Middleburg Eccentric™

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Talkin' Trash 2010: Mickey D's and Bud, Big Winners Page 11

Council Faces Public Protest

Daniel Morrow

At it's first regular meeting of the new year, Middleburg Town Council heard protests and calls for formal investigation of the role of their Police Chief, Town Sergeant Steve Webber, in the investigation, high-noon arrest and November 30 perp walk of Middleburg Eccentric Editor-in-Chief Dee Dee Hubbard four days before this year's Christmas in Middleburg celebrations.

Webber looked on in silence as two former Town Council members, a former Reagan Administration Undersecretary of Commerce, and the Publisher of the Middleburg Eccentric spoke.

All expressed dismay with Webber's conduct and expressed serious concern about both the action and lack of action by the Chief in the planning, execution, and appearance of subsequent front-page publicity following Hubbard's arrest on November 30 by Virginia State Police officers, called into the case by Webber himself.

Ironically, the calls for Council investigation of Webber's role in the Hubbard arrest were followed by Council's unanimous passage of a resolution commending the volunteers who made this year's "Christmas in Middleburg" celebrations a roaring success. Hubbard's name, and that of her co-chairman, Jim Hebert, headed the long list of those thanked and honored.

The Case

Council listened politely and with not a little forbearance as Middleburg Eccentric Publisher, Dan Morrow, spent well more than his allotted three minutes of "public comment" reviewing the events of November 30 and outlining a series of as-yet-unanswered questions about the Chief and his role in the Hubbard affair.

Hubbard was arrested for what key sources close to the investigation now describe as a dispute over some $9,000 in bookkeeping errors, apparently attributable to mistakes by both Hubbard and her local bank.

Each and every check in question, some 15 in all, has been submitted as evidence of a separate incident of alleged felony embezzlement, despite evidence that the misplaced funds had been, by all accounts, reconciled and refunded months earlier, with offers by Hubbard's local bank to cover any shortfall apparently refused by the complainant in the case.

Hubbard, who has yet to be indicted on any charges, was immediately released by the magistrate who processed her arrest at the County jail, set free on her own recognizance, with no bail required and with no restrictions on her future travel, inside Virginia or out.

The formal preliminary hearing on the case, the hearing that will determine if there is indeed a case worth pursuing, has also been postponed, at the request of the County Prosecutor handling the case, until March.

Though the accused 67-year-old grandmother, editor, and community service volunteer was apparently neither armed, dangerous nor a flight risk, Chief Webber, Middleburg Police Officer Owen Heine, State Police Investigator Robert Mrak, and two additional State Police officers were mobilized for her arrest.

Witnesses report that at least two of the officers involved hid behind a tall wooden gate screening garbage cans at Mello Out while waiting for Hubbard to appear in the restaurant's parking lot. Witnesses also report that at least one was heard to remark that a felony arrest would certainly look good on their record.

Webber's own emails, published in the December Eccentric, appear to confirm that he set up the time and place of the arrest and lured Hubbard to it by claiming, falsely, that he wanted to meet with her to discuss "Christmas in Middleburg."

Once arrested, with her hands shackled behind her back, Hubbard was then perp-walked through the small Mello Out parking lot, into East Federal Street, across the intersection, and then half a block down West Federal Street, around a corner and into a parking lot behind the Police Station.

Asked why he didn't simply ask Hubbard to meet him at the Police Station, whose back door opens directly onto the same parking lot, Webber first tried to blame the State Police for the planning and execution of the arrest, and then, confronted with his own emails, refused to comment.

Though both Mrak and Webber have been asked by The Eccentric why they thought such treatment of Hubbard was either necessary or appropriate. Neither have been willing to answer on the record.

"His Duty Was to Stop It."

Bruce Smart, a WWII veteran, retired CEO, a 24-year resident of the County, a former Reagan Administration Undersecretary of Commerce, a member of at least three State or County commissions,

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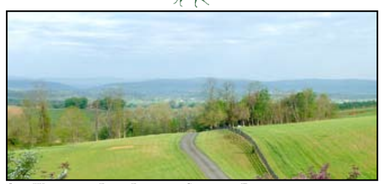
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Jim Lemon **703-203-9766** **$1,475,000**



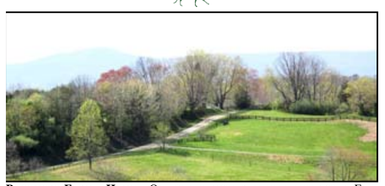
Atoka Chase - Middleburg - Incredible custom luxury home on 10 acre lot. 2 story foyer, cathedral & 9' ceilings. Open floor plan. Hardwood & marble flooring. Kitchen island, granite countertops, European appl.., fixtures and lighting. Renovated luxury baths. Plantation shutters, ceiling fans, skylights, built-ins, large rooms & tons of storage. Outdoor spa. Covered wrap around porch w/ mtn/view...

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News of Note

A Lady Celebrating a Century of Life Honored



Chateau Gallanosa-Gardecki

H.E. the Ambassador of Austria and Mrs. Christian Prosl bestowed a Medal of Honor to Vicomtesse Gertrude Zinner de Ponton d'Amecourt, an American of Austrian birth, now 101 years of age, living in the United States. Mme. d'Amecourt has distinguished herself as a gracious and notable international hostess since 1944, when her French diplomat-husband brought her to Washington from New York before the collapse of Warsaw, Poland where they were previously stationed.

During war times, there was no ambassador representing Austria in Washington, thus she served her homeland by hosting and serving as a bridge between the two countries, unofficially. Madame "Gertie" received guests in her home on Wyoming Avenue and even now on Cathedral Avenue. Her cocktail parties and dinners are legendary. She became one of the most respected realtors in DC, helping over 40 embassies to find perfect homes for their ambassadors and consulate offices. She was the toast of the town connecting people from all walks of life and has also been a great supporter of the arts and music.

At the Vin d'honneur in the residence of the Austrian Ambassador, His Excellency read a short missive from the former Governor of California Arnold Schwarzenegger which added a little touch of Hollywood.

Now, celebrating a century of enormous joie de vive, she still can dance the waltz as seen during the WIPAC Galas with John Gardecki and recently at the Russian Ball with her son Guy d'Amecourt and other partners.

Jeffrey Michael Keffer



Jeffrey Keffer, a resident of The Plains, Virginia and Washington, D.C., died suddenly this Monday, January 17, while riding with the Orange County Hunt. Jeff's last moments found him at his happiest on his horse, clearing fences and joyous with fellow riders. Jeff was 48.

Jeff leaves behind his wife of nearly 20 years, Elizabeth Baker Keffer, and three children Kathryn May (16), Audrey Beatrice (14) and Griffin Michael (11). Jeff is survived as well by his mother, Regina Keffer of Lansdale, PA, and his father, Charles Keffer of Hatfield, PA, and his three siblings Eric of Hatfield, PA, Ann Fraga of Collegeville, PA and Mark of Royersford, PA.

Jeff is best known for his unbounded love of his wife and children and for a spirit of constancy, kindness and self sacrifice. Jeff dedicated tireless years to his children's upbringing, schooling and hobbies.

Raised in Hatfield, PA, Jeff received his bachelor's degree from The University of Maryland and his law degree from The Catholic University of America. Across his career, Jeff was a practicing attorney, a devout father, an executive at an early stage technology start-up firm and, most recently, the retail division manager of Ayrshire Farm and its related businesses. He served on the boards of St. Patrick's Episcopal Day School in Washington, DC and Bright Beginnings. And, as to his life in the Virginia countryside, Jeff loved his farm, horses and riding with the Orange County Hunt.

The Keffer family received friends on Friday night, January 21, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Moser Funeral Home: 233 Broadview Avenue, Warrenton, VA. Mass of Christian burial followed on Saturday, January 22 at 1:30 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Roman Catholic Church: 271 Winchester Street, Warrenton, VA and The Little Georgetown Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family appreciates contributions made to Bright Beginnings www.brightbeginningsinc.org or Heifer International www.heifer.org.

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MARY DUTTON STEER



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News of Note

First Class Reading at Second Chapter Books



Middleburg's new bookstore is a labor of love for Kathy Jo Shea who established the shop with Jilann Brunett to meet the needs of a community that loves to read.

"We were saddened last year by the news that Books & Crannies, Middleburg's only book store, had been forced to close," Kathy Jo explained.

"I can't live in a place without a book store," she thought as she began to explore the possibility of establishing one herself.

Then, as luck would have it, she was part of a warm-up session before a board meeting, and the facilitator asked those in attendance to describe what they would really like to do. Kathy Jo, a very successful massage professional, at first didn't know what to say, but when the facilitator turned to her, she said, "I'd really like to read."

And then she began to connect the dots.

Five weeks later, she and co-owner Jilann Brunett, opened Second Chapter Books. In only this short space of time, they had formed the corporation, found a perfect location, done the required renovation and opened their doors in early December for Christmas in Middleburg weekend.

"Bookstore management is very difficult," Kathy Jo continued.

"One has to carefully orchestrate your stock to ensure that your shelves are fresh with new titles as you respond to customer requests. And, we have to capitalize on all the new social network and online assets.

"We recently joined the American Booksellers Association which will allow us to offer online ordering to help our customers, and soon we will offer ebooks on our website. This fairly new ABA service helps independent book stores with online ordering and many other services."

Second Chapter Books is located in a charming historic building at 8 East Federal Street, near Back Street Café, The French Hound and Mello Out.

