped my belief in stewardship, hard work, self-reliance, and responsibility to future generations. I graduated from Loudoun Valley High School in 1966 and later earned a degree from Guilford College in North Carolina. After spending nearly a decade working

in apple and cherry orchards in Michigan, I returned home to Purcellville to continue farming. Encouraged by my father, I began growing blackberries and eventually expanded into apples, peaches, vegetables, pumpkins, strawberries, and Christmas trees. My wife, Uta, shares my love of agriculture and conservation. Together, we have dedicated our lives to preserving our farm and the rural heritage that defines this part of Loudoun County. Years ago, approximately 40 acres of our property were zoned for hundreds of townhouses. Instead of pursuing development, I chose to place the entire 90-acre farm into conservation easement. I did so because I believe there are some things more important than maximizing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 26 »

OPINION: DROUGHT WARNINGS, CON'T. FROM PAGE 6

This is where the Governor's drought warnings become difficult to take seriously. One cannot simultaneously tell citizens that water scarcity is a pressing concern while approving development patterns that place additional pressure on the very resources being described as vulnerable.

It is a peculiar form of environmentalism.

Citizens are asked to conserve. Government is permitted to consume. Residents are told to skip watering their gardens.

Developers are invited to increase demand on aquifers. Homeowners are encouraged to think about every gallon.

Government approves projects that require millions more. The irony would be amusing if it were not so consequential.

What makes this particularly frustrating is that many of the same political leaders who describe themselves as champions of environmental justice, sustainability, climate resilience, and resource conservation seem remarkably comfortable setting those principles aside when so-called economic development opportunities appear.

Apparently, sustainability is an absolute principle—except when it becomes inconvenient.

One begins to suspect that some policymakers view conservation the way

medieval monarchs viewed taxation—necessary for everyone else.

The deeper issue, however, is not water. It is trust.

Planning is fundamentally an exercise in public trust. Citizens agree to participate in the process because they believe the outcome will matter. They invest their time, energy, and faith in the belief that government intends to honor the plans it adopts.

When those plans are disregarded, the damage extends far beyond any individual project.

People begin to wonder why they participated in the first place.

Why attend public meetings? Why provide comments? Why spend years crafting a Comprehensive Plan if elected officials can simply discard it whenever political convenience demands?

Cynicism is one consequence. Irreversible change is another.

Cynicism weakens public confidence in institutions. It undermines civic participation. It convinces citizens that decisions have already been made before the public hearing even begins.

Western Loudoun has spent more than fifteen years resisting the very pattern of development that transformed eastern Loudoun. Residents repeatedly expressed a preference for slower growth, agricultural

preservation, open space, and rural character.

Whether one agrees with that vision or not, it is the vision reflected in the County's own planning documents.

If government no longer intends to follow that vision, it should at least have the honesty to admit it.

What it should not do is continue presenting itself as a guardian of environmental stewardship while simultaneously approving projects that place greater demands on finite natural resources.

Droughts are not merely weather events. They are stress tests.

They reveal whether our policies align with our rhetoric.

If water scarcity is serious enough to warrant statewide warnings, then it should be serious enough to influence local land-use decisions.

Otherwise, conservation becomes little more than a slogan.

The Governor is right about one thing: water matters. But real conservation begins not with shorter showers.

It begins with leaders having the courage to make decisions consistent with the warnings they issue.

Anything less is simply asking the public to conserve what government is unwilling to protect.

KEVIN MALONE'S DREAM, CON'T. FROM PAGE 3

well-known restaurants, including Tuscarora Mill, Magnolias at the Mill, South Street Under and Fire Works Pizza, helping establish Loudoun County as a destination for both residents and visitors seeking locally owned dining experiences.

Located in the heart of downtown Leesburg near the Loudoun County Courthouse, the King Street property has long been a fixture in the town's hospitality and nightlife scene. The planned transformation into an Irish pub will add another dining and gathering place to the historic district, which continues to attract residents and visitors alike.

The project also reflects continued confidence in downtown Leesburg's economic vitality and appeal. Local restaurants, shops and entertainment venues remain a key part of the town's identity, drawing customers from across Loudoun County and the broader Northern Virginia region.

Renovation work is expected to begin this summer, with the Malone family planning to welcome guests in fall 2026 and bring what they describe as "a little piece of Ireland" to downtown Leesburg. Additional details, including the restaurant's name, menu offerings and opening date, are expected to be announced in the coming months.

PET SUPPLIES PLUS[®]

of Purcellville




Locally Owned and
Operated


Self-Service
Pet Wash


Full-Service
Grooming


1 Hour Curbside
Pickup

  
Delivery

120 Purcellville Gateway Dr. | Mon-Sat: 9-9 • Sun: 10-6 | 540.299.7959

AMERICA 250TH ANNIVERSARY 1776 ★ 2026

Celebrating 250 Years of Freedom, Opportunity and Community

In 2026, Americans across the nation are celebrating a remarkable milestone—the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the birth of the United States of America.

For a quarter of a millennium, our nation has endured challenges, embraced opportunities and continued to strive toward the ideals of liberty, self-government and individual freedom established by our Founding Fathers in 1776.

While much has changed over the past 250 years, the principles that inspired the nation's founding remain as relevant today as they were when America's first patriots pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor in pursuit of independence.

In Loudoun County, history is never far away. Long before modern highways and technology connected our communities, the region played an important role in the story of early America. From historic villages and churches to centuries-old farms and homes, reminders of our nation's past can be found throughout Loudoun and beyond.

The same spirit of determination and hard work that helped build America continues to thrive in our local communities today. Family-owned businesses, farmers, entrepreneurs, veterans, civic organizations and volunteers all

contribute to the strength and character of Loudoun County. Their efforts help preserve the values that have sustained our nation for generations—service, innovation, responsibility and a commitment to community.

As we commemorate America's Semiquincentennial, this special section recognizes not only our nation's history but also the people and businesses that continue to shape its future.

The advertisements and messages that follow reflect the diverse organizations, local enterprises and community leaders who help make Loudoun County a vibrant place to live, to work and to raise a family.

The 250th anniversary offers an opportunity to reflect on where we have been, appreciate the freedoms we enjoy and look ahead to the generations who will carry the American story forward.

It is a time to celebrate our shared heritage, honor those who came before us and recommit ourselves to the ideals that have united Americans for two and a half centuries.

As communities throughout Loudoun gather for parades, festivals, commemorations and family celebrations, we invite readers to join in recognizing this historic occasion and the enduring spirit of America.

Happy 250th Birthday, America.





Trusted Care for You and Your Loved Ones



Compassionate, reliable in-home care from fellow seniors who truly understand your needs – right from the comfort of your home.

Call today to learn how we can help: 571-680-1701
Seniors Helping Seniors Loudoun County

SHSLoudounVA.com



Have You Had Your Coffee Yet?

A simple cup of coffee can do more than start the day—it can create opportunities, build confidence, and bring people together.

SimplyBe Coffee celebrated the grand opening of its newest location with a ribbon-cutting ceremony June 25 at Giant Food, 1000 E. Main Street in Purcellville. Community members, local leaders, and supporters gathered to welcome a business whose mission extends far beyond serving coffee.

SimplyBe Coffee is built on the belief that everyone has unique talents to share. By creating meaningful employment opportunities and fostering an inclusive workplace, the company helps team members develop skills, build confidence, and make lasting connections within the

community.

Customers quickly discover that the warm smiles behind the counter are every bit as memorable as the coffee itself.

The new location offers residents another place to gather, connect, and enjoy a cup of coffee while supporting a business dedicated to helping people reach their full potential.

The ribbon cutting marked not just the opening of a new shop, but the continued growth of a mission rooted in dignity, purpose, and belonging.

SimplyBe Coffee at Giant Food is open Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Whether stopping by for a morning coffee or an afternoon treat, customers will find a welcoming atmosphere where every cup is served with care.

VISIT US
in the Town of Hamilton!

Mattingly's
Amish Lawn Furniture
Premium Quality Polylumber
Everyday Low Prices



Relax and Be Free.

Hand Crafted by select Western Pa. Old Order & Eastern Pa. Amish Craftsman families

Family Owned & Operated Since 1973
Dealing in Amish Outdoor Furniture Located in Loudoun County Since 1973.

