



POINT-TO-POINT CHAMPIONSHIPS

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EIGHTY-SEVEN NEW DEVELOPMENTS RECOMMENDED FOR WESTERN LOUDOUN

The Loudoun County Planning Commission, seeking ways to help developers in western Loudoun, voted overwhelmingly Wednesday to relax regulations requiring test wells on new developments and to give special "consideration" to 87 subdivisions now being rushed through the county zoning process to take advantage of temporary A-3 zoning.

The commission first proposed "grandfathering" for all 87 developments, even if they have not been approved by the county or even been reviewed by county agencies. But that apparently would be illegal under Virginia court decisions.

The commission then proposed urging the Board of Supervisors to grant a 4-5 month "grace period" for the developers.

That would have allowed virtually all of the 87 three-acre-lot subdivisions to be approved even if the pending Clem-Burton rezoning of

western Loudoun goes into effect in June, as expected. The Clem-Burton plan would require minimum lot sizes of 20 and 40 acres.

The 4-5 month grace period, proposed by Chairman Teresa White Whitmore (Potomac District) and vice chairman Robert Klancher (Broad Run), "is another way of grandfathering isn't it?" one commissioner asked. "Yes," she was told.

But the grace period failed in a vote, when several commissioners said 4-5 extra months was "too long." They proposed a two-month grace period, to help the 87. But that also failed.

"Approve Them All"

Still wanting to do something for landowners and developers, "who have spent energy, money and time" on their projects, the commission simply recommended that the Board of Supervisors do everything in its power to help the developers. The 87 subdivisions "should all get approved," one member said. That passed in an 8-1 vote, Nancy Hsu (Blue Ridge District) opposing.

Hsu said the extraordinary actions proposed to help this particular group of devel-

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CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL ANNOUNCED

The Salamander Inn moved another step forward and Vicki Bendure reported at length on recent Fox 5 television coverage of Middleburg at the sparsely attended regular session of the Middleburg Town Council on March 9.

The council also adopted, for the first time, a formal set of written financial management guidelines, heard complaints about parking, moved to advertise antenna-space for lease on the town water tower, formally published the list of candidates eligible for the upcoming Mayoral and Town Council elections, appointed Mimi Stein to the Pink Box Advisory Committee, and Town

Manager Mike Casey, temporarily, to no less than three currently unfilled positions in Town government.

With no debate, and only Council Member Helen Hyre voting in the negative, the Council adopted a resolution presented at last month's meeting, to amend the Town Limits to include the property owned by Salamander Development, LLC. The adjustment, required by the Town's memorandum of understanding with Salamander, moves the Inn and Spa one step closer to a formal

connection to the Town's water supply and sewer system, and the Town one step closer to receiving a new waste water treatment plant at Salamander's expense.

Vicki Bendure, whose Middleburg-based Bendure Communications provides public relations support for the town, showed highlights from a full morning of reporting from Middleburg by Fox 5's weatherman, Tony Perkins, featuring lengthy interviews with Maureen Handley of Fox Chase Farms,

Continued Page 3

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Jim.Thompson@AMRFP.com

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NEWS OF NOTE

DAVID 'PEACHES' LEE WILL BE GREATLY MISSED

When David, "Peaches," Lee died last Saturday at the age of 91, Middleburg lost a native citizen who epitomized the caring and civilized characteristics this village community was known for many years ago.

Raised in Middleburg, Peaches Lee grew up in the house on the north side of the Community Center. His mother, Mrs. D. N. Lee, was a dedicated rider and boarded horses, for General Patton, Billy Mitchell, Mrs. A. C. Randolph, and many others during and after World War II in the barns that were located where the Community Center building and pool now stand.

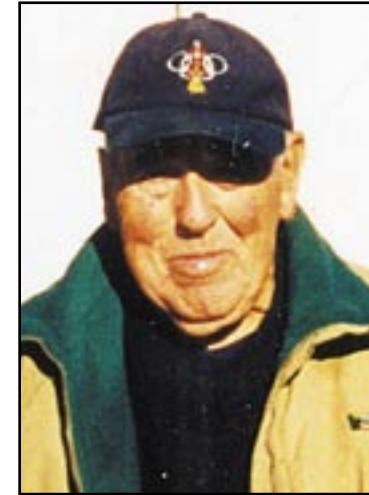
In the house next door to his lived Nancy Gartrell, who was to become Peaches' wife. She exercised horses for his mother and they both graduated from the Middleburg school.

Peaches Lee was Middleburg's postmaster for thirty years until his retirement, and he and three other village citizens founded the fire department. He was so well loved by many of his customers that they would jot notes to him on the post cards they sent to friends when they were on holiday.

Punkin Lee, Peaches' and Nancy's daughter, who owns Journeyman Saddlers in the village where she grew up and learned to ride, remembers her father as a kind, hard working citizen of this small hunt country community.

"He loved his work, and would do anything to help a colleague or a member of the community," she said. "If Christmas or birthday presents for Middleburg children arrived on a Sunday, and he knew they were expected, he would pick them up at the post office and deliver them personally to make certain no child was disappointed."

"He was very quiet man, who believed that if you had your health and liked what you were doing then life was good," she said, "But he loved the country-



side, the sunset, horses and birds. He remembered when the first automobile came to town and he served in the Navy on a Landing Craft Infantry Carrier in World War II."

According to his daughter, Peaches Lee respected that things had to grow and change.

"Things can't remain the same," she remembered him saying.

"He was a quiet, devoted member of this community," said Tyler Gore, who has lived in Middleburg since 1953. "Peaches was an exceptionally nice, all-around fellow who would help anyone in need and made work his life."

"Peaches woke early and helped at the barn before he went to the Post Office where he worked an eight-hour shift before he went home to put the horses away," Gore continued.

"Middleburg was a wonderful place then with a real camaraderie. I distinctly remember a time when, if your child was ill, you could telephone your local doctor late at night, he would ask the pharmacist to open the pharmacy, and the doctor would pick up the prescription and deliver it himself."

"Sadly, those wonderful days are gone," Gore concluded, ".... just like Peaches."

CAROLINE BROOK COSTIN TO WED

Mr. And Mrs. Mark Davis of Middleburg, Virginia, and Mr. And Mrs. Jim Atkins of Delaplane, Virginia, announce the engagement of their daughter, Miss Caroline Brooke Costin, to Mr. Nathan Drake Kline, son of dr. and Mrs. H Leon Gatlin, III of Charlotte, North Carolina, and Mr. And Mrs. Edward Kline of West Jefferson, North Carolina. Miss Costin is also the daughter of the late McKelvy Costin.

Brooke is the granddaughter of Mr. And Mrs. Howard O. Allen and Mrs. Jean Costin Gold of Middleburg, Virginia, the late William G. Costin, Jr., and the late Mrs. William C. Schoettle. She graduated from James Madison University, and earned a Bachelor of Science in accounting with a minor in Sociology. Brooke is a Recruiting Manager at Sherpa, LLC.

Nathan graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he earned a



Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication and is currently enrolled in the MBA program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Nathan is an Account Executive at Mindblazer.

The couple resides in Charlotte, North Carolina. They will be married on September 16, 2006 in Middleburg, Virginia.

TOWN COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Turner Reuter of the Red Fox Inn, John Fitter of Piedmont Vineyards Winery, and Mayor Tim Dimos. Mayor Dimos thanked Bendure formally on behalf of the Town and its business community, noting that media coverage "doesn't just happen." Bendure estimated the cost of 30 seconds of paid commercial time on channel 5's morning show at \$1,000, plus of course, the cost of production.

The Council praised, and adopted without debate, a set of financial management guidelines drawn up by a committee headed by Town Manager Mike Casey. The guidelines, the first of their kind for Middleburg, establish formally a minimum cash balance for the town's checking accounts, require the town to maintain a 3% of revenue projections contingency fund, establishes a 20% reserve fund, a new capital budget and associated fund, and mandates a debt limit of no more than 5% of

annual revenue projections (half the 10% maximum allowed by State Law.)

Casey also reported on candidate filings for the May 2nd election. Vice Mayor Betsy Allen Davis and James B. Justice III are running for mayor. Running for four council seats are

Frederick L. Hutchison, C. Darlene Kirk (Incumbent), Lisa Hubbard Patterson, Judith Pryor Plescow, Karen D. Robinson and Mark T. Snyder (Incumbent)

Edward ("Snooks") Swain bemoaned the new two-hour metered parking limit in the town's main shopping area, prompting comment from no less than five Council members. Betsy Davis noted that one can park forever without fear of ticket or tow, as long as one feeds the meter every two hours. Bundles Murdock noted that the Liberty Street lot is now open, quite inexpensive

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NEWS OF NOTE

NEW DEVELOPMENTS RECOMMENDED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

opers were inappropriate. Neither the old zoning nor the proposed (Clem-Burton) "zoning changes will prevent them (landowners) from selling their land" at a considerable profit.

The Planning Commission, appointed by the supervisors, has been outspoken in support of developers, calling current Loudoun building regulations "burdensome," "slow" and a "hardship" for them.

In a separate gesture to developers on Wednesday, and with little discussion, the commission voted 6-3 to "do away with" what commissioners called "expensive" and "costly" well-drilling requirements. The county Health Department requires 30-50 percent of a development's wells to be drilled and tested early in the county subdivision approval process. Under this commission recommendation, which also will go to the Board of Supervisors, developers would only have to do well drilling and testing in the final stages of the approval process.

Commission support for grandfathering, grace periods or special "consideration" for the 87 subdivisions, was done out of what commissioners have called "fairness" to landowners and developers.