Once you've walked up the steps, onto the porch and through the front door, you will be delighted to find yourself in a series of welcoming rooms lined with books to fascinate the most discriminating reader. The many floors offer books of all kinds, from classics to Civil War history, from fashion and art to equine pursuits, sports, and a special children's section.

There is a small room for meetings and book signings and, soon, there will be reading caves for children.

"Our Christmas in Middleburg opening provided a great lift-off for the store," according to Kathy Jo. "We had lots of customers and friends who kindly visited, purchased and thanked us for opening. We were so pleased to know that our instinct to ensure that Middleburg had a book store was correct and appreciated."

Throughout the year, Second Chapter Books will introduce many services. A membership program will soon be available to offer discounts to customers who join. Book clubs will be able to schedule meetings at the store, and soon customers will be able to order books on the website.

"We also plan to create special services for the community. We want to be of service to the many schools, teachers, grandparents and authors who live in Hunt Country.

"We are totally committed to this community and will do everything we can to serve the citizens here no matter their age or their interest."

Kathy Jo, who grew up in a family of avid readers, could not be more pleased and proud to make sure Middleburg has a bookstore. And her dedication to the community shows in her opening hours: Seven days a week, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to five on Sunday.

Beautiful new signs have been approved and are now in progress, but until they arrive, Second Chapter Books is located at 8 Federal Street. The website is secondchapterbooks.com

Manuel's Christmas Story



For Manuel Simpson, retailer extraordinaire, Christmas time in Middleburg, Virginia is always glorious.

The beautiful village, decked out in its charming holiday finery. The delightful Christmas Parade with its prancing Corgie Corps, fire engines, sleighs of laughing children, pipers, llamas, the Hunt and Hounds leading the way.

Santa is was always delighted to conclude the parade in his beautiful carriage preceded by dozens of wonderful floats and marchers who stepped merrily toward the holiday season.

But Manuel was sure something was missing.

Where was the bell ringer? The classic Christmas sound that heralds the season of generosity.

"Where was our bell ringer," Simpson mused. "Middleburg citizens would love to contribute to the Salvation Army to help others less fortunate. And with the ringing bell, Christmas in Middleburg would be complete."

Manuel's first Christmas memory was of the Salvation Army bell ringers in Winchester where he grew up.

"I come from a family of shoppers," he reminisced, "and I loved to put change in as many pails as possible. That ringing bell was the herald of the season for me."

The intrepid community leader was determined that Middleburg would have a bell ringer too.

So he called the Salvation Army and politely asked why no bell ringer came to Middleburg at Christmas.

"Actually," they said, "we don't have as many paid bell ringers as we used to have, so we depend on volunteers. If you can organize volunteers, we'll get you a bell!"

That evening, Manuel met friends at The French Hound for drinks and dinner. Everyone was very excited about having a bell ringer, and by the end of the evening he had enough volunteers from diners at the restaurant to cover the first four days!

The first year Middleburg citizens put $7,000 in the bright red pail at the Safeway. The next year, $9,000 was contributed.

"And despite economic challenges of 2010, Middleburg's bell ringers collected $9,600 . Over $20,000 in only three years, a clear sign of the generosity of our community," he said smiling.

"But without the many wonderful people who volunteer to ring the Middleburg Salvation Army bell, we would have nothing. Every bell ringer here is a superb individual who really cares about others.

"We are very fortunate to live in such a generous and caring community. This year many business leaders volunteered to organize a day of bell ringers. That help is appreciated more than they could know."

For the first two years, the Leesburg Salvation Army Captain came to Middleburg every night to count, date and seal the pail. Now, Manuel picks up five pails from Leesburg and counts, seals and dates them to record each week of giving.

"I love doing this," he insisted. "Middleburg is my hometown.

I want every single fabulous person here to have an opportunity to help others. By putting a little bit in each pail you pass , you make a big difference in someone's life."

"For me, that's what Christmas is all about."





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News of Note

Ed McGushin: A Personal Tribute

Tony Wells

Ed McGushin's passing on November 20, 2010 was a great loss for our community. Ed and his wife Sandy lived latterly at Leitrim, a house that they designed and built to their specifications on the Busthead Road, near Halfway, before moving to Connecticut to be closer to one of their two sons. All of us who knew Ed well were proud to know him because he represented the very finest values of a great American soldier, and had a generous and gregarious spirit that became infectious with all who were close to him. He lived life to the full. Ed's example was very much live every day as if it is your last. Ed was born in Sacramento, California, and was educated at the University of San Francisco and the University of North Carolina, before being commissioned into the Army and joining the elite of the elite, the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg. In the Army Ed was legendary for his leadership from the front, unrequiting persistent attention to his men's needs, and unit combat effectiveness. This matured and found its fruition on the battlefields of Vietnam, where Ed served with great distinction. He did two combat tours, in 1966 and 1972, and was awarded the Silver Star for heroic valor and bravery in combat. When I first knew Ed we shared a common heritage of military service, both of us trained and led in our early military careers by World War Two veterans. What I always admired about Ed was his personal courage and integrity, and he was never boastful of his fine achievements in uniform, and paid the highest respects to those he was proud to have led. Ed's time in Vietnam turned out to be a crucible for change in his life. Like so many outstanding combat veterans Ed realized that nothing could ever replace leadership in combat. His wisdom and humanity told him that all the promotions in the world via endless staff appointments and desk jobs could not replace for him what true soldiering is ultimately all about, leading a front line unit in combat. He took early retirement after a highly distinguished career, and went into industry. He joined an emergent area software company, SRA International Inc, where he transferred all his zeal and energy to increasing their business base by orders of magnitude. He was not only popular as a corporate leader he became a household name for his unique approach to winning government contracts through team work and adding that extra something that won SRA significant government awards.

It was indicative of the respect for Ed that when he had his seventieth birthday the senior leadership of SRA went to Connecticut to celebrate with Ed and Sandy. They both loved and admired him.

Ed's passion came out in his most cared for hobby – cooking. Ed could well have been a master chef in a world class restaurant. He simply loved to cook and please his friends and guests with a wide range of different creations. His kitchen at Lietrim made most restaurants look modest – he designed it personally, and was never happier than seeing the smile on the faces of his guests as they enjoyed his productions. Ed brought a unique blend of grace as well as showmanship to the culinary arts in ways that only Ed could. His wine cellar was spectacular and he just loved to please.

Ed's sense of humor was wonderful. He had a wry and buoyant sense of fun. I shall always remember him responding to a telephone call I made to him, imitating an official from the Pakistan Embassy in Washington. Although I can do a pretty good Pakistani accent, after a while Ed caught on that this was his neighbor on the phone and turned the tables on me in the most hilarious way – he had a great mercurial sense of acting.

Ed's wife and two sons were his stars and true light in his life. He was a family man through and through. This spirit was reflected in his local support activities, helping others in our community as he and Sandy brought up their boys. Ed was politically savvy and did not suffer fools gladly, and always did what he thought was right, and was unwavering in his sense of fair play. I never knew Ed to be unnecessarily critical or judgmental of his fellow human beings – he always led by practice, not precept. I only knew him once to be critical of a local resident whom we both felt tarnished the military code our generation was nurtured on, and he was so right in this instance. Ed never flinched from staying on course, and holding fast to that which is right. In an age when compromising values goes unnoticed Ed was a beacon for the younger generation.

All of us who knew Ed will miss him dearly, and we send our heartfelt condolences to Sandy and the boys. He was a man of deep faith and honor, and he believed firmly in his fellow men, his country, and he loved his family to the fullest. Ed, we will all miss you. The pud was very good indeed.

Ed McGushin was buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery on Tuesday, January 25, 2011

Tony Wells was a friend and neighbor of Ed McGuishin and is a former senior British Naval Officer.

Kitty Kearns Joins Middleburg Bank

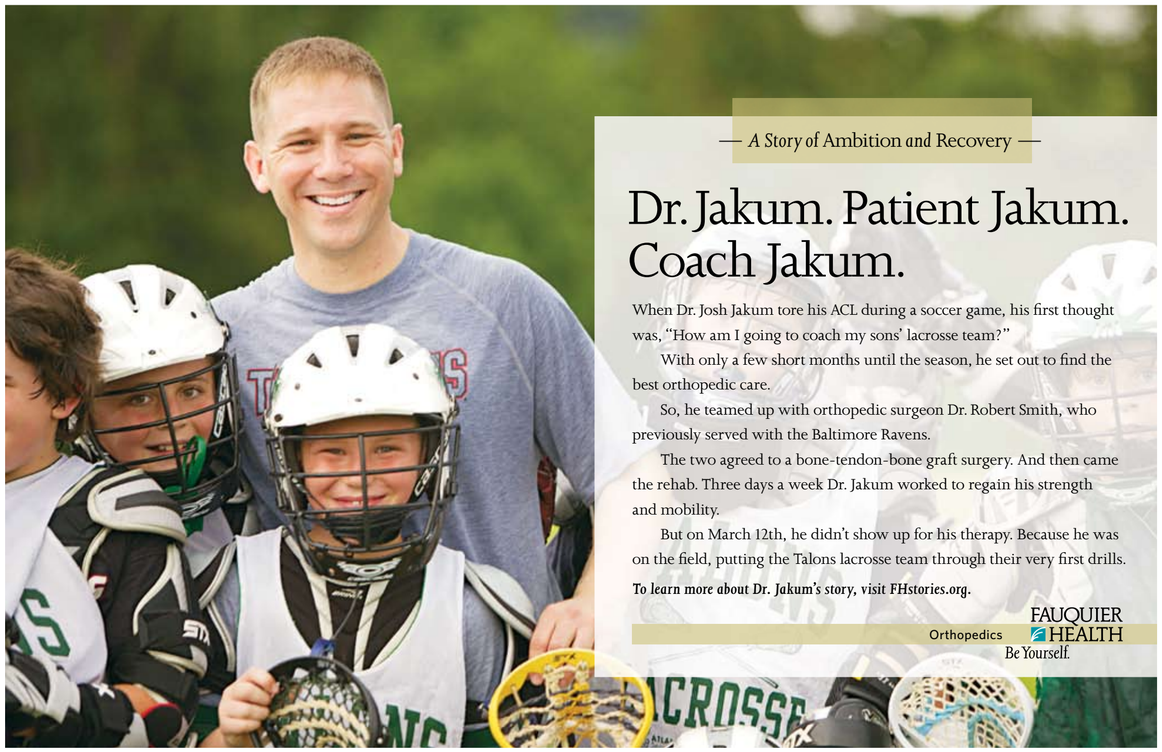


Middleburg Bank, a wholly owned subsidiary of Middleburg Financial Corporation (Nasdaq: MBRG) announced today that Kitty Kearns has joined the Bank as Senior Vice President and Regional Executive in Leesburg. In this role, Ms. Kearns will oversee all aspects of the Company's business in the Leesburg market.