540-338-2060

55 E. Colonial Highway (Old Rt 7) Hamilton, VA 20158
Parking in rear

EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC OF LIVE MUSIC THIS SUMMER, RIGHT IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

APPALACHIAN CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL

METAMORPHOSIS

2026 Aug 5-16
Harpers Ferry, Shepherdstown, Charles Town, Loudoun, Berryville, Winchester

2 weeks | 12 world-class musicians | 9 free events
15 unique concert programs | 2 world premieres
7 days of education programs | 4 outdoor gigs

TICKETS AND MORE: APPALACHIANCHAMBER.ORG

Purcellville Council Codifies Multi-Year Utility Rate Schedule

BY VALERIE CURY

The Purcellville Town Council voted unanimously June 9 to codify a multi-year utility rate schedule intended to help fund future water and wastewater infrastructure needs while strengthening the town's position when pursuing grants and other outside funding opportunities.

The measure passed 6-0.

Interim Town Manager Tony Sabio said the rate schedule grew out of discussions regarding the town's long-term capital improvement needs, including major utility projects such as improvements associated with the Short Hill Water Plant.

Sabio told council members that shortly after arriving in Purcellville, he met with Loudoun County Administrator Tim Hemstreet to discuss the town's infrastructure priorities and future funding opportunities.

According to Sabio, Hemstreet indicated that local governments seeking assistance for major infrastructure projects are often expected to demonstrate a commitment to addressing their own long-term financial needs.

“This is a first step to course-correcting

our relationship with the county,” Sabio said. “We did our part to move in this direction, and what do we need to do to obtain these grants that we need? This gives me a tool to have that conversation.”

Sabio said the multi-year rate plan and the town's Capital Improvement Plan were developed together to provide a framework for addressing future utility infrastructure requirements.

Council Member Susan Khalil said she would support codifying the schedule despite concerns about the projected increases.

"It is a hard pill to swallow with the rates for next year," Khalil said.

Khalil expressed optimism that careful management of operating expenses, competitive bidding for planned projects and the pursuit of outside funding could help reduce future costs.

"I really will do all I can do to see what can be done so what we are looking at here would be the worst-case scenario," Khalil said.

Mayor Chris Bertaut also emphasized that the projections assume major capital projects would be funded through cash

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19 »



LUCKETTS EXCAVATING INC

YOUR AT-HOME
oasis awaits

Lucketts Excavating, Inc. repaired, revived, and enlarged this picturesque lake and island along with installation of a custom wooden pavillion and dock in Purcellville, VA. We're Certified Responsible Land Disturber, licensed, insured, 10-time local award winner, and have been family owned & operated for over 25 years.

- + Pond Installation & Repair
- + Gravel Driveways & Roads
- + Basement Excavation
- + Land Clearing & Grading
- + Equestrian Riding Arenas
- + Pad Sites & Lot Clean Up

Call us today to schedule an estimate at **703-443-0039** or learn more at **LuckettsExcavating.com**.



OLD DOMINION
KITCHEN DESIGN

WOODHARBOR
Custom Cabinetry

194 N 21st Street
Purcellville
(540) 338-6338

OPINION: THE HANDS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

clean, repair, build, and show up when needed.

Today, too many people are consumers of community rather than contributors to it.

We see it everywhere. People ask what benefits they receive before asking how they can help. We have raised generations fluent in complaint but often unfamiliar with sacrifice. Social media has convinced many that visibility is the same thing as value, while the quiet work that truly sustains communities often goes unnoticed.

But institutions like Boulder Crest survive because some Americans still understand an old truth: freedom and community are not self-sustaining. Someone must carry the load.

What humbles me most is that many of our volunteers are not wealthy donors or retirees with endless free time. Some are working parents. Some are veterans still healing themselves. Some drive hours just to spend a day doing manual labor in support of people they may never meet.

And they keep showing up. Not because it is easy, but because it matters and there is something profoundly American about that.

At Boulder Crest, we often talk about Posttraumatic Growth—the idea that struggle can produce strength, wisdom, and purpose. Our volunteers embody that principle every single day. They remind us that healing does not happen through programs alone. It happens through human connection. Through people willing to serve one another. Through communities built not on transactions, but on shared responsibility.

A veteran attending one of our programs may never know who cleaned the room before they arrived. A struggling first responder may never meet the volunteer who prepared their meals. A family member finding hope again may never see the person who spent hours maintaining the property so it could remain a peaceful place of healing.

And those acts matter. The smallest acts of service often create the biggest impact. The challenge now is whether the next generation will continue this tradition.

Will they understand that citizenship requires participation? Will they recognize that strong communities demand contribution, not just consumption? Will they discover the fulfillment that comes not from being served, but from serving others?

I believe they can, but we must teach it. We must model it. And we must celebrate it.

Too often, our culture celebrates celebrity over character and influence over integrity. We tell young people to build a brand before they have built a sense of responsibility.

Yet the people who truly change communities are rarely the loudest voices in the room. They are the ones quietly stacking chairs after events, mentoring kids after work, serving meals, cleaning facilities, and stepping forward when nobody else does.

That is where real leadership lives.

Sixty-five thousand volunteer hours is more than a statistic. It represents thousands of individual decisions by ordinary people to put mission before self. It represents sweat, sacrifice, humility, and compassion. It represents Americans refusing to surrender the idea that we owe something to one another. And in a divided and distracted nation, that may matter now more than ever.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20 »

SHOP LOCAL

Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre

SPIES AND CYANIDE

WRITTEN BY MIA CANAVAN SCHAEFER
PRODUCED BY JERRI WISEMAN
DIRECTED BY TERRY SMITH

July 17 - Leesburg Junction
July 18 - Firefly Cellars Winery, Hamilton
July 19 - Ahso Restaurant, Brambleton
August 14 - Dulles Town Center, Sterling
August 15 - Casanel Winery, Leesburg
August 22 - Oatlands, Leesburg
August 28 - Ambiance Restaurant, Ashburn
and other local venues

Reservations required
www.StageCoachTC.com/Tickets
571-477-9444

Fun and unique experiences all year long!

STAGE COACH
THEATRE COMPANY

VIRGINIA
IS FOR
THEATRE
LOVERS

Patama Thai Kitchen

Authentic Thai Food
Simply Delicious

540-338-5859

101 South Maple Avenue
Unit E, Purcellville

"Excellence In Real Estate"

Kathy Stripley
RE/MAX Executives
kathy.stripley@comcast.net

703-314-5539 cell
840-822-9124 home office
571-210-7355 office

AFFORDABLE

Expert Tree & Stump Removal

- HOA Maintenance
- Tree Planting
- Lot Clearing
- Storm Damage
- Pruning
- Trimming
- Crowning
- Bulk Mulch Delivery

Hes Company LLC
703-203-8853
HesCompanyLLC.com
JohnQueirolo1@gmail.com

Licensed & Insured
Member Angie's List & BBB

LEESBURG
DECKS & PORCHES

Scott Pultz
703-727-5442
decksbyscott@gmail.com
35571 Suffolk Ln, Purcellville



SHOP LOCAL

Email advertise@blueridgeleader.com for advertising information.



See Our Ad on the Back Cover!
On The Market... with Sam
Sam Fisher
Principal Broker, Realtor®
Phone: 703-408-4261
onthemarketwithsam@gmail.com



onthemarketloudoun.com



PIANO LESSONS

children & adults
CLASSICAL METHOD

Alan Ogden
Purcellville & Loudoun

cell: (703) 401-7022
ogdenmusic.org

Trombone, Euphonium, Organ & Voice



Celebrating the Class of 2026

Claire Cory Greta Lorelei Haley Mandy

141 W. MAIN ST. PURCELLVILLE **107 S. KING ST. LEESBURG**



we won best burger

Thank You Loudoun for Voting us #1 Burger.

• in Loudoun County
• in Northern Virginia
• In the State of Virginia!

When You Need A Great Burger... You Need MELT!

525 East Market Street, Leesburg, VA 20176
(703)443-2105



Erie Insurance®

Above all in sERvice™

Auto • Home • Business • Life

Call us for a quote today.



Nikki Englund
Purcellville, VA
nikki@englundinsurance.com
540-338-1130

S982 Not all companies are licensed or operate in all states. Not all products are offered in all states. Go to erieinsurance.com for company licensure and territory information.



TUNE-UP AND PRUNE UP

Be ready to go when your grass is ready to grow

GENERATORS SMALL ENGINES AUTOMOTIVE LAWN CARE

Bice Services LLC

(410) 707-9978
biceservicesllc@gmail.com

20+ Years of Mechanical Experience • Honest, Trustworthy, Fair
Family-Owned • Serving Loudoun & Surrounding Areas

NOW HIRING

Purcellville Electric LLC

Over 40 Years of Experience

RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL

540-338-2424
www.PurcellvilleElectric.com

STRESSING ABOUT MEDICARE?