Unfair

The nonprofit Unison Preservation Society, in appeals to both the Planning Commission and supervisors last week, urged the county instead to consider "fairness" to the 50,000 residents of western Loudoun and the neighbors who would be impacted by the developments.

The 87 subdivisions would be "spot zones of high-density A-3 development" surrounded by 20 and 40-acre rural zoning and would dramatically reduce property values of neighboring property owners, the society's statement said.

Such dense A-3 subdivisions, impossible in rural Loudoun under the previous 50-acre zoning, suddenly became possible last March, when the Virginia Supreme Court threw out western Loudoun's 50-acre zoning on a technicality. It made all of western Loudoun as, at least temporarily, A-3 zoning.

The Unison group said approving the 87 hastily-planned subdivisions would have a major negative impact on western Loudoun. They would generate more than 5,000 car trips a day on rural roads, the Unison group said. And the majority of lots would use the controversial and "quirky" alternative septic systems that have high failure rates and are banned

or strictly controlled in other counties and states." The widespread and virtually unregulated use of such systems in Loudoun, which can overflow on open ground, could pose a health hazard for the county.

Another criticism by the Unison group is that the developments, including a 28-house subdivision in Unison, provide no proffers, as do large developments in eastern Loudoun. "They generate huge new tax burdens on county residents, require more schools, teachers and buses, more fire and rescue and police services." In short, the subdivisions have no benefits, only negatives. So why should county officials bend over backwards to try to help them, to grandfather them, to give them a grace period or special "consideration?"

The nonprofit group said it would be bad public policy, and probably illegal, for county officials to purposely relax or bend county regulations to assist a group of landowners in making large profits on particular business ventures.

The preservation society, which represents several hundred area residents, said the 87 subdivisions are not "hardship" cases at all, as claimed by some Planning Commission members. Develop-

TOWN COUNCIL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

at \$2 for eight hours, and recommended that all shop owners suggest that their employees park there, leaving the metered spaces free for customers. Darlene Kirk reassured Mr. Swain that, at the moment, there was no plan for the Middleburg Police to chalk tires or engage in other draconic forms of parking enforcement. Margaret

ers took "a risk, a gamble, to try to rush subdivisions through the zoning process while temporary A-3 zoning exists" simply to make more money. "And if they couldn't get them through in time, since it usually takes at least 8-12 months to get a subdivision approved, they would appeal to you (county officials), claim hardship and ask you to grandfather their developments."

The nonprofit group said "fairness for all Loudoun residents" should be the guiding factor in county decisions. "Residents want county regulations enforced equally, without special exceptions to benefit a few. We want rural zoning laws that re-establish zoning order, protect the farming and horse industry, protect rural property values, don't create a public health hazard... and won't add to our traffic and tax woes."

New touted a new pocket parking meter reminder alarm, available from the Sharper Image. Eura Lewis closed the discussion, noting that the Town Planning Department should be complimented on coming up with a reasonable plan to encourage parking space turnover.

Verizon Wireless is seeking a ten year lease for space on the town water tower for a proposed wireless communications antenna. Town Council voted to advertise the opportunity to obtain a franchise to use space on the tower, and Mike Casey and Town Attorney, Elizabeth Whiting, are working to resolve a conflict between Verizon's desire for a 10-year lease and the State of Virginia's requirements that such agreements be limited to five years. Of particular concern to Whiting was Verizon's desire to address the issue with language prescribing an "automatic" five-year renewal, without Council review, of any initial five-year agreement.

Mike Casey's temporary appointment to three part-time positions -- as Town Planner, Zoning Administrator, and Town Clerk -- was approved unanimously, as Middleburg seeks candidates for the jobs.

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SUE PULEO WINS AH&T DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Sue Puleo, Realtor for Prudential Carruthers of Hamilton, Virginia, received the 2005 Armfield, Harrison & Thomas Distinguished Service Award at the Dulles Area Association of Realtors Production Awards & Honor Society Induction Banquet held February 10, 2006 at the Lansdowne Resort. This annual award was created in 1985 to recognize a real estate professional in the greater Loudoun County area who makes a significant contribution to the well being of others and their environment through extraordinary community service. Prudential Carruthers in Hamilton is very proud that two other agents from their office have won this award. Durette Upton won the very first one in 1985 and MaryLou Raymond won in 1991.

Ms. Puleo was presented with a silver bowl and a plaque, which is displayed at the Dulles Area Association of Realtors' (DAAR) office. She has been an active volunteer for many organizations that serve the region. She has been a supporting member for:

- Habitat for Humanity - 7 years
- Christmas in April - 4 years
- Dulles Area Association of Realtors Community Service Committee - 6 years and is currently the Chairman of the Dulles Area Association of Realtors for 2006

In the past, Sue has been a Girl Scout Leader for 10 years and a Founder and member of the La Leche League Purcellville Chapter for many years. Sue not only finds time to take care of her grandchildren but she also pro-

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Linden Wiesman is very excited to begin her new career in real estate. The last time she began a new career she was two years old and she rode a horse for the first time. The year was 1977 and no one knew then that 23 years later she would be in Sydney, Australia winning a bronze medal with her teammates, Karen and David O'Connor and Nina Fout at the 2000 Olympics.

About her work in real estate

vides free debt and financial consulting to her clients.

When asked her belief on the topic of giving she said, "...I believe in family first, my top priority. People often get caught up in the treadmill and not the important things in life. I try to make the lives I touch remember what is important."

Linden says, "everyone at Armfield, Miller & Ripley is so wonderful. There is a wealth of knowledge here and they share and help each other freely. I have lived in the Middleburg area for 12 years and I know what a fine firm this is."

"Linden Wiesman brings a level of excitement and accomplishment to her work in real estate that we all enjoy sharing," Gloria Armfield said. "Since Linden owned and managed her own horse operation as well as competing 'full on' for a number of years in eventing, she has brought that



great follow-through talent into her real estate work and clients really appreciate the results. We are delighted to welcome Linden to the firm."

Figure in White

Ria DeWitt



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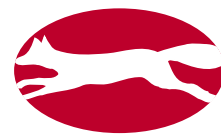
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PASTIMES

EPICUREAN CORRESPONDENCE

FROM BEHIND THE STOVE

BRIAN LICHOROWIC

I’ve received more email as a response to my 2005 “From My Mailbag” column than I did any other column. I kindly thank you all for your interest in my column and look forward to continuing to hear from my epicurean friends. Keep fielding me questions and keep sending me your beloved recipes.

Surprisingly, as a result of my October 2005 column, “For the Love of Liver”, I was thrilled to learn that there are many of you that appreciate the delicacy of liver. One reader, Virginia of Marshall, VA, sent me an outstanding pork liver and apple recipe. A country gentleman emailed me his story: a closet liver eater, only preparing it when his wife and kids leave him alone to fend for himself said, “They think I’m micro waving a Stouffers but I keep 2 pounds of fresh calf liver in the deep freezer for those special days. I fry up a pound in bacon fat and in the leftover grease fry up

one pound of onions.”

God love ya.

Q: “Tell us something NEW to do with prunes” - Blue-hair in Bluemont

A: Prune & Cottage Cheese was a standard fare on Dible’s salad tray in the 70’s. Always reluctantly taken last off the salad tray after all the good stuff was gone!

But for you, my Damsel of Dye, from the Uncommon Cookbook, circa 1968:

Soak whole (pittless) prunes in water for 4 hours. Place on a skewer with equal sized chicken pieces, apricot and pineapple and grill or pan fry. Substitute with fish or pork if you like. Delicious.

Q: “I bought and classically forgot about 6 gorgeous artichokes stored in my fridge. The leaves have browned some. How do you store them and what can I do with the ones that are on there way out?” - Twisk@ mac.com

A: To store: Slice a portion of the stem off and stand up in cold water (only enough to submerge the stem) with a pinch of salt and refrigerate. This works for most veggies - broccoli, asparagus, herbs, etc. – and springs them back to life.

Old La’ Honda, in the hills above Santa Cruz, CA “is” artichoke country. Have you ever seen a field of Cynara scolymus? Weirdest looking full-grown plants you’ve ever laid your eyes on. Think of a huge prickler bush with the entire choke, the part we buy, growing on top in the middle. Alice’s Restaurant, (now sadly closed I believe), was a light honky tonk kind of place with an eclectic mixture of locals, bikers, wineophiles, lost tourists, and a few hiding in the corners you couldn’t tell what they were.

It’s really a wonderful simple recipe for what was smugly told to you at Alice’s that artichokes are one of the oldest foods known to humans.

Artichoke Soup

The hearts from 5 large artichokes
7 tbs butter
1 med leek, white-and-light green part, sliced and rinsed
6 garlic cloves, chopped
1/2 cup shallots chopped (or yellow onion, if shallots aren’t available)
3 med potatoes, Yukon Gold, peeled & diced
12 cups vegetable or chicken stock
1/2 bay leaf
2 sprigs fresh thyme
3 sprigs of fresh parsley
1/4 tsp cracked black peppercorns
1/2 cup cream, whipping or heavy
Salt to taste

Prepare the artichoke hearts. Cut the artichokes lengthwise into quarters. With a small

knife, remove the thistley choke part and discard. Cut away the leaves from the artichoke heart and reserve for steaming and eating later if desired (why waste perfectly good artichoke leaves?). Cut or peel away the tough outside skin of the stems and discard. Leave an inch or two of stem with each of the hearts. Slice the hearts or chop to a quarter inch thickness.

In a large pot, melt half of the butter and cook the artichoke hearts, leek, garlic, and onion until tender but not brown. Add the potatoes and stock. Tie up the bay leaf, thyme, parsley, and peppercorns in cheesecloth and add to the pot. Simmer uncovered, 1 hour.