Ms. Kearns had been with Middleburg Bank from 2000 – 2005 as a Commercial Lender in Leesburg. In addition to her breadth of lending experience, Ms. Kearns brings a deep understanding of the financial needs of medical practices throughout the region.

"We are excited that Kitty has returned to Middleburg Bank" said Gary R. Shook, president and CEO of Middleburg Bank. "Kitty's experience and business connections throughout Loudoun County will help her make a significant contribution to the Bank's continued growth," added Mr. Shook.

"Returning to Middleburg Bank feels like coming home" said Ms. Kearns. "Middleburg Bank sets the standard for all community banks in this area and I'm proud to once again be associated with this leading organization. I look forward to helping the Bank continue to lead this market and help area businesses meet their financial goals".



News of Note

Council Faces Public Protest

Continued From Page 1

and a Middleburg Eccentric columnist concluded his formal remarks to Council by stopping just short of a call for Webber's resignation or dismissal.

"Ms. Hubbard," he noted, "a respected citizen of Middleburg, is accused of offenses that sound more like sloppy bookkeeping than anything criminal. She was lured to a meeting for another presumed purpose, then arrested and handcuffed in front of a crowd, and marched off to jail while cameras popped. Press coverage of this arrogant spectacle followed."

"The behavior of your Police Chief in arranging or participating in this matters seems reprehensible," he said. "His duty was to stop it."

Smart then called on Council to determine why Webber acted, or didn't act, in the events leading up to and including the perp walk of 30 November.

Noting that he, personally, knew nothing of the relationships between the plaintiff in the case, Chief Webber and Hubbard, Smart told Council, "You will have to determine whether there is a motive of revenge at work. You will also have to determine what relationship exists between the plaintiff and the Chief."

"Unless you find that Ms. Hubbard's behavior merited such harsh treatment, and the Chief was innocent of arranging the meeting, calling in the state officers, and has no personal relationship with the plaintiff," Smart continued, "I believe he has no place in Middleburg law enforcement."

At the conclusion of his prepared remarks, Smart paused for several seconds, then noted quietly that, in his youth, during the Second World War, he had served in the United States Army.

In that war, he said, he lost friends in armed combat against both Germany and the Japan. "This sort of thing," he said, "was what they died to prevent from ever happening again."

Council's Duty

Former Council Member Lisa Patterson, the proprietor of the restaurant from which Hubbard was called out, the daughter of the accused, and the mother of one of Hubbard's grandchildren, spoke with difficulty and, she said, with the hope " . . . of keeping out of her remarks anything personal."

As a former Council member, she observed that the Town lacked anything but the most general written procedures and guidelines for handling matters like the arrest, perp walk and transportation of her mother.

Council needed to develop guidelines covering when, where and how arrests are made, she said, as well as where police interviews are conducted.

"Public arrests that involve the parading of citizens through the streets should not occur," she insisted. "They embarrass Middleburg."

Nor should arrests be deliberately staged at businesses, she continued. It's tough enough, she said, to be in business during the current economic crisis.

Noting that both the State Police and Webber had denied alerting "the press" prior to the Hubbard arrest, Patterson called on Council to look into who, if anyone, had alerted the complainant in the case, and the professional photographers who did appear to be waiting both inside Mello Out and on the street. Pictures taken by one or more of those photographers were later sold to local media and published as above-the-fold front page news.

The former Council Member also insisted that the Legislative chambers of the Town Council were inappropriate venues for police interrogations.

A Pall Over the Town

Former Council member Judith Pryor Plescow agreed with Patterson in a letter to Council which she asked be read into the record. Her letter addressed what she referred to as " . . . incidents that have cast a pall over the town and the town's reputation."

"First," she wrote, "there was an arrest of a local business owner and philanthropic organizer. This person has spent 28 plus years working in and around Middleburg and has consistently been involved in originating organizations that have supported the town and its residents (both two and four-legged) as well as victims of natural disasters near and far."

She deplored what she perceived to be the effects of the Chief's issuing misleading press releases, making inappropriate remarks about other "pending allegations" both "during and after her arrest."

"While this is a Police issue, the Police report to Council," she continued. "This places this boorish behavior square on the shoulder of Town Council."

Witch Hunts and Fear

Plescow pointedly agreed with Patterson about the use of the Town Offices for police interrogations.

"I have been made aware of the fact members of the Christmas in Middleburg Committee were called into the Town Office to be questioned," Plescow continued.

"The Town Office is public domain," she wrote. "Why did this occur at the Town Office? If there is reason for additional Police investigation, then it would be professionally appropriate to handle it in the Town Police Department Office. This is beginning to take on the appearance of a Town sanctioned witch hunt."

Plescow also questioned Webber's handling of communications in general and the impact of his choices about when to issue public statements and when to remain silent.

"The Town was recently again in the news due to an armed robbery of a Federal Postal employee," Plescow reminded Council. In contrast to the Hubbard case, however, a serious armed robbery was apparently not considered worthy of a press release by the local police. "The residents of Middleburg and the surrounding area have been given little information regarding the status of the armed robbery investigation," Plescow continued.

"One of the many duties of the Town Police Department," she insisted, "is to protect and serve. I believe that part of serving is keeping the public informed. . . ."

"I have talked with several Town residents and business owners who are very concerned about both of the above referenced incidents," Plescow told Council, "yet feel uncomfortable talking publicly about law enforcement practices."

Plescow closed her statement with an appeal to Council. "As a former appointed Town Council Member," she wrote, "I must say that I am embarrassed at the lack of Council involvement addressing these issues. You are charged with protecting the Town and its residents, please step up and carry out the duties to which you have all been elected".

Council Response

On January 13, as had been the case at its December meeting, Council issued no public statements about its views on the Hubbard arrest, Webber's conduct, or the answers to any of the questions raised by concerned citizens and business people about the matter since November 30.

The current rules of procedure for meetings of the Middleburg Town Council make it difficult, if not impossible, for questions raised during "public comment" to be answered directly, either while they're being made, or later in the Council agenda.

Nor, by all accounts, have any of the members of the current Council faced issues similar to those raised by the Hubbard case.

In a late January email to Council Middleburg Eccentric Publisher, Dan Morrow, requested that Council consider his January 13 remarks a formal complaint, and seek answers to all the questions raised, by all speakers, during the "public comment" portion of the Council's agenda.

Unanswered Questions

The events of November 29 and 30, and possibly events before and after, beg several questions, Morrow noted on the 13th, " . . . which I believe Council is honor-bound to ask, to insist be answered, and to make the answers made public."

What, for example, are the guidelines by which our Chief of Police decides whether a criminal complaint justifies any investigation at all, much less referral to authorities outside his jurisdiction?

Did Webber seek advice or counsel from anyone on Town Council, Town Staff, or the Town Attorney about what was planned for November 30 and whether or not he should co-operate? Why not?

Did anyone on Town Staff know what was planned for that day? Why not?

Did Webber ask whether or not his decision to issue a press release on the Hubbard arrest was appropriate? Why not?

With whom, if anyone, did he vet the release he issued? Why did he, personally, issue a press release on this case, but not on any other? Was the release misleading? Did it exaggerate the charges and imply guilt?

Did Webber further imply guilt by breaking his on rules commenting to a reporter on "an investigation still in progress."

Did the events of November 30 do gratuitous harm, financially, psychologically, and spiritually to Dee Dee and her family? To their businesses? To the Town? To the department itself? To the press?

Did Webber deliberately seek to mislead the press and Town Council about the role he played in the set up and execution of the Hubbard perp walk? Why?

Was Hubbard REALLY dangerous? How? Was she a flight risk? Who said so?

Was the "public interest" in any way served?" How?

Did our own police chief make any effort to convince his State Police colleagues to behave differently? How and to what effect?

Did any members of his own force suggest an alternative approach?

Did the Chief at any time say to State Police Inspector Mrak, "Not in Middleburg. Not in my jurisdiction. Not on my watch. Not using my officers. Not with my collusion and cooperation. And not to Dee Dee Hubbard." Why not?

In the absence of answers to these questions, Morrow noted, "There is, in my view, no excuse whatsoever for what appears to be the deliberate, gratuitous, mean-spirited, and unnecessary humiliation of one of Middleburg's finest citizens and my Editor in Chief."