Well, stress no more.

I make Medicare sign-up and annual review EASY. And, my service is FREE. I guide you through the Medicare process:

Part A
Hospital
Stays

Part B
Doctor
Visits

Part C
Medicare
Advantage

Part D
RX
Drugs

Call me. I'm here to help make Medicare as easy as possible.



MPGROUP

NAVIGATE MEDICARE TOGETHER

703-930-5705 jeff@mpgroup.org

corcoran

MCENEARNEY
Middleburg Real Estate

Call Marcy for your Real Estate needs Full-Time, Local Experience since 1993



MARCY CANTATORE

Selling Homes, Farms & Land
Licensed in VA & WV

540-533-7453

www.MarcyC.com • MarcyC@MarcyC.com
[Facebook@MarcyCantatore](https://www.facebook.com/MarcyCantatore) • [Instagram@MarcyCSells](https://www.instagram.com/MarcyCSells)

Atoka Properties 113 N 21st St, Purcellville, VA 20132

10% SAVINGS ON TREE WORK



**Hilling & Sons
Offer the
Expertise You
Need**



**Tree pruning
is an essential
annual practice.**

- **Prune dead, diseased, or unsafe branches from your trees to protect you, your home, and your belongings.**
- **Smart maintenance will influence the structure and shape of the tree in the future.**
- **Trim lifeless branches so they don't succumb to winter snow and winds!**
- **Get scheduled now by visiting our website where you'll find our free estimate form and even request free wood chips.**

Offer valid through 7/31/26



Curt Hilling
540-287-1970

www.HillingAndSons.com

Licensed & Insured • ISA Certified Arborist #MA-5110-A

**FREE
ESTIMATES**

1M-SQ.-FT. INDUSTRIAL APPROVED,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sylvia Glass (D-Broad Run), Mike Turner (D-Ashburn), Koran Saines (D-Sterling), Matt Letourneau (R-Dulles) voted in favor of the rezoning application. Chair Phyllis Randall (D-At Large), Juli Briskman (D-Algonkian) and Laura TeKrony (D-Little River) voted no.

The 117.07-acre site at 17110 Purcellville Road lies within the Purcellville Joint Land Management Area, just outside town limits.

The proposal seeks to rezone the property from JLMA-3 to Planned Development-Industrial Park, allowing up to 986,000 square feet of industrial development.

Revised plans reduce overall square footage by nearly 289,000 square feet from earlier versions and lower building heights to 32 feet on the western portion of the site and 40 feet on the eastern side. The proposal also includes a 358-foot setback from the nearest residence and a 60-foot reforestation buffer.

The applicant has designated approximately 300,000 square feet—about 30% of the project—for warehouse or storage uses, saying these are intended to reduce overall water demand.

The proposal includes a private water system capable of producing up to 74,880 gallons per day, though state regulations would limit permitted withdrawals to 43,680 gallons per day.

Senior Planner and Project Manager Rachael Iwanczuk said that if the property remained zoned at one dwelling per three acres, estimated water usage would be 13,650 gallons per day. By comparison, if developed at the density of the nearby Mayfair community (five dwelling units per acre), estimated daily water usage would rise to about 204,750 gallons, she said.

Iwanczuk noted that Mayfair Industrial contains 246,299 square feet of industrial space, compared with 12,000 square feet at St. Francis Court, located outside the town limits across Rt. 7.

An additional secondary well could provide an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 gallons per day, and the project would include on-site wastewater treatment.

The applicant has updated its proffers to extend off-site well monitoring for nearby properties to five years, tied to the issuance of certificates of occupancy. Monitoring would begin after at least 300,000 square feet of non-warehouse and storage uses are completed and continue through buildout of up to 493,000 square feet.

The development is projected to generate 3,086 weekly vehicle trips. Iwanczuk said 2030 traffic volumes at Hirst Road and Rt. 690 are projected at 1,090 westbound,

220 northbound, and 870 southbound vehicles without the project.

Iwanczuk said the proposal is inconsistent with the development pattern and land-use guidance for the Purcellville Joint Land Management Area Rural Neighborhood Place Type outlined in the Loudoun County 2019 General Plan.

She said the designation is intended to support low-density, large-lot and clustered residential development, as well as agricultural and rural economy uses. County consultants also found the proposed industrial uses are not adequately mitigated given their proximity to residential areas, and cited a reasonable potential for off-site water impacts.

County staff continued to recommend denial of the application.

The public hearing drew a large number of speakers.

Purcellville Mayor Chris Bertaut said he has heard from residents of Purcellville and surrounding areas that “all are opposed to the project.” He added, “These are the people who will be most affected by this if you approve this project,” and said, “It’s impossible to reconcile approval of this project with the county’s General Plan and the town’s Comprehensive Plan for the area adjacent to the town, which call for less intensive uses that complement the rural character of the area surrounding the town.”

He said a recent survey of residents in surrounding areas showed 93% opposed the project.

“A sextuple increase in the industrial space over that provided inside the Town of Purcellville is simply not needed and will lead to the hollowing out of the commercial areas of the town,” he said.

Council member Susan Khalil said, “Approving this application would disregard the residents who are the foundation of our town.”

She noted that the project is “clearly inconsistent with both the county and Purcellville’s comprehensive plans.”

Khalil also said the risks are “straight-forward,” adding that approving the application could put additional strain on the water supply and increase traffic in an area that already presents safety concerns.

Council member Caleb Stought, who on Jan. 8, 2025, voted against ending the annexation process for the Valley Commerce Center, said, “This land is not a suitable location for this type of project.”

He said the Rt. 7/690 interchange should not be used as an excuse to build the Valley Commerce Center, noting that the interchange is being built to address current traffic problems. He said using it as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22 »

NETT ATTORNEY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

did not have sufficient time to fully research the legal question at that moment.

Nett’s attorney, Jennifer L. McGovern, disputes that characterization, writing that Olsen had several days to research the issue before jury instructions were finalized.

“To the extent Mr. Olsen argues that he previously agreed to the Removal Verdict Form because he was required to think on his feet and did not have time to research the issue, not only did he have several days to research the issue prior to the jury instructions being read to the jury, but having to think on one’s feet is a necessary component of litigation,” McGovern wrote.

McGovern maintains that the verdict form accurately reflected Virginia law and that jurors possessed the authority to decide whether removal from office was warranted.

“It is within the jury’s discretion to determine whether removal is warranted by clear and convincing evidence under Virginia Code § 24.2-233,” the filing states.

On June 30, the court is scheduled to determine whether the Commonwealth can challenge a verdict form it previously agreed to and whether the jury’s verdict should remain intact.

The case is the latest development in a series of legal proceedings involving Nett.

He is currently suspended from office under Senate Bill 648, legislation approved by the Virginia General Assembly earlier this year and signed into law by Governor Abigail Spanberger.

The law applies to towns within Planning District 8, which is only the Town of Purcellville, with populations between 8,000 and 10,000 residents and requires the suspension of elected officials while felony criminal charges remain pending.

Prior to his suspension, Nett was part of a 4-3 majority on the Purcellville Town Council. His suspension created a 3-3 split among the remaining council members.

Nett has denied wrongdoing and continues to contest both the criminal allegations against him and efforts to permanently remove him from office.

On June 22, Nett’s attorney, Ryan Campbell, filed a Writ of Prohibition with the Virginia Supreme Court challenging Senate Bill 648. According to the filing, Nett argues the law is an unconstitutional bill of attainder in violation of both the Virginia Constitution and the U.S. Constitution.

Nett has also publicly alleged that the legal actions against him are part of a broad criminal conspiracy. He has stated that he has met with the FBI and has called for a U.S. Department of Justice civil rights investigation.

DATA CENTERS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

character kind of being butchered up here in western Loudoun,” Carvill said.

He asked what role the federal government could play in helping communities protect water resources and prevent western Loudoun from becoming “another Ashburn.”

Subramanyam acknowledged that most land-use decisions are made at the local level but said he supports efforts to preserve western Loudoun’s unique identity.

He added that western Loudoun remains one of the region’s defining assets.

“We have the East—there’s a lot to offer in the East—but then we have the West, which is so unique and so beautiful that way,” Subramanyam said.

Subramanyam acknowledged that most land-use decisions are made at the local level but said he supports efforts to preserve western Loudoun’s unique identity.

“I think the community here agrees that we want to protect the rural character,” he said. “I think the community should be listened to.”