Remove and discard the herbs. Purée the soup through a fine strainer or food processor. When ready to serve, heat the soup and whisk in the remaining butter and the cream. Season with salt and serve.

Q: “You probably can’t cook to save your life.” - Mark, Purcellville VA

A: I edited out the colorful metaphors you added there, Mark. How about next month I do something geared more towards your type of “gourmet”, “Family Favorites Mom Used to Thaw.” Sound good?

Q: “Where do you go in or out of town to buy provisions or other high quality ingredients? I’ve been trying to find hand sliced fresh fish?” - Dave, Paris VA

A: I’ve been asked this same question consistently. I had an ongoing long stream of consciousness in a Word™ file answering it; I still believe that certain types of foods best hail from private enterprises. People that care. I consider myself a proficient forager, hunter and gatherer. I have about a 30-mile square territory that I regularly make the rounds. I like many places, for many different things, in many different places. I like the Epicurious Cow in Amissville, VA for really fresh fish, produce and wine. Their seafood supplier provides the store and restaurants such as Kinkead’s and Grapeseed Bistro with superior seafood selections. Be sure to get on their email newsletter so you’re alerted to the week’s freshest offerings. The Lost Dog Coffee shop in Shepardstown, WVA for micro-roasted & blended whole bean coffees. In Middleburg, Home Farm Store for their organic, free-range meats, produce and prepared foods. Salamander Market for packaged gourmet products, prepared foods and the occasional wine jewel at a good price. The Locke Store in Millwood, VA has the frozen bread my wife loves and a fabulous wine selection. I even like the guy at Gilberts Corner who sells lobsters & shellfish every spring/summer. (Pricey but fresh.) Hunting and gathering every step of the way!

Keep in mind the local farmer’s markets and stands. Middleburg Farmers Market should be opening soon and is loaded with the best varieties of apples I’ve ever seen (over 20) and samples are generously offered. Lots of fresh produce and herbs, cheeses, breads, etc.

Comment or catastrophes? fbts@mbecc.com
More recipes - mbecc.com/fbts



SPRING HAS SPRUNG

THE PLANT LADY

KAREN REXRODE

Spring has sprung. Wonderful things are happening in the garden and surrounding country side. As often as I have heard and watched spring arrive, it is never less dramatic or taken for granted. On warm balmy days there is a sense of euphoria,



heightened by sounds that only come at this time of year. One such sound would be the loud chorus of cheeps that are created by the many spring peppers or Pseudacris crucifer. Anyone that lives next to marshy ground or swampy lowlands becomes very familiar with the chorus that seems deafening at times, particularly at twilight and into the night. These very small frogs gather in wet locations and breed for a couple of months, often lasting into May. Sounding like baby chicks, the peeps begin in early March as the first of the thawed spring peepers begin slowly peeping. Only one inch in size, these small frogs feed on insects, primarily ants, beetles, flies and spiders. Many eggs are laid during this period and small tad-



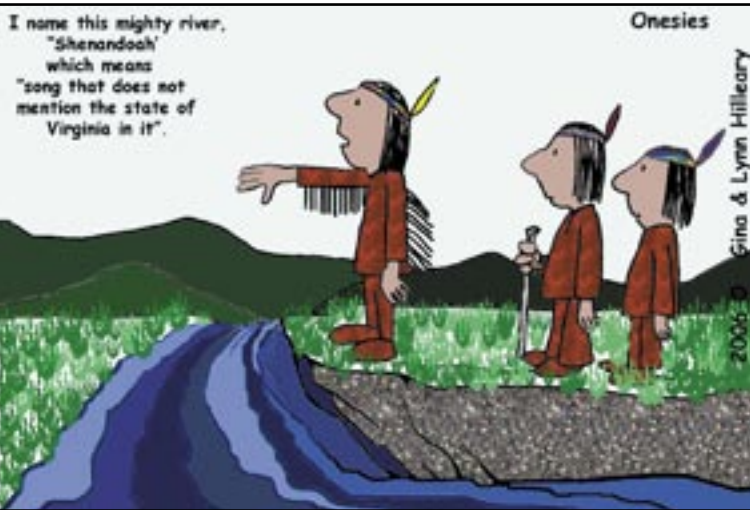
poles transform into full fledged frogs in June and July.

If there is one flower I might associate with this loud chorus, it would be the primrose. Of recent interest are the various cowslips, oxslips and false oxlips. These are the wild primula of Great Britain and they grow in the same sort of places that spring peepers breed.

Inclined to hybridize amongst themselves, a bit of detective work will reveal exactly what Tom-foolery has been going on with numerous seedlings. The true cowslip is Primula veris which flowers with a bobbing head of yellow, variable in their degree of yellow and always held

at times, particularly at twilight and into the night. The veris in the name means true, hence the common name. Primula vulgaris is the true oxlip and the yellow flowers have a much smaller calyx and may look upwards or outwards. The species name vulgaris means common, once common in the fields, meadows and hedgerows of England, but their popularity as

Continued Page 19



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THE EDITOR’S DESK

YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUESTED

There are very few Town Council meetings we’ve missed in the past ten years, and my appreciation for the commitment, dedication and hard work our elected officials contribute to our civic society is boundless.

So, it will come as no surprise when we suggest that all candidates for Town Council attend the March 13th Council meeting for a preview of what will be required should they be elected.

Our small village is moving through a sometimes rocky field of challenges and change. One only has to audit a Council meeting to note the professionalism and diligence of our sitting government, whether elected or staff, and to remark upon the magnitude of preparation and research required to do a fair and thorough job.

Those who wish to participate at the level of leadership should take the time to learn the lay of the land. Should they triumph in our next elections, they will need all the information available to acquit themselves honorably in their term of service.

Middleburg Eccentric welcomes and encourages Letters to the Editor. Letters must be signed and include writer’s name, address and daytime phone number. Please submit letter via email: editor@mbecc.com or P.O. Box 1768, Middleburg VA 20118

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor:
Kudos on your article (3/23/06) alerting people to the onslaught of alternative septic systems headed our way in Western Loudoun. We do indeed face a public health threat if thousands of these systems begin to crop up all over this part of the county, which appears to be exactly what is happening, as your article indicates.
County officials and leaders, of course,

should never have let this tiger out of the cage until they had in place the necessary regulations and rules to ensure that public health and safety were protected. But even today, the county through the Loudoun County Sanitation Authority (LCSA) has the ability to deal with this situation and ensure that public health is not endangered.
Take the example of the proposed subdivision of Bloomfield Estates near the village of Unison where a developer wants

to cram 28 homes onto a 97-acre parcel. Twenty-two of these homes – 80 percent – will need to use alternative septic systems. LCSA could handle this type of situation. It has qualified engineers and staff that will run community waste systems for 15 or more homes.
A decision to require the developer of Bloomfield Estates, and any other subdivision with 15 or more alternative systems, to use LCSA should be a no-brainer. Which do you think would protect public health better in Bloomfield Estates? Twenty-two individual homeowners running twenty-two separate alternative systems, which come with inch thick operating manuals, or one qualified engineer from LCSA running a community system for the entire subdivision. I vote for the later.
Sure, using the LCSA would make life tougher for the developers and slow down the land rush now going on out here, but doesn’t the public health of the citizens living here come first? The Board of Supervisors should make sure it does.
Howard Lewis
Bluemont, Virginia

RANT & RAVES

ALTERNATIVE SEPTIC SYSTEMS SHOWING FAILURE RATES 15 TIMES HIGHER THAN CONVENTIONAL SYSTEMS

UNISON PRESERVATION SOCIETY

At a meeting of the Board of Supervisor’s Public Safety Committee on February, 27, 2006, the Loudoun County Public Health Department provided some initial data on the failure rates of septic systems in the county. According to the Health Department, during the three years between January 2003 and December 2005:

- Conventional Septic System Failures:
- Total failures in the 3-year period is 71 or 24 per year
 - Total installed systems: about 12,000
 - Thus, the failure rate is 2/10 percent.
 - Age at failure: 25 years or more.

- Alternative Septic System Failures:
- Total failures in the 3-year period is 14 or 4.6 per year.
 - Total installed systems: about 800
 - Failure rate is 6/10 percent.
 - Age at failure: 5 years or less.

So let’s do the math. If the failure rate of alternative septic systems is three times high-

Continued Page 12

RANT & RAVES

RED VS BLUE

IT IS ALL ABOUT TRUST.

MARK TATE - (R)
The Governor of Virginia, Democrat Tim Kaine, just announced the collected revenues in Virginia are 10% higher than predicted, raising the already huge budget surplus by almost 200 million dollars. It would seem the Commonwealth of Virginia is experiencing fiscal good fortune . . . unless you talk to Governor Tim Kaine and Senate majority Leader John Chichester.
They have told us we have a financial crisis in Virginia . . . and because of this crisis we need to raise taxes again by 4 billion dollars. This is even larger than the previously largest tax increase in Virginia history: the \$1.4 billion tax increase last year.
This is all very confusing to most of Virginians. How could the Commonwealth have a budget surplus of almost \$2 billion and need to raise taxes at the same time?
Well there really is no fiscal crisis in Virginia. There is plenty on tax money to go around.
What we have is a leadership crisis, Governor Kaine, Senator Chichester and our Senator Potts have all misled us and let us down.
They rightly tell us we need to fix our transportation problems. However the only solution they will accept is to raise taxes. And not just any tax increase will do: they need a \$4 billion tax increase.
They would have us believe there are no other proposals to fix our crowded roads. They ignore the proposed transportation plan from the House of Delegates that proposes about 2 billion more in transportation spending.
The big problem the Governor and Senators Potts and Chichester have with the House of Delegates plan is that it does not raise taxes and it spends some of the current surplus on transportation.
So the Governor and the Senate have forced the General Assembly into a budget deadlock.
They refuse to compromise on the budget proposals unless they get to raise taxes again.
Thankfully we have Republicans in the House of Delegates fighting for us and fiscal responsibility. How on earth could it be responsible to raise taxes when you have a 2 billion dollar surplus?
To me this is an issue of trust. The governor and those Senators were elected after promising not to raise our taxes. Now that promise means nothing to them. They pretend they knew nothing of the transportation needs in Northern Virginia before they were elected.
On the other hand the House of Delegates promised to find solutions to solve these problems without raising taxes and that is what they are proposing to do. They are keeping their promises.