Armed Robbery

In other news, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, the Middleburg Police Department, and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service responded to reports of an armed robbery of a "contracted postal delivery person" in the Post Office Parking at around 6:00 PM on December 27.

According the Sheriff's office:

"The victim, a 27-year-old Manassas man, reported he arrived at the post office around 6 p.m. As he was unloading his vehicle an unknown Black male approached him and brandished a firearm. An unknown White male was also at the scene. A cell phone was taken from the victim and he was locked inside of the rear of the truck. After approximately 15 minutes a passerby opened the door for the victim. The victim reported postal bags and undisclosed items were taken from the vehicle.

The first suspect is described as a Black male, 5'10" tall, medium build, weighing approximately 175 pounds. The suspect was wearing a hood and mask. The second suspect was further described as being a White male, 5'10" – 6' tall, with a thin build."

Investigation of the case is ongoing.

Anyone with relevant information on the case should contact Investigator M. Bush of the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division at 703-777-0475 or call the 24-hour U.S. Postal Inspection Service Hotline at 1-877-876-2455.

Christmas in Middleburg Resolution

Council unanimously approved a formal "Resolution of Appreciation" for the volunteers associated with the 2010 "Christmas in Middleburg" event.

Jim Herbert, who co-Chairs the "Christmas in Middleburg Committee" with Dee Dee Hubbard was given a copy of the resolution.

Mayor Davis "expressed her appreciation for the volunteers' work; and, noted that the event was a great success."



Fauquier Realty Under New Ownership

Long time Fauquier County resident, Anne Michael Greene recently acquired Fauquier Realty, Inc., a real estate brokerage firm in Marshall, Virginia. She replaces Peter Van Deman, who retired as the Principal Broker of the firm. Fauquier Realty, Inc. has been operating in its present location since 1989.

A Realtor since 2003 and an entrepreneur, Ms. Greene has also been known for her marketing and communication expertise towards small businesses, real estate developers and non-profit organizations.

When offered the opportunity to purchase Fauquier Realty, Inc., Ms. Greene felt strongly about continuing the tradition of maintaining a real estate brokerage firm in Marshall. "I see there is a fundamental need for area residents to depend on real estate professionals in their own backyard, and we will be offering property management services as well as residential and land sales," she remarks.

She wishes to grow the agency by adding one or two more seasoned independent Realtors familiar with the area.

Fauquier Realty services Fauquier, Warren and Clark Counties and is located on 8390 West Main Street, Marshall, Virginia. Their direct number is 540-364-9500.



Pam Dickson Raises Money for Children's Hospital

A raffle Pam recently organized to raise funds to cover the cost of medicines for children who are being discharged whose families simply cannot afford the cost raised over $2,300. Middleburg Mayor Betty Davis drew the winning ticket, and the Sterling resident immediately encouraged Pam to continue the raffle. The Sisters at Children's Hospital agreed! Dickson has been taking handsome German Shepherd therapy dogs to visit children who are hospitalized for decades. She is totally dedicated to doing whatever she can to make their hospital stays as pleasant as possible. This is the first time she has organized a raffle to support the need for funds to cover the costs of medicine. "It's my great pleasure to help these children and their parents," Pam explained. "Being in the hospital is difficult for everyone, but for children, it is a very gloomy and frightening experience. I love to help them."



Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services
at
Middleburg Community Center
PRCS
Now Enrolling for 2011-2012 School Year Programs

Preschool Programs	After Kindergarten	Kids Club After School
2 Year Old Parent Co-Op Program Tuesday and Thursday 9:00-11:30A	Monday-Friday 11:00A-2:30P or 11:00A-5:00P Part-time available	Monday-Friday 2:40P-5:00P Part-time available
3-5 Year Old Program Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00A-12:00P* *extended day options available	Please call for more information 540-687-6375 or Email sheri.conrad@loudoun.gov	SCHOOL BUS



Editor's Desk

The Middleburg Business Association

January is a difficult month for most businesses, and especially difficult for retailers and restaurants.

Christmas, in every sense of the word, is over.

In the best of times a new year all too often begins, not with a bang but a whimper, punctuated by taxes, bad weather, people on diets, and the sad remains of businesses that couldn't make it for another year.

Here in Middleburg we are blessed with an economy that, in comparison to our friends in places like Danville or Martinsville, Virginia, is, if not the best, at least sound enough for many of us to look forward to the new year with hope.

We are also blessed with a business community and Town Government that not only works together, but works well improve the Town, improve the businesses active here, and make both as attractive as possible to our neighbors, friends, and customers.

A lynch pin in those efforts has been the Middleburg Business Association.

Never content to rest on its laurels (and there are many), the Association is constantly in search of new and better ideas and the people necessary to make those ideas a reality.

The Association is now in the midst of a drive for new members. If you're in business in or around Middleburg and are not already a member, you should join.

It's not only good business, it's great fun, and a chance to meet and work with an extraordinary group of people.

To join contact: Punkin Lee at 540-687-5888

Letters

I wanted to tell you how thrilled I was to open my mailbox a couple of weeks ago and find my dear "Wyot" on the cover of your paper!

I have marched in the "Corgi Corps" in years gone by with another beloved Corgi, "Bronwyn"; and have many fond memories of those past parades.

With the addition Wyot (10 month old Pembroke); I again approached the idea of marching with the Corgi's with renewed enthusiasm. I can say I went a little crazy with his holiday attire; which turned-out to be more of a "dog float" (as was coined by many of the parade goers). Wyot happily wore the outfit however, and received a ton of positive attention, praise and treats from children and adults alike. Children called "Wyot" from the stands (I looked at them in wonder, goofily forgetting that his name was around my neck). Some families gathered to have their pictures taken with him! Two people Twitted his photo to friends in England, for a "Corgi exchange". Friends later sent me YouTube videos of the Parade, with Wyot jauntily strolling down Main Street. The friendly and enthusiastic response on the street could not have been more helpful in socializing my young dog, unaccustomed to such crowds and animals.



I know you are key in organizing this annual parade and I want you to know that it is very much anticipated and loved by the Corgi community. Thank you for your efforts to bring joy to the general population during the Holiday Season; and for your special gift to dog lovers in particular.

Debra Murphy,
Orlean, VA

The Right Thing

Blue Notes

Daniel Morrow

"Moral courage is more difficult than physical courage. There are times when you disagree and you have to suck it in and say, 'Yes, sir,' and go do what you are told. There are also times when you disagree and you have to speak out, even at the cost of your career. If you're a general, you might have to throw your stars on the table, as they say, and resign for the sake of some principle or truth from which you can't back away."

General Anthony Charles Zinni
United States Marine Corps (ret)
- Battle Ready (2004)

In his remarks to the Middleburg Town Council on January 13, Eccentric columnist, Bruce Smart, a long time resident of the area, a WWII veteran, CEO, and public servant noted pointedly that, in his view, Middleburg Police Chief Steve Webber's duty was "to protect us" against the treatment meted out to the Editor-in-Chief of this paper on November 30, 2011.

For Smart, as for many of us, Webber's apparent lack of action was as worrisome as his participation in the set-up, execution, and post-event publicity surrounding what, by all accounts now appears to be, at the very least, a great mistake in judgment.

It would have taken great courage to insist that a senior State Police Officer change his mind about the timing and execution of an arrest.

It would have taken even more courage to refuse to aid and abet behavior that he believed to be wrong.

Chief Webber has been given every opportunity to explain why he thought it proper for the Police to arrest Hubbard rather than simply issue a summons for her to appear before a magistrate.

He has also been given every opportunity to explain why he became an active participant in the regrettable events of 29 and 30 November.

To date, he has declined to explain himself to the press and the public he serves.

Chief Webber wears the eagle, globe and anchor of the United States Marine Corps on the chest of his Middleburg Police uniform. For that service alone we are in his debt.

We hope, however, that, in the future, he will find the courage described by Marine Corps General and former Chief of Staff Zinni, and "throw his stars on the table" before allowing something like the events of 30 November to ever happen again.

A Dream For America

Purple

Bruce Smart

January 2011 opened in Washington with 90-some individuals taking oaths of office as new Members of the 112th US Congress. Most were elected by voters frustrated and angry over the state of America, emotions that many new Members share; they are determined to "do something" about it. What that specific "something" is they don't quite seem to know.

Purple agrees there are many things America must do if it is to realize Ronald Reagan's vision of a "Shining City on a Hill." That goal was first stated in Colonial Governor-to-be John Winthrop's sermon aboard the Arbella in 1630. His words "That we shall be as a city on a hill, the eyes of all people are upon us" had Biblical roots.

Anger cannot create carefully crafted, difficult measures to cure the national ills that block that vision. During December Americans, whatever their religion, again celebrated a new beginning. Many pledged "to love our neighbors as ourselves." Now, seeking to redeem that pledge, we are beset by complex difficulties as divisive as any since the start of the Civil War 150 years ago:

· Economic - unemployment, debt and deficits;
· Environmental - oceans, energy and threatened climate change;
· Social - an aging population, immigration, inadequate education and culture clashes; and
· Security - terrorism and expensive and perhaps unwinnable wars.

These problems impact one another. Military costs increase financial stress. Poor education harms economic competitiveness, and hinders understanding of environmental threats and cultural differences. Ideology competes with science and arithmetic in setting public policies. All is overlaid with negative, partisan politics – a search for villains, and self-serving "solutions" benefiting interest groups at the expense of the common good, threatening the nation's well-being and respect for it as a world leader.