While local growth concerns generated some of the strongest reactions from attendees, residents also raised questions about broader national issues.

One resident questioned how Congress plans to address the nation’s growing debt, which he described as approaching \$40 trillion.

PURCELLVILLE COUNCIL CODIFIES, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

reserves or borrowing, while town officials continue to pursue grants and other funding sources.

“When we create a budget that says we are going to be spending \$20 million to \$30 million on capital improvement projects, we have to assume for the sake of the modeling utilities that all of that will be funded through either cash or loans,” Bertaut said. “However, we are in the background aggressively pursuing other funding sources, including grants.”

Under the codified schedule, water and sewer rates would increase according to the following projections:

- FY 2027: 16.5% water, 14.5% sewer (previously adopted)
- FY 2028: 35% water, 32% sewer
- FY 2029: 35% water, 19% sewer
- FY 2030: 35% water, 3.5% sewer
- FY 2031: 25% water, 3% sewer
- FY 2032: 7% water, 3% sewer

Town officials noted the projections could change in future years depending on grant awards, outside funding sources, project costs and technological advancements that may reduce infrastructure expenses.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 »

Tuscarora Mill Presents

A Tour of Italy Wine Dinner









July 15th 2026
7:00 PM
\$150 ALL INCLUSIVE
www.Tuskies.com
Leesburg, VA

NOTICE ASPHALT PAVING

SUMMER SPECIAL

15% Off with ad

We are currently paving in your area.

With our crew and equipment close by, we are offering prompt service and reasonable rates to all area residents for a short time. Please call immediately if you are interested in having any asphalt paving done this year.



WE DO:

**HOUSE DRIVEWAYS • PARKING LOTS
FARM LANES • LONG LANES • DRIVEWAYS
PRIVATE ROADS • PATCHWORK
NEW HOMES • GRADEWORK • SEAL COATING
BASEWORK • ASPHALT MILLINGS**

Maybe you have a bit area you would love to have blacktopped but you can't afford to pave the whole thing right now. We install partial driveways. We can pave an area by your house just big enough to park your vehicles, or we can install as little as one load for you.

Tired of a Dust Bowl in the Summer and a Mud Hole in the Winter? Don't Fuss ... CALL US!

**Free Estimates • Fast Service • Quality Work
Full-Service Asphalt Paving**

Please call John Donohue for a FREE ESTIMATE

(571) 255-9187

1843218

Licensed and Insured

SPANBERGER SIGNS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

She noted that Loudoun County remains one of Virginia's most significant agricultural regions despite continued development pressures. Perry said the county has one of the Commonwealth's most diverse farming communities, including large numbers of new, veteran, women and minority farmers.

Perry also described the legislation as a foundational step that will allow policymakers, agricultural organizations and energy stakeholders to build future programs and incentives around a shared definition of agrivoltaics.

Spanberger said the legislation addresses both Virginia's growing energy demands and the need to keep farmland in production.

"Agrivoltaics is one of these solutions," Spanberger said. "The idea is simple: you put solar panels on farmland in a way that keeps that land in production."

"The farmer gets supplemental income and lower energy bills. The grid gets clean power, and nobody has to choose between feeding people and powering communities," she added.

The governor said establishing a legal definition in Virginia code will help provide certainty for farmers, developers and policymakers while helping prevent future disputes over how agricultural land can be used in solar agreements.

Without a clear definition, Spanberger said, some farmers elsewhere have entered agreements expecting land to remain in agricultural production only to later discover that solar development plans could significantly alter how the property was used. The new law is intended to ensure agricultural production remains the priority in agrivoltaic projects.

At Roundabout Meadows, rows of elevated solar panels provide partial shade for crops while generating electricity. The site also includes battery storage capable of supplying power when the electric grid is unavailable, allowing the farm to

continue operating during outages.

The Roundabout Meadows installation is considered one of Virginia's first crop-based agrivoltaics projects and serves as a demonstration site for farmers, researchers, policymakers and solar developers.

"We're proud to convene this bill signing at the site of the first crop-based agrivoltaics project in Virginia," said PEC Senior Energy & Climate Advisor Ashish Kapoor.

Crops including kale, lettuce, beets, broccoli and garlic are grown beneath the solar panels, which help reduce the farm's electricity costs. Kapoor said the project serves as a model for other Virginia farms interested in combining agricultural production with solar energy generation.

The solar arrays also help power farm operations, while battery storage can provide electricity for critical equipment during outages. Such systems can improve farm resilience while demonstrating how renewable energy and agriculture can coexist.

Agrivoltaics offers one approach to address two competing challenges facing Virginia—growing demand for electricity and the need to preserve agricultural land.

As data centers, population growth and business expansion continue to drive electricity demand across Northern Virginia, state and local officials are increasingly exploring ways to add new energy generation without permanently removing productive farmland from use.

Agrivoltaic projects can allow farmers to diversify income while continuing agricultural operations. Potential benefits include reduced water evaporation, crop protection during extreme heat and increased energy resilience.

The legislation itself does not create incentives or funding programs. Instead, it establishes a legal definition that may serve as the foundation for future state policies, regulations and discussions regarding solar development.

OPINION: THE HANDS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

The future of organizations like Boulder Crest will not depend solely on funding or facilities. It will depend on whether enough people still believe in service. Whether enough citizens still choose contribution over convenience. Whether the next generation understands that the strength of a nation is measured not only by its military, but by the willingness of its people to serve each other.

Our volunteers constantly show what that looks like and it is our responsibility

to ensure that spirit endures.

Ken Falke, is a 21-year veteran of the US Navy Special Operations Explosive Ordnance Disposal community. Falke is a serial entrepreneur and the chairman and founder of Boulder Crest Foundation, an organization focused on the teachings of posttraumatic growth. He is also the author of "Struggle Well: Thriving in the Aftermath of Trauma" and "Lead Well: 10 Steps to Successful and Sustainable Leadership."

OAK HILL STATE PARK, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Assembly is a landmark moment for Oak Hill and for Virginia,” said Heather Richards, Mid-Atlantic vice president at The Conservation Fund. “We don’t get many second chances to preserve history this important.

“These 1,200 extraordinary acres are poised to become a crown jewel of Virginia’s state park system—a place where visitors can experience our nation’s history, explore the outdoors and make memories for generations to come,” said Richards.

“After many years of attempts, I promised to get Oak Hill preserved as a State Park during my first term,” Del. John McAuliff said. “After heavily lobbying the Governor, the House and Senate, I made good on that promise in time to celebrate America’s 250th Birthday.”

Former Del. Geary Higgins, who worked for years to advance the proposal, also welcomed the vote.

“On the eve of the celebrations to commemorate our Country’s 250th Anniversary, I am very glad to see that President Monroe’s home, Oak Hill, is back on track to finally become a State Park,” Higgins said.

The Conservation Fund acquired the approximately 1,200-acre property in

November 2025 to prevent development while working toward its permanent preservation as a Virginia state park.

Oak Hill holds national historical significance as the home of President James Monroe, where he lived and developed the Monroe Doctrine. The property also reflects the lives of the enslaved people who built and worked the estate, as well as the Indigenous history that predates European settlement.

The property represents one of Northern Virginia’s last opportunities to preserve such a large, contiguous landscape for public use. Plans include hiking trails, fishing, equestrian access, wildlife habitat protection and interpretation of the site’s historical and cultural significance.

The DeLashmutt family, which owned and cared for the property for more than 70 years, declined larger development offers in favor of preserving Oak Hill for future generations.

Governor Abigail Spanberger is expected to sign the state budget June 30, completing the budget process. The project will then move into the administrative and planning phase, including archaeological and historic resource assessments. Supporters hope Oak Hill will welcome its first visitors as a Virginia state park in 2027.

GENERATORS

Servicing All Brands

Over 80 years combined experience providing complete service that includes engine, generator and transfer switch.

PROPANE – NATURAL GAS – DIESEL

▶ **INSTALL OR UPGRADE — REPAIR OR REPLACEMENT** ◀



POWER SOLUTIONS

540-533-0232

gwppowersolutions.com

We won’t leave you powerless.

KOHLER
IN POWER. SINCE 1920.

GENERAC

WINDO
Quality Generators Since 1927

ASCO Power Technologies®

Stop by our Grill Cylinder Fill Station today!

\$3.750* Per Gallon Cylinder Fill

*Prices subject to change without notice.