LIARS, THIEVES AND OTHER SIMPLE MISUNDERSTANDINGS

DAN MORROW - (D)
Well, pilgrims, Claude Allen, our President’s Chief Domestic Policy Advisor, recently departed to “spend more time with his family”, has been accused of slinking into his local Target, buying a little something, taking it to his car, putting it into his trunk . . . and now, as they say, for the beauty part . . . going BACK into the Target, putting another box of the SAME little something into his shopping cart, taking it to the customer-service desk, and using his original receipts to get a REFUND.
All a simple credit card “misunderstanding” he is reported to have told his White House bosses. As Dick Cheney would say (or, better, would have had a lady ranch-owner friend say), “Simple case of accidental foot shooting . . . all 22 times.”
George is, of course, “shocked!” and “disappointed.”
And, to be fair, no one told him the storm was that big . . . or about that levee thing . . . or that the mission hadn’t really been accomplished . . . or that religious fundamentalists in Iraq hated each other . . . and us . . . or that waterboarding is illegal . . . and warrantless wire-tapping too . . . or that some folks might look askance at the United Arab Emirates managing container shipping in a coupla minor ports.
Heavens, some of his best friends told George everything was LEGAL, if not all that moral . . . and if you can’t believe your own cronies, who can you believe?

I would say something here about the trials (literally) of the Bush clan’s old friend and energy-policy advisor Ken “Kenny Boy” Lay . . . and the guy who’s suddenly not in all the photographs, Jack Abramoff, but that would be piling on. And besides, speaking plamely, Dick really never knew anything about “that woman.”
Meanwhile, on the “If-we-weren’t-fighting-them-over-there, we’d-be-fighting-them-over-here” front, the incredibly clumsy botched prosecution of the only 9/11 hijacker so far brought to justice makes it crystal clear we’re really NOT fighting them over here . . . or, perhaps, just fighting them over here with the same high-quality leadership, legal expertise and sense of propriety that’s putting so many and so much so needlessly at risk, over there.
And finally, speaking of bridges to nowhere . . . at least the economy’s doing well enough to allow us justify borrowing another \$300 grand or so from our foreign creditors to finance a new George and Barbara Bush Cultural Center in New England.
Three more years of this. Feeling safer?
PS: Don’t forget to vote in the upcoming local elections . . . where your vote REALLY REALLY REALLY counts. Mark and I have composed some probing questions for our Middleburg candidates. Watch the next Eccentric for details!

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THE EDITOR’S DESK

RANT & RAVES

HYPOCRISY

TOM PRATT

I spent most of last week, starting Monday March 6th, with a delegation of professional Iraqi women who have come the United States to travel the country informing Americans about what is really happening, especially to women, in Iraq. Five were given visas and two were denied. They were denied visas because the State Department determined that they did not have enough relatives in Iraq and would be likely candidates to stay in this country illegally.

HYPOCRISY

While fleeing the bombing of their Baghdad neighborhood one of the women, Vivian Salim Mati, lost her husband and three children when they were fired on by a U.S. tank. (She has been told by the U.S. military that she is ineligible for compensation because her family was killed before May1, 2003 prior to the “end of the war”.

The other woman, Kadhim Jawad Anwar lost her husband, son and daughter when they were shot dead by an American unit positioned at the end of their road as they drove down that road from their house. There was no check-point and no warning. She was offered \$11,000 as compensation only if she signed a document giving up her future rights to legal action. She has refused adamantly.

Before the war and even under the systematic oppression of Saddam Hussein’s dictatorship women were among the most educated in the Middle East and participated in all sectors of Iraqi life. They were NOT veiled creatures sitting at home secluded from every day life.

HYPOCRISY

Now because of the invasion and occupation of Iraq it has become too dangerous for women, for the most part, to be out on the streets. They live in constant fear for their children while attending school and illiteracy is on the rise. Those that have means have left Iraq, those that cannot, stay heavily veiled, sit at home and keep their children from school. Women walking on the street face random violence; assault, kidnapping or death at the hands of suicide bombers, occupying forces, Iraqi police, radical religious groups and local thugs.

Before the invasion most Iraqis, other than the Kurdish population, did not think of themselves as Sunni, Shia or Christian, they considered themselves Iraqis. Rarely would what sect you belong to come up in conversation. And they had not had a civil war in 1,500 years.

HYPOCRISY

Now, and I know this first hand, because of the meetings I attended with Congressman Wolf, Senator George Allen, and aide of Senator Warner, the FIRST question of the women was “are you Sunni or Shia?” And furthermore the women say that in every interview by the press that is also the first question asked. They feel that the occupiers are contributing to civil unrest in the country by attempting to label and divide Iraqis. And the country does seem to be on the brink of civil war. “Divide and Conquer” ? Hmmm, food for thought.

In closing a few thoughts.
Trade with Cuba is wrong because the country is Communist.

ALTERNATIVE SEPTIC SYSTEMS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

er than conventional systems in 1/5 the time, after 25 years (the life of conventional systems) the failure rate of alternative systems is 15 times that of conventional systems.

If the installed base of alternative septic systems were as large as the 12,000 traditional septic systems we have today, at the end of 25 years, instead of the 24 or so failures per year we are seeing with traditional septic systems, we would be seeing over 350 alternative septic system failures per year--and that would be a potential public health crisis of significant proportions.

The Health Department also said at the public meeting that current septic failures are under-reported in the county. It is no surprise that homeowners don’t want to have failed septic systems recorded with the county. Actual failure rates, especially for the newer alternative septic systems with less of a track record, could actually be significantly higher.

Trade with Vietnam and China is vital to a spirit of international harmony.

A president lying about an extramarital affair is an impeachable offense.

A president lying to enlist support for a war where tens of thousands have died is solid defense policy.

Iran must comply with strict inspections of its’ nuclear power ambitions and also comply with the non-proliferation treaty.

Israel for years denied having any nuclear capability, has not signed the treaty and refuses all requests for inspections of its’ facilities. Britain and the U.S. are in constant breach of the treaty and no one mentions that fact.

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NEWS OF NOTE

POINT-TO-POINT CHAMPIONSHIPS & COUNTRY FAIR

YOUR GUIDE TO PLACES OF THE HERD

REGINA WELSH

If galloping horses and a beautiful day in the country sound enticing, you may want to visit Morven Park Equestrian Center in Leesburg, VA for a day of family fun and steeplechase racing on Saturday, April 30th, for the North American Point-to-Point Association (NAPPA) and Country Fair. This year will mark the 5th running of this championship day of point-to-point racing.

Attracting entries from all over the country, the Championship Day is a celebration of the relationship between fox-hunting and steeplechase racing. NAPPA is a 501c3 non-profit organization that was formed to help promote and perpetuate the sport of steeplechase racing by reuniting the foxhunting and jump racing communities.

Originally, the sport of steeplechasing began when a man from one foxhunt challenged a man from another foxhunt to race from one church steeple to the next, so NAPPA founder Mason Lampton decided to try and take steeplechase racing back to it's foxhunting roots by creating a series of races that was "doable" for foxhunters. This was done in hopes of repopulating the jockey colony, which has dwindled to very low numbers in recent years.

Molly Bance

Molly Bance, of Virginia, is the perfect example of the success of NAPPA's mission. Bance, a regular follower of the Deep Run Hunt (Va.) entered the Jr Field Master's Chase race on her horse Brave Note with the encouragement of Master of Foxhounds Ginny Perin. In the Field Master's Chase contestants follow behind a leader known as the Field Master, who sets the race pace.

After the Field Master clears the last jump, he shouts "Tally Ho" releasing the field to race to the finish on their own. With divisions for adults and juniors, this race teaches new comers about race pace and how to ride safely on the racecourse.

Bance easily won the junior division in 2004, and came back last year to dominate the adult division.

"Wow! That was fun," Bance exclaimed after her last victory. "There were so many good horses in the race. When I saw who I was riding against, I didn't expect to win at all."

She rode against stiff competition.

"When the field master let us go, I don't know what happened really," she said with a grin. "I put my hands down and just gunned it."

But Bance had a secret weapon in her own Brave Note. Bred in Ireland, the gelding raced on the turf there and then in America, earning more than \$500,000. Now that he has added jumping skills to his flat forum, Brave Note takes Bance to the trophy stand on a regular basis.

A total of seven steeplechase and flat races will be run, one every half hour, starting at 12:30 pm. Future jockeys in training take up the reins in the first contest of the day, the Lead Line Trot Race. Western saddle or English saddle makes no difference here. All that matters are the beaming faces of the kids under seven wearing their own version of "jockey clothes."

Crowd Pleaser

This race is a huge crowd pleaser and all participants walk away winners.

Race day spectators will be treated to the sounds of a blue grass band while they picnic on Founders Hill, which offers a terrific view of the racecourse and country fair activities. Vendors and artisans will offer unique articles of clothing and works of art for sale and gourmet food available to purchase.