There is a better way. It calls for a vision, a "Dream" for America, and a plan to implement it.

Ideally, our political system should produce this "Dream", engaging leaders from across the political spectrum. Sadly, current Congressional leaders, scarred by partisan warring, seem unable to work together collegially. In the past moderates from both parties sometimes banded together to craft compromises. Today few moderates remain in Congress, most having been ousted by party extremists. America has many wise citizens and "think tanks," but none seem appropriate to address the broad spectrum of problems and sell solutions.

One group who might develop this "Dream" and implementation plan are the living US ex-Presidents - Carter, Clinton, and the two Bushes. Convened by President Obama and staffed by whatever experts the ex-Presidents choose, and properly introduced, it would be seen as an effort to break the ideological gridlock which entangles Congress. It would consider the nation's issues listed above, addressing their interrelationships, and exploring their origins, not to place blame, but to define problems so they can be solved. It could present options, and seek input from other nations. Its conclusions would form a framework for public policies and legislative implementation, changing the debate from a negative "whether" (to take action) to positives of "how" and "when."

If asked for ideas, Purple would propose an America dedicated to freedom and opportunity for all, embracing a spirit of brotherhood, compassion and service; an America respected internationally, a leader dedicated to peace and collegial endeavour.

That "Dream" America would be well educated, respecting science, its own history, and diverse cultures. It would be financially strong, maintaining a sustainable balance between current consumption and investment in the future. It would be environmentally responsible, avoiding harm to future generations. It would be compassionate, providing care for those in need, believing that the most fortunate among us should give the most back. It would listen to and work with other nations, while remaining militarily strong enough to protect its vital interests.

In short, it would become that "Shining City on a Hill."

Pastimes

Talkin' Trash 2010: Mickey D's and Bud, Big Winners

2010 Foxcroft Road Pig Pen Awards

William H. McCormick VMD

2010 was the ninth consecutive year of a volunteer action to control trash on the Foxcroft Road. The author conducts this survey as a single observer. However, there are others who also pick up trash on the Foxcroft Road, such as the Middleburg Hunt and the Foxcroft students themselves. Therefore, if anything, the numbers here noted are understated. The year 2010 ranks as the most productive for the whole survey (2002: 713, 2003: 950, 2004: 1033, 2005: 1099, **2006: 1216**, 2007: 1143, 2008: 899 2009:1105, **2010: 1276**). To find second place we must return to the late Bush '43 Administration.

To aid those first time readers and as a reminder to past readers of this column, the course of trash collection is a 4.6 mile route of dirt and hard road that includes portions of the Polecat Hill Rd. (Rt. 696), the Foxcroft Rd. (Rt. 626), the Snake Hill Rd. (Rt. 744), and the Millville Rd. (Rt. 743).

This past year, 1276 individual pieces trash were retrieved from the Foxcroft Road, and most of the trash was recycled. The perennial nicotine champion, Marlboro, accounted for 47% of the tobacco total with Newport second at 16%. The relative numbers of tobacco products slipped to its lowest percentage (5%) of total trash in the last nine years, yet absolute numbers were about average. According to The New England Journal of Medicine "more than 8 million people are sick or disabled as a result of tobacco use, and smoking kills 450,000 Americans annually."1 The putative relationship of tobacco and health has been scientifically established since the early 1950's. This summer New York Times editor, Richard Cohen, suggested that instead of putting the image of diseased inner organs on the cover of cigarette packages, they should put the pictures of the CEO's who so cleverly delayed meaningful tobacco regulation for decades. Their actions are a guiding principle for every other polluter. If the tobacco CEO's can lie with impunity in open Congressional hearings, why cannot every other polluter?

In the New Age- Soft Drink category, the competition was between Pepsico and Coca Cola (123 vs. 73 in absolute numbers or 39% vs. 23% of the soft drink group). This year Pepsico was able to establish a clear separation from its oldest and nearest rival. For a long time Coca Cola has been able to depend on its sugary product and business acumen. However, tastes change, and the consuming public longs for caffeine jolts or electrolytes such as are provided by Mountain Dew and Gatorade. By the way, when victorious football coaches are doused with the contents of huge Gatorade barrels, the actual liquid is ice water. No actual Gatorade is wasted in the ritual, and Pepsico pays for the privilege of providing the appropriately labeled barrel. Any publicity is good publicity.

The Fast Food group scored a remarkable increase from 15% of total trash in 2009 to 21% in 2010. The closest McDonald's to Middleburg is a 20 to 25 minute drive away, yet McDonald's was able to distribute 128 pieces of trash or 47% of the fast food total. Wendy's dropped to fourth place with 10% (27) of the fast food on the Foxcroft Road. The runner up was 7-Eleven at 13% (36). A new comer, Popeye's Louisiana Kitchen totaled 11% (30). According to the Washington Post, McDonald's is the single largest nongovernmental employer in the Washington area, boasting 13,684 employees.

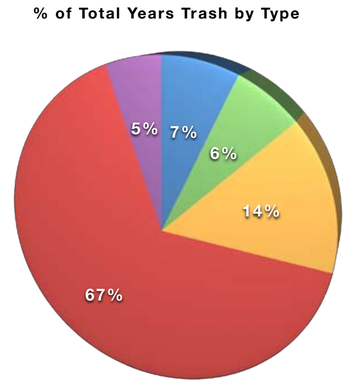
McDonald's, Popeye's, Wendy's and Burger King dispense fast food in bags with a brand name emblazoned thereupon. If one is interested in the origins of these bags, one need only look for the printed receipt within. One of the selling points of a fast food franchise is the business-like approach to the enterprise. Consequently, an itemized receipt is issued with each purchase. Therefore, on the receipt one will find the date, time, and site of the purchase as well as a cash or credit notation, even the last four digits of the credit card, if used in the transaction. The physical site and number of the store is listed as well as a telephone number. With that information we note that the person(s) dumping McDonald's bags on the Foxcroft Road purchases lunch in Leesburg or Fairfax on a weekday from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM , then drives west on Rt. 50 and dumps the bag between Middleburg and Foxcroft from 1:00 -3:00 PM. One wonders just who fits this profile? We all know that it is a crime to litter in the State of Virginia. We would like to express our gratitude to McDonald's and other fast food purveyors for providing a convenient phone number with which to register complaints.

In the Beer, Wine, and Booze category Coor's, last year's surprise winner, once again must take second place to In Bev, the parent company of Anheuser-Busch. Budweiser accounted for a full 10% of all road trash. Miller / Coor's only accounted for 8% of total road trash. Budweiser with 130 pieces of individual trash barely exceeded McDonald's absolute total of 128.

This year the "Slovenly Seven" accounted for 50% of all road trash. They are ranked in order of gross trash production:

1. Anheuser-Busch
2. McDonald's
3. Pepsico
4. Miller / Coor's
5. Coca Cola
6. 7-Eleven
7. Marlboro.

This year 7-Eleven replaced Wendy's. Look for these civic minded corporations at the Super Bowl and at other advertising opportunities.



Summary of Repetitive Trash

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Tobacco	54	73	42	61	100	92	63	73	70	628
Food Products	35	75	91	39	64	69	66	62	53	554
Fast Food	115	104	124	113	127	146	103	163	270	1265
Beverage Containers	509	698	697	765	776	727	472	663	729	6036
Generic Cups	0	0	78	86	80	88	40	49	61	482
Total	713	950	1032	1064	1147	1122	744	1010	1183	

Tobacco

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Marlboro	26	34	22	33	64	47	43	32	33
Parliament	1	2	0	5	1	2	5	4	2
Camel	2	9	6	7	5	6	3	0	5
Red Man	3	8	1	1	1	4	2	0	1
Newport	0	5	3	4	13	15	4	8	11
Winston	3	3	2	6	2	4	0	0	0
Salem	0	0	0	0	5	1	1	1	0
Merit	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	15	7
Benson & Hedges	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	1

Water

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Deer Park	0	4	2	27	19	26	11	19	26
Aquafina(Pepsico)	9	11	9	3	10	11	5	6	8
Dannan	0	1	1	7	8	4	0	1	0
Desani(Coca Cola)	8	2	4	11	10	17	6	10	7
Kirkland	0	0	0	0	0	7	4	5	9
Nestle's	0	0	0	0	0	9	2	8	5
Refreche	0	0	0	0	0	7	1	11	14
Others	5	6	14	16	12	14	10	12	17

Soft Drinks

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Pepsi/Mtn Dew	68	108	96	92	112	90	70	80	123
Coca Cola/ Sprite	66	73	87	87	80	98	81	76	73
7UP/ Dr. Pepper	9	20	13	20	12	10	10	11	13
Select (Safeway)	11	9	17	22	12	6	6	2	12
Arizona			2	4	3	1	3	4	18
Red Bull	3	2	11	26	19	20	19	40	16
Other	48	41	40	30	70	73	51	46	57

Fast Food

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
McDonald's	56	31	64	38	48	62	51	75	128
7-Eleven	35	35	34	39	29	32	23	15	36
Taco Bell	5	9	2	2	0	1	1	5	13
Starbucks	0	16	6	6	1	11	2	7	7
Sheetz	3	6	4	4	8	4	4	3	4
Wendy's	4	5	4	0	4	2	5	25	27
Burger King	9	4	4	2	8	5	2	2	10
Dunkin Donuts							1	5	3
KFC	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	3	2
Others	3	12	12	23	23	23	13	23	10

Beer / Wine / Booze

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Budweiser	62	86	78	78	119	68	36	36	42
Bud Lite	32	84	33	58	41	52	40	40	39
Busch	18	16	29	33	32	24	17	14	18
Natural Ice	54	71	50	67	77	29	6	4	4
Natural Dry	13	8	17	2	0	0	0	0	0
Natural Light	0	0	5	2	12	14	2	9	12
Michelob	5	7	19	8	7	12	10	5	11
Corona/Medelo	20	23	20	23	26	10	17	20	52
Coor's	26	18	22	5	32	43	33	120	107
Pabst Blue Ribbon	1	3	6	19	5	1	1	2	1
Steel Reserve	0	3	4	16	2	1	2	1	2
Heineken	0	0	0	0	0	14	13	18	20
Foster's	0	0	0	0	0	5	2	0	3
Yeungling	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	5
Others	27	35	62	65	41	38	19	14	23

Footnotes:

1.Schroeder, Steven A., M.D., and Warner, Kenneth E., Ph D.., "Don't Forget Tobacco." N. Engl. J. Med. 363;3, July 15, 2010, p. 201- 204.