YOUR LOCAL PROPANE AND NFI CERTIFIED FIREPLACE EXPERTS



HOLTZMAN | HOLTZMAN

OIL CORP. | PROPANE

FIREPLACE STORE

SALES. INSTALLATION. SERVICE. REPAIR.

1201 WOLF ROCK DRIVE | PURCELLVILLE, VA 20132

(540) 751-9292

Hours: Monday – Friday — 8am to 5pm



ENFORCE PREMIUM DIESEL

Best Performance Benefits
For All Diesel Engines



HoltzmanCorp.com

OPINION: THE UGLINESS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Trendiness

Architectural style fluctuates. Take the wide range of house types: Victorian, Prairie, Ranch, Colonial, Cottage, Victorian, Split-level and so on. Colonial remains the most popular, though often in bastardized and cheapened forms.

Trends also influence commercial and institutional buildings. For example, there's Brutalism, birthed in the time of Naziism and characterized by looming, oppressive concrete walls, minimal decoration or fenestration. Some critics say the new Obama Center in Chicago looks that way.

A current trend in County projects is expressing slim metal columns, flat roofs and accents in brown. That may have been what irked my friend. The Trump-Kennedy Center sports similar flourishes, screaming "mid-Sixties!" Park in front of your split-level house, feel the shag carpet underfoot, make a quick stop in a pink-tiled bathroom...

A current and noxious trend is featuring the color dark brown. Gag me, and I'm not alone: Dark Brown has been considered the world's ugliest color; so sayeth AI.

McMansions

They're everywhere. McMansions often haphazardly mix traditional architectural elements ... all on the same facade. Many have ridiculously complex roofs, with too many gables, hips, and dormers, making a chaotic appearance.

To have marketing pizzazz while remaining affordable to many buyers, McMansions can look grand from a distance, but are often built with many builder-grade materials. You'll see extensive use synthetic stucco, man-made siding, and faux stone veneer. While I blame builders, they are giving the market what it wants: Quantity over quality. That's reflected in their prices, which are much less per square foot than architect-designed residences.

There's a hysterical, snarky website at McMansionHell.com. It's great fun.

Price Sells: Homebuilders at Work

Never underestimate the ability of big homebuilders to create sad subdivisions of inconsequential houses. Take a new project off Dry Mill Road in Leesburg. Cookie-cutter, banal houses. Narrow lots, little variation in design, minimal variations of color. Zero landscaping. No redeeming factors and clearly built to attract people looking for

something cheap.

It's "White Oak Farm" but a farm no longer. There are no white oaks, no trees, no animals or crops of any kind, not even grass: The cheapo homebuilder bulldozed every single tree, blade of grass or foliage. Naming it "White Oak Farm" is an insult.

How Did We Get Here?

In older, established neighborhoods in Augusta and Atlanta, where I used to live, no two houses were alike. Houses were not butted up to each other. There were sidewalks. Houses sported windows on every exterior wall. Other than tile in bathrooms, all floors were hardwood. There was no plastic, no synthetic materials.

The came World War II and as it ended developer William Levitt saw an opportunity. Returning soldiers and sailors would be marrying, beginning families and looking for a home. Levitt responded, using mass-production techniques to build small houses on Long Island en masse, and repeating their design over and over. He successfully sold thousands of these houses, not because they were nice, but because they were cheap: \$7,000 to \$8,000. Not bashful, he called it Levittown.

Other homebuilders took notice that price

sells, and that the market will follow trends. That led to ranch houses and "ramblers" in the 1950s and 60s, then to little faux colonials like White Oak Farm and upmarket to McMansions.

What Can Be Done?

Loudoun has annual design awards, but they get little fanfare. Pity.

Local zoning should reduce density and demand wider setbacks side and rear. The County's Facilities Standards Manual sets many requirements, so add some more: Windows on every elevation. Use of the front exterior's material on all exterior walls. Color variation. Sidewalks and front porches. Look up Habersham, a community in South Carolina, to see how great a reasonably priced development could look.

Benefits

Imagine your house in an area of substantial, well-built colonial homes. Now imagine it surrounded by square miles of cookie-cutter, plain Jane houses built to be as cheaply priced as possible. Which environment is more likely to protect your home's value?

Charlie Houston was once denounced by a former neighbor as being a snob. He denies it and says the ideas in this article would enrich Loudoun.

1M-SQ.-FT. INDUSTRIAL APPROVED, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

justification would be "trading one problem for another."

Paul McCullough, chief information officer at JK Moving, said the county has done a good job building the data center economy, but it has put pressure on light industrial space and many businesses around "Data Center Alley" can no longer afford to rent there.

He said the Valley Commerce Center helps fill that gap and called for a balanced approach by supporting the project.

Jamie Emery, a hydrogeologist working on the project, said he has investigated groundwater for the Valley Commerce Center for the past four years and that "the applicant has far exceeded the requirements set forth by both the county and the state."

He said groundwater use at the Valley Commerce Center can be done in "a safe and sustainable manner."

Developer Casey Chapman said residents often return to the argument that "this isn't the right spot."

"Well, it's time to choose. The county has an obligation, a duty to provide something there" that is a net benefit—and the JLMA is supposed to be a transition, he said. "I am here as someone who sees the need for

this."

Purcellville resident Michael Parish said county planning staff continue to recommend denial "because it is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan and not adequately mitigated given its proximity to existing homes. This property is designated rural neighborhood intended for low-density residential."

Parish said, "The issue tonight before the board is not whether industrial space may be needed somewhere in Loudoun County, but whether this location is appropriate under the comprehensive plan."

He said that "residents rely on the comprehensive plan to understand how their communities would grow."

Contractor Donald Smith supported the project, saying it will generate tax revenue and create new job opportunities.

Commercial realtor Chase Stewart said there is a lack of available space in the region and that the project would be beneficial for western Loudoun.

Chad Martin, chief operating officer with JK Moving, said the project is a thoughtful and well-planned solution to the shortage of light industrial space in western Loudoun.

Tia Earman, senior land use field representative for the Piedmont Environmental Council, said, "A million square feet of

industrial building is an inappropriate use in the JLMA rural place type."

She said there is a recognized shortage of flex industrial space in the county, but added, "This is a direct product of over proliferation of data centers and frequent rezonings approved in eastern Loudoun."

"But the answer now is not to undermine the integrity of residential communities by approving inappropriate rezonings on their doorstep in western Loudoun," she said.

Earman said, "We continue to share the neighbors' concerns about traffic. It's not only the volume of traffic added, but the nature of the vehicles likely to be included coming and going from oversized buildings."

Purcellville resident Lloyd Harting said he had a traffic study conducted on Purcellville Road from 6 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 7 p.m., during which 2,114 vehicles, trucks and school buses were counted.

"If the applicant's traffic prediction is accurate of 3,500 daily trips, then vehicle traffic on Purcellville Road will reach 5,614 daily trips," he said.

John Ellis, with Save Rural Loudoun, said, "We are very strongly opposed to the Valley Commerce Center."

He said professional hydrogeologists who were not "commercially affiliated with

the applicant" have reached conclusions exactly the opposite to those presented earlier.



Area resident Richard Pruzina urged the board to vote no on the application. He said his family moved to the United States in 1969 in search of freedom and a better life from then-Czechoslovakia.

He chose Purcellville "as a place to build my life because it represented everything that my father, my family came here for—peace, community and the American dream."

"With the Valley Commerce Center we don't just lose water, we lose the very character of western Loudoun," he said.

After the board began its discussion following public comment, Supervisor Caleb Kershner, whose district includes the property, made a motion to approve the project, saying, "Ultimately I support this application."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 »

JUST LIKE NOTHING (ELSE), CON'T. FROM PAGE 4

formed prior to the American Revolution—way back in 1751, according to a quick bit of research.

Now, the current Church facility at the site is a comparative fledgling, having been constructed in 1854, after at least one earlier structure fell to the hands of time; I had to remind myself the present-day building pre-dates the Civil War.

So, that's some history; not quite eternity, but about as close as I can reach from the well of evidence of our so-called modern civilization in these parts. In fact, an unhurried stroll through the surrounding churchyard reveals headstones etched up to the memories of soldiers who served in several historic military conflicts: not only the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, but the War of 1812 as well.

Now, just for a point of reference, we can compare these relatively recent chicken-scratchings of some of the early settling in the locality to the much more impressive history of the region's geologic events: most eyebrows, I trust, will rise a bit at the reminder of the age of those hills rising to the west—the Blue Ridge Mountains, part of the Appalachian Range—having formed hundreds of millions to upwards of a billion years ago. Even the advent of the earliest Americans—erroneously called 'Indians' by some of the later 'outside' explorers—dates from drastically more recent times, evidence suggesting the 20-thousand-year range.