Kids will enjoy their turn on the Moonbounce (which is free of charge) or checking out the animal exhibits, with miniature Sicilian donkeys and alpacas, just to name a few. Dog agility performances will also be held in between the races. This year's event will include a Build-Your-Own Stick Pony Booth, which will open promptly at 11:00 am. Children attending the races will be invited to create their own mount and then race it in the Stick Pony Dash at 1:40 pm.

Spectators, horsie or non, will all enjoy the hilarious finale fundraiser race called The Beat Up Cup. Riders are generally "very retired", and some "slightly overweight", jockeys who race polo ponies _ mile on the flat. Their silks don't fit quite like they used to, but these old timers suit up none-the-less in whatever racing garb they can find in their attics that moths haven't eaten and race around the track for old times sake.

Will O'Keefe, the official announcer, fills the day with more color by creating a special narrative for each rider as they gallop out of the paddock.

General admission to the race day and country fair is only \$10 per car at the gate with parking in a field adjacent to the racecourse.

Admission price gets everyone in your car into the event. Bring your lawn chairs and picnic baskets, but please leave



your pets at home. Picnic space on Founders Hill is on a first come first served basis, so get there early! Reserved Rillside parking is also available for an additional fee by contacting the NAPPA office. The event will take place rain or shine and tickets are non-refundable.

For more information call 410-329-3749 and to learn more about NAPPA visit www.NAPTP.com or email info@NAPTP.com.

Where the excitement begins!

NAPPA Championships

May 27th at Morven Park, Leesburg, VA
North American Point To Point Association
P.O. Box 102, Butler, MD (410) 329-3749 or www.naptp.com

Photo donated by Van Cushny

Want to learn how to race ride?
 After the hunting season, point your horse, or pony to a NAPPA Field Master Chase. In those, riders follow a field master at a controlled hunting pace. After the last jump, riders are released to race for the wire! Safe and fun, riders learn to jump in company, rate their mounts, and then get the thrill of speed on the flat! Last year, numerous point-to-points and steeplechases hosted field master chases. Go to www.naptp.com to get full schedule, conditions and rules for 2005.

By competing early in the season, you qualify for the NAPPA Championships at Morven Park, May 27th. The best of the group are selected to go on a 5-day educational tour of leading trainer's barns ending in Saratoga!

Congratulations Alli Sirna, Willie White and Erica Flemming selected last year!

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We also need your support to provide spaying and neutering to prevent unwanted animals from enduring needless tragedies.

Middleburg Humane Foundation

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Phone: (540) 364-3272
Email: mhfdtn@earthlink.net

Visit us on the web at:
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MHF continues to be entirely funded by private donations with no state or county funding. Our major fundraiser is our Annual June Benefit at Bollingbrook in Upperville, VA.

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PASTIMES

WHAT'S IN A NAME

THE ART OF ART

TOM NEEL

What do you think of when you hear the name Monet? Allow me to ask this question another way, what do you think of when you hear the word impressionism? For many, the two questions and answers are reversible, because for most when we think Monet, we think impressionism and when we think impressionism, we think Monet. This may not be so easy when looking at the art you might be purchasing so, I now ask, what is in a name?

Artists are in one of those interesting occupations where 99.9% of time upon completing their work they are expected, by if nothing else an age old tradition, to sign their work. It's not like one of those tags you find showing that this work was approved and final inspected by....and then there's a preprinted line where a guy named Bob wrote his name. No, the artist's name is in some ways like a notary's signature or stamp of validation and authenticity.

So, when you look at artwork, is the name important and should it mean anything to you? Well, I would say in some ways yes and some ways no. I'll start with the "no" first. If you have found a painting for example and you love it, have a spot for it, it fits your price range, etc., but the only glitch is you haven't heard of the artist, I would say "buy it". That artist has created something you enjoy and the name or fame in the

name should not be important. If though, we took the same painting and scenario, you love it, etc., but maybe the price was an issue, then I would say "yes", turn to the artist's name for more information. You can ask questions or ask for a bio to learn more about an artist's accomplishments.

What might you find? Well, how long has the artist been painting? Do they do it full time or just as a hobby or part time? Education or being self taught, awards, maybe they do judging, seminars or workshops, all of these things may or may not mean something to you. After all, once you have learned more about them, the process should always be one of validation for you, not the artist. That is to say, did you learn what you needed to make your purchase? If so, move forward and enjoy. We should also look at this another way. Let's say, the name is the only thing you know, but you're not really that taken by the art itself. Should you buy it? Would you be surprised to hear that many do purchase art just by a name? It's true and I don't personally recommend it. Love it first.

In closing, I would just like to offer this final thought. Most of the time artists do not sign their paintings until they feel their work is finished and the painting is done. So, when you glance down in that corner to see a name, just think of it as our little way of saying, "The End".

Tom Neel www.tomneelstudio.com 540-364-4401

DELICIOUS DINING AT ASTER

BRIAN LICHOROWICZ

Many Middleburg locals are going to be disappointed when they're not able to get a reservation at Aster. Rarely does a jewel land itself in your backyard. The three-person team under the artful and able direction of Chef Hump with Aaron McCloud and Craig Erion has earned their monikers.

To keep it fresh, exciting and to take full advantage of seasonal ingredients, Chef Hump has changed his menu 22 times in the past 16 months. Amazing. It's hard to find a creative essence in food outside big urban areas and we've got a winner right here.

My last dinner included Hudson Valley Foie Gras (one of the best I've had and takes 3 days to make!), Veal and Mushrooms Three Ways (including

black truffle!) and Nested Banana Split. And the "piece de resistance", every dining experience includes sampling a few of the Chef's amuse bouches, or to "amuse the mouth".

Aster's sign says, "Creating Memories in Dining".

It's not just a sign people. It's an affirmation.

For reservations: 540-687-4080



THE PLANT LADY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

cutting flowers for bouquets has greatly diminished the wild populations. When left to their own devices and growing in close range, these two cross pollinate and we have false oxlips with flowers that come in various shades of yellow and hold their flowers at angles not normal for any true strain.

On occasion one may find a yellow flowering oxlip with one flower coming out of another. These are referred to as hose-n-hose flowers, possibly false oxlip. Hose was an old name for

stockings and most often these were stored one inside the other, with the top one turned down, very much like the doubled oxlip flower. Hence the common name. In fact there are many other common names for the wild primrose of Great Britain. The flowers themselves are sometimes known as "peeps", something that makes me ponder England's possible source of small frog sounds and the seemingly perfect association. One is fine without the other - but together they scream spring!

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PARENTS & PROGENY

WAKEFIELD STUDENTS TRAVEL TO NYC TO ACCEPT NATIONAL AWARD

Six Wakefield students will travel to Columbia University in New York City for the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA) annual conference, on Thursday and Friday, March 16 and 17. Attending will be one student from the yearbook staff, junior Lindsey Morgan, and five editors of the school's literary/art magazine Talisman: senior and current editor-in-chief Kelly Davidson of Warrenton, junior Julia Petty of Centreville, and sophomores 'Eri-

ca Eickhoff of Delaplane, Gillian Douple of The Plains, and Kendra Riddleberger of Middleburg.

In addition to participating in the conference, the five Talisman editors will also be accepting the prestigious Crown Award given to the 2005 Talisman, at an awards convocation on Friday afternoon.

The CSPA judges magazines, newspapers, and yearbooks for over 1700 member schools each year, both public and private. This year, a total of 36 Crowns

were awarded to magazines nationwide. The entire mid-Atlantic region garnered only six of these, with Wakefield being joined by one other Virginia school, three Maryland schools, and one District school. This is the second time in four years that Talisman has received a Crown Award.

All five girls worked on last year's winning magazine, and are currently engaged in producing the 2006 edition.

MIDDLEBURG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Student Art Show

On Tuesday, March 14, the Middleburg Community is invited to join us for our annual student art show. All students will have art work on display and families will be participating in an art activity. This event begins at 7:00pm and we hope you will be able to join us.

Kindergarten Registration and Open House

Any child who will be five on or before September 30, 2006 is eligible to enroll for Kindergarten at Middleburg Elementary School beginning April 18, 2006. Parents should bring the original birth certificate and proof of Loudoun

residency. Please note that if you reside in Loudoun County but live outside the Middleburg boundary, you may request for your child to attend Middleburg Elementary under certain circumstances. However, all Kindergarten students MUST enroll at the school that serves their attendance area. For more information, contact the school at 703-771-6680.

We will also be holding an open house that morning for tours and information about the school. Please stop by between 7:00 and 10:00 am for refreshments and to learn more about this wonderful little school.

Middleburg Elementary is Looking for Tutors

The Study Buddy Tutoring Program is looking for tutors. We need tutors on Monday and/or Thursday afternoons from 2:40 to 4:00 at Middleburg Elementary School. The program is one-on-one focusing on reading fluency and academic support. Tutors are provided training. Please consider volunteering and making a difference in a child's life. If you are interested, please contact Sara at 540-687-6552. This program is sponsored by the Windy Hill Foundation and the Middleburg Elementary School PTO.

MARY JANE COMBEMALE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO TWO NOTRE DAME ACADEMY SENIORS



JEAN-LOUP R. COMBEMALE, BUNNY HOUK '06 (DEPLANE, VA), KATIE WHITE, '06 (STERLING, VA), MARY FRANCES WILKINSON-COMBEMALE, COLLETTE (COCO) COMBEMALE

The Mary Jane Combemale Memorial Foundation Scholarship was awarded, On February 24, 2006, to two Notre Dame Academy seniors, Katie White of Sterling, VA and Bunny Houk of Delaplane, VA.

This scholarship has been established to provide assistance to young women who wish to go to Notre Dame Academy as preparation for a career in the Health Sci-

ences. The criteria for selection are 1) students must have a GPA of an "A" in Physical Science and Mathematics, 2) candidates must have demonstrated a commitment to community service and volunteer work, and 3) candidates must demonstrate qualities of kindness and generosity of self and have been recommended by others for such qualities.