Faces & Places

Middleburg Hunt Breakfast at Huntland

Middleburg, VA -December 18, 2010

Photos by Douglas Gehlsen and Janet Hitchen



Middleburg Hunt Staff and Hounds with Huntland Stables and Kennels in the Background, second is Penny Denegre MFH and Jeff Blue MFH leading the field



Penny Denegre, Betsee Parker and Jeff Blue



John Denegre



Marilyn Blue



Bill & Karen Schuiling



A toast from Jeff Blue, MFH to Betsee Parker



Andy Looney



Mr. and Mrs Jeff Ogden

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Pastimes

My Valentine: Sweet, Sweet Fruit

Your Personal Chef

Alyson Browett

I found myself earlier this month in a large, nationwide box store, wandering down a 50-foot-long aisle surrounded by red and pink boxes filled with sugary treats, piled over six feet high. The usual chocolates in heart-shaped boxes and candy hearts with printed messages (be mine!) were omnipresent. On the end caps of the check-out lines, Cadbury Crème Eggs were making an early show.

It got me thinking: who eats all of this sugar? Then I had another thought: when did all of our holidays become so candy-centered?

Instead of making a link between "I love you" and "Here's some pure sugar," we should take the sugar content down a notch. I'm not advocating sugar abolition. Let's focus our energies on consuming a different kind of sugar: those found in fruit. Believe it or not, it's easy to get your recommended daily intake of five fruit servings during the winter, even though most fruits (other than citrus) are out of season.

Canned, dried, freeze-dried and frozen fruits offer a great option during these cold months. The shelf life of "preserved" fruits is much longer than fresh fruits, and while some of the nutrients (particularly vitamins C and A) can be lost in the drying process, it is not enough to warrant avoiding them completely. Some fruit is better than no fruit! Be careful of added sugars and preservatives in canned and dried fruits. Purchase canned or jarred fruits in fruit juice, not syrup, and look for dried fruits, such as cranberries, that are sweetened with apple juice instead of syrup. Dried fruits are lightweight, take up little space, and no refrigeration is necessary, making them a great snack option for outdoor activities or lunch bags.

This Valentine's Day, try reducing frozen cranberries with orange zest and juice for an elegant sauce to pair with ham, duck or chicken. Treat your loved one to breakfast in bed by adding frozen blueberries to pancakes or dried fruits to a high-fiber cereal. Or make a smoothie with banana, canned pineapple, orange juice, fat-free Greek yogurt and some ice (be creative with this one!). And if you must go for a sweet treat, make my reduced-sugar version of sugar cookies, which feel more like a biscuit, to give to family members, neighbors or teachers. There's no better way to show you care than feeding your loved ones a rainbow of nutrient-rich fruits!

Sugar "Biskies"
Created by Alyson Browett

If you use dried fruit, try adding a few tablespoons of juice or water to them in a small bowl and microwaving for a minute to rehydrate. Drain the juice before adding the fruit to the dough.



2 ¾ cup unbleached white flour

1 tsp baking soda

½ tsp baking powder

1 cup butter, softened (best if set out at room temp for at least three hours)

¾ cup organic sugar

1 egg

¾ cup freeze dried or dried cherries, cranberries, blueberries, raisins, or other fruit

½ cup walnut pieces (optional)

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Mix the dry ingredients in a small bowl. Using a fork or hand mixer, beat together the butter, sugar and egg in a large bowl. With a fork or your hands, mix the dry ingredients into the butter. Add in the fruit and nuts and combine with your hands. Form doughnut hole-sized balls of dough and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, leaving about two inches between each cookie. Bake for 12-14 minutes, or until just starting to gain a gold hue on top. Cool. Makes about two dozen.

Get the Biz Buzz!

The Middleburg Business and Professional Association invites you to our February Mixer

Tuesday, February 8
5:30-7:30 p.m.

Hosted by
Wylie Wagg
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We'll have a 10-minute Biz Buzz to bring you up-to-date



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Saturday-Feb. 22, 2011

Spaghetti Dinner-6:00 pm

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Non cash prizes

Come enjoy the fun!!

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Dinner is $10
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- More highway information signs on approach routes
- More parking
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- More food outlets
- More parade bands
- More local parade entrants
- More activities for a day-long festival of Christmas wonder

We'll see you December 3rd, 2011
Dee Dee and Jim

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Pastimes

Have Tix, Will Travel

7th Inning Stretch

Alex Cudaback

Haven't scored tickets for Super Bowl XLV yet?

Still trying to figure out how to get into the big game on February 6th?

Dying to get your hands some "official" NFL swag that will forever prove to your friends and family that you really were there at Jerryland to watch the Steelers and the Packers duke it out for last NFL championship game before the apocalypse, heretofore known as the last game before the looming lockout?

Well, two out of three ain't bad.

The NFL, clearly in touch with the commoners that make up the diehard fan-base that feeds the country's largest, toughest, hairiest juggernaut, announced last week that it will make a still-unannounced number of tickets available for this year's Super Bowl for the bargain-basement price of $200.

Each.

And you can buy up to four (4!!) tickets at a time!?

Honestly.

And the league, in a show of inexplicable largesse, is even going to throw in a free, officially licensed Super Bowl program (gasp!) and a free, officially licensed Super Bowl scarf (gasp GASP!!) with each ticket purchased.

Really.

How could you NOT pop for four tickets (four SUPER BOWL tickets!!) for only $800? I mean, come on! Call in sick ahead of time, get three buddies lined up and gas up the family truckster for a road trip. Heck, throw the family in the family truckster and head for the open road if you absolutely must. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity….

And, just to prove how in touch with the common man they really are, Roger Goodell and his pals at the NFL aren't even going to make you set foot in the stadium once you get all the way to Jerry World! That's right, they're going to let you watch the big game on big screens!

(Not the 160-foot by 72-foot, $40 million, 600-ton behemoth that hangs from the rafters of Jerrytopia. Sorry. That one's INSIDE the stadium.)

The screens you and your friends (or family, if you absolutely must) will get to watch are being specially erected for Super Bowl XLV (wait for it….) OUTSIDE THE STADIUM!

At no small cost to the NFL, I'm quite sure.

So, you know, be grateful.

If you wanted to actually get INTO the game and, you know, see it live, well, you'd have to shell out somewhere between twenty-six hundred and twenty-two THOUSAND dollars for the privilege.

True dat.

Those are the prices being quoted as of 6:30 pm, Monday night, at NFL Ticket Exchange on the information-super-tubes.

The ticket price doesn't include seats (but since they don't really include, you know, a live sporting event, you can't really complain); purchasers will instead be invited to sit on the grass on the east side of Jerryville instead. And given that the game is in early February, I'm guessing that the "grass" is gonna look a lot like "dirt" with a healthy coat a green spray paint on it.

And, call me crazy, but I'm betting the NFL won't even make you schlep your own game day snacks all the way down to Jerryboro. I'm betting they'll set up a lovely and lively concession stand or three to pry the last few dollars from your cold, paint-stained fingers.

You can't make this stuff up.

Sadly.

In other news, or not, if you want to get technical, Diana Taurasi, face of the WNBA and international basketball star, saw her contract with her Turkish team, Fenerbahce, terminated earlier this month after two blood samples tested positive for performance enhancing drugs, namely the banned stimulant modafinil.

That announcement was made on January 7, over two weeks ago. Since then? Silence. Her lawyer indicated Taurasi would appeal any suspension that came down from the Turkish basketball federation. But that's it.

Since then there's been remarkably little comment from Taurasi, the Phoenix Mercury (her WNBA team), or even the WNBA itself.

She's not been subpoenaed by Congress.

She's really not been called out by much of anyone.

So what does that mean? That nobody cares? That the PED debate is limited to male athletes? Obviously not, given the relish with which people finally ran down Marion Jones.

Or is it that the WNBA is happy to hold its breath, hiding under the cover afforded by NFL playoffs, the Super Bowl and (GASP!!) $200 game-tickets?

I honestly don't know.

But it smells a bit to me, of double standards and slippery slopes. If Taurasi and the WNBA can avoid the kind of persecution and public humiliation other alleged athletic cheaters have been forced to go through based on far less evidence, well, we're no better off than when we madly cheered on Sammy and Big Mac all those years ago.

If closing our eyes and pulling the blankets over our heads is still all it takes, well, we haven't come an iota as far as I thought.

.