No, I didn't peruse all the dates and factual information of these lengthy timelines as I slowly paced around the grounds of Ketocin Church and its cemetery that gloomy morning, but some of the seeds were planted—in the back of the mind, at the



end of some of the hairs on my head, and perhaps along the spinal column, the part that remains partial to a shivering sensation whenever one feels the presence of the immortal, or eternal.

Being in the vicinity of that much time and space, the dimensions seemed, if only for a moment, to become irrelevant, perhaps intersecting all at one point, with mutual cancellation, like magnets repelling one another.

Simply: it's an old house of worship, surrounded by ancient markers of its members reaching far afield, in the shadow of even more ancient physical features, all previously trodden by at least what we believe was the original race of humans in this region, and country, and hemisphere.

See what I mean by the back of the mind, the hairs on one's head, and the sensitive portion of the spinal column? This is what spoke to me from that visit to the site along Ketocin Church Road, just off Alder School Road, a few miles north of the Town of Purcellville, Virginia.

And, you know what? Writing this story, I lost track of the time. Now, see—that was some good coffee!

FINANCIAL FOCUS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

ethical reasoning. Robo-advisors' predetermined algorithms may not suit investors with complex financial needs like estate planning or comprehensive tax planning.

The human touch still matters. This is where human financial advisors remain indispensable. They provide what technology can't:

Long-term perspective: Help you maintain focus when markets get volatile and emotions run high

Goal coordination: Balance competing priorities, help partners merge their financial visions and remind you of goals you've tucked away and didn't know still mattered

Accountability: Keep you on track with your financial strategy through life's inevitable changes

Emotional support: Offer reassurance and wisdom during major financial decisions

Research validates it: Those who regularly work with a financial advisor and have a financial strategy are more likely to feel optimistic about their financial future than those who manage finances on their own, according to 2025 research from Edward Jones and Morning Consult.

Find the right balance. The future likely lies in a hybrid approach: combining data-driven AI insights with the human wisdom of a financial advisor who understands your values, priorities and life's inevitable curveballs. Think of AI as a powerful calculator and your financial advisor as the mathematician who knows which equations to use.

As these technologies evolve, the key is treating AI as a tool, not a guide.

Stay curious about what technology can do for your finances. Stay critical of its limitations. And remember: What matters most in your financial life is something only you can define. 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. Edward Jones, Member SIPC.

Joshua Wolinski | (540) 338-2291 | joshua.wolinski@edwardjones.com.
"Aligning your financial future with your personal goals, wants, and wishes."

SHOP AND SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS AND NEIGHBORS

Lydia Clark
(M) 732-309-2298
lydiasellsloudoun@gmail.com
www.lydiasellsloudoun.com

LONG & FOSTER
REAL ESTATE

Long & Foster Realtors®
100B Purcellville Gateway Dr
Purcellville, VA 20132

MRP
Military Relocation Professional

LOUDOUN COUNTY'S PREMIER
GREENHOUSE & GARDEN CENTER

Serving the Community Since 1925

ABERNETHY & SPENCER
GREENHOUSE & GARDEN CENTER

18035 Lincoln Rd
Purcellville, VA
Mon-Sat 9am - 5pm
Sunday 10am - 4pm
abernethyspencer.com

- Perennials, Shrubs, Trees
- Annuals, Herbs & Vegetables
- Fountains, Statuary & Planters
- Conservatory Gift Shop
- Summer Classics Outdoor Furniture

Customized Special Cleaning Everytime!

SPECIAL CLEANING SERVICE

Weekly • Bi-weekly • Monthly or Just One Time!
FREE ESTIMATES • GREAT REFERENCES!

Call Maria Today!
703.477.1228
CallMariaToday@gmail.com

Tax Resolution Services

Tax Season is almost here
We Are The Key To Solving Your IRS Debts

accurate
Accounting & Tax Solutions

Individual and Business Tax Returns
Offer in Compromise
Wage Garnishment
Back Levy & IRS Liens
Installment Agreement

Back Tax Returns
Business and Payroll
Innocent Spouse
Penalty Abatement

Seema Nayyar MBA, CPA
540-338-3967
seema@accuratetaxpc.com
www.accuratetaxpc.com
170 W. Main St., #101, Purcellville, VA 20132

LUCKETTS EXCAVATING INC

We specialize in pond/lake installation & repair, equestrian riding arenas, gravel road/driveway installation & repair, land clearing, grading, pad sites, basement dig outs, and more.

703-443-0039 | LuckettsExcavating.com

LOCAL | AWARD-WINNING | LICENSED | INSURED

MARY WISKER
REALTOR®, ABR/SFR
Multi-Million Dollar Producer
Licensed in VA & DC
508 E. Market St.
Leesburg VA 20176

Cell: 703-577-6015
Office: 703-777-2900
Mary.Wisker@LNF.com
www.MaryWisker.com

LONG & FOSTER **Forbes**
REAL ESTATE

1M-SQ.-FT. INDUSTRIAL APPROVED,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

He said there is a significant shortage of flex industrial space in Loudoun County. Kershner said business owners he spoke with at the Small Business Awards were considering relocating to West Virginia, Clarke County or Winchester because comparable space is not available locally.

He said the planned Rt. 7/690 interchange “is going to help a lot.” Kershner also noted that approximately one-third of the project would be used for storage, which he said would reduce traffic impacts.

“Nothing is not going to happen on this property,” he said.

Kershner said the project could generate millions of dollars in revenue for

Purcellville “if they are willing to annex it in the future.” He said the town had refused to consider the project.

However, development proposals for the site have been discussed over the past 15 years through Town Council meetings, public hearings and community meetings.

Kershner’s reference to annexation reflected the fact that development on the site is constrained by available groundwater, while access to town water and sewer service could support greater density and more intensive uses.

Chair Phyllis Randall asked whether county staff believed the groundwater studies raised concerns.

Iwanczuk said the county had sent the applicant’s hydrogeologic study to a consultant retained by the county for review, and they found that the study conformed to the Facilities Standards Manual.

However, Iwanczuk said the consultant also concluded that “there is a reasonable potential that there could be an effect” on off-site wells in future years.

Supervisor Kristen Umstattd said, “It’s the board’s duty not just to provide for residents, but for jobs. The business community came out in force.”

Supervisor Juli Briskman said staff had made it clear that the property does not support this type of use.

“It’s not what is envisioned in our General Plan,” she said.

Briskman said repeated rezonings for data centers have reduced opportunities

for housing and flex industrial space, pushing those uses into these areas of the county.

“I know we need the use; this is not the right place for the use,” she said.

Supervisor Laura TeKrony said offering land in the western part of the county for industrial use “is not okay” and said approval of the application would set a precedent.

She said the proposal would impact the rural character of western Loudoun County and noted that “93% of neighborhoods oppose the proposal.”

TeKrony said the Town of Purcellville has twice rejected annexation and that the application does not align with the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25 »

ASK DR. MIKE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

the sounds and environments, and use visual schedules or social stories for younger children.

2. Offer Control: Provide noise-canceling headphones or earplugs. Let your child choose quieter spaces or take breaks as needed.

3. Create an Exit Plan: Identify a calm, quiet space your child can retreat to if overwhelmed.

4. Gradual Exposure: Practice tolerable levels of sound in controlled settings to build resilience over time.

5. Validate Their Experience: Acknowledge their discomfort rather than minimizing it.

6. Travel Strategies: Bring familiar comfort items, schedule breaks, and allow extra time. Predictability and preparation can reduce anxiety.

7. Fireworks and Events: Watch from a distance, inside a car, or through a window. Consider quieter celebrations or alternatives.

If your child’s sensitivity to sound interferes with daily life, consulting with a psychologist or occupational therapist can help clarify the underlying issue and provide tailored strategies. Early support can make a lasting difference in how they experience the world.

Remember children and teens with sensory sensitivities or misophonia are not being difficult; they are having difficulties. With understanding, planning, and appropriate support, families can help their children navigate a noisy world and participate more fully in summer activities and everyday life.

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, Ashburn.

OPINION: WATER RATES, CON’T. FROM PAGE 6

acknowledging those differences presents an incomplete picture.

The Fraser administration also used strategies beyond rate hikes: refinancing and restructuring debt to improve flexibility, eliminate balloon payments, and reduce financing costs; pursuing federal funding; benefiting from increased meals tax revenues; utilizing nutrient credit bank revenues; and receiving about \$10.58 million in ARPA funding. These measures helped ease pressure on residents while supporting operations and infrastructure.