NOTRE DAME ACADEMY COLLEGE FAIR

Please mark your calendars for Wednesday, April 5th, for the Notre Dame Academy College Fair from 1:30 – 3:00 pm in the Gymnasium. All members of the community are welcome to attend. Please call 540-687-5581 if you have any questions.

BLOSSOMS SYNCHRONIZED SWIM TEAM COMPETES IN REGIONAL MEET



DANI BREWER, ASHLEY EBERLY, LILLY POTTER

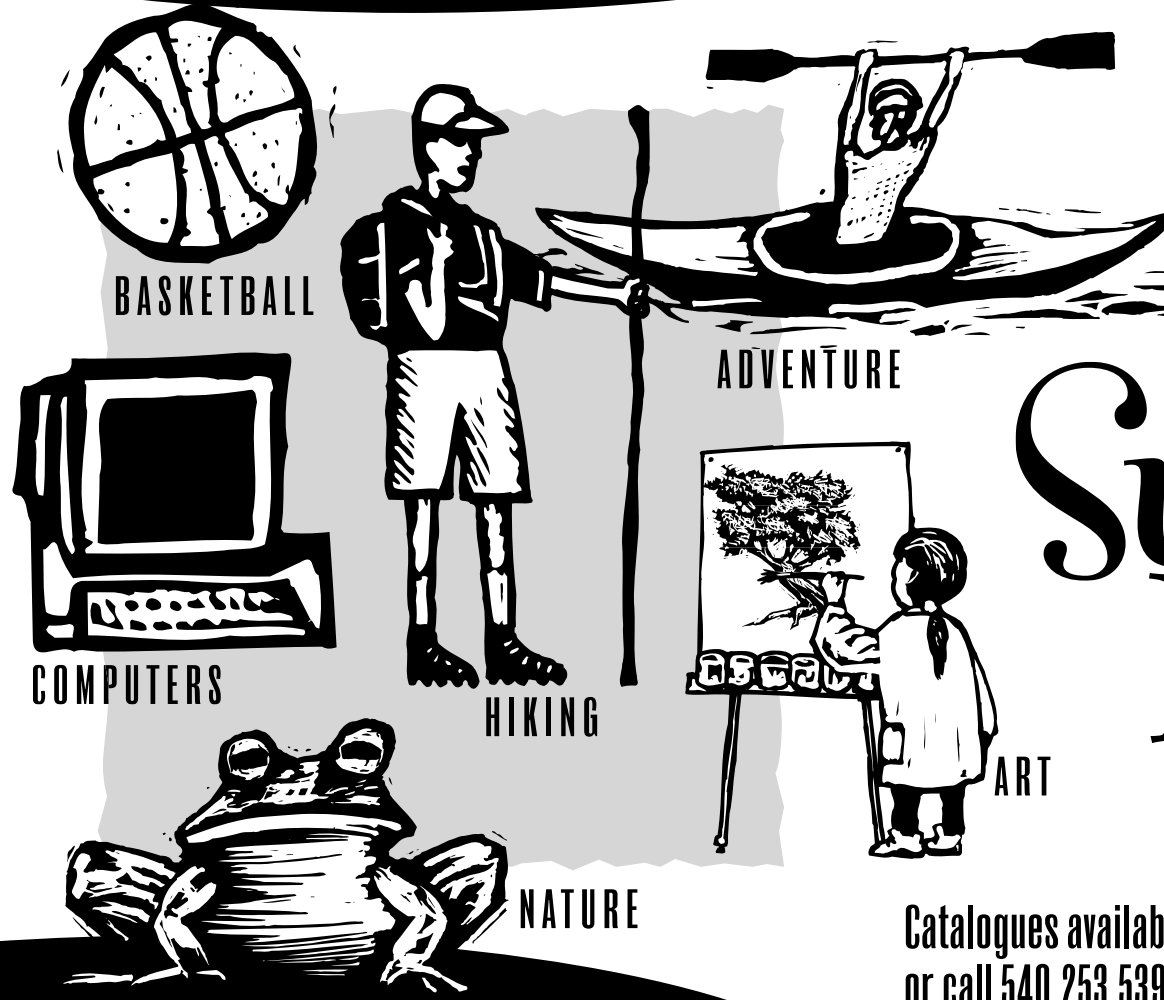
Synchro swimmers from the Blossoms team in Laurel, MD against ten other teams in a meet hosted by Potomac Valley Pearls. Other invited teams traveled from Tidewater, Middtown, Pennsbury, York, Chester County, Cumber-

land and Richmond.

The Blossoms practice on Tues and Thurs evenings from 7-8:30 at Ida Lee, Sat 9-11.

Call for information on the team at 703-728-7461 or check on line at www.blossoms-synchro.com

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FOXCROFT SCHOOL DAY STUDENTS SPONSOR BLOOD DRIVE

Foxcroft School's Day Students, led by student prefects Amy Lucas of Leesburg and Emily Wheelwright of The Plains, invite you to help replenish depleted supplies at a special Blood Drive on Monday, April 24.

The drive is to be held in honor of former teacher Keith M. McBride, who retired in 2004 after three decades of outstanding service and exemplary achievement for which the Board of Trustees bestowed on him their highest honor - the Anne Kane McGuire Distinguished Service Award. McBride, who was recently diagnosed with leukemia, lives with his wife

of 39 years, Kendra, in Cross Junction, VA. We urge all alumnae and friends of Foxcroft who have been touched by McBride's life to donate blood in his honor.

The drive, one of three conducted annually at Foxcroft School in Middleburg, will be held from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the FoxHound Auditorium. Appointments may be scheduled by calling 540-687-4322 or emailing blamond@foxcroft.org. Lucas, Wheelwright and local students will welcome donors and assist the Red Cross in this crucial community service.

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THINGS TO DO

Masterpieces of English Sporting Art Opening 19th and 20th Century April 21, 2006
An exhibition from the Joan Irvine Smith Collection. This is a rare opportunity to view an extensive, privately-owned collection by major sporting artists including John Frederick Herring, Jr. and Sr.; Henry Aiken; John Ferneley; David Dalby; E.A.S. Douglas; and Sir Alfred Munnings.
Cavaliers, Courage and Coffee: Mosby Owned the Night,
April 8th from 8pm to 10pm at the Rector House in Atoka (4 miles west of Middleburg on Rt. 50). Stories about life in the Mosby Heritage Area during the Civil War are told by costumed interpreters, the Gray Ghost Interpretive Group, by lantern light at venues throughout the village of Atoka. Free to the public, refreshments available, and Mosby products for sale. Sponsored by the Mosby Heritage Area Association. For more information call 540-687-6681 or go on the web at www.mosbyheritagearea.org

Middleburg Library Events for March and April 2006
Art Exhibit Manassas-Warrenton Camera Club, April 1 at 2pm Natural Attractions series for adults.
Karen Rexrode (former owner of Windy Hill Nursery)The Supporting Cast: Plants that hold a garden together. Karen will share information about the plants she relies on to keep a garden exciting through deer attacks, humid summers, dry spells, soggy springs and insect infestations. She'll look beyond flowering capabilities and will concentrate

on long-lasting attributes .Provided by the Middleburg Library Advisory Board
April 3 at 7 pm Passing the Book. For adults
Share your thoughts about a book you've read and find interesting titles to read next.
April 6 at 11 am Mi Casa es Su Casa with Dinorock. Celebrate National Library week with original music and colorful puppetry. Ages 3 and up.
April 10 at 7pm Middleburg Book Discussion series for adults Wicked: the life and times of the Wicked Witch of the West by Gregory Maguire. Sponsored by Middleburg Library Advisory Board
April 21 at 2pm Art in the Afternoon for adults. Dr Mary Ellett presents Hold still and please don't bark: animals in art slide/lecture. Sponsored by a grant from the Loudoun Library Foundation, VMFA and the Middleburg Library Advisory Board
The Loudoun Museum
Celebrate Spring at the Loudoun Museum Family Fun Day
Saturday, March 11th, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Come visit the museum at 16 Loudoun Street in historic Leesburg to learn about Loudoun County's Spring traditions during a free fun filled day.
Fun Day activities include making kites and pinwheels, learning about nests, eggs and feathers, planting a flower seedling, creating a birdhouse to take home, meeting and getting to know baby chicks, learning old fashioned games and dressing up in period costumes.