Alex can be reached at cuda24@yahoo.com

Loudoun Hounds Fan Fest

The Loudoun Hounds Professional Baseball Club is proud to announce the inaugural FanFest to be held from noon to 6 p.m. on February 13, 2011, at Stone Bridge High School in Ashburn, Virginia. The FanFest will be the first major fan-related event for the newest team in the independent Atlantic League of Professional Baseball and the Hounds are coming out of the gates in style.

Central to this family-oriented event are the approximately fifteen Major League stars all around Stone Bridge signing autographs, speaking with fans and their kids and telling great stories of life in the Big Leagues. The Hounds will also be unveiling our first mascot whose name is going to be determined by Loudoun County elementary school children in the coming month.

"These are exciting times for the Loudoun Hounds," said Bob Farren, CEO and President of the team. "To have such great names with such rich Major League and Atlantic League connections at our first major fan event is confirmation that the Hounds will be a first-class operation catering to our fans first and foremost."

"Independent baseball is extremely fan-friendly," says four-time MLB All-Star pitcher Tommy John. "And I think people in Loudoun County will be very impressed by the quality of play they're going to see in the Atlantic League." John knows both quality of play and the Atlantic League; he won 288 games in the big leagues, and served as manager of the Bridgeport Bluefish from 2007 to 2009.

To get more information on Hounds FanFest, please visit www.LoudounHounds.com. Also, sign up to attend FanFest at www.Facebook.com/houndsbaseball.v

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The Good and Bad News

The Plant Lady

Karen Rexrode

Winter wasted no time in securing its season. Arriving in early December with a fury of wind and below average temperatures, many of us were left with garden tasks left undone. I certainly didn't finish all that I had planned and I'm a wimp for not putting on coveralls and getting out there. I'm not fond of working outside when the ground is frozen solid, that work will have to wait. I have spent a lot of time reading. There have been some very interesting bits of information that have come my way. A few of these I would like to share.

The biggest news for gardeners (and non-gardeners), are the stink bugs. Those vile, stinky invaders that have entered our homes and massed themselves into random nooks and crannies. A little research on the internet reveals their Chinese origins and proper name of brown marmorated stink bug. Our invading populations originated in Allentown, PA and have spread rapidly through out the mid-Atlantic states. Another, separate mass is moving through the northwestern states. They have come into our homes to over winter and supposedly will not feed during the winter months, their only mouth part is a proboscis that is folded under their body. As temperatures rise in spring, they will swarm in our homes, looking for ways to exit. Once outside, they pierce fruit and leaves, sucking up plant juices. Their targeted plants seem widespread. Apple, peach and vegetable growers seem most concerned about blemishes in fruit and potential for secondary damage from fungi and bacteria as it enters in the wound. We will find a more aggressive anti-fungal spray program as far as commercial crops are concerned. Research to control stink bugs cannot move fast enough at this point. The options from an organic approach are parasitic wasps (hopefully already present), pheromone traps or a product known as kaolin clay. This mineral clay can be mixed and sprayed as a liquid solution around your plants and it will keep the stink bug from feeding or laying eggs. I'm sure it's too early to tell if it really works. The other option might be a vacuum cleaner, which is not a bad idea if you decide to dedicate one for just that, their foul odor will permeate the cleaner. We may have to lower our standards when it comes to perfect, unblemished fruit. Especially at this early stage of the stink bug onslaught.

Now for some good news. Brent and Beckys Bulbs summer catalog is here. You can order online, which I encourage. They sell out of tuberose and calllianthus (AKA acidanthera or Callianthus 'Murielae', under species gladiolus) very quickly. I encourage everyone to buy locally if you know of a source for these fragrant summer bulbs. If not order through www.brendandbeckysbulbs.com.

It is also time to send away for your snowdrop catalog. Hitch Lyman of Temple Nursery is the one and only source for unusual snowdrops in the United States.



Send $3.00 to Hitch Lyman, Temple Nursery, P.O. Box 591, Trumansburg N.Y. 14886

He digs and sends them "in the green" in early April and they must be planted within days of being dug. Another words, don't plan a vacation if you are waiting for snowdrops to be shipped from Hitch. His catalog is a mix of actual photographs, glued and handmade into a little catalog.

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Local Talent Wanted

Great Meadow seeks local amature talent for 4th of July

Great Meadow Foundation is currently seeking local amateur talent for it's annual 4th of July Celebration. The Foundation is looking for Pop or Rock Bands, Acapella groups, Barbershop Quartets, singing groups, high school bands, entertainers, puppeteers, as well as other types of local talents. Great Meadow Foundation is looking to entertain our 4th of July guests in a family friendly setting.

Please send your contact information, demo cd's, and other information. Performers will be required to provide all their own sound equipment.

We look forward to hearing the local talent!

Please send to Great Meadow Foundation, 5089 Old Tavern Road, The Plains VA 20198 attn Kim Shelly

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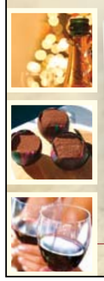


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Back: Andy Stevens, Jackie Hagenston, Joyce Gates, Bobby Kirk, Kim Hurst, Belinda Hyde, Marci Welsh, Billie Van Pay.
Front: Yolanda Brittle, Michele Stevens, Kristin Dillon-Johnson, Francesca Jewett, Kathy Chovnick.
Out on appointments: Amy Adams, Cathy Bowman, Penny Merritt, Michaela Quinlin, Betty Roth, Joy Thompson.



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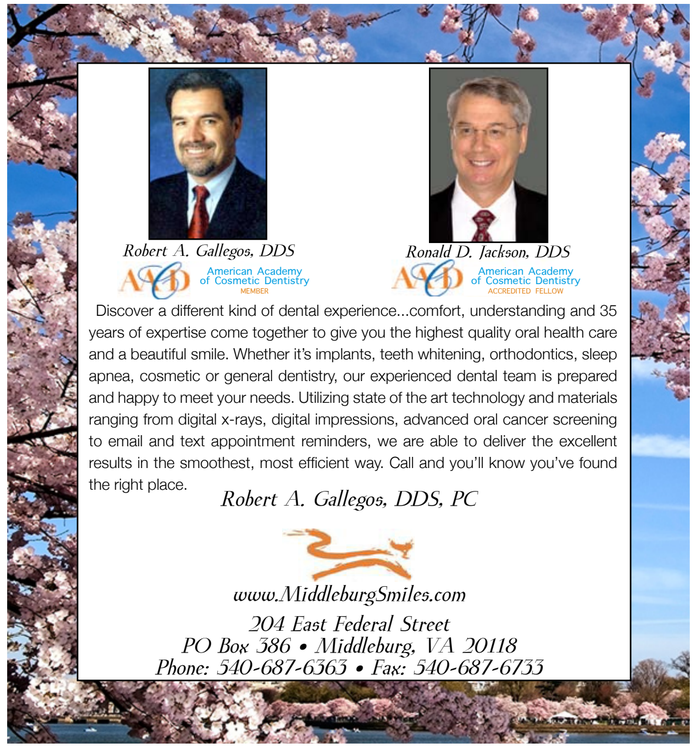


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Fauquier Realty, Inc. welcomes its new principal broker and owner, Anne Michael Greene. She brings years of real estate and sales experience, and is a long time Fauquier County resident. She is proud to continue the tradition of a real estate brokerage firm in Marshall. Fauquier Realty offer residential sales, property management, land consulting and commercial sales. We look forward to serving you.

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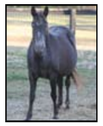
Friends for Life

Middleburg Humane Foundation



Susie is an adorable 1 yr. old Beagle. She is very sweet, gentle & loves people but is a little too eager with her treats, so she'd do best in a home with no small children.

Ripple is a very sweet red roan pony X mare, who is in her early teens, about 13h, has very good ground manners. Ripple is pregnant & will foal summer 2011. She and her foal are available.





Bruce is a very sweet, calm, super special, Bull Terrier mix. He has an absolutely wonderful temperament & is great with people, kids & other dogs. Bruce is always a perfect gentleman!

Dylan is a super adorable 1 yr. old Chihuahua. He is very calm, cuddly, loves attention & would love to be the center of your world.





Paige is a cute little 5 mo. old girl born. She is very sweet & gets along with other cats. She would fit in with any family & would love to have play buddies.

Honey is an adorable 4 yr old Border Terrier/ Pit Bull X who is excellent with kids, cats & dogs. She's a climber so she must be leashed walked or in a home with acreage.



A Yelp for Help!

MHF along with most other humane organizations have had a really tough year. The requests for all types of assistance has sky-rocketed and donations have decreased. MHF really needs your help to stay strong and continue to provide the many important services & programs for needy animals & people. Our funds and supplies are very low. Please help us by donating supplies-this will be greatly appreciated by all-both 2 legged and 4 legged!

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Animal Wish List:

Large Breed Rawhide Flip Chips ~Plain Clay Kitty Litter (no clumping) ~Dry & Canned Cat Food Dry Dog Food ~Paper Towels ~Bleach ~Gift Cert. to local feed stores (for Hay!) ~postage stamps ~13 gallon trash bags ~laundry soap ~dish soap

Please drop off donations at our thrift shop in Middleburg or at our farm shelter in Marshall VA. Thanks again for your support!

Middleburg Humane Foundation
P.O. Box 1238 Middleburg VA 20118
mhfdtn@earthlink.net (540) 364-3272
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Melody is an affectionate young adult kitty. She does not photograph well but is drop dead gorgeous. She would do well in an indoor or indoor-outdoor home.

Charlie is a very personable 4 month old Beagle mix who loves everyone and everything. He has tons of energy and finds everything in life very exciting.