Good governance balances infrastructure needs with affordability. Capital improvement plans are forecasts, not guarantees. Conditions and costs change, and priorities must be reassessed. Leadership is making those adjustments while protecting both infrastructure and ratepayers.

Responsible officials weigh infrastructure demands against affordability, economic conditions, available revenues, grants, debt strategies, and impacts on residents and businesses. Real leaders do not advance their position by mischaracterizing facts or stoking division. Leadership is measured by results, not rhetoric—by improving outcomes for our community, not rewarding loyalty or fueling conflict. That is governance, not politics.

No responsible official should ignore expert advice, but neither should officials blindly adopt every recommendation without considering the effect on the people who pay the bills. The choice is not sustainability versus affordability. Responsible leadership balances both.

What concerns me is the growing assumption that structural balance can only be achieved through significant

rate increases. That view overlooks other options, including:

- Reviewing General Fund chargebacks to utility funds
- Validating and rightsizing future capital projects
- Pursuing additional grants and outside funding
- Improving operational efficiency
- Refining debt strategies
- Exploring regional costsharing opportunities

Purcellville faces a unique challenge: nearly 45% of our land is schools, government facilities, churches, nonprofits, and other taxexempt properties. These institutions benefit from Town infrastructure but do not contribute to the local tax base as private property does.

At the same time, Purcellville residents and businesses contribute an estimated \$18 million annually to Loudoun County through taxes while hosting multiple Countysupported schools and public facilities that serve the broader region. As infrastructure needs continue to grow, the balance between local costs and regional benefits remains an important consideration.

That discussion is no substitute for responsible utility management. It is correct that infrastructure does not care about election cycles—neither do families trying to pay their bills.

The question is not whether we should maintain our infrastructure—we must. The question is how we do so responsibly while protecting affordability and preserving the character of our community.

Good governance means balancing resident needs with the need to maintain and improve infrastructure. True leaders accept responsibility for the present while focusing on solutions for the future. Residents expect their officials to solve

problems, not just explain who caused them.

Some argue for higher rates and more growth. I believe the answer is more balanced. Growth is not a sound financial strategy. New development brings new demands for roads, utilities, public safety, staffing, maintenance, and other services. While growth can generate shortterm revenue, it also creates longterm costs that taxpayers and ratepayers must support.

Purcellville’s history reflects this reality. Major infrastructure investments made in anticipation of growth contributed significantly to the debt challenges we continue to address. Growth does not pay for itself.

Our residents have made it clear they do not want Purcellville to become another large suburban center. They value our smalltown character, sense of community, and quality of life.

Responsible financial planning recognizes that capital improvement plans are not static. Infrastructure needs evolve. Technology and costs change. Priorities must be reassessed, assumptions validated, and opportunities for grants and outside funding pursued continually to avoid high future utility rate increases.

The path forward is not to ignore infrastructure needs, nor to assume every challenge can be solved through higher rates, more growth, or bigger government. It requires disciplined planning, responsible debt management, operational efficiency, affordable utility service, and a commitment to preserving Purcellville’s character.

That is the approach I have supported in public service and will continue to support: solving problems, protecting taxpayers and ratepayers, and preserving the community we all cherish.

1M-SQ.-FT. INDUSTRIAL APPROVED,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

county’s comprehensive plan, which was developed through years of public input.

She also referenced the county’s third-party consultant, who found there would be potential impacts to off-site wells.

Randall said the matter is a land-use issue. “If this were me, I would upzone this to dense housing. I’d put the infrastructure in place first and upzone it to dense housing.”

Following approval, the Board of Supervisors voted to consider removing the Northern Collector Road from the countywide transportation plan.

On Jan. 8, 2025, the Purcellville Town Council voted to remove the NCR from its transportation plan, with Council members Erin Rayner, Kevin Wright and Caleb Stought voting against the measure.

In a statement after the meeting, Chuck Kuhn said, “I’m very pleased with the outcome. It’s a win for small business and the local community they support. We appreciate the vote of confidence from the board and support from the local community, Loudoun Economic Development, and the Loudoun Chamber and its CEO Tony Howard.

“We look forward to moving ahead with this project and will work closely with the Town to make this a win for all.”

DATA CENTERS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

Subramanyam said elected officials too often focus on short-term political considerations rather than long-term fiscal challenges and said lawmakers must begin addressing the issue more seriously.

A veteran reminded Subramanyam he represents constituents across political, racial and socioeconomic lines and urged him to lead from principle rather than partisanship. He said he was “appalled” by what he viewed as a lack of bipartisan support during moments such as the State of the Union.

Other residents raised concerns about Social Security, health care costs and nursing home oversight. Subramanyam said his office continues to hear from constituents

struggling with rising medical costs and difficulties accessing government services.

The future of artificial intelligence also emerged as a topic of discussion. One attendee questioned whether Congress is moving quickly enough to address potential risks associated with advanced AI systems.

Subramanyam argued that lawmakers should establish stronger safeguards and oversight mechanisms for emerging AI technologies, saying Congress has been slow to respond as the technology rapidly evolves.

Subramanyam acknowledged residents’ concerns and said he would continue listening and working to ensure community priorities are reflected in decision-making.

SHOP AND SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS AND NEIGHBORS



NORTH’S TREE LANDSCAPING MASONRY

Seasoned Experience for Every Season

Decking • Driveways • Patios
Tree Work • Culvert Pipe Installation

Brian North 540-533-8092
NorthTreeAndMasonry.com
BNorth1883@yahoo.com

Free Estimates – Licensed & Insured – Angie’s List Member – Member BBB

LOUDOUN COUNTY MILLING

Feeding Loudoun County Over 100 Years!

HAY • STRAW • FENCING

Bulk Mulch • Top Soil • Sands • Gravels
Landscaping Stone • Erosion Control
Culverts, etc.

540-338-7161
www.loudounmillingfeeds.com



24/7 Home Care

SENIORS • SPECIAL NEEDS • DISABLED

Personalized Care For Your Needs

571-599-6570 • Info@AestarHomeCare.com
AestarHomeCare.com



Your Virginia Pets R My Pets
Daily Dog Walks &
In-Home Vacation Pet Care

Joe Pillera
(703) 867-7158
virginiapets@comcast.net
yourvirginiapetsmypets.com

Fully Insured, Bonded and Licensed

Lawn Mower, Small Tractors & Bushogs
Blade Sharpening & Maintenance
Oil Changes | Greasing | Repairs

Sharp Blades

Bill Suter We Come to You!
540 338-3408
SharpBladesVA@gmail.com



No Job too Big or too Small, We Handle Them All!

Kitchen and Bath Remodeling • Deck Maintenance
Plumbing • Electrical • Tile • Drywall • Painting • Roofing • Snow Removal

AFTER HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICES
540.683.0470
yourhandymanservice1@gmail.com

FREE ESTIMATES
LICENSED & INSURED

Business and Residential IT Support and Emergency Services

15 Years of IT Excellence

Call Nigel

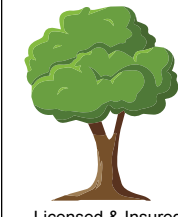
PREMIER COMPUTER TECHNOLOGIES
571-209-8250
nigel@premiercomputertechnologies.com



Erie Insurance®
Treacle Insurance Agency Inc
Darin Treacle

Auto • Home • Business • Life
8363 W Main St, PO Box 121, Marshall, VA 20116-0000
540-364-1853 • Fax 540-364-4210
darin@treacleinsurance.com

Flynn’s Lawn Maintenance



“Bret Flynn lawn care is outstanding. This guy is a hard worker and does it right the first time.” Charlie S.

General Yard Clean-up, Mowing, Mulching, Weedeating, Bush Trimming, Garden Tilling and more

Bret Flynn, Owner
(703) 727-9826

Licensed & Insured

Mark Malan (540) 751-8456



30 Years of Experience
Licensed/Insured
FREE ESTIMATES

Avalanche Excavating
Experience the Difference

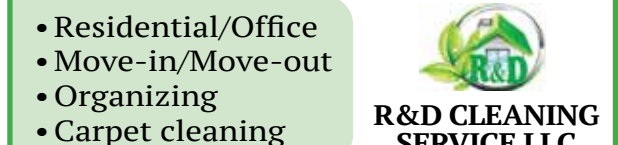
Gravel Driveway/Road Installation, Maintenance & Repair - Excavating - Bridges
Erosion Control - Pond Installation & Repairs - Land Clearing & Grading (Tree Removal)
Storm Damage Repair & Clean Up

www.avalancheexcavating.com
avalancheexcavatingllc@gmail.com

Serving Purcellville, Round Hill, Leesburg & Middleburg

Use Our Magic Cleaning Touch!