The Loudoun Museum currently seeks a number of volunteers to assist guests as they visit the museum. Duties include greeting guests, providing basic tourist and heritage information, collecting admission fees and answering the telephone. Hours are flexible with both morning and afternoon shifts available. Training will be provided.
The Loudoun Museum is located at 16 Loudoun Street SW in Leesburg. Museum hours are 10am-5pm Monday through Saturday and 1pm-5pm on Sundays. For further information, please email bfriedmann@loudounmuseum.org or call 703-777-7427.
Third Call for Photos
The Loudoun Museum is issuing its third call for photos and images to illustrate its upcoming pictorial history book entitled The Lure of Loudoun: Centuries of Change in Virginia's Emerald County. The book's publication, sponsored in part by James Monroe Bank, will coincide with the county's 250th anniversary in 2007.
For the first time, the large-format book will cover both text and photographs the history of Loudoun County from its geographical beginnings to its emergence as one of the fastest growing counties in the United States. The book will feature more than 300 black and white and color photographs. Images of little known artifacts from the museum's collection will be included, but staff for the book is also soliciting rare or never-before-seen photographs from families and businesses of the county.
Historical content will be mostly based

on Dr. Charles Poland's From Frontier to Suburbia: Loudoun County Virginia, One of America's Fastest Growing Counties. Poland's 411-page book will be condensed and new material added for the new book by former National Geographic staff writer Noel Grove, a resident of Loudoun County for 27 years, currently living near Paris, Virginia. Grove, who left the Geographic in 1994 to free lance, has written the text for six books. His first book, Wild Lands for Wildlife, about America's wildlife refuges, sold more than a half million copies. His popular Atlas of World History, telling the story of civilization from 25,000 years ago to the mid-1990s, was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection in 1997.
Images and photographs for the new county history book can be mailed or brought to the Loudoun Museum, 16 Loudoun Street SW, Leesburg, Virginia 20175.
For more information, call Eric Larson at 703-777-7427 or email el Larson@loudounmuseum.org .
Banshee Reeks Nature Preserve,
21085 The Woods Road Leesburg, VA 703-660-0316 www.bansheereeks.org - Monthly bird walks 8 a.m. March 11 and April 8 ,2006from the Visitors Center; Preserve is open to the Public March 18 and 19, 2006. Sunday at the Presve Family walk - March 19, 2006 at 2 p.m. with Phil Daley. Volunteer day March 18 - work on the annex installing flooring and winscoting and work on the rain garden - weather permitting. Arbor Day April 22,2006 9 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Board of Directors of the Middleburg Community Center



Cordially Invites You for Cocktails and Flor d'oeuvres and Our Spring Auction Hand painted or decorated "Everything Boxes" by Local Artists to benefit the Middleburg Community Center Friday, April 7, 2006 6:00 p.m. RSVP 540-687-6373



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Spring 2006 Local Area Steeplechase Calendar

- March 25 2006, 12:30 pm**
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Salem Course, Upperville
Information (540) 687-3455
- Sunday, April 2, 1:00 p.m.**
ORANGE COUNTY HUNT POINT-TO-POINT
Locust Hill Farm, Middleburg
Information (540) 687-6528
- Saturday, April 8, 12:00 noon**
OLD DOMINION HOUNDS POINT-TO-POINT
Ben Venue Farm, Ben Venue
Information (540) 364-4573,
(540) 636-1507
- Sunday, April 16, 12:30 p.m.**
LOUDOUN HUNT POINT-TO-POINT
Oatlands, Leesburg
Information (703) 777-8480, (540) 338-4031
- Saturday, April 22, 1:30 p.m.**
MIDDLEBURG SPRING RACE MEET
Glenwood Park, Middleburg
Information (540) 687-6545, (540) 687-6595
- Sunday, April 23, 1:30 p.m.**
FAIRFAX HUNT POINT-TO-POINT
Morven Park, Leesburg
Information (703) 787-6673
Saturday, April 29
- 1:00 p.m. FOXFIELD SPRING RACE MEET**
Foxfield Race Course, Charlottesville
Information (434) 293-9501
- Sunday, April 30, 1:00 p.m.**
MIDDLEBURG HUNT POINT-TO-POINT
Glenwood Park, Middleburg
Information (540) 687-3100 or (540) 687-6069
- Saturday, May 6, 1:00 p.m.**
VIRGINIA GOLD CUP RACE MEET
Great Meadow Course, The Plains
Information (540) 347-2612
- Sunday, May 7, 12:30 p.m.**
BULL RUN HUNT POINT-TO-POINT
Brandywine Park, Culpeper
Information (540) 727-8201
- Saturday, May 27, 1:30 p.m.**
NORTH AMERICAN POINT TO POINT CHAMPIONSHIP
Morven Park, Leesburg
Information www.naptp.com

SEVENTH INNING STRETCH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

Julius Caesar's assassination. No, this year I boldly and quickly tore through my brackets. Filling them out took me all 5 minutes. When I submitted them a warm glow of confidence settled over me, a blanket of calm dropped over my shoulders, and the certainty in my hard-earned knowledge fattened and bulged.

At first my confidence seemed well earned. I sprinted to an early lead in the standings in our pool, happily gloating in my predictions of upsets by the likes of Montana, NC State, and Wisconsin-Milwaukee, I hadn't gone too crazy, as I had in years passed, picking nutty upsets 'hither and yon. I hadn't picked Duke to lose (yet) and I hadn't picked any particularly dumpy teams to make the Final Four.

But then, I began to feel the first splinterings. All of the local Georges (Washington, Mason and 'town) advanced; in a cleverly ill-fated move, I had picked all three of them to lose. Kansas lost to Bradley, (I'll admit, I don't even know where Bradley IS.) Michigan State, a battle hardened team

under Coach Tom Izzo, a team that somehow seems to always save its best (or at least a COUPLE of wins) for the tournament, flamed out against you got it, George Mason. Sadly, I had them going on to the Elite Eight. And I didn't see Iowa losing to Northwestern State (WHAT Northwestern State?!).

My Final Four is still intact, which I know not everyone can say, but suddenly my confidence, the cornerstones of my surety, is starting to tremble just a bit. Do two 2-seeds, a 4-seed and only one 1-seed a Final Four really make?

Beats the heck out of me, but here're a couple of things you CAN take to the bank:

- Gonzaga's not making it to the Elite Eight (I doubt they'll even make the Sweet Sixteen)
- Tennessee is about the worst 2-seed EVER
- and Duke's not making it out of Atlanta.

Take it to the bank.

And, oh yeah, keep the engine running.

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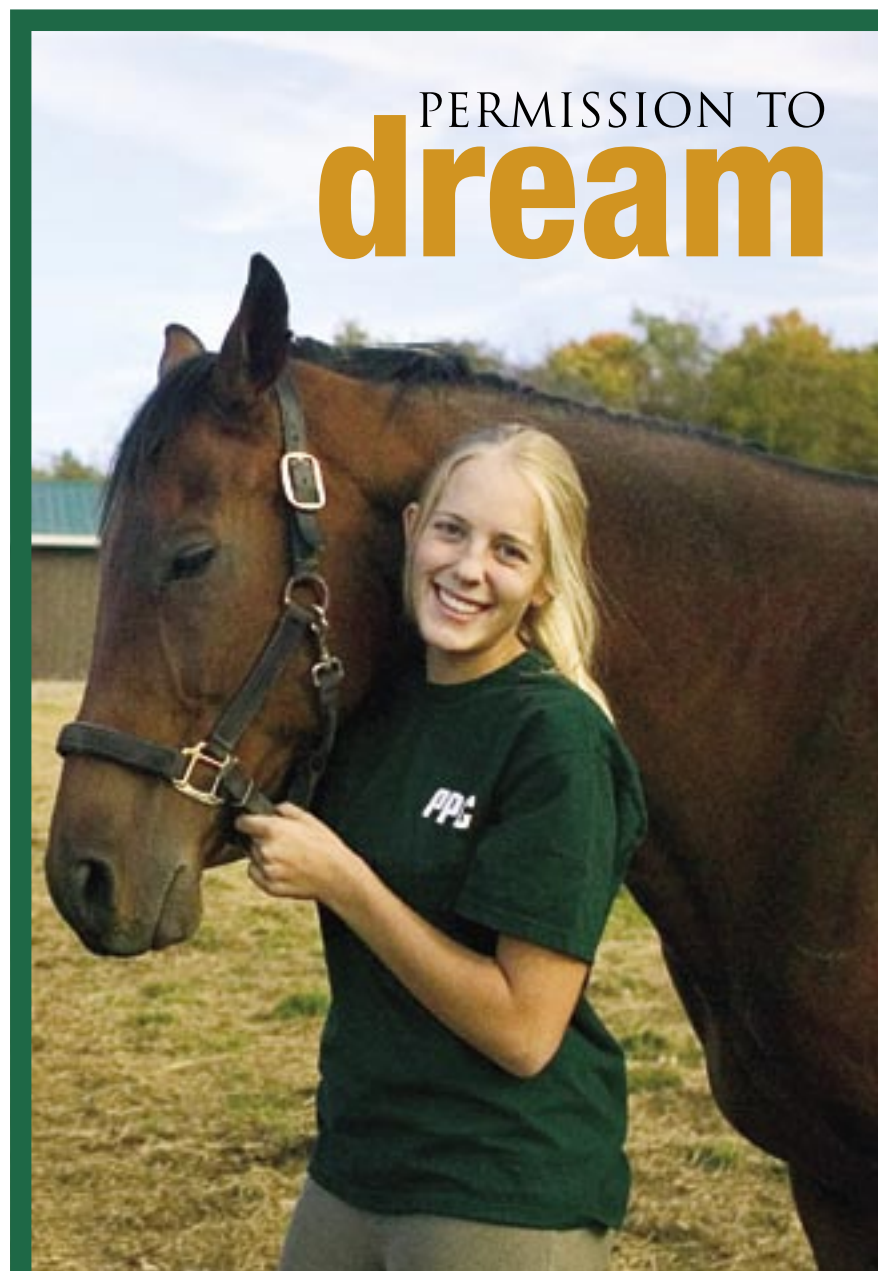
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RC— is a 1 year old red Chow mix who is a good guy! He was found on the side of the road in horrible condition. He is now very healthy and happy! RC is terrific with other dogs, kids, and cats too- a big personality who would bring lots of love into your home.



LORIANNA— Katrina Survivor: Loranna is a funny girl! She was rescued from a devastated home in New Orleans. Loranna is a super sweetie; she actually smiles when you greet her.



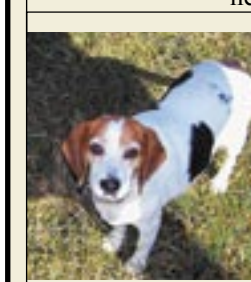
MAX — Max is a bubbly 2 year old chocolate lab mix who was found in a ditch, skin and bones and hit by a car. He has fully recovered and is doing great! Max does well with other dogs, he is very playful and would be happy as a clam as an outdoor dog.