Bunnies We have 5 adorable bunnies available of various ages and personalities that were found on the side of the road.

"Got Mice?"

Wendy is a 1 yr old kitty who is friendly and loves to play with her toys. She would love to find a home in a nice, safe barn.





Boomer is a 19 year old Big Boned Chestnut TB/ Warmblood X who loves attention & other horses. This perfect gentleman would make a great companion!

Lilah is a charming 4 yr old Beagle X with a stocky body & little short legs. She is very sweet, good with all people, & has a great calm personality.



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Albert's Corner

A monthly column for people who share their homes with four-legged friends.

I'm not exaggerating when I say that skin problems in dogs seem like an epidemic. Any of you who read my column already know that feeding the right food alleviates skin ailments about a billion percent of the time. I've written about the importance of healthy nutrition quite a lot and hope everyone is taking the time to choose good diets for their furry friends. In this month's column, however, I want to talk about some other things that can cause skin problems.

First of all, I'll address allergies that are not food-related. Dogs generally react to allergies via their skin (ear infections, hair loss, redness, etc.). If your dog is itching, biting and scratching, there's a really good chance that an allergen is responsible.

Everyone knows that most dogs are highly allergic to fleas, so keeping them at bay is very important. Unfortunately, there are no magic bullets where fleas are concerned. Some medications are heavily chemically laden and others are simply ineffective. Your vet can help you decide what works best for you and your pet.

In addition to talking to a vet, however, I strongly recommend going online and reading about any medication before deciding to use it. For instance, the Advantix website clearly states that it is "extremely poisonous to cats and could be fatal". Additionally, it states that Advantix "should not be allowed to enter water courses because it is dangerous for fish and aquatic organisms". Advantix is not the only flea medication with toxicity warnings, but I'm using it as an example of why it's critical to fully understand the contraindications and warnings of any drugs that you administer.

Mites are another parasite that can cause discomfort. If your pet is scratching a lot, you might want to ask your vet for a skin scrape to determine if mites are present.

Other common allergens include inhalants like dander, mold, dust mites and pollen. Symptoms can come and go with changes in seasons or surroundings. A simple blood test can determine whether airborne particles are problematic for your dog. Once you know the culprit(s), you can better manage your pet's exposure.

While allergies, particularly food allergies, are at fault for most skin sensitivities, there are other more serious conditions that could be responsible. Hypothyroidism and Cushing's disease are two that might be involved. A vet can diagnose and treat these ailments, but you should also be your pet's advocate.

I cannot emphasize that last statement enough: be your pet's advocate! I'm saying this because skin treatment recommendations often include steroids. Long-term steroid use can cause a lot of health problems. Before you go down that path with your dog, make sure there are no other alternatives. There are some promising and safer options you can discuss with your vet.

It's also important to make sure to pay close attention to the environment. Is your dog walking on surfaces that have been treated with toxic ice-melting chemicals? Is your lawn service using caustic pesticides? If so, you might be able to substitute pet-safe ice melt or non-toxic lawn treatments.

Finally, remember to consider the obvious. If a pet suddenly begins excessively scratching and biting, it's possible that it's a simple reaction to a bur or a mat. It could even be a response to a thorn or a small bit of gravel stuck between the pads of our paws.

In addition to what I've written about, there are many other reasons a dog might have skin problems. The bottom line is that excessive scratching is something to take seriously and address quickly. It's definitely not just a normal part of being a dog!

Albert, a Jack Russell Terrier, is Chairman of the Board of Wylie Wagg, a shop for dogs, cats, and their people, in Middleburg, Fairfax, Falls Church and Arlington.

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Mosby Heritage Area Events for 2011

The "Cavaliers, Courage and Coffee" Series

Interpretive programs presented in the evening by lantern light in first person by the Gray Ghost Interpretive Group in period Dress. The interpreters take on the persona of people living in the Mosby Heritage Area at the time of the Civil War and tell their stories. Admission to these programs is $5 for adults and $2 for students and reservations are not needed

February 12: Fireside Mosby, at the Rector House, Atoka, VA

Book Launch
"Lafayette: Lessons in Leadership from the Idealist General"
March 20, 2011: 3:00 PM

The Mosby Heritage Area Association will sponsor the Book Launch of Marc Leepson's latest book beginning at 3:00 p.m. at historic Oak Hill, home of President James Monroe near Leesburg, Virginia. The book, a concise biography of the famed Marquis, is a part of the World Generals series by Palgrave/Macmillan. President Monroe — and perhaps, the Marquis de Lafayette—will make an appearance during the afternoon.

The event will begin with a reception, followed by a talk by Marc Leepson, and a signing of his book. Seating is limited

To join the effort visit www.mosbyheritagearea.org or call 540.687.6681

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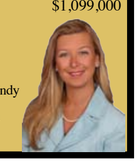
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Patrickswell
Middleburg, Virginia

Estate consisting of 213.83 acres in Orange County Hunt with mountain views in every direction. Manicured farm with mostly open and gently rolling acreage. Main house was built in 1984 of stone construction with four bedrooms, four full baths, two half baths, an in-law suite and four fireplaces. Improvements include pool, tennis court, 20 stall center aisle stable, office, tack, 2 wash stalls with 1/15 mile indoor track, and 3 bedroom guest house. $10,500,000.

Paul MacMahon (703) 609-1905



Trough Hill Farm
Middleburg, Virginia

103 acres and towering white oaks surround this delightful 1800's Virginia farmhouse in a well protected area near Foxcroft School. Ultra charming main house has 9 fireplaces, multiple staircases, original wood floors and 5 bedrooms. Additional guest house and stunning pool house/game room make this a unique compound for entertaining. Gorgeous stone walls, terraces and garden walls wrap around the pool and overlook lovely spring fed pond and barns. $5,000,000.

Ann MacMahon (540) 687-5588
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White Horse Farm
Scottsville, Virginia

Prime Albemarle County location, main house circa 1780 in excellent condition, completely updated. 4 bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths, 10 fireplaces with hardwood floors throughout and high ceilings. Improvements include 6 car garage, 8 stall stable, tenant house and sports barn with basketball court, hitting and pitching areas for baseball, bedroom area, full bath & locker room. 278.80 acres fenced & crossed fenced, ample water and numerous ponds. $4,200,000.

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Harborvale
Middleburg, Virginia

51 acres in Orange County Hunt located just minutes from town surrounded by large farms off the highly sought-after Zulla Road. Interior renovations have begun. Attractive stone cottage, 3 car garage, stable and tenant house are all in need of renovation but will make a fine estate. Currently in two parcels. $2,500,000.

Helen MacMahon (540) 454-1930



Hidden Brook Farm
Unison, Virginia

25 acre horse property. Home was completely renovated from top to bottom in 2003. Bright open floor plan with 1st floor bedroom, pine floors, well proportioned rooms, 2 fireplaces and pool. Entire property is fully fenced, 16 stall stable with apartment, feed room, tack room and 2 bay garage. Lighted stone dust arena and great ride out. Manageable property for the amateur or professional. $1,750,000.

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Pagebrook East
Boyce, Virginia

Gorgeous tract of land, 97.88 acres, in the middle of Blue Ridge Hunt territory. Small cottage converted from an original summer kitchen. Additional building site with approved 4 bedroom perc. Open pasture land, pond, small barn and run-in sheds. Fenced for horses and cattle. Land is in conservation easement. $1,495,000.

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Lions Lane
Boyce, Virginia

Custom built log home on 109+ acres, top of the mountain with unbelievable western views. Private but easy access to Route 50, hunters' paradise, house has 3 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths, 2 fireplaces, vaulted ceilings, gourmet kitchen, 3-car garage, top of the line finishing throughout. Very energy efficient. $1,490,000.

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Keepsake Farm
The Plains, Virginia

Classic farm house in Orange County Hunt. Charming log and clapboard well-maintained residence surrounded by pristine protected land. Spacious master bedroom with elegant en suite bath. Beautiful family room/den with exposed beams. Kitchen equipped with updated stainless appliances. Two stall barn with water and electric and run-in shed. Great ride-out. $1,295,000.

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Alix Coolidge (703) 625-1724



Rectortown Road
Rectortown, Virginia

1942 home located in a quaint village setting. Main house has a first floor master suite and 2 additional bedrooms. Large wood paneled living room with a wood burning fireplace and French doors leading to the stone terrace and garden area. Additionally there is a charming guest home and 3 stall barn on approximately 3 acres in 2 tax parcels. Lovely setting. $885,000.

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The Warren House
Upperville, Virginia

Turn of the century gem in heart of Upperville. Classic front porch leads into beautifully restored home, traditional parlor with Bellfire fireplace with original mantel; lovely dining room. First floor master. New kitchen has large island, custom cherry cabinets, farm sink, handmade backsplash, six burner Wolf range. Stunning porch gallery with wetbar; custom paneled doors to terrace. Oak and heart pine floors. $860,000.

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Conde Road
Marshall, Virginia

Stunning home on 8+ acres near Warrenton. Perfect first floor master overlooking stately pool and plantings. Gourmet kitchen, separate dining room, library, family room. Two private bedroom suites with baths on lower level with large entertainment center, wet bar and sitting room. 4 fireplaces, 3-car garage. Warrenton Hunt. $845,000.

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Commercial
Middleburg, Virginia

The old church rectory. Unusual opportunity to buy a free standing commercial building in Middleburg on a large lot. The property includes the stone and shake office building and the oversized stone garage with unlimited potential. Includes a large administrative area, reception, conference room and three private offices. $795,000.

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