- Residential/Office
- Move-in/Move-out
- Organizing
- Carpet cleaning



R&D CLEANING SERVICE LLC
(703) 303-1364

Excellent references!
Courteous, reliable, certified, bonded and insured.

TOWN OF PURCELLVILLE CANDIDATE'S CORNER

CANDIDATES CORNER: MAYOR CHRIS BERTAUT,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

remained consistent: growth must respect the Comprehensive Plan, protect taxpayers, and preserve the qualities that make Purcellville special."

Pointing to the proposed Valley Commerce Center annexation, Bertaut said it illustrates the difficult decisions facing town leaders.

"Growth is never free," Bertaut said. "Every annexation and major development proposal creates new demands on roads, utilities, public safety, infrastructure, traffic, and town services. Those costs do not disappear. They are ultimately borne by taxpayers."

"My responsibility is to represent the interests of Purcellville's residents first, not outside interests seeking to reshape our community for their own ends."

"The decisions we make over the next two years will shape Purcellville for decades. Choices about growth, infrastructure, fiscal responsibility, and the character of our community cannot easily be undone. We can protect what makes Purcellville special while preparing responsibly for the future. We don't want to Ashburn Purcellville. We want Purcellville to remain Purcellville."

Bertaut said one of the greatest challenges facing the town is the increasingly divisive tone that has emerged in local politics.

"In the past year and a half, residents have witnessed lawsuits, personal attacks, political hostility, and behavior that has too often distracted from the important work of

governing," Bertaut said.

"Public meetings should be places where neighbors respectfully exchange ideas, even when they disagree. They should not become forums for intimidation, unfounded accusations, or attempts to divide our community."

Bertaut said he believes people want local government focused on serving the public.

"I have always believed that reasonable people can disagree without becoming enemies," he said. "Purcellville is a community, not a battlefield. Residents deserve leaders who listen, treat people with respect, and focus on solving problems rather than creating distractions."

Bertaut said his campaign is built on a simple principle: keeping Purcellville, Purcellville.

His priorities include protecting taxpayers, preserving the town's identity, making government more efficient and accountable, supporting local businesses, investing in critical infrastructure, and ensuring future growth reflects the values and vision of the community.

"I love our town," Bertaut said. "My family built our lives here. I have spent years serving this community because I care deeply about its future. This election is about whether Purcellville remains the town we know and love, defined by its character, history, and sense of community."

"Purcellville is worth protecting," Bertaut said. "I am asking voters for the opportunity to continue that work."

CANDIDATES CORNER: GREG PARIS,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

town," Paris said.

"They attended meetings, organized petitions, challenged decisions, and refused to give up. In the end, the land was permanently preserved. More than 35 years later, it remains open space. That experience taught me that citizens can make a difference when they are willing to stand up for their community."

Paris said he sees similar challenges facing Purcellville today.

"Development pressure is coming from every direction," he said. "Residents are being asked to accept more density, more traffic, greater demands on infrastructure, and increased pressure on limited resources. We need leaders who are willing to ask tough questions and make sure growth serves the community instead of changing the community to serve growth."

Professionally, Paris has worked in technical communications, government contracting, and business development, helping organizations solve complex problems, manage competing priorities, and build long-term strategies.

He believes those experiences, combined with a practical approach, would serve residents well on Town

Council.

"As a father, I want my children to grow up in a community where they can safely ride their bikes, know their neighbors, and enjoy the same small-town experience that shaped my childhood," Paris said. "Once a town loses its character, it is impossible to get it back."

Paris said he supports policies that respect the Town's Comprehensive Plan, protect taxpayers, preserve existing neighborhoods, and ensure infrastructure and public services are planned responsibly.

"Growth should be guided by the needs of residents, not by outside pressures or short-term interests," Paris said. "The people who live here should have the strongest voice in determining Purcellville's future."

Paris and his wife have made Purcellville their home and are raising their two children in the community. He is active in his church and enjoys reading and volunteering.

"I am not running because I am seeking a political career," Paris said. "I am running because I care deeply about this town and want to help preserve the qualities that brought my family here. I would be honored to serve, and I believe Purcellville is worth protecting."

CANDIDATES CORNER: HANK SPECKHARDT,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

the nature of this town and the reasons people chose to live here," Speckhardt said. "These decisions need to reflect the long-term interests of the residents who live here and will live with the consequences."

He said residents deserve careful, independent decision-making when it comes to land use, infrastructure, and growth, rather than one-size-fits-all policies imposed from outside the community.

"These are not abstract policy discussions," he said. "They affect traffic, water supply, public safety, taxes, and the overall quality of life in our community."

Drawing on his background as a business owner and entrepreneur, Speckhardt said he brings a practical, common-sense

approach to problem-solving and financial decision-making.

"I am not a career politician," he said. "I am someone who understands how to evaluate risk, manage resources, and make decisions based on long-term consequences rather than short-term promises."

Speckhardt said he supports policies that respect the Town's Comprehensive Plan, protect taxpayers, preserve existing neighborhoods, and preserve the qualities that define Purcellville's character and quality of life.

"I will work to ensure that residents remain at the center of every major decision," he said. "This town belongs to the people who live here, and its future should reflect their voice and their vision—not someone else's."

CANDIDATES CORNER: SAM BROWN,
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

development potential. Once open land is lost, it is gone forever.

The issues facing Purcellville today are not very different from those we faced years ago. The pressure to expand, increase density, and grow beyond the vision residents established for our community remains constant. That is why I am running for Town Council.

I am not a politician. I am a farmer, a businessman, a husband, a neighbor, and a lifelong resident who cares deeply about the future of our town.

Residents can count on me to support policies that respect Purcellville's Comprehensive Plan, protect property owners and taxpayers, preserve our

small-town character, maintain fiscal responsibility, and ensure growth occurs only when it serves the interests of the community.

I have participated in the Town's long-range planning efforts and understand the importance of following the vision residents spent years creating. That vision should guide decisions as new development proposals come forward.

Purcellville is more than the place where I live. It is the place that has shaped my family for more than 250 years. I am running because I believe future generations deserve the same opportunity to grow up in a town that values its history, its farms, its neighborhoods, and the people who call it home. I would be honored to earn your support and your vote.



WHEN THE PLAN FITS THE LAND

Your property is one of a kind.
Your landscape plan should be too.



DESIGN • BUILD • MAINTAIN

200 E Main St, Purcellville 540.338.7190 wildwoodlandscape.com

UNDER
CONTRACT



ESBY FARM

Virginia Countryside at its Finest



A true multigenerational compound with two full-sized residences — a beautifully preserved historic period farmhouse and stunning carriage home, offering an unmatched blend of history, luxury, and equestrian living. At the heart of the equestrian setting on 11.68 acres is a striking stone barn with silo and cupola details, with a spectacular party barn above that has hosted countless gatherings and celebrations. A 90' x 200' sand riding ring, extensive fencing, and excellent ride-out in a highly horse-friendly area further elevate the equestrian lifestyle. Sweeping Short Hill Mountain views complete the setting. Brilliant red roofs, towering trees, lush pastures, and storybook architecture create an unforgettable offering. Listed for \$2,400,000.

On The Market Properties



KNOW THE PEOPLE WHO KNOW THE MARKET



Sam Fisher
Principal Broker,
REALTOR®
Bluemont Resident
Onthemarketwithsam@gmail.com

On the Market Properties brings a people-first approach shaped by nearly 30 years of experience. Sam leads each client relationship with clarity and steady guidance, helping clients feel informed, supported, and never rushed. Partnering with her brother, Curt, whose knack for country real estate and laser focus on every detail, complements Sam's leadership, guiding clients through every step. Their experience spans in-town historic homes, large farms, vineyards, distinctive community residences, condos, and townhomes, supported by their personal team—including stager, personal organizer, contractors, lenders, title professionals, and movers. They welcome your whole family, including dogs, horses, and cats!

703-408-4261 www.OnTheMarketLoudoun.com

On The Market Properties – Bluemont, VA Licensed in the Commonwealth of VA



Curt Schaber
REALTOR®
Round Hill
Resident
Schabercurt@yahoo.com