BRAMLEY — Katrina Survivor - Bramley is a special young gal who we rescued from New Orleans. Bramley gets along well with other dogs and is a great watch dog. She is the perfect barn friend



MYLES— Myles is an Otter Hound mix who came to us from a county shelter where his time was up. Myles is not comfortable around children though. A gorgeous young man who needs an adult only home.



OLIVIA— The love of your life little Beagle girl. Olivia was rescued from a neglectful owner and she is now the most appreciative little thing in the world! Olivia is great with kids and cats but would prefer to be an only dog.



SHORTY- Shorty is an old fashioned short legged Beagle. He looks like he has Dachshund in him; his legs are super squatty- a very cute little guy! Shorty has a fun personality- he is shy when you first meet him but he loves kitties, kids and all other dogs.



BIG BIRD — Big Bird is a very sweet but shy Beagle. He loves other dogs and is very gentle. He came from a very sad place and he needs someone who is willing to be patient, loving and kind with him. Once he knows you, he is a love muffin!



RUCKER — A terrific young man. Rucker came out of a county shelter where his time was up. 1- 2 year old Cattle Dog who is very smart and loves everyone!



ETNIE — A lovely young lady who came to us with her 9 babies. She was in horrible shape but is now very healthy and happy! Etnie would do best in a home with lots of activity or room to run. She is incredibly sweet!



MARIE — Marie is a fabulous 5 year old Portuguese Cattle Dog. She is a Katrina survivor from Mississippi. Marie is also incredibly calm, gentle and very sweet. She grew up with and loves small kids. Marie is also housebroken and loves to play with other dogs



LEVI -Levi is a 1 year old fun-loving, energetic dog who enjoys outdoor activities. He is totally safe around cats, horses and kids. Levis has a great temperament - not a mean bone in his body! Levi would do well on a farm or with a family who has lots of room to run and play!



SARA- Recently rescued from Alabama, She is a Katrina survivor. She and her brothers and sisters came to MHF a few weeks ago. They are a very special group! 10 month old Retriever mixes. Lovely temperaments- very sweet and cute medium sized dogs!



MOSES —Sara’s brother! A Katrina survivor from Alabama, Moses is adorable and very outgoing! He will be a great family friend!



LINDY-Sara’s sister! Another adorable young Retriever mix will grow to be a medium sized gal, Lindy loves everyone!



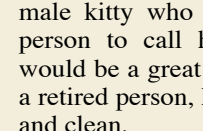
SHEA- Sara’s sister! Shea is the shy gal in the group but she is very sweet and loving.



GIA— 7 month old Pit Bull puppy. Gia has grown up with kids, cats and other dogs. She loves car rides and hanging out in our office. Incredibly quiet, calm and cute! Gia needs a structured loving home.



ANNA — An absolutely gorgeous long haired kitty. She is a 2-3 year old spayed female. Indoor/ outdoor. Anna has an angelic face that matches her angelic personality!



CASH — Cash is a declawed young neutered male kitty who really wants a person to call his own. Cash would be a great companion for a retired person, he is very quiet and clean.



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ALBERT’S CORNER

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Recently, I was dismayed to read an article that discussed “shocking” scientific findings revealing that animals might have personalities and emotions. It was as though this was a completely novel revelation. I’ve got news for the authors of that article and for anyone else who is skeptical: animals absolutely have personalities, preferences, emotions and moods.

There’s a lot of advice out there regarding how to live with dogs and cats, but most of the information has to do with training, feeding and providing shelter. Little is written about learning how to communicate with animals on a personal level. In fact, there is little that even supports the existence of unique personalities or emotions in animals.

The result of all of this is that a lot of people don’t have the most successful relationships they could have with their pets. They sometimes end up with “ill-behaved” dogs or “neurotic” cats. Often, lack of communication and misunderstood emotions are at the root of the problem. It’s not surprising that this happens. After all, we live in a world that largely dismisses the concept of animal emotion as preposterous.

If a dog seems sad, he probably is sad, and it’s worth his person’s time to figure out why. If you think your cat is avoiding you, it’s probably not your imagination, and it’s time to get busy fixing the problem. I’m not saying that animals have all of the same emotions people do. Most of us don’t do things out of spite, hold grudges, or plan revenge. We’ll leave that to the human race. We do, however, feel joy, pain, fear, shame and a host of other emotions.

We communicate these emotions by constantly “talking” to our people, hoping that one day they’ll hear us. We talk with our eyes, ears, tails and bodies. We have many, many vocal variations, all of which mean different things. We communicate with our people endlessly, knowing and understanding far more than most people think we do.

In today’s busy world, people’s lives can get very full. Jobs, families, social obligations and the endless list of errands each day can leave little room for worrying about the relationship one has with one’s dog or cat. Animals like me are so forgiving of this reality that it’s easy to believe we need very little attention to thrive. The truth is, we need our people very much – on a sub-

stantive level befitting a true relationship.

Even the very best people sometimes get a little too busy to check on the emotional well-being of a pet. If you happen to fall into that category, take some time today to really “listen” to what your pet might be telling you. If you listen on a regular basis, it could be the start of an even more beautiful friendship

Albert, a Jack Russell Terrier, is Chairman of the Board of Wy-lie Wagg, a shop for dogs, cats, and their people, in Middleburg and Fairfax.



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Four Chimneys

Middleburg, Virginia

Great location, east of Middleburg. Well-built brick home, high ceilings, detailed molding, 3 bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths, large kitchen, sunroom, 2-car garage, 7.57 open, level acres. 3-stall barn with tack room, large tractor shed, fenced and cross fenced. GEO Thermal heating and air conditioning, low utility bills. \$1,750,000.



20011 Forest Hill Lane

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Unique cottage on 6.78 acres in fantastic location near Upperville. You can see mountains in every direction. Most of the views are deed restricted and should never change. Built in 1968, this house would make a great weekend getaway or incorporate into a new home. 4 bedroom septic approved. \$495,000.



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Built in 1973, completely updated and enlarged, frame construction. 4 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, 2 fireplaces, hardwood floors on main level, front porch, rear terrace, 2-car attached garage. 2-car detached garage with apartment, 3-stall barn with tack room, inground heated pool, gazebo with grill overlooking lake, tractor shed, equipment shed, run-in shed, and generator. 18.34 gently rolling, mostly open acres, lake frontage, mountain views, fenced and cross fenced. \$1,250,000.



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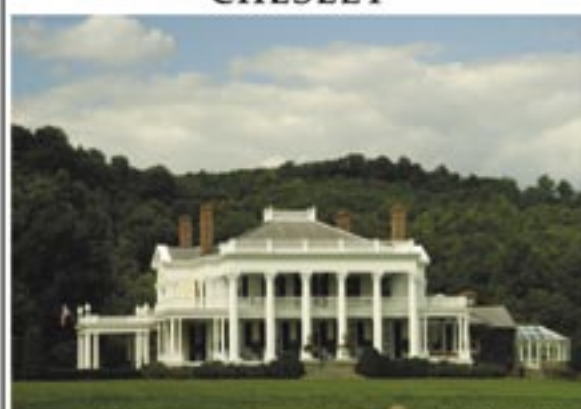


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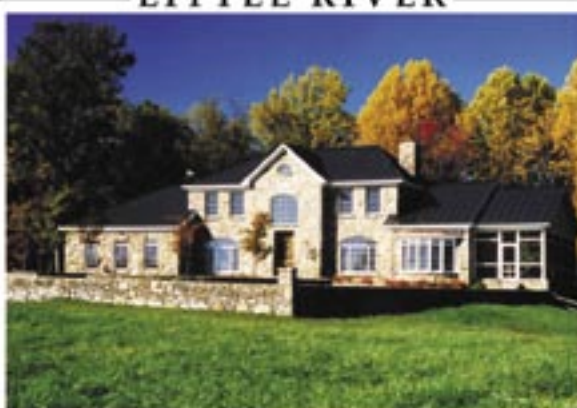
Extraordinary brick manor on 76 acres •High ceilings •Stone & hardwood floors •Historic residence •Approx 12,000 sf •Library •Sunrooms •Office •7+ BR's •Formal living & dining rooms •Pool •Brick terraces •Pond •Stream **\$3,100,000**

HALCYON HILL



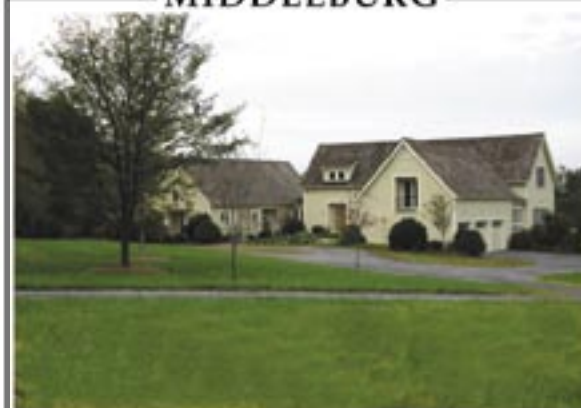
Newly renovated Cape Cod on 17+ acres in Rectortown •4BR/4.5BA w/lux. Master Suite •Finished basement w/Nanny Suite, Wine cellar, Workout room •New heated pool & spa •2 BR guest house •Mtn views •Fully fenced **\$2,750,000**

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MIDDLEBURG



Stunning 5 bedroom, 4.5 bath Cape on 10 gorgeous acres •Beautifully decorated •Fabulous floor plan •Sun filled rooms •High ceilings & HW floors •LR & DR open to gorgeous gardens & terrace •Sep. office/guest suite **\$1,880,000**

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